



For Immediate Release

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**Stock Growers Land Trust Conserves Ranch for
Agricultural Production in Perpetuity**

Sundance, Wyoming – Almost 2,000 acres of productive rangeland in Crook County will remain in agriculture thanks to a conservation easement on the Wood Ranch donated in part to the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust by landowner Jackie Griffith. The project's closing on October 22 complements two completed conservation easements in Crook County held by the Stock Growers Land Trust. The Wood Ranch conservation easement ensures the ranch's compatibility with agriculture and prevents the ranch from being converted to non-agricultural uses in the future.

The Wood Ranch was founded in 1895 by Jacob Wood and remained in the Wood family for many generations. Jackie Griffith, the current landowner, purchased the land from the Wood family in 2000 and continues to utilize the forage for livestock grazing. At the location of the original homestead, a cabin was erected in Jacob's honor and is used today as a Pastor Day Retreat, where religious leaders may have a quiet place to reflect, pray and study.

Wood Ranch is situated in the Bear Lodge Mountains and is nestled in the Beaver Creek Valley, surrounded by other private rangeland and National Forest land, with stunning mountain views in all directions. The property also provides habitat for a host of wildlife species including elk, deer, mountain lion, black bear, bobcat, eagles and several species of hawks. The ranch is bisected by State Highway 24, which is a popular route for those traveling to Devils Tower National Monument and helps to ensure the unspoiled views of Wyoming's wide open spaces which are enjoyed by all travelers.

Following the closing in Sundance, Jackie Griffith said "I would like to thank the Stock Growers Land Trust staff for their dedication and perseverance in preserving and protecting Wyoming rangeland, especially the Wood Ranch, which I own. The preservation of this beautiful ranch will protect wildlife and the natural beauty for all to enjoy."

Stock Growers Land Trust Executive Director Pamela Dewell said, "We thank Jackie for her dedication to conservation and the preservation of her beautiful ranch in Crook County."

This project was made possible by funding from the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, along with a generous in-kind donation from the landowner. Bob Budd, Executive Director of the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust, said, "This is another great example of a landscape that deserves to be retained in agriculture, and providing wildlife habitat and the amazing views that Wyoming offers to the world. Exemplary ranch management has long provided a wealth of wildlife habitat, while at the

same time contributing to the economy and culture of northeast Wyoming. Congratulations to the Stock Growers Land Trust and Jackie Griffith for this accomplishment!”

Oregon State Conservationist and current administrator of NRCS easement programs in Wyoming, Ron Alvarado said, “The Natural Resources Conservation Service is pleased to continue our partnership with the Stock Growers Land Trust in the conservation of important agricultural land in Wyoming. Protecting this property is very important to the area as it provides critical wildlife habitat connectivity between federally managed properties around it. Protecting this agricultural land from development enhances the agricultural and wildlife values in Beaver Creek Valley. We thank Ms. Griffith for her commitment to conserve land and protect these important values in Crook County.”

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About the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust

The Stock Growers Land Trust is dedicated to conservation through ranching. Based in Cheyenne, the non-profit organization serves the entire state and is Wyoming’s only agricultural land trust. Through partnerships with ranch families, the Stock Growers Land Trust holds and stewards conservation easements on more than 203,000 acres of land on ranches and farms throughout Wyoming. Founded in 2000 by the 140-year-old Wyoming Stock Growers Association, it is one of the largest among the 1,659 regional land trusts in the United States. For more information, visit www.wsgalt.org.