



Protecting Open Space By Preserving Agriculture

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## Staff

Chris West  
Executive Director

Ray Ilg  
Director of Conservation

Barb Dowdy  
Director of Operations

Alyssa Schneider  
Communications Manager

Carolyn Aspelin  
Project Assistant

Tawnya Ernst  
CCT Conservation Fellow

## Contact us

8833 Ralston Rd.  
Arvada, CO 80002  
303-225-8677 (ph)  
303-431-6446 (fax)  
email: info@ccalt.org  
www.ccalt.org

## Family camping trip leads to conservation legacy

In the late 1960's, Bob Lindner, Sr., his wife Betty and their four boys first ventured into the Weminuche Valley on a camping trip from the family's home in Ohio. That long ago trip proved fortuitous for conservation in the valley when late last year, Lindner signed conservation easements that will permanently protect the Weminuche Valley Ranch in Hinsdale County as well as three other ranches in Hinsdale and Archuleta Counties – the Singing Pines Ranch, El Rancho Pinoso, and the Cungini Ranch totaling 3,200 acres.



Lindner's El Rancho Pinoso

During that first visit, they asked a Pagosa Springs district Forest Service ranger about a primitive campground they might visit. The ranger's recommendation to stay at Cimarrona campground next to Williams Creek Reservoir proved pivotal.

"We were simply overwhelmed by the beauty, and I fell in love with that valley immediately," Mr. Lindner says.

Several years later, when the Jewell-Carrol Ranch came up for sale, Mr. Lindner acquired it and adjoining parcels to create the Weminuche Valley Ranch as it exists today. Over the years, Mr. Lindner acquired other ranches in five Colorado counties. The Lindners plan to protect most of the ranches with CCALT in the coming years.

Marty Zeller, a conservation planner who has worked extensively with the Lindner family said that, "The care, stewardship and respect for the ranching heritage that the Lindners have exercised in managing their properties is truly breathtaking."

Many of the barns, cabins and historic structures have been restored to retain their original western character and function. The Lindners are longtime members of the Colorado Cattlemen's Association and each of the properties is a working cattle ranch run by local ranch managers who have worked with Mr. Lindner for years. The quality of the cattle raised on these properties is attested to by the fact that over the years they are frequent award winners at the National Western Stock Show in Denver – including the 2006 CCA Producer Show.

On the Weminuche Valley Ranch, over five miles of Weminuche Creek flow through an open valley framed by the peaks of the San Juan Mountains and surrounded on three sides by the Weminuche Wilderness and San Juan National Forest lands. The land is home to a wide variety of wildlife including elk, moose, bear, mountain lion, lynx, brown trout, bald and golden eagles and other raptors. With the help of fisheries biologists, the Lindners have worked hard to improve the quality of the native fisheries on the Weminuche and other properties.

Bob Lindner's intent is clear. "I believe I am not only preserving God's beautiful land but also the way of life of generations of people—honest, hard-working people who helped forge the West into what it is today. My dream is to preserve these lands and maintain their integrity for decades to come."

Mr. Lindner, now in his eighties, is in the process of transferring the ownership and management of the ranches to his four sons, successful businessmen in their own right, who share the same desire to carry on the legacy of these fine properties.

Bob Lindner, Jr. recently stated that the ranches formed a key part of growing up and a key legacy that he and his brothers plan to continue. "We can't imagine not having these ranches—they've become so much a part of who I am and the life our family leads. My brothers and I hope to carry on the fine tradition of stewardship that my parents have exercised for over forty years."

# National Western Stock Show Landowner Dinner a Success



CCALT Board Members Sue Anschutz-Rodgers and Bill Fales

Sue Anschutz-Rodgers honored all CCALT landowners by hosting nearly 100 people at the CCALT annual dinner at the National Western Stock Show in January. Ms. Anschutz-Rodgers is a long-time CCALT board member and has sponsored events honoring our landowners for the past seven years.

Special recognition went out to all of our landowners from southeast Colorado who were hit hard with the blizzard in December and could not attend the event. We would also like to acknowledge all of those who have volunteered their time and contributed money for the blizzard relief efforts.

Everyone had a great time meeting one another and enjoying the excellent prime rib dinner that was served. John Swartout, Executive Director for Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), was the guest speaker for the evening. John recognized the ranchers at the dinner, highlighting the contribution they make daily to the protection of Colorado's open spaces. GOCO has awarded CCALT and their landowners millions of dollars over the last several years to promote land conservation. We are all very grateful to John and GOCO for all of their support. CCALT would like to thank Sue and her staff for all of their hard work in organizing this annual event for our landowners. Colorado would not be as beautiful as it is today without their dedication to preserve our land for generations to come!



John and Catherine Martino at the NWSS Landowner Dinner

## CCALT founder Jay Fetcher leaves after 12 years of service

Lifelong rancher and CCALT co-founder, Jay Fetcher recently announced his resignation from the CCALT board due to a conflict of interest with his current job working for Senator Ken Salazar.

In 1994, the Fetchers decided that they wanted their land near Steamboat Springs to be a ranch forever and to be able to pass it on to their children. After they created the conservation easement, Jay went to the CCA board and suggested it start a land trust. The association voted to become the first mainstream agricultural organization in the nation to form a land trust which was officially incorporated in 1995.

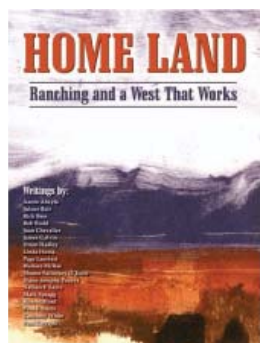
Jay's ties to Colorado agriculture and conservation run deep. He grew up on the family ranch and after receiving a Degree in Animal Science from the University of Wyoming, he returned to the ranch to take over the operation. In 1980, he received a Masters Degree in Genetics from Colorado State University. Jay also served on the Governor's Agriculture Land Conversion task force during 1995 and received the American Land Conservation Award in 1997.

Over the years, Jay's insight and hard work for the land trust have proven invaluable. As a board member and fellow landowner, Jay has

become a trusted source for those considering conservation easements. Though Jay has resigned from the board, he'll still have a presence around CCALT and will serve on the advisory council. All of us are honored to have had a chance to work with and learn from such a dedicated rancher and steward of the land. Board president Bill Fales reluctantly accepted Jay's resignation stating that, "We will miss not only Jay's creative thinking that is grounded in common sense but also his warmth and friendship. The wisdom behind Fetcher's idea of a CCA-based land trust has been proven not only by CCALT's amazing success but also by the fact that cattlemen's association in six other states have followed Colorado's lead and formed their own land trusts."



Jay Fetcher



## Hot off the press!

All across the West, ranches are giving way to development, just as the biological and cultural benefits of well-tended agricultural lands are becoming more and more clear. *Home Land: Ranching and a West that Works*, co-edited by CCALT board member Rick Knight, has recently hit bookstore shelves. The book, a compilation of essays, stories and poems, bridges the urban/rural divide with its steady focus on the health of the land. All royalties from this book will be donated to CCALT. Copies of the book are available at the Tattered Cover Bookstores in Denver or at [www.tatteredcover.com](http://www.tatteredcover.com).

## CCALT Wish List

- 2 handheld GPS units
- 1 Digital Camera: 5.0 mega pixel or greater
- Dell Inspiron Laptop; 512 MB memory, 80 GB hard drive
- Lightly used pickup or SUV



# Recognizing Our Supporters

We would like to express our sincere thanks to those individuals, businesses, and organizations that have partnered in CCALT'S unique vision from July 1, 2006 to March 20, 2007. We appreciate their leadership in the rewarding task of protecting productive agricultural lands.

**Colorado Pioneer \$10,000 +**  
Sue Anschutz-Rodgers  
Penny Lewis

**Rancher \$5,000 - \$9,999**

Mr. & Mrs. Tom Bradbury, Sr.  
Denny & Joy Swanson  
Ed Trousil, Humble Ranch

**Homesteader \$2,500 - \$4,999**

Anonymous (1)  
Miles & Jeanne Davies  
Bill Fales & Marj Perry  
Jack & Judy Green  
Katherine Rich *in honor of the Rickenbaugh Family*  
Carl & Karen Spina  
Western Land Group  
Marty Zeller

**Team Roper \$1,000 - \$2,499**

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Tim & Patti Casey  
Michael Dowling  
John & Mary Ann Duffey  
Bret & Brooke Fox  
Whitney Gillett  
Donald Holmes  
Larry & Nancy Kueter  
Bill & Rita Larson  
Randy & Dr. Lisa Lewis  
John P. McBride Family & the ABC  
Foundation *in honor of Bart Rickenbaugh*  
Jerome McHugh  
Lynn Nichols & Jim Gilchrist  
Anne Rickenbaugh *in memory of Kent Rickenbaugh*  
Randy & Claricy Rusk  
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The Colorado Health Foundation  
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John Anderson  
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Robert Gordon Barnhardt  
Lee Barrett  
Donald & Mary Lee Beauregard  
Tom Berg  
Tilman Bishop  
Gordon & Beverly Black  
Kyle Blackman  
Mike & Janice Bohart  
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David Christensen  
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Doug & Moira Cogswell  
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Polly Coleman  
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Cameron Cummings  
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Maud Duke  
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Christine Quinlan  
Ken Ransford  
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Erik & Amy Swanson *in honor of Kent Rickenbaugh*  
James & Cindy Tanner  
John Tarabino  
Moses & Betty Taylor  
Walt Taylor *in honor of Kent Rickenbaugh*  
Philip Teeter & Annie Sjoberg  
Alexander & Dottie Thomson  
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Robert Warner  
Charles & Emma Warren  
Anne Weckbaugh  
P.J. Wenham  
Chris & Kyle West  
Mark Weston & Lauri Korinek  
Allan White & Jane McLeod  
Wilderness Land Trust  
Craig Winterburn  
Suzanne Wolff & Gary Tennenbaum *in honor of Anne Rickenbaugh*  
John & Marion Woods  
Michael Young  
Robert Young  
Jerry & Karen Zink

*Please accept our sincere apologies for any unintentional mistakes or names that have been omitted.*



## Ranchers to showcase benefits of private land stewardship with SE Biological Inventory

Ranchers in southeast Colorado's shortgrass prairie, canyon and mesa country have known for generations that their ranches are home to spectacular wildlife resources. They have also been content to know that their private land stewardship keeps the wildlife there and thriving, and have kept the general public and government scientists out in order to keep it this way.

Southeastern Colorado is home to the largest intact working shortgrass prairie landscape in the United States. This area is almost entirely in private ownership and is extensively utilized for cattle production. Various interests, including the US Army which is looking to expand their Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site by more than 400,000 acres, developers creeping south from Front Range cities and conservation groups looking at the ecology of the area, have brought increased attention to this part of Colorado. While this attention may not be welcomed by the local ranching community, many landowners in the area are taking matters into their own hands.

In the fall of 2006, a group of more than 40 local ranchers approached CCA and Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) about the possibility of conducting a biological inventory of the 1.5 million acre area surrounding PCMS in the summer of 2007. Colorado Cattlemen's Association (CCA) Board Member T. Wright Dickinson and GOCO held a meeting with landowners in Pueblo to explore the possibilities in November. The Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP) volunteered to complete the inventory. CNHP is part of Colorado State University, and is the eminent authority on the animals, plants and habitats of Colorado. A partnership was formed between landowners, the land trust and the CNHP after an additional meeting in La Junta.



*JE Canyon Ranch*

In December, GOCO awarded the project a \$200,000 grant to move forward with the inventory in the spring of 2007. Beginning in April and running through the summer of 2007, scientists from CNHP and their partners, the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory will be on the ground, working with ranchers to identify significant biological resources found on private ranches of the area. A key component in this study for CCA and the landowners is that ranchers have control over the information collected on their property. Every landowner will see the information collected from their property and will have the final say on if and how it will be included in the final report compiled by CNHP.

CCA, CCA and the landowners anticipate the study's results will provide sound scientific information and a strong case for maintaining the area in private land ownership and not as a military installation.