

Community Agriculture Alliance: Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust hires new team member

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For Steamboat Pilot & Today

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS — The Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust has helped to permanently protect more than 662,000 acres through conservation easements. Critical to that work is the long-term commitment of providing the support necessary for landowners to maintain and improve agricultural operations by protecting natural resource qualities in perpetuity.

To meet that goal, the organization is expanding by adding a new team member, Sally Ross, who will be working out of the Yampa Valley Conservation Partnership office in Steamboat Springs to build and develop the land trust's new restoration program. The goal of the program will be to work with individual landowners and communities throughout Colorado to implement restoration and resiliency projects that support the land trust's long-term stewardship goals.

Originally from North Carolina, Ross developed her appreciation for the natural world in the Appalachian Mountains. During and after college, she worked seasonally for the U.S. Forest Service as a trail crew member and backcountry wilderness ranger in the Frank Church Wilderness in Idaho and the Bob Marshall Wilderness in Montana. Ross made her way to Colorado via The Nature Conservancy, and her knowledge around restoration and mitigation will be vital to the land trust's restoration program success.

"Having work that allows my family and I to more deeply understand where we live, who we live with and how we may contribute to ensure the qualities we value are protected, is such an honor," Ross said. "I've worked alongside Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust in a partnership capacity and have always been very impressed with CCALT's authenticity and ability to get things done. Selfishly, I'm excited to tour different landscapes and get to know the families that have shaped these landscapes."

Restoration project work will range from small projects, such as weed management, to larger projects. Currently, the land trust has several restoration projects in the pipeline, including: a fire mitigation project that will work to reduce fuel build up in close proximity to structures and also will improve critical habitat for big game species, such as elk; a river restoration project that will reduce erosion and loss of ground and will help keep a wetland area intact; and a fencing project that will protect over 2 miles of stream and riparian area while supporting a livestock operation.

For additional information about the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust's restoration program, email Ross at Sally@ccalt.org.

Jayne Thompson is director of external relations for the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust.



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