

RIO GRANDE HEADWATERS LAND TRUST

2005 ANNUAL REPORT

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Celebratory Notes from the Staff

2005 was a year for celebration— RiGHT's 5th Anniversary, completing three important conservation easements, welcoming new Board Members and Advisors, creating a web site and receiving multiple grants to continue several important programs.

Please join me in taking a closer look at our year in review and ...to celebrate our successes.

Sincerely,
Nancy Butler, Director

Presenting Our Website: riograndelandtrust.org

Through a generous grant from the Norcross Foundation and the expertise of Stewart Warren, RiGHT created a web site. In our little corner of cyberspace you can find information about RiGHT, upcoming events or programs, completed projects and a series of downloads to answer your general conservation easement questions.



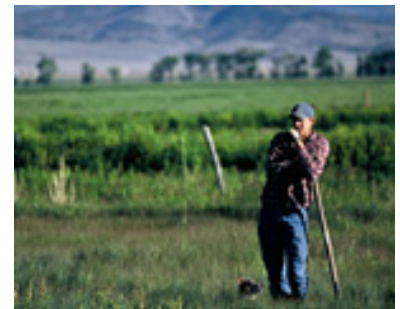
We are sincerely excited to be globally accessible.

Land Protection: 3,105 Acres

RiGHT experienced its best year yet in terms of land protection, protecting 3,105 acres of very important private land in the San Luis Valley, bringing our overall total up to 5,055 acres.

The Blair Ranch — RiGHT's first project for the year involved protecting an 840 acre ranch owned by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) that adjoins their Mishak Lakes complex. Mishak Lakes is 4,000 acres of wetlands that are considered one of Colorado's important breeding and migratory habitats for wetland birds. Protection of the large Blair Ranch will provide an important buffer to this critical habitat.

The Dunn Ranch — In October, RiGHT closed on the 1,240 acre Dunn Ranch. This project was completed in conjunction with Trust for Public Land and local landowner, Roger Perry and received funding from the NRCS Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program and Great Outdoors Colorado. This



ranch, valued for its agricultural productivity and wildlife habitat, boasts the 8th priority water right on the Rio Grande and not enough can be said about the significance of protecting these resources. Protection of this ranch also represents the expansion of privately protected lands in the La Garita watershed. Two large ranches have now been protected and we hope more are to follow in the effort to create a comprehensive landscape link between private properties. The Dunn Ranch is the largest conservation easement RiGHT currently holds.

The King Ranch — In March, TNC approached RiGHT to work with the landowners of the sprawling 5,600 acre King Ranch. The ranch lies directly south of TNC's Medano-Zapata Ranch. In December RiGHT closed on the first phase of the project, protecting 1,025 acres. The Colorado Division of Wildlife donated funds for the transaction costs, but the landowners completely donated this conservation easement. When the project is complete in 2007, the ranch will be the southern bookend of one of the largest protected corridors in Colorado, more than 275,000 acres, stretching north from the ranch to the Medano-Zapata, the Great Sand Dunes and the Baca National Wildlife Refuge. In addition, the ranch fills in an important link between the Rio Grande National Forest to the east and the BLM's Blanca Wetlands, to the west.

Education For the 5th year in a row, RiGHT held a highly attended Estate Planning and Conservation Easement workshop. The workshop this year was sponsored by the Colorado Division of Wildlife's Habitat Partnership Program, Horizon Organic, Intel Corporation, Wall, Smith & Bateman, Walters & Assoc., and Darricades and Assoc. More than 50 people from landowners to realtors, spent their day absorbing important estate planning considerations and learning about conservation easements.

Changes in Staff and Board

2005 brought with it several personnel changes both of RiGHT's staff and Board of Directors. On the staff side Susan Pierce and Michelle LeBlanc both left the staff in June. All of RiGHT's staff is part time, and Michelle left to pursue a full time job with the Colorado Foundation and Susan to focus more time on her family, and return to her more academic roots by preparing base-lines for conservation easements as a contractor. Susan was one of the founders of RiGHT and we are glad we are still on the same conservation team as she is.

The Board lost one and gained two Board members. Karen Henderson also a founder of RiGHT, stepped down to concentrate her time on other pursuits after years of concentrating on RiGHT. Although 2005 was RiGHT's 5th anniversary, our founders have really been working since the early 1990's to make all of this possible. Our many thanks to both Susan and Karen for the many years.

Linda Schoonhoven, a rancher in the Rock Creek area and Peggy Blenden, a wildlife biologist by training, have stepped up and stepped into their shoes and both are wonderful assets to the organization.

In addition, RiGHT is bringing back an Advisory Committee to tap into for technical expertise and advice. While in its newly created stage, both Steve Russell (retired NRCS guru) and Pat McDermott of the Division of Water Resources have both accepted our invitation to advise us.

Board of Directors

Pete Magee - President
 Ralph Curtis - Vice Pres
 Christine Canaly -
 Sec/Treas
 Peggy Blenden
 Cathy McNeil
 Linda Schoonhoven

Staff & Consultants

Nancy Butler
Director

Rio de la Vista
Consultant

Gigi Darricades
Legal Consultant

Special Events

5th Anniversary Party—the year started off with our 5th Anniversary Party at the Cottonwood Inn B&B in Alamosa. Thanks to San Luis Federal Bank who underwrote the event and to the Wal Mart Foundation who provided a one to one match for any donations raised up to \$1,000. It was a successful fundraising event and a great way to start the year.

Brown Foundation Picnic—in July we finally got to meet one of our wonderful benefactors—the Brown Family, who administers the Brown Family Foundation. Thanks to Dorothy Steele, for offering up the Wright Ranch as our picnic locale, we enjoyed a great afternoon along the banks of the Rio Grande.

Rock Creek Picnic—In August, neighbors and conservation partners in the Rock Creek area gathered at Pete and Terisa Atkins ranch for a great McNeil Beef hamburger dinner and to celebrate the successes of the Rock Creek Heritage Project, which now has nearly 7,000 acres protected by various organizations.



Financials

2005 Profit and Loss Statement

Income	
Board Contributions	\$ 4,840
Corporate Donations	\$ 4,990
Grants	\$ 30,350
Individual Contributions	\$ 10,276
InKind Income	\$ 17,986
Interest Income	\$ 680
Legal Endowment Inc.	\$ 15,500
Program Income	\$ 12,550
<u>Workshop Income</u>	<u>\$ 1,220</u>
Total Income	\$ 98,392
Expenses	
Bank Charges/Interest	\$ 388
Computer/Website	\$ 679
Development Director	\$ 2,580
Director	\$ 18,125
Fundraising	\$ 1,805
Employer Tax Exp	\$ 1,714
Insurance	\$ 434
Land Protection Expenses	\$ 6,152
Land Protection Staff	\$ 2,612
Legal Expenses	\$ 20,351
Memberships with LT's	\$ 375
Postage	\$ 1,387
Printing	\$ 1,342
Office Space	\$ 1,080
Office Supplies	\$ 1,788
Staff Training	\$ 270
Telephone and Internet	\$ 1,373
Travel	\$ 484
Water Protection	\$ 15,097
Workshop Ex	\$ 3,154
<u>Total Expenses</u>	<u>\$ 81,190</u>
Net	\$ 17,202

Wetlands

RiGHT is the fiscal agent to support the Coordinator of the San Luis Valley Wetlands Focus Area Committee, Rio de la Vista. In this capacity, RiGHT and Rio play an important role in wetlands protection in the Valley. In 2005 on behalf of multiple agencies and organizations, the committee applied for a \$1 million dollar North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant, attended several water and wetlands workshops and hosted a wonderfully successful San Luis Valley tour in June that showcased the Valley's world class wetlands and brought together more than 100 people from around Colorado and the region.

"Conserving Our Land, Water and Way of Life in Colorado's Rio Grande Basin, the San Luis Valley."