



CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER

Finance Office
Division of Real Estate

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MEMO

TO: City Council

RE: Axton Ranch Mountain Park Donation

DATE: February 11, 2021

Axton Ranch is a 488-acre mountain property located in Jefferson and Gilpin Counties owned by Starr Peak Holdings, a five member LLC consisting of three generations of the Axton Family. The property has been owned by the Axton Family since 1954 and the family has offered to donate 450 of the 488 acres to the City as a new Denver Mountain Park, the first since the donation of James Q. Newton Park in Conifer in 1939. In addition to the 450 acres, the donation also includes a Right of First Offer on an adjacent 38-acres that the Axton Family is retaining. The Right of First Offer provides the City with the first opportunity to acquire the 38-acres if the family ever decides to sell it.

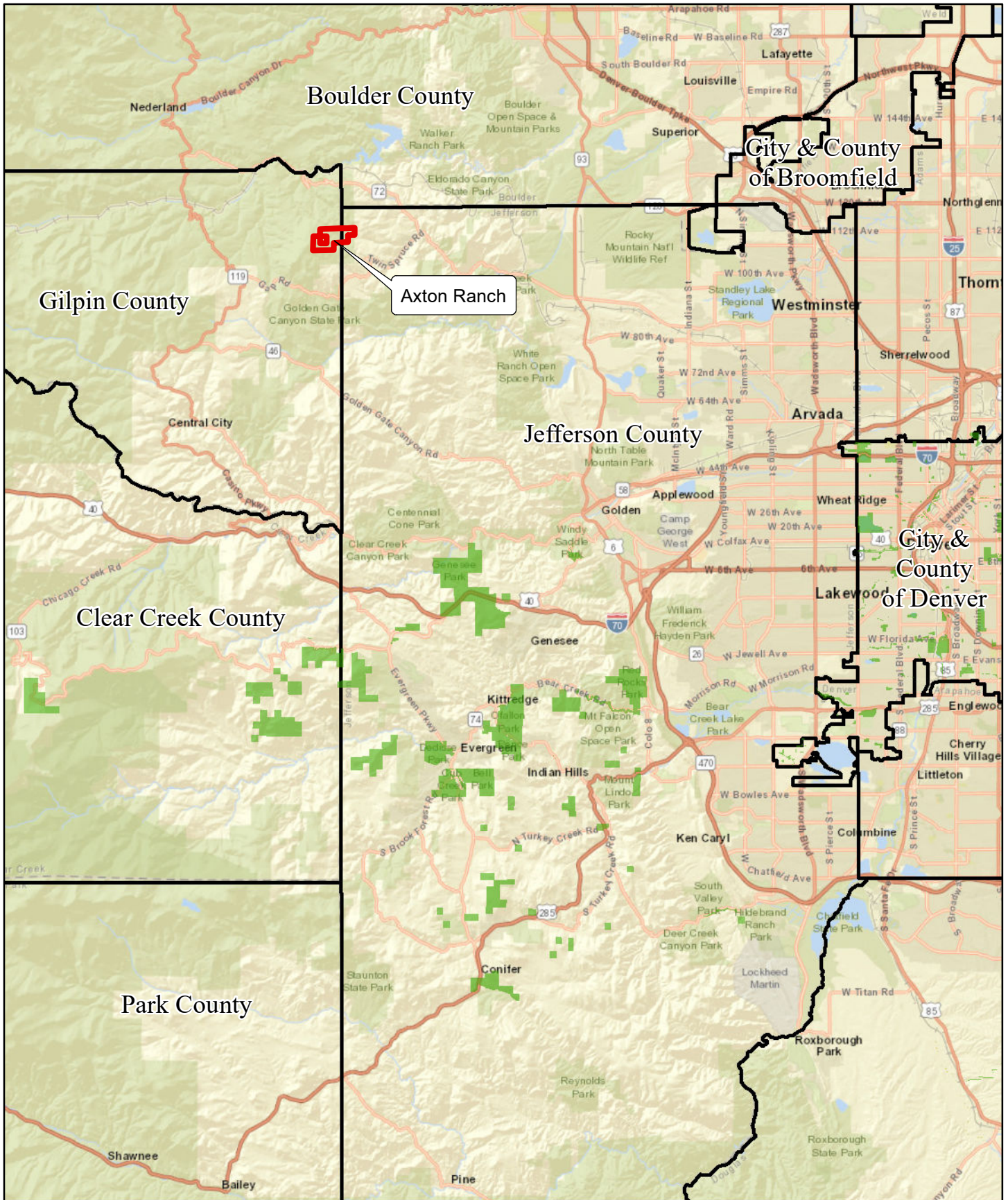
Less than an hour drive from Denver, Axton Ranch is adjacent to Roosevelt National Forest and near Arapahoe National Forest, Golden Gate Canyon State Park and Jefferson County Open Space—a contiguous assemblage of over 14,000 acres of public lands. The property consists of mixed conifer and aspen stands, meadows, ponds, Beaver Creek, and a historic trail constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps providing access to nearby Mount Thorodin and Starr Peak.

The acquisition of Axton Ranch continues the City's legacy of its Mountain Parks system and its legacy as a leader in regional open space protection. It also creates new opportunities to realize Denver Parks and Recreation's (DPR) 20-year visioning document, *Game Plan for a Healthy City*. Through equitable and inclusive recreational and educational programming, Axton Ranch will help DPR expand access and increase opportunities for Denver residents to experience nature and the outdoors. In addition to recreational and educational programming, DPR management will focus on forest health, wildlife habitat conservation, wildfire mitigation and watershed stewardship.

DPR intends to designate the property as Axton Ranch Mountain Park soon after closing. Axton Ranch will also be protected by deed restrictions agreed upon by the City and the Axton Family in the Donation Agreement. DPR will lead a future master planning effort to help determine the long-term vision for Axton Ranch Mountain Park with interim management focused on resource inventory and assessment as well as limited public use

and access. Management and maintenance costs will come out of DPR's Mountain Parks operating budget with future capital improvements funded by the Parks Legacy (2A) Fund.

Per the terms of the Donation Agreement between the City and the Axton Family, DPR has agreed to cover the family's transaction costs in order to facilitate the donation in the amount of \$80,000 funded by Capital Program: RV001 - Land Expansion Pre-Acquisition Costs; Fund: 36050 Parks Improvement Projects.

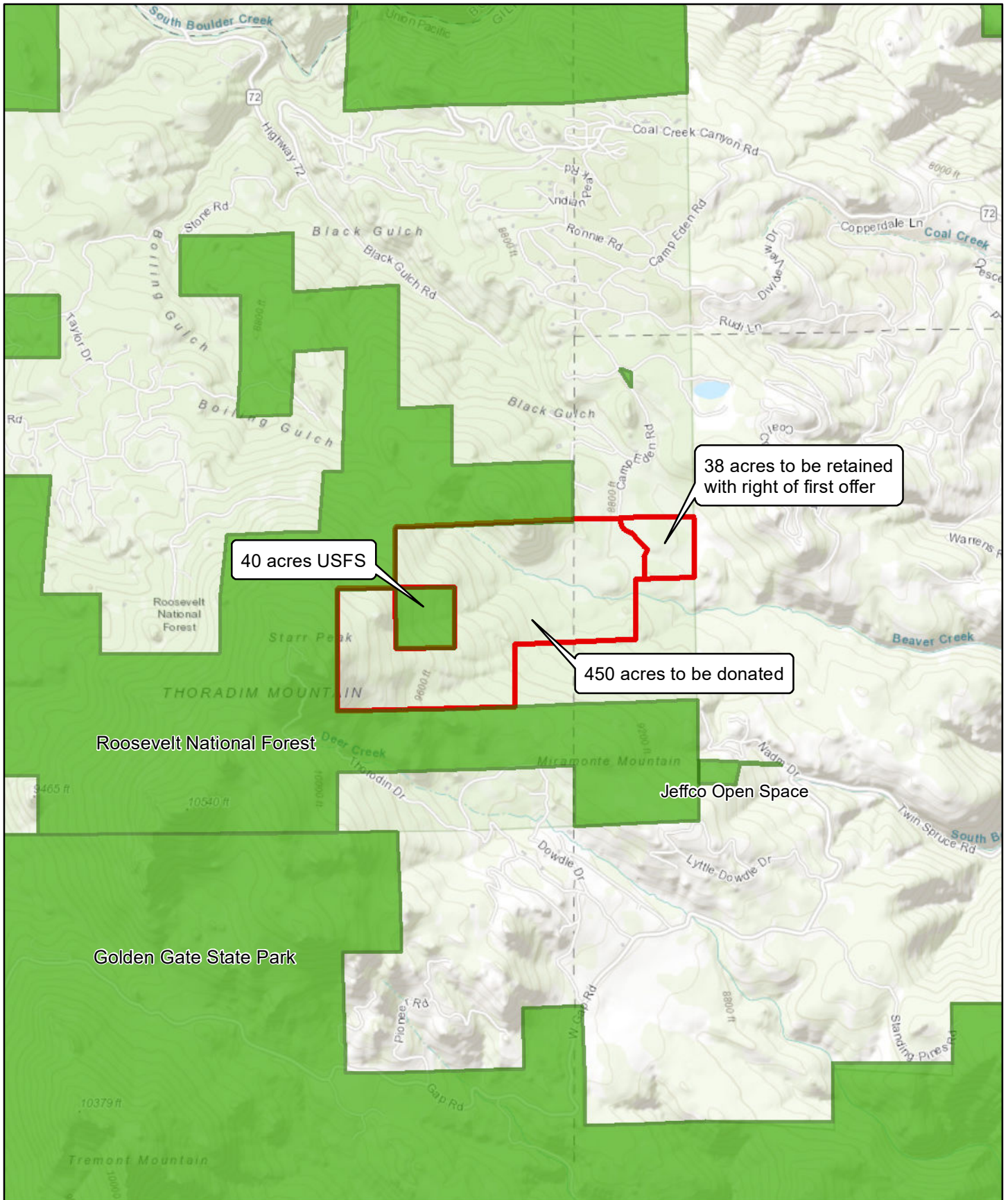


Axton Ranch

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General Location Map

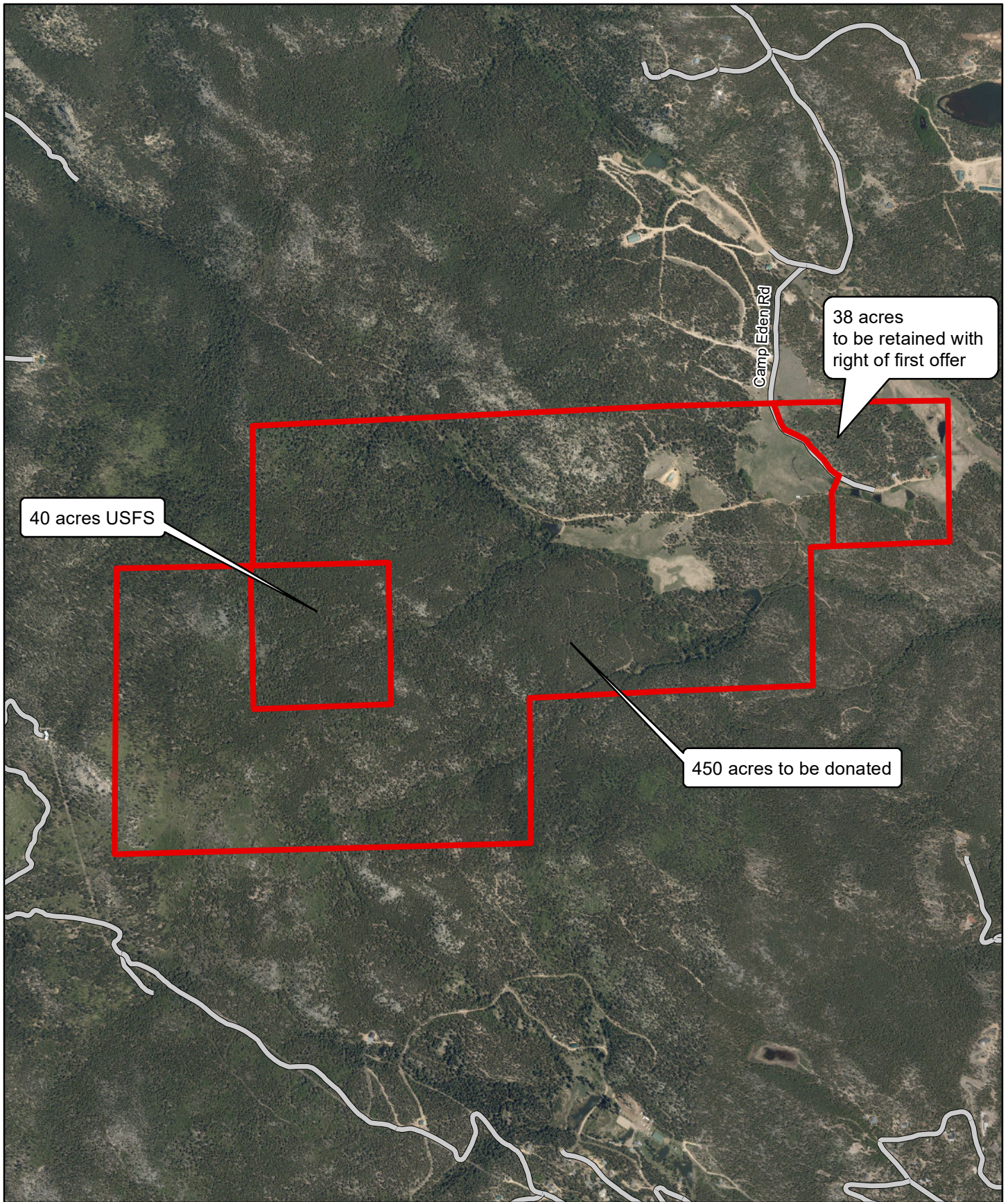




Axton Ranch

Site Map - Adjacent Open Space





Axton Ranch

Site Map - Aerial 2018

