

# Finding common ground



SUMMER 2017 NEWSLETTER





## What is YOUR life?

Share a photo and fill in the blank for yourself: **"I support the Land Trust because \_\_\_\_\_ is my life."** You could win an \$85 Mountain Khakis gift card! From gorgeous fields of wildflowers to a healthy wetland home for beavers and herons, your support makes life here possible.

Visit [cblandtrust.org/mylife](https://cblandtrust.org/mylife) for details and more examples.



## Books in nature YOUR SUPPORT GETS KIDS READING

The final bell rings, signaling the end of the last day of school. It's summer vacation! While the kids in this classroom learned much of the same material over the last school year, they will go off to have drastically different summer experiences.

**"15% of families are in need of assistance to ensure their kids continue learning over the summer."**

### Summer learning is crucial

Summer is a crucial time for kids to continue learning. Unfortunately, studies show that more than 80% of kids from economically disadvantaged families lose reading skills over the summer because they lack access to books, learning resources, and enrichment opportunities.

In Gunnison County, 15% of families are in need of assistance to ensure their kids continue learning over the summer.

### Free public access

By providing a free opportunity to read a book, you can work to make sure that no child in Gunnison

County is falling behind on reading over the summer months.

For the last two years, your support

has allowed us to partner with the Crested Butte Library to offer StoryWalk® to the community, for free. A children's picture

book is deconstructed, and each page is displayed along the wide path of the Lower Loop. Children move through meadows and forests, reading each page as they come to it. The walk is short and easy, allowing kids to enjoy a story and explore their natural surroundings at the same time.

### Nothing beats nature

All parents know that hiking with young children can be quite a challenge. But the long-term rewards are worth it. Spending time in nature has been shown to increase attention span, reduce stress, and help kids stay active and fit. When kids connect to nature at a young age, they

are much more likely to develop a conservation ethic and love for the land. They are more likely to grow up to protect these places that you love.

Adriana Bombard is a busy mother of two. She and her family were visiting Crested Butte last summer when they stumbled upon the StoryWalk®. "It was great for our kids, who are between the ages of three and five," she said. "They ran from page to page, and it made hiking with them really easy."

By providing a free opportunity to read a book and connect with the natural landscape, you ensure that kids like Adriana's grow up to be the next generation of conservationists.

Over the last few months, we heard from our community how important education is to you. Your support right now will ensure that we can provide more projects like the StoryWalk® in the future.

*The StoryWalk® Project was created by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, VT and developed in collaboration the Kellogg Hubbard Library. Storywalk® is a registered service mark owned by Ms. Ferguson.*



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Lydia Stern



**Our mission is working with you:** 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.





PHOTO: Jerry Clark

Wildlife and flooding

## HOW WETLANDS WORK FOR YOU



PHOTO: Matt Berglund

**I**t's a quiet, brisk morning in late April. Temperatures have been warm, and the snow in the mountains above is melting quickly. The Slate River is rushing and churning, filled to the brim and spilling over.

If you live in the town of Crested Butte, you might be worried about spring flooding.

You might be worried, but you shouldn't be.

The Slate River wetlands just north of town are nature's sponge. As the river spills over its banks, the willows and rich, loamy soil of the wetlands expand, absorbing the excess water, and assuaging your worries of flooding.

### Did you know?

In addition to natural flood control, there are so many ways that the Slate River wetlands work for you.

They provide a haven of biodiversity. From birds and beavers to elk and deer, the wetlands are teaming with life. Great Blue Herons collect willow branches to build rookeries in nearby trees, hatching and raising their young just outside of town.

The area also offers great opportunities for stand up paddle boarding and kayaking. In 1991, the Land Trust's first project ever was protecting a section of the Slate River wetlands. It's no wonder why.

Today, the Land Trust continues to enhance and protect these wetlands through habitat improvement projects like saving Peanut Lake and replacing the Gunsight Bridge.

## your impact FROM TOXIC TO TREASURE

**I**f you're looking carefully, you might spot a beaver popping her head up out of the clear, cool water. Great blue herons pick their way along the shore, and the shadows of willow bows fall across the meandering river.

The Slate River Valley is a peaceful scene these days, full of wildlife and the occasional boater. Later in the summer, cows will graze along the sloping valley walls. But the valley didn't always look this way.

### Once upon a time...

Back in the mining days, this was the stage for a roaring operation. A railroad track blazed down the southern shore of Peanut Lake. Coal was stacked and loaded onto cars. Silver ore was milled just below the Peanut Mine, producing oozing pools of bright orange and red sludge.

It must have been quite the scene. Unfortunately, you didn't have to be alive 100 years ago to picture it. None of the waste from the operation was cleaned up.

By the early 2000s, the network of trails that take off just upstream of Peanut Lake had become popular for hiking and biking. Now known as the Lower Loop, these trails were almost the perfect place to take your kids or your dog. Almost.

**"The entire community showed up to plant trees and native plants on the restored land."**

To access the Lower Loop, you had to cross through the toxic mining waste left from the Peanut Mine. Parents kept a close watch on their children and their dogs as they passed through. Ranchers didn't like to let their cattle graze in the area.

Finally, the coal and silver ore next to the Lower Loop spontaneously combusted. Through the smoke of that fire, the community knew that enough was enough.

### Something had to be done

Sandy Leinsdorf grew up on a ranch outside of Crested Butte, where her family has been ranching since the late 1800s. She has long blond hair and a welcoming smile.

Talking to Sandy, you can tell she has fierceness behind her convictions.

She was the president of the Land Trust on the day the coal and silver ore caught fire. With the strength of the entire community behind her, Sandy and the Land Trust board set out to clean up the Peanut Mine.

### The power of a community

The plan was straight-forward. A layered combination of limestone, coal and silver refuse, and an earthen cap would reclaim the mine. Water would be cleaned as it trickled down through the limestone.

About 50,000 cubic yards of coal and silver waste were cleaned up. That is the equivalent of over 53,000 hot tubs full of refuse.

Top soil was added, and the entire community showed up to plant trees and native plants on the restored land. Sandy smiles as she talks about the personal satisfaction of accomplishing this project with so much support. "Everyone was in," she says.

Butterflies and birds now share the airspace above the reclamation, and it's easy to spot the cottontail rabbits that live on the hillside. Ranchers graze their cattle without worry, and kids are free to run around and be kids.

You can still tell where the mine tailings lie, a subtle reminder of the power we have to destroy our home. When we come together as a community, we also have the power to clean it up.

### Before:



### After:

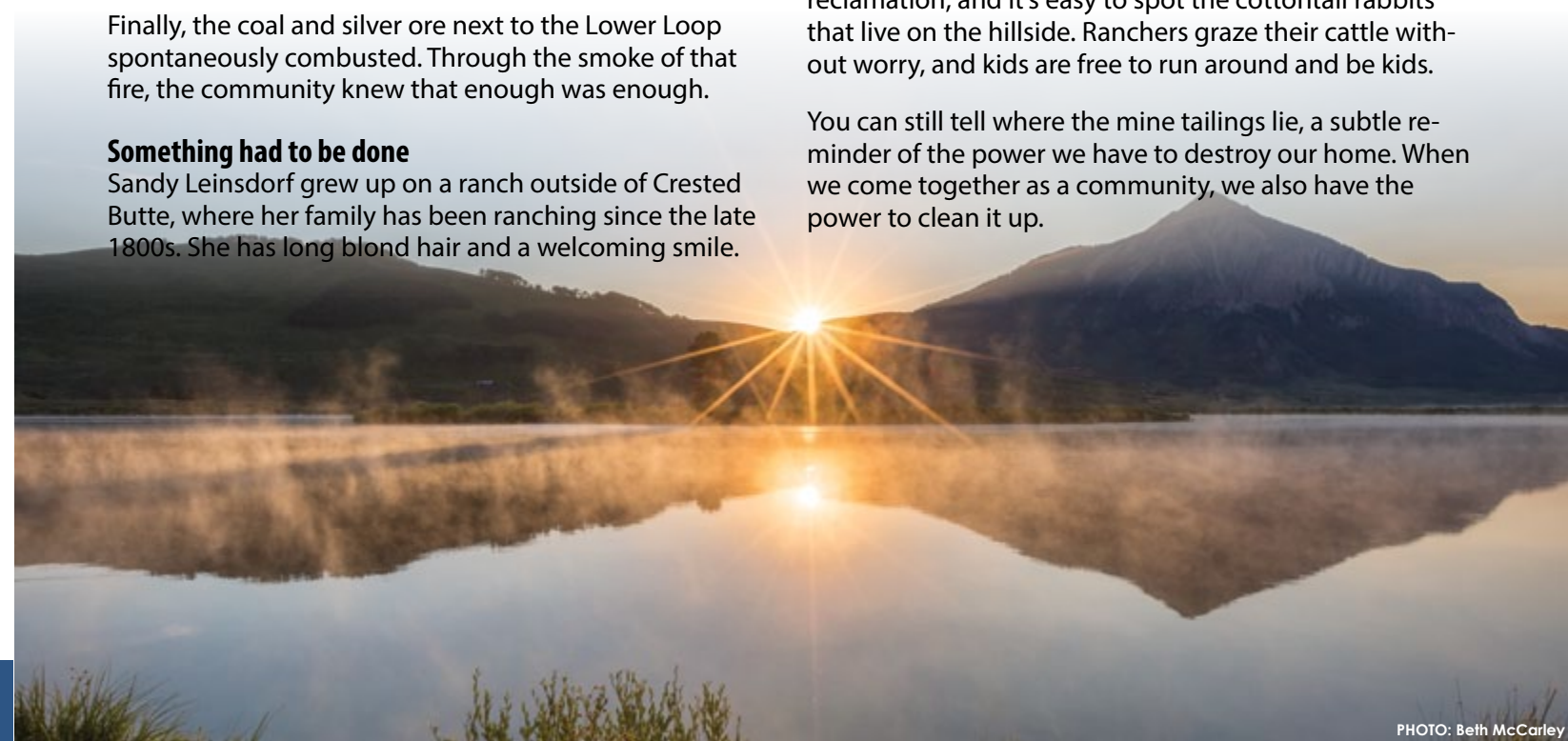


PHOTO: Beth McCarle



# Vibes and values

## FINDING YOUR COMMUNITY IN SERVICE

**M**argery Feldberg's family came to the Gunnison Valley forty-four years ago. Like so many, they came for the world-class skiing, but they stayed for the views and the vibe of this little mountain town.

### The vibe is here to stay

"The vibe in CB is a singular thing. It's about being low key, it's about placing a priority on the outdoors, it's about being effective at what you do while not taking yourself too seriously, and it's especially about being fun-loving," Margery said.

Margery knew that the vibe of Crested Butte wasn't in any danger of changing. But she worried that the iconic views around town were not all protected.

They could disappear.

"As a second homeowner, there are only so many ways that I can contribute. I can't vote here, and I can't sit on town council," she said. "I saw getting involved with the Land Trust as a way that I could defend what I cherish about this place."

### Finding her community

Margery joined the Land Trust board, served two terms, and now serves as a committee member. Her twin experience as both a real estate developer and as a small-scale rancher has informed her service at the Land Trust. She's still learning the ranching trade; this month, she'll be learning cattle branding with local ranchers, and bringing that knowledge back to her

ranching operation in Connecticut.

"I think there's one thing that really unites everyone in the valley," she

said. "People's willingness to adhere to their values, to relentlessly defend the things they hold dear. That is so much stronger here than

other places I've been." By helping to protect the views she loves through her service to the Crested Butte Land Trust, Margery has found herself able to contribute.

"I think my love of CB is notable for how typical it is rather than how different it is," she said. "Our love of vibe and our devotion to protecting what we value unites us in this valley."

**"I saw getting involved with the Land Trust as a way that I could defend what I cherish about this place."**



PHOTO: Mitch Warnick

## See you soon!

# SUMMER 2017 EVENTS

June

22

### StoryWalk® Grand Opening

This event is for the kiddos! StoryWalk® is geared towards kids ages 3-6, and offers a unique way to explore the natural world while reading a story. This year, we are celebrating the installation of new, durable display cases for the story pages. Join us for snacks, lemonade, and the first glimpse of our brand new StoryWalk®!

June

27

### Annual Cocktail Party

We hope you can join us for some good 'ol fashioned FUN! Our annual cocktail party is a chance for us to say thanks for making our work possible. Drinks, a live band, and appetizers make this evening one of our favorites.

July

7-8

### Caddis Cup Dinner and Fly Fishing Tournament

A delicious meal, prepared with local and seasonal ingredients, a beautiful, secluded view of Cement Creek, and friends who care deeply about water conservation. It's our signature event, the 16<sup>th</sup> annual Caddis Cup! Join us Friday evening for dinner, or come out on Saturday to participate in the fly fishing tournament!

July

10

### Snodgrass Mountain Marvels

Join us on a moderate hike through wildflower meadows and ancient aspen forests, learning the history of the land.

July

12

### Copley Lake Shoreline Tour

Remote and scenic, Copley Lake rests in the high alpine outside of Crested Butte. Join us on a moderate hike to explore the secluded wetlands and wildflowers, protected in 2015.

July

13

### Washington Gulch Wildflowers

Come search for the beautiful orchid, enchanting twisted stalk, bishop's cap, and monkey flower on the Land Trust's conserved Washington Gulch property. This hike is mellow and suitable for all.

August

14

### Waterfalls and Wildflowers of North Pole Basin

Nestled in the alpine, surrounded by cascading waterfalls, North Pole Basin offers a stunning backdrop for wildflowers, and a laboratory for leading research at RMBL. Join this hike to learn about our collaborative protection of the area.

For full details and registration, please visit [cblandtrust.org/events](http://cblandtrust.org/events). We can't wait to see you this summer!

# WITH YOU, FOREVER

Crested Butte and the Gunnison Valley are steeped in history - a history of ranching, mining, railroads, and of course, conservation. Through our **Leave a Legacy** program, you can participate in the conservation of this special place, forever.

For information about planned giving, and how it can benefit you and your family, email Noel: [Noel@cblandtrust.org](mailto:Noel@cblandtrust.org), or visit our website: [cblandtrust.org/planned-giving/](http://cblandtrust.org/planned-giving/).



PHOTO: Ron Baker



# THANK YOU

to the following Crested Butte Land Trust supporters for gifts received from April 15, 2016 to April 15, 2017. We sincerely appreciate our community’s support of and involvement in the Gunnison Valley’s local land trust. Also, thanks to our [Sustaining Members](#) in green and [Business Affiliates](#) in blue. If you are interested in becoming a Sustaining Member or Business Affiliate, please call Noel Durant at **970.349.1206**.

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Anonymous (3), L.E. and R. Becker, Frank Brookins, Mike Gould, Denis Hall, Jeff Hermanson, Karen Hickey, Margaret Mead, Melanie Rees, Phil Roy, Suzanne and John Simmons, Mary Louise Skinner and Richard Kimball

**Stewards of the Land**  
Allen, Anders, Aspen Valley Land Trust, Beitner, Bench, Betz, Biery, Budd, Burstein, Cavalli, Conroad Associates LP, Stock, Cosentino, De Pasquale, Divine, Eccher, Elliot, Family of Andrew Kasic, Gallin, Gebhart, Graham, Gronk, Hermanson, Hidden Mine Homeowners Association, Huckeby, Ingraham, Jucha, Kapushion, Kennel, Klingsmith, Kochevar, Kroft, Kubricht, Lumb, Maxwell, McBride, McElroy, McGill, Mead, Meredith, Miller, Niccoli, North Village Reserve, Ochs, Owen, Oso & Luna, Passow, Parry, Pitkin Iron Co., Ranch Reserve, Riverbend Homeowners Association, Robbins, Roberts, Robinson, Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory, Rolling River, Rozman, Schaffer, Silka, Smith, Stratman, Stroh, Town of Crested Butte, Trout Ranch, Trust for Public Land, US Energy, US Forest Service, Uteley, Zeligman

2



new conservation projects completed

55

conservation projects completed over the last 26 years



1,700

head of cattle grazed on Land Trust properties, keeping the Gunnison Valley ranching heritage alive

# 2016: OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

24



young adults learned to build trails and control noxious weeds on our lands

1



accredited land trust in Gunnison County

80+

species of birds call the Slate River Valley home

## Public Notice COMMENT ON OUR COMPLIANCE



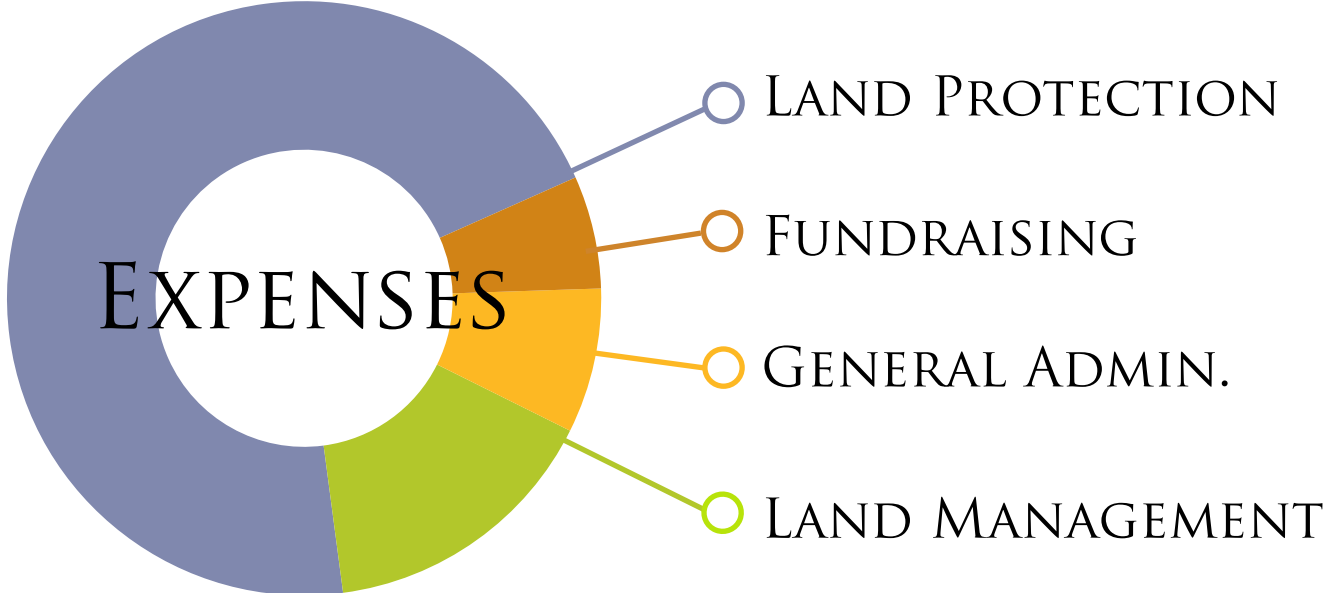
The land trust accreditation program recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. The Crested Butte Land Trust is pleased to announce it is applying for renewal of accreditation. A public comment period is now open.

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, conducts an extensive review of each applicant's policies and programs. As the only accredited Land Trust in the Gunnison Valley, we view accreditation as critical to our integrity. Accreditation assures our partners and supporters that we are a reliable, trustworthy organization, and that we are meeting the highest standards for our financial practices, transactions, land management, and governance.

The Commission invites public input and accepts signed, written comments on pending applications. Comments must relate to how the Crested Butte Land Trust complies with national quality standards. These standards address the ethical and technical operation of a land trust. For the full list of standards see <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/help-and-resources/indicator-practices>.

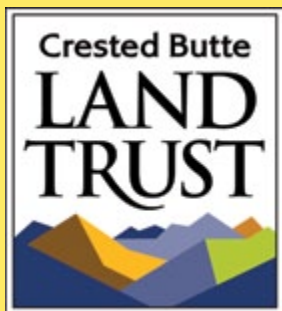
To learn more and to submit a comment, visit [www.landtrustaccreditation.org](http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org), or email your comment to [info@landtrustaccreditation.org](mailto:info@landtrustaccreditation.org). Comments may also be faxed or mailed to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, Attn: Public Comments: (fax) 518-587-3183; (mail) 36 Phila Street, Suite 2, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866.

Comments on the Crested Butte Land Trust's application will be most useful by Friday, July 21<sup>st</sup>.



We're accountable to you! For our full financial report, please visit [cblandtrust.org/financial/](http://cblandtrust.org/financial/).





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PHOTO: Nathan Bilow

If you'd like to have a confidential, obligation-free conversation about protecting your legacy,  
**we're here for you.**