

Mammoth, Forest Service say Let's make a deal

By Michael Doyle, McClatchy News Service

A Sierra Nevada land swap that would add 1,317 acres to three national forests in exchange for about 30 acres serving the prominent Mammoth Mountain ski resort is nearer completion.

After maneuvering that dates at least to 2011, the Forest Service on Friday pushed ahead with the proposal involving the Stanislaus, Plumas and Inyo national forests. Supporters call it a win-win proposition.

The swap must still survive scrutiny, starting with a 45-day public comment period and a hearing Sept. 8 in Mammoth Lakes. Already, though some residents of nearby June Lake have raised concerns, the proposal has cleared political hurdles that exemplify how Washington works.

To navigate a deeply partisan Congress, the land-swap proponents got companion bills in the House of Representatives and the Senate introduced by the local congressman, Republican Rep. Paul Cook of Apple Valley, as well as by California Democratic Sen. Dianne Feinstein.

Read the whole story