

March 19, 2026

Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust
Kendra Mitchell, Administrative & Communications Manager
307.772.8751
kendra@wsqgt.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Ellsbury Diamond E Ranch Conservation Easement in Crook County Permanently Protects 2,506 Acres

Cheyenne, Wyo., March 19, 2026 – David Ellsbury has permanently protected 2,506 acres of the Ellsbury Diamond E Ranch northeast of Sundance, Wyoming. This conservation easement with the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust ensures the ranch’s agricultural legacy and important wildlife habitat will endure for generations to come.

Located approximately 15 miles northeast of Sundance, the ranch was originally established by the Ellsbury family in 1884 under the Homestead Acts. Today, the ranch is owned and operated by fourth-generation rancher David Ellsbury, with the sixth generation learning the land and traditions that will one day carry the operation forward.

“My roots go back to my great grandfather who homesteaded this ranch before Wyoming was a state,” said David Ellsbury. “I, along with my father and grandfather, invested our lifetimes working this ranch to provide for our livelihoods. With the threat of encroaching development looming across my fencelines, I felt the need to preserve and conserve my family’s legacy and

heritage for our future generations. I share the sentiment often credited to Chief Seattle, ‘We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children’.”

The property consists primarily of native rangeland interspersed with forested areas and supports grazing operations, dryland hay production, and limited commercial timber harvest. Approximately 300 acres are devoted to hay and cropland production.

The ranch also provides important wildlife habitat and lies within Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD) designated elk and mule deer seasonal range, with portions identified as crucial mule deer habitat. Areas of the property are included within a WGFD Aquatic Crucial Habitat Priority Area in the Powder River Basin Watershed, and nearby streams are classified as either clear water or green ribbon trout streams. The entire western parcel of the property is surrounded by United States Forest Service (USFS) land, while the eastern parcel shares a boundary of more than two miles with USFS lands, further enhancing landscape-scale conservation connectivity.

Funding for the project was provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service through the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program–Agricultural Land Easements (NRCS ACEP-ALE), Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust (WWNRT), National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), and Atira Conservation.

“With continued growth and subdivision pressures in Crook County, protecting large, intact working lands like the Ellsbury Diamond E Ranch has never been more important,” says Wyoming NRCS State Conservationist, Jackie Byam. “Through a significant ACEP-ALE investment, we’re helping conserve habitat that supports elk, mule deer, and crucial aquatic resources connected to the Powder River Basin Watershed. This easement ensures the ranch remains productive while maintaining the ecological integrity of the Black Hills landscape.”

The completion of this project brings the Land Trust’s total protected acreage to 327,799 acres statewide. This conservation success reflects a shared commitment between the Ellsbury family, funding partners, and the Land Trust to protect Wyoming’s agricultural heritage and the wildlife-rich landscapes that define the region. The Land Trust is grateful for the trusted partners, landowners and supporters who make projects like this possible.

###

The Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust is dedicated to conservation through ranching. Based in Cheyenne, the non-profit organization serves the entire state and is Wyoming’s only agricultural land trust. Through partnerships with ranch families, the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust holds and stewards’ conservation easements on more than 327,000 acres of agricultural land throughout Wyoming. Founded in 2000 by the Wyoming Stock Growers Association, it is one of the largest regional land trusts in the United States.

For more information, visit wsqgt.org