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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Over 15,000 Acres of Ranchlands Conserved In Sublette County

Cheyenne, Wyo. -- On December 12th the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust acquired the 15,231 acre North Cottonwood Ranch conservation easement from The Conservation Fund. The ranch, which is located south of Merna, and west of Daniel, is near several previously conserved ranches with easements held by the WSGLT.

Bo Alley, WSGLT Executive Director, spoke about the importance of the project and the collaboration between the two organizations stating, "Sublette County has been a shining example of the coexistence of ranching, energy development, and conservation. The Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust now holds nearly 67,000 acres of conservation easements on 22 ranches in the county. This conservation project, like many in the county, is the product of a collaborative effort with our partners at The Conservation Fund."

The North Cottonwood Ranch, a historical ag-operation, not only offers vast agricultural benefits, but is also an important piece of the local ecology. The ranch contains nearly 20 miles of streams, including the North Cottonwood Creek, Spring Creek, and Killpecker Creek. In addition to the streams, there are 16 reservoirs on the property and three different types of wetlands.

Funding for the conservation easement acquisition was provided by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, the State of Wyoming through the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resources Trust, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation through its Mountain West Migratory Bird Habitat Conservation Fund, the Knobloch Family Foundation and a stewardship donation from the seller.

The ranch offers abundant water sources, riparian corridors, sagebrush-steppe habitat, and plentiful forage, which provide excellent habitat and unencumbered migration corridors for Wyoming wildlife, and a variety of species use the ranch year-round including, elk, mule deer, moose, pronghorn, and sage grouse. The eastern part of the ranch is located within the Daniel Core Sage Grouse Area.

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"Over the last decade, the Fund has been honored to work cooperatively with private landowners, public agencies, and non-profit partners—like WSGLT—to conserve nearly 118,000 acres in Sublette County," said Dan Schlager, Wyoming State Director with The Conservation Fund. "These efforts in the Upper Green River Valley and along the Hoback Rim conserve working agricultural ranches that are part of Wyoming's world-renowned migration routes, secure miles of river frontage, and protect core sage grouse habitat and crucial winter range for moose, elk, mule deer and pronghorn—creating benefits for people, communities and wildlife."

Currently, WSGLT holds and stewards 92 conservation easements which make up 252,213 acres of productive agricultural lands across the state. The North Cottonwood Ranch conservation easement will keep a unique and important agricultural property unbroken in perpetuity. The ranch will continue to offer abundant wildlife habitat, water sources, and agricultural production in the years to come.

About the Wyoming Stock Growers Land Trust

The Wyoming 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 252,000 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.

About The Conservation Fund

At The Conservation Fund, we make conservation work for America. By creating solutions that make environmental and economic sense, we are redefining conservation to demonstrate its essential role in our future prosperity. Top-ranked for efficiency and effectiveness, we have worked in all 50 states to protect nearly 8 million acres of land since 1985. www.conservationfund.org

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