

MAINTAINING THE RANGE

SUMMER 2017

16th Annual Roundup Fundraiser

On the evening of August 26th the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust (WSGLT) welcomed over 240 people to the 16th Annual Roundup Fundraiser and Barbeque.

Dr. Fred Eshelman was kind enough to host the event at the base of Elk Mountain on the headquarters of his ranch. The beautiful mountain in the backdrop and sunset made for the perfect evening of fun and fundraising.

The event began with a tour of the four ranches that WSGLT holds under easement, The McKee, UL, Vickers Complex, and Basin Ranches, which have a combined conserved area of over 23,000 acres. Employees from the ranch, as well as the WSGLT stewardship staff accompanied over 50 people on the tour and explained the histories and the operations of the ranches.

The evening continued with the program and auction. The program included a keynote speech from Congressman Liz Cheney and the presentation of the 2017 Kurt Bucholz Conservation Award to Jim Wilson of Thermopolis. WSGLT Executive Director, Bo Alley spoke to the importance of the WSGLT's mission and the conservation impact of several upcoming projects.



Pictured: Jim Wilson speaking briefly before accepting the award. Photos Courtesy of Mike Sullivan.

As Bo mentioned in his speech, we all have a personal connection to agriculture. Whether that connection is directly through farming and ranching, or if it is through secondary connections like being an outdoor enthusiast, an educator, or simply enjoying the landscapes and the sense of place that is so often felt by those who live and visit Wyoming.

Agriculture is the common thread that sews together the fabric of our rural communities and the foundation on which our western heritage and culture endure. Events like the Roundup Fundraiser help to support these common connections so that they may continue into the future.

The WSGLT Board of Directors, Trustees, and staff would like to thank everyone who was in attendance, made a donation to, or sponsored this event. Without your support our conservation efforts would not be possible.

We hope that you will join us for the 17th Annual Roundup Fundraiser and Barbeque which will be at the Sommers Homestead in Pinedale, Wyoming on August 25th, 2018!



16TH ANNUAL ROUNDUP FUNDRAISER SPONSORS

Every year, private donors, foundations, and businesses support WSGLT's conservation efforts by becoming sponsors for the Annual Roundup Fundraiser and Barbeque. These funds help us in the continuation of our mission and we are grateful for their support.

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HECHT CREEK RANCH PROFILE

Each time we visit a conserved ranch property, there's always a moment where we stop and take in the sheer beauty and importance of conserving just that single place. In June, a few of the WSGLT staff were lucky enough to experience this moment yet again, as we toured Hecht Creek Ranch and met with the Sigel family.

The Hecht Creek Ranch, previously known as the Squires Ranch, was conserved by the WSGLT and the Sigel family in 2006. The conserved portion of the ranch consists of over 2,000 acres of high altitude range and irrigated land that is primarily used for farming and as a cattle ranch. Hecht Creek, Spring Creek and the South Fork of the Little Laramie all flow to the ranch and offer irrigation water as well as water sources for livestock and wildlife.



On the day we visited, the cool breeze of spring was blowing through the valley as we loaded up into the side-by-side and headed out to see the ranch. As we drove, Art Sigel pointed out the pond where his grandchildren swim during the summers and a path where elk had migrated through one of the pastures just a few weeks earlier. The elk migrate through every year and the ranch is also utilized by a variety of other wildlife in the area.



Along with producing food and fiber and serving as an important wildlife habitat, the ranch offers a rich history and a richer future. The ranch was founded by Reynold Hecht in 1887, and his son, William Hecht, went on to homestead additional property in 1906. The ranch changed hands through the generations before the Sigel Family purchased the property in 2005. Examples of this history are still visible as you walk through the pastures and up on the hills, with tracks from wagons still rutted in the earth.

Today, three generations of the Sigel family are actively taking part in the day-to-day operations of the ranch. Both of Art and his wife Dorothy's sons, Matt and his wife Gina, and Ed and his wife Harmony have children and work on the ranch. Matt and Gina have started a Community Supported Agriculture otherwise known as a CSA, on the ranch called The Black Market Farm. People in the neighboring communities are able to order ranch grown beef, pork, chicken, lamb or goat meat packages. The family also supplements their ranch income by opening their home to tourists for overnight stays and trail rides.

At the end of our tour we sat down with Art and Dorothy and they discussed how their family is pleased with the WSGLT's mentality as an organization, not getting involved in day-to-day operations and allowing farmers and ranchers manage their conserved properties as they best see fit. More importantly, Art discussed how happy this conserved ranch makes his family and that the hope is for that happiness and agricultural productivity to continue into the future.

Conserving a ranch achieves so much more than just ensuring it will never be lost to development. We were reminded of this that day. Conserving a ranch allows the land to forever spur diversification and creativity which can support local communities and inspire future generations. Yet more reasons to continue our mission.

Photo Captions: 1st Picture: Landscape photo of a portion of the ranch.

2nd Photo: Art Sigel points out a spot on hillside to WSGLT Stewardship Coordinator, Travis Brammer.



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LAND TRUST ALLIANCE RE-ACCREDITATION



If you have been a supporter of the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust (WSGLT) at any time during the past 15 years, you may have seen the small green “Accreditation” logo in the corner of our print materials and website, but you may not fully understand the importance that logo plays for us as a part of the land trust community.

In August, the WSGLT was awarded accreditation renewal through the Land Trust Alliance (LTA) Accreditation Commission. The LTA is a national organization that advocates for over 1,000 land trusts. They offer support and training for land trusts, and also work to improve the quality of land trusts throughout the country. The WSGLT was originally accredited in 2012, and is required to seek reaccreditation every five years.

Accreditation is no small task and requires land trusts to meet the highest standards for land conservation and shows that the land trust is strong, effective and trustworthy. During the process of accreditation, the LTA worked with the WSGLT’s staff and Board to further strengthen our organization’s processes and procedures.

Accreditation demonstrates that the WSGLT is responsible and professional in its mission of conserving Wyoming’s working family ranches, farms and the wide-open spaces, natural habitats, and rural communities they support, while also living up to the highest standards of land conservation. We are dedicated to our mission and we hope that you will join us in supporting another five years of Wyoming ag-land conservation.