

## **Kennecott backs Nature Conservancy's climate change research**

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Kennecott Utah Copper and Kennecott Land Co. have donated \$210,000 to help The Nature Conservancy establish a Canyonlands Research Center as part of its Dugout Ranch Climate Change Initiative.

The Nature Conservancy intends to conduct world-class research on climate and land-use interactions at Dugout Ranch, which is near the Needles entrance to Canyonlands National Park. That research could be beneficial to land-use decisions and policies in the semi-arid West, addressing issues that could be exacerbated by climate change, such as water quantity and quality in the Colorado River, wildfires and the proliferation of invasive species.

"It is in the best interest of our company to support these initiatives and understand the science behind climate change," said Kennecott Utah spokeswoman Alexis Cairo, noting that her companies are members of The United States Climate Action Partnership, an alliance of businesses and environmental groups encouraging federal policy to address climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Dugout Ranch was acquired by The Nature Conservancy in 1997.

It encompasses 5,200 acres of private land and 300,000 acres of associated public grazing allotments, including 42 miles of cottonwood/willows riparian areas valuable to wildlife and rare wildflowers.

The ranch is also along an important monsoonal climate boundary, said Dave Livermore, The Nature Conservancy's state director in Utah. He said the Climate Change Initiative is expected to begin in 2009, once partnerships, research facility designs and scientific goals are finalized.

*-Mike Gorrell*