



NEWS RELEASE

February 2, 2012

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Chris West
Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust
303-225-8677
cwest@ccalt.org

Congressman Cory Gardner recognizes landowners and land conservation efforts

Sue Anschutz-Rodgers hosted the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust's (CCALT) National Western Stock Show landowner appreciation dinner on January 16, 2012. This annual dinner recognizes all landowners who have permanently protected their working ranches and farms with conservation easements through CCALT. To date, CCALT has protected more than 261 properties covering 389,000 acres across Colorado.

"This special event allows CCALT to focus on the families who have made this incredible decision to protect their ranches for future generations," said Chris West, CCALT's Executive Director.

Congressman Cory Gardner was the keynote speaker at the dinner. The Congressman is a fifth-generation Coloradan with family farming roots dating back to 1886 in Yuma County. Gardner spoke about the importance of making the enhanced conservation easement incentive permanent and why he decided to sign on as a cosponsor of the legislation.

The Conservation Easement Incentive Act (H.B. 1964 and S. 339) will aid in the conservation of millions of acres of agricultural lands, wildlife habitat and open spaces by making permanent an incentive that allows landowners to receive significant tax savings for donating permanent conservation easements. The Conservation Easement Incentive Act has impressive bipartisan support in the House with more than 295 cosponsors. Congressman Gardner supports H.B. 1964 because he understands the value of agriculture to rural communities and the importance of preserving the tools that help keep families on the land.

"The benefits of agriculture and the stewardship of our land are passed down from generation to generation. The family farm is a key component of promoting the ideals of conservation of our land and resources," said Congressman Gardner. "Farmers and ranchers throughout Colorado

know the importance of our natural resources and wilderness. It is important that we continue to preserve and protect our great state.”

Congressman Gardner held a face-to-face meeting with several ranchers who have protected their ranches through conservation easements held by CCALT. This friendly discussion provided the Congressman an opportunity to hear landowners’ perspectives on Farm Bill conservation programs and the impacts of estate taxes on family farms and ranches. The dialogue also covered Colorado’s current conservation incentives, the state income tax credit and Great Outdoors Colorado. It is CCALT’s hope that bipartisan support of conservation easements, from both urban and rural legislators, will continue in order to support Colorado’s working agricultural landscapes and the families that produce our nation’s food supply.

###

Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust protects productive agricultural lands and the conservation values they provide by working with ranchers and farmers, thereby preserving Colorado's ranching heritage and rural communities. For more information visit www.ccalt.org.