

■ Local

Land trust picnic fuses nature with plein air art

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JACKSON HOLE DAILY

The valley's scenery acts as muse for many artists. The Jackson Hole Land Trust works to protect the places that inspire so many creative thinkers.

Celebrating the accomplishment of phase one of a four-part conservation project, the trust will be fusing art and nature at its annual picnic 4 to 7 p.m. Sunday.

In addition to the public at large, the plein air painters of View 22 will be on hand, and Jessica Camilla O'Neal and the Neversweat Players will provide music.

In November the trust protected an area of East Gros Ventre Butte, sage grouse habitat north of Jackson and land above the National Museum of Wildlife Art. By securing these landscapes, the trust prevented the development of residential property.

Equally keen about Jackson's wild beauty, several artists support the trust's mission.

"Artists, be it a photographer or in this case the View 22 painters, help us

recognize the amazing scenery of Jackson," Land Trust Executive Director Andrews said. "When you stop to take a picture or paint one, you stop and look at that scenery in a different way. That outlook develops a deep connection with nature."

Five artists have volunteered to participate Sunday. They will showcase plein air work that features land not accessible to most people. Because the trust protects privately owned property, most people don't get up-close looks at its preserved open spaces.

O'Neal and her band, the Neversweat Players, also write songs influenced by Wyoming's scenery.

A private, nonprofit organization, the Jackson Hole Land Trust was founded in 1980. Working with landowners, it has protected more than 24,000 acres of open space in and around Jackson Hole.

Sunday's picnic will take place at the 4 Lazy F Ranch, just south of town. Cost is \$50 for adults. Children 12 and under are free. For information and directions to the picnic site, visit the trust online at JHLandTrust.org.