



# COLORADO CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

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

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## **2015 Colorado Leopold Conservation Award® Recipient Announced**

Arvada, Colo. – (April 21, 2015) The Flying Diamond Ranch, owned and managed by Scott and Jean Johnson, has been selected as the recipient of the 2015 Colorado Leopold Conservation Award®.

Located near Kit Carson, Flying Diamond Ranch is a fifth generation, 25,000-acre cattle ranch. For over 100 years, the Johnsons' management philosophy has reflected a personal conviction of individual responsibility for the health of the land. Guided by their principles of holistic management, they implemented a rotational grazing system that is supported by pipelines and fencing, which allows them to control the environmental impact of their herd.

To lower production costs, the Johnsons pushed their calving season to May when natural forage supplies can better meet the nutritional needs of their herd.

Given in honor of renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold, the Leopold Conservation Award recognizes private landowner achievement in voluntary conservation. It is presented annually by Sand County Foundation, the Colorado Cattlemen's Association, the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust (CCALT), Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, and American AgCredit.

The \$10,000 award and a crystal depicting Aldo Leopold will be presented to the Johnsons at the Protein Producer Summit in Steamboat Springs on June 15.

"The Flying Diamond has done an impressive job of balancing resources with operational needs to create a sustainability show piece that should be an inspiration to us all," says Frank Daley, President of Colorado Cattlemen's Association.

"The Johnson family's commitment to consistently reviewing and improving their management strategies is representative of the broader commitment that Colorado's agricultural producers take on each and every day as resource stewards. Their longevity speaks loudly to their hard work, adaptability, dedication and passion. We are pleased to join the other partners in congratulating the Johnson family on being selected as the 2015 Leopold Conservation Award recipient and thanking them for their multi-generational commitment to agriculture and conservation," stated Erik Glenn, CCALT Deputy Director.

“Tri-State and its member electric cooperatives are proud to support the Leopold Conservation Award,” said Mike McInnes, chief executive officer of Tri-State. “The award recipient’s environmental stewardship reflects the strong conservation ethic of rural communities and their electric cooperatives.”

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 many organizations, including Tri-State Generation and Transmission Assoc., American AgCredit, The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, DuPont Pioneer, The Mosaic Company, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

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

#### ABOUT THE LEOPOLD CONSERVATION AWARD

The Leopold Conservation Award ([www.leopoldconservationaward.org](http://www.leopoldconservationaward.org)) is a competitive award that recognizes landowner achievement in voluntary conservation. The award consists of a crystal depicting Aldo Leopold and \$10,000. Sand County Foundation presents Leopold Conservation Awards in California, Colorado, Kansas, Kentucky, Nebraska, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

#### ABOUT SAND COUNTY FOUNDATION

Sand County Foundation is a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to working with private landowners across North America to advance ethical and scientifically sound land management practices that benefit the environment. [sandcounty.net](http://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. [coloradocattle.org](http://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 450,000 acres. [ccalt.org](http://ccalt.org)

#### ABOUT TRI-STATE GENERATION & TRANSMISSION ASSOCIATION

Tri-State Generation & Transmission Association is a wholesale electric power supplier owned by the 44 electric cooperatives and public power districts it serves. Tri State Generation & Transmission Assoc. generates and transports electricity to its member systems across Colorado, Nebraska, New Mexico, and Wyoming. [tristate.coop](http://tristate.coop)

#### ABOUT AMERICAN AG CREDIT

Founded in 1916, American AgCredit is part of the nationwide Farm Credit System, and is the nation's 6<sup>th</sup> largest Farm Credit cooperative. American AgCredit specializes in providing financial services to agricultural and rural customers throughout California, Nevada, Central Kansas, Northern Oklahoma, Central and Western Colorado, and Northern New Mexico – as well as to capital markets customers in 30 states. [agloan.com](http://agloan.com)

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