

Press Release: March 31, 2005

Gunnison Family Preserves Ranch Land

Bob (Harold) Robbins and his son, Bob, have decided to give up forever their right to subdivide and develop 500 acres of grazing land and wildlife habitat in the Steuben Creek Valley, about 8 miles west of Gunnison. The family has granted a conservation easement to Colorado Open Lands, a statewide land trust. Local grassroots organization, Gunnison Ranchland Conservation Legacy (GRCL), coordinated the easement project and secured grants and donations to fund the deal. The land is now restricted to allow only one home on the entire 500 acres.

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), funded by the Colorado Lottery, granted \$299,343 for the agricultural land preservation project. The Gunnison County Land Preservation Fund, 1% for Open Space, and private donations provided the remaining cash. The Robbins Family donated \$125,000 worth of easement value.

The Robbins will continue to graze livestock on the property. The ranch will also continue to provide habitat for the imperiled Gunnison sage-grouse and winter habitat for elk and deer. The parcel, which is located between Beaver Creek Wildlife Area and Centennial Wildlife Area, includes riparian areas along Sun Creek and upland sagebrush grazing land.

Since 1998, Gunnison Ranchland Legacy has facilitated the placement of 28 easements on 13,924 acres in the Gunnison/Crested Butte area. GOCO has provided more than \$10 million in lottery proceeds to assist with many of those easements. An additional 15,000 acres, worth over \$30 million in development value, remains on the Legacy waiting list for funding, according to Lucy High, Executive Director for the organization.

“Legacy is constantly seeking additional donations and grants,” High commented. “We are very grateful for our many supporters whose contributions ensure that we can continue our mission to preserve

ranching and conserve ranchlands in the Gunnison Country. Conservation easements help protect productive ranch lands while also preserving wildlife habitat and scenic views.”

Further information is available at Gunnison Legacy’s website, gunnisonlegacy.org.