

our place

INSPIRING YOU TO
PROTECT GREAT PLACES



WINTER 2023/2024

Cover Photo
Linda M. Swope

Milestones and Moments



Dear Teton Regional Land Trust Community,

We hope this message finds you well and filled with the same sense of gratitude and accomplishment that we hold in our hearts. It is with great pleasure that we share two remarkable milestones your Land Trust reached on this incredible journey of conservation: protecting 40,000 acres across eastern Idaho and completing Teton County, Idaho's 100th conservation project.

These achievements represent more than just numbers. They are a testament to the unwavering commitment of our dedicated team, our generous supporters and partners, and the committed landowners who have entrusted us to help them protect private lands in our region, all while ensuring that the wildlife, waters, and working lands in eastern Idaho will be here for future generations.

While we sometimes measure milestones, life is remembered in moments. Partnering with families provides the moments that make our work special. In September, while celebrating Boyd Bowles' new easement at the mouth of Darby Creek—the Land Trust's 100th Teton County conservation project!—third generation Darby Creek farmers Boyd Bowles and Paris Penfold shared their love of their land. There was hardly a dry eye as they told of the hardships endured and sacrifices made to keep their farms working for generations to come. Four generations of the Penfold family walked the property as Paris Penfold talked about the variety of crops that he and his family have experimented with to meet market demands in a changing world. The Penfolds haven't always been believers in conservation, but now see the benefits of conservation agreements that help sustain farmland as development pressures skyrocket.

We also celebrate the generous service of several talented and committed board members. Mike Allen (Swan Valley), Wes Keller (Salt Lake City), Laura Pickard (Ashton), Tim Reynolds (Rigby, Island Park), Sue Talbot (Swan Valley), and John VanOrman (Swan Valley, Idaho Falls) are stepping off the board at the end of December. We welcome new members Sarah Ashworth (Tetonia), Jeff Carr (Idaho Falls), Mike Merigliano (Driggs), Ron Miller (Swan Valley), and David Pease (Salt Lake City, Victor) in January.

As we celebrate this significant milestone of 40,000 acres preserved, we want to express our deepest gratitude to all who have played a role in making it possible. Together, we are creating a legacy of land conservation that will define our region for generations to come. Your support, dedication, and shared love for this land are truly making a difference. A majority of our operating budget (83 percent, to be exact) comes from individual gifts of all sizes, so conservation depends on you. The Hamill Family Foundation has offered up a challenge match for the Land Trust through the end of the year. Your new or increased gift given now until the end of the year will be matched dollar for dollar, doubling your impact to protect some of the best habitat left in North America.

Thank you for being part of our journey, and we look forward to working together to preserve the beauty and vitality of eastern Idaho.

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kim".

Kim Trotter
Executive Director, Teton Regional Land Trust

Conserving working farms and ranches, fish and wildlife habitat, and scenic open spaces in eastern Idaho for this and future generations.

Remembering Lew Mithun

BY MICHAEL WHITFIELD



Lew Mithun

In September, Teton Valley and the entire Northern Rockies lost a conservation giant. I lost a long-time friend, mentor, advisor, even sometimes father-figure: Lew Mithun, a kind, soft-spoken gentleman in the finest sense of that word.

In May 1994, as leader of the then Teton Valley Land Trust, I began a months-long conversation with Lew about a potential conservation easement. He

had acquired land on lower Teton Creek after a realtor let him know that this property had exceptional conservation value. As we worked together through coordination with relevant agencies and many easement drafts, I was impressed by Lew's deep intelligence and thoughtful consideration. He was committed to his conservation goal and displayed considerable patience as we drove toward the Land Trust's first conservation easement signing in January 1995. Lew understood the magnitude of that step as he became the first landowner to place that trust in our nascent organization. He would later buy two adjacent properties and place them under easements to secure protection of the vital fish and wildlife resources of what is now the 847-acre Six Springs Ranch. Once he had the ranch assembled, Lew asked me to form an advisory group to help him draft a conservation vision for his holdings. Ultimately Lew crafted a simple yet powerful idea of Six Springs as a conservation model for a productive working ranch managed to protect sensitive and vital cutthroat spawning and other wildlife values. That community engagement also led several participants into impactful conservation careers.

I was so impressed by Lew's leadership that I recommended him to the board for membership. In June 1995, Lew Mithun joined the Land Trust board and in November became vice president. In December 1998, Lew was elected as board president, a position he held until January 2003. Throughout this period Lew also led board development and fundraising. Those years under Lew's leadership were some of the organization's

best years, an era that saw the Land Trust become the Teton Regional Land Trust, greatly expand its conservation holdings, and make deep advances toward professional excellence as a model nonprofit. As executive director, I was something of a dreamer. I would come up with what I thought were great ideas for the benefit of the organization and conservation, and Lew would be the sounding board that would carefully point out the gaps in my thinking. Those ongoing conversations became cherished learning opportunities for me, a thorough process that turned dreams into vision and plans into success.

Lew often said if you need someone's help, ask for it. With Lew, that ask was the challenge. He expected the applicant to be as intellectually prepared as he was. He probed into the weak points of a proposal, always with the kind intent of making the plan even better. Over many years, Lew was a major Land Trust donor in support of new staff positions, staff training, and capital funds to support conservation property acquisitions. Later, he and his foundation did much the same for Heart of the Rockies Initiative, with large annual gifts for land trust development that led to significant grants to TRLT and other land trusts throughout the northern Rockies. He also donated significant capital campaign funds for conservation projects extending from Wyoming to Canada's British Columbia. Lew Mithun's generosity of thought and resources changed the course of conservation for people and nature across vast landscapes.



Lew signing his conservation agreement.

140 Acres of Teton Valley History

A HISTORY RELATED TO THE GAILEY PROPERTY CONSERVATION EASEMENT

In June, the Land Trust partnered with the Gailey family to place their farm, located on the west side of the Teton River, into a conservation easement. Wildlife, particularly moose and Sandhill Cranes, rely on the habitat along the river; its protection will benefit numerous species. This property also holds historical value, having been homesteaded by Cal Carrington at the turn of the 20th century. Teton Valley resident and friend of the Land Trust, Earle F. Layser, wrote a biography chronicling the life of Carrington. Earle has graciously offered to share some of that history with Land Trust members.

By Earle F. Layser, author of *I Always Did Like Horses and Women: Enoch Cal Carrington's Life Story*



Cal Carrington, early 20th Century

In the century before the Gailey family acquired the subject 140-acre easement property at Bates, it had known only two owners—the Furniss family and its original homesteader, Enoch “Cal” Carrington.

From the Bates W 1250 S county lane, located southwest of Driggs, you can look north across the Gailey property’s open fields today and observe a lonely time-worn

shack. Viewing it is like looking back in time. It is the remnants of the 1897 homestead cabin of Cal Carrington.

Cal deceased in 1959, but the Furniss and Gailey families chose to farm around the cabin all these years rather than remove it. Teton Valley history has deep ties to the old cabin and its original owner.

The scene flashes back to 1897, when Cal and a traveling companion, James “Jim” H. Berger, first rode into the valley driving a light iron-tired wagon with three head of horses tied to the wagon trotting along behind them. They had traveled the old Mormon Trail from Utah to Teton Basin—young men, raring-to-go, looking for adventure and a chance to take up homesteads.

Cal squatted on the original 160.29-acre Bates tract, establishing a claim through the Desert Land Act. As he worked toward meeting the requirements to take ownership of the land, Cal worked at times as a packer for the infant Yellowstone National Park, the Forest Service, and as a bronc buster for John Holland in Teton Valley.

In late-summer of 1917, while working for Jackson Hole’s renowned BAR-BC dude ranch, Cal met and guided Eleanor “Cissy” Patterson Gizycka, a Polish countess and heiress to the

family *Chicago Tribune* fortune. Cissy also had her daughter, Felicia, traveling with her.

Cal and Cissy became the most celebrated couple in Jackson Hole. Together they attended lavish East Coast parties, toured Europe, floated the Salmon River, and hunted big game throughout the West and Alberta, Canada. Cissy arranged for Cal to hunt in Africa, and later, to travel to the Bahamas with her on a chartered yacht.

When Cal died in 1959, he willed his Bates Ranch to Felicia, Cissy’s daughter. In 1962, she in turn sold it to Oren Furniss, Cal’s friend and neighbor. The property was owned and farmed by the Furniss family until its sale and purchase by the Gailey family about twenty years ago.

Now that it has been placed into a conservation agreement, this piece of Teton Valley history will remain just as it is today: a working farm with scenic open space benefiting wildlife. We’d like to thank the Gailey family, the Natural Resources Conservation Service’s Agricultural Land Easement Program, the Richard G. Grundler Teton Valley Conservation Fund, the estate of Ronald C. Rope, The Cross Charitable Foundation, the East Idaho River Conservation Fund, and supporters of the Land Trust’s Legacy of Land campaign for making this project possible, as well as Earle F. Layser for sharing this story.



Celebrating Our 100th Conservation Project in Teton County

192 ACRES OF FARMLAND AT THE MOUTH OF DARBY CANYON PROTECTED FOREVER

This fall, the Land Trust celebrated its 100th conservation project in Teton County, Idaho. These projects have protected 12,835 acres of working farms and ranches, fish and wildlife habitat, and scenic open spaces. In addition, the conservation agreements we've finished this year bring the total number of acres protected in our service area to more than 40,000.

When the Land Trust was founded in 1990, milestones like this would have been unimaginable. To celebrate and reflect on this momentous occasion, we invited our members—the people who have made this work possible—to see the land for themselves. With founding executive director Michael Whitfield, now a county commissioner for Teton County, in attendance, we gathered at the Bowles Darby Creek Farm. This land, which has been farmed for over a century, is now in a conservation easement and will remain in agriculture.



Landowner Boyd Bowles.

Conservation of these resources is important to continue the agricultural heritage in Teton Valley, and for providing produce to local and regional markets.

It's fitting that the 100th conservation project was a farm because helping farmers and ranchers conserve their land is at the heart of the Land Trust's mission. In fact, 94 percent of properties that the Land Trust has helped protect in Teton County are farms or ranchland. Farmers and ranchers often have a sentimental attachment to their land, and the thought of it being developed is a tough

one to consider. "It has been my goal not to see houses on this ground," says Mr. Bowles. "For the past few years, I have been working with the Land Trust to preserve the ground to keep it in agriculture."

Mr. Bowles plans to sell his property to the Penfolds, a family that has been farming in Teton Valley for over a century. After limiting the property's development rights, Mr. Bowles will be able to sell the property at a price that is affordable, while still receiving what he needs to retire. "I wanted to pass this ground to the Penfolds at a reasonable price so that they can make money, because farming is pretty tough," he says.

"This is a legacy for us," says Paris Penfold. "I'm the third generation, and here we have the sixth," he said, gesturing to his great-grandchild in attendance. "The only way farmers are going to survive in Teton Valley is to have people kind enough to want to keep land farming. I want to thank Boyd. We might keep this legacy of a farming family together."

Finally, Michael Whitfield summed up the celebration succinctly and impactfully. "Boyd Bowles is a man of few words, but he's one of my heroes."

On behalf of the board and staff of the Land Trust, we'd like to thank Boyd Bowles, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Richard G. Grundler Teton Valley Conservation Fund, the Mithun Family Foundation's JKL Fund, the estate of Ronald C. Rope, the Heart of the Rockies Initiative's Keep it Connected program, the Kendeda Fund, and Land Trust members for making this project possible.



This farm sits in an incredibly scenic landscape at the mouth of Darby Canyon, which is one of the most popular and cherished destinations for recreationists in Teton Valley. Darby Canyon is an important wintering area for mule deer and a migration route for big game species. The protection of this farm will allow for the continued unimpeded movement of those species and the preservation of scenic views.

Mr. Bowles has owned the land for nearly 40 years since he acquired it from his family. The farm is currently used as irrigated farmland, much as it was at the end of the 19th century. Barley, quinoa, and seed potatoes are the primary crops grown on the farm. Approximately 70 percent of the Bowles Darby Creek property soils are considered prime farmland soils if irrigated, which are critically important in meeting the nation's short-term and long-term needs for food and fiber.

Letter from our Board President

A CHANGING LANDSCAPE



As I near the end of my term as president of the Board of Directors for the Teton Regional Land Trust, I am reflecting on my time spent as part of the board. I became involved with the Land Trust for two reasons. One was to keep my brain challenged in retirement. Because I knew nothing about land conservation, volunteering with the Land Trust has provided a constant stream of learning opportunities. The staff and my fellow board members have taught me so much about conservation easements, the wildlife of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and their habitat, and the working farms and ranches of eastern Idaho. The second, more important reason, is that I felt an obligation to give back to my community and, in a small way, help preserve this special place.

This past year has been significant for the Land Trust. Under the leadership of Kim Trotter, our executive director, we've focused on strategic planning, while moving the organization forward in compelling ways. This progress is exemplified by two huge milestones for the organization: surpassing 40,000 acres protected in eastern Idaho and completing our 100th conservation project in Teton Valley.

Finally, as I reflect on the current state of the organization, I am encouraged by the work of the dedicated staff who have exciting conservation projects in the pipeline, by the passionate board of directors who volunteer many hours to further our mission, and by the donors whose generosity funds this important work. As I pass the baton to the next board president, Bill Rogers, it is with a sense of well-being that preserving this magical place that I love so much is in good hands.

- Arantza Zabala, Board President

Awards



THE HEART AND SOUL AWARD

The Heart and Soul Award is awarded to honor individuals who go above and beyond in their commitment to sustaining the Land Trust. The Land Trust is proud to recognize the late Lew Mithun and his wife, Jill, as the winners of the 2023 Heart and Soul Award. "In the Land Trust's infancy, Lew's faith in the Land Trust and the durability of conservation agreements was remarkable," says Kim Trotter.

"Lew loved the idea of a Land Trust," says Jill Mithun. "Then he loved the Land Trust itself. Thereafter, he spent his life learning from experts and ranchers in the community about environmental issues. It's been a happy part of his life."



THE ED HILL CONSERVATION AWARD

The award is presented to an individual or group who best demonstrates an active interest in conservation of land and community in the Upper Snake River Valley. This year, the award is presented to the Heart of the Rockies Initiative, a group that builds collaborative partnerships between land trusts, landowners, and other entities.

"We are deeply honored to receive the Ed Hill Award," says Managing Director JoAnn Grant. "It really reinforces for us the power that working together, sharing knowledge, and building collaboration has on conservation. We truly value what the Land Trust brings to our partnership and we admire the incredible impact you have in this region."



VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Land Trust is lucky to have an amazing community of volunteers who give their time and expertise to the organization. This year, the Volunteer Award is presented to Linda M. Swope, a renowned photographer who leads wildlife photography workshops and donates her impeccable photos for use in our outreach materials.

"What thrills me most about receiving this award is that Teton Regional Land Trust does such important work and they seem to think my cameras and I helped," says Linda. "To the staff and board, I am proud to be the tiniest part of your dual legacy of conservation and community."

2022 Annual Financial Report

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION December 31, 2022

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$3,666,372
Prepaid Expenses	\$10,241
Pledges Receivable, Current	\$775,200
Other Receivables	\$43,730
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	\$4,495,543

OTHER ASSETS

Assets Held at the Idaho Community Foundation	\$46,448
Investment Funds for Conservation Acquisitions	\$6,258,249
Property Acquired for Long-term Purposes	\$456,540
Pledges Receivable, non-current	\$250,000
Right of Use asset, net	\$283,405
TOTAL OTHER ASSETS	\$7,294,642

PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

Equipment Less Accumulated Depreciation	\$27,897
Land Restricted for Conservation Purposes	\$326,279
TOTAL PROPERTY & EQUIPMENT	\$354,176

TOTAL ASSETS **\$12,144,361**

CURRENT LIABILITIES

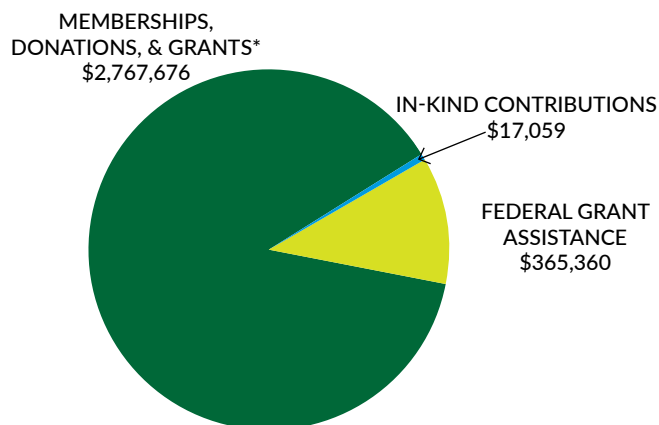
Accounts Payable	\$17,450
Accrued Payroll & Related Liabilities	\$59,964
Lease Liability	\$283,405
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$360,819

NET ASSETS

Unrestricted	\$5,037,587
Temporarily Restricted	\$6,745,955
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$11,783,542

TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS **\$12,144,361**

2022 INCOME - \$2,391,715



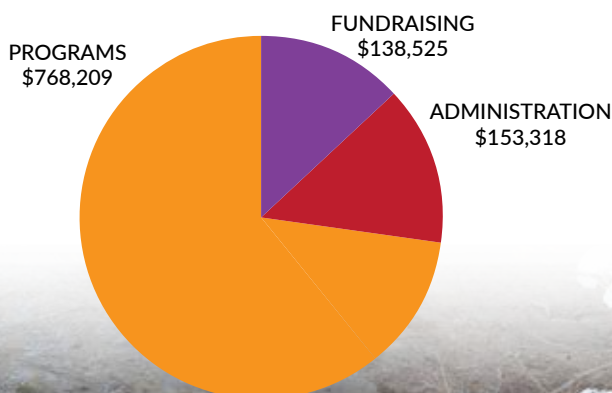
*Interest and Dividends of (\$758,380) are not shown in this chart.

Teton Regional Land Trust often serves as a pass-through organization for Federal and State grants that directly support conservation projects. These funds do not support staff and operational costs. These pass-through funds are included in the Memberships, Donations, and Grants figure.

2022 income also includes proceeds from our recent Legacy of Land Campaign, which is restricted to longterm stewardship, acquisition, and reserves.

In addition to operating funds, we raise private matching funds to qualify and apply for conservation project grants. These donations are generally leveraged 3:1 for conservation in eastern Idaho.

2022 EXPENSES - \$1,060,052





Please join us for our Holiday Member Party and Fundraiser, Friday December 8, from 5-8pm at Moose Creek Ranch in Victor.

Enjoy food and drinks, catch up with fellow Land Trust supporters, and get the latest updates on the conservation successes that your gifts have made possible. RSVP at tetonlandtrust.org.

On behalf of the Land Trust Board and Staff, we'd like to wish you and yours a happy holiday season.

STAFF LIST

Cynthia Collin
ADMINISTRATIVE
ASSISTANT

Mandy Crane
OUTREACH & EVENTS
COORDINATOR

Nicole Cyr
STEWARDSHIP ASSISTANT

Christine Ford
OPERATIONS MANAGER

Jeske Gräve
DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Katie Guetz
STEWARDSHIP ASSOCIATE

Renee Hiebert
CONSERVATION PROJECT
MANAGER

Josh Holmes
CONSERVATION PROJECT
MANAGER

Kimberly Holmes
STEWARDSHIP DIRECTOR

Will Roth
DEVELOPMENT &
COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATE

Kristy Smith
STEWARDSHIP ASSOCIATE

Tamara Sperber
CONSERVATION DIRECTOR

Kim Trotter
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PASTBOARDMEMBERS

Lonnie Allen, Robin Anderson, Dennis Aslett, Clen Atchley, Emma Atchley, Lynn Bagley, Richard Beesley, Don Betts, Jan Betts, David Breckenridge, Kane Brightman, Tim Brockish, Jaydell Buxton, Jeanne Marie Callahan, Dr. James Cecil, Janet Conway, Jean Crabtree, Ron Cordes, Liz Davy, Harold Dunn, Ken Dunn, Frank Felton, Lou Gaylord, Dan Gerber, Jamie Greene, Gary Grigg, Ed Hill, Tom Hill, Phyllis Hockett, Tim Hopkins, Beach Huntsman, Nancy Huntsman, Glenn Janss, Jeff Klausmann, Amy Lientz, Matt MacMillan, Debbie McGregor, Martin McLellan, Connie Mohr, Heidi Nelson, Brett Novik, Eric Noyes, Jon Prahasto, Jerry Reese, David Reinke, Chuck Rice, Dave Richardson, Ron Rope, Frank Russo, Dave Rydallch, Bonnie Self, Gene Sewell, David Shipman, Rick Sitts, Steve Smart, Catherine Smith, Gloria Smith, Susan Steinman, Neal Stelting, Albert Tilt, Ned Twining, Glenn Vitucci, Michael Whitfield, Meredith Wilson, Delbert Winterfeld, and David Work.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Arantza Zabala, President
*Retired Idaho National Laboratory Human
Resource Manager | Teton Valley, Idaho*

Bill Rogers, Vice President
*Retired Chemist/Chemical Engineer |
Idaho Falls and Teton Valley, Idaho*

John VanOrman, Secretary
Entrepreneur | Swan Valley, Idaho

Mike Allen
Attorney | Swan Valley, Idaho

William "Brad" Bradley
*Retired IT Company Co-Founder & Senior
Executive | Overland Park, Kansas*

Ned Corkran
Teton Valley, ID

Bill Graham, Past President
*Entrepreneur | Kenilworth, Illinois &
Teton Valley, Idaho*

Sandy Schultz Hessler
*Director of Education, Silicon Couloir | Teton
Valley, ID*

Robert "Wes" Keller
*Retired Physician | Salt Lake City, Utah &
Teton Valley, Idaho*

Bob Lugar
Financial Advisor | Rigby, Idaho

Paul Merrill
Financial Advisor | Teton Valley, Idaho

Bruce J. Mincher
Retired Scientist | Idaho Falls, Idaho

John Nedrow, Past President
Farmer | Ashton, Idaho

Laura Pickard
Farmer | Ashton, Idaho

Timothy Reynolds
Ecologist | Rigby, Idaho

Karen Rice
*Retired BLM Associate District Manager |
Idaho Falls, Idaho*

Sue Talbot
*Fly Fishing Guide/Snow Cat Driver |
Swan Valley, Idaho*

BOARD EMERITUS

Susan Lykes
Linda Merigliano
Lew Mithun
Dean Scofield

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SIGN UP FOR OUR EMAIL NEWSLETTER ON OUR WEBSITE.



Teton Regional Land Trust has been accredited by the Land Trust Alliance, meeting national standards for excellence, upholding the public trust, and ensuring that conservation efforts are permanent.

A copy of the latest Financial Report and Registration filed by this organization may be obtained by contacting us at: PO Box 247, Driggs, ID 83422; (208) 354-8939
Teton Regional Land Trust is a nonprofit, tax-exempt charitable organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

