

**Forecast**  
Thunderstorms likely from noon to midnight.  
H 78 L 57

**Saturday county meeting draws OHV discussion**

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**Write-in candidates deadline set for July 17**

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# THE MOUNTAIN MAIL

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## Governor lifts fire ban; local bans remain in effect

by Joe Stone  
Mail News Editor

While Gov. John Hickenlooper lifted a statewide fire ban Sunday, all local fire bans remain in effect.

Salida, Buena Vista, Poncha Springs, Chaffee and Fremont counties, the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management continue to ban all outdoor fires, including charcoal and fireworks.

In lifting the statewide ban, Hickenlooper cited the abatement of extreme fire conditions following recent rainfall.

"Mother Nature is finally giving us some relief," he said. "Even though the 2012 wildfire season is far from over... we believe conditions are such that local authorities and federal land managers ought to resume control over fire bans in their jurisdictions."

"Many counties have fire bans in place that will not change as a result of this executive order."

Hickenlooper also cited short- and long-term weather

forecasts predicting cooler and wetter weather.

According to a press release from the governor's office, more than 60 counties are forecast to move to moderate or low fire danger over the next 7 days.

Nonetheless, the wildfire season will continue for a few months, and a few counties continue to experience high fire danger.

Existing major fires in Colorado are well contained, and no new fires are being monitored or supported by the Colorado Office of Emergency Management.

The High Park Fire is 100-percent contained, Waldo Canyon Fire is 98-percent contained, the Weber Fire is 90-percent contained, and the Little Sand Fire is 40-percent contained.

"We will continue to monitor the fire danger across the state and re-enact the statewide ban if necessary as conditions change," Hickenlooper said.



Photos by Cailey McDermott  
Sen. Michael Bennett (D-Colo.), second from right, listens to the history of the Hutchinson Ranch told by Art Hutchinson, far right, Friday. Bennett, his wife, Susan, and their three daughters toured the ranch. With Bennett and Hutchinson were, from left, Andrew Mackie, executive director of Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas, and Bennett's daughters Halina and Caroline.

## Sen. Michael Bennett visits Hutchinson Homestead Ranch

by Cailey McDermott  
Mail Staff Writer

Sen. Michael Bennett (D-Colo.), his family and Chaffee County commissioners toured Hutchinson Homestead Ranch and Learning Center between Poncha Springs and Salida Friday.

Bennett said he made the visit in support of his "dedication to farmlands and agriculture."

Art Hutchinson started the tour with some historical background, noting the homestead was the first frame house built south of Georgetown.

Of the total 640 acres, the working cattle ranch has achieved conservation easements for 408 acres.

Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas holds 185 acres and the Colorado Cattleman's Agricultural Land Trust holds 223 acres.

Abby Hutchinson said she runs the ranch, and the conservation easements will allow the ranch to be handed down to future generations.

"It means a lot to have this land, and now we know it can't be taken away," Abby said.  
Katy Grether, project man-

## ROAR, OTR comment on judge's ruling

by Cailey McDermott  
Mail Staff Writer

The ruling on the Rags Over the Arkansas River lawsuit is more significant than a hold, Joan Anzelmo, ROAR spokesperson, said Friday.

The judge did not dismiss the case, and "it puts a pause on the 'Over the River' project," Anzelmo said in reaction to Senior U.S. District Judge John Kane's decision to place a hold on the lawsuit Thursday.

The ROAR lawsuit seeks to block artist Christo's large-scale hanging art project between Cañon City and Salida.

The Bureau of Land Management asked Kane to throw out the ROAR lawsuit in May because of a separate appeal pending within the Interior Department.

Kane said Thursday it is prudent for him not to consider the merits of the law-

suit until the administrative appeal process is done.

Steve Coffin, OTR spokesperson, said Friday, "This is another step in the legal process. We weren't surprised at the judge's ruling. The legal process will continue to go on."

Coffin said he doesn't "100 percent" believe the hold ruling means OTR can't move forward.

"I don't know if we can move forward. Typically you need an injunction for that, and we don't have one," he said.

Keith Berger, BLM field manager, said he couldn't comment because he hadn't reviewed the judge's ruling.

Christo's "Over the River" temporary work of art will involve suspending 5.9 miles of silvery, luminous fabric panels above the Arkansas River in eight segments of a 42-mile stretch between Salida and Cañon City. Targeted display date is August 2015.



Anne Bennett, daughter of Sen. Michael Bennett, listens to Katy Grether, project manager, explain the history of the Hutchinson Ranch Homestead Friday. Grether said some of the original wallpaper will be recreated for the ongoing restoration of the home.

ager with Salida-area Parks Open-space & Trails, said the homestead is in its third phase of restoration. The outside is complete but the inside still needs work.

She told Bennett a visitors center will be built on site, with opening scheduled for next summer.  
Jen Visitation, executive

director of Guidestone, said their Farmhands summer camp allows children to experience life on the Hutchinson Ranch.

She said camps this summer are already full.

"Even if we held camps all summer, we still couldn't meet the demand. Kids want to play on the ranch," Visitation said.

She also explained the garden-to-cafeteria project that began this summer on Holman Avenue.

Bennett said, "That's tremendous. I hear (similar projects) are happening across the state."

Commissioner Frank Holman said, "We're happy to support (the ranch) because we know how crucial agriculture is to the county."

He also said grazing permits on public lands are critical and need to remain.

Abby agreed, saying the majority of ranchers, herself included, couldn't afford to feed their cattle without public grazing.

With the dry conditions this year, ranchers are already feeling the pressure because everyone is looking for pasture, she said.