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# Finalists named in Colorado Leopold Conservation Award program

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Finalists for the 2015 Leopold Conservation Award in Colorado have been announced. The prestigious award recognizes private landowner achievement in voluntary conservation.

The finalists for the 2015 award are:

**The Draper Ranch** - a cow/calf ranch owned and operated by Buddy and Jerry Draper in Wetmore.

**The Flying Diamond Ranch** - headquartered near Kit Carson and has been owned and operated by Scott and Jean Johnson since 1990.

**The Green Creek Ranch** - operated by Bill Gay in Pleasant Valley near Steamboat Springs.

Given in honor of renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold, the Leopold Conservation Award recognizes extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation.

It inspires other landowners through these examples and provides a visible forum where farmers, ranchers and other private landowners are recognized as conservation leaders.

In his influential 1949 book, "A Sand County Almanac," Leopold called for an ethical relationship between people and the land they own and manage, which he called "an evolutionary possibility and an ecological necessity."

Award applicants are judged based on their demonstration of improved resource conditions, innovation, long-term commitment to stewardship, sustained economic viability, community and civic leadership, and multiple use benefits.

It is presented annually by Sand County Foundation, the Colorado Cattlemen's Association, the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust, Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association and American AgCredit.

"The Colorado landowners who have been named finalists for the Leopold Conservation Award are committed to conservation and to teaching others about the importance of natural resources stewardship," said Brent Haglund, Sand County Foundation President.

The 2015 recipient, who will receive \$10,000 and a crystal depicting Aldo Leopold, will be announced in April. The award will be presented at the Colorado Cattlemen's Association annual convention on June 15th in Steamboat, Colorado.

The Leopold Conservation Award is possible thanks to generous contributions from many organizations; including Tri-State Generation and Transmission Assoc., American AgCredit, The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, Farm Credit, DuPont Pioneer, The Mosaic Company, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

For application information, please visit [leopoldconservationaward.org](http://leopoldconservationaward.org).

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