From the Director

I often think about what it would have been like to be a fly on the wall thirty-five years ago during the conversation in which a group of Jackson residents predicted an increasing development interest in the valley and brainstormed how to protect this place they loved so much. Growth is natural and inevitable in a beautiful place like Jackson, but this group had faith that the Jackson community could grow in a way that respected the land, the animals, and the spirit of Jackson Hole.

In 1980, the Jackson Hole Land Trust was founded as a community tool to be used to protect the very characteristics of the valley that were attracting more and more people each year. Each day! I am lucky enough to learn something new about the role the Land Trust has had in preserving important and historic pieces of land, and I am consistently amazed at the community’s creative and impassioned use of conservation easements to safeguard the vitality of Jackson Hole.

When thinking of how to tell the story of what 35 years of the Jackson Hole Land Trust’s work has meant to our valley, we felt that the cherished open spaces, and the people that played a pivotal role in protecting them, would best speak for themselves.

For this issue, “35 Years of Open Places, Places, and Faces,” we interviewed each past president of the Land Trust and asked them the following four questions: Why did you want to be a part of the Land Trust? What project was the most special to you as board president and why? What impact has the Land Trust made in this valley? What three words would you use to describe the Land Trust?

As you will see in the following pages, the Land Trust has been blessed with an amazing family of board members, supporters, partners, and staff through the years. The past presidents of the Land Trust are wonderful spokespersons for this family – familiar faces of the valley that are beloved and respected leaders from diverse backgrounds encompassing everything from ranching to international finance.

The photos of the iconic open spaces that defined each president’s tenure – visionary projects like the Walton Ranch, Hardeman Barns, Snake River Ranch, and Hansen and Mead Ranch, to name just a few of many – also help tell the Land Trust’s story through time. Seen in sequence, they help to highlight how our approach to land conservation in the valley has kept pace with the valley as it has evolved, thanks to the leadership of our board, community support, and the backing of two capital campaigns.

Certainly this is only a small part of the Land Trust story, and if we could have, we would have filled countless pages with photos and fond memories of all of our family members over the years. We hope that you will be inspired to help us to do this in another way, by contributing your images and thoughtful quotes to our Faces of the Land Trust photo and video contest.

I am so grateful for the connection that I feel to Jackson – to the land and to the community – a connection that was facilitated and strengthened by my role at the Land Trust and the support from conservation advocates like you. It has been an honor to lead and serve this organization for the past ten years to protect and steward the open spaces that we hold near and dear. I look forward to celebrating our 35th anniversary with you this summer.

Warm Regards,
Laurie Andrews

The full interviews with past presidents and emeritus board members, as well as portrait photography by Laurie Andrews, celebrating our 35th anniversary with you this summer.

Celebrate 35 Years with the Jackson Hole Land Trust!

JHLT Chamber Mixer
Thursday, June 25th at 5 PM
Join us for the launch of the Jackson Hole Land Trust’s 35th anniversary celebrations!
With music by Shark Week, food, refreshments, a photo booth, and more.

35th Anniversary Picnic
Sunday, August 9th at 4 PM
The JHLT Annual Picnic is a celebration of the wide open spaces that we, as a community, have worked to protect – a family-friendly event featuring classic barbecue fare, children’s activities, partner booths, and music by One Ton Pig. This year, the View22 35 Places Exhibit will be on display, showcasing the works created over the spring and summer by the View22 Project artists.

Open Land: The Jackson Hole Land Trust is a private, non-profit organization that was established in 1980 to preserve open space and the critical wildlife habitat, magnificent scenic vistas, and historic ranching heritage of Jackson Hole. By working cooperatively with the owners of the areas privately-owned open lands, the Jackson Hole Land Trust has ensured the permanent protection of over 25,000 acres in and around Jackson Hole and the Greater Yellowstone Area. For more information please visit jhlandtrust.org.

Staff
Laurie Andrews, Executive Director
Pam Case, Development Officer
Greg Freer, Major Gifts Officer
Steffan Freeman, Land Steward
Liz Lord, Director of Conservation
Holly Mckey, Office Manager
Roxi Pierson, Development Associate
Lance Potter, Conservation Associate
Derek Schaefer, Chief Financial Officer

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Jenny Woltz

Executive Director
Holly McKoy

Director of Conservation
Laurie Andrews

Director of Development & Communications
Laurie Andrews

Development Officer
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Major Gifts Officer
Tania Evans

Office Manager
Karen Parent

First Vice President
Scott Pierson

Second Vice President
Bill Adams

Executive Director
Laurie Andrews

Office Manager
Allan Tessler

Director of Communications
Leslie Steen

Board Member
Jennifer Sparks

President
John Vogelstein

Vice President
Teddy McElroy

JH Hole Land Trust’s 35th Anniversary Art and Documentary Exhibit view22

VIEW22: 35 Places
This year’s View22 Project once again unites art and conservation, with local artists creating place-based art on JHLT protected properties to raise awareness of the importance of open space protection. These experiences will be shared through an interactive online blog, artist demonstrations, and a fundraising art show at the picnic. New for this year, our 35th anniversary, we will be featuring 35 local artists and 35 conservation properties. Find out more at view22.jhlandtrust.org.

Faces of the Land Trust
Photo & Video Contest:
Enter a photo or short video of a “Face” of the Land Trust (a community member, wild animal, farm machinery, Land Trust leader, mountain – be creative!) and share your connection to open space conservation for a chance to win: $1,000 gift card from Orvis; a 2 night stay at Amangani; and other fantastic prizes. Your entries will be stitched together to create a community-sourced photo and video gallery that showcases the joy of what open spaces mean to our community, displayed online and at the picnic.

2015 SUMMER EVENTS
June 25 • 5-7 pm
Chamber Mixer at the JHLT Offices
July 8 • 4-7 pm
People’s Market Booth at Snow King
July 9 • 9-11 am
View22 at the Top of the Tram, Jackson Hole Mountain Resort
July 19 • 2-5 pm
Teton Food Tour from Wilson to Teton Village
July 21 • 12-1 pm
View22 at R Park
August 1 & 2
FoundSpace & The Exquisite Gardeners at Kams Meadow
August 9 • 4-8 pm
35th Anniversary Annual Picnic at the Mead Ranch
September 12 • 9am-12pm
Old Bill’s Fun Run Booth at the Town Square

For more information about how to participate in our 35th anniversary celebrations, please visit www.jhlandtrust.org/35years.

“The whole valley was trying to keep 350 condos from being built in the big meadow between the Iron Rock hill and Walton driveway. Emily Stevens led the charge, and the result was no condos and no single family lots in that meadow.”  


Describe JHLT: a model of continuity, fundable

Why he joined: the valley had a direct need for preservation and someone had to do it. I had seen the impact that a land trust could have in New England when I was in school at Dartmouth and I knew that something similar had to be done to restrict development in Jackson Hole. The Land Trust was the natural solution to this problem.

JHLT’s Impact: The Land Trust has guaranteed the preservation of private lands owned by families in the valley, and ensured that we will continue to have large, open pieces of land throughout the valley.

JHLT’s Impact: The Land Trust began, and then continued to refine, the public’s understanding of conservation values and the relationship between public and private lands. Additionally, the Land Trust framed, and then defined, the concept of “in perpetuity.” “In perpetuity” evolved from a legal concept involving tax incentives into the stewardship of those private lands (including wildlife, flora, and open space), for the public benefit, forever. That’s a big responsibility.


“Finding 300 local couples to accept an unidentified gift from Paul and Betty Walton, and having all but one of them relinquish their claim to interest in the ranch in order to rejoin the parcels back into the present Walton Ranch, gave me the most personal satisfaction.”

JAMES MATHIEU  Board President: 1986-1987  |  Board Member: 1983-1990

Describe JHLT: private/public partnership

Why he joined: my family initiated one of the first conservation easements in Wyoming with the Lake Creek Ranch easement to The Nature Conservancy in 1973. I was, and remain, very proud of that conservation precedent. I was aware of the potential of the Land Trust and, within the State. Apparently enough other people seemed to think my experience with that process was a valuable asset to the fledgling Jackson Hole Land Trust. Plus, I think Jean Hocker liked me.

JHLT’s Impact: The hardeman campaign made everyone in the valley aware of what the Land Trust did and how important we were to the valley. It took us to a new level, important organization in the valley.

Defining Project: Hardeman Barns & Meadows | 129 acres | 1989

“Every time I drive down that road, I look at those Barns and think, ‘this is what I did for my kids, and now for my grandkids that live in Wilson’. They’re going to drive by it long after I’m gone and say, ‘that’s what my grandfather helped to do’.


Why he joined: Throughout the 1970s, it became clear that Jackson Hole was destined to grow and possibly lose much of the character that had spurred that growth. I joined the Land Trust because I believed that planning and zoning regulations alone weren’t going to preserve the valley, and if we wanted to protect it then the thing to do was to push the idea of conservation easements.

JHLT’s Impact: The Land Trust has prevented a disaster! Its impact has been similar to that of the Rockefeller purchase of the northern end of the valley for the Park. If they hadn’t done that, the Park would be full of commercial development trying to take advantage of the view. The Rockefeller purchase protected that, and the Land Trust has prevented much of the same thing from happening in the southern end of the valley.

JHLT’s Impact: On private memory


Why he joined: My first foray into Jackson’s nonprofit community was the Jackson Hole Land Trust. It became apparent in the late 80s that we needed to preserve the Hardeman Meadows – the most important view corridor coming over Teton Pass from Idaho into Wilson.

JHLT’s Impact: The Hardeman campaign made everyone in the valley aware of what the Land Trust did and how important we were to the valley. It took us to a new level, from a small organization to a very meaningful and important organization in the valley.

Quotes by Alan Hirschfield from past interviews with the CFJH and JHLT courtesy of Berte Hirschfield.

35 Years of Open Space Conservation

McK Mendenhall, Anne Muller

Mary Gerty


“It was the first easement that the Land Trust did, and it was extremely valuable to the preservation of Jackson Hole. The Stirns were among the first ranching families to see the value of protecting the ranching way of life and land ethic.”


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Quotes by Alan Hirschfield from past interviews with the CFJH and JHLT courtesy of Berte Hirschfield.
Defining Project: Circle Shoe Ranch | 32 acres | 1989
“Conserving the Circle Shoe meant that the incredible views and wildlife habitat around Wilson would be protected forever. This place has given us so much joy over the years, and it was deeply important to me and Tom to be able to pass that on for the future.” – Birdie Rossetter, Tom’s wife

Why he joined: All my life growing up in Jackson Hole, whether it was in the Town of Jackson, in South Park on the ranch, or at our resort in the Park, I felt very fortunate to be in this extraordinarily beautiful place. I’ve never longed to be on boards, but I really wanted to be part of this organization that ranchers and other interested people had formed, the Jackson Hole Land Trust.

Why he joined: When my parents bought the Circle Shoe Ranch in Wilson, the Land Trust was working on protecting the neighboring Hardeman Ranch, and with that introduction and through working on the Circle Shoe easement, my dad’s involvement in the organization expanded. He loved being on the board. He had a background in development and liked being able to contribute that experience toward conserving land in Jackson Hole.” – Steve Rossetter, Tom’s son

JHLT’s Impact: The Land Trust has had an extraordinary impact. Had it not been for the Land Trust, there would have been a lot more development in the valley. In addition you have to recognize the conservation landowners, the original stewards of their properties, for their willingness to protect the open vistas and wildlife habitat of their land. Just imagine if the Wilson Ranch had one house per 3 acres - you do the math.

Why he joined: The proposed development slated for the Hardeman property would have dramatically altered the landscape in Wilson. Public support for protection may have been everywhere, but it was the JHLT that was able to galvanize that sentiment and turn it into a tangible reality. Bold, effective work is easy to support.

JHLT’s Impact: There is no other place in the country where the scenic and natural resource values are so high. As land values are also high, it is crucial that landowners have a viable option to development. You would think that the extent of the public domain in Teton County would offer ample protection, but the valley would have a very different feel without the Jackson Hole Land Trust.

Why he joined: I got involved with the Land Trust because my business partner, Alan Hirschfield, was very engaged with the organization. At that time we were trying to protect the Hardeman Meadows.

JHLT’s Impact: It’s obvious when you look around at the various pieces of protected land in the valley, and you look at the map, that the Land Trust has had a major impact over time. I think it’s been for the betterment of the valley to keep our vistas open.
Kim Fadiman

Mary Gerty

Anne Muller


“It was a huge undertaking and involved serious fundraising and our commitment to the first capital campaign. Considering what development for that piece would do to the views and ranching ambience of Jackson it was absolutely essential to protect.”

TANIA EVANS

Board President: 2000-2001

Board Member: 1996-2001, 2012-Present

Why she joined: I was honored to be asked to join the JHLT Board in 1995. We had just witnessed the superb job the organization did to preserve the Hardeman property which was so crucial to the character of Wilson. It was a time of huge development in the valley and it seemed that the Land Trust was the only organization that could protect the lifeblood of the community from runaway development.

JHLT’s Impact: Without the ability that the Land Trust provides to save parcels in danger of mass development, encroaching on wildlife migration and habitat as well as priceless scenic views, the character of one of nature’s most extraordinary places would be ruined forever. In many respects when I say this, it is in response to seeing the dreadful degradation of other areas of the United States which were once places of tremendous beauty.

Defining Project: Capital Campaign & Serenity Ranch | 209 acres | 2001

“The Serenity Ranch project was important because there was growing pressure to develop 55-60 acres in the Gros Ventre area. The easement effectively stopped development and protected those open spaces in perpetuity. But the biggest project of my board presidency was the capital campaign.”

SCOTT PIERSON

Board President: 2001-2003

Board Member: 1996-2005, 2010-Present

Why he joined: I wanted to be part of the Land Trust because of the special place that Jackson Hole is with regards to its Parks, community, and wildlife. I’d worked with the Land Trust on many easements for my clients before I joined the board. I came to believe that protecting this place through conservation easements was, and is, the best way to ensure that we preserve the values that brought many of us here.

JHLT’s Impact: Without the Land Trust, the valley would have a much different face on it. The scenic views and the protection of wildlife habitat complement each other – if you protect the scenic corridors it gives the wildlife places to move back and forth as well. Through conservation easements we have created broad swaths of connected habitat from the river corridors to the mountain ranges on either side of the valley.

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TONY BROOKS

Board President: 2000-2003

Board Member: 1999-2005

Emeritus: 2003

Why he joined: My two brothers and I came to ski in 1980; we had never been to Jackson before that. I returned for a summer visit – skiing attracts people to Jackson, but it’s the summer kept them there. At the time, the Hardeman project was underway and it just felt like the right thing to be involved with, so we started contributing to the Land Trust.

JHLT’s Impact: The Land Trust has kept critical lands in the valley from development; open and wild places protected as a benefit for the community. Looking back, one of the most important things that I had anything to do with was being part of the committee that found and hired Laurie Andrews as Executive Director. The last 30 years have proved that it was one hell of a good decision.

Defining Project: Fish Creek Ranch | 383 acres | 1982 - 1989

“We had an easement with The Nature Conservancy prior to the establishment of the Land Trust, but when I became involved with the organization, I decided to go local and transfer the easement to the Land Trust.”

GIL ORDWAY

Board President: 1992-1995

Emeritus: 2003

Why he joined: The environment has always been a concern to me. I grew up in an urban environment, first in New York City and then later in the Twin Cities, and I think my urban upbringing made me want just the opposite; I knew Jean Hocker personally, and was one of the first members to join the organization when it was set up, and our easement was one of the first to be donated.

JHLT’s Impact: Every community which is worthy of saving as an entity should have a land trust because it is one of the greatest ways of encouraging investment in the future of the environment. Saving these huge open spaces, and saving this place from pollution doesn’t seem to me to be just a local interest, but rather a national and worldwide interest.

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Describe JHLT: conservation, open land

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Defining Projects: Snake River Ranch & Shooting Star | 2,093 acres | 1996 - 2012

“…it was of great importance as it protected open space and panoramic views on both sides of Highway 390. The views have been preserved in perpetuity for the benefit and enjoyment of everyone who goes to and from Teton Village.”

PEGGY GILDAY
Board Member: 2002-2010

Why she joined: I was approached by Pam Swift, a past Land Trust board member, at a point in my personal and professional life when I was able to volunteer my time and expertise at a higher level. As an architect who was involved in development issues, as well as for someone who had little prior board experience, this highly professional, well-run organization was a great fit for me to invest my resources.

JHLT’s Impact: JHLT’s impact is irreplaceable. It is a place where I have an opportunity to make a difference and to support an organization of which I am proud and that I love.

Describe JHLT: Sustainable, natural, beauty

Defining Project: East Gros Ventre Butte Phase 1 | 181 acres | 2013

“I didn’t like to think that somebody with enough money might try and push a road up through there and scar the hillside all the way up to the top. It was something I was hoping would never happen, for the wildlife as much as for the views.”

FRED STAEHR
Board Member: 2008 – Present

Why he joined: Before I joined the board, my impression of the Land Trust was that they put out a nice picnic and they saved a lot of nice open space. I had never thought about being on the board, but I knew a fair number of people that had been involved with the organization. So, when they asked me to join the board, it seemed like a good thing to do, and I think it’s been a very good thing.

JHLT’s Impact: Even though the percentage of private property in Teton County is really small, if that were all filled up with houses, I think that would be a tragedy. There used to be a school land section behind where I live where we used to go riding and walking before it was sold and developed. It’s a lesson that those opportunities are gone forever if we fill land up with houses.

Describe JHLT: Protection, wildlife, scenery

Defining Project: Spring Gulch Meadows | 380 acres | 2015

“I have a lot of ties personally to the project on the Mead Ranch and the families involved. I grew up with that family, and I’ve known that property forever. Additionally, my role at the Bank of Jackson Hole and on the Land Trust board allowed me to connect people in support of the project.”

PETE LAWTON
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Why he joined: Living in Jackson hole my entire life, I have always loved and lived in the open space. The Land Trust appeals to many diverse ideologies, from conservationists to developers. That’s somewhat unique in this community and is evident when you look around the crowd at the annual picnic. The professionalism and skill of the staff has established a reputation and performance that motivates people to be involved with the Land Trust.

JHLT’s Impact: The Land Trust has given us open space forever. Perpetuity is a word I think everyone understands when it comes to conservation easements and that is the important difference between what the Land Trust does and what the Town or the County can do. It amazes me how diversified our donor base is, especially geographically—which speaks to the importance of our work.

Describe JHLT: Open space, forever

Defining Projects: Ring Lake Ranch | 134 acres | 2009

“Launching the Wind River Program was a very special milestone. With so much discussion about the connectivity of wildlife, open spaces and resources being defined by more than man-made boundaries, embarking on this logical expansion of the JHLT work was a visionary step.”

BILL CAMPBELL
Board President: 2005-2007

Why he joined: I grew up on a farm in rural Iowa and spent my adult life practicing law in downtown Los Angeles. Although I was able to tolerate city life, my first love has always been the out of doors and open spaces. The Land Trust’s mission to preserve the open spaces was, and is, very important to me, and I was happy to serve on its board and as president.

JHLT’s Impact: In this valley the expanding population has created an inexorable press for development of all kinds. Without the Land Trust much of the open space that we now enjoy would have been gobbled up. What has been accomplished can best be summarized by looking at other resort communities. Seeing what has happened to Park City recently, I say and I both exclaimed, “Thank God for the Jackson Hole Land Trust”!

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A New Chapter for a Storied Valley

The beautiful valley of Spring Gulch, located north of Highway 22 and south of the Gros Ventre River, between East and West Gros Ventre Buttes, is a picture-perfect vision of green pastoral meadows, snowy peaks, and rolling hillsides. Drive along Highway 22 or along Spring Gulch Road, and you can almost imagine times gone by in Jackson Hole—when homesteads and ranches marked long stretches of open spaces, ferries were still needed to cross the Snake River, and cattle ranching was the valley’s primary industry.

Some of Spring Gulch’s earliest homesteaders and settlers include names that are still well-known in the valley today, including the Mead, Hansen, and Lucas families. Other notable characters of these early days were well-respected rancher Billy Redmond and Bert Charter, who according to local lore had a stint in Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid’s Hole in the Wall gang. Billy Redmond and Bert Charter, along with others like Spring Gulch.

Peter Christofferson Hansen first came to the valley as a cattleman, driving herds over Teton Pass, from Idaho. He was drawn to homestead 22, in the 2000s as a signature project of the Land Trust’s first capital campaign. The Spring Gulch Meadows land deal was a complex effort that required the combined resources, experience, and commitment of all parties involved to become a reality. Jackson businesswoman and longtime valley resident Clarine Lew, who was actively involved in the Land Trust’s efforts to protect the Hansen Ranch parcels in the 2000s, said of the impact, “It really speaks to the continued importance of the Land Trust’s work in the valley, and the strength of its experience and long-term relationships with ranching families, that a project of this significance could be completed in today’s economy.”

The Mead and Hansen family’s ranching and conservation legacy will benefit valley residents, visitors, and wildlife, into the future and forever, preserving a cherished piece of the valley’s history and identity— even as the economy and demographics of Jackson Hole continue to evolve and pressure to develop community-valued open spaces continues to increase. “We’re pleased to think that future residents and visitors can look across the meadows in Spring Gulch and see essentially the same views Peter Christofferson Hansen did when he settled there almost a century ago. The volunteers and donors at the Land Trust have made that possible,” reflects Brad Mead.

The 380-acre Spring Gulch Meadows conservation easement secured this spring was made possible through the contributions of donors to the Jackson Hole Land Trust’s Forever Our Valley capital campaign and a loan from the Bank of Jackson Hole. Joining the 61-acre Rendezvous Park and 181 acres on East Gros Ventre Butte, Spring Gulch Meadows is the third conservation project funded by the Land Trust’s Forever Our Valley capital campaign. The purpose of the $35 million campaign, which began in its quiet phase in 2013, is to generate funding that provides the necessary financial resources to secure conservation easements on priority projects like Spring Gulch.

“All of the bigger land deals we make these days are extremely complex and can take years to complete. They require a lot of expertise, which the Land Trust has, and they also require a lot of fundraising,” notes Pete Lawton, board member and president of the Bank of Jackson Hole. “Our Forever Our Valley Campaign has been very successful to date, and leading that effort all along has been campaign chair Rod Moorhead. He’s been phenomenal to its success.”

Thus far, the Forever Our Valley campaign committee and Land Trust board have worked to secure critical funding from generous leadership donors to protect over 600 acres of high priority conservation land in the valley. The campaign also seeks to establish a fund that will allow the organization to safeguard the acres protected by this campaign and ensure that the conservation values of the land are upheld forever.

We continue to partner with landowners in Jackson to cultivate landscape-scale, high priority projects that protect the critical wildlife habitat, scenic views, and iconic ranchlands of our valley. While we have accomplished significant milestones for the campaign, we have more to accomplish and invite you to join us in our campaign to ensure that this will be Forever Our Valley. For more information about the Forever Our Valley capital campaign, please contact Laurie Andrews, Executive Director.
35 years ago, the Jackson Hole Land Trust was founded to protect our valley’s open spaces. Thanks to our community’s commitment to this shared vision, this will be…

FOREVER
Our Valley

Celebrate 35 Years of Wide Open Spaces

Thursday, June 25th
Chamber Mixer at the JHLT Offices

Sunday, August 9th
35th Anniversary Community Picnic

View22: 35 Places – The Art of Open Spaces
view22.jhlandtrust.org

Faces of the Land Trust Photo & Video Contest
#jhlandtrust35

35 years of open spaces with 35 Places & Faces

The Jackson Hole Land Trust’s 35th anniversary events and initiatives have been generously underwritten by the following sponsors:

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