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Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust Earns National Recognition Accreditation Awarded by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission

(Del Norte, Colorado) – The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, announced last week that the Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust has been awarded accredited status.

“Accredited land trusts meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever,” said Commission Executive Director Tammara Van Ryn. “The accreditation seal lets the public know that the accredited land trust has undergone an extensive, external review of the governance and management of its organization and the systems and policies it uses to protect land.”



"For the Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust (RiGHT), accreditation provides our landowners with assurances they need in a changing and sometimes uncertain economic climate. They can be confident that RiGHT has earned the respect and stamp of approval from our national association for our practices, our standards and the quality of conservation projects," says Nancy Butler, RiGHT's Executive Director.

Since 1999, the Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust, the only local land trust serving the entire San Luis Valley, has worked to conserve the land, water and way of life in Colorado's Rio Grande Basin. To date, RiGHT has worked with 36 conservation-minded landowners to protect 16,107 acres of land. In 2006, RiGHT began the *Rio Grande Initiative* to preserve intact land and senior water rights along the Rio Grande. RiGHT has completed 11 conservation easement projects along the river corridor permanently protecting over twelve miles of river and 6,814 acres of wetlands, wildlife habitat, open space, and productive ranchland.

RiGHT was awarded accreditation this March along with two other Colorado land trusts and eight other land trusts from across the country. These land trusts join 82 other land trusts throughout the nation that have been awarded accreditation since the fall of 2008. Accredited land trusts are able to display a seal indicating to the public that they meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent. The seal is a mark of distinction in land conservation.

Butler concluded, “We are proud to be part of the statewide and national community of land trusts who are always striving to achieve important conservation objectives, with the highest quality in both our process and our results.”