

# THE ASPEN TIMES

## Ranch sells for \$47 million

**By Aspen Times Staff**

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A 949-acre ranch south of Carbondale has sold for \$47 million, one of the largest and most expensive land deals in Pitkin County history.

The deal took roughly eight years to complete and includes hundreds of acres of open space, according to local real estate agent Joshua Saslove, who represented the sellers, Richard and Debbie Jelinek.

The Crystal Island Ranch is bordered by the Crystal River, Prince Creek and Thomas Creek, Saslove said, and sits near the base of Mount Sopris. The U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management administer much of the land nearby.

"The property abuts very large tracts of BLM land, and the only modern development on the property is a house and barn, a guest house and caretaker's quarters," said Saslove, a regional affiliate for Christie's auction house. "One of the messages we want people to hear is that the former owners are really thankful to everyone who participated in this unique land-use plan."

The complex deal involved the Pitkin County Open Space and Trails program, the Conservation Fund, the Jelineks and the Aspen Valley Land Trust. The ranch once encompassed roughly 1,700 acres, but the land has been divided several ways, with some pieces sold to conservation organizations and others preserved with conservation easements. Overall, some 1,400 contiguous acres have been protected.

The name of the buyer was not available Thursday afternoon, and Saslove would not reveal any names, saying the buyer wished to remain anonymous.

The marketing materials for the Crystal Island Ranch described it as "the epitome of an idyllic mountain escape," with a private lake, boat docks, a horse barn, party pavilion, lake cabins, riding arena and 10 miles of trails. The property includes a 12,000-square-foot home. For the \$47 million purchase price, the new owner will also be able to build four more homes on the property.

Pitkin County Open Space and Trails and the Aspen Valley Land Trust placed conservation easements on several hundred acres of the ranch last summer. The nationwide Conservation Fund purchased other pieces of the property and then conveyed them to Pitkin County, including one 87-acre parcel with nearly two and a half miles of Crystal River frontage.

The overall cost to the Pitkin County Open Space and Trails program was \$4.375 million.

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