



In this Issue

- **Prairie Conservation**
- **Double Your Money!**
- **CCALT Wish List**
- **Ranches of Colorado**
- **Ranches of Colorado Events**
- **CCALT Holds Sunset BBQ Benefiting Ranchland Conservation**

The mission of the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust is to protect productive agricultural lands and the conservation values they provide by working with ranchers and farmers, thereby preserving Colorado's ranching heritage and rural communities.

Contact us

8833 Ralston Road
Arvada, CO 80002
303-225-8677 (tel)
303-431-6446 (fax)
E-mail: info@ccalt.org
www.ccalt.org



Prairie Conservation

CCALT and landowners work together to ensure the protection of prairie ranches

For most people, Colorado is a state that conjures up majestic mountain vistas, forested hills, aspen trees and streams abounding with fish. In this issue of *Crossroads* our spotlight is on the eastern plains of Colorado. The prairie landscape is as important to Colorado as the majestic mountains and scenic valleys. Imagine a kaleidoscope of color that shifts with the seasons: the smoky blue of chiming bells, blue flax and green grass in the spring along with the bright red of paintbrush and the prairie rocket, the beauty of the yellow primrose, sunflowers and the prickly pear cactus in the summer, and the white sparkle of frost on straw-colored grasses in the winter. This area was once only flat and fertile prairie land, and now much of this area has been developed. Protection of the prairie is critical if the complex ecosystem of the natural prairie habitat and the working ranches it supports is to survive.

CCALT has recognized the need to protect the prairie and we are particularly proud of the conservation efforts over the years in Weld County. Since 2001, we have protected 34 ranches and farms and more than 33,000 acres in Weld County. It is important that the landowners protecting the prairie in these areas are recognized for their efforts. They have all worked with CCALT to ensure that their properties will forever remain in productive agriculture.

The History of CCALT's Prairie Conservation

In December of 2001, CCALT accepted its first conservation easement in Weld County. The Savage Ranch protected more than 250 acres and jump-started CCALT's protection of the native habitat and wildlife in the area. Shortly thereafter, a second agricultural operation located near the town of Grover in northeastern Weld County approached CCALT about the possibility of using the conservation easement tool as a way to protect their operation. Since then, numerous landowners in the area around Grover, Hereford and Briggsdale have embraced the easement tool and have worked alongside CCALT to protect the farms, grasslands, and native shortgrass prairie pastures that characterize this portion of Colorado. Three notable ranching families who have worked with CCALT are featured in this issue.

Ehmke Ranch

The Ehmke family donated a conservation easement on their 3,600 acre cattle ranch in 2008. The ranch sits approximately five miles east of the town of Grover on top of the Chalk Bluffs. The Pawnee Buttes are located immediately to the east of the ranch and can be viewed from



*Pawnee Buttes
Photograph by John Fielder*

Prairie Conservation Continued

several locations on the property. The Pawnee Buttes rise approximately 250 feet above the grassy valleys below, but from the plateau the view is indeed a grand one. The Great Plains tumble off to the east for mile after mile, finally becoming lost on the horizon. Hawks, falcons, and swallows nest in the surrounding cliffs and over 400 species of plants live can be found in this area. In addition, it has been said that the Buttes are one of the worlds richest sites for vertebrate fossils.



Prairie grasslands protected by CCALT's conservation efforts

Meader Ranch

The Meader Ranch is a 7,440 acre cattle ranch located approximately 35 miles north of Greeley and ten miles west of Grover. The Meaders have been ranching in the area since the early 1970s, running approximately 300 cow-calf pairs on the ranch year-round. The process to protect the entire ranch took approximately two years and was finalized in the early part of 2009. The Meader Ranch is the epitome of prairie conservation. Roughly 92% of the 7,440 acres is untilled shortgrass prairie. Two playas, small indentations in the ground that annually fill with rain, are also found on the ranch. These ecosystems provide a range for pronghorn antelope, mule deer, mountain plover, plains sharp-tailed grouse, and many other shortgrass prairie dependent species. The protection of this property also contributes to the ecological viability of the adjacent Pawnee National Grasslands as well as over 15,000 acres of adjacent private ranches under easement.

Lonesome Pines Ranch

The Lonesome Pines Ranch is located approximately three miles east of the town of Grover at the base of the Chalk Bluffs. The Sturrock family has donated a conservation easement on approximately 1,824 acres of the ranch. The ranch provides unobstructed views of the Chalk Bluffs to the east and the Great Plains and Front Range mountains to the west. The Chalk Bluffs are home to numerous raptors that nest on the cliffs including a variety of hawks, Golden Eagles, and Prairie Falcons which co-exist with the Lonesome Pines ranching operation. The Bluffs are also a favorite site for birdwatching and have been recognized by the National Audubon Society as a site of global importance.



Chalk Bluffs on the Lonesome Pines Ranch

Conservation Success

The conservation work that has been completed in Weld County will ensure that the county's rich agricultural heritage is preserved for future generations. This growing block of conserved land now totaling more than 33,000 acres is a testament to the commitment of the farming and ranching families who protect the land and their unique way of life. "It is these families that are spreading the word about CCALT and the benefits of using the conservation easement tool. Thanks to their efforts, additional properties will be protected in the future," said Erik Glenn, CCALT Weld County Project Manager.

Double Your Money!

The success of our organization depends on our donors. Now is the time to donate! Cold Mountain Ranch, LLLP has issued a challenge to all donors. **Your donation will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$50,000.** Help us reach our \$100,000 goal by year end. You can fill out the enclosed envelope, or visit our website at www.ccalt.org to make an online donation. Help us meet this challenge by donating today! Don't forget, you can also consider us when you are planning your estate.

CCALT Wish List

GPS Vehicle System

Juno ST Handheld GPS from Trimble

Gas Cards

Natural Resource Reference Library

Lightly Used Pickup/SUV

Board of Directors

Bill Fales
President

Randy Rusk
Vice President

Corwin Brown
Treasurer

Ben Duke
Secretary

Sue Anschutz-Rodgers

Reeves Brown

Miles Davies

Roger Evans

Rick Knight

Penny Lewis

C.J. Mucklow

Joanne Sinclair

Tim Wohlgenant

Advisory Council

Jay Fetcher Pat Grant

Dale Lasater Sydney Macy

Jack Orr Max Vezzani

Ed Warner

Staff

Chris West
Executive Director

Barb Dowdy
Director of Operations

Alyssa Street
Development and
Communications Manager

Carolyn Aspelin
Senior Project Manager

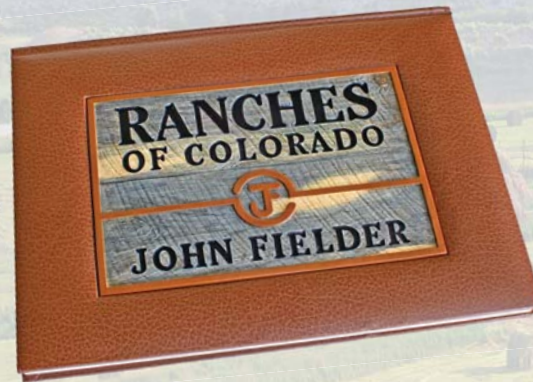
Erik Glenn
Project Manager

Megan Manner
Project Manager

Sharon Lanyon Pierce

Ranches of Colorado

The Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust and John Fielder are proud to announce the release of *Ranches of Colorado*. John has made a name for himself photographing and advocating for the protection of Colorado's high country over the past decade. In 2007 and 2008 John traveled to photograph 50 of Colorado's most beautiful multi-generational working cattle ranches, most of which are already protected from development. The project is a partnership of Fielder, Colorado's preeminent outdoor photographer, and the Colorado land trust community including Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust, Colorado Open Lands, and the Colorado Coalition of Land Trusts. These organizations will earn royalties from each copy of the book sold.



These ranches tell of a life that is fast disappearing. There is pressure to sell out to developers for ski areas and vacation homes and urban sprawl. There are children who, legacy or not, no longer want to make a living from the land. There are also taxes that can threaten to take away what has been in the family for generations. As we watch the complex struggle of ranchers to maintain a life that is slipping away, we also witness the inspiring way in which people are coming together to protect it. Through partnerships between landowners

and conservation groups, more than two million acres of Colorado's private lands have already been protected.

"Ranches of Colorado is the first time John has focused on private, working lands. We are thrilled to partner with him on this effort to highlight some of Colorado's most impressive ranches," said Chris West, CCALT Executive Director. "To me, the best part of the book is how John's artistic eye captures the grass, cattle, hay meadows, barns and fences on these beautiful properties. Without the ranchers and the agricultural operations, the scenery that John has captured would not exist."

John Fielder will also be traveling around the state promoting *Ranches of Colorado*. His slide show will include over 200 of the project photographs and John will tell stories about his experiences working with these remarkable ranchers and exploring their lands. Both book and slide show will be used to rally support for conservation efforts, and to raise funds to purchase development rights from ranchers so that these lands can remain in ranching in perpetuity. John will visit 25 Colorado communities in the fall of 2009 alone.

Save the Date!

Ranches of Colorado Events Sponsored by CCALT

November 19
November 22
December 7
December 14

CCA Convention, Colorado Springs
Denver Museum of Nature & Science IMAX Theater
Steamboat Springs Community Center
Colorado History Museum, Denver

For more information and a complete listing of the Ranches of Colorado events around the state, visit CCALT's website www.ccalt.org.



CCALT Holds Sunset BBQ Benefiting Ranchland Conservation

CCALT held the annual Sunset BBQ benefit at the Crystal River Ranch, on Saturday, July 11th, just outside of Carbondale. The event, hosted by Sue Anschutz-Rodgers, was the annual fundraiser for CCALT and proceeds will be used by the land trust to protect additional ranches across Colorado.

“We were thrilled to have the Sunset BBQ at the Crystal River Ranch this year. The Roaring Fork Valley has such a rich ranching tradition,” said Chris West, CCALT Executive Director. The annual fundraiser is held at different ranches across Colorado every summer. This is the first time that the Sunset BBQ has been held in the Roaring Fork Valley.

Guests were treated to a magnificent view of Mount Sopris and could not have asked for a better atmosphere for an event. In addition to cocktails and BBQ, the event included a silent and live auction and entertainment from the band *Heart of the Rockies*. All proceeds went to support the Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust, and our efforts to protect ranches and farms across the state. CCALT has partnered with 211 ranching families in protecting over 330,000 acres of major working landscapes across Colorado. We would especially like to thank Sue-Anschutz-Rodgers for hosting the event and making the BBQ a success.



*Over 120 Guests Attended the BBQ at the
Crystal River Ranch in July*