

# Grand Views



**KEEP IT  
GRAND!**

The Middle Park Land Trust is dedicated to helping landowners preserve Grand County's scenery, agriculture, water, wildlife and biodiversity for today and the future.

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## 285 More Acres Preserved in the Williams Fork Valley



The Middle Park Land Trust has already accepted 285 acres this year, adjacent to an existing 300 acre easement in the Williams Fork area just outside of Parshall. This conservation easement is on ranchland that preserves agricultural uses, wildlife habitat and view corridors,

increasing open space, bringing the total land held under easement by MPLT to 2885 acres.

## Tax Incentive Changes Benefit Conservation Easement Donations

Both Congress and the Colorado state legislature have recently passed significant positive changes to the tax laws in strong support of conservation easement donations.

The federal change raises the deduction from 30% to 50% of that persons adjusted gross income up to the value of the easement and can be carried forward for up to 15 years. Qualified farmers or ranchers who earn more than 50% of their income from the business of farming can now deduct 100% of their adjusted gross income. However the conservation easement must cover property used or available for agriculture or livestock production and contain a restriction that the property will remain available for livestock or agriculture production.

The state of Colorado has also made a change. Beginning in 2007, a conservation easement donor is able to claim up to 50% of the fair market value of the conservation easement as a tax credit. They have also increased the maximum donation amount to \$750,000 which results in a maximum tax credit of \$375,000. (Please remember that this income tax credit is based upon a qualified appraisal.) Further, this credit can be sold to other Colorado tax payers and the donor is able to receive cash. This is usually accomplished through tax credit brokers who match tax credit buyers with sellers.

## 10th Annual Photo Contest Winners Announced

2006 proved to be another banner year for our photo contest with 102 entries submitted. Each year, the photos continue to bring into focus the special places and things unique to Grand County. Winners of this year's contest are Patricia Shannon in scenery, Toni Leuthold for her wildlife photograph, John Kossler with a unique Black & White, Karren Boshears, who won the Board's Choice category and Spencer George, the very talented 15 year old from Kremmling who took the honors in three categories - kids only, floral and agriculture. Congratulations to all our winners and thank you to every photographer who submitted their amazing photos. Thanks also to our judges this year, Mike Turner, Art Ferrari & Dennis Finnigan. Visit our website at [middleparklandtrust.com](http://middleparklandtrust.com) to view all the winning photographs.



Photo by Spencer George  
2006 Agricultural Winner

## New Executive Director Hired



We are pleased to announce the appointment of Billy Sumerlin as our new Executive Director. Billy is a long-time resident of Grand County and joins us after spending the last seven years as Grand County's Director of the Department of Natural Resources.

He has a wide and varied background in natural resources, forestry and production agriculture, including work with landowners, developers and governmental agencies. His experience in leading and managing organizations, along with grant writing, budgeting, public outreach and education and public speaking will be invaluable in helping us achieve the goals we have set out for ourselves as we enter our second decade.

According to Land Trust President Mike Braddy, Billy's experience collaborating with diverse constituencies was an important factor in his selection. "It was also exciting to find someone for our Executive Director position with such deep roots in Grand County and knowledge of many of the issues surrounding land conservation."

Billy expressed excitement at the opportunity to be on the ground floor of the growth of an organization whose mission and values are near and dear to his heart. "I look forward to the challenges that lie ahead in implementing conservation practices in Middle Park. It is undeniable that people, wildlife, fisheries, agriculture and economics depend on healthy natural landscapes. It is imperative that we engage diverse interest groups to find common ground and motivation for preservation of special places."

## Annual Meeting Held At Devil's Thumb A Huge Success

Our annual meeting was held on June 11th at Devil's Thumb Ranch and Resort. The meeting took place first, with over 100 people in attendance. Once the formalities were out of the way, the bar was open and food was served while music was provided by Roger & Joan Shaw & Becky Shaw of Alpine Classic Music.



Once everyone was relaxed and having a good time, the square dancing began, with Barry Wright calling the moves for all the people on the dance floor. It was a great time, with everyone, both young and old, enjoying the event and activities.

Throughout the event, representatives from the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Trout Unlimited, Friends of the Fraser River, Grand Huts, the Grand County Wilderness Group, the Colorado Riparian Association along with the Grand County Historical Society were on hand to meet new people and answer questions about their organizations.

A special thank you to Devil's Thumb Ranch for allowing us the use of the incomparable Broad Axe Barn.

## Save the Date for Cupid's Corner

Cupid Corner Valentine Craft Boutique will again be sponsored by the Middle Park Land Trust. The date will be Saturday February 10, 2007 at the old Historic Church in Fraser. The 2006 boutique was a great success, we are sure this year will be even better! So plan on attending and finding that something special for your someone special! A special thanks to Francie De Vos who continues to work tirelessly to put this together and who has designated the Land Trust as beneficiary. See everyone there!



2006 Board's Choice Winning Photograph  
by Karren Boshears

## GoodSearch.com

The Middle Park Land Trust is now able to receive funds when you surf the web. GoodSearch.com is an internet search engine that funds your favorite charity or school each time you search the internet using the search engine. Powered by yahoo, GoodSearch.com gives money to the designated organization every time you browse the web. Please consider making "goodsearch.com" your search engine while supporting the Land Trust all at the same time.

## Volunteers Make Stewardship Day A Success!

Several volunteers were on hand July 30th in order to clean up "Jimmy's Trail". This is a three mile long walking/horseback trail located on 985 acres of land under conservation easement just outside of Fraser. The day was clear, the sun was shining and thanks to the tireless efforts of all the volunteers, the trail was cleared of brush and downfall, and is now usable again. At the request of the landowner, the volunteers also installed sign at the top of the trail in memory of the man who built the trail in 1995.

A special thanks to Brock and Angela McCormick who organized the day and solicited donations for lunch from Safeway and Pizza Hut. And THANKS to all who volunteered to help!

**If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please contact us at (970) 887-1177 or [mplt@middleparklandtrust.com](mailto:mplt@middleparklandtrust.com)**

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## Business Partners Program

*Please Support these Businesses  
that Support the  
Middle Park Land Trust*

Alpine Classic Music

Devil's Thumb Ranch Resort

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George Edwards Photography

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Grand Lake Lodge

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Miller's Inn Massage

Mo Henry's Trout Shop

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Ore Communications

The Paper Clip

Ripple Works

Silk's Dental Hygiene Service

Streamside Art

Walden Hollow Enterprises

Whistle Stop Bed & Breakfast

Winter Park Dental

Winter Park Market

## Matching Grant



Photo by Linda Borgeson

Our Land Trust is growing - growing and changing at a very rapid pace. Because of this, our Board of Directors issued a matching grant to help bring in funds to support this growth.

We are happy to announce the grant program this summer was extremely successful with over \$27,000 new dollars donated to the Land Trust. THANK YOU to everyone who supported the program and gave that little bit extra!