



FOR LANDS' SAKE

SPRING 2008

NEWS & VIEWS FROM THE CENTRAL ARIZONA LAND TRUST

VOL.5/NO.1

Central Arizona Land Trust accepts donation of conservation easement on the W Diamond Ranch in Skull Valley, Arizona

The board of directors of the Central Arizona Land Trust proudly announces the protection of 4,296 acres of private ranchland in Yavapai County. David Jenner, owner of the W Diamond Ranch in Skull Valley donated the conservation easement to the Central Arizona Land Trust on December 19, 2007. David and his wife, Kay, first contacted the Central

western heritage. The W Diamond Ranch conservation easement specifically provides for the protection of agricultural, wildlife and open space values in perpetuity.

The value of the W Diamond Ranch conservation easement to wildlife and water resource protection cannot be overstated. The W Diamond Ranch property contains an array of biological land types including semi-arid grasslands, wooded uplands, and verdant riparian areas and cienegas. This diversity supports quality habitats for numerous animal species, ranging from mountain lion, bobcat, deer, and elk to Neotropical birds and birds of prey.



Photo by Matt Turner @2008

Arizona Land Trust in 2002 about a conservation easement. The Jenners saw an opportunity to protect their ranchlands in Skull Valley from future subdivision and development while continuing their ranching operation. This generous donation is a pioneering act by the Jenners; one that is vital to the continuity of the natural and cultural resources which have shaped our



Photo by Matt Turner @2008

Similarly, the protection of cultural values should be recognized. In a time when there is unprecedented growth in Arizona, family farms and ranches are becoming a thing of the past. The W Diamond Ranch conservation easement offers the opportunity to show that conservation easement agreements, which maintain private ownership while providing tax benefits to the landowner, can be used to help farm and ranch families successfully transfer land to future generations. It is the hope that this significant donation will generate a renewed interest from like-minded individuals to act now to begin the protection of family lands. You can make a difference...

CENTRAL ARIZONA



LAND TRUST

Preserving Open Space in the Heart of Arizona

P.O. Box 1050
Prescott, AZ 86302
(928) 445-7790
www.centralazlandtrust.org

The Central Arizona Land Trust was founded in 1989 as a local private, non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization. Donations are tax deductible as allowable by law.

For Lands' Sake is a regular publication to inform and educate the members and general public alike to the need for land protection and preservation.

Central Arizona Land Trust Board of Directors

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The mission of the Central Arizona Land Trust is to preserve and protect open space, wildlife habitat and the scenic and cultural values of Central Arizona for future generations.

President's Message



Dear Friends,

It is our pleasure to bring you another update on the work of the Central Arizona Land Trust. Through the generosity and extraordinary vision of David and Kay Jenner the W Diamond Ranch in Skull Valley is now protected in perpetuity through a conservation easement held by the Trust.

This easement signifies the successful completion of a partnership effort between the Jenners, CALT and the many professionals involved in this project over the past five years. This partnership and the resulting protection of this beautiful ranch is a wonderful example of the nature of land trust work.

CALT representatives work each year with dozens of landowners who are interested in learning more about the potentials of conserving land through conservation easements. These discussions include the continuation of agricultural operations, ecological conditions, open space, cultural values, and the exploration of the costs and benefits associated with the transfer of development rights.

Thank you for taking the time to read about what is being done here in Central Arizona to make the community and the world a better place. If you'd like to learn more, would like to become a landowner partner or get involved with CALT please email me at scorey@prescottcollege.edu or call Jeanne Trupiano, Lands and Project Manager, at (928) 499-8583.

Warmest regards,

Steven M. Corey, PhD
President, Central Arizona Land Trust

PO Box 1050
Prescott, AZ 86302

Protection of Agricultural Lands

With the donation of the conservation easement in Skull Valley on the W Diamond Ranch, The Central Arizona Land Trust would like to focus this issue on our efforts with rural property owners who are interested in placing their private land under an agricultur-

If you have been considering the donation of a conservation easement in 2008, start learning more about the process and how your working lands can be protected forever. Visit our website at www.centralazlandtrust.org or call us at (928) 445-7790.



Photo by Matt Turner ©2008

al conservation agreements. As a private, non-profit organization, CALT works with landowners to craft agreements, along with professional advisors, that suit each landowner's circumstance. We believe strongly that leaving the land in private ownership while allowing for agricultural uses helps to benefit the owner, the land, and the community in so many ways. As your local land trust we endorse the following basic tenets of land trust work:

- Strong land trusts are critical to conserving land in communities across America, and conservation easements are increasingly the best way to do so.
- Land trusts, including CALT, have adopted and follow a set of professional standards and practices which help ensure their sound operation and permanent protection of land.
- Conservation easements have helped thousands of ranchers and farmers keep their land in agricultural production, and have enabled communities to protect the rangelands, clean water, scenic views, natural and historic areas that are important to their quality of life.
- Conservation easements work because they allow the landowner to stay on the land, they restrict future development, and they are drafted as legally enforceable documents that protect the natural features and traditional uses of the land.

Funding

Since 1989, the Central Arizona Land Trust has been funded by those like you who are concerned about the preservation of our western heritage. Your donation, that is tax deductible, will go directly to support our continuing efforts to preserve and protect open space throughout Central Arizona. Donate today by mail or online at our website www.centralazlandtrust.org.

What you can do to save Working lands:

1. Place an easement on your farm or ranch to ensure agricultural production and open space in perpetuity.
2. Become a conservation buyer, someone who buys land that is vulnerable to development or subdivision.
3. Become a member of CALT and spread the word about our work.
4. Make a tax deductible donation to support our land preservation efforts throughout Central Arizona.

Will Tax Incentives Be Extended?

The conservation easement tax incentives passed in the 2006 Pension Protection Act (PPA) have expired as of December 31, 2007 – but those in the nationwide land trust community are very hopeful that these incentives will be made permanent as part of the pending Farm Bill legislation.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 2006 a landowner who donated a qualified conservation easement could deduct the value of the conservation easement up to 30% of their adjusted gross income with a 5-year carry-forward. For corporations, the donation of a conservation easement would allow for a deduction of 10% of taxable income (taxable income before the donation) for the year of the donation with a 5-year carry-forward. Gifts by cash or check are deductible up to 50% of the donors adjusted gross income.

UPDATE: Legislation now pending in Congress may extend or make permanent the 2006 tax incentives for the donation of conservation easements. The Senate has already given a nod to approvals that would extend these incentives as part of the pending Farm Bill. Most recently, 65 members of the House of Representatives signed a letter in support to move these incentives forward. Hopefully, by Fall of 2008 we will be able to report on the outcome of this legislation—look for an update.

As a recap, the incentives from 2006, that are now under consideration by Congress, include the following provisions:

Any landowner who donates a qualified conservation easement can take the income deduction for the gift up to 50% of the landowner's adjusted gross income for the year, with a 15-year carry-forward.

A landowner who meets the tests for a 'qualified farmer or rancher' can take a deduction up to 100% of their adjusted gross income (for individuals) or up to 100% of taxable income (for corporations), also with a 15-year carry-forward.

These tax incentives, that have enabled many landowners to permanently protect their farms and ranches, are supported in Congress as part of the Senate's version of the pending Farm Bill. There is opposition from the House due to procedural and political reasons that may be overcome in the weeks ahead by Members of Congress and the White House. The 2008 fiscal budget, as proposed by President Bush, includes a provision that endorses these tax incentives and asks that they become a permanent feature to foster land conservation efforts.

If these expanded tax incentives are made permanent, family farmers, ranchers, and other moderate-income landowners will be able to conserve the land they love while obtaining a significant tax benefit for making the charitable donation of a conservation easement. CALT is hopeful that the Farm Bill will extend these incentives to allow landowners, especially agricultural producers, to benefit while protecting values important to all of us. Conservation easements are a powerful tool that enables private landowners to keep ranching or farming in the family while protecting all the great benefits that come from preserving our western land heritage.

Contact CALT at calt@centralazlandtrust.org for more information today!

Become a Partner in Protection – Join CATL Today! The Natural Beauty of Central Arizona Depends on You



Photo by Walt Anderson ©2008

Thank you for your interest in supporting the Central Arizona Land Trust! The success of the Trust's land protection and outreach programs can be attributed directly to donations from our locally-based membership. We do not receive state or federal funding for our operations and rely on our donors each year who financially support our efforts. Your membership support will join with others who believe that prudent land decisions can and should incorporate land protection strategies so that we can all enjoy Central Arizona for generations to come.

You can donate online today at
www.centralazlandtrust.org.

UPDATE

The Central Arizona Land Trust Stewardship Fund

The Central Arizona Land Trust is pleased to report that as of December 31, 2007, the Central Arizona Land Trust Stewardship Fund is valued at \$143,948. The income from the principle provides an invaluable resource and income stream necessary for the stewardship, management, protection, and defense of the conservation easements held by the Central Arizona Land Trust.

Component funds of the Central Arizona Land Trust Stewardship Fund include: The Boyle-DeBusk Endowment Fund, The Payne-Trust for Public Lands Endowment Fund, and the W Diamond Ranch Endowment Fund. Each component fund provides similar support for each land project.

The Board of Directors has decided to partner with the Arizona Community Foundation in establishing the Central Arizona Land Trust Fund to provide for improved fund management and prudent endowment investment strategies. The Central Arizona Land Trust will be placing its endowment with the Arizona Community Foundation for the purposes of improved fund management and prudent endowment investment strategies.

“We’re very pleased with this recent decision and believe it will provide us with added security and value for many years to come, furthering our ability to successfully steward and conserve lands here in Central Arizona,” stated Board President Steven Corey.

For more information on contributing to the endowment, contact us today:

(928) 445-7790

P.O. Box 1050, Prescott, AZ 86302

Email – calt@centralazlandtrust.org.

Website – www.centralazlandtrust.org

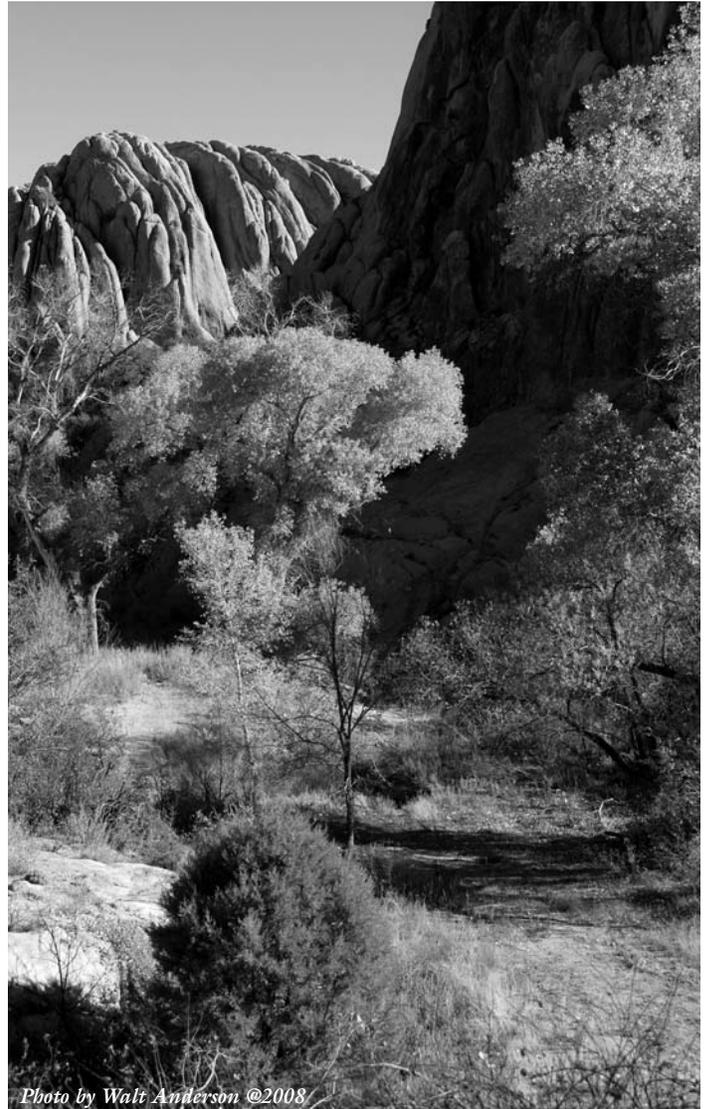


Photo by Walt Anderson ©2008



Welcome to the CALT Board of Directors

Steve Walker

Steve first moved to Prescott with his family in 1973. Following graduation from NAU School of Forestry, he worked as a private environmental consultant and director in the US Forest Service throughout the western US. For the past 14 years Steve was Executive Director of Bat Conservation International, the Texas and Mexico Chapters and Migratory Bird Program of the Nature Conservancy. Steve and his wife Denise moved back to Prescott in October, 2006, to begin his new position as Executive Director of College Development and Foundation, Yavapai College. “We are thrilled to be back in our hometown of Prescott. For us, the weather and natural beauty here are unmatched.” In addition to serving on the CALT Board, Steve is also serving on the Prescott Mayor’s Open Space Acquisition Committee. “With almost 30 years in natural resource conservation, I want to do everything I can to protect the last great places in Yavapai County and beyond.”

What is the Baseline Documentation Report and why is it necessary for conservation easements?

By Matthew Turner

When conservation agreements are created, there are specific documents that are required prior to the transfer of the easement. One of the components is the Baseline Documentation Report. As stated, in the highly recommended *Conservation Easement Handbook*, the “baseline documentation report provides detailed information on the condition of the property-relevant to the terms of the easement-at the time the easement is transferred, and may be added to when conditions change.” The report should clearly describe and accurately record the condition of the property, including its geographic features, vegetation types, fauna, current uses, existing structures and their relationship to one another in nature and in use.

Following the acceptance of a conservation easement CALT uses the baseline documents to prepare for and conduct the annual monitoring of the easement property. Additionally, the report can be used by the land trust to continue a positive dialogue with the landowner and future owners regarding the protection of the conservation values. Furthermore, it establishes a reliable document should the easement ever be threatened by development or inconsistent uses.

For tax purposes, the Internal Revenue Service requires that a Baseline Documentation Report be prepared should the landowner choose to take the federal tax deduction associated with the donation of a conservation easement, under Treasury Regulations 1.170A-14 [g] [5] [I]).

The Central Arizona Land Trust works closely with landowners to ensure that all of the requirements associated with conservation agreements, such as the Baseline Documentation Report, are conducted in a professional and effective manner. Materials

and educational information are available upon request in our local office.

To view examples of Baseline Documentation Reports, visit Matthew Turner’s website at www.matthewturner.org

Byers, E. Ponte, Karin Marchetti. (2005). *The Conservation Easement Handbook: San Francisco, CA: The Trust for Public Land and The Land Trust Alliance.*



Photo by Walt Anderson @2008

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Local Programs Reach Out to Landowners Large and Small

Did you know that the Natural Resources Conservation Service, an arm of the United States Department of Agriculture, has a local field office that has much to offer private landowners in Yavapai County?

According to Kresta Faaborg, District Conservationist of our local NRCS office in Prescott Valley, “the NRCS not only provides financial assistance through grants such as the EQUIP Program, but also offers helpful information and technical assistance.” One would think that the main focus would be to farmers, ranchers, and agricultural producers, but increasingly with the development of Yavapai County, this NRCS office would like to reach out to homeowners, both urban and suburban. The expertise available for both large and small landowners promotes conservation efforts to prevent soil erosion, keep water supplies clean and plentiful, retain or create green spaces, and reduce the impacts of flooding. NRCS is here to help you conserve and protect your land for future generations. For the full array of services that NRCS can offer to your particular situation, visit www.nrcs.usda.gov or call (928) 759-9301 ext. 2.

Time for Annual Easement Monitoring

The Central Arizona Land Trust (CALT) currently holds conservation easements on over 5,000 acres of land throughout Yavapai County. When a conservation easement is accepted, CALT commits itself to the defense of the conservation values as stated in the conservation easement. This means that the CALT has an ongoing obligation to regularly monitor its easements to verify that the conservation values are not compromised.

“While the spirit of neighborliness was important on the frontier because neighbors were so few, it is even more important now because our neighbors are so many.”

-Lady Bird Johnson

The purpose of annual monitoring is to confirm that the terms of the conservation easement agreement between the landowner and CALT are being fulfilled. For example, if the landowner agreed to construct agricultural structures only within a certain area of the ranch, we make certain no prohibited construction is taking place. Or, if the easement prohibits timber harvesting we confirm that the trees have not been harvested.

Monitoring visits can also reinforce the partnership between the owner and the CALT board and staff. Some of our easement properties are owned by private landowners which at some point in the future, the land may be transferred to new owners. These personal visits give the landowner names and faces to accompany the legal terms of the deed, and also provide the landowner with ready access to someone who can answer questions about the easement. Ultimately, our goal is to foster a working partnership and prevent violations to the easement.

During annual monitoring visits, CALT staff-members and the landowner (if they wish to accompany) walk the property to make observations that are noted in a checklist of items related to the easement. Additionally, photographs are taken at established photo-points to track conditions over time. The significance of these visits can not be overstated. According to the nationally recognized standards and practices set by the Land Trust Alliance, annual monitoring is one of the most important duties of a land trust. The Central Arizona Land Trust is proud of its strong monitoring policy that provides for consistent procedures that provide comprehensive oversight on a regular basis.

If you would like to learn more about this aspect of conservation easements, please call us a (928) 445-7790.

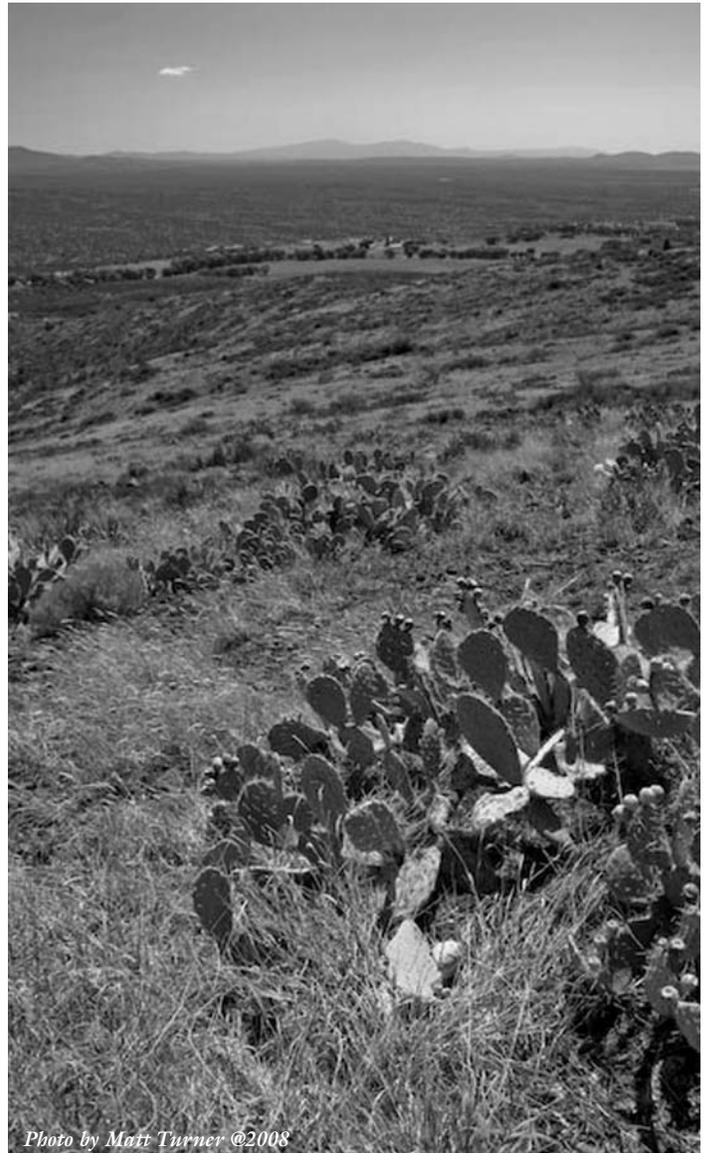


Photo by Matt Turner ©2008

CALT Wish List

Underwriters for radio announcements-day, week or monthly spots

Field Equipment: Digital camera and GPS Unit

Office Space: The CALT office is temporarily located at 141 N. McCormick Ave. in downtown Prescott. We love the location, but need more space to serve our growing needs plus an adjoining conference room to hold meetings.

Silent auction items for the Annual Wide Open Spaces Event in September 2008

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