



Ranching Life Continues on the San Rafael Ranch

By Kate O'Connor-Masse

Celebrating a love of wide open spaces and the ranching way of life, the Central Arizona Land Trust hosted local friends and supporters on June 5th to hear author Lisa Greene Sharp read from her recently released memoir, “A Slow Trot Home”. Lisa grew up on the San Rafael Ranch in Santa Cruz County, and her stories of long days in the saddle, hard work and beautiful landscapes resonated with an audience who themselves are devoted to the land.

In 1988, Lisa’s mother’s health declined and her brother Bob, took over ranch operations. Ten years later, estate and family issues required that Lisa and her siblings sell the ranch, as so often happens with large ranching parcels in Arizona.

The family did not want their beloved ranch to turn into tract houses or a strip mall. They rejected offers to develop the land and instead, opted to sell the land to the Nature Conservancy.

In turn, The Nature Conservancy sold a 3,000 acre portion of the ranch, including the historic ranch house, to the Arizona State Parks Department together with a conservation easement over the remaining 18,000 acres. TNC then sold the encumbered ranch for a private landowner who, beyond a 10-acre parcel to build a personal home, agreed to easements that forever preserve the historic Spanish land grant as it has been for hundreds of years.



Lisa Sharp speaking at the Friend Raiser event held June 5th at 'Tis Gallery, Prescott AZ

Similarly, CALT works with local landowners to preserve the character and natural beauty of their land through conservation easements (CEs). According to the national Land Trust Alliance, “Landowners have found that conservation easements offer great flexibility, yet provide a permanent guarantee that the land will not be developed. For example, an easement on property containing rare wildlife habitat might prohibit any development, while one on a farm might allow continued farming and the building of additional agricultural structures. An easement may apply to only a portion of the property, and need not require public access.

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LAND TRUST

Preserving Open Space in the Heart of Arizona

Mission

The mission of the Central Arizona Land Trust is to preserve and protect open space, wildlife habitat, working agricultural lands and the scenic and cultural values of Central Arizona for future generations.

The Central Arizona Land Trust was founded in 1989 as a local private, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

Donations are tax deductible as allowable by law.

For Lands' Sake is a regular publication to inform and educate its supporters and the community.

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President's Message



YOUR local land trust was very busy this summer completing our final application for accreditation, to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the national Land Trust Alliance.

As I am one of the 'long timers' on the board of the Central Arizona Land Trust, I can tell you this is a HUGE step for this all-volunteer organization, but one we are more than ready to take.

We hope to join our colleagues at the Desert Foothills Land Trust and the Arizona Land and Water Land Trust as the third accredited Arizona land trust sometime in 2016. Read more about accreditation and what it means to you, our community and the land trust movement on page 3 of this newsletter.

Over 1100 local land trusts all over the country make up the membership of the Land Trust Alliance, which brings us all together via the national Rally each year to ensure the success of every local effort to save the lands we all love.

This year the Rally 2015 was in Sacramento, California October 8-10. Thousands of volunteers and conservation professionals enjoyed field trips on local rivers, wine tasting tours on conservation properties, as well as 100 workshops and seminars on a vast array of topics important to conservation, community building and sustaining our efforts across the country.

If you'd like to know more about the national land trust movement, I suggest you visit the Land Trust Alliance soon on their newly redesigned website for more information about what land trusts in communities around the country are doing to save the places we all love. Go to:(www.landtrustalliance.org)

If you would like to play a part in supporting YOUR local land trust achieve accreditation or if you'd simply like to let us know you support our efforts to save the places we all love in the central Arizona highlands, please use the envelope in this newsletter to send us your support!

We look forward to announcing our ACCREDITATION sometime next year – a HUGE milestone in the 26-year history of YOUR local land trust!

Rebecca Ruffner
President

Speak Up for CALT

To the Land Trust Accreditation Commission

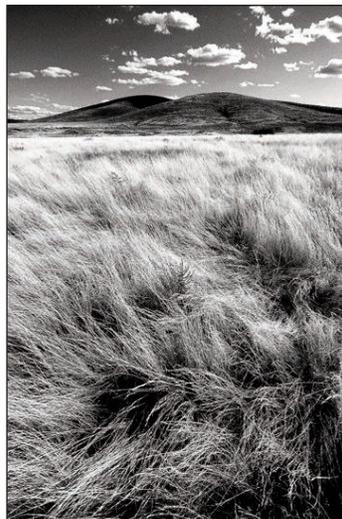
By Matt Turner

Accreditation by the national Land Trust Accreditation Commission has been a long-standing goal of the Central Arizona Land Trust. Thanks to the hard work of the board and guidance from an outside consultant, submitting our application on September 2nd. Accreditation is a mark of distinction in land conservation. To date only 301 of the nearly 1,700 land trusts in the U.S. have been accredited.

As an important part of the process, the Accreditation Commission invites public input on pending applications. Comments must relate to how the Central Arizona Land Trust complies with the Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices. The easiest way to comment is to visit the Commission web site, www.landtrustcommission.org, and click on “Comment on a Land Trust” link located on the home page. You can email your comment to info@landtrustaccreditation.org. Comments may also be submitted to:

Land Trust Accreditation Commission, Attn: Public Comments, 36 Phila St., Suite 2, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866; or fax to 518-587-3183. Comments on the application will be most useful if they are received by November 1, 2015.

We feel confident that accreditation will strengthen our standing with landowners, government agencies, charitable foundations, and the individual donors who are so critical to our success. The accreditation seal provides the public with an assurance that the Central Arizona Land Trust has the ways and means to protect important natural places and working lands in the heart of Arizona forever.



Photos courtesy of Matt Turner

Central Yavapai Metropolitan Planning Organization (CYMPO) Regional Transportation Plan: Environmental Considerations

By J.D. Greenberg

From February 23, 2015 until April 6, 2015, the public had an opportunity to provide input regarding the CYMPO Regional Transportation Plan that extends to 2040. A total of 120 comments were submitted, 105 of them specifically in favor of highway mitigation for wildlife such as overpass and underpass crossings and appropriate fencing. This unparalleled response clearly demonstrated that there is widespread support in Central Arizona for wildlife habitat connectivity and conservation. The statement below was officially adopted as part of the final plan. It reflects the impact that a number of concerned people can have on a critical issue. Now we must remain vigilant to ensure these environmental recommendations are implemented.

“One of the largest populations of pronghorn in Arizona is found in central Yavapai County in the area bounded by Prescott, Prescott Valley, Chino Valley, Paulden and Seligman. AGFD refers to pronghorn in this area as the Central Yavapai County Herd. The area supports 15-25 percent of the statewide pronghorn population in one of the highest density populations in the state.

A pronghorn GPS movement study within the study area was initiated by AGFD in 2009-2010. Future corridor improvement studies should coordinate with AGFD on locations and design of pronghorn crossing structures

(i.e. wildlife underpasses, overpasses) and any other measures (i.e. funnel fencing, etc.) recommended to maintain permeability and mitigate the potential impacts of roadway improvements on pronghorn movements.

It is recommended the information available from AGFD be referenced by the local jurisdictions and developers to plan future wildlife corridors as part of the development process. This will align future crossings with the preservation of future open spaces for wildlife movement.

Future improvement studies should also coordinate with AGFD in cooperation with local community groups with open space, recreation, and/or habitat preservation as their mission, to assist in locating, prioritizing and conserving open space in accordance with the local area Land Use/General Plans. These lands should be considered options for conservation easements, or other legal mechanism, when CYMPO considers highway corridor planning. The CYMPO and AGFD should collaborate with these groups to seek those measures necessary to maintain habitat permeability and recognizes the role that ecological systems hold in providing green infrastructure for storm water management, as well as compatibility of multi-modal (bicycle, walking, horseback, etc.) accesses to the highway corridor for aesthetic and recreational value.”





Top 5 Reasons Why YOU Should Financially Support YOUR Local Land Trust:

5. To preserve wildlife habitat, clean water and open space for generations to come.
4. To support the farming and ranching way of life.
3. To protect local agriculture, part of the 37 million acres which generate our nation's food supply.
2. To conserve the local landscape you love.
1. Because asphalt is the last crop.



Continued from page 1.

Perhaps most importantly, a conservation easement can be essential for passing land on to the next generation. By removing the land's development potential, the easement lowers its market value, which in turn lowers estate tax. Whether the easement is donated during life or by will, it can make a critical difference in the heirs' ability to keep the land intact."

For Lisa and her siblings, a conservation easement on the ranch allowed them to deal with estate issues while still preserving an essential part of their family history. Photos of the ranch show a gorgeous landscape, and baseline studies that were conducted as part of the CE process catalogued a host of important wildlife, scenic and historical values. (go to azstateparks.com/Parks/SARA/gallery_01.html)

CALT enthusiastically thanks Lisa and her siblings, The Nature Conservancy and Arizona State Parks for their vision and commitment to preserving this unique part of Arizona's ranching heritage.

Do you have questions about conservation easements? For more information, please contact CALT at (928) 445-7790, or visit us at www.centralazlandtrust.org.



Friends of CALT visit during our June 5th event at 'Tis Gallery.

PAGE SPRINGS
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We thank these generous sponsors for providing locally grown libations at our recent Friend Raiser event.

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AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice.

To shop at AmazonSmile simply go to smile.amazon.com from the web browser on your computer or mobile device. You'll then be instructed to select a charitable organization (Central Arizona Land Trust) to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. From then on every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.com will result in a donation to Central Arizona Land Trust. Thanks!

Priorities! Priorities! Priorities!

CALT's Board of Directors made a tough decision this year, to hold off on the Fifty-Mile Feast, our signature event featuring locally grown food and wines prepared by local master chefs. We simply lacked the 'band width' to take on the months of planning, while we were also preparing for our national accreditation. Although no decision has been made yet about 2016, we hope to be able to bring you and yours another fabulous Fifty-Mile Feast next summer. If you are interested in volunteering to help make this event possible again, please contact us at 928-445-7790.

Estate Tax Basics for a Qualified Conservation Easement

By John Farmer

For landowners who will leave sizable estates upon their death, the most important financial impact of a conservation easement may be a significant reduction in estate taxes. Estate taxes often make it difficult for heirs to keep land intact and in the family because of high estate tax rates and high development value of land. It may be necessary to subdivide or sell land for development in order to pay these taxes which may not be the desire of the landowner or their heirs. A conservation easement can often provide significant help with this problem in three important ways:

Reduction in Value of Estate. The deceased's estate will be reduced by the value of the donated conservation easement. As a result, taxes will be lower because heirs will not be required to pay taxes on the extinguished development rights. In other words, heirs will only have to pay estate taxes on preserved farmland values, and not full development values.

Estate Exclusion. Section 2031(c) of the tax code provides further estate tax incentives for properties subject to a donated conservation easement. When property has a qualified conservation easement placed upon it, up to an additional 40% of the value of land (subject to a \$500,000 cap) may be excluded from the estate when the landowner dies. This exclusion is in addition to the reduction in land value attributable to the easement itself as described above.

After Death Easement. Heirs may also receive these benefits (but not the income tax deduction) by electing to donate a conservation easement after the landowner's death and prior to filing the estate return (called a "post mortem" election).

John works for Taylor and Padgett Financial Group.

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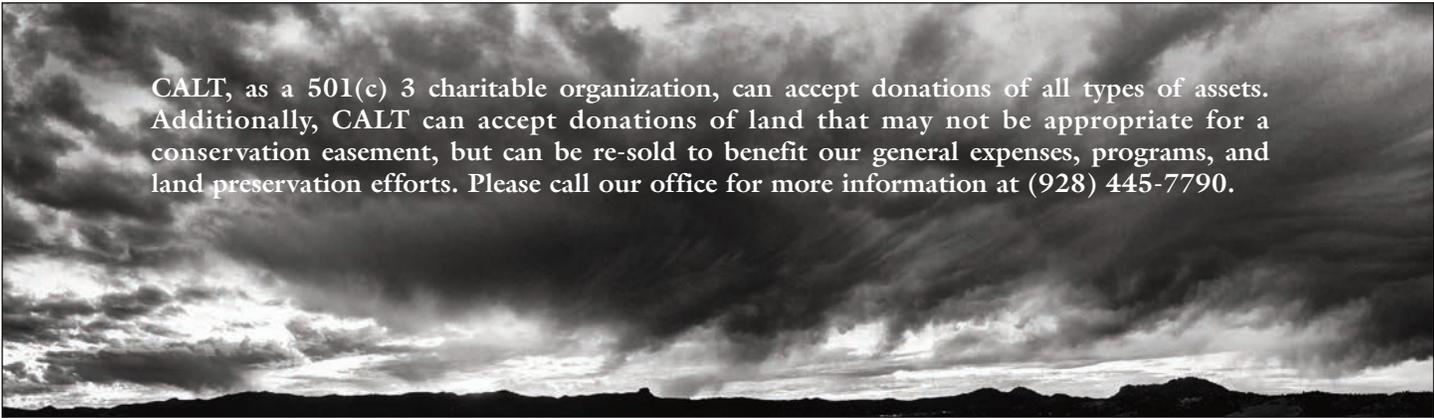
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CALT, as a 501(c) 3 charitable organization, can accept donations of all types of assets. Additionally, CALT can accept donations of land that may not be appropriate for a conservation easement, but can be re-sold to benefit our general expenses, programs, and land preservation efforts. Please call our office for more information at (928) 445-7790.

CENTRAL ARIZONA



LAND TRUST

Preserving Open Space in the Heart of Arizona

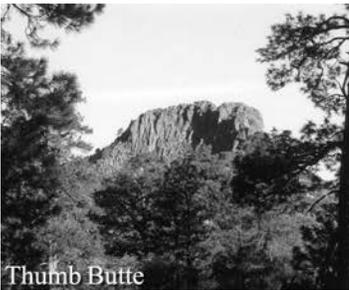
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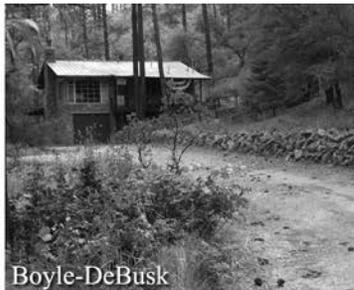
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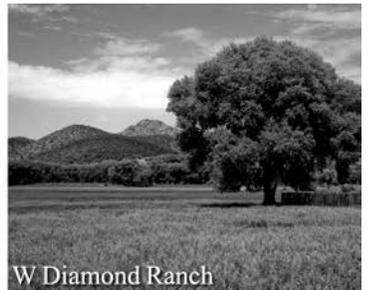
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Become a Partner in Protection

The Central Arizona Land Trust is dependent on your continued support to the mission of preserving and protecting open space throughout Central Arizona.

Please remember CALT for charitable gifts or estate planning. Your gift works directly to benefit land preservation this year and into the future. As a qualified 501(c)(3) gifts to the Central Arizona Land Trust are tax deductible. Please visit the CALT website to explore options for donations and planned giving.

*Preserving Western Lands Since 1989.
All donations are tax deductible.*



Our thanks to Foothills Bank for sponsoring this newsletter.