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Conservation Easement Helps Protect Water Supply for City of Cheyenne

Cheyenne, Wyo. – It's not often that you see a hay meadow being mowed with horsepower, but that's what happens almost every year outside of Curt Gowdy State Park in Wyoming. The Jaw Bone Gulch Ranch landowners started using horses to cut hay in 1979 when their tractor broke down. While waiting for parts to fix it, they hitched the horses to an old mower and got back to work. They have done it this way ever since, on hay meadows that have been in the family for well over one hundred years.

Nestled between Granite and Crystal reservoirs, the Jaw Bone Gulch Ranch helps protect water quality for the City of Cheyenne. Facing increasing development pressure, the Landers family chose to enter into a conservation easement with the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust (WSGLT) to protect 560 acres of their agricultural land. In doing so, they are successfully protecting prime winter and yearlong habitat for mule deer, seasonal habitat for other big game species, and a portion of the South Fork of Middle Crow Creek.

The Jaw Bone Gulch Ranch conservation easement project was completed with funding assistance from the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resources Trust, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, and The Conservation Fund.

"As communities in southeast Wyoming continue to grow, it is important that working landscapes be protected to benefit future generations. The conservation easement on the Jaw Bone Gulch Ranch adds to the over 34,000 acres already conserved in Laramie County. We are grateful to the landowners for voluntarily protecting a vital piece of Wyoming's heritage," said WSGLT Executive Director, Eric Schacht.

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About the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust

The [Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust](#) (WSGLT) is a nonprofit land conservation organization whose mission is to "Conserving Wyoming's working agricultural lands, which also provide open space, wildlife habitat, and other environmental benefits for future generations."