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The mission of the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust is to protect productive agricultural lands and the conservation values they provide by working with ranchers and farmers, thereby preserving Colorado's ranching heritage and rural communities.

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Beaver Mesa Ranch Celebrating a Ranching Legacy



Beaver Mesa Ranch

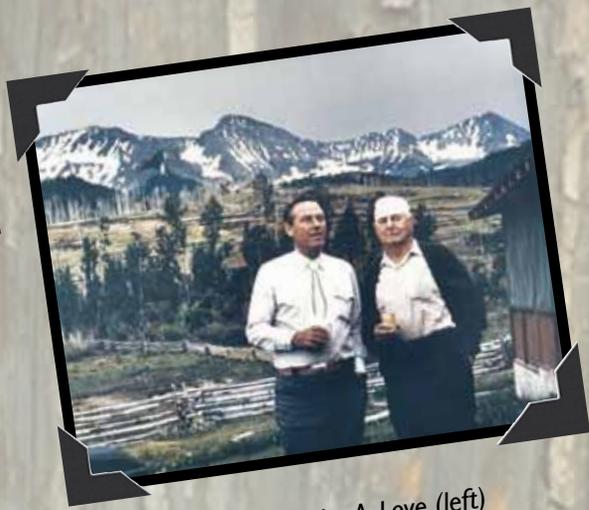
Photograph courtesy John Fielder, johnfielder.com

Beaver Mesa Ranch lies twenty miles west of the town of Telluride and south of the San Miguel River in San Miguel County. Located on an isolated mesa at 9,000 feet above sea level, it affords some of the most magnificent views in a region known worldwide for its scenery. The Sneffels Range can be seen to the east and Little Cone and Lone Cone mountains are in the ranch's backyard.

The ranch has not only spectacular views, but a rich historical heritage dating back to the 1900's. Third-generation rancher Howard Hughes manages the ranch today and is preparing the way for the fourth generation.

The beginning of a legacy

Dan H. Hughes acquired the ranch in the 1930's, with some of his siblings. Known as a "sheep man," Hughes created a sheep operation that ranged from Utah to Silverton and Montrose, Colorado. Purchasing near contiguous ranches allowed the



Governor John A. Love (left) and Dan H. Hughes near Telluride, CO

stockmen to drive the livestock from winter to summer pasture with ease. Hughes eventually grew the ranch to over 52,000 deeded acres.

Dan H. Hughes was not only a rancher, but was also well known for his work as a Montrose District Judge and his love for politics. In fact, Hughes was one of two lawyers who were heavily involved with passing the Taylor Grazing Act and was a member of the District 4 board representing sheep men.

Dan married Maidie Atkinson and they had seven children. The family eventually grew the sheep herd to over 10,000 head and also grazed cattle on the ranch. Unfortunately, upon his death, the ranch was unable to be maintained as a single operation. Although the ranch was not the large operation it once was, Hughes passed his ranching knowledge and legacy on to his children and grandchildren.

Inheriting a ranching heritage

Marshall Hughes was the fourth of the seven children and was born on March 26, 1926. After serving in the United States Navy, Marshall returned home to marry Barbara Jean Rogers from Norwood and graduate from Western State College in Gunnison.

He spent the next 30 years living and ranching on the Hughes Ranch alongside his brothers Dan and Charlie. Marshall and Barbara had two children, Sandra and Howard.

Marshall's older brother, a military pilot, taught him how to fly. The family had small airplanes for the ranching operation. Due to the size of the operation, they had to fly over the ranch to see all of the herds and drop groceries and supplies to the sheep camps.

His main focus and greatest love in life was the land and getting water to it. In order to irrigate the hay meadows, the Hughes family constructed the J & M Hughes Ditch, a monumental task given its origin twenty-two miles away above Woods Lake. Marshall was dedicated to the ditch and worked on it throughout his lifetime. He also served on the Colorado Game, Fish and Park Commission and through this commission; he planned, developed, and dedicated the Miramonte Reservoir near Norwood.

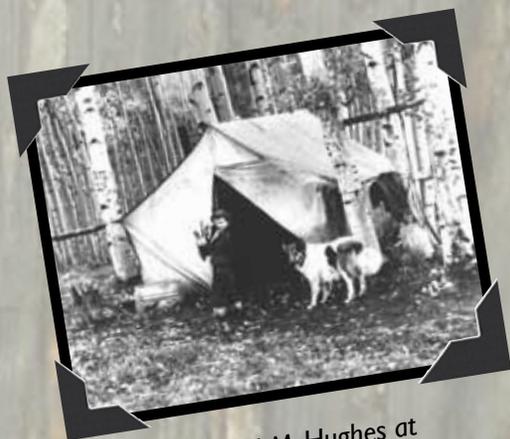


Marshall Hughes & Howard M. Hughes 1958

Sustaining the ranch for future generations

Howard M. Hughes, third generation of the Hughes ranching legacy, decided that sustaining the land and the water was imperative. "It's sad that it takes so much money to hold on to the ranch. You just can't make enough money on it. These days, someone in the family has to have a job in town to hold on to the land and that is the only way to make ends meet on a smaller ranch," said Howard.

The Hughes family partnered with the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust (CCALT) to protect over 2,050 acres of the Beaver Mesa Ranch. When asked what Howard appreciated most about the ranch he said, "The ranching lifestyle. To have the boys see and live the lifestyle of working hard on the land, with water and livestock. This type of lifestyle is important to our family and it is vanishing."



Howard M. Hughes at sheep camp 1960

Entrusting the ranching legacy

Howard and his wife Temi are fighting hard to keep the lifestyle for their two sons Wyatt, age 14, and Calder, age 12. They would both like to keep the land intact for the boys when they grow up, so that they may also entrust the ranching legacy to the next generation.

Even now, Wyatt and Calder have a plan. One of them will have a job in town and help with the ranch part-time and the other brother will stay on the ranch full-time. Unfortunately, in this day and age it is difficult to support one family on the ranch, let alone two.

Now that the ranch is protected, the Hughes family can be sure that no matter what may happen, the ranch will always remain in agriculture. As fourth generation ranchers, they now have a chance to someday pass the ranch on to their children and grandchildren – sustaining the rich historical heritage that Dan H. Hughes began so long ago.

“This type of lifestyle is important to our family and it is vanishing.”

- Howard M. Hughes

Leave a legacy and donate to CCALT

Including the Colorado Cattlemen’s Agricultural Land Trust in your estate plans is a great way to protect Colorado’s special places. You can remember CCALT in your will or living trust; or name CCALT as a beneficiary of your IRA-qualified retirement plan, or life insurance policy.

If you would like more information or would like to talk with someone about making a planned gift, contact your financial advisor or contact our Development Director Alyssa Street at alysa@calt.org or 303-225-8677.

Brand for Sale



Interested in buying a brand to help CCA and CCALT? Long-time CCA member Bob Cordova has donated one of his brands and we are taking bids from interested buyers.

Proceeds from the sale of the brand will go toward supporting the CCA building fund and CCALT. Folks interested in bidding should contact Terry Fankhauser at CCA at 303-431-6422 or terry@coloradocattle.org by May 15, 2012.

Spotlight on Colorado



Park County Gateway to the Rockies

Located high in the Rockies in the center of Colorado, Park County offers spectacular scenery in a true mountain setting. Open vistas, lofty mountain views, a pervasive deep respect for western heritage, and friendly towns and communities make visiting Park County appealing.

Park County played a prominent part in the center of the “Pikes Peak or Bust” gold rush of 1859. Though Park County has changed over the years, many of the historic buildings, mining camps, towns, ranches, and natural wonders still exist for visitors to enjoy.

Due to its proximity to Denver and Colorado Springs, the Colorado Cattlemen’s Agricultural Land Trust (CCALT) has protected 16 ranches covering over 13,000 acres in Park County. This area is in danger of being developed and it is the hope of the organization to continue to protect its ranching heritage.

One of CCALT’s most recent efforts is a partnership with the Smith family to protect 480 acres of their historic ranch. The ranch consists of two parcels, almost entirely surrounded by Pike National Forest. The property lies just east of Badger Mountain, and the Puma Hills. The Smith Ranch has spectacular views of Pilot Peak, the Tarryall Range, the Lost Creek Wilderness, Pikes Peak, Crystal Peak and the Rampart Range.

The Iona Mildred Smith Ranch was originally homesteaded in the late 1800’s by Louis Hurtgen and Karl Strickner. The ruins of the old Strickner homestead still exist on the western end of the property. The Jack Smith Ranch was homesteaded in the late 1800’s by John Badger and Badger’s original homestead cabin still exists and is in use on the ranch. The Smith family has owned the Iona Mildred Smith Ranch for over 90 years and the Jack Smith Ranch since the 1930’s.



Smith Ranch, Park County



Platte Ranch, Park County

The protection of these historic properties will help ensure Park County's agricultural heritage continues to be celebrated and remembered. A strong partnership was formed with the Smith family and several other county and state-wide organizations to help protect the ranch. Some of the funds to help protect the ranch came from the Park County Land & Water Trust Fund.

The Fund is supported by a one-percent tax on retail sales in Park County. Each year sales tax revenues are used to leverage state, federal and private grants to accomplish a variety of conservation, stream improvement and education projects.



Badger Ridge Ranch, Park County

"I revered Jack Smith and have known the family for the past 34 years. The Smith Ranch is a unique and beautiful place that we are proud to help preserve," said Dave Wissel, Chairman of the Land and Water Trust Advisory Board.

Funds for the project also came from the Habitat Partnership Program (HPP). The Habitat Partnership Program (HPP), funded by revenue from the sale of big game licenses, develops partnerships among landowners, land managers, sportsmen, the public and Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW). The local HPP committees are key players in providing funds to help protect important habitats for future generations.

"The HPP program depends on partnerships to protect ranches for wildlife and agriculture," said Pat Tucker, HPP Coordinator. "The Smith Ranch is a perfect example of multiple organizations collaborating toward the conservation of an important piece of land. We're glad to have been a part of this project."

With the protection of the ranch complete, the Smith family can focus on what they know best - this upcoming calving season and stewarding the ranch and its natural resources. "My family and I are grateful for the support of so many organizations. Our ranching and agricultural heritage will now be protected for generations to come," said Webb Smith.



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Save the Date!



Wilson Ranch, Rio Grande County

Save the Date for the CCAAL Annual Sunset BBQ. There will be dinner, drinks and an auction; so be ready to have a wonderful time on one of CCAAL's protected ranches. RSVP today!

2012 CCAAL Sunset BBQ

Wilson Rio Grande Ranch in Del Norte, CO
Saturday, August 4, 2012
5:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Tickets are \$150/person

The proceeds from the event will go toward the protection of Colorado's beautiful and productive agricultural lands. To RSVP for this exciting event or for sponsorship opportunities, please contact Alyssa at alyssa@ccalt.org.