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For Immediate Release

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### **Toll Canyon Preservation Takes Another Step Forward**

Today, Utah Open Lands exercised its option on Toll Canyon. With an initial down payment of \$2,000,000 from Snyderville Basin Recreation District Open Space bond funds, the Toll Canyon land transferred from REIH to Utah Open Lands. Exercising the option was the second step in bringing Toll Canyon's 781 acres of forest, trails and watershed into public ownership.

To the public this project seemed sudden. In mid-December Utah Open Lands asked Summit County neighbors, communities and open space lovers to come up with a \$250,000 shortfall needed to preserve Toll Canyon. Funding from Park City Municipal, The Snyderville Basin Recreation District and Summit County brought the purchase of Toll Canyon within the realm of possibility. "What brought this project home, was the demonstration of community support. We'd like to thank neighbors and residents who wrote out checks for \$50, \$500, \$5000 whatever they could. To those who were waiting for today's news, now is the time to keep your pledge promise, just as Utah Open Lands will keep its promise to spend 100% of your pledge money on Toll Canyon." Said Fisher who indicated that all \$250,000 needed was pledged and approximately \$125,00 has already been made in donations to the organization.

The final payout of the total purchase price of \$6,100,000 will be accomplished by December 2014. "The down payment we made today is quite real" said Snyderville Basin Recreation District Executive Director Rena Jordan. "the protection of this property was possible because of Utah Open Lands, Park City and the residents of the Snyderville Basin who passed the Snyderville Basin Recreation District Open Space bond." Jordan said.

Utah Open Lands quietly worked with landowner for years to preserve Toll Canyon's pines, wilderness habitat, and backcountry recreation. Its protection has the potential to link uninterrupted backcountry trails and wildlife migration corridors from Kimball Junction to Salt Lake County watershed lands.

Utah Open Lands now holds an interest-free promissory note for the remainder \$4.1 million purchase price. Once paid in full, the property cost will be discounted by \$610,000, making the final purchase price \$5,490,000.

Utah Open Lands in partnership with the Snyderville Basin Recreation District, has also agreed to begin the process of creating a management plan for the property. This management plan will accompany the conservation easement which will be placed on the property when the purchase is complete and the land is transferred to the Snyderville Basin Recreation District as owners and Utah Open Lands as the conservation easement holder. The first step of the management plan will be in gathering data on the conservation values and existing conditions of the property. Input from the neighbors, donors and the community will be an important part of the process.

Utah Open Lands also looks forward to a big community thank you celebration. Craig Eroh and Sancy Leachman from CAGE, who partnered with UOL to garner community support have put a call out to those interested in putting together a community celebration. More details on when and where will be forthcoming. Check out postings from CAGE and UOLs website.

### **Additional Information**

Snyderville Basin Recreation District Trails and Open Space:

Utah Open Lands:

#### Toll Canyon

**Wildlife Habitat:** Toll Canyon borders the Wasatch Casche National Forest and Utah Open Lands' Murdoch Peak and Hi Ute Canyon protection projects. It provides critical wildlife corridors from upper elevation (summer) range to lower elevation (winter) range habitats. Animals found in this ecosystem include: moose, elk, mule deer, black bear, mountain lion, grouse, owls, hawks (and other raptors), fox, beaver, and sensitive species including Bonneville Cutthroat Trout and Flamulated Owl.

**Trail Connectivity:** This property offers potential critical trail connections to be determined within the Management Plan. Trail connections include the mountain bike trails on the Western side of Summit Park to the Mid-Mountain Trail. This land could help extend the Mid-Mountain Trail to the Millennial Trail and eventually the Great Western Trail.