



Board Agenda Background

Date: 1/6/2026
To: Board of County Commissioners
Through: Colton Rohloff, County Manager
Alexis Sohlden, Public Lands Manager
From: Martha Tableman, Open Space Coordinator
Subject: Consideration of Approval of Resolution R-26-02, a Resolution Authorizing the Contribution of an Additional \$25,000 Toward the Purchase by the Town of Silver Plume of the Taylor Kennedy Family Mining Claims for Use as Open Space, Bringing the Total Contribution to \$125,000

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Clear Creek County Open Space Commission (OSC) recommends that the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approve an additional \$25,000 contribution towards the purchase of the Taylor Kennedy Family Mining Claims by the Town of Silver Plume for use as open space.

BACKGROUND

In 2023, the Town of Silver Plume purchased the Jack Pine Mining Claims adjacent to Silver Plume and the Open Space Acquisition Fund contributed \$100,000 to that purchase. In the fall 2024, the Taylor Kennedy Family mining claims (122 claims, 350 acres) adjacent to the Jack Pine Claims, on Republican Mountain, went up for sale. Like the Jack Pine Claims, the Taylor Kennedy Family Claims are located within the boundaries of the National Historic Landmark District. The Town of Silver Plume decided to pursue the purchase of the Taylor Kennedy Family Mining Claims. The Town is working with Mountain Area Land Trust (MALT) on the purchase. MALT has helped procure funding and will hold the conservation easement on the property.

The specifics of the proposed purchase are that the Taylor Kennedy property (122 claims, 350 acres) begins at the north end of Silver Street in Silver Plume, at approximately 9,200' and stretches up the mountainside to 11,200'. The popular, public non-motorized, interpretive 7:30 Mine Trail also begins in Town at Silver Street, and winds in and out of the Taylor Kennedy property for its entire 1.8-mile length. Purchase and permanent protection of the Taylor Kennedy property will make it possible to extend the 7:30 Mine Trail up Brown Gulch and connect the trail with the USFS Bard Creek Trail two miles to the west. The appraisal valued the property at \$875,000, which is \$2,500 per acre which is the same amount paid for the Jack Pine Mining Claims.

The Town initially approached the OSC regarding the Taylor Kennedy Family Claims in October 2024 and then again in January 2025 to assess the OSC's interest. The OSC indicated that they were supportive of the purchase; and, when the purchase was definite, they would make a recommendation to the BOCC to provide funding towards the purchase. A Letter of Intent to Purchase was secured in early 2025. At the March 3, 2025 BOCC meeting, the BOCC approved the \$100,000 contribution from the Open Space Acquisition Fund to the Town of Silver Plume for the purchase of the Taylor Kennedy Mining Claims.

Since then, the Town of Silver Plume and the Taylor Kennedy Family entered into a purchase contract with a closing date of January 31, 2026. Having secured the contract, the total costs of the purchase were itemized and the total amount required, \$1,001,600, including all of the due diligence and closing costs was determined.



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The breakdown on funding needed is as follows:

Funding Required	
Purchase	\$875,000
Conservation Easement	\$67,700
Phase I Environmental	\$16,400
Title/Closing	\$35,000
Cultural Resource Survey	\$7,500
TOTAL	\$1,001,600

With the fundraising goal determined, the Town of Silver Plume and MALT have been actively seeking funds from a variety of sources. As of 12/14/2025, funding committed is as follows:

Agencies	
Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO)	\$300,000
State Historical Fund	\$250,000
CCC Open Space Acquisition Fund	\$100,000
Town of Silver Plume	\$50,000
Gates Family Foundation	\$50,000
NoCo Places	\$37,000 (verbal)
Subtotal	\$787,000

The Town of Silver Plume has received **\$184,600** from a variety of sources including 42 individual donors, the Georgetown Loop Railroad, Big Horn Sheep Society, Friends of Clear Creek, HDPLC, Historic Georgetown, and Colorado Ghost Town Club.

TOTAL Committed: \$971,600

Having pursued all possible avenues for funding, the Town of Silver Plume is, as of December 14, 2025, still short \$30,000.

ANALYSIS

As presented in March 2025, staff worked with the OSC to follow the Land Acquisition Process approved by the BOCC to consider supporting the purchase of these claims. Key initial aspects of the process include a Site Visit Report and a Land Use Recommendation Form (LUR), attached. As outlined in the LUR, these mining claims overwhelmingly meet most of the criteria identified for open space acquisitions very well. Supporting the Town of Silver Plume in its effort to buy the Taylor Kennedy Family Mining Claims aligns with the Open Space Mission. From a management perspective, it makes sense for the Town to be the owners of the claims as they adjoin the Town and are within the boundaries of the Silver Plume Mountain Park. They will be assisted in management of the Park by the Historic District Public Lands Commission (HDPLC) and the conservation easement holder MALT.

As the Town of Silver Plume was seeking additional funding, they approached the Clear Creek County Open Space Commission in October 2025 to update them on the fundraising efforts and to ask if the OSC was willing to consider an additional contribution, if needed. At that point, the Town had been notified that the funding from NoCo Places was less than what had been requested. The OSC urged the Town to seek funding from other



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sources as much as possible; and, as a last resort, they would consider a recommendation to the BOCC for additional funding. The Town of Silver Plume came to the December 2025 OSC meeting with a request for an additional \$25,000 as that would address the majority of the remaining funding shortfall. The remaining \$5,000 will come from individual donors. The OSC unanimously voted to make the recommendation.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION/INPUT

At the OSC meeting on December 10, 2025, the OSC unanimously passed a motion stating “The OSC recommends that the BOCC support the purchase of the Taylor Kennedy Family Claims by the Town of Silver Plume by providing an additional \$25,000 towards the purchase.”

FISCAL IMPACT

The Open Space Trust Fund (Acquisition) has the funds needed to contribute the additional \$25,000 towards the purchase of the 122 Taylor Kennedy Family Mining Claims. (For the Fund and Budget amounts, see BOCC Memo prepared by Finance requesting a Supplemental Appropriation to the 2026 Budget.)

CONCLUSION

The Town of Silver Plume has an opportunity to purchase a key portion of Republican Mountain to add to the Silver Plume Mountain Park. It is a critical viewshed for those who travel I-70 as well as those who ride the Georgetown Loop Railroad. Support for this purchase has been received from a wide variety of entities including GOCO, History Colorado, as well as many residents of Clear Creek County. While Clear Creek County has already provided \$100,000 towards the purchase, an additional \$25,000 from the Open Space Acquisition Fund is needed. Clear Creek County has the capacity to provide this additional support for this purchase based on the resources available in the Open Space Acquisition Fund. The OSC recommends that the BOCC approve this additional contribution towards this purchase. As mentioned previously, the Purchase Contract has **January 31, 2026** as the closing date for the acquisition. Thus, the BOCC needs to act on this request in early January.

To approve the contribution, the BOCC needs to approve R-26-02 Resolution Approving the Use Of Open Space Trust Funds (Acquisition) for the Town Of Silver Plume Purchase of 122 Mining Claims Owned By Taylor Kennedy.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution R-26-02
2. Taylor Kennedy Mining Claims Land Use Recommendation Form
3. Taylor Kennedy Mining Claims Site Visit Report