



News Release

March 11, 2024

Collard Ranch on Tarryall Creek Has Been Permanently Conserved and Will Soon Open to the Public

DENVER, Colorado—In an exciting win for fish, wildlife and recreationists, Western Rivers Conservancy and Colorado Parks and Wildlife have permanently conserved the 1,860-acre Collard Ranch on Tarryall Creek, just 60 miles southwest of Denver. Using funding from Great Outdoors Colorado's Centennial Program and the Colorado Habitat Stamp, WRC transferred ownership of the ranch on Friday to CPW, which will now manage the property for its outstanding conservation and recreation values.

"Tarryall Creek is a special area to so many people in Colorado, with easy access for Park County residents and folks living on the Front Range," said Allen Law, WRC's Interior West Project Manager. "We are proud to partner with CPW to forever protect this stretch of the creek, especially given its importance to a critical wildlife corridor and its iconic views of Kenosha Pass."

Collard Ranch includes five miles of Tarryall Creek, a principal tributary to the South Platte River and a popular South Park fly fishing stream. The ranch is part of a major migration corridor for thousands of Rocky Mountain elk, which use the property as their primary route from the high peaks of the Rockies to lower-elevation grasslands during their annual migration into and across South Park. Mule deer and pronghorn frequently move through the area as well.

There are several beaver ponds along the creek on the property, which are rare on Colorado's valley floors. Beavers, considered a keystone species, add vital habitat complexities to rivers through dam building, which create ponds and wetlands as well as channel structure that improves spawning habitat for fish. Their presence on Collard Ranch adds to the property's importance.

"A huge thank you to WRC and GOCO for their partnership in acquiring this property and protecting this land in perpetuity," said CPW Area Wildlife Manager Mark Lamb. "Wildlife conservation work would not be successful without cooperation between government agencies, outdoor organizations, private landowners and nonprofits. We are excited to acquire this property and look forward to getting it open for public access in the near future."

After Collard Ranch was listed for sale, WRC jumped at the opportunity to conserve the property and negotiated a purchase agreement with the landowner. WRC bought the property in early December 2023 and held it until funding was in place, allowing it to convey the ranch to CPW. The ranch will now be managed by CPW to preserve its outstanding fish and wildlife habitat and to provide new recreational access.

Under state ownership, Collard Ranch will be open to the public, offering fishing and hunting access along five miles of Tarryall Creek. CPW ownership will also establish more uniform resource management along the creek, given the property's adjacency to Cline Ranch State Wildlife Area and other conservation lands.

"We developed our Centennial Program to invest in once-in-a-generation opportunities that protect some of our most valuable places and create meaningful access to the great outdoors for Coloradans," said GOCO Executive Director Jackie Miller. "Western Rivers Conservancy and Colorado Parks and Wildlife have given us exactly that kind of opportunity with the Collard Ranch project, and we are proud to help make it a reality for Colorado with our \$6.25 million investment."

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ABOUT

Western Rivers Conservancy

Western Rivers Conservancy acquires lands along rivers throughout the West to conserve critical habitat and to create or improve public access for compatible use and enjoyment. By cooperating with local agencies and organizations and by applying decades of land acquisition experience, Western Rivers Conservancy secures the health of whole ecosystems. Western Rivers Conservancy has protected hundreds of miles of stream frontage on great western rivers, including the Rio Grande, Yampa, Hoh, Methow, John Day, Salmon, Snake, North Umpqua and Madison Rivers. To learn more, visit www.westernrivers.org.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

CPW is an enterprise agency, relying primarily on license sales, state parks fees and registration fees to support its operations, including: 43 state parks and more than 350 wildlife areas covering approximately 900,000 acres, management of fishing and hunting, wildlife watching, camping, motorized and non-motorized trails, boating and outdoor education. CPW's work contributes approximately \$6 billion in total economic impact annually throughout Colorado. To learn more, visit cpw.state.co.us.

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO)

GOCO invests a portion of Colorado Lottery proceeds to help preserve and enhance the state's parks, trails, wildlife, rivers, and open spaces. GOCO's independent board awards competitive grants to local governments and land trusts and makes investments through Colorado Parks and

Wildlife. Created when voters approved a constitutional amendment in 1992, GOCO has since funded more than 5,700 projects in all 64 counties of Colorado without any tax dollar support. Visit GOCO.org for more information.

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