



*SKCK Ranch, Routt County, Colorado
Photo Credit: Mike Kramer*

River Ranch Conserved Outside Phippsburg

STEAMBOAT, CO (August 18, 2021) – A dedication to land led a Routt County family permanently conserve their ranch along the Yampa River with the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust (CCALT). The conservation easement ensures the property will remain open and available for agricultural production. The Keith and Kramer families simultaneously partnered with Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) to grant a fishing access easement along approximately two miles of the Yampa River as it flows through the ranch.

SKCK Ranch is located just outside of Phippsburg, Colorado. Visible from Highway 131, the ranch's irrigated pasture frames the meandering Yampa River, harboring many of the characteristics that residents and visitors alike associate with Routt County.

The area's outstanding scenery and proximity to world-class recreational opportunities made the SKCK Ranch highly vulnerable to residential development. Conversion of the SKCK Ranch would have resulted in the loss of a scenic landscape, fragmented critical wildlife habitat for big game, greater sandhill cranes, Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, and a nesting pair of bald eagles. The Keith and Kramer families dedication to seeing this land permanently protected, means it will always remain intact for current and future generations to enjoy.

This project leveraged previous conservation investments to build upon an existing protected landscape of over 3,100 acres within just three miles of the SKCK Ranch. The conservation easement transaction was made possible by Routt County's Purchase of Development Rights Program, which contributed funds to the easement acquisition and cash reimbursement for certain qualifying transactional costs. Colorado Parks and Wildlife also contributed funding towards the conservation easement and qualifying transactional costs in addition to purchasing the fishing access easement.

"This conservation easement is great for the landscape, wildlife and anglers in Routt County," said CPW Area Wildlife Manager Kris Middendorf. "The work done to keep the SKCK ranch working and intact not only protects critical big game corridors and important bird habitat but also provides an angling opportunity on the Yampa River upstream from Stagecoach Reservoir. We are pleased to play a role in conserving this property for our wildlife and future generations of Coloradans."

“This is a great example of how a conservation easement can help keep land in the family,” says Molly Fales, director of transactions at CCALT. “Here the families will be able to retain the SKCK Ranch, as well as actively partner with Colorado Parks and Wildlife to allow limited public access for fishing. Conservation of the ranch and the associated access easement are a true gift to the community”

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About the Colorado Cattlemen’s Agricultural Land Trust

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.”

About the Routt County PDR Program

To date, [PDR](#) has completed conservation projects totaling 49,510 acres in Routt County. For more information, please contact Kendra Alfieri at Routt County, 970-879-0108.

About Colorado Parks and Wildlife

[Colorado Parks and Wildlife](#) is an enterprise agency, relying primarily on license sales, state parks fees and registration fees to support its operations, including: 41 state parks and more than 350 wildlife areas covering approximately 900,000 acres, management of fishing and hunting, wildlife watching, camping, motorized and non-motorized trails, boating and outdoor education. CPW's work contributes approximately \$6 billion in total economic impact annually throughout Colorado.