



## JACKSON HOLE LAND TRUST NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Jackson Hole Land Trust and Green River Valley Land Trust Unite to Ensure Protection of 32,000 Acres in Sublette County**

The incorporation of the Green River Valley Land Trust as a program of the Jackson Hole Land Trust will guarantee the stewardship of important conservation lands in Sublette County in perpetuity.

**August 15, 2016** – The Jackson Hole Land Trust (JHLT) today announced that the organization will be accepting a transfer of 58 easements totaling 32,000 acres from the Green River Valley Land Trust (GRVLT). These easements will be held by the Jackson Hole Land Trust under the organization’s new Green River Valley Program. The creation of a Sublette County-focused program and procurement of GRVLT’s 58 easements by JHLT secures the conservation values of important protected private lands.

“This is a proactive approach by two conservation organizations to become more sustainable and to safeguard the future of Sublette County’s ranch lands, open space and wildlife habitat,” said Bob Budd, Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust Executive Director. “Proper stewardship of conservation properties in this region is critical to maintaining important, large-scale wildlife migration corridors that run across two major mountain ranges, along three primary river systems, in all directions, and to preserving important ranchlands that contribute to the agricultural resources and heritage of Sublette County.”

Both JHLT and GRVLT have long histories of conservation success in Wyoming. The Jackson Hole Land Trust was a critical partner in the founding and creation of the GRVLT and has since been a resource and ally in land protection. Over the last 36 years, JHLT has helped over 220 landowners conserve more than 25,000 acres in Teton County and through the Wind River Program in Fremont County. Founded in 2000, the GRVLT has secured over 32,000 acres of easement-protected property for 44 landowners.

Working closely over the past three years after GRVLT (then known as the Wyoming Land Trust) announced it would be transferring its easements to other conservation organizations, JHLT and GRVLT have made considerable efforts to strengthen landowner relationships and restore donor and community trust in Sublette County. The two Land Trusts began evaluating a unification last year. After careful consideration, the Board of Directors of both organizations have agreed that the solution for ensuring sustainable stewardship of existing

Sublette County conservation easements and for gaining the resources necessary to move forward on additional land protection opportunities in the region is to have JHLT take ownership of all GRVLT easements and manage conservation in the area under a designated program with a local office and staff in Sublette County.

“The new Green River Valley Program of the Jackson Hole Land Trust has been carefully designed to provide stewardship and landowner services to the unique and valuable conservation lands of Sublette County, while leveraging the historically strong leadership and financial security of the Jackson Hole Land Trust,” said Pete Lawton, JHLT Board President. “We are excited about the land protection opportunities that this program brings to the organization, and are committed to safeguarding the integrity of GRVLT’s existing easement properties.”

“We believe that this is a great opportunity to ensure the future of our easements and honor our commitment to the landowners,” said Brian Gray, GRVLT Board President. “We are grateful to all those that have worked so hard to get us to this point so that we can continue our local presence and the wonderful work in Sublette County.”

The Jackson Hole Land Trust will begin the process of taking responsibility for GRVLT’s easements on October 1, 2016 and GRVLT will conclude its separate operations. Moving forward, the staff of JHLT will work with the existing GRVLT staff, board, partners, and volunteers to ensure that partner landowners, and new potential conservation landowners, have a quality experience as they work to protect a critical portion of the Wyoming landscape.

“I am grateful to again have a trusted partner in Sublette County to help me and my fellow landowners here achieve our conservation goals,” said J.J. Healy, a conservation property landowner in Sublette County. “With the presence of the Jackson Hole Land Trust, we can regain momentum towards our collective vision to establish a high quality, permanent land protection strategy for our community.”

Both the Jackson Hole Land Trust and the Green River Valley Land Trust are excited for the bright future of land protection in Sublette County under the Green River Valley Program of JHLT. The Jackson Hole Land Trust is committed to stewarding existing Sublette County conservation properties and working with the community to identify priority protection projects and expand conservation work in the region.

For more information about the merger, and how to get involved, visit [www.jhlandtrust.org](http://www.jhlandtrust.org).

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### **About the Jackson Hole Land Trust**

The Jackson Hole Land Trust is a private, non-profit organization that was established in 1980 to preserve open space and the critical wildlife habitat, magnificent scenic vistas, and historic ranching heritage of Jackson Hole. By working cooperatively with the owners of the area's privately owned open lands, the Jackson Hole Land Trust has ensured the permanent protection of over 25,000 acres in and around Jackson Hole and the Greater Yellowstone Area.

### **About the Green River Valley Land Trust**

The Green River Valley Land Trust was formed in 2000 by a committed group of residents "to assist landowning families of Sublette County in the conservation of agricultural and ranch and natural lands, to protect open spaces, watersheds, wildlife habitat, and other ecological values for the benefit of today's inhabitants and as a legacy for future generations." The Green River Valley Land Trust currently holds 58 easements, conserving 32,212 acres.