



## The Fouts Ranch: Instilling Values by Protecting Land

When Jeremy and Candice Fouts signed the deed on a 1,707-acre ranch in Delta County, they had their children in mind. “We bought this property to make a deliberate lifestyle change and to do something together as a family,” Jeremy explains. “I grew up in eastern Oklahoma on a farm and ranch. A retired minister moved to my hometown from Delta, and he’s the one that taught me the love of hunting, fishing and being outdoors.”

“I also learned a lot of life skills working on a farm—how to treat others, how to respect the land and wildlife—that’s what set me up to have a lot of financial success later in life,” he continues. “But it also made me realize that living in a gated subdivision would be a harder place for me to pass on those values to my boys.”

The Fouts Ranch seems an ideal location for Jeremy and Candice to pass on their work ethic and love of the outdoors with their two sons, ages 9 and 11. They have over 200 red angus cattle, and work closely with Ashley Jackson-Baillie from the Montrose Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office to make their land as productive as possible, both for their livestock and the surrounding wildlife.

“Anything you’d be looking for in a property, it has to offer,” Jeremy says. “There are two creeks with phenomenal trout fishing, scrub oak from around 7,500 to 9,800 feet in elevation, 400 acres of

aspens, and beautiful bottom land with over 450 acres of irrigated land that we can use for hay crops and to provide wintering ground for game.” Further, their property adjoins BLM and National Forest land, which provides forage, cover, breeding grounds, and migration corridors for a diversity of wildlife, including many big game species.

The harmony between productivity and preservation on the ranch was cultivated through careful planning by the whole family. “When we first bought this land, I thought it was pretty sad to look to the east and see subdivisions going in. I don’t want to fault anyone for wanting to get an acre in the mountains of Colorado, but as I look at everything that we want to do here, I think about my boys’ future,” says Jeremy.



Together, the Fouts developed a 5-year plan for their property. After considering all that they hoped to accomplish, Jeremy and Candice decided to ensure that their land

could never be subdivided. “I looked for the best land trust around—which we found in Colorado West Land Trust,” says Jeremy. “I want to say thank you to Julie Barger and Ilana Moir—they have been extremely diligent in teaching me the process and ensuring that everything happened smoothly. It’s a lengthy process, but the bottom line is that anyone considering a conservation easement should know that it was the best decision that I have made and it was truly worth the effort.”

## In Memory of our Dear Friend, Russ

Colorado West Land Trust lost a friend and valued member of our Board of Directors with the passing of Russ Walker on February 18, 2019. Russ was a professor of environmental science at CMU who was devoted to his students and environmental causes in western Colorado.



As chair of the CWLT lands committee, Russ was instrumental in helping the Land Trust oversee the conservation of thousands of acres of western Colorado's finest lands. CWLT benefitted greatly from his sharp intellect and easy sense of humor, and we will miss his friendship and support.

We thank Russ's family for designating gifts to Colorado West Land Trust in his memory.

### 2019 Field Club

- **April 27:** Spring Farm Tour in the North Fork Valley
- **May (TBD):** Avant Vineyards Birding and Winetasting
- **June 22:** Lazy H Ranch Tour
- **Sept. 17:** Fall Colorado Tour to Plateau Valley
- **Oct. 17:** Shavano Rock Art Tour

For more information, visit:  
[www.cowestlandtrust.org](http://www.cowestlandtrust.org)

### Save the Date!

- **Spring Picnic:** Sunday, May 19th
- **Fall Open House:** Friday, Nov. 1st

## Jen and Anne Believe Growing Means Giving Back

As avid mountain bikers, co-owners of the Hot Tomato Pizzeria, partners in BestSlope Coffee Co., the visionaries behind a new venture called a Community of Businesses, and other really inspiring things that would make this sentence even longer, Anne Keller and Jen Zeuner tend to stay busy in Fruita. But they aren't just hard workers, they also give back to the community quite a bit.

"When Anne and I started the Hot Tomato, we didn't ever think that it would get to this level," explains Jen. "We just wanted to hire a couple of employees and ride our bikes, but it has turned into this bigger *thing*. We can make pizza and ride bikes all day long, but if we aren't being good stewards of the land where we recreate then we aren't going to want to be here later on. We get so busy that we sometimes forget how important it is to go out and do trail work, to do things like sit on boards, to have a voice. And I think as a community we have a powerful voice right now because we are all wanting to do similar things. If we can make our voice heard in this valley, then we can be impactful."

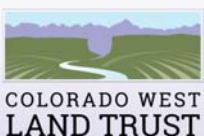
We are grateful to Jen and Anne for their commitment to making the Grand Valley a better place and for supporting us as we work alongside a growing network of individuals to enhance the lands of western Colorado. Thank you!



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Through April 8th, every time you make a purchase at the GJ REI store you'll have a chance to vote for our THRILL! project and help us win a contribution from REI.

At the checkout counter you should receive a voting token to place in the container of your choice.



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