OPEN LANDS
News from the Jackson Hole Land Trust

Partners for open spaces

FALL / WINTER 2015
Partners
FOR PROTECTION

The Bridger-Teton National Forest (BTNF), one of 154 national forests that are part of the USDA Forest Service, comprises a significant portion of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and spans more than 3.4 million acres of public land and nearly 1.2 million acres of designated wilderness area. Within this core area, which covers 52% of Teton County, private land “inholdings” have the ability to either complete or fragment the surrounding forest ecosystem, depending on how the land is managed. The Jackson Hole Land Trust (JHLT) has partnered with BTNF to protect, secure or transfer private land inholdings to Forest Service ownership, eliminating the threat of fragmentation and thereby complementing the function and management of surrounding public lands.

Funding for land conservation from the Forest Legacy Program (FLP) and Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has been the cornerstone of several of these public-private partnership projects.

**Partnership Projects**
- **Munger Mountain Corridor Project** (236 acres | 2014) FLP funds (administered by the Wyoming State Forestry Division) are awarded for the first time in Wyoming to this multi-partner project that protects elk migration on privately-owned forested lands of Munger Mountain.
- **Poison Creek (73 acres)** The LCWCF grants a private holding in the Hoback River drainage for public access and winter range in 1997. A LCWCF grant and assistance from The Conservation Fund enables its transfer to BTNF in 2013.
- **Feuz Ranch** (205 acres | 2003), Hatchet Meadow (28 acres | 1998), Hatchet Ranch (680 & 80 acres | 1992) BTNF and JHLT team up in the Buffalo Valley, a community of private ranch inholdings at Jackson Hole’s eastern gateway, to protect these private properties through conservation easements and land transfers.
- **East Gros Ventre Butte** (grant in process | 2016) NRCS Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) funding is committed toward future phases of this landscape-scale project to protect crucial sage grouse area and mule deer habitat on a centrally-located butte in Jackson Hole.
- **Hardeman Barns and Meadows** (2012) An NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) grant, Wyoming Governor’s Stock Water Pumps funding and the JHLT held conservation easement on this property which improves habitat and stock watering infrastructure.
- **Torrey Lake Ranch** (940 acres | 2020) NRCS FRPP funding and support from state agencies, nonprofit partners, wildlife groups, and sportmen’s groups protects habitat and migration for the Whiskey Mountain bighorn sheep herd and other Dubois wildlife.
- **Rendezvous R Park** (40 acres | 2013) JHLT and the LR Foundation acquire the River Springs property with the assistance of a bridge loan from The Conservation Fund, establishing RLC in the process.

**Partnership Projects**
- **Hardeman Barns & Meadows** (329 acres | 1989) A “young” JHLT rallies a community-wide effort (including a legendary western-themed carnival) to save this iconic property and protect the rural character of the Wilson community. Teton County commissioners contribute $500,000 to the effort. The land is successfully purchased by JHLT with the help of a conservation buyer, with TCSPT holding the easement over the property.
- **Spring Creek Ranch** (83 acres | 1994), South Park Service Center (56 acres | 1987) JHLT and the County partner on these projects that result in JHLT owning and stewarding these open spaces, with easements held by TCSPT.
- **Emily’s Pond** (21 acres | 1993), Valley Springs Ranch (37 acres | 2002 & 2005), Wilson Centennial Ponds (22 acres | 2005) JHLT and the County partner on these community-supported, community-oriented land deals that result in protected park land managed by Parks & Rec; JHLT held conservation easements maintain wildlife values while also allowing for public access.

**The Conservation Fund**
The Conservation Fund (TCF) is a national nonprofit organization that works on conservation solutions and partnership projects that “make environmental and economic sense”. TCF’s Wyoming Office was established and led by the late Wyoming State Director Luke Lynch, former JHLT special projects director and Green River Valley Land Trust managing director. JHLT worked collaboratively with TCF on several projects that demonstrate the different ways in which TCF supports conservation: by providing a bridge loan that enabled a time-sensitive land deal; facilitating a private-to-public land transfer; and committing grant funding for sage grouse conservation.

**Partnership Projects**
- **East Gros Ventre Butte**, Phase 1 (381 acres | 2013) The keystone piece of the project is protected, with generous support from TCF’s and the Knobloch Family Foundation’s Wyoming Sage Grouse Conservation Campaign, the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust, private supporters, and a neighboring landowner.
- **Poison Creek (see above)**
- **R Park (see above)**

**The Nature Conservancy**
The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is an international nonprofit conservation organization that “works to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people.” TNC first pioneered the use of conservation easements in Wyoming in the 1970s, and following JHLT’s establishment in 1980, we received several transferred easements from TNC. TNC focuses its land conservation efforts on projects with landscape-scale wildlife and ecological benefits. Two wildlife-focused JHLT Wind River Program projects have received support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation’s Environmental Stewardship Program, which is administered by TNC.

**Partnership Projects**
- **Ring Lake Ranch** (414 acres | 2009) Led by the newly-established Wind River Program, a coalition of funding partners join forces to protect a historic retreat center in the Torrey Creek Valley that has abundant wildlife and nearby winter wildlife habitat.
- **Torrey Lake Ranch (see above)**
- **U Lazy U Ranch** (341 acres | 2005) An innovative, three-way land deal between JHLT, TNC, and Bob and Kate Lucas simultaneously...
The Town of Jackson

The Town of Jackson is the only incorporated municipality in the Jackson Hole valley and Teton County. With a population of nearly 10,000, the Town is the urban core of the valley where the most concentrated residential and commercial development is found. At the same time, it is surrounded on three sides by public land, as owned by TBNF and the National Elk Refuge. The Town of Jackson and JHLT have partnered on two projects that recognize the heightened ecological importance of protected open spaces within Town limits, for wildlife migration and habitat as well as ecosystem services like water quality and flood resiliency.

Partnership Projects

- Flat Creek Corridor (see above) JHLT and the Town embark on a multi-year collaboration to protect riparian habitat and mule deer winter range as well as community access to a network of trails on the northwestern side of Snow King.
- Korns Meadow (see above) JHLT and the Town partner to purchase and protect this property in phases from the Korns family it represents a rare, natural section of Flat Creek as it flows through Town, and is currently the site of a successful partnership project to filter stormwater runoff.

TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) on their first collaborative project in Wyoming, high up the Gros Ventre River valley to TPL. JHLT contributes funding toward the project out of a revolving funding source dedicated to Forest Service inhinding projects.

Wyoming Game and Fish Commission and Department

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department is the Wyoming state agency charged with “managing Wyoming’s wildlife resources and conserving them for future generations”. The Commission is the policy making board appointed by the Governor to oversee the Department. The Commission’s grant program, which funds projects that benefit wildlife populations in Wyoming, has supported two Wind River Project programs. In addition, the Commission and Department played an important role in the Munger Mountain Corridor Project by agreeing to hold the conservation easement on the property, thereby satisfying the federal funding requirement for a publically-held easement.

Partnership Projects

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Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust

The Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust (WWNRT) is an incredibly important funding source for wildlife and natural resource projects in Wyoming. Established in 2005 by the Wyoming Legislature, the WWNRT has funded hundreds of conservation projects in all 23 counties of the state, ranging from habitat restoration and mitigation, to invasive plant treatments, to open space protection. WWNRT grants are matched on average at a 6-to-1 ratio, meaning that JHLT projects receiving this funding also typically receive support from other agencies, nonprofits, foundations, groups, and private donors.

Partnership Projects

- East Gros Ventre Butte, Phase 1 (see above) Munger Mountain Corridor Project (see above) JHLT and the Town partner to purchase and protect this property in phases from the Karns family it represents a rare, natural section of Flat Creek as it flows through Town, and is currently the site of a successful partnership project to filter stormwater runoff.

Other Partners

We are grateful to the conservation groups, wildlife groups, sportmen's groups, and private foundations that have also made vital contributions to many of our partnership projects.

In Grateful Memory

In times of loss, we can find solace in the memories and legacies of those who have passed. The Jackson Hole Land Trust would like to remember and thank the following, conservationists who left lasting marks on the Jackson Hole community and its landscape.

- Stephen Adamson, Jr.
- Ann Bredlove
- David Carlin
- Ted Donnan
- Alan Hirschfield
- Luke Lynch
- Karen Oatey
- Clarence “Stearnie” Stearns

JACKSON HOLE LAND TRUST  j h l a n d t r u s t. o r g    5
T ime lapse footage of this year’s Annual Picnic at the Meadow Ranch reveals people arriving, frame by frame, to fill a big open field in Spring Gulch under clear blue skies in August. Topping 900 guests, it was our best attended picnic, ever.

The Land Trust believes that preserving open spaces for wildlife, scenic, and ranching values provides benefits to the community in the form of a robust local economy, healthy wildlife populations, and a quality of life that we all enjoy. These benefits work both ways, offering a positive feedback loop between our community and our organization.

Our community outreach projects connect people with the wonder of open space, encouraging personal relationships with the land. With the help of partners and supporters, these special projects allow us to reach new and existing audiences in transformative ways, so that our mission resonates with our community and future generations.

FOUNDSpace

FOUNDSpace is a new community outreach partnership at the crossroads of art, conservation, and community. Launched with the Center of Wonder, Jackson Hole Public Art, and the Cultural Council of Jackson Hole, FOUNDSpace engages the community with interactive art making on Land Trust protected public access properties and open spaces throughout the valley. “Creating experiential art on open space with arts based partners in the community increases the impact and reach of the Land Trust,” said Laurie Andrews, executive director.

The Exquisite Gardeners, a cooperative group of installation artists from California, envisioned an interactive installation and creativity hub in Karns Meadow for the inaugural FOUNDSpace project, working together with local artists and community members. They fabricated oversized patinated letters spelling the words “Art,” “Land,” and “Trust,” and placed them in the meadow for community members to enhance with poetry, quotes, found objects, and their thoughts and impressions. Artists and community members worked collaboratively to build sculptures from found objects collected through several “gathers” on other Land Trust protected properties. The closing party celebrated a communal appreciation for art and land with local food and music. Letters spelling “Land” and “Trust” were shifted to the Meadow Ranch for the 35th Annual Land Trust Picnic, providing another opportunity for the community to experience and interact with the FOUNDSpace project. For more information visit jhlandtrust.org/FOUNDspace.

VIEW22: 35 PLACES

This year’s VIEW22 project went “big” for our 35th anniversary, highlighting 35 conservation properties as seen through the eyes of 35 local artists, a jump in both the number of properties and artists. We invited artists that represented a diversity of artistic styles and media including paintings, photographs, mixed media pieces, sculptures, and jewelry to create works inspired by highly-visible properties along well-traveled routes in the valley, such as Highway 22, the Moose-Wilson Road, Spring Gulch, Highway 89, Town of Jackson, and the Snake River Corridor, as well as a few farther-flung locations. These artists also represented different segments of the community and levels of familiarity with the Land Trust’s work.

The VIEW22 artists’ vibrant and unique interpretations of these 35 locations were displayed at the VIEW22: 35 Places exhibit at the Annual Picnic, and through the revamped VIEW22 blog, which shared stories and photos from the artists’ individual experiences out on the land. VIEW22 artists donate a portion of their proceeds to the Land Trust, and over two thirds of the works have been sold to date, raising nearly $10,000. A selection of available works is currently on display at the Land Trust offices and online for interested collectors to view. We are grateful to these 35 local artists and conservation landowners for their partnership on this project. For more information visit view22.jhlandtrust.org.

TRAVELSTORIES GPS

In 2012, we partnered with Story Clark of Conservation Consulting and the Grand Teton National Park Foundation to release the TravelStoriesGPS app, which uses location-based stories, narratives, and multimedia content to uncover the real story of place. The Land Trust’s Highway 22 Tour, which is stacked with entertaining and educational conservation, natural history, and community stories, is now one of 18 tours on the TravelStoriesGPS app that have been developed by Story and her team, including new Wyoming-based tours exploring topics ranging from trona mining and art to mountaineering and history. The app also encourages online giving to featured nonprofit organizations like JHLT. For more information visit www.travelstoriesgps.com.

OPEN SPACE COUNCIL

The Open Space Council is our group of community ambassadors that act as on-the-ground partners linking the community with our work. The Council is made up of people from all across the community, including past presidents, fishing and ski guides, conservation landowners, part-time residents, business people, marketers, artists, realtors, attorneys, educators, and ranchers, to name just a few. This year, Council members contributed in many valuable ways—by hosting, attending, and volunteering at events; developing new interpretive signage at the Jackson Hole Mountain Resort; brainstorming and implementing ideas for our 35th anniversary, participating in all aspects of the VIEW22 project, and assisting with our stewardship monitoring program. Thank you, Open Space Council!

Green Flags

All around the valley in late July, emerald green banner flags bearing the Jackson Hole Land Trust logo appeared on familiar hay meadows, sage-covered hillsides, riparian lands, and mountainsides. With the help of our community networks, social media, and articles in Buckrail, the Jackson Hole Mountain Resort blog, and the Jackson Hole News & Guide, the word spread quickly: these flags marked 35 JHLT conservation easements in the valley for our 35th anniversary (corresponding with our 35 VIEW22 locations).

Our hope was that a colorful, visual prompt like a flag would draw attention to these iconic JHLT easement-protected properties as being conserved, in a more striking way than a two-dimensional map. Installed for the two weeks leading up to the Annual Picnic, we believe they had the desired effect based on what we heard from the community.

“As the Land Trust observes its 35th anniversary this year, it’s certainly worth noting the work that has gone into making Jackson Hole look the way it does. As you travel around this week, look for the banners and imagine the alternatives along highways 22 and 390.” – Jackson Hole News & Guide editors

“We’re always amazed feeling to think about forever when I am going out over a Land Trust property. My grandchildren will come back to some of the places I have painted, and our generations will be closer our pride in this valley stronger, because of it.” – Travis Walker, VIEW22 artist

“While driving around the valley today, I noticed the flags on the many properties holding Land Trust conservation easements. Every day, I drive by some of them, enjoying the view, not often recognizing the ‘gift’ of the view. Always in awe of this beautiful valley I call home. I am so grateful that some precious views have been preserved forever so that we can still see nature’s beauty.” – Stephanie Brennan, VIEW22 artist
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 area’s 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 www.jhlandtrust.org.

From the President

I always look forward to Jackson Hole in the fall. This year has been an especially nice one, longer than usual with many warm sunny days and crisp evenings. My wife Lisa and I like to take weekend trips this time of year, travelling regionally to enjoy the fall colors and seasonal changes in the natural world. Fall in this part of Wyoming, and at the Land Trust, is a time to take a deep breath, reflect, regroup, and get ready to do it all over again.

This fall marks the beginning of my second stint as president of the Jackson Hole Land Trust (I was president previously from 2001 to 2003). I feel fortunate this time around to already be familiar with the responsibilities that go along with being president, so that I can focus my energy on the exciting land conservation opportunities up ahead for the Land Trust, including some great projects right out of the gate. These opportunities, in areas like East Gros Ventre Butte, Spring Gulch, the Snake River Corridor, South Park, Hoback Canyon, and the Buffalo Valley, have been made possible through an organizational culture that cultivates strong relationships and partnerships, so that seeds planted as far back as my last time on the board continue to yield fruitful harvest today.

From my perspective as someone who wears many hats in the community – working with clients through my firm, Pierson Land Works, service on other boards, and having been a valley resident for nearly 40 years – I think that landowners, nonprofits, artists, government agencies, and foundations seek to partner with the Land Trust because it is one of the most respected organizations in Teton County, thanks to the amount and quality of land we have protected and the close relationships we have built with private landowners. This issue of Open Lands, Partners for Open Spaces, highlights some of the ways we work with partners to complete complex land deals, ensure that protected lands are well taken care of, and connect the community with open spaces. Partners create and enhance opportunities, increasing the breadth and impact of our mission. They help us to remain a vibrant, successful, and relevant organization in this community. In addition to the organizational partners featured in this issue, I would also like to thank our annual fund supporters and the ground partners – the conservation landowners and land managers of each of our protected properties – that form the foundation of who we are and what we do. I hope you are all enjoying a beautiful fall and finding some well-deserved time to reenergize before the winter ahead.

- Scott Pierson

The Land Trust Alliance our partners in D.C.

The Jackson Hole Land Trust is a proud and active member of the Land Trust Alliance, the national umbrella organization for land trusts across the nation. In addition to being an LTA member land trust since 2001, our organizations have connected histories: founding JHLT executive director Jean Hocker was the CEO of LTA from 1987 to 2002, and current executive director Laurie Andrews has served on the LTA board since 2013. The Land Trust Alliance’s work to advance the pace, quality, and permanence of land conservation helps JHLT and other member land trusts at a “big picture” level. LTA’s advocacy, quality, and permanence of land conservation helps JHLT and director Laurie Andrews has served on the LTA board since 2013. was the CEO of LTA from 1987 to 2002, and current executive director. Tom Segerstrom has been on the Teton Conservation District Board of Supervisors since 2008, and was recently tapped to lead the state-funded natural resources conservation organization as its executive director beginning this November. We are grateful to Tom for his 15 years of dedicated stewardship of JHLT’s protected open spaces, and look forward to continuing to work with him in his new role at the Teton Conservation District.

Renewed Accreditation

In August 2015, the Jackson Hole Land Trust achieved renewed land trust accreditation from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance. We are one of the first land trusts in the country to achieve renewed accreditation, following being initially accredited in 2009. This renewed accreditation, earned after submitting extensive documentation and undergoing a rigorous review by the LTAC, verifies to the public that our operations as a land trust continue to be effective, strategic and in accordance with strict requirements. JHLT is one of 317 land trusts now accredited across the country, and one of two accredited land trusts in Wyoming. We were honored to accept our accreditation certificate in person at this year’s LTA Rally, the National Land Conservation Conference.

Thanking Rand

Rand Wentworth, President of the Land Trust Alliance for the past 14 years, visited Jackson Hole this September. The Jackson Hole Land Trust hosted a special reception to thank Rand for his many years of dedicated leadership, presenting him with a photograph of the Rack Springs conservation easement from this year’s View22 project. Rand shared his perspective on the land conservation movement over the past decade and provided a compelling vision of what the future looks like for land trusts and community-focused conservation. •
CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF OPEN SPACES, PLACES, AND FACES

Our 35th anniversary celebrations kicked off in June with a Chamber Mixer at our offices and continued throughout the summer with a slate of vibrant community events and initiatives that connected us with landowners, supporters, partners, sponsors, artists and the next generation in record numbers. It’s clear that our community continues to be committed to land conservation and the Land Trust’s work to protect and steward the cherished open spaces of Jackson Hole, keeping this Forever Our Valley.

The 35th Anniversary Annual Picnic at the Mead Ranch was our largest community picnic to date, an incredible finale for our 35th anniversary celebrations. The speaking program featured present and former Board Presidents and Executive Directors, who took to the stage to provide a history of the Land Trust through their stories and reflections. The program also recognized the Mead Family for their conservation legacy and partnership in the recent Spring Gulch Meadows project, and Land Trust Executive Director Laurie Andrews received a standing ovation from the crowd for her ten years of leadership. The event, made possible through the generous support of our 35th anniversary sponsors, featured the View22 and FoundSpace art projects, music by One Ton Pig, partner booths, Wyoming Whiskey samples, and Mead Ranch Beef as the main course.

Save the Date
FOR NEXT YEAR’S ANNUAL PICNIC
SUNDAY, AUGUST 14TH, 2016

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