



Together, saving the lands you call home

+ JOIN OUR EFFORT TO PRESERVE THE COAL CREEK WATERSHED AT COPLEY LAKE

+ LOCAL RANCHING PROTECTS CLEAN WATER

+ HOLIDAY GIFTS FOR EVERYONE ON YOUR LIST

+ CONGRATS! SNODGRASS WINS AWARD

FALL 2015 NEWSLETTER



PHOTO: Caitlin Ward

## Why do YOU love the Gunnison Valley?

“ Living in Crested Butte energizes me. It feeds my soul. The day that I first arrived in Gunnison County, I felt like I was home. In the many years since, I have developed a deep love and respect for both the mountains here and the people who inhabit them. Every moment in the Gunnison Valley offers opportunities for sharing, exploration, preservation, and of course, crazy fun adventures. ”

- Janae Pritchett



P.O. Box 2224 Crested Butte, CO 81224  
[director@cblandtrust.org](mailto:director@cblandtrust.org)  
[www.cblandtrust.org](http://www.cblandtrust.org)  
 970.349.1206

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bill Reimer, President	Charla Brown
Kiley Flint, Vice-President	Beth Hise
Margery Feldberg, Treasurer	Peter Kennel
Karen Janssen, Secretary	Cynthia O'Brien
Beth Appleton	John Simmons

### STAFF

Ann Johnston, Executive Director  
 Julie Ball, Development  
 Danielle Beamer, Stewardship  
 Cassidy Brush, Stewardship  
 Claire Karban, Outreach  
 Hedda Peterson, Stewardship

### COVER PHOTO

Lucas Stein



**our mission:** to forever protect and steward open lands for vistas, recreation, wildlife and ranching, thus contributing to Gunnison County's unique heritage and quality of life.

# What's up next **15+ Acres at Copley Lake**

Our drinking water. Our economy. Our natural environment. You have told us how important these issues are to you. Now we have the chance to protect them all at Copley Lake.

This mining claim sits nestled between Elk Creek and Lake Irwin on lush Copley Lake. A rare opportunity to purchase 2,000 feet of shoreline, and over seven acres of wetlands, has just presented itself. But, we need your help so we can act quickly, before the land is developed. While the landowner has very generously reduced the purchase price to 20% below the appraised value, we only have until December 1<sup>st</sup> to raise the funds.

## **How does Copley Lake impact our drinking water?**

Copley Lake is part of the Coal Creek Watershed, which provides the residents and visitors of Crested Butte their crystal clear drinking water.

## **How does Copley Lake impact our economy and our natural environment?**

Hundreds of species call the Elk Mountains their home, like black bear, elk, and mule deer. Estimates across the state indicate that hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing brings \$3 million to Colorado each year, supporting almost 35,000 jobs

state-wide. Copley Lake is a critical and irreplaceable fresh water source that wildlife depends on to live and reproduce.

**Copley Lake is part of the Coal Creek watershed, which provides the residents and visitors of Crested Butte their crystal clear drinking water.**

## **Why is this particular mining claim so important?**

The catalyst to protecting Copley Lake is that many mining claims, like this one, are owned privately. To complete protection of land important to you, we must be tenacious and look at the big picture. The North Pole Basin is a prime example of how protecting a single mining claim can make a big impact, and leverage other protected

areas. Plus, we have the option of transferring claims into the ownership of the Forest Service, guaranteeing public hiking, and enabling us to leverage our funding on subsequent projects.

**We just received a crucial gift from the Town of Crested Butte. That gets us one fourth of the way to our goal, but we still need to raise \$75,000 from committed folks like you before December 1<sup>st</sup>. Now you can make a difference.**

For more information, please contact Ann Johnston, at **970.349.1206** or [director@cblandtrust.org](mailto:director@cblandtrust.org).



**COPLEY LAKE**, on a drizzly afternoon. Time is of the essence to protect over 15 acres and 2,000 feet of shoreline at Copley Lake. This property is important for the many species that call the West Elks home. Wildlife viewing and hunting bring revenue and jobs to our valley.

PHOTO: Bob Couchman



# Local ranching protects what we love most



PHOTO: Claire Karban

Across the American West, clean water is precious and becoming more scarce. At home in the Gunnison Valley, the legacy of ranching and the protection of our water resources go hand in hand.

Working family ranches need a source of clean water to grow hay and to provide drinking water for cattle. In many cases, ranchers have been important stewards of our water for generations, ensuring that the water they need remains clean. “We return the water to the system as clean as when we get it,” Sandy Guerrieri explains. “Ranching, first and foremost, is a business. The folks who are left are pretty good business people. If you’re still here in the Gunnison Valley and still in business, you’re always looking out for the long-term, be that with water, land, or cattle.”

Sandy and her husband Burt are fifth generation ranchers at Mill Creek Ranch, between Gunnison and Crested Butte. Like many ranchers in the valley, the Guerrieris have been here long enough to see some changes. Sandy recalls the years before housing developments sprung up along Highway 135. “It does make a difference when the foreground is developed, rather than productive agriculture land. You can see how quickly that beauty can go away,” she said.

“Ranching happens to provide things that people love. People love the drive to Crested Butte, and a lot of that is open space from ranching,” she added. And yet, the tragic irony remains that the more people move to the valley, the more threatened

ranching operations – and the views they provide – become.

“High density living and recreation are generally not compatible with ranching,” she explains. Not only do cattle require a lot of open space to graze, but neighbors who aren’t familiar with ranching often find it bothersome. “There’s a lack of understanding. You become a nuisance for them, and they become a nuisance for you.” Driving around her hay fields, Sandy has a stunning view of Carbon Peak and the Anthracites to the Northwest, and Flattop and the Gunnison River to the Northeast. Her property is still surrounded primarily by other productive, agricultural land and the open space means you can see for miles.

The Guerrieris, like many, have placed a conservation agreement on a portion of their land. This legal agreement ensures that their land will remain productive, agricultural land forever.

**“It’s the biggest bang for the buck. When you preserve agricultural lands, you’re protecting future business, ensuring that water rights stay with the land, and protecting open space.”**

“It’s the biggest bang for the buck,” Sandy said. “When you preserve agricultural lands under a conservation easement, you’re protecting future business, ensuring that water rights stay with the land, protecting open space, as well as lots of habitat.”

If you’d like information on how to protect your land, call Ann without obligation at (970) 349-1206. Read more at: [cblandtrust.org/take-action/cows-and-water/](http://cblandtrust.org/take-action/cows-and-water/).



PHOTO: John Holder

**For generations, local ranchers have been grazing cattle up-valley while they grow hay on lower-elevation ranches.**



# PEANUT LAKE

## We must act now to save the lake



PHOTO: Bob Couchman

Peanut Lake in the background, spilling over the precarious beaver dam that remains between the lake and the Slate River.

“When two bodies of water are ready to co-mingle, that situation needs immediate attention,” Bob Couchman said. “We can’t wait 50 years to address this. The immediacy of the need really struck me.”

Just outside of town, the Slate River has been migrating, several feet a year, towards Peanut Lake. At this point, only two feet of beaver dam separate the river from the lake. If the river overpowers the beaver dam, contamination and flooding is likely, and Peanut Lake could be drained, diminishing this critical habitat and natural amenity. That can’t happen.

We hope to begin restoration work to save Peanut Lake this fall. Just one

piece of the puzzle is missing. We’ve raised \$15,000 so far, but we need the community’s help to raise the additional \$18,000 right away.

**“We can’t wait 50 years to address this. The immediacy of the need really struck me.”**

“The dam separating the river from the lake is the width of this table,” Bob tells me, gesturing towards the small wooden table we are seated at in downtown Crested Butte. “You can just see that in

a big snow year, with a big runoff, that beaver dam is going to be gone.”

Even more importantly, heavy metals leftover from Peanut Mine rest in the sediment at the bottom of Peanut Lake. If the Slate River erodes the bank and drains Peanut Lake, the silver and coal waste could be carried into our irrigation and recreation waters. Once that happens, there is no going back.

To help us reach our fundraising goal, visit: [cblandtrust.org/donate](https://cblandtrust.org/donate) or contact Ann at [director@cblandtrust.org](mailto:director@cblandtrust.org) or (970)349-1206. Read more at [cblandtrust.org/take-action/peanut-lake-restoration/](https://cblandtrust.org/take-action/peanut-lake-restoration/).

**Take action now!**

# HOLIDAY

**gifts**  
**FOR**  
*everyone on  
your list*



## 2015 Holiday Ornament

Inspired by the magnificent beauty of the Gunnison Valley, local artist Lian Canty hand-painted this year's ornament with a rosy finch. These gorgeous birds are native to the high Rockies around Crested Butte. They are unique because, unlike many birds who flock to the area in the summer, these birds are year-round residents! The striking rosy plumage of the male birds against the snow is quite a spectacle.



## 2016 Calendar

The Crested Butte Land Trust's 2016 Calendar is bursting with stunning landscapes, inspiring adventure and remarkable wildlife from our slice of paradise. All four seasons are beautifully represented by local, professional, and amateur photographers. Creative Haikus from fourth grade students at the Crested Butte Community School complement these distinctive images.



PHOTO: Julia Van Raalte

## Skida hats and headbands

We are SO excited to offer Skida hats, headbands, and tours, in delectable patterns, for both men and women! The lightweight, breathable, and moisture-wicking poly-blend fabrics make these ideal for any adventure, from skinning up Snodgrass Mountain to braving the Elk Avenue ice on your walk to the coffee shop. Check out our website for the full selection of fun fabrics.

# [www.cblandtrust.org/shop](http://www.cblandtrust.org/shop)

for all of our great gifts - like wine goblets, travel mugs, Forever socks, and more!  
Proceeds from the online store go back into protecting our breathtaking lands and waters.





PHOTO: Beth Carter

Locals Beth "Hurricane" Carter and Molly Susla enjoy a gorgeous winter day in the valley. Nordic skiing is just one of many ways to partake in the natural bounty of our home. The Land Trust provides an outstanding network of trails for cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and backcountry skiing, many of which are maintained by the Crested Butte Nordic Center.

## CONGRATULATIONS! Snodgrass wins award

You made sure that the Snodgrass Trail remains accessible to hikers, bikers, equestrians, and backcountry skiers. You protected wetlands so elk, black bear, and mule deer have fresh water to drink. You offered local ranching families reprieve from further fragmentation near their grazing lands.

And, the state of Colorado took notice.

Good for you! You have won a 2015 Starburst Award. Starburst Awards recognize excellence in creativity of the project, the economic and social impact on the community, and whether the project achieved its goal.

Read one donor's story at: [cblandtrust.org/take-action/teddys-trail/](http://cblandtrust.org/take-action/teddys-trail/).



Incredible backcountry skiing and snowshoeing await just outside your door! There are so many ways to enjoy the Snodgrass Property, preserved last winter thanks to tremendous community support.

PHOTO:  
Xavier Fane



P.O. Box 2224  
Crested Butte, CO 81224

NONPROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT NO. 27  
CRESTED BUTTE, CO  
81224

we know how important clean water is to you



PHOTO: John Holder

give monthly to keep our rivers pristine

[cblandtrust.org/monthly-giving](http://cblandtrust.org/monthly-giving)

[www.cblandtrust.org](http://www.cblandtrust.org)

P.O. Box 2224 - 308 Third Street - Crested Butte, CO - 81224  
970.349.1206 - [director@cblandtrust.org](mailto:director@cblandtrust.org)