

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Photo Credit: Maggie Hanna

The Trust for Public Land Announces Protection of 2,700-acre Taylor-Oswald Ranch

COTOPAXI – The Trust for Public Land (TPL), in partnership with San Isabel Land Protection Trust (SILPT), Colorado Cattlemen’s Agricultural Land Trust (CCALT), Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) are excited to announce the protection of the 2,727-acre Taylor-Oswald Ranch in Fremont County.

The Taylor-Oswald Ranch Conservation easement ensures that this working ranch at the base of the Sangre de Cristo mountains, its significant wildlife corridors, cultural attributes, water resources, agricultural viability, and scenic vistas will be permanently protected. Steve and Nancy manage the ranch that has been in Nancy’s family for more than 60 years. The Taylor family history can be traced all the way back to her great grandparents who began ranching about ten miles away along Texas Creek in the late 1800’s. Today, the Oswald’s ranching operation includes marketing natural grass fed beef to consumers and promoting sustainable, profitable agriculture. Together, Steve and Nancy are committed to carrying on the heritage of the ranch in a world of change. It is, and always has been their hope to pass on a legacy of ranching, agriculture, and land preservation to future generations.

“The Upper Arkansas Valley is home to amazing natural resources and our goal is to use the protection of the Taylor-Oswald Ranch to inspire future conservation projects in the region,” said Carrie Kasnicka, project manager for The Trust for Public Land. “Preserving this land both honors the legacy of agriculture in the region and preserves an important native ecosystem.”

The ranch encompasses productive irrigated meadows and native wetlands, 26 miles of Arkansas River tributaries, and provides habitat for bird species of concern, such as bald eagle, ferruginous hawk,

willow flycatcher, prairie falcon, and others. The property provides summer and winter concentration areas for elk, mule deer, pronghorn, wild turkey, mountain lion, black bear, and bobcat.

“The ability to donate and protect this land recognizes the generations of hard-working people who came before us,” said landowners Steve and Nancy Oswald. “Our hope is that others will be able to continue the traditions of agriculture and land stewardship for years to come.”

“It is possible for ranching operations to thrive, even in drought conditions. The Taylor-Oswald Family’s operation is a shining example of what’s possible,” said Clint Evans, NRCS State Conservationist in Colorado. “Their unconventional weed management, grazing, and forestry practices, as well as the grass-fed programs compliment their traditional riparian restoration efforts. It’s a high-quality operation with mostly native plants and grasses and minimal invasive species. All of which are important to the host of wildlife, threatened and endangered species, birds of conservation concern, and species of greater conservation need found throughout the landscape.”

“It has been an honor to work with Steve and Nancy on this important conservation project. The Oswald family’s commitment to Colorado and leadership in southern Colorado has brought attention to the important resources – natural and cultural – of this unique part of the state,” said Erik Glenn, Colorado Cattlemen’s Agricultural Land Trust Executive Director. “Conserving the Taylor-Oswald Ranch builds on the growing agriculture and conservation legacy of the Oswald family and many other families along the Arkansas River who have committed to conserving their farms and ranches for the benefit of future generations of Coloradans.”

“We are very excited to be a part of the Taylor-Oswald conservation easement,” said Larry Vickerman, president of the San Isabel Land Protection Trust Board of Directors. “The ranch provides an excellent example of regenerative management that we can all learn from and aspire to. Their innovative grazing and forestry programs, direct marketing of grass-fed beef and low-tech riparian restoration projects increase the sustainability of their operation and demonstrate that conservation, including easements, helps ensure long-term viability of agricultural operations throughout Colorado.”

About The Trust for Public Land

The Trust for Public Land creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come. Millions of people live near a Trust for Public Land park, garden, or natural area, and millions more visit these sites every year. To support The Trust for Public Land and share why nature matters to you, visit www.tpl.org.

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 “...protect Colorado’s agricultural land, heritage and families for future generations by conserving working rural landscapes.”

About Great Outdoors Colorado

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 5,400 projects in urban and rural areas in all 64 counties without any tax dollar support. Visit GOCO.org for more information.

About the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service provides technical and financial assistance to help agricultural producers and others care for the land. The Agency prioritizes conservation planning and uses conservation programs in the Farm Bill to implement most of its efforts including the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program which is designed to protect the agricultural viability, grazing uses and related conservation values of prime agricultural land by limiting nonagricultural uses of that land.

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