

# Friends of the Green River Valley Land Trust

A GREEN RIVER VALLEY LAND TRUST  
NEW S L E T T E R

## SAVE THE DATES-

**BOULDER NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING**—April, date TBD  
You will soon receive an invitation; join us for dinner and a question and answer session

**PINEDALE NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING**—Tuesday, May 1  
An invitation will be mailed; this is another opportunity to join us for dinner and a question and answer session

**KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR THE UPCOMING FIELD TRIP BROCHURE**

**GRVLT ANNUAL DONOR APPRECIATION PICNIC**—8/25/07

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

GRVLT Awarded \$50,000 Grant from Tom Thorne Sage Grouse Conservation Fund for Murdock Project	2
Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About...The GRVLT Board—But Were Afraid to Ask	2
GRVLT 101	3
New Tax Benefits	4
Focus On: Making the Expanded Tax Incentives for Easements Permanent	5
Did You Know...	5
GRVLT Contact Information and Mission	6
Across the Fence Post...	6

## CONSERVATION MOMENTUM CONTINUES TO GROW - A REVIEW OF 2006 & PLANS FOR 2007

Throughout 2006 and in early 2007, we worked with 8 landowners to conserve **3,819** acres of working ranchland, wildlife habitat and beautiful views in Sublette County. These projects build on conservation momentum in the Boulder, Upper New Fork, Daniel and Cottonwood Creek neighborhoods.

We worked with more landowners this year than we have since 2004 and exceeded both 2005 total conserved acres (3,281) and the 2006 goal (2,500).

Our 2006 projects included conservation of 296 additional acres in the Ryegrass Ranch. This means 14 of 20 landowners owning 2,090 of the ranch's 2,854 acres have chosen to conserve their properties with us. Our 2006 projects also included 142 additional acres in the Seven Mile River Ranch. This means 4 of 20 landowners owning 692 of the ranch's 3,197 acres have chosen to conserve their properties with us.

We have now worked with **nearly 40 families to conserve nearly 20,000 acres** in Sublette County. This puts us in the **TOP 100 land trusts in the country** in terms of acreage held under easements! This means that in our 7-year history, landowners will have trusted us to conserve more acres than most land trusts in the United States - a wonderful complement to those organizations' efforts and a lasting testament to ours.

As an interesting follow-up to the point many of you made about the need to work with ranching families who may not be able to donate easements, **more than a dozen local families** have approached us in the last 8-10 months to ask for our help in conserving their properties by purchasing conservation easements.

This is certainly positive reinforcement of the need for our work and the timeliness of our mission. The families that have approached us own more than **25,000 acres of working land** in Sublette County. This is an exciting testament to the future of conservation, and we look forward to telling you more about the particular properties!

Stop by the office for an update or give us a call.

**GRVLT AWARDED \$50,000 GRANT FROM TOM THORNE SAGE GROUSE CONSERVATION FUND FOR MURDOCK PROJECT**

We have had great success with our fundraising efforts for the Murdock project, the option for which expires on 6/18/07. As you may recall, we signed an option last June that gives us one year to raise \$1.2 million to purchase the 873-acre easement from the Murdock Family.



In addition to funding from many generous individuals, the GRVLT has received funding from several important foundations towards our purchase of a conservation easement on the Murdocks' Double Bar E Ranch. We reported last year that we received \$185,000 from the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resources Trust Fund. In another testament to the property's important wildlife and habitat values, the GRVLT was just awarded \$50,000 from the Tom Thorne Sage Grouse Conservation Fund.

We hope that, if you haven't already, you will join those that have made contributions toward the protection of the Double Bar E Ranch, as we know you will want to be included as a supporter of this special project. We look forward to celebrating the close of this special project later this spring when we reach our \$1,200,000 easement purchase goal!

**EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW  
ABOUT...  
THE GRVLT BOARD -  
BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK**

The GRVLT Board of Directors is currently comprised of 13 members—all of whom live and work in Sublette County. The GRVLT's Board determines the organization's mission and purpose, approves and monitors programs and services, raises money, and ensures effective and sound financial management. Each Board member participates on at least one of the organization's seven standing committees: Executive Committee, Finance Committee, Fundraising & Outreach Committee, Lands Committee, Nominating/Board Governance Committee, and Personnel Committee. The Executive Committee is comprised of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Immediate Past President.

The current GRVLT Board of Directors includes:

Mary Anne Almquist – *Vice President*; teacher – Pinedale, WY  
 John Andrikopoulos – *President*; rancher – Rimfire Ranch, Daniel, WY  
 Liz David – teacher and rancher – Boulder, WY  
 Holly Davis – brand inspector – Big Piney, WY  
 John Fandek – ranch manager – Cora, WY  
 Mike Fenn – *Secretary*; local business owner and rancher – Pinedale, WY  
 Bernie Holz – Game and Fish employee – Pinedale, WY  
 Juli James – community volunteer – Pinedale, WY  
 John Mortenson – *Treasurer*; CPA and business owner – Pinedale, WY  
 Ron Rhyne – ranch manager; O Bar Y Ranch, Cora, WY  
 Tucker Smith – *Immediate Past President*; artist – Pinedale, WY  
 Kenna Tanner – EMT – Big Piney, WY  
 Patty Washburn—community volunteer—Pinedale, WY—our newest Board member

## GRVLT 101



Ever find yourself at a loss for words when someone asks you about the GRVLT? Here's a simple explanation of who we are and what we do that may help.

Cut this out and put it on our fridge as a quick reminder!

**WHAT WE DO**

The GRVLT helps people conserve the things they love about their land and Sublette County.

**HOW WE DO IT**

The GRVLT does this by working with private landowners to voluntarily limit residential and commercial development on our County's working lands using a legal document called a conservation easement.

Conservation easements are tools that landowners can use to:

- Keep their land available for agriculture
- Alleviate income and estate taxes
- Pass their ranch to children and grandchildren
- Curb residential subdivision and commercial development
- Preserve habitat for moose, antelope, elk, mule deer, fish, ducks, swans, eagles, songbirds and other wildlife
- Maintain the beautiful views we all enjoy.

Conservation easements are flexible, negotiable and voluntary. No two are alike! We work with every landowner to ensure that their easement meets their particular needs and goals.

GRVLT acquires conservation easements in one of two ways: We either accept them as charitable donations or we purchase them.

- If a landowner donates a conservation easement, he or she can deduct the easement's value as a charitable gift on their federal income and estate taxes.
- If a landowner sells an easement, he or she can use the sale proceeds to improve their operation, retire debt, or invest for the future.

As always, please call us with any questions!



# New Tax Benefits

Congress recently expanded the federal income tax incentives for conservation easement donations.

Landowners who donate conservation easements in 2007 can deduct more of their easement's value each year and carry forward any unused value for a longer period of time.

The new incentives:

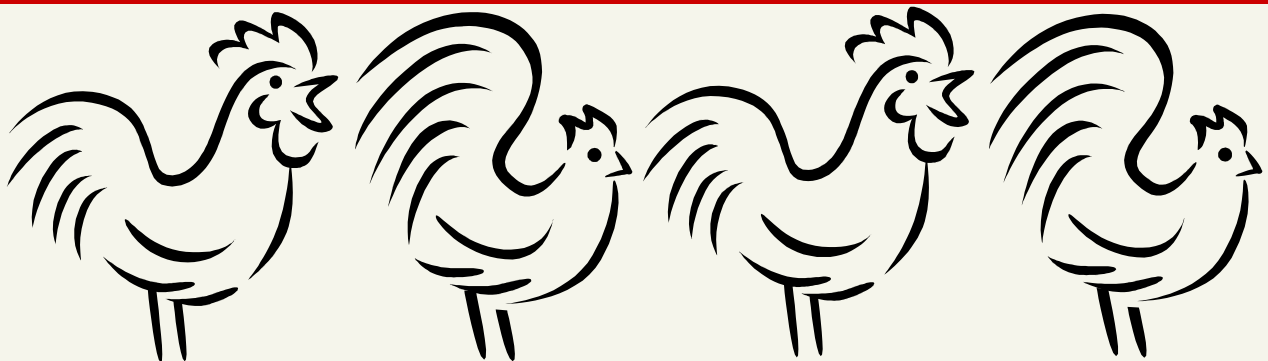
Raise the deduction a landowner can claim for donating a conservation easement from 30% of their adjusted gross income in any year to 50%;

Allow qualified ranchers (including C-corporations) to deduct up to 100% of their income, provided the land remains available for agriculture; and

Increase the number of years over which a donor can take deductions from 5 to 15.

**The incentives expire at the end of this year and offer unprecedented benefits for conserving Sublette County's spectacular agricultural and natural lands.**

If you'd like to learn more about these benefits, please contact the Green River Valley Land Trust at (307) 367-7007.



## FOCUS ON: MAKING THE EXPANDED TAX INCENTIVES FOR EASEMENTS PERMANENT

You may recall that in our last issue of this newsletter, we talked about the expanded tax incentives. We want to again discuss this issue, and a new development that has occurred. Representatives **Mike Thompson** (D-CA) and **Dave Camp** (R-MI) introduced H.R.1576, a bill to make the newly expanded tax incentive for conservation easement donations permanent!

The bill was introduced with 22 cosponsors. Representatives **Ron Kind** (D-WI), **Jim McDermott** (D-WA), **Eric Cantor** (R-VA), **Earl Blumenauer** (D-OR), **John Lewis** (D-GA), **Ben Chandler** (D-KY), **Jim Saxton** (R-NJ), **Jim Gerlach** (R-PA), **Chris Murphy** (D-CT), **Jeff Fortenberry** (R-NE), **Ellen Tauscher** (D-CA), **Darrell Issa** (R-CA), **Roscoe Bartlett** (R-MD), **George Radanovich** (R-CA), **Wayne Gilchrest** (R-MD), **Randy Kuhl** (R-NY), **Patrick Murphy** (D-PA), **Steve Israel** (D-NY), **Dennis Cardoza** (D-CA), **Vernon Ehlers** (R-MI), **Tim Bishop** (D-NY) and **Scott Garrett** (R-NJ).

Similar legislation (S.469) has been introduced in the Senate by Senators **Max Baucus** (D-MT) and **Charles Grassley** (R-IA). President Bush's fiscal year 2008 budget also supports making the new incentive permanent. The bill permanently extends the tax incentive for conservation easement donations passed by Congress in late 2006.

This incentive:

- Raises the deduction a landowner can take for donating a conservation easement from 30% of their income in any year to 50%;
- Allows qualifying farmers and ranchers to deduct up to 100% of their income; and
- Extends the carry-forward period for a donor to take tax deductions for a voluntary conservation agreement from 5 to 15 years.

Currently, the 2006 law will expire at the end of 2007. This House bill would prevent that, and permanently ensure donations of conservation easements are a possibility for modest income level landowners.



### DID YOU KNOW..SUBLETTE COUNTY'S BEEN IN THE NEWS?

Sublette County has been the subject of a number of recent newspaper and magazine articles and features.

*End of the Road?*—Smithsonian; January, 2007

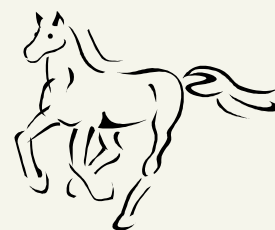
*Losing Ground*—National Geographic; January 2007

*Sagebrush Showdown*—Audubon; January/February

*2007 Boomtown Blues*—the New Yorker; 2/5/07

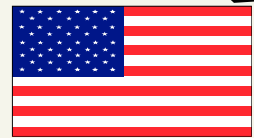
If you are interested in reading these articles, we would be happy to provide copies.

Just call the office and let us know.





WE'RE ON THE WEB:  
[WWW.GRVLANDTRUST.ORG](http://WWW.GRVLANDTRUST.ORG)



A GREEN RIVER  
VALLEY LAND  
TRUST  
NEWSLETTER

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**ACROSS THE  
FENCE POST...**

The mission of the Green River Valley Land Trust is to assist landowning families of the area in the conservation of agricultural, ranch and natural lands, in order to sustain and protect open spaces, watersheds, wildlife habitat and other ecological values for the benefit of today's inhabitants and as a legacy for future generations.

Since it was founded in 2000, the Green River Valley Land Trust has worked with nearly 40 families to conserve nearly 20,000 acres of prime ranchland in Sublette County.

**Betty Fear** just concluded her service to the community as County Commissioner: Thanks, Betty!

Congratulations to **Mike Halloran** who was recently appointed Counselor to the Chairman and Deputy Chief of Staff for the Securities and Exchange Commission.

**Dave Hohl** was just appointed to the Pinedale Town Council: Good luck, Dave!

**Chris and Bradley James** recently welcomed new baby boy Jasper—their first! Congratulations!

**Dave and Sherri Wright** will be moving in several months to Arizona. We have enjoyed getting to know them and wish them well!