



Eastern Colorado: A Conservationist's Paradise

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In the wake of Colorado's population and development boom, conservation groups scrambled to save 86,000 acres of undeveloped nature, reports *The Denver Post*.



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http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci_29701589/colorado-land-preservation-racing-save-nature-amid-growth)The land includes part of the 50,000-acre JE Ranch east of Trinidad in the Purgatoire River Valley. The deals were negotiated by the Nature Conservancy and Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust.

The negotiated easements will prevent subdivision and industrial or commercial development on the land, but will allow traditional agricultural activity to continue. Protective easements (http://www.denverpost.com/ci_20861904/90-000-colorado-acres-offered-national-protected-area) now account for two million acres of Colorado, roughly 3 percent of the state. The Nature Conservancy has prioritized the Eastern Colorado region as some of the most ecologically significant land in the West.

"It is big. It is open. And it continues to be functional — both ecologically and for the local historic agricultural community. When you're working in dry climates, as in eastern Colorado, scale matters," said Matt Moorhead, southeast Colorado program director for the conservancy. "This is a place where the conservation community can try to get ahead of the curve."