



DOUGLAS LAND CONSERVANCY

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Douglas Land Conservancy (DLC) is a nonpolitical, nonprofit land trust dedicated to the protection and conservation of the natural character, habitats, ecosystems, and open space of Douglas County and other areas along the Front Range region of Colorado.

DLC PRESIDENT'S LETTER

"In the presence of nature, a wild delight runs through the man, in spite of real sorrows." – Ralph Waldo Emerson

For many of us, these challenging times can seem overwhelming and without a clear end yet in sight. But, to the extent that we can experience the natural world – even virtually - we find hope, learn resiliency and experience simple, profound joy no matter what the circumstances.

In our quest to become more resilient in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic's negative health and economic impacts, effects of climate change and social justice evolution, Douglas Land Conservancy is reassessing and adjusting -- how we work safely with our volunteers, land owners, board and staff members; the ways we steward our lands, and heightened awareness of a land trust's role in facilitating healing for our community. Now more than ever, we are applying new tools and techniques -- using aerial technology to assist with our conservation easement monitoring, holding virtual and socially-distant hikes, book club, events and get-togethers, conducting online interviews with landowners to capture and share their timeless stories -- all while limiting office interactions through work-from-home and conducting appropriately socially-distant field activities. Board members and staff recently attended the national Land Trust Alliance 2020 Rally - held virtually for the first time – to learn and share methods of inclusion and diversity in land trust intentions and actions.

Despite the many challenges of 2020 and beyond, we are more than cautiously optimistic about the future. Our stewardship team is busier and stronger than ever, handling both the normal responsibilities of stewarding 24,000 acres over 80+ (and growing) conservation easement properties in addition to working with our public landowners to address unprecedented visitation levels as people seek to explore and enjoy our amazing part of Colorado.

We are also thrilled to announce the acceptance of an additional 2,698 acres of conservation easement lands by the end of 2020 by working closely with landowners who decided not to postpone their deepest wish to preserve their land for future generations.

On behalf of the board and staff of Douglas Land Conservancy, I wish you those moments of 'wild delight' – perhaps while beholding the brilliant gold cottonwood trees on a crisp autumn day, during a winter wander through the snow following mysterious tracks, or simply scrolling through DLC's Wildlife Wednesday photos on Facebook to see the critters that live often unseen amongst us (like whomever is emptying our bird feeder every night despite hanging it from an 8-foot high branch...).

We would love to hear about your moments of "wild delight" – what did you see, touch, smell or taste (um, not that fungi, however) that has fed and soothed your spirit in recent months? Drop us a line and let us know if we may share!

Please know that we deeply value your kinship and willingness to travel through these uncertain times together. And THANK YOU for your continued support – we really are in this together and together we will thrive.

Jane Boand
DLC President

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"I have supported Douglas Land Conservancy since 2001 because I enjoy the beauty and openness of Douglas County. Having lived in Colorado since 1978, I think Douglas County has some of the best landscapes of any Front Range county and I am thankful the founders of DLC had the foresight in the mid-1980s to begin protecting land for its natural values. Whether it be a conservation easement for landowners to continue the original farming or ranching operations while protecting the land from development, or land acquired for public access to allow hiking, cycling and other uses, is of great value to all of us. Public lands speak to my soul and whether open to the public or preserved for viewscapes and wildlife habitat, we should all feel grateful knowing these lands are preserved in perpetuity by the hard work of DLC."
- Jay Poules, DLC Supporter and Volunteer



DLC OPERATIONAL STABILITY

STEWARDSHIP & LEGAL DEFENSE

Douglas Land Conservancy's responsibilities do not stop once a conservation easement protecting the land is executed. In fact, the moment the easement is signed is just the beginning of our involvement with the land and the landowners. DLC is responsible for stewardship and monitoring compliance with the easement provisions in perpetuity. At least once a year a representative from DLC will visit the property to ensure that no violations of the easement provisions have occurred. If a violation were to occur, along with an easement defense insurance policy, DLC is required to have funds set aside to steward and defend each conservation easement.

DLC is committed to growing all of these funds over time to continue to sustain the organization and steward and defend our protected land portfolio.

Here is a glimpse of our fund balances as DLC's fiscal year end 6/30/2020:



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

DLC'S FIVE YEAR PLAN

Douglas Land Conservancy recognizes that successful protection and conservation efforts include not only the acquisition of conservation easements, but also the development of a sustainably funded and staffed organization to steward its conservation easements, manage and conduct ongoing operations and prepare for contingencies. DLC is currently staffed by an Executive Director, one three-quarter-time Stewardship and Outreach Coordinator, and one part-time Project Coordinator. DLC's budget and reserves are tailored to meet its stewardship needs and provide a minimal buffer for unforeseen expenses and income shortfalls.

DLC visualizes a strong need to increase its reserves to be able to fulfill its mission in perpetuity. Forever is a very long time! Your continued support is very important and allows DLC to continue to protect these lands for future generations to enjoy and appreciate.

PROJECTED OPERATING INCOME SOURCES 2019 THROUGH 2023



"A world without wildlife is a world without a soul. I give to Douglas Land Conservancy and protect wild lands so that my daughter and future generations will be able to see the same beautiful wildlife and landscapes that we all take for granted." - Andi Poland, DLC Supporter and Volunteer

"When we relocated to Douglas County, we began looking for ways to connect with our new community and learned about Douglas Land Conservancy through the guided hike program. Exploring open space, we turned our attention to the mission and needs of DLC and began to support them with annual donations to assist with the protection and preservation of conservation easements. Volunteering with the guided hikes, community programs and Plein Air Art Fest has given me a greater appreciation for the ways DLC is educating our community and showcasing our beautiful open space land.

During the pandemic, many of us turned to open space to connect with nature and find respite in an uncertain time. The power of open space fills our hearts with hope and our minds with inspiration. I hope you will take time to reflect on how you used open space this past year. Know that through this unusual year, DLC staff continues to monitor open space, evaluate future projects and add to the protected acres in our community. DLC needs our support even more so this year. Will you join me in supporting the land that supports all of us?"

- Mary Ellen Fitzsimonds, DLC Supporter and Volunteer



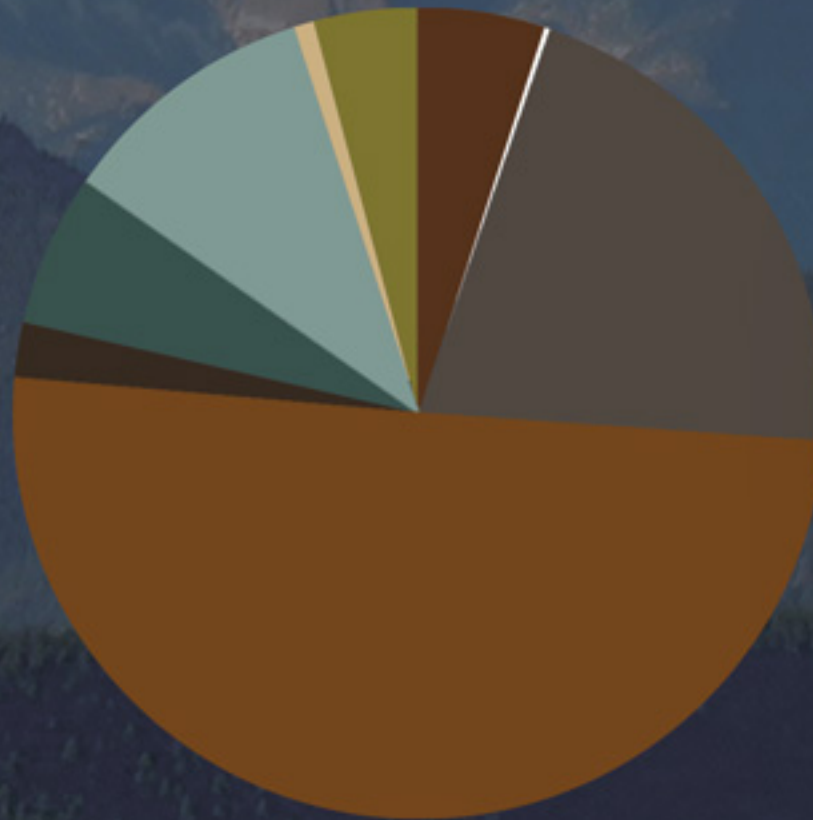
2020 DLC VOLUNTEER STATS

While most of DLC's 2020 outreach has been virtual, it has been rich, varied and well received. DLC volunteers remain a key factor to our success, despite the pandemic and safety precautions of 2020. Big thanks to those that have transitioned with us to a virtual platform for events and activities. We have been safe, responsible and appreciate their service. Together we have reshaped volunteerism at DLC while still meaningfully engaging with each other and the community.

DLC volunteers have donated **2448 hours of time during the first 10 months** of 2020.

VOLUNTEER HOURS BY CATEGORY

- ADMIN/TECH 123.5 HRS
- ARTICLES/BLOGS 9 HRS
- BLUEBIRDS 512.5 HRS
- BOARD/COMMITTEE MTGS 1230 HRS
- EVENTS/SPEAKERS 52 HRS
- HIKES 151.5 HRS
- PHOTOGRAPHY 24.5 HRS
- VIRTUAL EVENTS 97 HRS
- OTHER 248 HRS



2,448

VOLUNTEER HOURS
SO FAR IN 2020

=

\$66,585.60

2020 VALUE OF
DLC'S VOLUNTEERS' TIME

\$27.20

CURRENT ESTIMATED NATIONAL
VALUE OF EACH VOLUNTEER HOUR

CALCULATED BY
INDEPENDENT SECTOR

SO FAR, IN 2020 DLC HAS HOSTED...

- Guided Hikes
- Educational presentations with the Town of Castle Rock
- Naturalist courses
- Mindfulness sessions
- A presentation celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Long Expedition
- Virtual book club discussions
- Gardening days at Kiana Creek Ranch
- Virtual Plein Air art exhibit
- Photo contest
- Wildlife Wednesday
- Bluebird Monitoring program

We are also proud of our volunteers' efforts:

- Fundraising for the community with The Rotary Club of Castle Rock
- Creating a DLC celebration video, The Power of Open Space



DLC utilizes our army of volunteers to keep staff lean and overhead low. Volunteers like, Naturalist Cathy Fischer, help keep DLC mission driven and community focused.

"DLC protects the natural value of the land for now and for future generations. Their mission for protecting land and my love of nature go hand-in-hand...I receive a lot of intrinsic value from volunteering. I am giving back to the community I live in and hopefully make a difference for the good in the lives of others."

- Cathy Fischer, DLC Supporter and Volunteer

CONSERVING NOW & FOREVER

Since 1987 DLC has protected 24,000 acres from being developed, in perpetuity. These lands include agricultural lands, public recreation open space, scenic views, critical wildlife habitat, and wetlands.

Of those 24,000 acres, 11,102 acres are open to the public and provide great trails and recreational experiences for all to enjoy.

12,889 acres are private lands that protect agricultural operations, open space, scenic views, critical wildlife habitat, and wetlands from ever being developed.

2020 COMPLETED CONSERVATION PROJECTS

In spite of COVID-19, 2020 has been a very busy year of land conservation for DLC, and 2021 is shaping up to be equally as busy. By the end of 2020 we will have completed several conservation easements that protect an additional 4,200 acres in Douglas County. Here is what has been protected by DLC in 2020, or is scheduled to close by the end of 2020:

600
ACRES

2,038
ACRES

1,500
ACRES

62
ACRES

830
ACRES

SEDALIA

600 acres of forested and riparian land protected with conservation easements held by DLC. These conservation easements protect scenic views from Highways 105 and 67, critical wildlife habitat, native plant communities, and on one of the properties, will provide for great public recreational experiences for all to enjoy in the future.

LARKSPUR

2,038 acres known as the Sandstone Ranch protected by a conservation easement held by DLC. This conservation easement protects the agricultural heritage of our region of Colorado, wildlife habitat, scenic views, and provides for great public recreational experiences.

CASTLE ROCK

1,500 acres known as the Ditmars Ranch protected by conservation easements held by DLC. This conservation easement protects agricultural land, wildlife habitat, scenic views, and allows for up to four annual DLC guided hikes in the future.

CASTLE ROCK

62 acres will be protected by a conservation easement held by DLC. This conservation easement will protect wildlife habitat, scenic views, and will provide for great public recreational experiences for all to enjoy in the future.

FRANKTOWN

830 acres of agricultural land protected in partnership with Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust and The Trust for Public Land. This conservation easement is held by CCALT and protects scenic views along Russellville Road, agricultural land, critical wildlife habitat, native plant communities, and allows for up to four annual DLC guided hikes in the future. (DLC played a key role in securing a grant from Great Outdoors Colorado to help protect this ranch).

"I am so incredibly grateful for the conservation easement program that will forever protect the rest of the property from development and preserve the wildlife and ecological environment forever".

- Don Ditmars, Conservation Landowner



DOUGLAS LAND CONSERVANCY'S 2020 OAK LEAF AWARD

PRESENTED TO SUE MOORE IN HONOR OF HER SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS
TO THE COMMUNITY THROUGH AGRICULTURE AND LAND CONSERVATION

Nearly a native, I grew up on a cattle ranch northeast of Colorado Springs, where my lifelong love for productive land, open spaces, livestock and agriculture in general got an early spark.

I went to school and college in Virginia and Massachusetts and got my first job at the United Nations in New York. Then my husband Davis and I were married and we went to work at the Central Intelligence Agency in Washington for a few years before returning to Denver, where I taught history at Kent Denver School. In 1966 we found our beautiful old homestead in the West Plum Creek valley where we still live, and where for many years I bred Thoroughbred horses and Black Angus cattle. We have two sons ranching and farming in Montana and three grandchildren.

My community activities in Douglas County have included memberships on a library accessions committee, the county fair livestock sale committee, and the Douglas County Historic Preservation committee. I was an active 4H mom, a Plum Creek Pony Club instructor, and an original board member of CALF, the Colorado Agricultural Leadership Foundation. More recently I enjoyed being a board member of the Douglas Land Conservancy and at present volunteer on two of its committees. I have also done volunteer editing for the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust.

