



## OPEN SPACE & TRAILS DEPARTMENT

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### STAFF REPORT

**TO:** Board of County Commissioners  
**FROM:** Katherine King, Senior Resource Specialist  
**DATE:** March 24, 2020  
**FOR:** March 31, 2020 Consent Agenda  
**REQUEST:** Approval to exercise option agreement to acquire the Climax Mining Claim (Snake River)

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The OSAC made a unanimous recommendation at their September, 2019 meeting that the County pursue acquisition of the Climax mining claim (Snake River, see attached map).

Climax MS# 20017, Schedule No. 3009688, 10.10 acres. Owner: Thomas and Regina Meyers. Cost: \$25,000

The owners of the Climax mining claim reached out to Open Space staff to gauge the County's interest in acquiring the claim. It has been in their family for a number of years, and now that they are all getting older, they would like to sell it. Given its remote location above treeline on Teller Mountain, OSAC recommended the County acquire the claim for \$25,000. The BOCC gave their approval to move forward at that price shortly thereafter.

Since that time, the family has worked to consolidate ownership in the claim to be able to convey it to one person and minimize closing costs. Recently they finished the deed conveyances and recording, and signed the option agreement. Staff conducted a site visit in the fall of 2019 and does not believe there are any environmental concerns on the property.

Open Space Values: On the west flank of Teller Mountain near and above treeline, this backcountry mining claim contains high alpine habitat and is surrounded by other public lands. Open space values include:

- Extensions: The property is surrounded by USFS lands.
- Access/Recreational: The property currently only has rough 4WD road access. Development of the claim could result in a significant change in character to the area.
- View corridors: Development in this location above treeline would be visible throughout the Deer Creek basin.
- Unique lands: the Climax Claim contains mostly high alpine tundra.
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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION/REQUEST:** Staff concurs with OSAC's recommendation to pursue acquisition of the Climax Claim at a cost of \$25,000 to the Open Space fund. Staff requests BOCC approval to exercise the option agreement and move forward with closing in April.

Cc: Scott Vargo, Bentley Henderson, Jeff Huntley, Jim Curnutte