

# 2022 BLM Instream Flow & Natural Lake Level Recommendations



Hack Lake, near Flattops Wilderness



# Streams in Water Division 4





# Van Boxel Creek - Location



**Lower  
Terminus:  
Confluence With  
Little Cimarron  
River**

**< Little Cimarron River**

**Upper Terminus:  
Headwaters**



# Van Boxel Creek



## Natural Environment:

- Fish species: Brook Trout
- Macros: mayfly, caddisfly, stonefly
- Riparian community: willow, alder, spruce



# Van Boxel Creek

**Existing ISF Right: 2.0 cfs Jan 1 to Dec 31**

**Preliminary Flow Rates For Increase:**  
**10.8 cfs Apr 15 to Jul 31 (8.8 cfs increase)**  
**4.0 cfs Aug 1 to Oct 31 (2.0 cfs increase)**  
**2.0 cfs Nov 1 to Apr 14 (no increase)**



# Van Boxel Creek



## Stakeholders:

- Gunnison County
- U.S. Forest Service
- Private landowners along the creek



# Van Boxel Creek



## Water Availability:

- Hydrology driven by snowmelt runoff and consistent groundwater discharge

## Water Rights:

- One diversion with absolute and conditional rights for hydropower production



# Streams & Lake in Water Division 5





# Derby Creek - Location





# Derby Creek



## Natural Environment:

- Fish species: Brown Trout, Rainbow Trout, Mottled Sculpin. Important Brown Trout spawning habitat.
- Macros: mayfly, caddisfly, golden stonefly.
- Riparian community: alder, dogwood, spruce, willow, hawthorne.



# Derby Creek

**Existing ISF Water Right:  
7.5 cfs Jan 1 to Dec 31**

**Proposed ISF Water Right:  
11.70 cfs Apr 1 to Nov 30 (4.2 cfs increase)  
7.50 cfs Dec 1 to Mar 31 (no increase)**





# Derby Creek



## Water Availability:

- Snowmelt driven hydrology
- No gage data available

## Water Rights:

- Large watershed with more than 150 cfs in water rights within the reach and upstream.



# Derby Creek

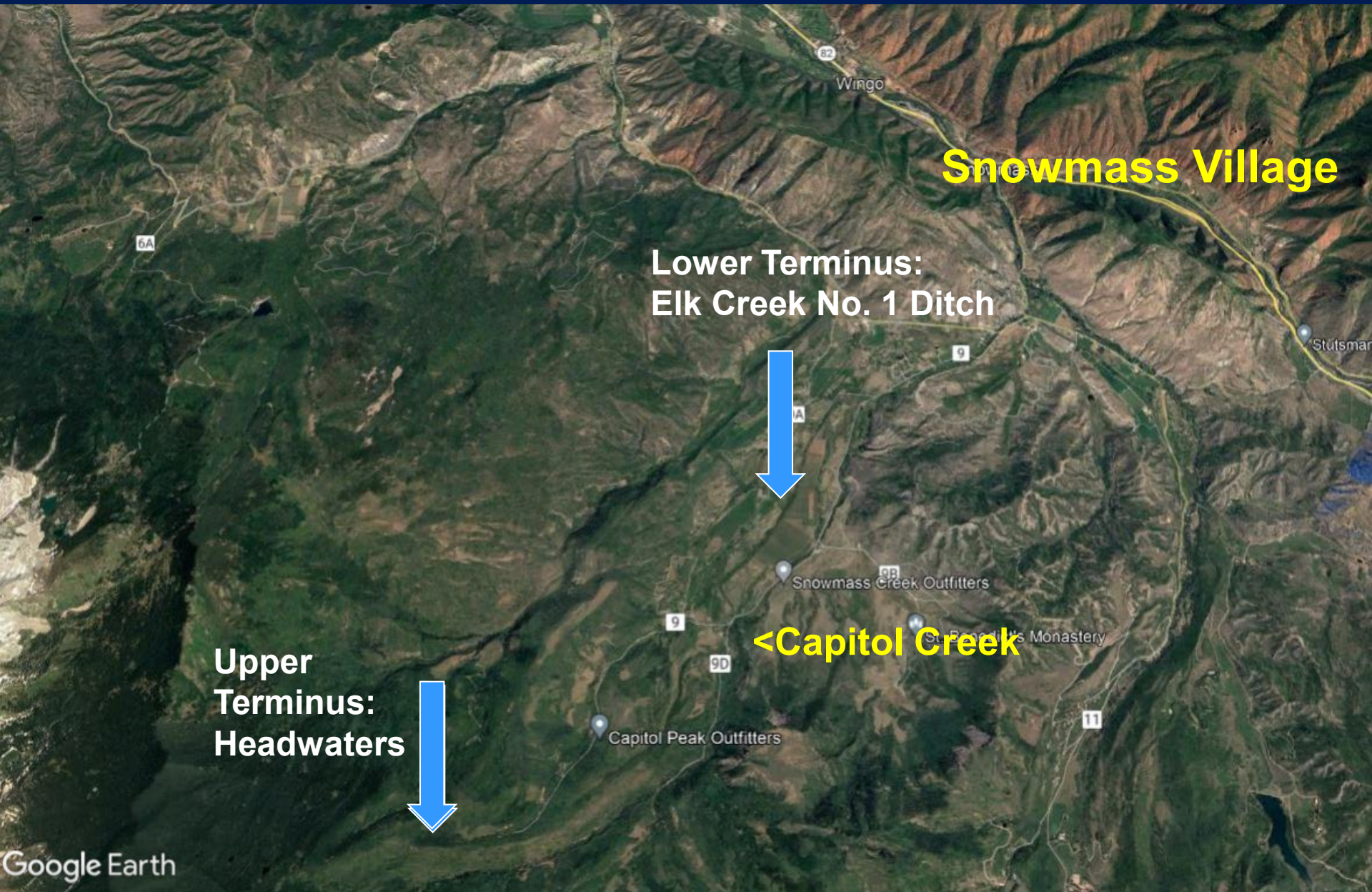


## Stakeholders:

- Water right owners and landowners along the creek
- Eagle County
- U.S. Forest Service



# Little Elk Creek: Location



**Snowmass Village**

**Lower Terminus:  
Elk Creek No. 1 Ditch**

**<Capitol Creek**

**Upper  
Terminus:  
Headwaters**



# Little Elk Creek



## Natural Environment:

- Fishery: brook trout
- Macros: mayfly, caddisfly, stonefly, beetles
- Riparian community: willows, spruce, alder
- Headwaters on forested lands; lower part of reach on meadow habitat



# Little Elk Creek



**Preliminary Flow Rates:**  
**1.2 cfs May 1 to Aug 31**  
**0.6 cfs Sep 1 to Oct 31**  
**0.3 cfs Nov 1 to Apr 30**



# Little Elk Creek

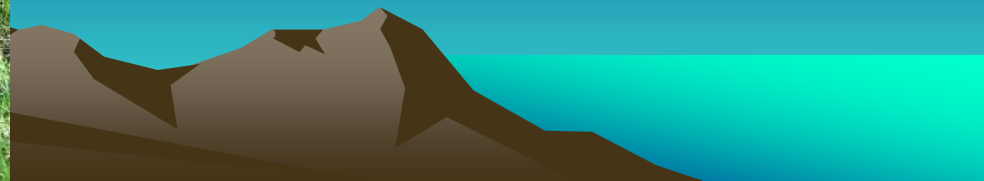


## Water Availability:

- Driven by snowmelt runoff
- Base flow driven by groundwater discharge
- No gage data available

## Water Rights:

- None





# Little Elk Creek



## Stakeholders:

- Land and water rights owners along the creek
- Pitkin County
- U.S. Forest Service



# Coon Creek: Location



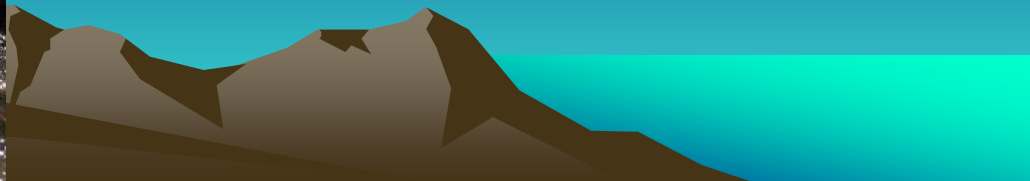


# Coon Creek



## Natural Environment:

- Fishery: Brook Trout, Cutthroat Trout
- Macros: Stonefly – indicates high water quality
- Riparian community: willows, alder, aspen





# Coon Creek



**Preliminary ISF Rates:**  
**1.80 cfs Apr 1 to Oct 31**  
**0.80 cfs Nov 1 to Mar 31**



# Coon Creek



## Water Availability:

- Driven by snowmelt runoff, but affected by ditch operations
- No gage data available
- Downstream ditches have good diversion records

## Water Rights:

- 1 water right within proposed reach
- 3 water rights located upstream



# Coon Creek

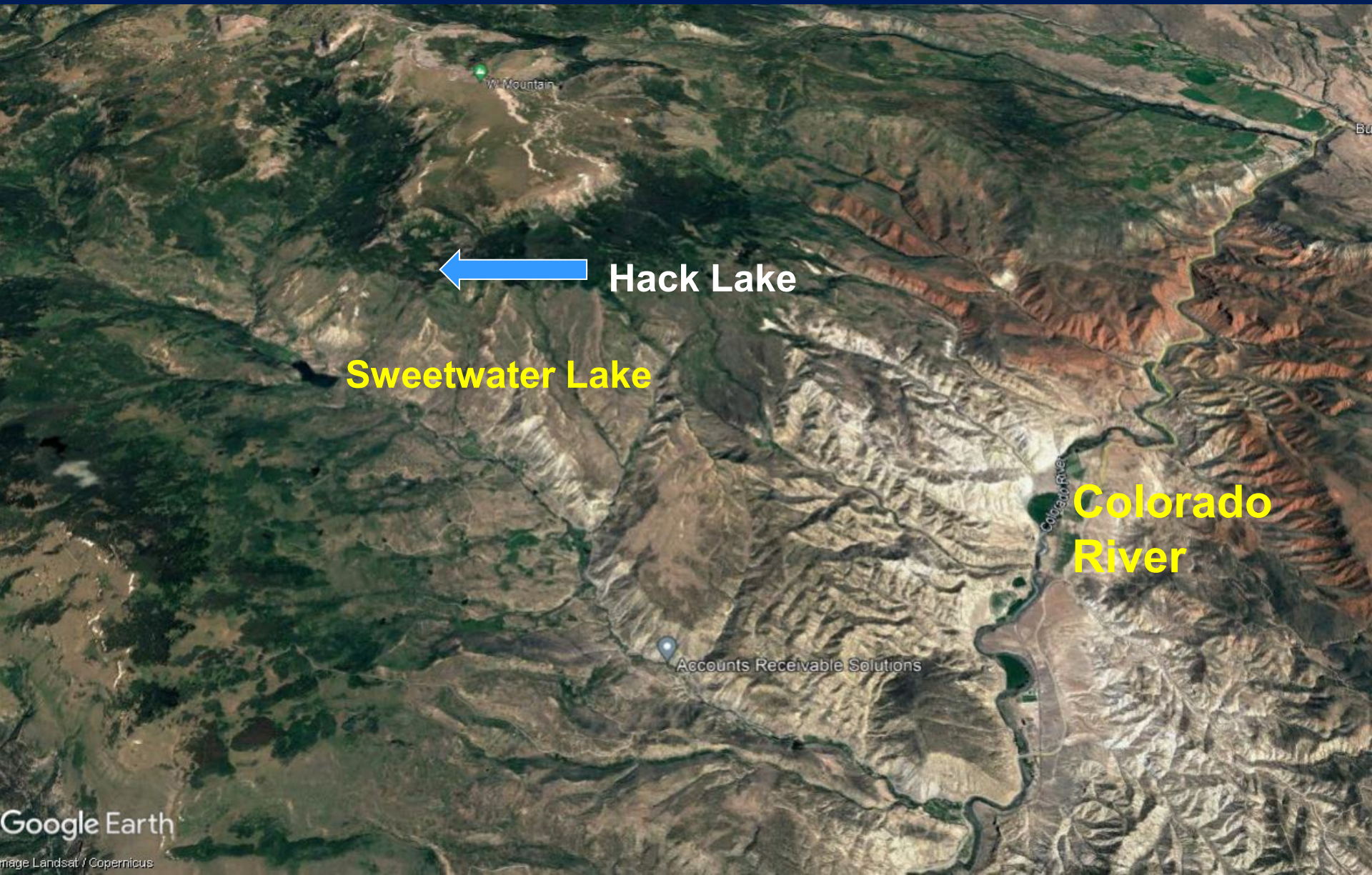


## Stakeholders:

- Land and water rights owners along the creek
- U.S. Forest Service
- Mesa County



# Hack Lake: Location





# Hack Lake



## Natural Environment:

- Fishery: Cutthroat Trout
- Macros: Mayfly, Caddisfly
- Riparian community:  
dogwood, willow, aspen,  
twinberry, sedges



# Hack Lake



**Preliminary Natural Lake Recommendation:  
Protect any quantity of water stored in the  
lake, up to and including full pool, which is  
at elevation 9,689.0 feet and 8.92 acre-feet of  
storage.**



# Hack Lake

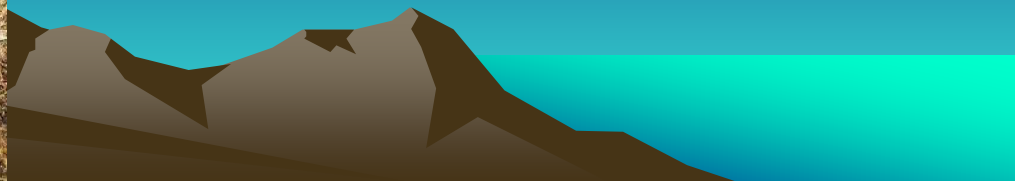


## Water Availability:

- Filled each spring with snowmelt runoff.
- Lake level maintained by large springs on north shore.
- Lake has substantial groundwater inflows and outflows due to volcanic geology.

## Water Rights:

- No surface or groundwater rights located upgradient.





# Hack Lake



## Stakeholders:

- Garfield County
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife



# Streams in Water Division 6





# Wheeler Creek - Location



← Lower Terminus:  
Akers Ditch

← Upper Terminus:  
Headwaters

Independence Mountain



# Wheeler Creek



## Natural Environment:

- Fishery: Brook Trout
- Riparian community: spruce, willow, alder
- Flows through densely forested landscapes and some open meadows



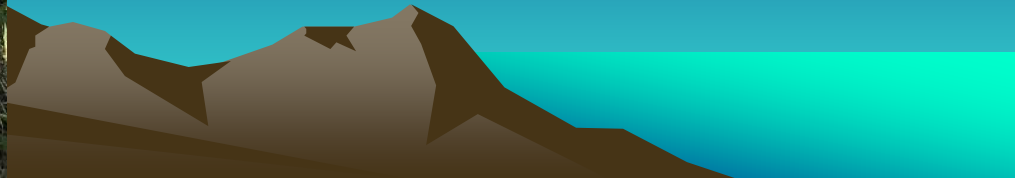
# Wheeler Creek



## Proposed ISF Rates:

1.0 cfs May 1 to Oct 31

0.8 cfs Nov 1 to Apr 30





# Wheeler Creek



## Water Availability:

- Headwater stream
- Snowmelt driven hydrograph
- No gage data available
- Stream flows through area burned in 2015.

## Water Rights:

- Upstream from all diversions

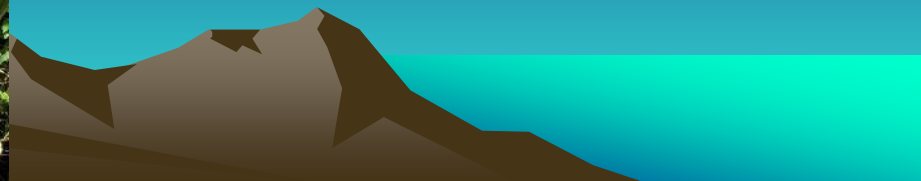


# Wheeler Creek



## Stakeholders:

- Jackson County
- Private land and water right owners along the creek





# Ways Gulch - Location





# Ways Gulch



## Natural Environment:

- Fishery: Mountain Suckers
- Riparian community: spruce, willow, alder
- Flows through dense willow habitat with numerous beaver ponds



# Ways Gulch



## Proposed ISF Rates:

1.2 cfs Apr 1  
to Aug 31

0.9 cfs Sep 1  
to Nov 30

0.6 cfs Dec 1  
to Mar 31



# Ways Gulch



## Water Availability:

- Headwaters stream
- Snowmelt driven hydrograph
- No gage data available

## Water Rights:

- Upstream from all diversions



# Ways Gulch



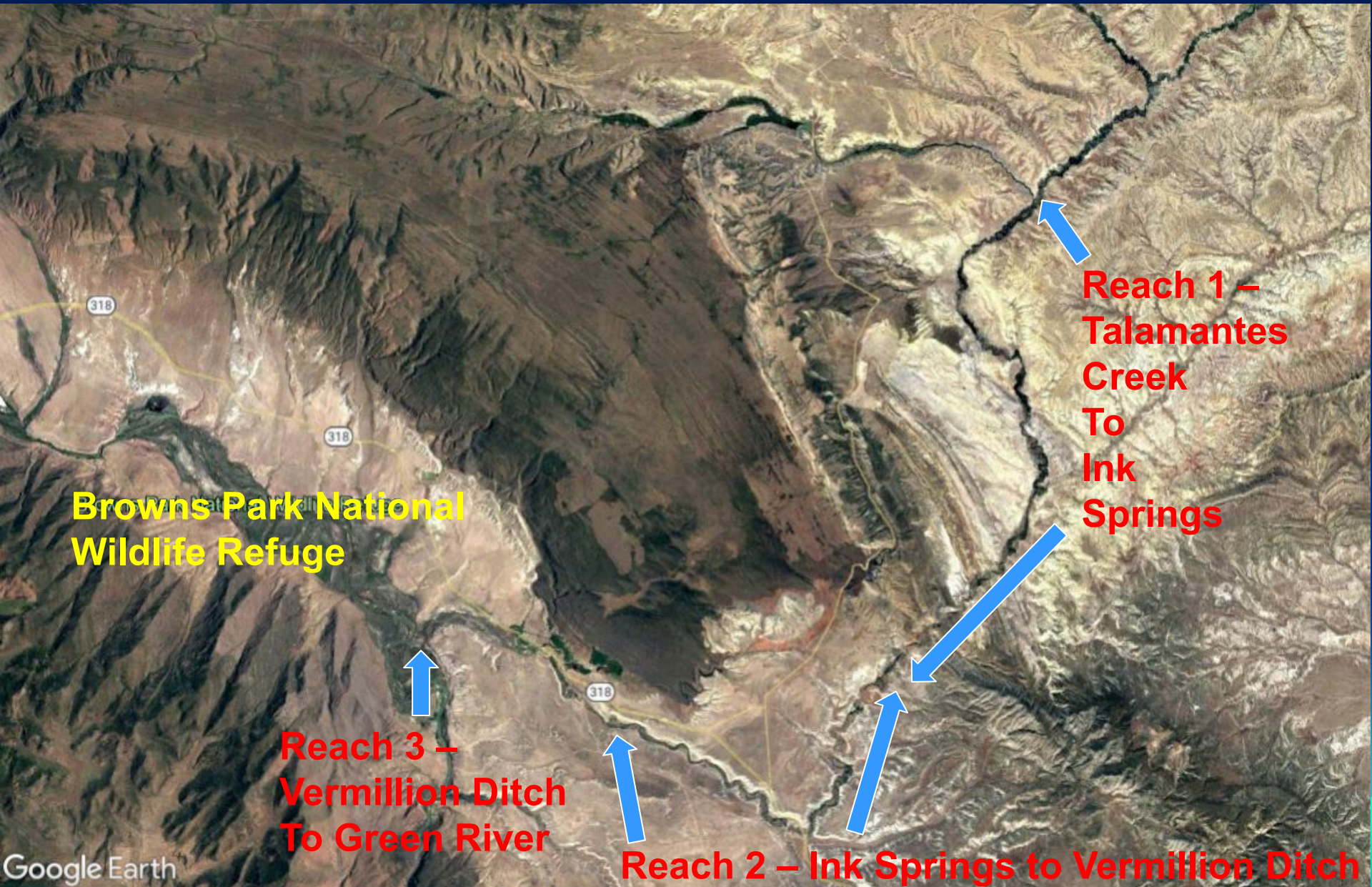
## Stakeholders:

- Routt County
- U.S. Forest Service
- Steamboat Lake State Park
- Private land and water right owners along the creek





# Vermillion Creek - Location





# Vermillion Creek



## Natural Environment:

### Fishery:

Reach 1 – Mountain Suckers

Reach 2 – Mottled Sculpin, Speckled Dace

Reach 3 – Brown Trout, White Sucker, Mountain Sucker, Speckled Dace, Creek Chub, Fathead Minnow, Red Shiner



# Vermillion Creek



## Natural Environment:

Native riparian species, including

- Cottonwood and Willow
- Introduced Riparian species including Russian Olive and Phragmites



# Vermillion Creek



## Proposed ISF Rates

### *Reach 1:*

1.2 cfs Apr 16 to Oct 15

0.9 cfs Oct 16 to Apr 15

### *Reach 2:*

2.0 cfs April 16 to Jul 31

1.6 cfs Aug 1 to Apr 15

### *Reach 3:*

2.20 cfs Oct 16 to April 15

(No summer recommendation  
- water availability.)



# Vermillion Creek



## Water Availability:

- Extremely arid environment
- Some snowmelt surge in April - May
- Base flow provided by springs
- Three historic gages provide useful flow information

## Water Rights:

- Reach 1 – None
- Reach 2 – Four ditches
- Reach 3 – One ditch



# Vermillion Creek



## Stakeholders:

- Moffat County
- Ink Springs Ranch
- Diamond Peak Ranch
- State Land Board
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



# Questions for BLM?

Contact Roy Smith at [r20smith@blm.gov](mailto:r20smith@blm.gov) or 303-239-3940

Big Dominguez Creek  
near Grand Junction

