

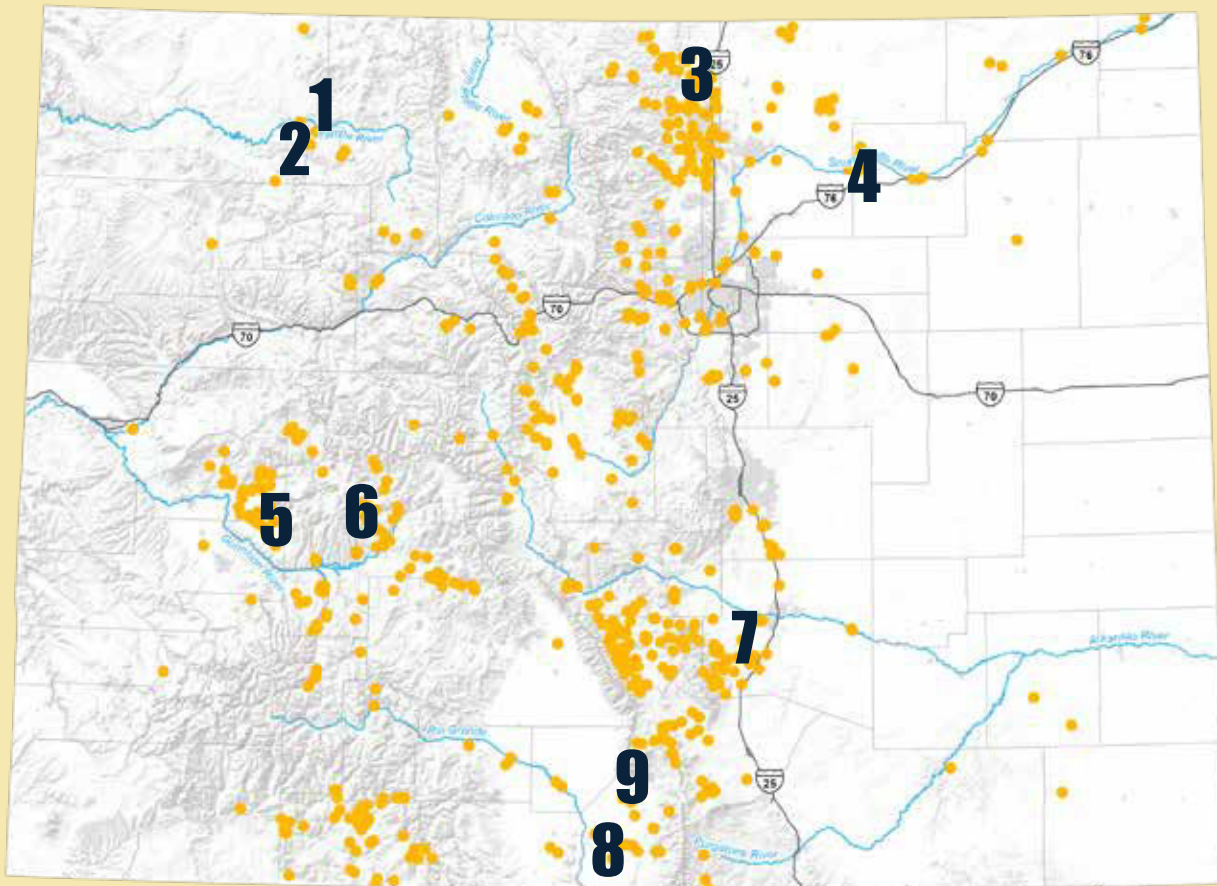
IN THIS ISSUE:
INTRODUCING THE NEXT
GENERATION TO CONSERVATION
9 NEW CONSERVATION PROJECTS
2024 EVENTS PREVIEW
AND MORE!



**SPRING 2024
NEWSLETTER**

COL has protected nine new properties totaling more than 14,000 acres since our last issue!

Thanks to supporters like you, Colorado Open Lands has accomplished a hugely productive period of land and water protection in Colorado. See the map below for where these projects are in the state, and see page numbers where you can find the full project descriptions as well! These projects include extraordinary wildlife habitat in northwest Colorado, iconic ranches in the Gunnison basin, innovative water and wetlands projects in northern Colorado, a beloved community gathering space, and much more!



● Existing Colorado Open Lands conservation project

Projects in this issue:

- 1. Home Place - p.11
- 2. Moon Place - p.11
- 3. Park Creek Station Mitigation Bank - p.15
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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Friend of Colorado Open Lands,

Stewardship is something we take very seriously at Colorado Open Lands. This includes stewardship of the lands and waters we work to permanently protect, stewardship of our relationships with the families that decide to work with us to conserve their land, and even careful stewardship of the resources our supporters share to make this work possible.

But there is another aspect of stewardship that is critical to our mission: the stewardship of Colorado's strong conservation ethic.

If there is one thing we have learned in our more than 40 years of protecting land and water in Colorado, it is that this work can't happen – and certainly can't happen in perpetuity – without the backing of conservation-minded Coloradans. After all, conservation easements designed to last in perpetuity are only as strong as the laws and policies that stand behind them and the people that defend them. For conservation to be upheld, we must have a community that understands and appreciates the importance of protecting open lands and water for the benefit of people and wildlife.

That's why COL has developed a suite of programs to educate and engage the public on the importance of land and water conservation, and that's why we consider this work so central to our mission.

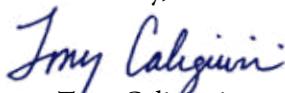
From helping educators develop curriculum that instills a love and care of nature in their students, to engaging professionals in an annual leadership program that focuses on the intricacies of conservation, to helping launch dozens of careers in conservation through a dedicated fellowship program, COL is working to build and steward the important ethic that makes Colorado a leader in conservation.

More than 80% of Coloradans feel that more needs to be done to protect land, water, and wildlife habitat in the state. In a state with an increasing awareness of that importance - coupled with a constant surge in land development - it is more important than ever that organizations like Colorado Open Lands focus on building and fostering that conservation ethic among our upcoming generations of leaders. Colorado Open Lands is poised to give conservation-minded Coloradans – and those still becoming such – the opportunity to connect with the land more deeply and ensure they have the knowledge, tools, and resources to support our work and that of the land conservation industry.

Colorado is a leader in conservation. But in order to continue to protect what we value, we need to make sure that future generations understand and appreciate the beauty and bounty of this extraordinary place we call home.

In this issue, we share some of this work and the people it has impacted. We deeply appreciate your support in helping to build and grow a statewide community of conservation advocates protecting land and water for people and wildlife.

Sincerely,



Tony Caligiuri
President and CEO



Empowering Future Advocates for Conservation in Colorado



The 2023 Conservation Leadership Series cohort attending an outing in South Park

Colorado Open Lands has permanently protected over 680,000 acres of open and working lands. That's a total area larger than all the state and national parks in Colorado combined! It is an extraordinary accomplishment, only possible because of the support that you provide.

We take great pride in these protected lands and the waters that run through them. We partner with many private land-owners to help steward and protect these open places from future development in perpetuity. Yet our job can't just be to quietly place conservation easements on open lands. We also have a responsibility to ensure that Coloradans have an appreciation of the important public benefits these places provide, since a supportive conservation-minded community urges our leaders and legislators to protect these places far into the future.

For the past 13 years, Colorado College has conducted an annual public opinion survey about land and water in the West, and each year they find overwhelming support for more land and water conservation. This year, 83% of respondents agreed that we should do more to protect our open lands and 87% thought that water was a particularly urgent issue.

This survey demonstrates that Coloradans truly care about our natural resources and are deeply concerned about their protection. This is good news for communities like ours that work in this industry, but we also know that this public support doesn't happen on its own. It takes intentional effort to effectively educate and engage Coloradans about the benefits of protecting our wild and working lands.

That's why Colorado Open Lands is leaning into this work. In a state with an increasing awareness of land conservation importance coupled with a surge in land development, it is more important than ever that conservation organizations like Colorado Open Lands focus on building and fostering a conservation ethic among our next generation of leaders.

Our Outreach & Education Vision

A statewide community of conservation advocates protecting land and water for people and wildlife.

Inspiring Future Generations

Investing in education and outreach initiatives is an investment in the future. By inspiring and engaging new people, conservation organizations nurture the next generation of environmental leaders and advocates. Through hands-on learning experiences, mentorship programs, and environmental education, organizations like COL can instill values of environmental stewardship, encouraging the continuity of our conservation efforts.

Colorado Open Lands has developed a suite of outreach and education programs that effectively educate people on the benefits of protecting our land and water. These programs reach audiences spanning from elementary school students, to recent college graduates, to mid-career professionals across industries. The programs not only provide an understanding and awareness of land conservation, but also inspire an appreciation and love of the natural resources surrounding us.

Reaching Our Youngest Coloradans

Today's youth – the next generation of leaders that will be protecting our land – need a repertoire of knowledge and skills that is more complex than any previous generation of students. We want students to have the opportunity to become leaders in the environmental field and integrate their care for nature into their personal and professional lives as adults. This is only possible if educators are equipped and empowered to facilitate environmental learning in their classrooms.

COL addresses this need by hosting **Teacher Workshops** to help K-12 educators learn about land and water conservation, develop hands-on skills, and compose curriculum that is tied to state standards and instills a sense of appreciation for conservation among their students. To date, 25,000 students across Colorado have been impacted by the program conducted in the San Luis Valley and these numbers multiply as teachers spend more years in the classroom with new students. This year we look forward to doubling the impact of our Teacher Workshops by launching a second session in a new location, with a new curriculum and in partnership with a local land trust. We will be able to reach even more teachers in an additional rural landscape, impacting even more youth across our state!



Elli Weaver participating in the 2023 Teacher Workshop

“Facilitating the Teacher Workshop last year brought true joy to my role at COL. Witnessing teachers from across the state take the time during their summer break to learn about land conservation and natural resource management is truly heart-warming. Educators have an incredibly important job to do – they inspire the future leaders of our state. Empowering and equipping them with conservation knowledge is pivotal, as they can then integrate what they learn into their classrooms, ultimately spurring and nurturing a love for the natural world in their students! There are moments throughout every Teacher Workshop that are memorable. A moment in time from last year that I will not forget is the smile and joy of Elli, a middle and high school science teacher at Bennett School District, as she held her first fish during a lesson with Colorado Parks and Wildlife!”

- Yvonne Schramm, COL's Community Outreach & Education Manager

Opportunities to Learn and Lead

Now entering its sixth successful year, the **Conservation Leadership Series** (CLS) engages a diverse class of early- to mid-career professionals in a year-long, immersive educational experience that weaves together a series of briefings, field experiences and networking opportunities to learn about the issues and complexities of land and water conservation. Participants join us from many professions, including business, banking, law, ranching, philanthropic foundations, health care, and other conservation organizations. Since its launch, more than 70 professionals have gone through this program and most continue to stay engaged with COL and advocate to solve conservation challenges within their own professional networks.

In the survey following the 2023 program, all participants either *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that participating in CLS will increase their civic and community engagement in relation to land conservation in Colorado. In addition, almost all participants strongly agreed that they would recommend the program to a friend or colleague! The below testimonial best shares the impact of this program.

“I’ve gained a new appreciation for private lands conservation and the critical role that landowners play in protecting habitat, recreation values, water, and biodiversity... There is no better way to understand this complex topic other than the experience of the Conservation Leadership Series... regardless if you’re an urban planner or a rural rancher, you will learn so much and be better prepared to approach community-oriented conservation in your daily life.”

- Survey Response of a 2023 CLS Participant

Education for All Coloradans

Colorado Open Lands acknowledges that many Coloradans may not fit into any of the above categories to benefit and learn from these special programs. Colorado Open Lands hosts additional meaningful outreach events for the whole Colorado community. From joining a webinar on the state’s water challenges, to volunteer days, to joining a tour about South Park’s conservation landscape, there is something for everyone. Learn more about this year’s events on page 13 of this publication and at coloradoopenlands.org/outreach-events.



Fellow turned Conservation Project Associate Kelsey Kirkwood (center) celebrates finalizing a conservation project with COL President Tony Caligiuri (left) and owners of Gold Nuggets River Ranch

Jump-starting Conservation Careers

Colorado Open Lands has successfully launched the careers of more than 50 conservation professionals through a **Conservation Fellowship Program**, placing recent graduates or beginning professionals in a conservation position within COL or with partner organizations. The program provides critical experience and a professional foot in the door by guaranteeing a two-year salaried position, while also providing important capacity for many partner organizations.

“During my time as a fellow, I was able to shadow project managers on ongoing projects, to help out and learn. The most impactful were the projects where I was able to start from the beginning, strengthening the relationship with the landowners and shepherding them through the whole process. The Gold Nuggets River Ranch was this project for me. It is a beautiful property along the Tarryall Creek in South Park that I was able to work on from start to finish. It was an amazing accomplishment for me, and it will always hold a special place in my heart.”

- Kelsey Kirkwood, originally hired as a Conservation Fellow, now promoted to Conservation Project Associate

Last year, COL spent a day at Santa Maria Ranch in Hartsel, doing fencing work alongside landowner George and ranch manager Gary. It was a typical bluebird Colorado day with clear skies and warm sunshine. Volunteers and staff removed old fencing to benefit local wildlife such as elk, while also erecting new fencing to support the ranch's rotational grazing practices. The day was spent doing meaningful work while also hearing firsthand stories about the land and its changes over the years. Santa Ma-

ria Ranch was conserved in 2004 and, as a large historic property, there is always work to be done to manage and restore the land and its homestead buildings. As the day came to an end, George and Gary did not stop thanking the group and shared that it was a huge help for them. Even days later, a participant shared that they were still relishing the experience and commented that it was "so nice to do some beneficial work out on the land."



The Conservation Leadership Series cohort of 2023 touring conserved land in northern Colorado

Fostering Stewardship and Empowerment

Community outreach and education lie at the heart of effective conservation strategies. By promoting awareness, fostering stewardship, addressing local needs, building trust, promoting equity, and inspiring future generations, conservation organizations like Colorado Open Lands can create lasting positive change for our state and help guarantee our promise of protecting land and water in perpetuity. As we confront unprecedented environmental challenges, the importance of community engagement in conservation has never been more critical. Together, we can work towards a sustainable future where nature thrives, and communities prosper.

If you are interested in supporting or enrolling in one of these programs, please contact Yvonne Schramm at YSchramm@ColoradoOpenLands.org or 303.988.2373 ext. 223.



Volunteer day repairing fences at Santa Maria Ranch in Hartsel

New ranches protected in the Gunnison Basin!

COL has completed 142 land protection projects in this region, totaling over 46,000 acres!



TLC Ranch

TLC Ranch

TLC Ranch is 1,236 acres located in the upper part of the Ohio Creek Valley of Gunnison County, approximately 13 miles northwest of the City of Gunnison. The ranch is managed for hay production and livestock grazing. It's comprised of sloping hillsides and terraces covered with sagebrush, montane forest, native mountain grass and forb vegetation, and irrigated meadows.

Habitat is provided for bald eagle, ferruginous hawk, and northern leopard frog (all Colorado Species of Concern) as well as Gunnison sage-grouse (which is also federally listed as Threatened). The property is within the northernmost reach of Gunnison sage-grouse habitat in the Ohio Creek Valley. Black bear, elk, moose, mountain lion, and mule deer can also be found on TLC Ranch, and the property is part of a migration corridor for elk and mule deer and is a production area for elk.

TLC Ranch is visible to the public from Ohio Creek Road and nearby Gunnison National Forest lands, contributing to the scenic enjoyment it offers.

Ohio Creek Valley is stunning with lush, irrigated fields surrounded by National Forest lands and the West Elk Mountains. Development pressure in this valley is high due to the proximity to Gunnison and Crested Butte, recreational access, and the beautiful scenery. Conservation efforts in this valley have resulted in much of the land being protected with Colorado Open Lands and our conservation partners. TLC Ranch is located within 5 miles of 17 conservation projects conserving over 8,700 acres.

Project partners include Gunnison Ranchland Conservation Legacy (GRCL) and Gunnison Valley Land Preservation Fund. Photo courtesy of GRCL.

Nelson Property

The 120-acre Nelson Property in Montrose and Delta Counties was homesteaded in the 1880s, and many of the original structures are still standing. Today, the property is used for livestock grazing and hay production. It's just three miles outside the Town of Crawford in the Clear Fork Area. The property consists of irrigated fields, sagebrush, pinyon-juniper trees, and a half mile of frontage along Clear Fork Creek. Habitat is provided for Gunnison sage-grouse, bald eagle, black bear, elk, mountain lion, and mule deer. The Nelson Property is located in an area dense with other protected lands. More than 12,000 acres of agricultural lands are conserved within 10 miles of the property.

Natural Resources Conservation Service was a project partner.



Nelson Property

New Faces at COL

Join us in welcoming two additional members to our Board of Directors, and a new staff position to help us accomplish more and better conservation work!

Cleave Simpson - Alamosa - BOARD MEMBER

Cleave Simpson was born and raised in Alamosa, Colorado. He is the fourth generation of his family to farm and ranch in the San Luis Valley. Cleave and his wife Cathy enjoy spending time in their beloved Valley with their loving family members, especially their grandchildren. Cleave is the general manager of the Rio Grande Water Conservation District, working across the Valley with all stakeholders addressing the water security issues in the basin. He is also currently the Colorado State Senator representing Senate District 6 which is comprised of 14 counties in southern and southwest Colorado, including the west slope and the south slope. Cleave has served as a representative to the Rio Grande Basin Roundtable and as the Roundtable representative to the statewide Interbasin Compact Committee. He is also the past chairman of the Adams State University Board of Trustees in Alamosa. Through a thoughtful approach to preserving the landscapes Coloradans cherish, he expects to create opportunities for the fifth and sixth generations of his family and many others to enjoy the abundant and varied natural beauty of our great state.



Jeff Trujillo - Denver - BOARD MEMBER

Jeff Trujillo leads PwC's U.S. Alliances & Ecosystems Commercial team which is responsible for identifying and activating strategic growth investments with the firm's key technology alliances. A fifth generation Colorado native, Jeff is dedicated to taking care of the state's outdoor spaces. He is a 20-year boots-on-the-ground volunteer with Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado and also served as VOC's board chair. He currently serves on the board of Leave No Trace and El Pomar Foundation's Awards for Excellence selection committee. When Jeff isn't working, he can be found enjoying the outdoors with his family and friends. Jeff is a graduate of Colorado College and received his masters from the University of Colorado.

Adding a Grants Manager to the COL staff allows us to pursue and track government and foundation funding, freeing up project staff to do more and better land protection work!

Megan Anthony - GRANTS MANAGER

After attending Metropolitan State University of Denver, Megan began working for a Denver based non-profit whose mission is to increase access to reading materials and improve early childhood literacy rates across the state of Colorado. Her other prior experience includes grant writing and management for a national conservation corps as well as the Denver Fire Department Foundation. Megan is excited to support a team that protects and preserves Colorado's natural beauty. In her free time Megan enjoys escaping into the back country, going for a bike ride, or browsing local thrift shops.





Working in Northwest Colorado to protect large intact landscapes

Two new projects in Routt County

Home Place. All photos on these two pages courtesy of D. Reeder, Rare Earth Science

Colorado Open Lands has long focused our land and water protection efforts on priority landscapes across the state. Although we can and do work in any area of Colorado with land and water that deserves protection, we select areas to focus our conservation efforts at the intersection of strong habitat, water resources, ag production, and incredible views, combined with the threat of land fragmentation or development. In recent years, we have become more involved in a new region with prime opportunity to protect large parcels of land with extraordinary wildlife habitat in Colorado: the Northwest.

Northwest Colorado is a vast, scenic landscape dotted with working cattle and sheep ranches and muted mountain ranges. It's home to the Yampa, Green, and White Rivers, some of the last untamed and undammed rivers in the West. The area has abundant wildlife including a high concentration of elk, mule deer, sage grouse, mountain lion, bighorn sheep and sandhill cranes.

The Bears Ears elk herd that calls this region home is estimated to be between 23,000-25,000 animals. There is also a high concentration of local mountain lions. And Northwest Colorado is home to the largest concentration of Gunnison sage-grouse in the world. Together, these create a compelling reason to focus on the protection of open land and habitat in this region.

“In my opinion as a wildlife manager for the last 38 years, the importance of this region to wildlife, both in habitat and as a migration corridor, cannot be underestimated or overstated,” said Pat Grieve, Manager of the Snake River Wildlife Compact.

The federal Inflation Reduction Act and the federal Infrastructure Bill have pumped billions of dollars into land conservation, which goes directly to landowners willing to give up their development rights in order to protect wildlife habitat. There is also a great sense of urgency in this work. Not only is development pressure growing, but the window to use these federal funds is limited.

In 2020, COL completed its first significant conservation project in the region with the protection of the 7,311-acre Baker's Peak Ranch, which provided a critical wildlife migration corridor between summer and winter elk ranges on neighboring public lands. Since that time, we have met with numerous landowners interested in conserving their lands, and those efforts are bearing fruit. Since our last newsletter issue, we have worked with two families to complete projects in Routt County totaling over 6,500 acres of new land protection. Read on to learn about Moon Place and Home Place, protection of which created a 27,000-acre block of contiguous, protected agricultural lands and wildlife habitat.

Moon Place

Comprising 5,813 acres, the Moon Place property is owned by the Tuttle family and serves as seasonal grazing ground. The Tuttle family is a seventh generation sheep ranching family that manages land spread throughout the lower Yampa River Valley. The family has a strong conservation ethic, having conserved over 23,000 acres of land in total. The Moon Place property is located in both Moffat and Routt Counties, about eight miles southeast of Craig and six miles southwest of Hayden. The property lies within the Williams Fork Mountains and is within the Yampa River watershed.

“With property values increasing, it’s harder than ever for ranchers to buy land. My son and I represent the fourth and fifth generations of my family to ranch in this region. Conservation easements help families like mine make stable, long-term commitments to our agriculture operation,” said Rex Tuttle.

The Moon Place property consists of sagebrush shrublands and shrubsteppe, Gambel oak mixed mountain shrublands, aspen stands, numerous ponds and springs, cliffs and rock outcrops. Habitat is provided for Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, ferruginous hawk, Greater sage-grouse, Greater sandhill crane, northern leopard frog, black bear, elk, moose, mountain lion, mule deer and pronghorn. Elk and mule deer use the property as part of a larger migration corridor.

The property is visible from adjacent county roads and from adjacent and nearby Bureau of Land Management and State Land Board lands. Numerous state-owned lands are in the vicinity and provide protection of Greater sage-grouse and recreation opportunities.

Home Place

Located in western Routt County about seven miles southeast of Craig and six miles southwest of Hayden, the 810-acre Home Place property is owned by the Barnes family, which manages the property for cattle grazing. Part of a land patent from the State of Colorado in 1964, the property was acquired by the Barnes family in 1974. The family has been ranching cattle for four generations.

The Home Place property consists of sagebrush shrublands and shrubsteppe, mixed mountain shrublands, grass



Moon Place

pastures and swales. Habitat is provided for bald eagle, Columbian sharp-tailed grouse (including two active leks), ferruginous hawk, Greater sage-grouse, Greater sandhill crane, northern leopard frog, black bear, elk, moose, mule deer and pronghorn. The property is part of a winter concentration area for elk and provides important winter habitat during the most severe winters.

The property is visible from Routt County Road 65 and from adjacent and nearby State Land Board lands and State Wildlife Areas. The state has invested heavily in protecting lands in this area for grouse and wildlife habitat and recreation along the Yampa River corridor.

Partners for both projects include Natural Resources Conservation Service and Routt County Purchase Development Rights.



Bruce Barnes, Home Place

Conservation taking flight in the San Luis Valley



Newly protected Sandhill Crane Habitat

Colorado Open Lands has been working with local partners in the San Luis Valley for over a decade and has successfully completed 50 land and water protection projects, totaling over 140,000 acres of land! Here are our two most recent projects:

Prime Sandhill Crane Habitat

In February, we protected nearly 1,500 acres in Costilla County in partnership with local landowners. This ranch consists of irrigated meadows and grazing land, and the water rights – critically important in this area – were protected along with the land. The ranch is known habitat for elk, mule deer, pronghorn, black bear, and mountain lion, as well as endangered and threatened species including southwestern willow flycatcher and burrowing owl. Huge numbers of sandhill cranes gather on the ranch each year as well!

Caldon Farms

Colorado Open Lands has partnered with the Caldón Family in the San Luis Valley to permanently protect 2,464 acres of working farmland, including the water the family uses

for irrigation. This historic farm is an important part of the local agricultural community and is home to important wildlife species including elk, mule deer, and sandhill crane.

The farm consists of grazing and crop land in Costilla County, southwest of the town of San Luis and is highly visible from two state highways. The protected water is drawn from the Culebra River.

Project partners include Natural Resources Conservation Service, Great Outdoors Colorado, the LOR Foundation, Colorado Conservation Partnership, and the Trinchera-Blanca Foundation.



Caldon Farms



2024 Events Preview: Connect with Colorado Open Lands!

We're pleased to offer three open-invite outreach tours in 2024!

Thursday, June 13, 2024:
Community Conservation Hike - Golden

Friday, August 2, 2024:
South Park Conservation Hike - Kenosha Pass

Friday, September 27, 2024:
Conserved Property Visit & Hike - Fairplay

Want more information? Contact Yvonne Schramm at
YSchramm@ColoradoOpenLands.org or
303.988.2373 ext. 223.

May 15, 2024: For Love of the Land - Join us! Denver Art Museum

As a headwaters state, Colorado has incredible water resources that support habitat for wild-life, irrigation for agriculture, and recreation and drinking water for Colorado's residents and visitors. Protecting these resources in the face of population growth and an uncertain climate is more important than ever. Come together with Colorado's best minds in conservation, business, and philanthropy to celebrate the leaders who are working to protect this precious resource and uncover the challenges to come. The program promises to be thought-provoking and inspiring.



Commissioner Anne Castle is our 2024 Champion of the Land

Anne currently serves as the U.S. Commissioner for the Upper Colorado River Commission and formerly served as the Assistant Secretary for Water and Science for the U.S. Department of the Interior. While at Interior, Anne spearheaded the WaterSMART program and provided hands-on leadership on Colorado River issues including a ground-breaking agreement between the U.S. and Mexico.



Keynote by Pete McBride

Pete is an acclaimed photographer, filmmaker, writer, and public speaker originally from Aspen, CO. He has traveled to more than 75 countries on assignment for the National Geographic Society, Smithsonian, Google, and The Nature Conservancy. Pete will offer a unique perspective on not only the land and water we work to protect, but the people and places that it touches.

For sponsorship or ticket information, contact Elizabeth Silverman at ESilverman@coloradoopenlands.org or 303.988.2373 ext. 216.

A beloved community gathering place permanently protected

Hudson Ranch is 1,600 acres outside of Pueblo

On the edge of growth and development in nearby Pueblo, the nearly 1,600-acre Hudson Ranch has been permanently protected from development or subdivision. This effort was made possible through a partnership between the Rocky Mountain Farmers Union Foundation, the Pueblo County 4-H Foundation, and Colorado Open Lands. Protecting this land will forever ensure the future of community recreation spaces and diverse ecosystems for people and wildlife.

Owned and operated by the Rocky Mountain Farmers Union Foundation and the Pueblo County 4-H Foundation, Hudson Ranch serves as a hub for agricultural education and treasured community activities. The decision to pursue a conservation easement with Colorado Open Lands secures the future of the ranch, contributing to wildlife habitat preservation and maintaining the area's scenic beauty.

Chad Franke, President of the Rocky Mountain Farmers Union, sees the conservation of Hudson Ranch as a tangible result of the organization's vision. "At the Farmers Union, we are working to create a society in which farmers, ranchers, and their communities thrive. The conservation of Hudson Ranch, and the educational opportunities it provides for our Foundation are an exciting step toward that goal. We extend our thanks and gratitude to the organizations involved in this project, as well as the ranch managers who worked tirelessly to move this project forward."

On a portion of the ranch - but just outside the boundary of the protected area - sit community amenities including a cowboy church, an outdoor arena, and a model rocket launch site. These facilities have become cherished resources for both locals and visitors.

John and Helen Hudson's generous donation of the land made possible their vision for agriculture, education, and community use. The conservation easement guarantees that the property will remain open in perpetuity, aligning with the Hudsons' wishes and ensuring a lasting legacy for the community.





Two new wetlands protected to benefit wildlife!

Park Creek Station

After the federal government, the Colorado State Land Board is the second largest landowner in Colorado with over 2.8 million acres in holdings. Its mission is to monetize that land to support Colorado public schools. It does this largely through leasing land for grazing, which also supports our agricultural industry. In recent years, the State Land Board has been partnering with Colorado Open Lands to create mitigation banks. This process consists of permanently protecting land and subsequently creating a bank of saleable credits that fund restoration on these sites for the benefit of wildlife habitat and wetland health. Colorado Open Lands completed two conservation bank projects with the State Land Board in the last six months! Read on to learn more about these two sites.

Park Creek Station

This 240-acre property in Larimer County serves as important wildlife habitat and includes 33 acres of wetlands and a mile of Park Creek. The property is home to coyotes, prairie dogs, mule deer, white tail deer, and many bird species.

Restoration and enhancement of the wetlands will be completed in the coming years with over 50 acres of inactive wetlands reestablished and the existing wetlands enhanced, improving the habitat as well. Once complete, the property will serve as a wetland mitigation bank, providing a new and innovative funding source for Colorado public schools.

South Platte Wetland

This 197-acre property in Morgan County contains the confluence of the Milliron Draw and the South Platte River and includes over half a mile of the latter. Habitat is provided for bald eagles, turkeys, white-tailed deer, and migrating waterfowl. In protecting the land and creating the mitigation bank, restoration and enhancement work will begin to reconnect former wetland areas that have been impacted by sediment deposits from past floods. Invasive species will be removed, and native vegetation will be planted. This will improve the floodplain and ecological function of the wetlands and provide improved habitat for a multitude of species.



South Platte Wetland

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Per-en-ni-al / pə'renēəl: Lasting for an infinitely long time; enduring or continually recurring.

Colorado Open Lands will continue to steward Colorado's conservation ethic through the programs detailed in this newsletter. You can join this effort by having an infinite impact as a Perennial Partner!

Perennial Partners are individuals who give to COL on a monthly basis. It is an easy way to know your gift is current and provides COL with steady and predictable funding that could support our outreach and education programs!

\$60 per month

Could help cover the cost for one professional to take part in our nine-month Conservation Leadership Series

OR

Could impact nearly 200 K-12 students by educating their teacher on land conservation through our Teacher Workshops!

Join today at ColoradoOpenLands.org/MonthlyGiving