

THE LEGACY



Newsletter of the Gunnison Ranchland Conservation Legacy
Fall 2018

MISSION

CONSERVE RANGLANDS. PRESERVE RANCHING.

CONTINUED SUPPORT IN 2018 FOR CONSERVATION IN COLORADO



Conservation got a big boost from the State of Colorado this year with a newly formed Division of Conservation that will administer the Conservation Easement Tax Credit Program. This change is the result of a collaborative effort among legislators, state agencies, landowners and land conservation groups to improve the efficiency and utility of the program. Colorado is one of only five states in the nation to offer a transferable tax credit for the donation of a conservation easement. In May, GRCL board and staff celebrated with Governor Hickenlooper (pictured left), elected officials, and community members after the governor signed a bill reauthorizing the Colorado Lottery through 2049. This includes continuation of funding to Great Outdoors Colorado for the protection of open space, parks, trails, rivers and wildlife. GOCO has been a funding partner for GRCL projects for 23 years and continues to make conservation projects possible in the Gunnison Valley through Open Space and Protect Initiative grants.

“Knowing we are going to have the resources to make sure we keep working ranches as working ranches, that’s not going to change. This gives us an opportunity to really preserve so much of what defines this state as different and special.”

- Governor John Hickenlooper



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GRCL is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit and relies on donations to provide conservation services to landowners wishing to protect their land.

Donations are tax-deductible and greatly appreciated. Every gift goes directly to current conservation projects.

Online giving is easy at www.gunnisonlegacy.org or to learn more about options for planned giving, please call the Legacy office at (970) 641-4386

NEWS

SUMMER WALKING TOUR HIGHLIGHTS RANCHING

Crested Butte Mountain Heritage Museum invited GRCL to lead a tour on ranching in the Gunnison Valley. The group (pictured right) visited recently conserved Trampe Ranch at Brush Creek. Participants learned about the seasonal management of ranches in the area, public lands grazing, and water resource management.



DIRECTORS NOTE

Since our founding in 1995, GRCL has been a catalyst for helping keep agricultural lands productive and families on the land. With ranchlands protected, our communities can rely on the natural resource benefits that intact working lands provide.

Good stewardship by families working land is especially important in drought years such as 2018. Conservation easements tie senior water rights to the land forever. Irrigation water soaks into the living "sponge" of soil and plant roots and is slowly released below the surface to sustain plant communities and recharge groundwater. Permanently connecting water to land also protects natural habitat for wildlife. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service just reviewed updated statistics GRCL provided about conservation easements, and concluded we must be pretty busy. They report a 34% increase in conserved lands within Gunnison Sage-grouse habitat over the past five years since the species was listed as Threatened and Critical Habitat was designated. In building relationships with landowners for more than 20 years, we've learned that land conservation is about much more than open space. It's also about keeping ag land affordable for ag families in the face of changing economics. The National Young Farmers Coalition produced a report in 2017 stating that conservation easements are the single most important factor in providing an affordable future for ag landowners.

Landowners remain solidly committed to conservation and stewardship that will carry us into the future. We are working on more projects than ever before, with several due for completion before the end of the year. We thank the landowners and the larger community for supporting the protection of ranchlands in our valley and the legacy it provides for future generations.

- Stacy McPhail
Executive Director

SPECIAL THANKS

to our conservation partners:



**Gunnison Valley Land
Protection Fund**



**GREAT
OUTDOORS
COLORADO**

**COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**
of the GUNNISON VALLEY

CFGV
here for good



COLORADO OPEN LANDS

CONSERVATION

CRANOR RANCH



The Walt and Margaret Cranor family conserved 632 acres north of Gunnison in April 2018. The Cranor Ranch is made up of irrigated meadow and rangeland that provides for livestock and wildlife including Gunnison Sage grouse. The Cranor family raises sheep, cattle, hay and horses on the irrigated meadow and rangeland of the ranch. Colorado Open Lands holds the easement. Grant funding came from our partners at Great Outdoors Colorado, the Gunnison County Land Preservation Fund, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Agricultural Lands Easement Program.

HOTCHKISS RANCH



Dick and Janice Hotchkiss finished the protection of their ranch in the Kebler Pass area with a donation of 595 acres. Largely surrounded by US Forest Service land, this 1,073-acre ranch provides summer grazing for the family's cattle and protects important wildlife habitat in the area. Dick Hotchkiss spent summers alone on the high-country ranch, beginning as an eight year-old boy managing the grazing. After their marriage, Dick and Janice lived every summer for 51 years on the ranch tending cattle. Colorado Open lands holds the easement and transaction expense support was provided by the Gunnison County Land Preservation Fund.

TRAMPE RANCHES - Upper East River Valley



The last of three easements to protect Trampe Ranches was completed in April with The Trust for Public Land. The 2,647-acre Upper East River Valley easement, held by The Nature Conservancy, protects more than 2 miles the East River and important seasonal grazing lands. This easement adds to the family's existing conservation totaling more than 6,000 acres of ranchland that allows for continued agricultural production and protects vital natural resources in the basin. The project was made possible by partners at GOCO, NRCS, the towns of Mt. Crested Butte, Crested Butte, Gunnison County, RMBL, 1% for Open Space, CB Land Trust, and many generous private donations.



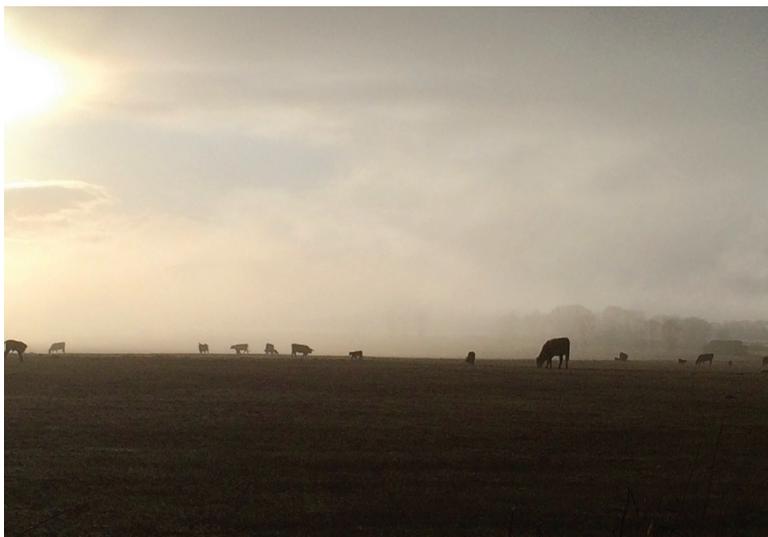
Gunnison Ranchland
Conservation Legacy

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Give a forever gift to the Gunnison Valley
ColoradoGives Day is December 4th
www.coloradogives.org

This year **ColoradoGives Day** is Tuesday, December 4, and features a \$1 million Incentive Fund. Every nonprofit receiving a donation on Colorado Gives Day will receive a portion of the fund, increasing the value of every dollar donated. Colorado Gives Day has grown to be the state's largest one-day online giving event, raising more than \$200 million since it began in 2010.



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