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# Colorado Headwaters Land Trust Earns National Recognition

## *Accreditation Promotes Public Trust, Ensures Permanence*

**Granby, CO** (Feb. 24, 2016) – Colorado Headwaters Land Trust, a state-certified and 501(c)(3) local Grand County land conservation nonprofit, today announced it has achieved national accreditation – a mark of honor in land conservation. The Land Trust Accreditation Commission awarded accreditation, signifying its confidence that conserved lands held by Colorado Headwaters Land Trust will be protected forever.

“A major milestone!” said Nick Meyer, President, Board of Directors of the land trust. “This achievement is an asset the organization will benefit from for a very long time and we are all grateful for the efforts of so many people that helped us get this accomplished.”

“We all worked together on this massive project and are ecstatic about this achievement!” said Carse Pustmueller, Executive Director, Colorado Headwaters Land Trust. “We had to meet extensive documentation requirements and undergo a comprehensive review as part of the accreditation application. It was a rigorous process but one that definitely has strengthened our land trust in so many ways that will help Grand County’s landowners and communities achieve their goal to maintain the beauty, vitality and sustainability of our mountain environment.

“Many thanks to Anna Drexler-Dreis, our Manager, who worked hard to organize the application and ensure compliance with the Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices and to our Board of Directors for supporting the Land Trust through the year-long process”

Since 1995, Colorado Headwaters Land Trust has protected over 8,000 acres of critical wildlife habitat, agricultural lands, riparian areas and scenic beauty. In partnership with willing landowners, the Land Trust is continuing to work hard to protect the flowing rivers and scenic valleys of the Colorado River headwaters and its many tributaries that define Grand County. We recently partnered with The Conservation Fund to protect the historic 662-acre McElroy Ranch Conservation Easement along the

Colorado River and Muddy Creek as part of our Colorado River Initiative and our ongoing efforts to protect open lands within the headwaters of the Colorado River.

Colorado Headwaters Land Trust was among 37 land trusts across the United States to achieve accreditation or to have accreditation renewed in February. Colorado Headwaters Land Trust joins the 342 land trusts that demonstrate their commitment to professional excellence through accreditation, helping to maintain the public's trust in their work. Accredited land trusts across the country have permanently conserved more than 15 million acres of farms, forests and natural areas that are vital to healthy, vibrant communities.

"It is exciting to recognize Colorado Headwaters Land Trust with this distinction," said Tammara Van Ryn, executive director of the Commission. "Together, accredited land trusts stand united behind strong national standards ensuring the places people love will be conserved forever. In all, over 75 percent of private lands conserved by land trusts are now held by an accredited land trust."

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission inspires excellence, promotes public trust and ensures permanence in the conservation of open lands by recognizing organizations that meet rigorous quality standards and strive for continuous improvement. The Commission, established in 2006 as an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, is governed by a volunteer board of diverse land conservation and nonprofit management experts. For more, visit [www.landtrustaccreditation.org](http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org).

Founded in 1982, the Land Trust Alliance is a national land conservation organization that works to save the places people love by strengthening land conservation across America. The Alliance represents more than 1,100 member land trusts supported by more than 100,000 volunteers and 5 million members nationwide. The Alliance is based in Washington, D.C. and operates several regional offices. More information about the Alliance is available at [www.landtrustalliance.org](http://www.landtrustalliance.org).

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