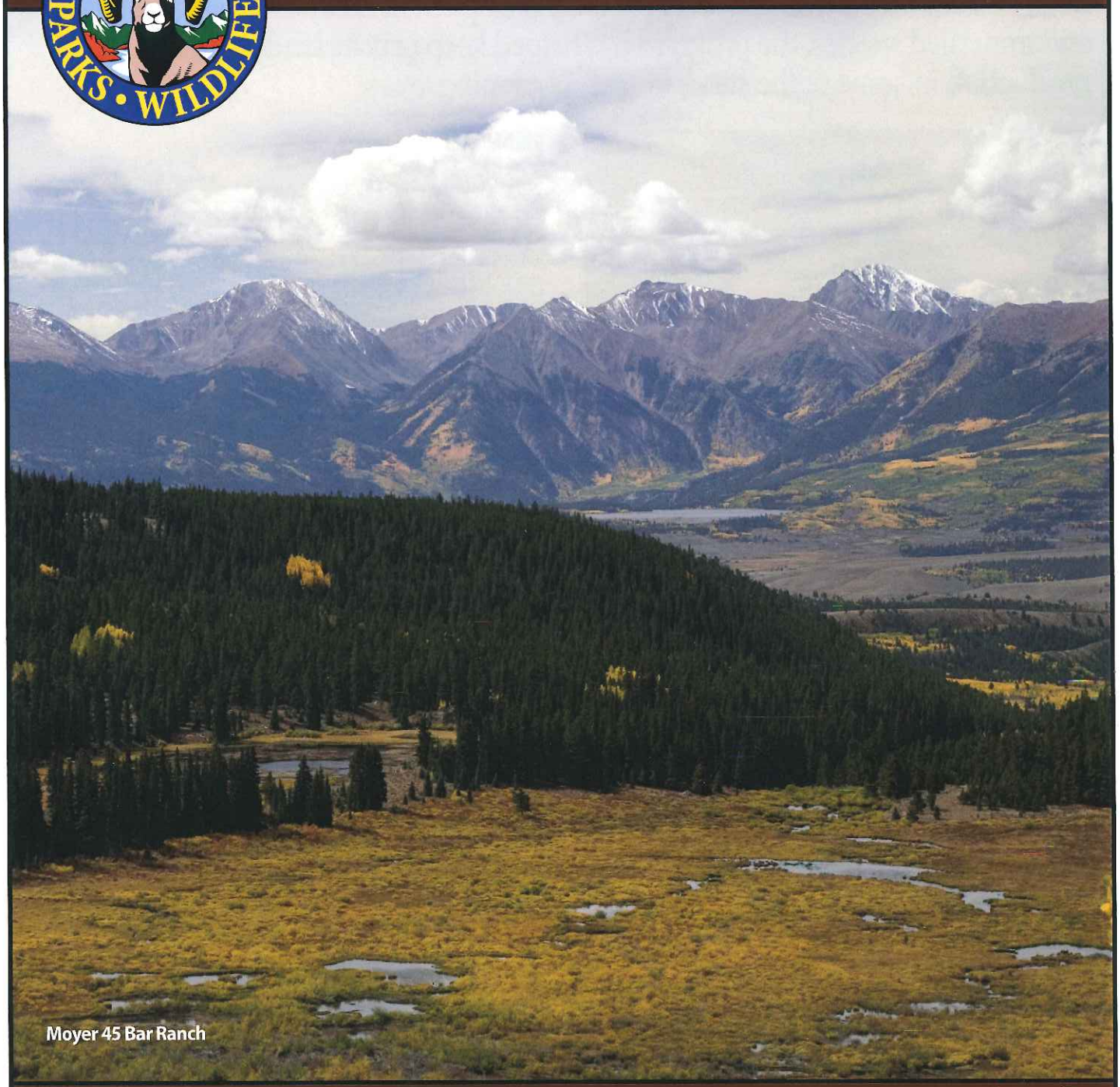
Attachment C

COLORADO PARKS & WILDLIFE

Colorado Wildlife Habitat Protection Program

Project Highlights • 2006 Through 2012



Moyer 45 Bar Ranch

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Introduction

The Colorado Wildlife Habitat Protection Program was initiated in 2006 with the enactment of legislation to create a Colorado Wildlife Habitat Stamp. The program provides a means for Colorado Parks and Wildlife to work with private landowners, local governments, and conservation organizations to protect important fish and wildlife habitat and provide places for people to enjoy our wildlife heritage. Over the years, the program has helped protect more than 100,000 acres of land from development. In addition to protecting important habitat for big game, fish, and imperiled species, the program has helped keep private lands in agricultural production in some of the state's fastest-developing areas.

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Habitat for Fish and Wildlife

Habitat loss is one of the leading issues impacting the survival of fish and wildlife for future generations. The Colorado Wildlife Habitat Protection Program protects a wide range of important lands and waters, including winter range and migration corridors for big game, rivers that provide habitat for fish, and riparian and wetland areas. The program also protects habitat for a variety of imperiled species, helping to prevent them from becoming endangered.

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Protecting Wildlife Habitat on Private Lands

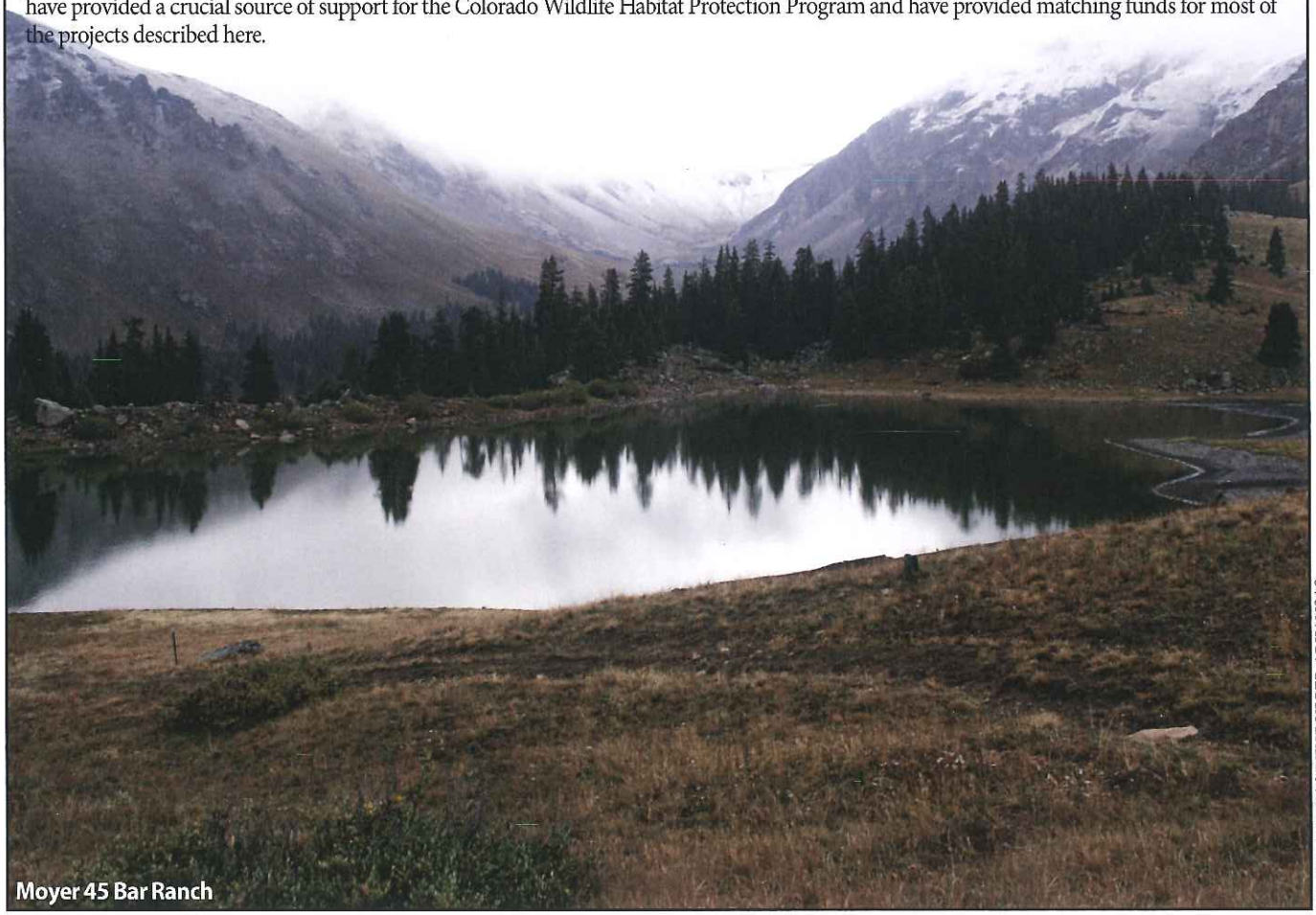
Privately-owned ranches and farms provide important habitat for fish and wildlife. However, development pressure and escalating bills often force landowners to subdivide and sell their land. Through the use of voluntary conservation easements, the Colorado Wildlife Habitat Protection Program helps landowners around the state protect their land for future generations. This helps keep the land in agricultural production while also providing habitat for fish and wildlife and access for hunting and fishing.

Access for Hunting and Angling

In addition to protecting habitat, the Colorado Wildlife Habitat Protection Program provides an option for landowners to open their land up to hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing while keeping it in agricultural production. In many parts of Colorado, protecting private lands can also help open up access to much larger areas of adjacent public land for hunting and fishing.

Great Outdoors Colorado Partnership

In 1992, Colorado voters amended the State Constitution to dedicate a portion of Colorado Lottery proceeds to the Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Trust Fund. The mission of GOCO is "to preserve, protect, enhance and manage the state's wildlife, park, river, trail and open space heritage." GOCO awards grants to local governments for park, trail and outdoor recreation projects. GOCO also awards grants to local governments, land trusts and Colorado Parks and Wildlife for open space projects including acquiring parcels in urban areas and for the preservation of agricultural lands. GOCO makes investments through Colorado Parks and Wildlife for state park projects, trail projects, and youth education projects. Wildlife project investments are focused on habitat and species protection, wildlife programs and watchable wildlife. GOCO funds have provided a crucial source of support for the Colorado Wildlife Habitat Protection Program and have provided matching funds for most of the projects described here.



Moyer 45 Bar Ranch

© LAND TRUST OF THE UPPER ARKANSAS

The Habitat Stamp: Small Stamp, Big Difference

With very few exceptions, everyone aged 18-64 who applies for or buys a hunting or fishing license in Colorado is required to buy a Colorado Wildlife Habitat Stamp. Their purchases provide the core funds for the Colorado Wildlife Habitat Protection Program. The agency has leveraged a variety of other funds around this core – including Great Outdoors Colorado and federal State Wildlife Grants – to extend the Program's reach. These combined funds have been focused on protecting fish and wildlife habitat and opportunities for hunting and fishing.

Working Together and Leveraging Funds

Colorado Parks and Wildlife works with a variety of partner organizations to identify and implement habitat protection projects. While the program is open to direct application from landowners who want to protect their land, projects are also brought forward by land trusts, local governments, and conservation organizations. These partner organizations bring significant additional funding to the table to help protect important lands and waters, amplifying the impact of Habitat Stamp dollars provided by sportsmen.

Habitat Stamp At Work

Since the Habitat Stamp's legislative inception in 2006, the Colorado Wildlife Habitat Protection Program has:

- Conserved 173,864 acres (more than 271 square miles) of key wildlife habitat
- Secured 78,693 acres of new public access
- Opened 25.85 miles of new fishing access
- Protected more than 100,397 acres of big-game winter range/ migration corridors
- Saved critical habitat for sage-grouse and other imperiled species

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Project Profiles

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Moyer 45 Bar Ranch
- Acres Protected: 3,276 acres
- Lake County
- Protected in 2009

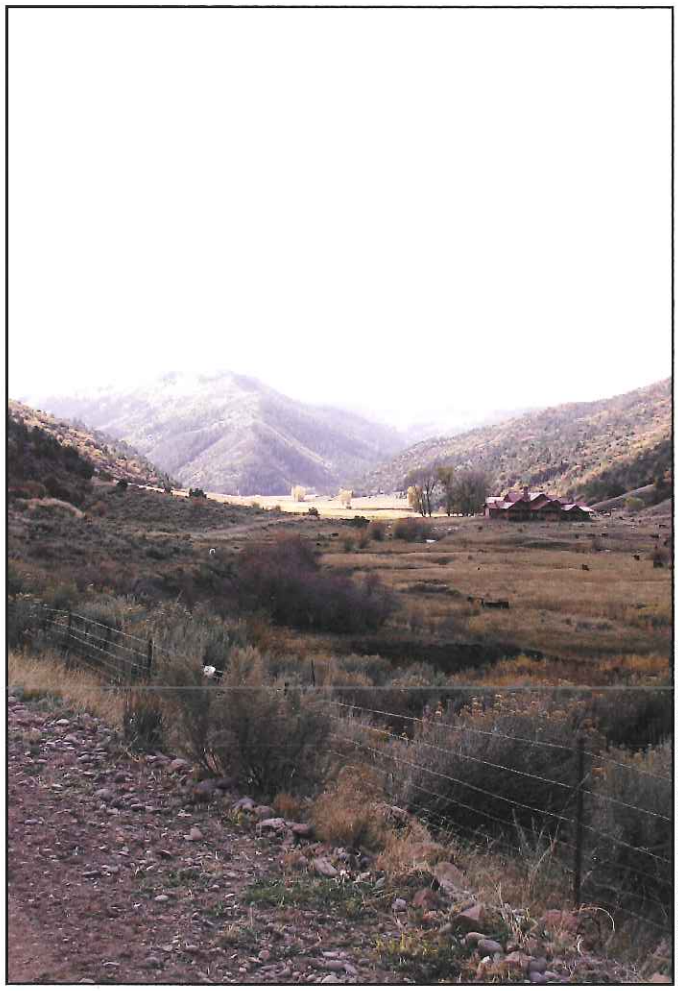
Located south of Leadville, the Moyer Ranch is the last working ranch in Lake County and the largest fee title ranch in the entire Upper Arkansas Valley. With support from the Habitat Stamp, the Moyer Family was able to protect the ranch from subdivision and vacation home development. In addition to keeping an active cow-calf operation in business, this project protected important wildlife habitat and provided the public with access to important lands and waters for hunting and fishing.

Mixing sagebrush steppe with wetlands and streams, the Moyer Ranch harbors a variety of wildlife, including deer, elk, bighorn sheep, mountain lions, black bears, and several species of migratory songbirds and small mammals. The property protects important migration corridors and winter range, providing a crucial connection between several adjacent public land areas. The ranch also supports a number of small streams that feed into the Arkansas River, providing habitat for fish and wildlife and protecting flows in the river. In addition to the conservation easement on the entire ranch, about 1,350 acres of the ranch are open to public hunting and fishing. The Moyer Family also chose to allow fishing access to a crucial stretch of the Arkansas River, which, when combined with other accessible areas, gives anglers over seven contiguous miles of world-class fishing.

The Moyer Family was able to protect their ranch by working with Parks and Wildlife and the Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas. Without support from the Habitat Stamp program, the Moyer Ranch would almost certainly not have been protected in a timely manner. Facing development pressure, it would have likely been eventually subdivided and its water rights would have been sold.

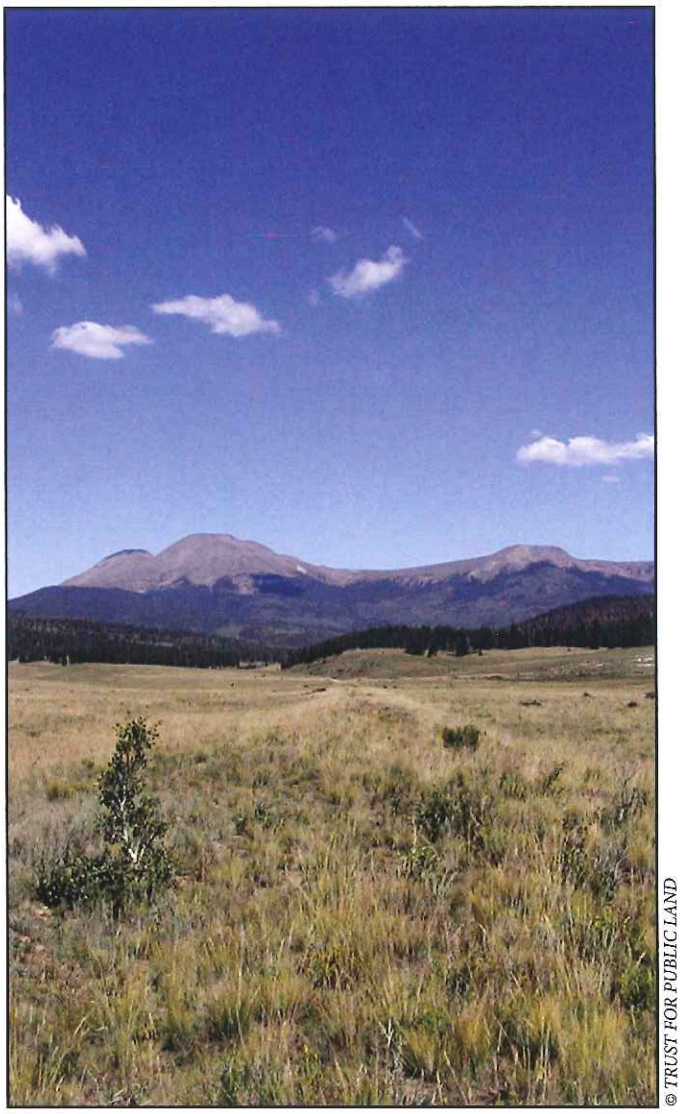
Miller Creek Ranch
- Acres Protected: 3,115 acres
- Rio Blanco County
- Protected in 2011

The White River Valley in northwest Colorado includes some of the most productive big game habitat in Colorado, supporting the largest elk and mule deer herds in the state. The region also includes a variety of sagebrush and wetland habitats that are important to a wide range of species of concern. While this area of Colorado is still largely in agricultural use, development interest has been growing in recent years.
The Miller Creek Ranch sits squarely in the middle of this important rural landscape. The ranch provides habitat for big game species and important migratory connections between habitat areas on adjacent lands. The property includes a unique combination of wetland and upland habitats. The ranch's expanses of sagebrush provide habitat for greater sage-grouse and a variety of other sagebrush-obligate species. The wetland areas and riparian areas along Miller Creek also harbor fish, amphibian, and bird species of concern.



© PERMISSION OF MILLER CREEK RANCH

The managers of the Miller Creek Ranch have been responsible stewards of the land for many years, working in partnership with state and federal agencies to provide wildlife habitat while running a productive livestock operation. Habitat Stamp funds helped secure a conservation easement that will protect this ranch from development, ensuring that this important part of Northwest Colorado's cultural and natural heritage remains intact for future generations.



© TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND

Chubb Park Ranch
- Access Protected: 507 acres
- Chaffee County
- Protected 2009

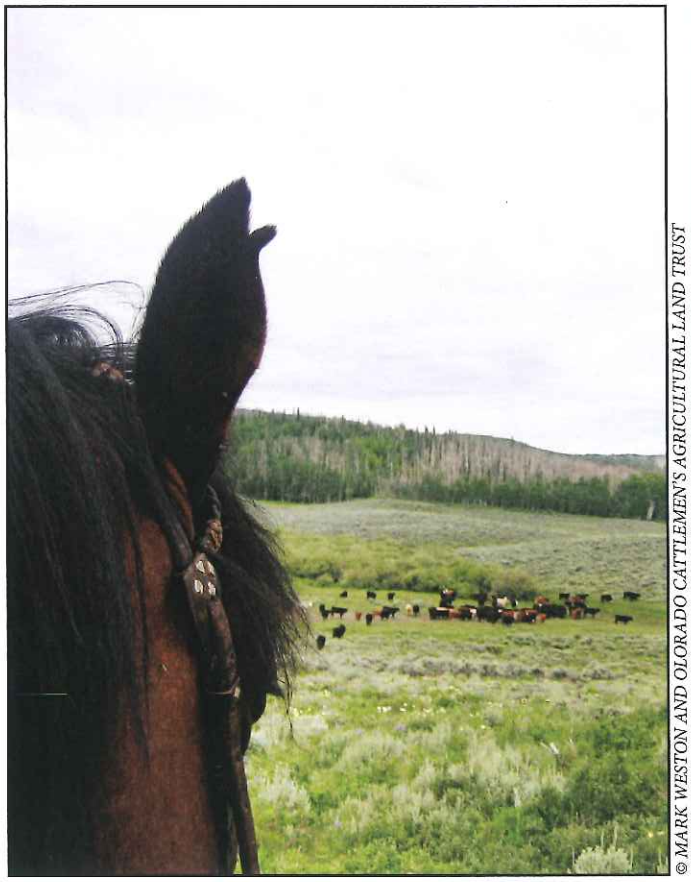
In the heart of the Upper Arkansas Valley, Chaffee County's scenery and outdoor recreation opportunities draw tourists and second homeowners from around the world. The region has seen tremendous growth in recent years, and local ranching families have experienced escalating property taxes and pressure to subdivide and sell their land.

The Cogan family has ranched in the Chubb Park area of Chaffee County since 1889. Spreading across a high mountain meadow, their ranch encompasses mountain grassland and forest habitat, providing important winter range for elk. Riparian areas along Trout Creek and Chubb Creek also harbor a variety of important species.

Facing development pressure, the Cogans decided to work with Colorado Parks and Wildlife, the Trust for Public Land, and the Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas to develop a conservation agreement to protect their land. In addition to keeping the ranch in agricultural production, the agreement provides public hunting access to the property itself and to nearby public lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service and the State Land Board.

Coyte Ranch
- Acres Protected: 2,240 acres
- Jackson County
- Protected 2011

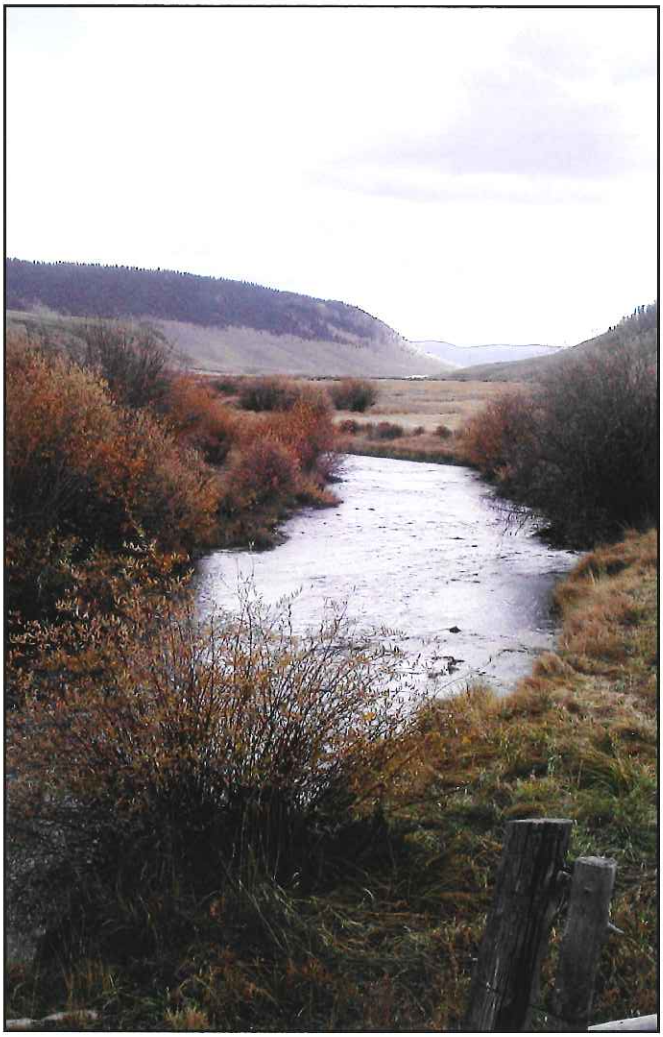
More than 150 years since the first European settlers reached the high intermountain valley of North Park, the region still retains a unique rural character. The region's economy has long depended on the coexistence of agriculture and wildlife, with local communities thriving through a combination of ranching, farming, hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing.



© MARK WESTON AND OLORADO CATTLEMEN'S AGRICULTURAL LAND TRUST

The Coyte Ranch epitomizes the balance between ranching and wildlife habitat. The property encompasses a mix of aspen and spruce forests, sagebrush shrublands, and wetlands along Mexican Creek in southwestern Jackson County. For decades, the landowner has managed the land to support a productive cattle operation while also providing habitat for a range of species, including elk, moose, mule deer, and greater sage-grouse.

The family that owns the ranch worked with the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust and Colorado Parks and Wildlife to protect the ranch's traditional ranching uses and wildlife habitat values. Habitat Stamp funds from Parks and Wildlife helped secure conservation for 2,240 acres alongside an earlier parcel of 2,000 acres that was protected by the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust. As one of the first conservation easements in North Park, the project has been a catalyst for other private land conservation in the area, by demonstrating that local landowners, government agencies, and private conservation groups can work together to protect wildlife habitat and traditional ranching practices.



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Cochetopa State Wildlife Area – Snyder Property
- Acres Protected: 6,995 acres
- Saguache County
- Protected 2008

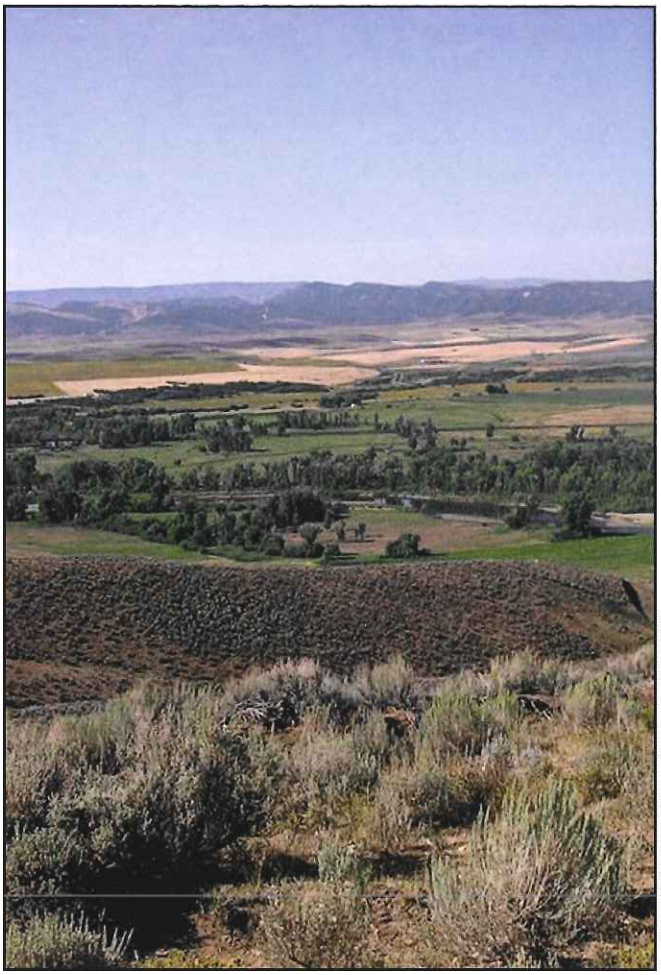
Located about 35 miles from Gunnison, the Snyder Ranch includes a mix of irrigated meadows and sagebrush shrubland that exemplify the unique landscape of the Gunnison Basin. The property provides crucial winter range and movement corridors for elk, as well as year-round range for pronghorn. The ranch also harbors a variety of small game as well as Gunnison sage-grouse.

As responsible stewards of the land, the Snyder Family has worked with Colorado Parks and Wildlife for decades to maintain their property's habitat value. In 2008, the Snyders and the agency reached an agreement to put a permanent conservation easement on the property in order to prevent subdivision and development of the ranch. Habitat Stamp funds were combined with other funds to finance the deal. The Snyder Family continues to run their livestock operation, with sustainable grazing practices helping to maintain pastures in healthy condition.

The Snyder Ranch also provides significant new public access for hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing. About 7,000 acres of land were opened to new public access, including 8 miles of excellent cold-water fishing opportunity. The property also adjoins federal and state public lands, opening up even more areas to outdoor recreation.

Wolf Mountain
- Acres Protected: 5,654+ acres
- Routt County
- Protected in 2008, 2009, 2011

Located just outside of Hayden in western Routt County, the Wolf Mountain Ranch includes rolling sagebrush and Gambel oak uplands, as well as cottonwood riparian forests and hay meadows along the Yampa River. Wolf Mountain provides important transitional range for deer and elk, as well as habitat for imperiled species like the greater sage-grouse. The ranch is also at the heart of the last remaining population of Columbian sharp-tailed grouse in Colorado, providing a core area for restoring the species.



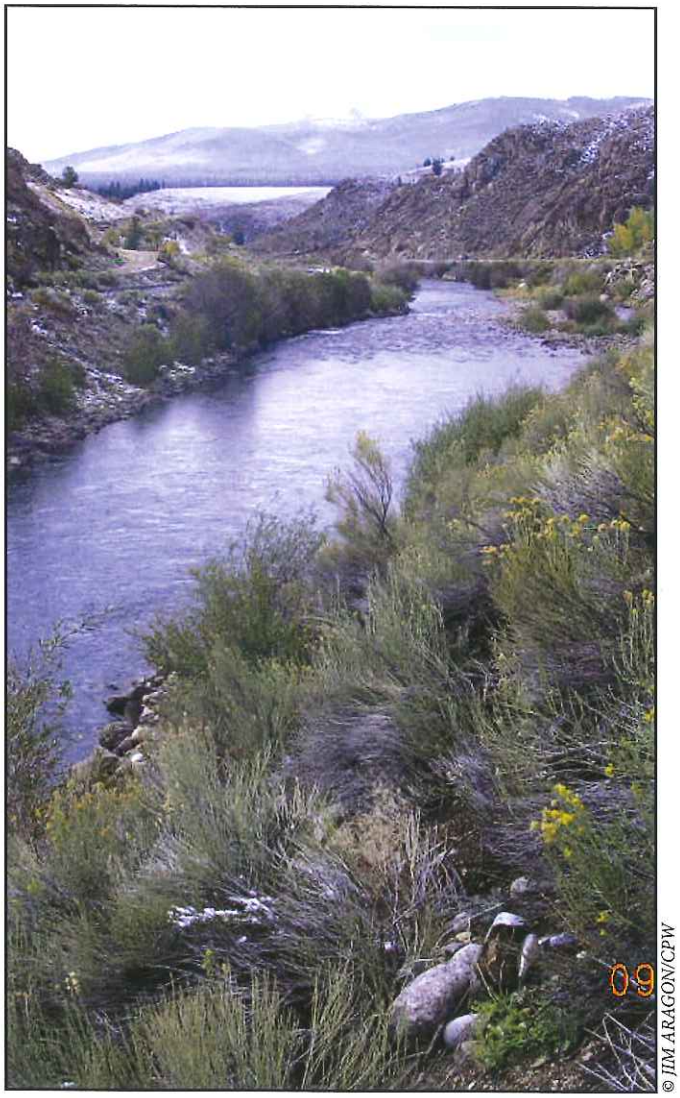
© COURTESY OF WOLF MOUNTAIN RANCH

For many years, the owners of Wolf Mountain Ranch have worked to protect their operation from development. However, conserving a large working ranch in a fast-growing part of the state is a complex process that can easily overwhelm the best intentions. The owners of Wolf Mountain have relied on a network of partners who have been able to help protect their ranch one piece at a time, including The Nature Conservancy, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Routt County, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Habitat Stamp funds have played a crucial role in completing some important pieces of the puzzle.

Wolf Mountain is one part of an ongoing effort to protect Routt County's rural landscape. Eventually, a contiguous area of more than 20,000 acres of working ranchlands will be protected, providing critical connectivity for wildlife and protecting the rural heritage that defines Routt County.

Salida State Wildlife Area - Hardeman parcel
- Acres Protected: 37 acres and 4 miles of river
- Lake County
- Protected in 2007

The upper Arkansas River includes some of the best cold-water fishing in Colorado, harboring giant brown and rainbow trout in a picturesque setting. The region is a destination for anglers from around the country, who help support the local economy in Chaffee and Lake Counties. Located in southern Lake County, the Hardeman property includes land on both sides of the Arkansas River. In addition to supporting



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a productive fishery in the river, the property's riparian corridor also provides habitat for bighorn sheep and other wildlife.

For many years, the Hardeman property was open to public access through a short-term lease between Colorado Parks and Wildlife and the landowner. In 2007, Parks and Wildlife was able to combine Habitat Stamp funds with financial support from Trout Unlimited to secure easements for permanent protection and access to the property. In conjunction with neighboring areas, the project opened up a total of four miles of the river to fishing. In addition to ensuring that the area will remain permanently open for anglers, the deal has helped reduce the long-term cost to the state of continually renewing the access leases to this highly desirable area.

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Andrick Ponds State Wildlife Area
- Acres Protected: 711 acres
- Morgan County
- Protected in 2009

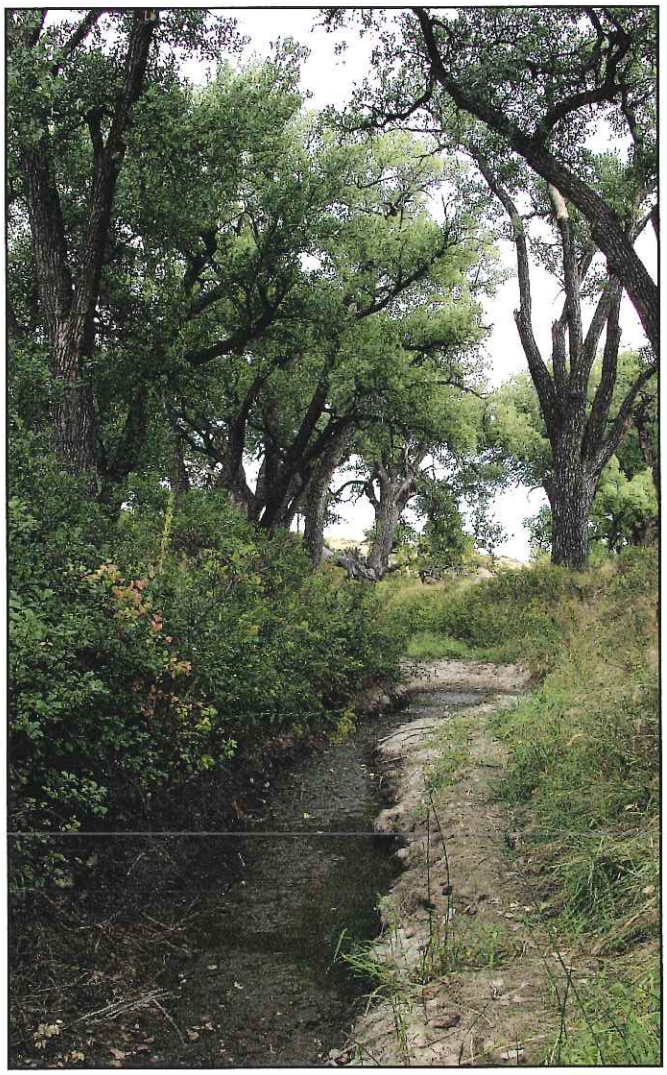
Andrick Ponds State Wildlife Area sits within Colorado's "Golden Triangle" of waterfowl hunting, between Empire Reservoir, Riverside Reservoir, and Jackson Reservoir. Located in the central flyway, these water bodies provide an important stopover point for a variety of migratory waterfowl and other birds. They also support resident populations of mallards and geese.

Andrick Ponds State Wildlife Area was created in 2009 through the purchase of the former Centennial Hunt Club property. Located adjacent to Jackson Lake State Park, this private hunting club was developed over several decades from a parcel of dry grassland into a unique mosaic of wetlands and ponds. After many years of leased hunting, owners John Andrick and Linda Andrick decided that they wanted to turn the club into a public hunting preserve. John turned to Colorado Open Lands and Colorado Parks and Wildlife for help, and Habitat Stamp funds played a pivotal role in making his dream a reality.

In addition to providing a world class waterfowl hunting opportunity, the Andrick Ponds State Wildlife Area shelters deer, turkey, and other species of small game, along with watchable wildlife. Since acquiring the property, Colorado Parks and Wildlife has invested additional funds in restoring the wetlands to enhance their ability to store water in this arid environment. These efforts have provided credits to protect water supplies in the Platte River and support local agricultural needs as well as fish and wildlife.

Gelvin Ranch/Willow Creek State Wildlife Area
- Acres Protected: 920 acres
- Yuma County
- Protected in 2010

Located southeast of Wray, the Gelvin Ranch epitomizes Colorado's Eastern Plains. The ranch encompasses just under a thousand acres of upland prairie and riparian wetlands along Willow Creek. Mule deer and white-tailed deer rely on the property for winter cover and spring fawning, and a number of other mammals and birds inhabit the ranch. A portion of Willow Creek retains water year-round, providing an invaluable oasis in the dry prairie environment. In addition to serving as a critical water source for wildlife, the creek provides habitat for native fish and amphibians, including the orange-throat darter and plains leopard frog.

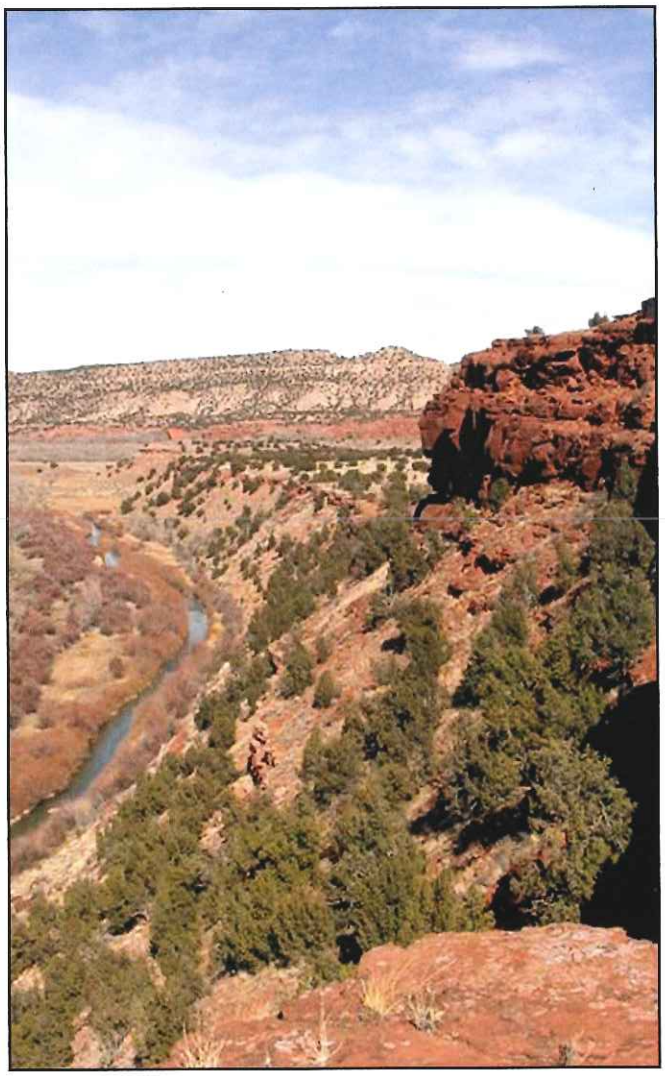


The Gelvin Family was able to provide a place of refuge for wildlife for many years while running cattle on the ranch. When they decided to pursue permanent protection of their property, the Gelvins decided to work with Colorado Parks and Wildlife and The Nature Conservancy. Habitat Stamp funds were used to purchase a conservation easement which is being held by The Nature Conservancy and an access easement which is being held by Parks and Wildlife. The Gelvins continue to graze cattle on their land, in harmony with the needs of wildlife and appropriate recreational use by the public.

Beatty Canyon Ranch
- Acres Protected: 13,920 acres
- Las Animas County
- Protected in 2008

Located in the lower Purgatoire River area of Southeastern Colorado, Beatty Canyon Ranch is part of a large, intact native landscape at the nexus of riverine, canyon, and short-grass systems. The ranch is made up of high mesas bisected by deep, rough canyons. The mesa tops are covered with shortgrass prairie, and the canyons include riparian areas full of cottonwoods, box elders, and willows. The area is home to several species that are at risk of becoming endangered. It also provides important habitat for game species, including deer, bighorn sheep, pronghorn, mountain lion, bear, and turkey.

The Wooten Family has lived on this land for four generations. Facing the economic realities of modern agricultural markets, the Wootens were forced to consider the prospect of subdividing and selling their ranch for development into recreational ranchettes and vacation homes. Steve Wooten decided to take a different route in order to keep his ranch intact and in business. A 13,920-acre conservation easement funded in part by Habitat Stamp funds helped to keep the ranch whole, protecting its substantial value for wildlife while also keeping the family ranching operation in business. Additional funding for the easement came from Colorado Open Lands.



Jumping Cow Ranch
- Acres Protected: 12,613 acres
- Elbert County
- Protected in 2010

Located in Elbert County, the Jumping Cow Ranch encompasses a range of unique grassland habitats along with riparian woodlands and shrublands. These habitats harbor several wildlife species, including native prairie fish, ferruginous hawks, Swainson's hawks, native leopard frogs, swift fox, and pronghorn antelope. The ranch provides crucial linkages between the foothills and the Eastern Plains.

Jumping Cow Ranch was home to a thriving cattle operation for more than 20 years, but financial pressures on the owners grew. Faced with the prospect of ending their ranching operation and subdividing their property, the owners of Jumping Cow worked with The Nature Conservancy and Colorado Parks and Wildlife to place conservation and access easements on the property, protecting the land from future development and retaining its significant recreational opportunities. Habitat Stamp funds proved to be crucial to the success of the agreement.

© THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

In addition to keeping the ranch in business and protecting wildlife habitat, Jumping Cow Ranch has also opened up land for public hunters. Finding a place to hunt can be a challenge on the Eastern Plains, especially in close proximity to the Denver metropolitan area.

© THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

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South Republican State Wildlife Area
- Acres Protected: 7,082 acres, including 3 miles of river
- Yuma and Kit Carson Counties
- Protected 2008-2010

Andrews Parcel: Conservation easement on 326 acres, protected in 2008
Kleweno South: Conservation easement on 1182 acres, protected in 2008
Kleweno North: Conservation easement on 645 acres, protected in 2008
Shallow River Ranch: Conservation easement on 4929 acres, protected in 2010

Located in Yuma and Kit Carson Counties, this series of conservation easement acquisitions protected a total of 7,082 acres including approximately three miles of riparian habitat along the South Republican River and its tributaries. Protecting these properties linked more than six miles of contiguous lowland riparian habitat, in addition to protecting upland grasslands and irrigated fields. These properties represent highly significant habitat for multiple waterfowl species dependent on healthy wetland and riparian areas, in addition to deer, turkey, pheasant and other upland wildlife. Other properties previously protected through conservation easements are in the vicinity, thus adding to a broad landscape of protected habitat.

The easements also provided perpetual protection for agricultural property, maintaining ranching or farming on the landscape and also providing public access for the public to enjoy hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing opportunities.

LK Ranch LK/Grady State Wildlife Area

- Acres Protected: 10,262 acres
- Rio Blanco County
- Protected 2011

Located in Rio Blanco County, protection of the LK Ranch LK and Grady properties included habitat within the last remaining patch of occupied range for the Meeker/White River population of greater sage-grouse. The properties are also within a migratory corridor for the large elk and mule deer herds in the area. In an unusual conservation and recreational opportunity, four access easements united multiple parcels and provided limited public access for hunting on ranchland within and outside the area covered by a conservation easement.

© YAMPA VALLEY LAND TRUST

Completion of this complex transaction affirmed the Klinglesmith family's ongoing large-scale, rolling conservation effort in conjunction with Yampa Valley Land Trust, and joined that effort with the willingness of the nearby Grady family to also conserve their ranch and its valuable habitat. This creative combination of habitat conservation and hunting opportunity was possible only with cooperation from landowners and the land trust community; it is an example of the new template CPW has forged for achieving multiple wildlife-related objectives on a landscape scale. Yampa Valley Land Trust and CPW continue to work together to monitor these properties in support of their open space and wildlife values.

Tarryall Creek Ranch/Cline Ranch State Wildlife Area

- Acres Protected: 1635 acres
- Park County
- Protected in 2010

Located in Park County, Tarryall Creek Ranch (now known as Cline Ranch State Wildlife Area) was the object of focused conservation efforts for several years. The property contains 2.7 miles of Tarryall Creek plus 30 beaver ponds and 250 acres of riparian shrub community. In 2010, Park County purchased the ranch and conveyed to Colorado Parks and Wildlife a conservation and access easement; the County also developed a management plan to protect the property's conservation, wildlife and recreational values.

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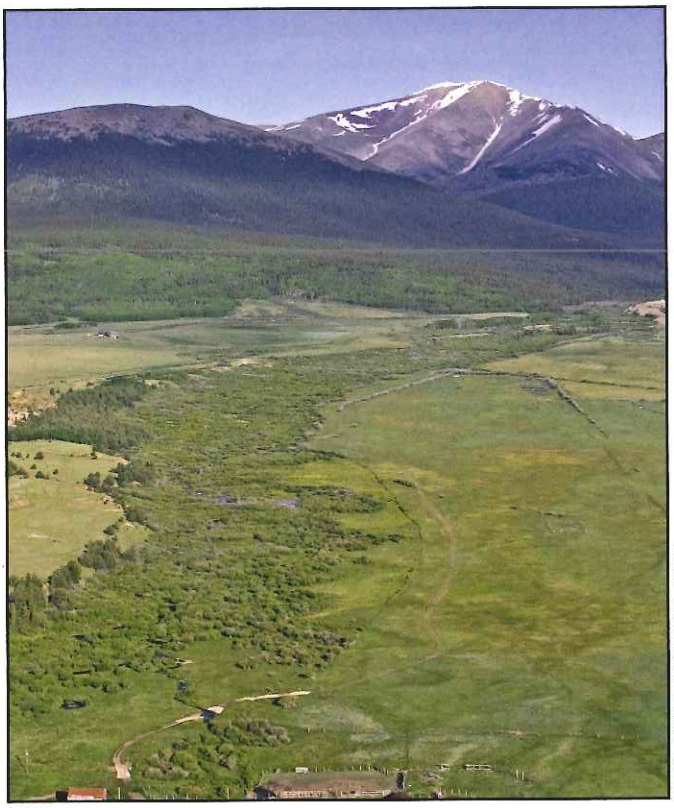
This transaction resulted in additional protection of the property's unique value to wildlife; it permanently protected public access to a property esteemed for its excellent hunting, fishing and wildlife-viewing opportunities.



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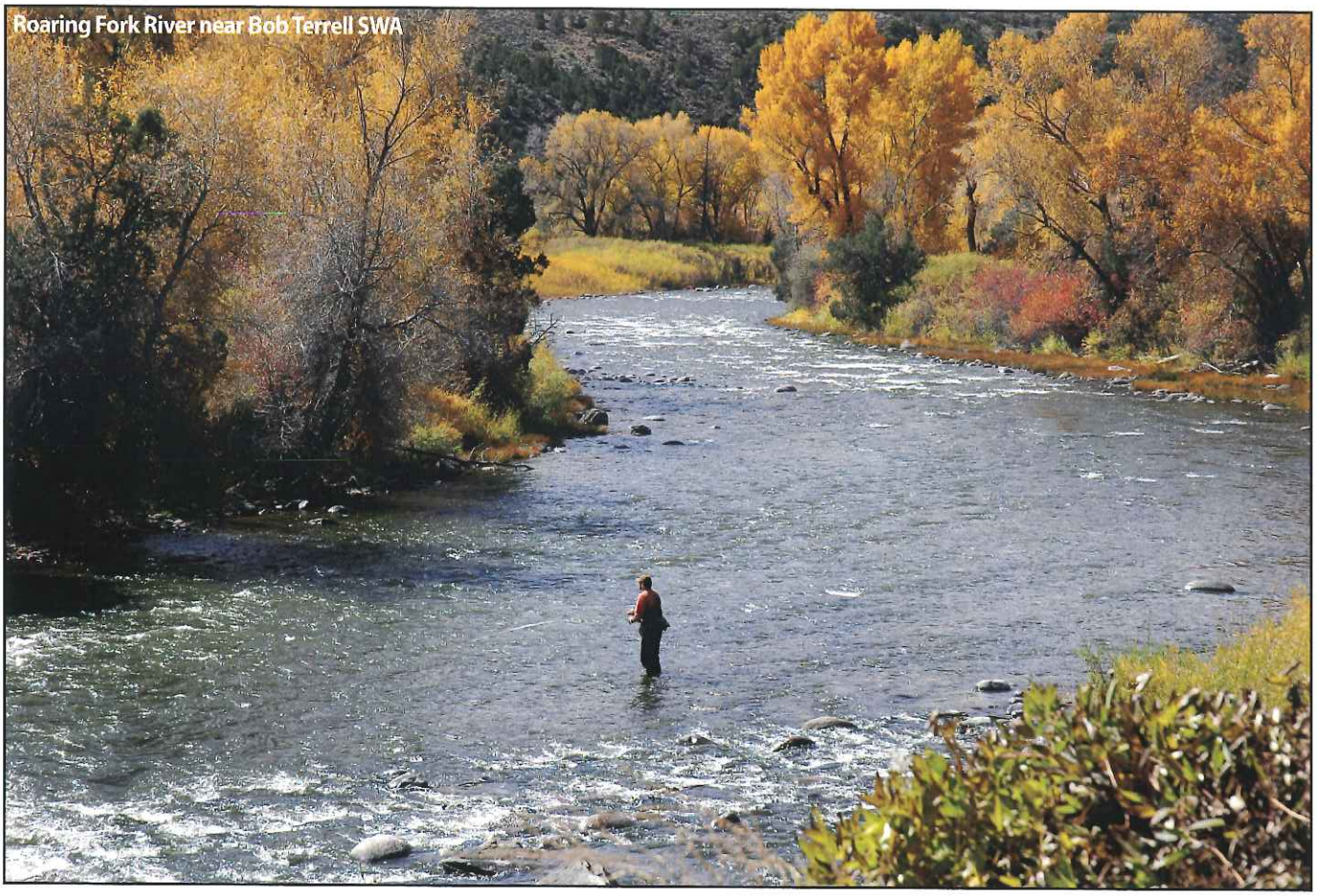
Roaring Fork River near Bob Terrell SWA

Bob Terrell State Wildlife Area (Koziel Parcel)
- Acres Protected: 7.5 acres
- Garfield County
- Protected in 2010

Located at the intersection of Routes 82 and 133 just north of the Carbondale town limits, this project protected a critical access point on the north side of the "Gold Medal" Roaring Fork River. The conservation easement will prevent the entire 7.5 acre site from being developed for commercial, residential, or industrial uses. The public access easement includes an access point to the river, a public parking lot and public boat launch – an area that was previously leased by the Colorado Division of Wildlife and was enormously popular with anglers, but was in danger of being sold to private interests and thus lost for public use. This transaction secured that access point in perpetuity.

Additionally, the property provides links to an extensive network of existing bicycle and hiking trails in the region. The town also intends to create a municipal waterfront park and a public campground adjacent to this site. CPW's role in securing this property was critical to the town's recreational plans for the community and had exceptional community support.

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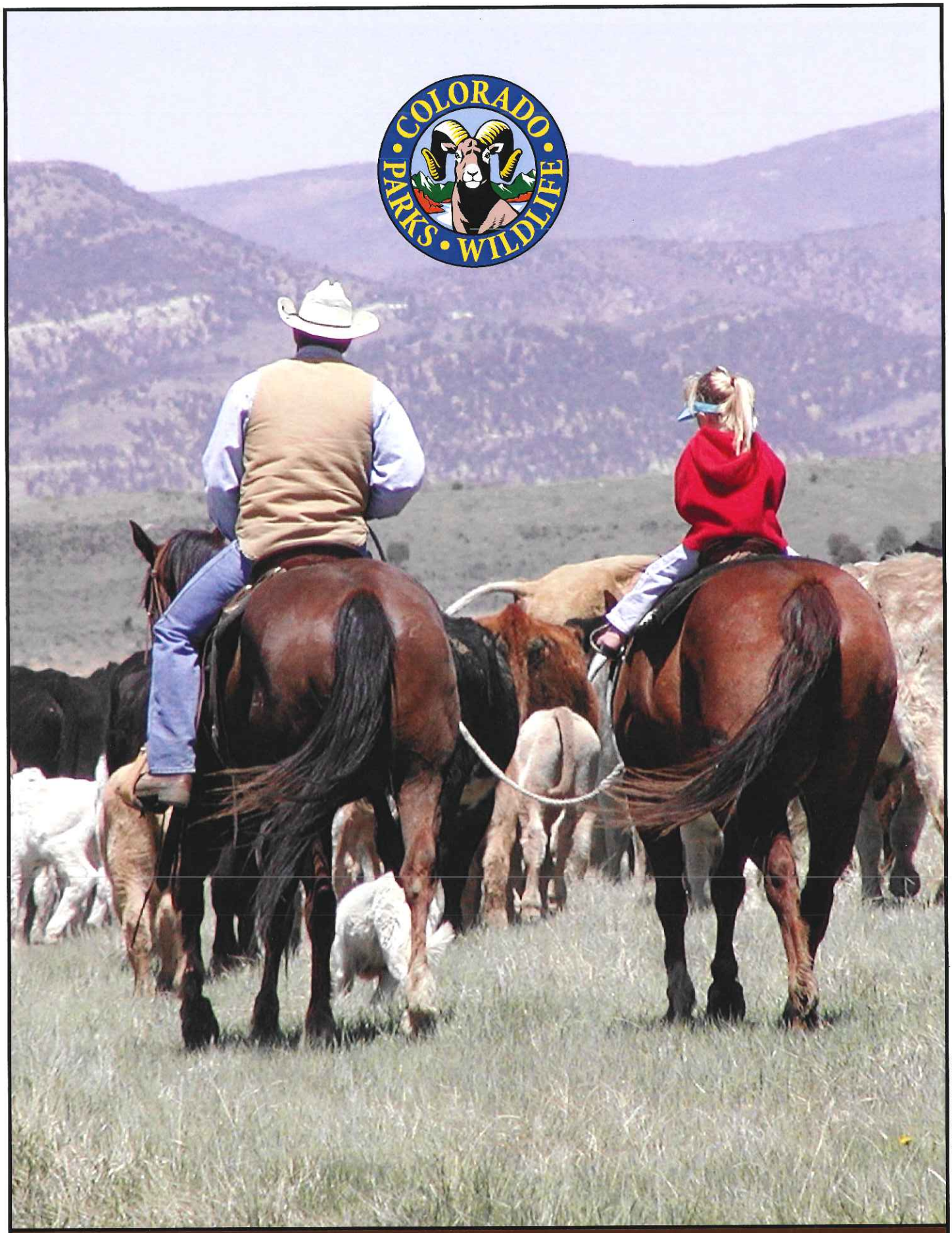

KLINGLESMITH FAMILY PHOTO

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