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Finalists for Colorado Leopold Conservation Award Selected

ARVADA, Colo. – Three finalists have been selected for the prestigious 2019 Colorado Leopold Conservation Award®.

Given in honor of renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold, the award recognizes ranchers, farmers, and foresters who inspire others with their dedication to land, water and wildlife habitat management on private, working land.

In Colorado the \$10,000 award is presented annually by Sand County Foundation, Colorado Cattlemen's Association, Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust, Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The finalists are:

- **The Livingston Ranch of Stratton in Kit Carson County:** Mike and Julie Livingston raise cattle, wheat, milo, corn and hay with their children Kari and Justin, and their families. Cover crops and no-till practices have improved soil health, while reducing water runoff and soil erosion. Their beef cattle and land have benefitted from an efficient watering system and planned grazing system across 119 pastures. Wildlife habitat is important to this operation has been included in all conservation efforts.
- **Off Ranches of Del Norte in Rio Grande County:** Cory Off raises beef cattle and hay at his ranch along the Rio Grande River. The combination of innovative grazing management, fencing and watering systems, have made the ranch more resilient, both ecologically and economically. Conservation improvements to the ranch's landscape, such as the establishment of buffer areas around wetlands, have bolstered wildlife habitat and attracted a variety of plants, birds and wildlife.
- **Gregg, Chris and Brad Stults of Wray in Yuma County:** The Stults' have implemented a variety of conservation practices on their cattle ranch. Cover crops and no-till practices have increased soil health, retained water, and reduced erosion while growing wheat, milo, sunflowers and hay millet. Their land provides habitat for 53 species of birds, including Greater Prairie Chickens and the western yellow-billed cuckoo. Beaver dams are credited with spurring beneficial streambank vegetation.

This year's recipient will be revealed in April, prior to Earth Day. The formal presentation will take place Monday, June 17 at Colorado Cattlemen's Association's 2019 Annual Convention, which will be held at the Steamboat Grand in Steamboat Springs, Colo.

"Agriculture producers feed a growing society, domestically and abroad, through sustainable production practices that produce more by using less. This approach is the very backbone of stewardship that the Leopold Conservation Award honors," said Mike Hogue, Colorado Cattlemen's Association President. "CCA not only celebrates the award recipients and applicants, but all of Colorado's conservationists through farming and ranching."

"The 2019 Leopold Conservation Award nominees featured an impressive array of families and operations from around the state. The Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust is proud of the conservation accomplishments of each of the applicants," said Erik Glenn, Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust Executive Director. "These applicants showcase the diversity of agriculture in Colorado and the dedication that farming and ranching families have to the lands they steward, their communities, and their families."

The 2018 recipient was Beatty Canyon Ranch of Kim, Colorado.

The Leopold Conservation Award in Colorado is made possible thanks to the generous contributions from Colorado Cattlemen's Association, Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust, Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Stanko Ranch, Gates Family Foundation, American AgCredit, The Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, The Nature Conservancy in Colorado, and McDonald's.

Sand County Foundation presents the Leopold Conservation Award to private landowners in 13 states for extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation.

For more information on the award, visit www.leopoldconservationaward.org.

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LEOPOLD CONSERVATION AWARD PROGRAM

The Leopold Conservation Award is a competitive award that recognizes landowner achievement in voluntary conservation. Sand County Foundation presents the award in California, Colorado, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Texas, Utah and Wisconsin.

SAND COUNTY FOUNDATION

Sand County Foundation is the nation's leading voice for private conservation. Based in Wisconsin, the non-profit organization is dedicated to working with private landowners to advance the use of ethical and scientifically sound land management practices that benefit the environment. www.sandcountyfoundation.org

COLORADO CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Colorado Cattlemen's Association (CCA) is the state's only nonprofit trade organization exclusively representing Colorado's beef producers. Founded in 1867, CCA is the nation's oldest state cattlemen's association. www.coloradocattle.org

COLORADO CATTLEMEN'S AGRICULTURAL LAND TRUST

Recognizing the need to help Colorado's ranching and farming families protect their agricultural lands, in the face of growing development and economic pressures, the Colorado Cattlemen's Association in 1995 formed the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust (CCALT). To date, CCALT has partnered with hundreds of ranching families in the protection of more than 570,000 acres. www.ccalt.org

TRI-STATE GENERATION & TRANSMISSION ASSOCIATION

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