



COLORADO CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

"Representing the interests of Colorado's beef industry since 1867"

For Immediate Release
E-Mail: grace@coloradocattle.org
www.coloradocattle.org

Contact: Grace Lischeske
Ph: (303) 431-6422
Fax: (303) 431-6446

Colorado Leopold Conservation Award Recipient Announced

Arvada, Colo. – (March 19, 2013) Sand County Foundation, the Colorado Cattlemen's Association, the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust, and Peabody Energy are proud to name the Visintainer Sheep Co. of Craig, Colorado as the recipient of the 2013 Leopold Conservation Award.

Given in honor of renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold, the award recognizes private landowner achievement in voluntary conservation, and is presented annually.

The Visintainers will receive \$10,000 and a crystal depicting Aldo Leopold at the Colorado Cattlemen's Association Annual Convention on June 17 in Breckenridge.

Visintainer Sheep Co. is a sheep and cattle ranch in Moffat County. Dean Visintainer and his son Gary jointly run the operation, where concern for the land has always been essential to their management.

Across generations, the Visintainers have continually adapted to a changing environment and economy by moving away from production-based management to "forage-based" management aimed at improved range health.

This critical change in philosophy, coupled with decades of monitoring and observation, has led to the diversification of livestock to both sheep and cattle; while keeping a key emphasis on wildlife species, including deer, elk, pronghorn, greater sage grouse, and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse. Today, their ranch is a true refuge for many wildlife species.

"The Visintainers are clearly committed to innovation and testing of practices that further improve stewardship of natural resources under their care," said Brent Haglund, president, Sand County Foundation. "This family exemplifies what it means to be leaders in conservation."

T. Wright Dickinson, President of the Colorado Cattlemen's Association, said, "The Visintainer family coexists with nature in one of the most challenging environments in Colorado to produce food and fiber for families across the state and nation. This miracle of agriculture and conservation doesn't happen on its own; but requires tending of the herds, soil, and water through the lens of sustainability."

The Leopold Conservation Award recognizes extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation. It inspires 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.

The Leopold Conservation Award is possible thanks to generous contributions from Peabody Energy and The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation.

For application information, please visit www.leopoldconservationaward.org.

ABOUT THE LEOPOLD CONSERVATION AWARD

The Leopold Conservation Award is a competitive award that recognizes landowner achievement in voluntary conservation. The award consists of a crystal award depicting Aldo Leopold and a check for \$10,000. In 2013, Sand County Foundation will present Leopold Conservation Awards in California, Colorado, Nebraska, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

ABOUT SAND COUNTY FOUNDATION

Sand County Foundation (www.sandcounty.net) is a private, non-profit conservation group dedicated to working with private landowners to improve habitat on their land. Sand County's mission is to advance the use of ethical and scientifically-sound land management practices and partnerships for the benefit of people and their rural landscapes. Sand County Foundation works with private landowners because the majority of the nation's fish, wildlife, and natural resources are found on private lands. The organization backs local champions, invests in civil society, and places incentives before regulation to create solutions that endure and grow. The organization encourages the exercise of private responsibility in the pursuit of improved land health as an essential alternative to many of the commonly-used strategies in modern conservation. www.sandcounty.net

ABOUT 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. <http://www.coloradocattle.org>

ABOUT 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 402,500 acres. <http://www.ccalt.org>

###