



JACKSON HOLE LAND TRUST NEWS
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: September 10, 2019

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**Green River Valley Program of the Jackson Hole Land Trust Completes Easement
Project in Sublette County**

605 Acres of Mule Deer and Sage Grouse Habitat Protected on Working Agricultural Land

Pinedale, Wyoming – The Jackson Hole Land Trust announced today that 605 acres in Sublette County located along the Red Desert to Hoback Mule Deer migration corridor have been protected through the Willow Lake Pasture Conservation Easement now held by the Green River Valley Program of the Jackson Hole Land Trust.

Protected in perpetuity on August 28, 2019, the Willow Lake Pasture Conservation Easement (Willow Lake) contains 605 acres of important open space, wildlife habitat, and agricultural heritage in Sublette County, located just five miles north of Pinedale. This is the first multiple hundred acre agricultural property that has been protected since the Jackson Hole Land Trust (JHLT) and the Green River Valley Land Trust merged, forming the Green River Valley Program (GRVP) based locally in Pinedale.

“It is very satisfying to see the Green River Valley Program completing significant and important protection projects in Sublette County,” says GRVP Advisory Council and JHLT Board Member Mike Fenn.

“The JHLT and its staff have been working hard to establish new conservation easements in Sublette County since the creation of the program in 2016, and we are now seeing the positive outcomes of focused and diligent protection work that comes to fruition sometimes over extended timelines,” Fenn continued. “With conservation accomplishments like Willow Lake, we are experiencing the concrete results of the JHLT’s dedication to working with local landowners to protect open spaces, wildlife habitats and migration corridors, and working lands in our region.”

The open sagebrush steppe of the Willow Lake property has historically supported ranching operations, and it is part of the frame of view of the majestic Wind River Mountains. Willow Lake contains wet meadows and ephemeral pothole wetlands, which are oases in the surrounding sagebrush sea that provide nesting, feeding, and shelter habitat for waterfowl and other birds, as well as small mammals and migrating big game.

The property provides seasonal habitat for pronghorn antelope, mule deer, and moose, and is located within the Daniel Greater Sage-Grouse Core Population Area. It also lies in the Sublette Mule Deer Migration Corridor, which stretches from the Red Desert near Rock Springs to the Hoback area and is the longest documented mule deer migration route in the world. The location of the property supports wildlife resilience by providing connectivity to both federal and state public lands, which helps to facilitate seasonal migrations such as those of mule deer, moose, and pronghorn.

The Willow Lake project was accomplished with funding from the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust (WWNRT), the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, and the Wyoming Governor's Big Game License Coalition. In addition to this public funding, a portion of the easement's value was generously donated by the landowner.

Since the 2016 merger of the JHLT and the Green River Valley Land Trust, the GRVP has been working to advance the Land Trust's mission to protect and steward the treasured landscapes of Northwest Wyoming. By completing this major protection project, the GRVP has taken an important step in establishing momentum for land protection in Sublette County.

The JHLT continues to prioritize the protections of other properties in Sublette County, including in the Pinedale and Bondurant areas, and has secured public funding to support several of these easement projects. The JHLT looks forward to closing these projects in the future.

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About the Jackson Hole Land Trust: The Jackson Hole Land Trust is a private, non-profit organization that was established in 1980 to protect and steward the treasured landscapes of Northwest Wyoming including Fremont and Sublette counties. With over 57,000 acres protected, our vision is a legacy of protected open spaces, wildlife habitat, working lands and community spaces that inspire current and future generations.

About the Green River Valley Program of the Jackson Hole Land Trust: The Green River Valley Program of the Jackson Hole Land Trust is based out of Pinedale, Wyoming, and focuses on the JHLT's mission and projects in Sublette County. The program was established in 2016 following the merger of the Jackson Hole Land Trust and the Green River Valley Land Trust.