



Medicine Mountains Ranch, conserved in December 2018.

Conservation Legacy in Jackson County *Preserving land for future generations to enjoy*

Jackson County, Colorado. – Ed Hamill lives a secluded but rich life in the high mountains of Jackson County, Colorado. With few amenities and heavy winter snows, Ed doesn't have too many neighbors, and the area known as North Park remains relatively undiscovered for most Coloradoans. In 2017, the entire population of Jackson County was estimated at 1,385.

Upon seeing North Park for the first time in 1844, American Explorer John Fremont would later write: “a beautiful circular valley of 30 miles in diameter; walled in all around with snowy mountains, rich with water and with grass, fringed with pine on the mountainsides below the snow, and a paradise to all grazing animals.”

Ed Hamill first visited North Park and what is now Medicine Mountains Ranch in the late 1970s on a ski trip. It was during that ski trip that he fell in love with the land. He purchased Medicine Mountains Ranch in 1987, and designed a plan for a development of home-sites with access to a community horse pasture, skiing and hiking trails on the ranch. Before his plan could come to fruition, Ed would decide that his true desire for the property was not to develop it, but to protect it, forever. Perhaps, what John Fremont saw so many years ago was also what made this land so special to Ed today.

Ed first approached the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust (CCALT) about conserving his property in 2008. Within that year, the first 387 acres of Medicine Mountains Ranch were conserved, putting the first piece of Ed's new plan into place. Today, nearly 10 years later, the remaining 920 acres

of the ranch were conserved with CCALT, completing Ed's conservation legacy, and preserving a small slice of North Park, forever.

Ed has no immediate family to transition operation of Medicine Mountains Ranch to, but he is still driven by what he'll leave behind and how it will impact future generations. "I dearly love this place and feel truly blessed to be its current caretaker. It is a superb example of the majesty, peace and beauty to be found in nature. To think of its beautiful open vistas and hopefully all of its special character preserved could be my legacy, my gift to the world, would be fulfillment of a fondly held dream," said Ed.

"Medicine Mountains Ranch is a stunning ranch. But, what makes it truly special is Ed's dedication to the property and genuine love of the land. Ed has waited and worked for almost 10 years to complete this second phase of his conservation vision to ensure the protection of this land; and, despite the wait, he never gave up on his vision. That devotion to the land is what makes our work so meaningful, and CCALT is thrilled to assist Ed in implementing his conservation legacy," Said Molly Fales, CCALT conservation manager.

The conservation of Medicine Mountains Ranch would not have been possible without support from Great Outdoors Colorado, The Gates Family Foundation, and Ducks Unlimited.

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The Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust (CCALT) is a nonprofit land conservation organization whose mission is to "...conserve Colorado's western heritage and working landscapes for the benefit of future generations." For more information, visit www.ccalt.org

Ducks Unlimited Inc. is the world's largest nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving North America's continually disappearing waterfowl habitats. Established in 1937, Ducks Unlimited has conserved more than 14 million acres thanks to contributions from more than a million supporters across the continent. Guided by science and dedicated to program efficiency, DU works toward the vision of wetlands sufficient to fill the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow and forever. For more information on our work, visit www.ducks.org.

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) invests a portion of Colorado Lottery proceeds to help preserve and enhance the state's parks, trails, wildlife, rivers, and open spaces. GOCO's independent board awards competitive grants to local governments and land trusts, and makes investments through Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Created when voters approved a Constitutional Amendment in 1992, GOCO has since funded more than 5,000 projects in all 64 counties of Colorado without any tax dollar support. Visit GOCO.org for more information.

Gates Family Foundation invests in projects and organizations which have meaningful impact in Colorado primarily through capital grants and Foundation initiatives that enhance the quality of life for those living in, working in and visiting the state. The Foundation seeks to promote excellence, innovation and self-sufficiency in education, healthy lifestyles, community enrichment, connection to nature and stewardship of the state's natural inheritance. The Foundation's actions will remain consistent with the founders' intentions and the principles of citizenship, entrepreneurship and free enterprise. Visit www.gatesfamilyfoundation.org for more information.