

Central Colorado Conservancy Earns National Accreditation

Central Colorado Conservancy has been working on its national accreditation application for the last few years. The process is comprehensive and involves all aspects of land trust operations.

We are pleased to announce the Land Trust Accreditation Commission has awarded accreditation to Central Colorado Conservancy. This is a real mark of honor in land conservation. Accreditation confirms the work Central Colorado Conservancy is doing is at the highest level possible and its lands will be protected forever.

Accredited land trusts across the country have permanently conserved more than 15 million acres of farms, forests and natural areas that are vital to healthy, vibrant communities.

“Accreditation demonstrates our commitment to land and water conservation in Central Colorado,” Central Colorado Conservancy Board President Michael Scott said. “We are a stronger organization for having gone through the rigorous accreditation program, and this strength will help make our region an even better place for us and our children.”

Central Colorado Conservancy has helped protect more than 9,000 acres in its five-county region of Chaffee, Lake, Park, Saguache and Fremont counties.

The organization holds more than 4,000 acres in conservation easements. These legal agreements between a landowner and the Land Trust permanently limit the use of the land in order to protect certain conservation values.

The Conservancy’s most recent conservation easement protects the 550-acre historic Headwaters Ranch north of Leadville, where public fishing access will be provided later this year.

Central Colorado Conservancy has protected several ranches in the area helping to maintain our local agricultural production and ranching heritage. The Land Trust works with ranching families to help them find options to maintain their agricultural operations.

More than 400 acres of private property near the Heckendorf State Wildlife Area northwest of Buena Vista is protected from development through the Conservancy’s work. These lands are important for herds of American elk that graze in the valley during deep-snow winters.

Elk, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, black bear, mountain lion, and lynx are known to migrate through a 660-acre ranch on Poncha Pass that was protected by the Land Trust to maintain the important wildlife corridor between the Sangre de Cristo and Sawatch mountain ranges.

The Conservancy also helped protect land for hiking and biking trails in the Arkansas Hills east of Salida, and is actively engaged in multiple river and trail restoration projects throughout the Valley.

Central Colorado Conservancy joins the 342 land trusts across the country that demonstrate their commitment to professional excellence through accreditation, helping to maintain the public's trust in their work.

“Accredited land trusts stand united behind strong national standards, ensuring the places people love will be conserved forever,” Land Trust Accreditation Commission Executive Director Tammara Van Ryn said. “Over 75 percent of private lands conserved by land trusts are now held by an accredited land trusts.”

Land Trust continues conservation work in 2015

A year of accomplishments for Central Colorado Conservancy include significant gains in land and water protection in the organization's five-county region.

The Conservancy completed a multi-year conservation easement this year on the 550-acre historic Headwaters Ranch north of Leadville.

The ranch was the No. 1 property on the Lake County Open Space Initiative's wish list because it offers stunning views, unparalleled wildlife habitat and excellent fishing on the East Fork of the Arkansas River.

“This conservation easement is especially significant because in addition to preserving open space and protecting wildlife habitat, we were also able to secure public access,” Central Colorado Conservancy Executive Director Andrew Mackie said. “The public will be able to fish three miles of the river in an area where today, there is no access.”

Mackie said the new access could relieve pressure on downstream fishing locations in Chaffee County and help Leadville attract anglers to their community. More than 700 anglers a year are expected to use the Headwaters Ranch fishing access once parking lots and trails are built by the end of summer of 2016.

The Conservancy also took ownership of 12 acres near Salida this year, and hopes to create public access in the future.

To date, Central Colorado Conservancy has helped protect more than 9,000 acres in Central Colorado and holds 4,202 acres in conservation easement.

Conservation easements are an important tool that help landowners protect property from development in perpetuity.

This year both Congress and the Colorado Legislature passed new laws that enhance federal income tax deductions and state tax credits for property owners who choose to protect property under conservation easements. Central Colorado Conservancy worked in cooperation with the national land trust community to achieve these important changes.

In addition to land conservation, the Conservancy worked to restore land and water resources in its service area this year, planting 350 native trees and shrubs in restoration areas and conducting water quality testing on the South Arkansas River.

The Land Trust's 2016 South Arkansas River project will enhance the fishery, reduce erosion, and improve water quality and riparian habitat along 3,000 feet of the river in both Poncha Springs and Salida.

A restoration project also will take place on the Arkansas River near the Chaffee and Lake County boundary.

The organization has budgeted \$80,000 over two years for these river projects. It is still working to raise the final \$10,000 for 2016 activities.

As part of its land and water conservation mission, the Conservancy conducts both technical trainings and general public programs on the natural and agricultural world. This year the Land Trust conducted 14 programs reaching several hundred individuals helping connect them to the importance of protecting our critical resources.

The Conservancy also worked with the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway producing a first ever conservation plan for the Byway and Central Colorado Conservancy helped develop economic strategies for landowners along the Byway with an effort to maintain traditional land uses such as agriculture.

The Conservancy volunteer program is growing and is in need of additional volunteers to help with restoration projects, conservation easement monitoring, programs, special events and planning.

"2016 is shaping up to be another major year for conservation work in Central Colorado," stated Andrew Mackie, Executive Director of the Conservancy. "Central Colorado Conservancy is working on conservation easements and other land conservation projects in four counties. We need support from everyone who appreciates and takes advantage of the amazing natural resources we have in this area," Mackie stated.

The Conservancy is funded through membership dues, donations and fundraising programs. Twenty local businesses participate in its Common Cents for Conservation program â€" a voluntary 1 percent donation of sales to support the organization's work.

The Common Cents program, which has been in operation for 12 years, generated \$50,000 in 2015 toward the Conservancy's \$250,000 operating budget.

Through grant programs and other fundraising, the Conservancy has raised \$7.5 million since 2009 to secure conservation easements and other land protection agreements in Central Colorado. These funds help local landowners, businesses and area contractors.

"Central Colorado has no doubt been discovered as desirable place to live and visit," Board President Michael Scott said. "That is exciting for its economic potential but we cannot forget

the reasons why this has happened. As we face future growth and development pressure, it is imperative that we remember our special places and take strong steps toward protecting them.”

Central Colorado Conservancy accepts donations of cash, securities, real estate, life insurance policies, retirement plan gifts and bequests to support its conservation work and program needs.

Visit www.ltua.org or call the office at 719-539-7700 for more information about becoming a member, a volunteer or a donor.

Congress Passes Tax Incentives for Conservation

On Friday, Dec. 18, Congress passed legislation that makes permanent the federal tax incentives for land conservation, after years of effort by LTUA and other members of the national Land Trust Alliance to make this happen. The President was expected to sign the bill as early as Saturday.

The legislation makes several tax incentives permanent including the Conservation Easement Incentive.

Having this tax deduction permanent makes conservation easements more rewarding for landowners, especially ranchers and farmers. When combined with the Colorado State Conservation Easement Tax Credit for landowners, it is a perfect time to talk to us about conservation options for your property.

Agricultural producers who donate a conservation easement can claim a federal tax deduction of up to 100% of the donor’s adjusted gross income in any year. Other landowners who donate a conservation easement can claim a federal tax deduction of up to 50% of other landowner’s adjusted gross income in any year. Donors may carry forward any unused deduction for up to 15 years after the year of the donation until the deduction is fully used.

LTUA’s expert staff has a combined 25-years of experience helping landowners with conservation easements, and we are here to help ranchers and other landowners figure out if a conservation easement is right for them. We are available to sit down and go over all the details of how conservation easements work and what benefits are available. Please call LTUA Conservation Director Lucy Waldo at 970-901-1816, or the main office at 719-539-7700 for more information.

LTUA sets fundraising goal of \$10,000 for river restoration projects

In addition to protecting land and water resources in the Upper Arkansas River Valley, the Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas is engaged in several projects that focus on environmental stewardship — caring for and improving resources for generations to come.

These restoration projects focus on areas critical to the wellbeing of our natural environment — watersheds and riparian areas. It is estimated that less than 1% of land area in the Western U.S. is riparian or wetland, yet 80% of our wildlife species depend on them for survival at some stage of their lives.

The Land Trust has placed more than 4 miles of Arkansas River headwaters under direct protection, and is undertaking restoration projects on tributaries that are critical to the region's water quality. Three ongoing projects are located on the Arkansas River and the South Arkansas, with more projects in the pipeline. Work will enhance riparian habitat and water quality, diminish the effects of erosion, and improve habitat for fish and wildlife.

Over the next two years, the Land Trust has budgeted \$80,000 for these projects; \$40,000 for the current budget and \$40,000 in 2016. We have secured funding for \$30,000 of this year's allocation, and we are asking for your support to help raise the remaining \$10,000.

Please consider making a contribution of whatever amount you can, be it \$50, \$500 or \$5,000. All donations are tax deductible as allowed by law. The Land Trust staff is happy to explain our river restoration projects in greater detail — just give the office a call.

[Please download the pledge form and give today.](#) Thank you for your support!

Final Phase of the Headwaters Ranch Conservation Easement Completed

by Andrew Mackie

When driving through Lake County, Colorado your lungs go into overdrive to extract every molecule of oxygen possible. Approaching Leadville from the south you enter the 10,100-foot high city and realize this is different from everywhere else. Over your shoulder to the southwest are the two highest peaks in Colorado, Elbert and Massive. At this point you have to wonder if shortness of breath is due to the elevation or the unbelievable scenery.

Entering Leadville is a journey back in time. The signs of the past are everywhere, from the mine tailing piles to the architectural ornate buildings constructed from fortunes made on gold, silver, and copper. Continue your trek out of Leadville to northeast on Route 91 and soon the road will follow the meandering course of the East Fork of the Arkansas River. This is a very different river from lower in the Valley. Many would call this water course a creek as any normal throwing arm could easily put a stone across it. You have reached the very headwaters of the mighty Arkansas River. If you were able to mark and follow one water droplet from the River's source through plunging rapids, numerous towns and cities, past agricultural fields, by dams, you are the

farthest point of the start of this journey to its connection with the Mississippi River and ultimately the Gulf of Mexico.

The River's riparian zone also looks different here. Gone are the cottonwood trees found at lower elevations, replaced by broad plains of shrubby willows, called willow carrs. Beaver ponds add to the complexity and diversity of the River. In some areas green carpets of grasses and sedges dominate.

It is this area that the Land Trust has been working for the last several years. The Headwaters Ranch is mostly a linear property stretching from approximately mile marker two to six on Route 91. The Arkansas River flows through this entire property. In a close partnership, the Land Trust has been working with the Colorado Office of the Trust for Public Land (TPL). TPL bring years of experience to the table especially in complicated, large transactions such as Headwaters Ranch. The project was dependent on the landowner's interest and cooperation. Jim and Larry are the two owners making up Birdseye Land and Water, LLC. They both wanted to see this special property protected. Earlier this year the Land Trust and TPL closed on the third and final phase of a conservation easement. We had already completed two phases totaling 375-acres. Phase three adds another 175-acres for a grand total of 550-acres and just over a three mile stretch of the Arkansas River.



Headwaters Ranch Conservation Easement, Phase III

Headwaters Ranch is dominated by wetlands along the River. The wetlands are important for many species of wildlife. As you get away from the River, forests cover the landscape varying from stands of lodgepole pine to spruce-fir forest. This mix of habitat provides both food and shelter for species such as: elk, moose, mule deer, black bear, bobcat, coyote, red fox, lynx, mink, snowshoe hare, and many species of birds. In addition to the wildlife values, public fishing is included in the conservation easement. The Land Trust is working with the landowners and Colorado Parks and Wildlife to establish parking areas, signage and trails for this fishing access. It will probably take at least another year before open to the public. All of these values made this a high priority project for the Land Trust, TPL, and other groups. Several years ago the Lake County Commission relayed to the Land Trust that this section of the River was a high priority for them. Headwaters Ranch became the highest priority for the Lake County Open Space Initiative (LCOSI). The Land Trust is a member of LCOSI and we helped rank priority projects in Lake County.



Wooden stave line on Headwaters Ranch

The Ranch is also rich in history. Found on the property is a historic wooden stave line that transported water to Leadville. This was part of the Stevens and Leiter Ditch with water rights filed on September 1, 1873. The original owners of the rights were the Leadville Water Company and the Leadville Power, Water, and Mining Company. The decreed amount was 38 cubic feet per second. The stave line is buried or totally absent in places but can still be found in certain areas.

Overall, the Headwaters Ranch Conservation Easement is a monumental accomplishment. Saved in perpetuity are the natural and historical values of not just 550-acres of the Ranch but of the headwaters of the Arkansas River. The Land Trust is grateful to have worked with the landowners, TPL, LCOSI, Lake County and the funders who made the project possible, including: Upper Arkansas Natural Resource Damage and Restoration Trustees, Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) and Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

Changes in Colorado Law Provides Benefit to Landowners Wanting to Protect the Conservation and Agricultural Values of the Their Properties

Today, Colorado Senate Bill 206 was signed into law by Governor Hickenlooper. This new law changes the current Colorado Conservation Easement Tax Credit program by increasing the potential tax credit for landowners.

The Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas supported this legislation because it encourages the protection of additional lands in the State that are important for their natural and water resources, scenic vistas, outdoor recreation, or agricultural significance. The Land Trust's Executive Director, Andrew Mackie states: "This is a major step forward for conservation in Colorado. Working in partnership we can maintain lands in agriculture and wildlife habitat. We work with many private landowners who protect the conservation values of the property for the greater public good and they deserve to see a realistic benefit for this perpetual protection."

The new law will increase the credit to 75% of the first \$100,000 of the fair market value of the conservation easement and 50% of the fair market value above that amount. This is an additional \$25,000, over 2014 levels, in tax credits to landowners who donate a conservation easement to a certified entity, such as the Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas. The tax credit can be sold for cash or utilized by the landowner for their tax purposes. In addition, the new law raises the individual tax credit cap from \$375,000 to \$1.5 million. The increased cap will help large landowners, such as ranchers, protect the agricultural and conservation values of their properties.

The Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas is ready to assist landowners who are considering a conservation easement for their property. Contact the Land Trust's Conservation Director, Lucy Waldo at 970-901-1816 or lucywaldo@ltua.org. The law is retroactive to January 1, 2015, so now is a perfect time to start thinking about the conservation options and expanded tax credits available to landowners.

Boxcar Ranch Conservation Easement

On Friday, October 3, 2014, the Land Trust completed a conservation easement on the 90-acre Boxcar Ranch in Chaffee County. This Ranch is on the Arkansas River and surrounded on three

sides by public lands. In addition, the conservation easement ties shares in the New Salida Ditch to this property, therefore, the water can't be sold off and moved to the Front Range. Some of the conservation values include: irrigated pasture, protection of the riparian corridor along the Arkansas River, habitat for Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep, buffering of public lands, and protection of the scenic vista from the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway.

We gratefully acknowledge the contribution and commitment made by the property owner of Boxcar Ranch and her desire to see this property remain in its agricultural and natural state. Funding for the project was provided by Great Outdoors Colorado, Gates Family Foundation, National Scenic Byway Program, Chaffee County, and the Rocky Mountain Bighorn Society.





Headwaters Ranch project in Lake County

February 27, 2014 — The Land Trust in partnership with the Trust for Public Land closed on the second phase of the Headwaters Ranch project in Lake County. This second phase protects 200-acres in addition to the 175-acres we protected last year. The property is northeast of Leadville, CO along the East Fork of the Arkansas River. Headwaters Ranch is aptly named as the Arkansas River begins just above this property. We gratefully recognize the efforts of the landowners in protecting this beautiful stretch of River with its associated beaver ponds, willow wetlands, wet meadows, and spruce/fir forest. The property is also along the Top of the Rockies Byway with the conservation easement protecting the scenic view shed from this designated roadway.

The Headwaters Ranch is a high priority for the Lake County Open Space Initiative (LCOSI). The Land Trust is a member of LCOSI and started working on this property with TPL several years ago. "We are pleased to help achieve the goals of LCOSI and protect such a tremendous property," stated Land Trust Executive Director Andrew Mackie. This section of the Arkansas is home to trout, songbirds, grouse, elk, bear, lynx, and a variety of small mammals. In addition, the Land Trust will work with the property owners in opening up sections of the Arkansas River to public fishing.

Land Trust completes its first conservation easement as part of our Poncha Pass Initiative

October 3, 2013 –“ The Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas now holds a 660-acre conservation easement on Poncha Pass, straddling both Chaffee and Saguache Counties. We want to recognize and thank the family who own the property.

Their vision in protecting this ranch will be a lasting benefit for all the residents of Colorado. In addition, we want to thank our partners: The Trust for Public Land, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

The Land Trust identified Poncha Pass as a priority in 2010. This pass connecting the Upper Arkansas and San Luis Valleys is a vital link for wildlife populations. The high mountain pass acts as a wildlife corridor between the Sangre de Cristo and Sawatch mountain ranges. Many different species utilize this region, including: elk, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, black bear, mountain lion, and lynx.

The Poncha Pass area also has a long ranching history. It is used for summer pasture and was host to numerous cattle drives moving stock between the two valleys.

The Land Trust is working to keep this ranching heritage alive by making sure there will be room for livestock and wildlife for many years to come.



Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas Completes Three Conservation Easements

Upper Arkansas Valley — June 22, 2011 — The Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas announces the completion of three conservation easements totaling 343 acres. Each conservation easement represents months of work on behalf of the Land Trust and the corresponding landowner. In another first for us, we completed a conservation easement in each of three counties: Lake, Chaffee, and Fremont. Each conservation easement has "public benefit" by permanently protecting wildlife habitat, working agricultural land, and scenic vistas. Hayden Mellsop, Chair of the Land Trust Board, stated "These three conservation easements are another significant step forward for the Land Trust and will help keep our ranching tradition and protect key wetlands and wildlife habitat."

A conservation easement is a legal agreement that a landowner voluntarily enters into with a land trust that permanently limits the use of the land in order to protect certain conservation values. All three conservation easements were donated by the landowners making each donation eligible for certain Federal and State tax benefits. However, all the property remains in private ownership and the owners continue to pay property tax.

The Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas is certified by the State of Colorado to hold conservation easements. The Land Trust also has certain criteria that must be met before the organization will accept a conservation easement on a property. Not all properties qualify, only those that have certain conservation values, such as important wildlife habitat or working agricultural lands. It is also the responsibility of the Land Trust to monitor and enforce the conservation easement in perpetuity. This is a major responsibility and takes a significant amount of time and resources. Any landowner interested in finding out more about conservation easements should contact the Land Trust Executive Director, Andrew Mackie at 719-539-7700 or andrewjmackie@ltua.org.

The first conservation easement is southeast of Leadville in Lake County. This 160 acre ranch is set among the Mosquito Mountains. Overall the property is situated from 10,670 feet to 10,890 feet. Bisecting the property is Empire Gulch. This creek meanders through a series of beaver dams creating a mosaic of wetlands important to many species of wildlife. In addition, several kettle ponds are found on the property. A total of 32% of the Ranch is in wetlands and is now protected. Much of the remaining property is in lodgepole pine and aspen. Surrounding the ranch on three sides are lands open to the public, composed of Paddock State Wildlife Area and San Isabel National Forest.



This ranch is routinely used by a herd of 300 elk. Also, black bear, mountain lion, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, mule deer, lynx, and an occasional moose use the property. The wetlands are key habitats for breeding songbirds and amphibians. A section of the property has been retained for cattle grazing and another small area is reserved for local food production.

The second conservation easement is in Chaffee County surrounded by San Isabel National Forest near Raspberry Gulch. This 108 acre easement helps to reduce development potential within San Isabel National Forest. The property is mostly mixed conifer forest with areas of ponderosa pine and aspen. An intermittent stream runs along the boundary providing additional plant diversity and wildlife habitat. Grasses and forbs provide food for elk and mule deer.



Another interesting element of this conservation easement is the protection of a historic miner's cabin on the property. This structure and some other foundations provide a glimpse back into the past. Cattle grazing will also continue as a use on the property.

The third conservation easement is a 75 acre parcel in Howard, Colorado. This property is used for summer cattle and horse pasture and has associated water rights that are now tied with the land. Most of the property is in pasture with scattered piñon pines and Rocky Mountain juniper. On side of the property contains a small canyon that wildlife uses for movement between the Arkansas River and Sangre de Cristo Mountain Range. These areas often have a number of unique plants associated with them. In addition to livestock, elk and mule deer use the pasture. Also, a part of the conservation easement abuts Bureau of Land Management property.



The Land Trust wishes to thank all three land owners for their vision and dedication to completing these conservation easements. Their commitment to seeking long-term protection for important agricultural and natural resources on the properties is inspiring.

LTUA and City of Salida protect land in the Arkansas Hills



On February 10, 2010 the City of Salida completed a purchase of 26.8 acres of vacant land from the Everett Land and Cattle Company. Following the purchase, the Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas placed a conservation easement on the parcel to forever protect the land from further development. The City of Salida and the Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas had worked on protecting this land for over a year so that it could be added to the existing City of Salida Open Space. The purchase was made possible with funds from Great Outdoors Colorado.

This purchase and the conservation easement will help ensure access to surrounding land owned by the City of Salida and the Bureau of Land Management. It will also protect the scenic backdrop of downtown Salida.

According to Dara MacDonald, Salida Community Development Director, “Many members of the community, recreation organizations, local government, and the Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas contributed to completion of this purchase.” Salida Mountain Trail members Kent and Mary Ann Davidson drafted the grant application to Great Outdoors Colorado; they were assisted by Donna Rhoads of Salida-area Parks, Open Space and Trails (SPOT) and City of Salida staff. Financial contributors included: Chaffee County, SPOT, Quiet Use Coalition, Salida Mountain Trails, Chaffee County Running Club, City of Salida, and Mary Roberts. The Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas contributed significant resources to the project by drafting the base line documentation for the conservation easement, reducing many of their fees to the City of Salida, and allocating staff resources to assist in the effort.

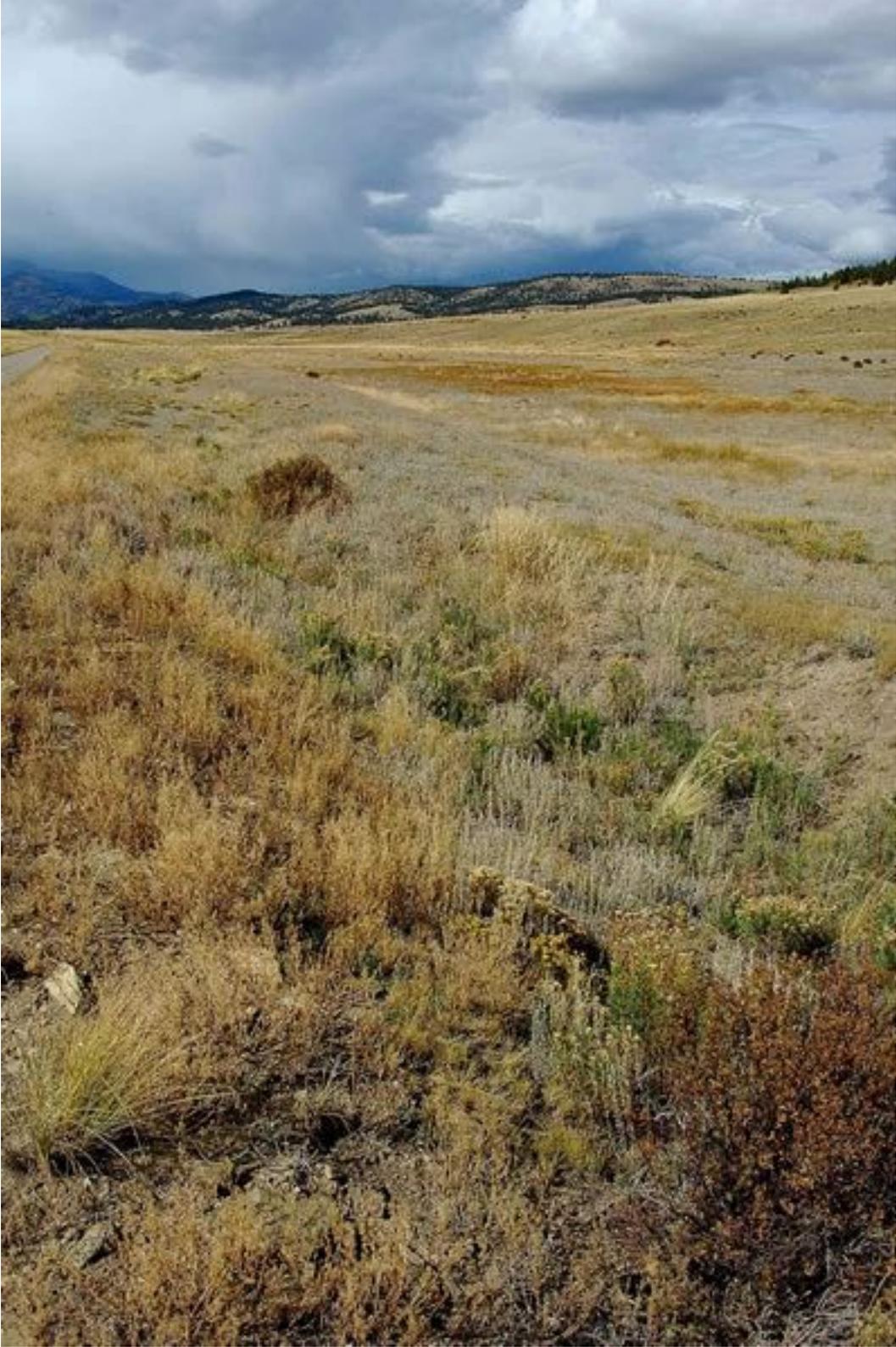
The property will be left in a natural state providing habitat for wildlife. According to the conservation easement public trails for non-motorized use can be constructed on the property. The Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas will work cooperatively with the City of Salida on the placement of trails and the long-term management of the property.

Chubb Park Ranch Protected

Chaffee County, CO, 8/11/2009 -- The Trust for Public Land (TPL), working in partnership with the Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas (LTUA), lottery funded Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), the Colorado Division of Wildlife (DOW), and Chaffee County, has succeeded in permanently protecting the Chubb Park Ranch, a high mountain meadow in beautiful central Colorado.



The 507-acre holding is part of the Cogan Ranch, and the Cogan family has been in ranching in Chaffee County since 1889. In recent years, the family has watched as Chaffee County, with its magnificent mountain scenery, world-renowned whitewater rafting, and welcoming community, has grown in popularity as a tourist destination and location for second homes. Although property prices have stabilized, the boom years have left long-term residents like the Cogan family facing land and inheritance taxes that their ranching operations cannot support.



“Our land would be taxed unfairly for an incredible amount as if it would be subdivided. How do you pay taxes on that?” says Joe Cogan. “It would break my children. They'd have to sell at least half the ranch.”

But selling could jeopardize production on the rest of Cogan's land. It would also threaten public access to the property's prime hunting grounds - something Cogan has granted year after year. So the Cogan's found another solution: conservation easements. Working with DOW, GOCO, LTUA and TPL the family mapped out the details of a conservation easement that not only puts the land under permanent protection, it also gives them the financial resources they need to help ensure that their children and grandchildren will be able to continue to work the ranch.

"Working with Joe to keep his land in the family and in ranching has been very rewarding," says The Trust for Public Land Project Manager, Wade Shelton. "And now with this signature project complete, TPL hopes to expand our work in Chaffee County."

TPL secured funding to purchase the conservation easement from Chaffee County, DOW and GOCO and managed the transaction to make sure that the final outcome would meet the needs of everyone involved - particularly the Cogan Family. The DOW also acquired a perpetual hunting access easement from the Cogan's, ensuring that the property will be available for hunting for future generations. Most conservation easement projects do not include public access, which illustrates the extent of the Cogan's generosity. The conservation easement will be co-held by LTUA and DOW, who will work together as long-term stewards of the easement, with DOW managing public hunting access to the land, making it a historic partnership between DOW and a local land trust.

"One of the great things about this project is that not only does it preserve the dramatic views off Trout Creek Pass and provide hunting opportunities for big game hunters, but that all of the funding came from Habitat Stamp Fees and Lottery Ticket sales," says Frosty Roe, President of the Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas. "We're very fortunate that we live in a state where you can complete projects like this without relying on taxpayer dollars."

Landowners like Cogan open up local conservation opportunities, as residents are more likely to consider an easement if a neighbor had a good experience. And every easement strengthens the region's rural character.

"The Cogan property is exactly the type of land we love protecting," says Andrew Mackie, executive director of the LTUA, the local organization that will manage the conservation easement. "We're excited to have this crucial property protected."

"The valley is breathtaking, but it hasn't become a resort community," continues Shelton. "These projects help maintain balance. People can still live here without being incredibly wealthy." Cogan's view is simpler still. "Now I don't have to look at a damn subdivision at the foot of Buffalo Peaks."

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) is a national nonprofit land conservation organization that conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, gardens, and natural areas, ensuring livable communities for generations to come

