2008 Annual Report
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Front Cover: North Park - Coyte Ranch

Back Cover: Tate Rusk at the Wet Mountain Valley Branding

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2008 Financial Overview

The Colorado Cattlemen’s Agricultural Land Trust takes pride in our 14-year record of fiscal responsibility and organizational growth. In 2008, CCALT accepted conservation easements valued at $32,050,368 and accepted another $35,000,000 in transferred easements. CCALT was able to raise funding for $5,028,695 in easement purchases and landowners donated an astounding $27,021,673 in easement value. CCALT established the dedicated Conservation Easement Stewardship Fund to provide for the long-term monitoring and enforcement of our conservation easements. As of December 31, 2008 the fund balance was $1,443,680.
Dear Friends,

These uncertain times may seem to be an unusual time to be making significant investments, but that is exactly what the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust (CCALT) is doing. We feel that now is the time to secure Colorado's agricultural future. Our conservation work with ranchers across Colorado is accomplishing that goal. In 2008, the Land Trust completed 43 conservation transactions which protected more than 50,000 acres!

As a non-profit organization, it is critical to be effective stewards of charitable donations and public conservation funding. CCALT prides itself on our fiscal conservatism and our return on investment. In 2008, CCALT protected conservation easements valued at more than $30 million on an operating budget of $500,000. **This represents a return of more than $60 in conservation for every dollar invested by our supporters.** To look at it another way, CCALT is able to protect land at the cost of $10 an acre!

However, it is not just enough to efficiently protect land. A ranch is not a ranch without a rancher to work there and an agricultural community to support it. We look for those opportunities where we can do more than just protect land, but also those places where a family can use conservation to pass the ranch to the next generation - or where a group of neighbors can protect an entire working agricultural landscape.

One place where CCALT is accomplishing this goal is the Saguache Creek Corridor in the San Luis Valley. Last year we completed a multi-year Great Outdoors Colorado Legacy Grant in Saguache. Fifteen conservation easements now protect much of the private ranch land in the valley - 11,000 acres stretching 20 miles west from the Town of Saguache. Another place where we hope to have a similar effect is North Park, a spectacular working ranch landscape. In 2008, CCALT purchased conservation easements from two traditional ranching families. We have several new projects in North Park for 2009 and we expect to be working there for many years.

**Finally, CCALT received a major national recognition when we were accredited by the Land Trust Alliance in February 2009.** This capped a year-long effort that demonstrates that CCALT adheres to the highest standards in the conservation community.

As we look forward, there will certainly be challenges, but we are seeing many exciting new projects across Colorado from the shortgrass prairies of Weld County and southeast Colorado, to the hay meadows of Routt County and the San Juans. Our success is not possible without two key groups; the landowners who are committed to ensuring an agricultural future for Colorado and our financial supporters, who make our work happen! Thanks again, and we look forward to another banner year in 2009!

William E.L. Fales
Board President

Chris West
Executive Director
Successes and Highlights

CCALT had another record-setting year for land conservation in 2008, protecting more than 50,000 acres in 43 total transactions. More important than the numbers is the positive impact our work is having in protecting rural communities, our ranching heritage and the spectacular working landscapes for which Colorado is known.

We would like to thank every landowner who has protected their lands through CCALT.

Routt County
A local commitment to ranching

In recent years, CCALT has become more active in Routt County, a place which typifies much of Colorado’s spectacular scenery, resort communities and a history of agriculture. What sets Routt County apart is the commitment to keep ranching as part of the community. Residents tax themselves to provide funding for an innovative Purchase of Development Rights Program which has protected more than 20,000 acres since 1997. CCALT is partnering with the PDR Program to protect several multi-generational ranches across the county. We look forward to a strong partnership for years to come.

North Park
Ranchers initiate conservation legacy

The ranching community in North Park is beginning to use conservation easements as a way to protect this relatively untouched landscape. CCALT sees this valley as a rare opportunity for agriculture and conservation because it is largely owned by traditional ranch families.

In 2008, CCALT protected five ranches in North Park including the Holsinger family’s Iva Mae Ranch, which gained the financial support of several groups to become a reality. The Iva Mae Ranch lies just outside of Walden on the Michigan River and was CCALT’s first conservation easement purchase in the area. Coyte Ranch, featured on the cover of this report is another impressive conservation project in the area.

Accreditation
CCALT awarded national accreditation status

CCALT is pleased to announce that we have been awarded accredited status by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance. The accreditation seal recognizes land trusts that meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent. CCALT’s accredited status demonstrates our commitment to the conservation of Colorado’s ranches and farms. CCALT is proud to display the accreditation seal. It is an honor to be one of the few accredited land trusts in the nation.
2008 Donors

The Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust would like to express our sincere thanks to those individuals, businesses, and organizations that have partnered in CCALT's unique vision. We particularly want to thank the 43 landowners who contributed easements in 2008.

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Please accept our sincere apologies for any unintentional mistakes or names that have been omitted.

We have listed only donations that were received in our office by 12/31/2008. Any year-end donations that arrived in January will be listed in our 2009 report.