



Maintaining the Range

Fall 2021 Newsletter





A Letter from our Leadership

Dear Friends and Partners,

Fall is a time of harvest and preparation. There is a sense of urgency to get everything done as the weather cools. There is also a sense of joy and pride in all that has been produced and accomplished during the year. We certainly feel that way at the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust!

In the last twelve months, we have recorded three conservation easements, preserving 2,057 acres of agricultural lands, big game migration corridors and crucial habitat, important riparian systems, and Greater sage-grouse core area. We wrapped up our stewardship season, monitoring over 285,000 acres of existing conservation easements across some of the most beautiful ranches in the country.

In late August, we hosted our 20th Anniversary Celebration and Annual Roundup BBQ at the Padlock Ranch. This event rounded out a busy summer and provided our community – landowners, partners, supporters, board, and staff – an opportunity to reflect on the importance of conserving agricultural lands. And, of course, to celebrate all those who have moved us to this point in our 20-plus year history.

We are also preparing. As I write this, we are working with eighteen landowners to develop easements across another 41,885 acres. Landowner's interest in conserving their land continues at a steady pace. We know Wyoming is changing as more people recognize the value of open spaces and connected communities. While change is inevitable, we continue working to keep Wyoming's agricultural lands, wildlife habitat, and scenic views intact.

Here at the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust, we find joy in the many partners we work with, in their conservation and agricultural accomplishments. As we settle into fall and prepare for winter here in Wyoming, I hope you will enjoy this newsletter celebrating those accomplishments.

The harvest shows us we have much to be thankful for!

With thanks,

Staff

Jessica Crowder, Executive Director
Kaylee Wilkins, Office Manager
Tate Smith, Conservation Director
Cidney Handy, Stewardship Coordinator
Sarah Kauer, Engagement Coordinator

Board of Directors

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Bobbie Frank - Keith Geis
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Reg Phillips - Steve Sharkey
Jared Souza - Joe Thomas

Wayne Fahsholtz Board Chair

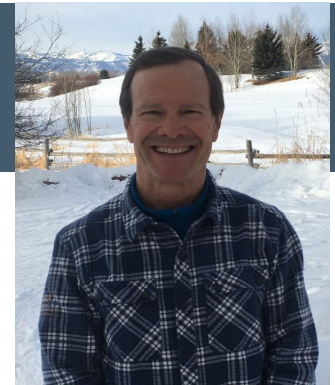


Wayne Fahsholtz, who serves as the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust Chair, has a long history with the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust.

During his time serving as the CEO and President of the Padlock Ranch, Wayne was instrumental in assisting with the placement of conservation easements on the ranch through the Land Trust. The legacy of Homer Scott was important to the family and placing easements on their working land ensures that his legacy lives on.

When asked why he serves on the board, Wayne noted that serving on the board is a way to give back to the people of Wyoming. The Land Trust provides a tool, through easements, that help landowners preserve the open space that everyone in Wyoming has come to know and love. More importantly easements provide landowners a way to maintain their way of life, protecting agriculture and ensuring there will be opportunities for generations to come. Wayne's passion for the state, land, people, and the future of Wyoming is evident, and he finds great satisfaction in encouraging others to preserve pieces of each.

Steve Sharkey Board Member



Steve Sharkey, a Director of the Knobloch Family Foundation, joined the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust Board in December 2020. For Steve, joining the board was a natural fit.

"The Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust has become a trusted Knobloch Family Foundation partner for private land conservation in Wyoming. The Foundation's mission is conservation of quality wildlife habitat, which is often a collateral benefit of the Land Trust's mission of conserving Wyoming's working agricultural lands."

Upon joining the board, Steve noted that he wants to help the Land Trust do more, increasing support in areas that will benefit land protection across the state.

"The Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust is a leading land trust in the State, and is doing so much with so little."

Steve's contributions to conserving agricultural lands and wildlife habitat reach far beyond individual landowners, providing multiple public benefits that will be appreciated for years to come.

Bousman Ranch **Preserving Agriculture for Future Generations**

In December 2020 the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust closed on the Bousman Ranch conservation easement. The Land Trust and Bousman Livestock Inc. partnered to permanently conserve 1,295 acres in the Upper Green River Valley, just east of Boulder, WY.

The Bousman family was interested in protecting the property's agricultural and wildlife values amidst the pressing need to prevent fragmentation due to development and support the family's future agricultural operations. At closing, Brad Bousman said,

"I am relieved that the ranch is protected from subdividers and will continue into the future as an agricultural operation."



Conservation values:

- Crucial habitat for mule deer, pronghorn antelope & moose
- Greater sage-grouse core area and nearby leks
- Riparian habitat along Boulder Creek sustains fish & waterfowl populations
- Scenic views of the Wind River Range & the Wyoming Range
- Agricultural history and strategic water rights

Funding partners:

- U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust

Completed Projects

MJH **Protecting the Land**

In August of this year, the Land Trust was back in Pinedale to close on the second conservation easement completed at the MJ Ranch east of Boulder. Starting in 2016, the Land Trust partnered with Mark and Renee Jones to protect 600 acres of highly developable rangeland near an existing subdivision, adjacent to the 2,054-acre conservation easement on the MJ Ranch that was completed in 2008 in partnership with The Conservation Fund. The Jones family was intent on conserving this part of their ranch to ensure that future generations are able to use the property for agriculture.



Conservation values:

- Open space within rural residential development area
- Seasonal habitat for mule deer, pronghorn antelope, and migratory birds
- Greater sage-grouse core area and nearby leks
- Scenic views of the Wind River Range & the Wyoming Range

Funding partners:

- U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust

Hammer Reed Place **Continuing a Legacy**

Early in 2021, the Land Trust partnered with Maggie Miller of the Grindstone Cattle Company to protect the 162-acre Hammer Reed Place through a donated conservation easement. The property was originally owned by the Hammer-Reed family. The conserved acres are directly adjacent to other WSGLT conserved properties and brings the total acres conserved by Maggie Miller and Grindstone Cattle Company to over 18,000. The conservation easement was fully donated, a tremendous charitable contribution and continuation of Maggie's conservation legacy.

"All of these conservation easements just make me so happy. This is something I enjoy doing and I'd like to keep this wonderful land the way it is."
- Maggie Miller



Conservation values:

- Open space within rural residential development area
- Connectivity of agricultural operations
- Mule deer migration corridor and stopover area
- Habitat for iconic Wyoming wildlife species

Funding partners:

- Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust

Conservation
Through
Ranching

Summer Stewardship, A Note From Our Intern

I have never been the type to work a conventional desk job, which meant there were a lot of raised eyebrows when I announced I had ambitions to go to law school. As my first year at the University of Wyoming College of Law was wrapping up, I desperately needed to get back outside.

When the Land Trust announced that it was looking for an intern to help with monitoring for the summer, Travis Brammer, a past Stewardship Coordinator with the Land Trust, enthusiastically advertised to help fill the position.

"Let me get this straight, I get to spend the summer riding around Wyoming on an ATV, meeting landowners and learning about the land?? I need this job."

With encouragement and a quick education on conservation easements from Dr. Drew Bennett, I felt equipped to throw my name in the ring. I applied, was blessed to be offered the job and from there began a wonderful summer.

Outside of working with such great people and my adventures on the ATV, the best thing about my summer was how much I learned about Wyoming. I learned things this summer that I was hungry for. I learned how the West works. I learned about cows and fencing, water and ditches. I learned to pay attention to grass. I learned a little about how to read the agricultural history of the land just by looking at it. I even learned more about my family's history here. On top of all that, I got to meet a fair number of the people that make Wyoming, Wyoming.

Wyoming is a wildly beautiful state. I tease Cidney because she gushes at every ranch, raving about what a great place it is. While I tease, she is absolutely right. It is a blessing to own land here. I feel very grateful and privileged that I got to visit places that manifest a dedication and lifelong relationship with the land. Thank you to everyone that I got to meet this summer, thank you for letting me experience your personal patch of Earth.

Life is back to being crazy busy, stuck inside the walls of the law school once again. Reflecting on what I learned and witnessed in the field this summer, I am realizing it is all prevalent in my classes. I am very engaged in my water law class as I now know how Wyoming's water law is playing out in the field. In Global Climate Governance we are discussing opportunities and potential systems to give ranchers and farmers carbon credits. In another class we are tackling a behemoth of a topic: what we want the future of America's public lands to look like. Through all the conversations I sat in on this summer, I am so much more aware of all the different concerns and relevant information that go into that question. Although I am once more hobbled behind my computer, fenced in by the range of Wi-Fi, as ironic as it may sound, I'm doing it to help people be outside.

- Kimber Logan, 2021 Stewardship Intern

Statistics

- 105 Conservation Easements
- Over 12,000 Miles Traveled
- 34 Days on the Road



Happy Trails!

We wish Kimber the very best of luck as she enters her 2nd year of Law School at the University of Wyoming.



Scott Sims
McFadden, WY



2021 Kurt Bucholz Conservation Award

Scott Sims, winner of the 2021 Bucholz Conservation Award, was recognized for his exceptional commitment to and support of agricultural land conservation, water rights, and fish and wildlife habitat. Sims was nominated by the Medicine Bow Conservation District.

Sims, a past board member and long-time supporter of the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust, is an avid advocate for the agricultural community and the ranching way of life.

If Sims is known for one thing, it would be leading by example through roles on various boards that hold the same values that he embraces. Sims has been a Board Member for the Medicine Bow Conservation District, the Farm Service Agency, and many more organizations. Sims is also the immediate past President of the Wyoming Stock Growers Association, where he has been a member since 1975.

As a leader Sims is active in natural resource discussions from the local to the national level through his involvement with the Public Lands Council, playing a crucial role in a nationwide panel that studied the effects of high intensity, short duration grazing. In addition, Sims influences local natural resource policies and practices through his work on the Rock Creek Water Users Board and the Rock Creek Coordinated Resource Management Program.

Together, the Sims family shows their passion for conservation through their on-the-ground projects. They have worked with several organizations – from the NRCS to Trout Unlimited to the Wyoming Game and Fish Department – to implement habitat, riparian connectivity, and grazing management projects on their property, another great display of leading by example.

The Bucholz Conservation Award is given in memory of the late Dr. Kurt Bucholz, DVM, rancher from Carbon County, and early supporter of the Stock Growers Land Trust. The Bucholz Conservation Award winner encompasses the agricultural stewardship values and conservation ethic that Dr. Bucholz exemplified in his life.

To find out more about the Kurt Bucholz Conservation Award, visit
www.wsplt.org/bucholz-award
or email Sidney Handy at
sidney@wsplt.org

Individuals eligible for nomination exhibit one or more of the following criteria:

- An advocate for conserving Wyoming's farms and ranches
- A land steward or agricultural advocate who has been a participant in state, regional, or national natural resource discussions
- A defender of the importance of water conservation and the significance of protecting Wyoming's traditional water rights
- A proponent of hunting and wildlife protection, and a personal commitment to habitat conservation
- Has implemented land or resource conservation practices on their property with the WSPLT or a similar organization

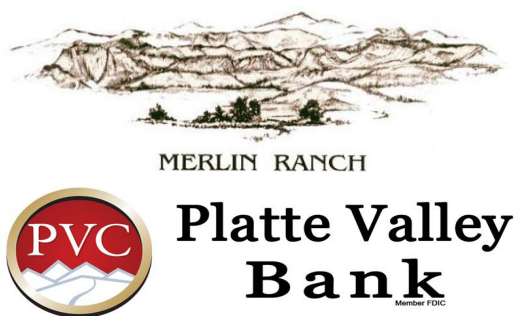


20th Anniversary & Annual Roundup BBQ Sponsors

Anonymous - Barbara Dilts - Bart Rea - Burke & Carole Baker - Cato Ranch - Crowder Family

Dave Clarendon, In honor of the Labbe Family- Driskill Family / Bear Lodge Cattle Co / Devils Tower KOA - Ducks Unlimited
Gretchen Swanson Family Foundation - Grindstone Cattle Co. - Hotel Wolf - Intermountain West Joint Venture Janet Marschner
Jerry Webb - Joe Glode - John & Kathleen McKinley - Kelly Lockhart - Lazy Hanging G - Lonabaugh and Riggs - Mantha Phillips
New Frontier Ranches - Purdy Family Foundation - Robert B. & Emilie W. Betts Foundation - S-A Cattle - Sinclair Oil
Sommers Herefords - Steve & Emy Duerr - Sundance State Bank - Tracy & Liz Swanson, DA Davidson - US Fish & Wildlife Service
V Ranch - Wyoming Aero Photo - Wyoming Downs - Wyoming Livestock Roundup - Wyoming Game & Fish Department

We Thank You!



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Natural Resources Conservation Service



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**



LEGACY RANCHES & FINE SPORTING PROPERTIES

Oxbow Ranch

Landowner Feature by Katie Shockley

The now thriving hay meadows and grazing land of the Oxbow Ranch along the Norwood River between Hyattville and Manderson was once left rundown, improperly managed and vacant for several years before the Eastmans got their hands on it.

Maria and Skip Eastman purchased the ranch in 2005 with a five-year plan in front of them. They were either going to restore the productive ground and rebuild the buildings or they were going to sell it.

"We felt overwhelmed, and we always asked, 'what are we doing,'" said Maria. "But we said 'okay, if we can't turn this around in five years, we are just going to sell it.' But we never did, we just couldn't stop."

Restoring the land became the driving factor for the Eastmans.

"It became sort of who we were and what we did, and we couldn't walk away," said Maria.

Maria's background with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, range consulting, field work, and mine reclamation work helped her to better understand the needs of the ranch. She became good at growing many different things on all kinds of soils.

The Eastmans have been living and working on the Oxbow Ranch for 16 years and primarily raise hay crops and lease cattle for winter feeding and grazing. They sell most of their hay to farmers and ranchers in the area. "We've always been really pro wildlife, we like wildlife," said Skip. "We have hay fields, so we are not doing farming that is making a lot of noise and scaring off wildlife."

The ranch provides a route for wildlife to access the river.

"We really have enjoyed having all those wildlife values and also the production values and being able to keep them both strong," said Maria. "That's what we really wanted to do, and we have been blessed we have mostly been able to do that."



Photo Credit: Skip & Maria Eastman

Continued...

Maria also runs Rainhorse Equine Assisted Services, a non-profit that helps people bond with horses and guide them towards physical, psychological and emotional healing through the support of the Wyoming Community Foundation. Her rescued and retired horses can be found on the Oxbow Ranch.

Things changed for the couple when they heard their neighbor was looking to sell about 600 acres of land and thought subdividing might help with the sale.

"We started thinking 'we better protect our land,'" said Skip. "We had known Bob Budd at the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust from the Nature Conservancy because he used to work there, so we contacted the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust. We knew Alan Barnett, who was on the board, so we asked about getting an easement to protect our land."

Our families were both very supportive of our decision to get an easement to help protect the land from development, shared Skip. "We went through the whole process and the easement was also supported by the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) through the NRCS," said Maria. "We were blown away when our easement got approved."

The Oxbow Ranch was the first approved easement in Big Horn County.

Since then, the neighbor who purchased the property near them has also applied for an easement, shared Skip. "People are nervous about easements because they don't understand them," said Skip. The hesitancy towards easements comes in two parts, shared Maria. "They are afraid to give over any kind of control of property rights and they think they might get inspected all the time," said Maria. "We try to tell them the purpose behind the easement is really to protect the agricultural values. The Stock Growers Land Trust is not motivated to do anything that would interfere with good responsible production practices."

The other concern is not having subdivision leeway, to be able to sell off a piece, and that can be a sacrifice, shared Maria. "Eventually, when we are gone, these places are going to be taken over by developments," said Skip. The Eastmans thought about their easement as the ability to draw the line at their property to prevent development and to maintain it for many generations to come. The process of establishing an easement is something that takes time, shared Skip. "You have to have a reason to do it," said Skip. "It has to be more than just the purchase of the easement, it's got to be the idea that you're going to be protecting it."

"This is our home, this land is in our blood and we know it's going to be protected forever now."



Photo Credit: Mary Miles

Invest in the Future of Wyoming Through Gifts of Appreciated Investments

Investment portfolios fluctuate over time. If you opt to sell investments that are worth more than what you originally paid for them, you are subject to capital gains taxes. Consider donating them to the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust instead!

There are several types of assets where you may be vested:

- Stocks
- Mutual Funds
- Index Funds
- Closely-held Securities

Making a gift of invested securities to support agricultural conservation in Wyoming is as easy as instructing your broker to transfer the shares to the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust.

Using assets other than cash also allows you flexibility when planning a future gift. For example, if the timing is not right for you to gift these assets, a gift of securities through your will or living trust allows you the flexibility to adjust your gift if needed. You can continue to receive dividends and participate in shareholder votes, and the securities are yours if you need them.

Gifts of appreciated investments provide a win-win for you, for the Land Trust, and for Wyoming.

Please contact us at 307-772-8751 for additional information.

The information provided is not intended to be used as legal or tax advice. Please consult an attorney or tax advisor for individual advice.



**We have an exciting match opportunity that will be shared in November.
Will you join us in unlocking this match during our annual appeal?
Keep an eye on your mailboxes for more information!**

And all at once, summer collapsed into fall... - Oscar Wilde



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The Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust is dedicated to conserving Wyoming's working agricultural lands, which also provide open space, wildlife habitat, and other environmental benefits for the people of today and generations of tomorrow.