

JOHNSON CREEK RANCH

Costilla and Las Animas Counties, Colorado
10,719 Deeded Acres, more or less



OFFERED EXCLUSIVELY BY:

Chas. S. Middleton and Son

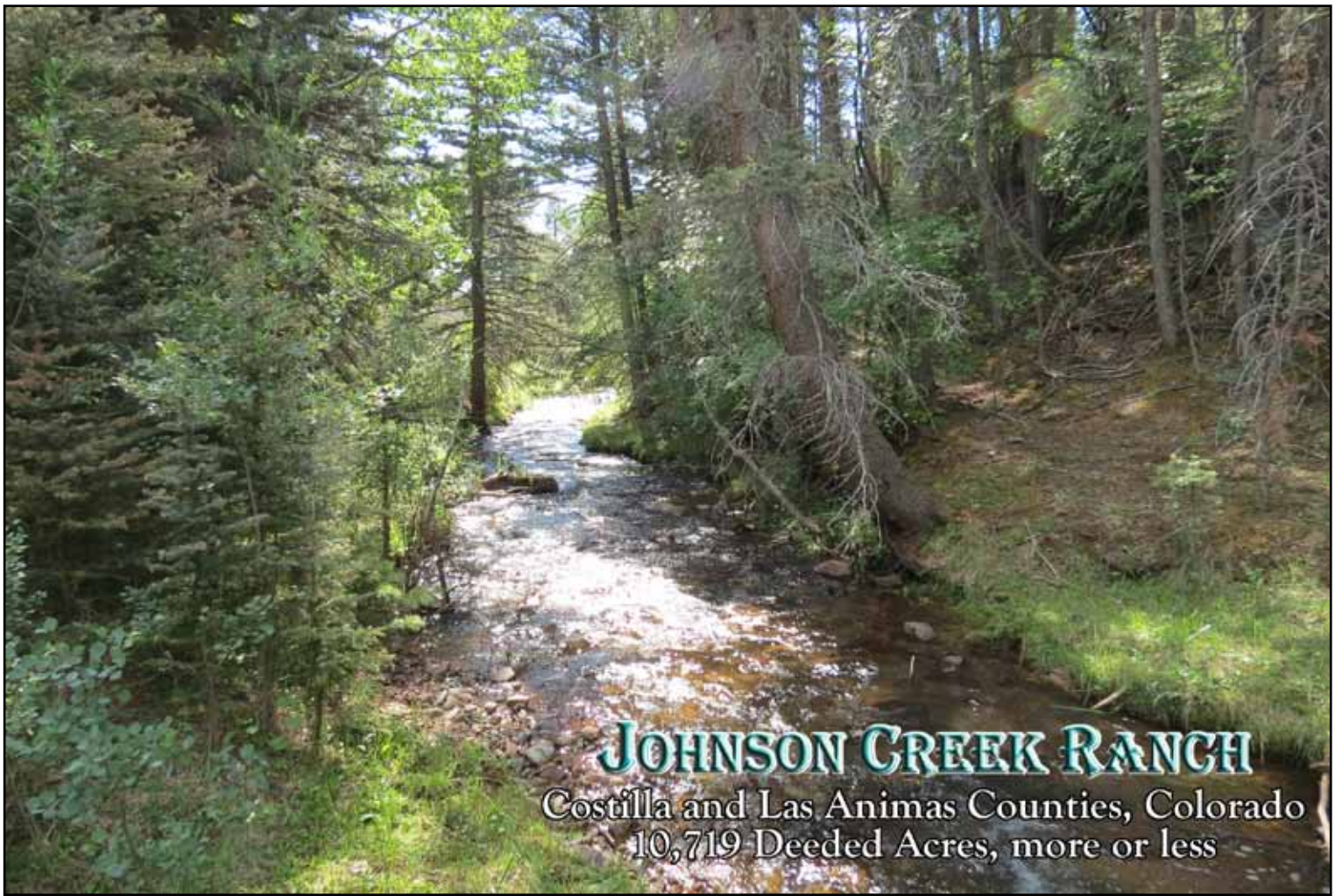
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We are honored and privileged to have secured an exclusive listing on one of the most scenic high mountain ranches in Southern Colorado. The Johnson Creek Ranch has been under the same ownership for nearly 30 years. This is truly a premier recreation/hunting property ideally located approximately 35 miles west of Trinidad, Colorado, south of the historic, quaint mountain community of Stonewall, Colorado. Stonewall is located on State Highway 12, “The Highway of Legends”, which is widely known for the scenic beauty throughout this highway corridor. According to the Trinidad Colorado Community Webpage, “The Scenic Highway of Legends is one of the first three scenic Highways in the State of Colorado and is also one of the most scenic, beautiful and historic drives in Colorado.” The community of Stonewall is aptly named for the rugged, raw faced stone mountain ledges situated above the town. This area of Colorado has a very distinct four season’s climate.



Subject to sale, withdrawal, or error.



Access to the ranch is by private locked gate at the end of a graded county road. There is no public access through or onto this pristine mountain hide-away. The Johnson Creek Ranch is located in a desirable highly sought after area of Colorado, where only very few ranches are ever offered for sale. This ranch and the surrounding area were once a part of the huge Maxwell Land Grant, which contained over 1,700,000 deeded acres. Several nearby ranches have been subdivided into smaller weekend retreats, but most of the neighboring ranches, which are also all deeded, range in size from 9,000 acres to 35,000 acres. The well known Vermejo Park Ranch, which comprises over 500,000 deeded acres, is located only a few miles south of the Johnson Creek Ranch. With all property in the area being deeded, and no federal government leases open to the public, this unique area of Colorado offers unmatched seclusion, scenery and recreational opportunities to the select number of large private ownerships. Several of the large nearby deeded ranches are owned and enjoyed by some of the nation's wealthiest families.



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The terrain of the Johnson Creek Ranch is best described as rugged mountains with steep forested mountain side slopes draining to numerous live water creek bottoms. Elevations at the ranch entrance, which is located on the east side of the property, are in the range of 8,500 feet. The property dramatically ascends to approximately 13,700 feet on the Purgatorie and Vermejo Peaks, both of which are positioned along the divide on the far west end of the ranch. These tremendous, snow capped, above tree line, peaks offer some of the highest elevations and most scenic beauty to be found throughout the Sangre de Cristo Mountain Range in Colorado. Views from the high mountain lookout points, without question, are breathtaking.





The lower portions of the Johnson Creek Ranch are fenced and crossfenced and livestock are normally run in this area of the ranch during the summer season. The higher elevations of the ranch are not fenced. These boundaries are determined by surveyed ridge lines, typically from peak to peak and/or peak to saddle, containing entire drainage areas. The Johnson Creek water shed is one complete drainage, entirely located on the property. Travel off of existing roads and trails can be sometimes limited due to the rugged terrain and down timber.





The timber canopy throughout the property is primarily comprised of fairly dense stands of pine, spruce, fir and aspen. A past timber cruise indicates a high potential for timber development on the property. Some harvesting of timber occurred 50-100 years ago, but more recently, the current ownership has selectively harvested timber over 10% – 15% of the ranch. Approximately 15 years ago, a timber cruise report estimated approximately 20 million board feet of commercial timber is still available on the Johnson Creek Ranch.

These harvested areas are now described as open parks with re-growth timber occurring, creating a wildlife mecca. Grass cover in these harvested areas has greatly improved due to increased sunlight exposure. New roads have been constructed to access the harvested timber areas, and this road network has opened up portions of the ranch that were previously not accessible.





The Johnson Creek Ranch is well improved. The main headquarters compound is located near the entrance of the ranch, surrounded by the confluence of Johnson Creek and several smaller flowing mountain streams and springs. These structural improvements are located in a beautiful creek bottom setting, surrounded by massive trees with a high alpine mountain backdrop. Improvements include an attractive two-story lodge home (4 bedroom – 3 bath), a manager's residence (3 bedroom – 3 bath), guest house (2 bedroom – 1 bath), barn/shop and horse shed. All improvements are very well maintained. Johnson Creek, which offers great trout fishing is only a few paces from the lodge.



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Down the road from the main headquarters is the “Mill House”, which was once the site of an operating saw mill. After this saw mill was abandoned, the structure was renovated and now approximately one-half of the building is a Spanish style residence containing three bedrooms and three baths. The other half of the structure is equally partitioned into a storage area and an area that has been used for horse stalls.



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The headquarters area of the Johnson Creek Ranch is located in the lower elevations of the ranch, and this portion of the property is accessible year round by county maintained road. Because of the rugged terrain and abundance of winter snowfall, use of much of the remaining portion of the property can be limited from December through February. During winter months snowfall is generally substantial, typically 8 feet to 12 feet per year. Average precipitation and snowfall records were obtained from nearby Stonewall, Colorado, which has an elevation of 7,711 feet, several thousand feet below the average elevation on the Johnson Creek Ranch. Average annual precipitation at Stonewall is over 20 inches and annual snowfall averages 79.7 inches (nearly 7 feet). Precipitation increases with elevation, which would strongly suggest that average precipitation on the Johnson Creek Ranch exceeds historic records at Stonewall.

During the winter months the many trails and roads on the Johnson Creek Ranch offer a wonderful opportunity for snowmobiling and other winter outdoor activities.





Water is in abundance on the property. Johnson Creek, which is the primary drainage through the ranch, heads near the far west end of the property at an elevation of approximately 13,500 feet. This crystal clear live water creek runs through the entirety of the ranch, exiting at the east boundary near the ranch headquarters, where the creek is renamed the South Fork of the Purgatoire River. High mountain springs, snow melt and numerous tributary creeks, including North Johnson Creek and Sierra Blanca Creek all flow into the Johnson Creek drainage. In addition to the spectacular live water features on the property, there are numerous mountain ponds, and several water wells serve the structural improvements. Spring snow melt will raise the creek levels, sometimes making creek crossing roads impassible for short periods.





Wildlife abounds on the Johnson Creek Ranch. A recent wildlife study concluded that elk are in abundance and herd size ranges from 620 animals to over 2,000 head depending on time of year and weather conditions. Other wildlife resources include mule deer, mountain lion, bear, Rocky Mountain sheep, turkey, grouse and bobcat. Bald and Golden Eagles are also commonly sighted. Native Brookie Trout are common in Johnson Creek and other major drainages.



The Johnson Creek Ranch is best described as a trophy/legacy ranch, and anyone would be proud to own and enjoy this outstanding property. The current long-term owner of the ranch does not allow commercial hunting on the property and only family members and a few select friends have had the opportunity to hunt this magnificent property. During the current ownership, several harvested elk have scored in the 380's Boone & Crockett.





In an effort to conserve and protect the Johnson Creek Ranch, two Conservation Easements have been placed on portions of the ranch. One easement contains 4,159 acres, with the easement holder being the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Inc. The second easement contains 641.68 acres. This easement is held by the Division of Wildlife and Wildlife Commission. Both easements are designed to preserve and protect wildlife and the natural beauty of the area. In order to protect and preserve the property, these easements prohibit subdivision, but most all other normal activities are allowed, such as hunting, fishing, timber harvesting, mineral development, etc. Copies of both easements are available upon request. Without easements in place, such as the easements on this ranch, much of this area of Colorado would have likely been subdivided into 35 acre tracts. Many large ranches in this vicinity have placed similar conservation easements on their properties to protect the area from further development and to maintain and enhance a safe haven for wildlife.





The ranch has water rights out of two ditches located in the lower meadow area below the headquarters.

The Johnson Creek Ranch truly exemplifies the best of the best. This unique offering is now available at a price of \$29,960,000, or \$2,795 per acre. Included in the price are all wind generation rights, timber rights, water rights, and most importantly 100% of the mineral rights. Reportedly, there are several early day silver mines located in remote areas of the ranch, and a considerable amount of CO2 gas production is located east and south of the ranch. Substantial coal reserves are found in the general area. A gold mine is located on the western side of the mountain range, near the community of San Luis, Colorado.



With much of the high mountain country throughout the western states being owned by the US Forest Service and open to public use, the opportunity to buy a 100% all deeded, high mountain ranch only rarely comes around. The Johnson Creek Ranch offers privacy, scenery, hunting and fishing, not typically found in today's market. This ranch will make you proud and deserves your consideration.

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