



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 30, 2017

Press Contacts:

Erik Glenn, Executive Director
Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust
[303-225-8677](tel:303-225-8677)
eglenn@ccalt.org

Historic Crags Ranch Conserved

The Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust (CCALT) has recently partnered with Jerry and Judy Green to place a conservation easement on the historic Crags Ranch, preserving an important piece of Routt County's western heritage with help from the Routt County Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program and the Northwest Colorado Habitat Partnership Program.

Located 10 miles southwest of Hayden, Colorado along the East Fork of the Williams Fork River, the approximately 835 acre Crags Ranch is part of Jerry and Judy Green's family-run cow/calf business.

The Crags Ranch was homesteaded by Jerry's great grandparents, Leon and Mary Green. Leon and Mary Green left their home in Sterling, Colorado in July of 1895 in search of a suitable homestead in western Colorado. They arrived on the Williams Fork in August and made camp. Leon chose an area near several large rock outcroppings which reflected his interest in geology. Leon immediately began constructing a house, barn, shop, cellar, buggy shed, potato shed, and chicken house. He planted crops on the mesas including oats, wheat, barley, and potatoes. His livestock included horses, cattle, hogs and chickens. Leon also began irrigating and hand dug a ditch system (the Hobson Ditch), using horses and plows to help where they could. The patent for the homestead was recorded in Routt County on July 5, 1910 and the Greens officially named their place the "Crags Ranche" (sic), which is today known as the Crags Ranch.

The ranch received its Century Designation from the Colorado Department of Agriculture and the Colorado Historical Society at the Colorado State Fair in 1995.

Aside from the rich history, the Crags Ranch has incredible conservation value. The property is comprised of irrigated hay meadow, open pasture, sagebrush rangeland, aspen woodlands, and mixed montane shrubland. The property is home to elk, mule deer, black bear, mountain lion

- more -

and Bald Eagle, as well as habitat for two Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife species of concern: sandhill crane and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse. The ranch is highly visible along Routt County road 55 and 29, which are heavily traveled routes for access to the Dunkley and Beaver Flat Tops, as well as the Flat Tops Wilderness Area. The scenic East Fork of the Williams Fork River flows through the property and provides stunning vistas from these county roads, especially in the fall season. The East Fork of the Williams Fork has been ranked as a significant site by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program due to fair examples of a globally rare mixed deciduous-evergreen montane riparian forest. The ranch is located in an area of Routt County that doesn't see high land turnover, but is facing increasing development pressure for its recreational amenities.

Current owners Jerry and Judy Green's passion for their ranch and its history is evident to anyone who has ever met them. Since Leon's original 160 acre homestead the ranch has grown to 1,564 acres from acquisitions from other early settlers. Those parcels are still known by their historic names: Coffin, Miller and Crowell. In 2015, the Greens donated a conservation easement on 729 acres of their remaining ownership, assuring the ranch and its rich history will forever be protected.

"By placing the ranch in a conservation easement, I feel the hard work and sacrifice of four generations of my family will now be recognized," says Jerry Green. "I'm satisfied that the ranch will continue to be used for agriculture".

CCALT has partnered with the Routt County PDR program on the conservation of more than 17,600 acres, assisting 18 ranching families across the county. CCALT holds conservation easements on an additional 11,800 acres in Routt County, and has conserved more than 500,000 acres across the state.

###

Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust protects Colorado's agricultural land, heritage and families for future generations by conserving working rural landscapes. For more information visit www.ccalt.org.

The Routt County PDR Program ensures that Routt County will always be defined by its agricultural and natural resource assets. Since its inception, the program has helped to fund 54 conservation projects totaling 40,598 acres. For more information, please contact Helena Taylor at Routt County (970) 870-5315.