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Hefley will hold Browns Canyon forum Monday

U.S. Rep. Joel Hefley, will hold a public forum Monday on proposed legislation to designate Browns Canyon in Chaffee County as a federal wilderness area.

The forum is set to take place from 4-6:30 p.m. at the Chaffee County Fairgrounds on CR 120.

Hefley presented the idea of making Browns Canyon a wilderness area in 2003 and has worked with various environmental and outfitting organizations, local governments, the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management to advance the proposal.

The outcome of those discussions will be discussed at the forum.

“I believe the best wilderness legislation is the kind that fully takes into account what is happening on the ground and is the product of input from the local people who will be directly affected by it,” said Hefley.

The Browns Canyon Wilderness Study Area was recommended for permanent wilderness designation by the BLM in 1992 as part of a survey of BLM lands mandated by the 1976 Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

Hefley said the area’s relatively low elevation and proximity to U.S. 285 also make it accessible for recreational activities during winter when nearby high-elevation areas cannot be reached by most potential users.

For more information on the event, contact Hefley’s Colorado Springs office at 719-520-0055.