



COLORADO CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

"Representing the interests of Colorado's cattle industry since 1867"

For Immediate Release
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Leopold Conservation Award to be Presented to Stanko Ranch

ARVADA, Colo. – May 13, 2010 – The Wisconsin-based conservation organization, Sand County Foundation, in partnership with the Colorado Cattlemen's Association, the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust and EnCana Oil & Gas (USA) Inc., is proud to name Jim and Jo Stanko as the winners of the 2010 Leopold Conservation Award in Colorado.

"Jim and Jo Stanko are exceptional stewards of their land, but it is to their credit that their efforts don't stop there," said Dr. Brent Haglund, Sand County Foundation President. "They reach out to others through a great deal of community involvement and educational opportunities that promote the importance of sustainable agriculture."

The Stankos have utilized several conservation initiatives on their 103-year-old ranch. They effectively manage water distribution through innovative irrigation methods, including an earthen dam; which created a three-acre lake that provides water for cattle and wildlife, and helps prevent soil erosion from runoff. Their range management techniques include rotational grazing and a vigorous weed control program that utilizes a combination of chemical, mechanical and physical methods, which include preservation of areas of sagebrush to promote sage-grouse habitat.

Perhaps most impressive, however, is the Stankos' commitment to taking conservation beyond their ranch's borders. Mr. and Mrs. Stanko were co-founders of the Southside 4-H Club in the late 1970s. Mrs. Stanko is a past president of the Colorado CattleWomen and Mr. Stanko served on the State and Federal Lands Committees. The Stankos welcome countless domestic and international visitors to their ranch. They host Ag 101 classes for new landowners and community leaders and open their ranch to Ranch Days classes where third and fourth grade students learn about agriculture. Mrs. Stanko was the originator of this program in Routt County and organized it for ten years.

The \$10,000 Leopold Conservation Award will be presented to the Stankos on June 14 at the Colorado Cattlemen's Association's Annual Convention in Pueblo.

The Leopold Conservation Award in Colorado is sponsored by the Bradley Fund for the Environment, Peabody Energy, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

For more information, visit www.leopoldconservationaward.org, or contact Amy Bader, amy@coloradocattle.org.

ABOUT THE LEOPOLD CONSERVATION AWARD

The Leopold Conservation Award is a competitive award that recognizes landowner achievement in voluntary conservation. The award consists of an Aldo Leopold crystal and a check for \$10,000. In 2010, Sand County Foundation will present Leopold Conservation Awards in Nebraska, Wyoming, Colorado, Texas, Utah, and California.

The awards are presented to accomplish three objectives: First, they recognize extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation on the land of exemplary private landowners. Second, they inspire countless other landowners in their own communities through these examples.

Finally, they provide a visible forum where leaders from the agriculture community are recognized as conservation leaders to groups outside of agriculture.
www.leopoldconservationaward.org

ABOUT SAND COUNTY FOUNDATION

Sand County Foundation is a private, non-profit conservation group dedicated to working with private landowners to improve habitat on their land. Sand County's mission is to advance the use of ethical and scientifically sound land management practices and partnerships for the benefit of people and their rural landscapes. Sand County Foundation works with private landowners because the majority of the nation's fish, wildlife, and natural resources are found on private lands. The organization backs local champions, invests in civil society, and places incentives before regulation to create solutions that ensure and grow. The organization encourages the exercise of private responsibility in the pursuit of improved land health as an essential alternative to many of the commonly-used strategies in modern conservation. www.sandcounty.net

ABOUT COLORADO CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

The Colorado Cattlemen's Association (CCA) is the state's only nonprofit trade organization exclusively representing Colorado's beef producers. Founded in 1867, CCA is the nation's oldest state cattlemen's association. CCA serves its members by speaking out on behalf of Colorado's more than 12,000 beef producers. www.coloradocattle.org

ABOUT COLORADO CATTLEMEN'S AGRICULTURAL LAND TRUST

Recognizing the need to help Colorado ranchers and farmers protect their agricultural lands in the face of growing development and economic pressures, the Colorado Cattlemen's Association formed the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust (CCALT) in 1995. www.ccalt.org/

ABOUT ENCANA OIL & GAS (USA) INC.

EnCana Oil & Gas (USA) Inc. is a leading North American energy company that produces approximately 4.4 billion cubic feet of gas equivalent per day. More than 80 percent of the amount is natural gas. The organization strives to be a trusted community contributor and is committed to benchmark practices in safety and environmental stewardship, ethical business conduct, and community responsibility. www.encana.com

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