



FACT SHEET: Browns Canyon National Monument and Wilderness – March 28, 2013

Sen. Mark Udall is proposing the Browns Canyon National Monument so that future generations of Coloradans can enjoy the area's unique mix of exciting whitewater, wildlife and wilderness recreation close to the Front Range. Based on community input, this proposal will preserve Browns Canyon, support jobs, grow our economy and protect Colorado's quality of life. Sen. Udall has spent more than a year building this proposal from the ground-up, so as to develop a draft bill that preserves this remarkable landscape while continuing current access and use of the area. This designation will draw visitors who will boost the regional economy by literally putting the new Browns Canyon National Monument on the national tourist map.

Next Steps: Please review the proposed map and draft bill and send Sen. Udall your comments using the form at <http://www.markudall.senate.gov/browncanyon>.

What is in the draft “Browns Canyon National Monument and Wilderness Act of 2013”?

- **New National Monument:** Designates an approximate 22,000-acre national monument that would be jointly managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and U.S. Forest Service, in cooperation with the Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife through the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area (AHRA).
- **New Wilderness:** Designates approximately 10,500 acres of new wilderness within the national monument (8,000 acres of land managed by the BLM plus 2,500 acres of land managed by the U.S. Forest Service).
- **Public Access:** Visitor access will continue exactly as it does now, so most visitors will experience the new Browns Canyon National Monument from floating through it on the Arkansas River or by traveling into one of the two existing recreation sites. The existing recreation sites are easily accessible off of Highway 285, and they have parking, campgrounds, trails, restrooms and boat ramps.
- **No changes to other uses such as grazing, water, hunting, angling or outfitting:** All of these uses will continue as they do now.
- **Ongoing public involvement:** After designation, a detailed management plan for the area will be developed by the BLM and U.S. Forest Service with additional public input to guide the area's management and determine what, if any, additional recreation and visitor facilities might be appropriate.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Will this be like a National Park managed by the National Park Service?

This will not be a National Park Service National Monument. Instead, the proposed Browns Canyon National Monument will stay under the same management as it has now – the BLM, U.S. Forest Service and the AHRA (a unit of Colorado Parks and Wildlife). There are 27 other national monuments across the country that are managed by the BLM and/or the U.S. Forest Service, including two in Colorado – Canyons of the Ancients and the new Chimney Rock National Monument, both in the southwestern part of the state.

What is a National Monument?

A national monument is a flexible designation that protects the land and encourages the public to recreate and enjoy unique natural and historic sites in the area, but protects it from development and large-scale resource extraction. Each national monument is unique, and is designed to match the values to be protected and the circumstances on the ground.

What is a Wilderness Area?

A wilderness designation means that the area will be managed as a quiet haven for recreation and wildlife. Wilderness provides the strongest level of protection available to federal lands to ensure that areas remain natural for future generations to enjoy. Nearly all of the area proposed as the BLM component of the Browns Canyon Wilderness has been a Wilderness Study Area for more than 20 years, and the U.S. Forest Service portion was managed as a Colorado Roadless Area because it was roadless and undisturbed.



How will this impact motorized use of the area?

The bill maintains motorized use in exactly the same configuration as it is now. Most of the proposed Browns Canyon National Monument is bordered by roads, and the Turret Trail/FR184 will remain open in its current condition.

What does this mean for water rights?

The bill makes no changes to water rights.

What does this mean for grazing?

Grazing will continue under exactly the same rules as apply now. The private stock tank on Aspen Ridge Road is excluded from the monument. In general, any grazing activity or facility established prior to the date of the designation shall be allowed to remain in place and may be maintained or replaced when necessary. For example, the legal language referenced in the proposed bill specifically allows ranchers to use motorized vehicles as necessary to maintain stock ponds, repair fences, rescue sick animals or place feed in emergency situations.

Will hunting and fishing be allowed?

Hunting and fishing are allowed in both wilderness and national monuments managed by the BLM and U.S. Forest Service. Sen. Udall is committed to maintaining these important uses of our public lands and his proposed legislation does just that. These designations can provide for some of the best hunting and angling opportunities around by protecting habitat that is essential for healthy populations of fish and game. Any designation will help ensure that our children and grandchildren can enjoy the same hunting and angling traditions that we enjoy today.

What about mountain biking and horseback-riding?

In general, pedestrians and horses are allowed anywhere in a national monument or wilderness area. Mountain bikes are allowed on designated roads and trails in BLM and U.S. Forest Service national monuments, but are not allowed in wilderness areas. Sen. Udall's proposed bill does not change any of these current uses where they occur now.

What impact will this have on private property?

There are no private inholdings in the national monument. The proposal does not require the purchase of any private land and will not impact the valid existing rights of private landowners.

What about gold-panning?

Recreational gold-panning is allowed in the proposed national monument and wilderness. In fact, these designations can actually encourage gold-panning by helping keep waterways clean and undisturbed. A wilderness or national monument designation protects the rivers and lands that many gold prospectors have used for generations and will not have an impact on recreational gold-panning. There is no other active mining in the area.

What about commercial river outfitters?

The commercial river outfitters are a key part of the economy of the area. River use and quotas will continue as it does now and be managed by the AHRA. The plan is coordinated by the AHRA, which is a partnership between the Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife, BLM and the U.S. Forest Service. AHRA manages recreation resources and activities along 148 miles of the Arkansas River from its headwaters near Leadville down to the Pueblo Reservoir.

What about private recreation boaters and anglers?

Visitor access will continue exactly as it does now; most users will experience the new Browns Canyon National Monument by floating the Arkansas River. River use and quotas will continue as it does now and be managed by the Arkansas River Recreation Plan. The plan is coordinated by the AHRA.

What about other commercial activities, like Elk Mountain Ranch?

Commercial outfitting, such as group trail-riding, is specifically allowed in the proposed Browns Canyon National Monument.