

# **MCELROY RANCH**

Kremmling, Grand County, Colorado



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664 Acres	\$5,900,000
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Located at the confluence of the Colorado River, Blue River, and Muddy Creek, the McElroy Ranch provides a rare opportunity of owning over 4 ½ miles of rivers and creeks and pristine beauty within 2 hours of Denver.

Purchasing the McElroy Ranch includes pre-Colorado River compact water rights, authentic Colorado recreation, and a piece of Kremmling’s history; it also continues the legacy of preserving Colorado’s wild environment.

Five generations of McElroys have cared for and worked the land since the early 1920s. Now, for the first time in nearly 100 years, the 664-acre ranch in Kremmling, Colorado is available for purchase.

If you’re looking for an authentic Colorado experience characterized by grassy meadows and vast rivers teeming with trout and a convenient location to the Denver Metro area, the McElroy Ranch may be what you have been looking for.



# HISTORY

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Henry McElroy was a true Western pioneer. In 1895, the adventurous 18-year-old left his family's small farm near Benton, Wisconsin, with a glimmer in his eye and a dream to strike it rich during the gold rush.

He didn't have a dime to his name, so he worked with his uncle, Sam. The pair had driven a freight wagon from Wisconsin filled with enough food to make it through one summer in Kremmling. Henry settled into the early Western lifestyle, and by 1901 he was working for a homesteader and dairy rancher on Muddy Creek.

Henry met his wife, Lillie Sevier, when she waited on him at her father's old Central Hotel in Kremmling. In true Wild West form, Henry's boss said he could borrow the ranch's team of wild mares — if Henry could catch them — to pull the wagon to usher his fiancée to Hot Sulphur Springs, where they got married. The snorting mares were so wild, Lillie had to nearly run to catch the wagon. It was just the first of many exciting adventures the couple, and their descendants would experience in the vast, mountainous ranch lands of Colorado.

In 1908, Henry borrowed money from his father to build a two-story log livery stable, where he kept over 100 horses. The building is now part of the Kremmling Heritage Park.

A year later, Henry bought a ranch to grow hay for his horses. He used his Belgian horses to deliver mail from Kremmling to Dillon for 10 years in a sled built like a small pickup, with a wooden cab and a bed in the back.

Since the couple had five children, they developed the first Middle Park Fair in 1912 by building a racetrack on their ranch. The McElroys continued to acquire land and began to raise cattle. In fact, part of the McElroy Ranch was one of the first pieces of land sold by the State of Colorado to a private entity, and the McElroys have been the only family to own that part of the ranch.

Ironically, Henry didn't make his fortune mining. Though he dug a hole into Junction Butte to mine for copper one summer, it soon collapsed. No one was hurt, but Henry took it as a sign to stick with





ranching cattle and running the livery stable. His first brand, Seven Two Bar, was granted in 1904. By raising beef and milk cattle, the family filled an essential gap in feeding hungry miners who pursued their own riches.

For nearly a century, the working ranch has been a cow-calf operation. To this day, it maintains its picturesque attributes of baby calves running around as mamas graze in the open valley, punctuated by stunning views of the Gore Range. The ranch is so iconic that photographer John Fielder included the ranch in his second edition of "Colorado, 1870-2000." He stood in the same location W.H. Jackson stood in 1874 when he photographed the McElroy Ranch.

The McElroy family has shaped Kremmling from the start. About half of the homes in Kremmling are situated on land the McElroys used to own. Henry helped establish the first municipal water systems, served on the town council from 1904 to 1929, and was the county assessor from 1908 to 1912. He donated portions of his land to the town for the Kremmling Cemetery, police and fire stations, schools, and the airport, which is named in his honor as McElroy Field. He sold the land he built the racetrack on to the county for less than half its market value, and he helped build the bleachers at the Grand County Fair and Rodeo.

Henry also pulled off a historically significant feat: He rerouted the Colorado River at its junction with the Blue River in the early days. The Colorado River, which now joins the Blue River on the southern reaches of the ranch, formerly took a sharp turn north and joined Muddy Creek near the town of Kremmling. Henry, along with some help from friends and family members, dredged the new river channel to go west and connect to the Blue River and Muddy Creek at its current location instead of through the ranch and through valuable hay ground in order to increase hay productivity. As a result, he added many more acres to grow hay, and thus, support more cows.

Joe McElroy, the grandfather of the current ranch owners, was just as bold and committed to ranching as his parents. He won the adoration of his wife, Isabel, when she first rented a horse from the McElroys. The horse was a little too lively for Isabel, so Joe chased it down as she rode and "saved her life, just like in the Old West." The couple married in 1931.



## CONSERVATION

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In 2014, the McElroys' love of the land and commitment to the environment led them to place a conservation easement on the land, with the help of the Colorado Headwaters Land Trust. The purpose of the easement was to forever conserve the scenic, agricultural, open space, wetlands, water, wildlife habitat, and biodiversity values of the ranch.

The easement allows for owners to subdivide the East ranch from the West ranch and also has several building envelopes for the next owner/owners to build as many as 3 homes.

## WILDLIFE AND RECREATION

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The next owners of the McElroy Ranch will play an important role in conserving Colorado's pristine rivers, land, and wildlife — all while fully enjoying the recreation of its 664 acres.

The confluence of the Colorado River, Blue River, and Muddy Creek is located on the ranch. Almost 3 miles of the Colorado River winds through the land, which is an extremely rare find. Colorado Parks and Wildlife categorizes this stretch of the Colorado River as a "High-Quality Trout Fishery for Brown and Rainbow Trout."

In addition to the Colorado River, more than 1 ½ miles of Muddy Creek flows through the ranch. The Colorado River and Muddy Creek both provide important habitats for the Bluehead Sucker, Flannel Mouth Sucker, and Round Tail Chub, which are all Colorado-listed Species of Special Concern.

The waters of the Colorado and Muddy Creek offer an exceptional opportunity for angling, as well as for enhancing the two native fisheries.

The two rivers and their extensive riparian areas also provide excellent habitats for waterfowl. The ranch is home to Mallard, Gadwall, Widgeon, Canvas Back, and Teal Ducks, as well as Canadian Geese and the Sand Hill Crane during the spring, summer, and fall waterfowl season. The ranch is also home to populations of Mule Deer, White-tail Deer, and Colorado's Shiras Moose and is a late-fall and winter range for Rocky Mountain Elk.



## OPERATIONS

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Five generations of McElroys have worked the ranch as a cow-calf and haying operation. In the 1920s, Henry McElroy was one of the first ranchers in Middle Park to bring Aberdeen Angus Cattle to the area at a time when the predominant breed was commercial grade Herefords.

Today the ranch runs 120-130 head of Angus and Angus Cross cattle and harvests an average of 300 tons of hay.

The ranch currently has an income-producing, 5-year agricultural lease in place with the Sammons/McElroy family, who are interested in maintaining that lease for the foreseeable future. Unlike most ranch acquisitions, this allows the new owner to benefit from five generations of knowledge and to own the ranch without the day-to-day burdens that can sometimes accompany ranch ownership. The current operators will continue to work the ranch, raising beef cattle and harvesting hay. They also will entertain caretaking responsibilities for the next owner.

# WATER RIGHTS AND RESOURCES

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McElroy Ranch's water rights will help ensure the endangered headwaters of the Colorado River are conserved and protected. Many of the ranch's water rights were granted before the Colorado River Compact of 1922. A list of the ranch's water rights will be supplied to qualified buyers upon request.



## IMPROVEMENTS

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The McElroy Ranch consists of the East and West parcels, which are allowed to be subdivided, within the conservation easement. This unusual flexibility and freedom allow for separate ownership between the two parcels.

The West Parcel consists of approximately 551 acres with nearly 2 miles of the Colorado River flowing east to west and 1 ½ miles of Muddy Creek flowing north to south. The West Parcel has the ability to build 2 homes on 2 of the 3 designated building sites.

The East Parcel contains approximately 114 acres of land and approximately 1 mile of the Colorado River, flowing east to west with 2 potential building areas to choose from.

Both parcels offer exceptional scenic and agricultural open space and excellent fishing, with vistas of the Colorado River landscape as it leads into Gore Canyon.

# LOCATION

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Throughout the last century, the town of Kremmling has grown up just north of the McElroy Ranch. The ranch sits adjacent to extensive, undeveloped land, which provides quality wildlife habitat, Bureau of Land Management acreage, and large private ranches, some of which are conserved.

Kremmling maintains its authentic Colorado small-town charm, with wildlife vastly outnumbering the town's population of approximately 1,500. It's a place where the pace is just a little slower, and neighbors are willing to lend a hand.

Known as the Sportsman's Paradise of Colorado, Kremmling is surrounded by miles and miles of unspoiled Western wilderness. Thousands of pristinely-conserved acres of land provide some of the best outdoor recreation in the state, from fishing and ATVing to hiking and cross-country skiing.

The Colorado River and Blue River both have been rated Gold Medal water, making fishing in the area second to none. The rivers also support kayaking and rafting. In addition to Kremmling's two major rivers and Muddy Creek, the area has three reservoirs for boating and fishing, surrounded by rolling green mountains and jagged snow-capped peaks. Fossil Ridge still holds records of the past through fossils of ammonites.

Hundreds of miles of ATV and OHV trails also make Kremmling the Motorsport Capital of Grand County. Trails for all levels stretch across the scenic land, characterized by rivers and the stunning Wolford and Red mountains.

After an exhilarating day outdoors, restaurants and shops await downtown. Kremmling's private airport makes it convenient to fly directly to your ranch. The town also has a new hospital finished in 2022.

Kremmling is located equidistant (about 50 miles) between the world-class ski and summer resorts of Steamboat Springs and Breckenridge. It's even closer to Summit County's year-round festivals, concerts, and outdoor recreation. Tucked within Colorado's mountain region, Kremmling is only about 2 hours from all the culture Denver has to offer.

# MINERAL RIGHTS

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All mineral rights owned by sellers will convey with the sale of the ranch.

# SUMMARY

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 Boundary

**CRC**  
**COLORADO RANCH**  

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**C O M P A N Y**

[ColoradoRanchCompany.com](http://ColoradoRanchCompany.com)

970.724.5900

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