



FOR LANDS' SAKE

SUMMER 2009

NEWS & VIEWS FROM THE CENTRAL ARIZONA LAND TRUST

VOL.6/NO.1

CALT Celebrates 20 Years

Preserving and Protecting Arizona's Cherished Landscapes



Thumb Butte



Boyle-DeBusk



Payne - Granite Dells



W Diamond Ranch

A Look Back to Our Beginning

By Harley Shaw and Patty Woodruff



Harley Shaw and Patty Woodruff

CALT was formed by four natural resource specialists (a range scientist, a soil scientist, a wildlife biologist, and a wild lands recreation specialist), along with a realtor, a historian, and a retired mining executive. These individuals all saw the vulnerability of wild lands surrounding Prescott to development. We were especially concerned about the loss of grasslands and their associated wildlife, especially pronghorn. Due to the history of land ownership in Arizona, the grasslands were nearly all owned privately or owned by the State Lands Department. Either way, they were susceptible to subdivision.

I think we realized three things fairly early on: that we needed more credibility in the community to apply land conservation measures to large expanses of habitat, that more money than we could hope to raise quickly was involved, and that the trust board badly needed people with better people skills and deeper roots in the ranching and business community.

Technical people such as ourselves could see the need and understood process well enough to get the trust up and running. Once that was accomplished we needed to retire to advisory positions, providing scientific know how as needed.

We began our effort to gain credibility by tackling the purchase of remaining residential lots on Thumb Butte. For many of us, this was a diversion from our initial goals. Nonetheless, our success there placed the trust on the map, as it were. I felt that we began to shift the board toward people in the "movers and shakers" category when Becky Ruffner and Richard Simms agreed to serve. The growth and success of the trust under Becky's guidance sustains this belief.

Yet, looking at the area around Prescott, I think we have to acknowledge that the loss of grasslands has continued and that preserving large expanses of this single habitat is even more critical now than when we formed. The Prescott Lakes pronghorn population attracted a lot of press, but disappeared nonetheless. Urbanization has expanded up Big Chino and across Little Chino. The bypass highway around Prescott Valley has further fragmented habitats that were already badly broken up. Acquiring expanses of grassland needed to protect pronghorn habitat may be beyond the

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LAND TRUST

Preserving Open Space in the Heart of Arizona

Mission

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.

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 its supporters and the community.

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President's Message



Dear Friends,

This year CALT will celebrate 20 years of land preservation. As a private, non-political land trust, CALT has helped to protect almost 5,000 acres with conservation agreements. From the first open space work on Thumb Butte to rangeland protection in Skull Valley, CALT has been your local land trust, providing long-term protection strategies to both private landowners and the City of Prescott.

In January of this year, the CALT Board of Directors met to determine the best strategies for serving the growing needs of our region. This year's highest priority is rangeland protection through voluntary conservation agreements. This program protects significant rangelands, which in turn support healthy watersheds, wildlife habitat, and regional scenery.

We firmly believe that voluntary conservation agreements give individual landowners a non-governmental way to conserve natural areas and traditional ways of life that are important to them and their communities. From our point of view, the best steward of the land is the one who owns it. We recognize that our mission is best fulfilled when we can keep rangelands in the family, on the tax rolls, in agricultural production, ecologically healthy and diverse, and connected to other open spaces as applicable.

Our program for open space protection will also be a priority, as we continue to work diligently with the City of Prescott to hold conservation easements on parcels acquired for open space with tax dollars.

To implement both programs, the CALT board has determined that we must grow as an organization and expand our professional staff. We are currently seeking funding to support and sustain this additional capacity. As we launch into our summer season with more Ranching in the Future Workshops and fieldwork, I am reminded that our work to protect our western lands is ultimately carried-out for the health, well being, and enjoyment of people. If you believe that CALT is making a positive impact, please tell a friend or neighbor to join us in our efforts by becoming a new Partner in Protection today.

Warmest regards,

Cover photos: Thumb Butte, Walt Anderson; Boyle-DeBusk, Jeanne Trupiano; Payne-Granite Dells and W Diamond Ranch, Matt Turner.

Prescott College Moves Agroecology Program to Jenner Farm in Skull Valley

by Tim Crews

The cottonwood buds are swelling with the warmer spring temperatures, and the vetch and oats are also taking off, covering a couple of acres of the Jenner Farm. With a little more rain these cover crops will bulk up and supply nitrogen and organic matter to future crops. The Jenner Farm is not to be confused with Dave and Kay Jenner's W Diamond Ranch in Skull Valley, although the Farm is contained within the Ranch. Situated on the flat alluvial bottom land that borders Skull Valley Wash, about two miles south of the Skull Valley General Store, the Jenner Farm is a twenty-acre education, research and demonstration project in agricultural ecology (agroecology) at Prescott College. As most readers of the CALT newsletter know, David and Kay Jenner took a historic step in 2008 by placing 4,296 acres of the W Diamond ranch in an agricultural conservation easement. The benefits of this generous and forward looking act will be enjoyed and treasured by people, hawks, cattle, and other members of the land community for decades if not centuries to come. By designating land to the Prescott College agroecology program, the Jenners even went beyond agricultural preservation into agricultural education, effectively helping a new generation of farmers, researchers, and educators.

The Jenner Farm has taken the place of Prescott College's Wolfberry Farm, which was located amidst the desert grassland off Perkinsville Road in Chino Valley. Wolfberry Farm was made possible by a 30-year lease from the Town of Chino Valley. Unfortunately the Town of Chino converted Wolfberry's grandfathered irrigation rights to a designation that would support municipal development but not agriculture. The possibility of farming on the Jenner's Ranch in Skull Valley could not have come at a better time. It was difficult to lose the financial and sweat investment we made in Chino Valley over the last decade, but the Jenner property's productive Mollisol soil, 9-foot deep water table, glorious sunflowers and cottonwoods, hawks and owls, and kind neighbors have made the move a pleasure.

The first order of business to launch the Jenner Farm was to retrofit an 80-foot well that had historically been used to fill a cattle tank with a small solar pump. As with Wolfberry Farm, we were intent on using solar energy to pump the water for the farm, and we received enough funding from the Heartspring Foundation in Washington State to install a 4 kilowatt photovoltaic array and inverter. We soon found that the 80-foot well did not have enough water available to keep up with the size of our new system (flow rate of 100gpm). Enter Dale Balow and his son Bud, of Balow Drilling in Skull Valley. They laboriously drilled another 140 feet before hitting a substrate that would supply enough water to the whole



Tim Crews. Photo by Mary Lin

farm. Though the static water level is nine feet, the soil texture in the top 219 feet is too fine for the water to recharge at the desired pumping rate. At 220 feet, the water flowed freely.



Retrofitting the well. Photo by Mary Lin

Once irrigation capacity was in place, the next task was to fence out the handful of cattle Dave Jenner and his ranch manager KC Looper graze in the pastures surrounding the farm. Then, in May of last year (2008) summer agroecology students and college staff fenced the entire 20-acres, pulled mesquite seedlings from half of the farm, installed drip irrigation to about five acres, and by June, we were ready to plant. We planted winter squash as a deficit irrigation experiment, put in trial plots of different varieties of tepary beans and blue corn, planted a "common garden" experiment of pale wolf-



Solar panels for well pump. Photo by Mary Lin

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berry collected from northern and eastern Arizona and western New Mexico, and finally, tested the latest perennial sorghum seed to come out of experimental breeding plots at the Land Institute in Salina, Kansas (www.landinstitute.org). Everything except the winter squash experiment grew with the same gusto as the wild sunflowers that previously covered the land. Two serious pests hit the winter squash—the first was curly top, a virus usually known for hammering tomatoes the second was pocket gopher—“happier than a gopher in soft dirt”, truly describes the population of this mammal on the Jenner farm. We thought they were bad in Chino Valley, but Skull Valley is gopher paradise.

I will be on sabbatical this year at Rothamsted Research in Great Britain working on projects related to the development of perennial grains in association with the Land Institute. The Agroecology Summer Semester will not be offered again until 2010, but we look forward with great anticipation to sinking more roots into the beautiful patch of 20 conserved acres now known as the Jenner Farm.

Tim Crews has been a faculty member in the Environmental Studies Program at Prescott College for fourteen years, over which time he has developed the curriculum in Agroecology, and undertaken research in regionally-adapted sustainable farming. He was on the founding board of the Prescott Farmer's Market and was instrumental in launching the Community Supported Agriculture program at Prescott College.

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scope and means of CALT. Nonetheless, grasslands and associated wildlife continue to be severely threatened.



Patty and Harley now live in Hillsboro, New Mexico, a village with some 80 permanent residents. Harley continues to work on writing projects and is currently the President of the Hillsboro Historical Society. Patty recently hosted a Heritage Music Festival to raise funds to buy an historic courthouse and jail site in town. They spend a week or so in the winter months monitoring mountain lions and other wildlife with trail cameras set-up on Ted Turner's Ladder Ranch—much of it on horseback, thus giving much needed exercise to their overfed and under worked equines. Recently, Patty and Harley made a trip to Beaverhead, New Mexico, where they re-shot old photographs of various wild landscapes, using an original set of photographs taken in 1913 by J. Stokley Ligon. Other than all this, Harley and Patty keep up with house and yard work, and try to keep at least one of their aging cars running.



Contact the Central Arizona Land Trust at
(928) 445-7790
or
calt@centralazlandtrust.org

All donations are tax deductible.

Wish List

Silent Auction Items Needed for July Fundraiser

Donate your tax-deductible items for Liquor Barn Beer Tasting by July 15 to benefit CALT. Advertise your business or service and support CALT at the same time. Silent Auction item donors will receive two tickets to the July 17 beer tasting fundraiser! Call 445-7790 today.

Office Supplies and Equipment

Digital Camera – 6 mega pixel or higher
GPS Equipment
Color Printer/Scanner
Copy paper, pens, and printer ink

Books for Central Arizona Land Trust Lending Library

\$25 will buy 5 copies of *Conservation Options: A Landowner's Guide*
\$50 will buy 1 set of

Preserving Family Lands: Book I – Essential Tax Strategies for the Landowner

Preserving Family Lands: Book II – More Strategies for the Future

Preserving Family Lands: Book III – New Tax Rules and Strategies and a Checklist

\$100 will buy 3 copies of *Saving the Ranch: Conservation Easement Design in the West*

Volunteers

Do you have a few hours a month to help with light clerical work, grantwriting, event planning, and public relations?

Liquor Barn Beer Tasting

to benefit

Central Arizona Land Trust

Friday, July 17
5:30–7:30 p.m.

Live Music by
The Remedy

‘Music for what ails you’

Prescott College Crossroads Center
Behind 220 Grove Avenue (off alley)

\$20 per person – \$25 at door

*Taste over 50 varieties of domestic
and foreign beer plus handcrafted
beers from Prescott Brewing Company,
enjoy delicious appetizers and
find treasures at the silent auction.*

Tickets can be purchased in advance at The Liquor Barn, 405 W. Goodwin;
the Old Sage Bookshop, 100 S. Montezuma – St. Michael Alleyway;
or online at www.centralazlandtrust.org

Become a Special Partner in Protection at the \$100 level and receive 2 free tickets.



Project Manager's Updates

By Jeanne Trupiano

Ranchland Preservation: The Way Forward

As you may know, our focus over the past 9 months has been to get out of the office and meet landowners at the Ranching in the Future (RIF) workshops. I believe I can speak for our entire team when I say that it has been a pleasure to meet with the participants at each location. Most importantly, it has been valuable to speak directly to landowners, to hear their concerns, and gain insightful feedback regarding ranchland preservation.

“Successful easement programs that focus on working landscapes help sustain natural resources, the people who work the land, and compatible land-based businesses.”

Marty Zeller, Conservation Partners

The RIF workshops have also been a great forum to discuss what landowners are doing, in Arizona and other western states, to protect and preserve large working landscapes while retaining private landownership. From CALT's point of view, this is the most rational way to maintain community viability while protecting of our precious resources.

I am also reminded that the move to protect a family farm or ranch is a bold step. It often requires many multi-generational owners to come to an agreement about the future of the family estate. These are not easy decisions, taking time and effort and the willingness to explore new options for how working landscapes can be protected yet utilized for economic viability for both the landowner and the community. This forward thinking action gives added value to the natural capital of the land- protecting water and soil quality, reducing sprawl and costly public service expenses to local jurisdictions, providing key linkages for wildlife corridors, while retaining our agricultural communities.

As we wrap up the first round of the Ranching in Future workshops, CALT, in partnership with the University of Arizona Yavapai County Cooperative Extension, would like to thank everyone who has participated and supported this effort. Because of the on-going feedback we have received from participating landowners, the remaining two workshops will focus on an in-depth look at agricultural conservation agreements and estate planning options. Our legal, tax, and appraisal experts will be on hand to provide excellent advice and examples based on their experience with agricultural conservation agreements. We are encouraged by the interest shown in the first round of workshops and will work to continue these programs to ensure comprehensive outreach and support for ranchland preservation.

For the two remaining workshops we will be focusing on the technical aspects of agricultural conservation agreements, estate planning, and tax benefits. If you would like to be on our mailing list for upcoming workshops or to register please call (928) 445-7790.

Lands and Projects Committee

Ranchland and Open Space projects will be reviewed over the summer months for acceptance into the 2009 program. If you own land that you believe has natural, historic, and/or cultural values, donating a voluntary conservation agreement can be a beneficial tool to conserve the land you love, maintain your private property rights, and possibly realize significant tax benefits. The current federal tax incentives include:

- Raising the deduction a donor can take on their federal return from 30 to 50 percent of their adjusted gross income.
- Allowing farmers and ranchers who qualify to deduct up to 100 percent of their income, provided that the land remains available for agricultural production.
- Extending the carry forward period from 5-years to 15-years, allowing donors to take advantage of a tax deduction for an extra decade.

Note that agricultural easements do not require public access, restrict your rights or those of your heirs to sell, lease, or bequeath your lands. CALT is a non-governmental, Arizona private, non-profit corporation that is not affiliated with any government agency or non-profit organization.

Federal Tax Incentives for Agricultural Easements

Tax incentives renewed in 2006 in the Farm Bill are set to expire December 31, 2009. If you have a conservation gift in mind this is the time to finalize your plans for 2009.

Land trust advocates are working hard this year to have these tax incentives made permanent. For more information call CALT at (928) 445-7790 or online at www.landtrustalliance.org, see Policy Action.

Land Trust Alliance Rally 2009

The National Land Conservation Conference
October 11-14, Portland, Oregon
www.landtrustalliance.org

Office Hours, Phone Calls and Appointments

As a reminder, telephone and email are monitored daily and are returned within 24 hours. Please call the office at (928) 445-7790 to set times for appointments in the office at 111 Park Ave., Prescott.

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*** Top Hands \$250 and above

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Much Appreciated Donation

Constance Pinney, CPA (an advisor to CALT) kindly donated a desk-top speaker's podium with PA system and a beautiful office white board. Both of these items are welcome additions to our program and will surely get a lot of use. Thank you Constance!

Jim Cristea, RLS, generously gave his time and talents to verify the boundary survey for the Boyle-DeBusk Conservation Easement. Thank you Jim!

Please remember that CALT, as a 501 (c) (3) charitable organization can accept donations of all types of assets. See the CALT website for more information on gifts and planned giving options on the comparison chart. Additionally, CALT can accept donations of land that may not be appropriate for a conservation easement, but can be re-sold to benefit our general expenses, programs, and land preservation efforts. Please call our office for more information at (928) 445-7790.



IMPORTANT NOTICE TO OUR BUSINESS SUPPORTERS

Beginning with the fall/winter issue of this newsletter, CALT is inviting businesses, non-profit organizations, or other groups to submit to us business card sized ads. The fee will be \$25 per issue. We ask that the ads be print-ready, two-color as hard copy or digital file. For more information, please contact our office at calt@centralazlandtrust.org or 928.445.7790.

Ad copy may be sent in GIF or JPG format.

CENTRAL ARIZONA



LAND TRUST

Preserving Open Space in the Heart of Arizona

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Preserving Western Lands
Since 1989

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Liquor Barn Beer Tasting
to benefit

the Central Arizona Land Trust

Friday, July 17
5:30–7:30 p.m.

Live Music by
The Remedy
'Music for what ails you'

See details inside

