



P.O. Box 412, Huntsville, UT 84317
OgdenValleyLandTrust.org 801-891-5179

NEWSLETTER

February 2021
Volume 9, Issue 1

Message from the Chair

Dear Friends,

New Year's salutations will be put aside for the moment as we look hopefully yet cautiously to the New Year. 2020 is a still too recent memory that challenged us as individuals, families, communities, states, countries and the world. Our sincere condolences to all of you who lost loved ones, and our hearts go out to those touched by COVID-19. We all miss and regret the precious moments and time lost with our families and friends.

As we reflect on the past, present, and future, I ask that each of you begin to recognize and acknowledge those places in your lives that brought you peace, joy, and feelings of comradery and community. For many of us those places are found in the mountains, valleys, trails, and rivers surrounding us. As we stepped outside our doors for a brief respite from the pressures and anxieties of a "work-from-home" environment, hopefully we learned to appreciate the 360 degree mountain views, the natural open spaces, the abundant wildlife (the sandhill cranes are my favorite), recreational opportunities, and the soulful healing properties found in nature. If any of these words and images resonates with you, then you are a friend of Ogden Valley Land Trust (OVLТ).

The pandemic, most likely, hastened what we always knew was inevitable; our beautiful Valley became a premier recreational destination and a desirable place to live. While we cannot compete with developers in their race to buy up vacant land and build homes, we can reach out to landowners and provide alternate opportunities to realize the value of their land while keeping it open, natural, and, if desired, agricultural. By preserving open land that is scenic, provides habitat for wildlife, allows for productive agriculture, and protects our watersheds, we can maintain our quality of life and insure that our community will flourish for years to come.

The year 2020 was good for us as we recorded three conservation easements for a total of 100 acres that will remain as open space in Ogden Valley in perpetuity, and 2021 promises to bring additional easement opportunities. (Two of these new easements are highlighted in this

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newsletter.) Working through the development of an easement can be tedious and time consuming, but deeply rewarding as we work closely with landowners to create an easement meeting their specific needs both now and into the future. As our Valley changes and open land becomes less available, there is a heightened appreciation of and interest in conserving both large and small swaths of land with less development. Today, the work of land trusts is more relevant than ever.

Your support of Ogden Valley Land Trust helps to cover the costs associated in developing these easements and insuring they are monitored and protected for generations to come. Easements are legally-binding documents that are recorded on the property's title; thus, they require legal

*Continued at **Message** on page 3*

***"Everybody needs beauty
as well as bread,
places to play in and pray
in, where nature may heal
and give strength to
body and soul."***

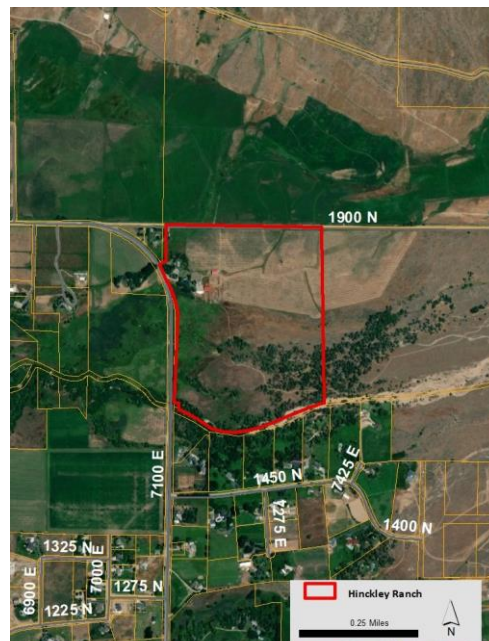
-- John Muir

Saving a Legacy: Ogden Valley's Hinckley Ranch

A Land Conservation Deal to Withstand the Testament of Time

By Brandi Hammon,

Broker & Owner of Mountain Luxury Real Estate & Lodging



Not all real estate sales are joyful. Some are actually emotionally painful as a lifetime of memories and generations of history are left behind by the seller. Sometimes the legacy is passed to a new steward, and other times it is left to the highest bidder. As the large ranches and open lands of the valley are sold, one beautiful soul went the distance to protect her family's legacy with the help of Ogden Valley Land Trust, an equally thoughtful buyer, two attorneys, and two real estate brokers.

The Hinckley Ranch was established in 1957 when Robert and Abrelia Hinckley purchased the ranch. The ranch ultimately ended up in the care of their youngest granddaughter Kristin Whitaker. I first met Kristin while serving on the board of Ogden Valley Land Trust. Some years later, Kristin called to help find a new owner for the ranch. Even after that call, I wouldn't list the ranch for another two years.

This process of letting go of a piece of your soul—memories of warm summer nights, of treasured horses come and gone, working in the fields, the river flowing then disappearing each year, and family gatherings echoing through time is a slow unraveling of what a person has become and is, and what place has become and is. The bond slowly releases, but it comes with a price. There's the guilt of moving on and the fear of what lies ahead for the property and for oneself. Kristin was part of the ranch, and will always be, just as those who held it before her are. As she grew comfortable letting go, her one request was to protect the land from becoming a future subdivision. The only real mechanism to do this is through a conservation easement held in perpetuity.

"The great use of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it." – William James

Conservation easements are placed on the land, and essentially specify what may and may not be done with the land in accordance to the donor's desires. The enforcement for the easement is done by a third party. In this case, we partnered with Ogden Valley Land Trust, a local nonprofit organization that will oversee the protection of the property for generations to come. While this sounds all well and good, most landowners of ranches don't care too much for folks telling them what they can and can't do with their land. As buyers placed offers, the trepidation from the conservation easement and the impact on their future home was proving difficult.

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Hinckley from page 2

After two failed transactions, the Franzen family came to see the ranch and what it had to offer. We spent a few hours walking through the buildings, pointing out the trapdoor that hid extra wives from an earlier era, and exploring the bunkhouse that was drug down from Geertsen Canyon—the result of a failed homestead attempt nearly 200 years ago. The Franzens were excited. With four kids, the ranch seemed to come alive as we wandered down to the river and through the meadows.

The Franzens fell in love with the 85-acre ranch, struck a deal, and we worked through the terms of the conservation easement, which are specifically tailored to meet the specifications of the property owner. Whatever enthusiasm the purchase started with was tested through the review of 40 pages of legalese. Just for fun, we added in a sprinkle of 2020 mayhem when gale force winds tore through the valley, landing a tree square on the roof of the “Little Red House.” Built from adobe bricks dried right on the property, this little house had stood unwavering with its white lattice trim in perfect prairie red since the 1800’s. With legal tensions and the red house in shambles, we proceeded to negotiate for two months.

With many transactions under my belt, I often say if no one is entirely happy with the outcome, it is fair. That said, this was the most difficult transaction I’d done; however, it was also the one I am most proud of. The Hinckley Ranch change of ownership with the easement was recorded on my birthday; the perfect gift.

A Testament to Time

One day we will all be gone from this picturesque valley, but the land will forever be a standing ranch on the Middle Fork River. It will stand through time as a marker to those that loved it and worked it. It will stand as an anchor for the new family that took a chance, who will enjoy starry nights, and have adventures. It welcomes a new family into its home.

I would like to give many thanks to Kristin Whitaker, Marlin Jensen, Gail Meakins, Paul Franzen, Steve Small, Jeff Appel, Tuiono Malakai, Ogden Valley Land Trust, and my team at Mountain Luxury Real Estate & Lodging for all their hard work, trust, and commitment to the end goal.

Note: This article was originally published in Mountain Luxury’s bi-annual magazine, “The Mountain Luxury Collection.”

A P.S. about the Hinckley Ranch Easement

Paul and Jessica Franzen, who recently purchased the Hinckley ranch, stated, “When we came to the Valley and walked across the [Hinckley] property, we immediately felt peace and at home. It was not difficult to feel the powerful history of the generations of good people who have lived here before us.

“We recognize that this beautiful valley will be around much longer than us. Those of us who are blessed to call this valley home have a responsibility to protect it for future generations. We support the work Ogden Valley Land Trust is doing. These open spaces are an important part of what makes the Valley special. Once they are gone, they’re gone forever.”

MESSAGE from page 1

consultation and advisement. The supporting documents of a conservation easement are expansive, using extensive mapping technologies, research, and publishing expertise. Without your donations, we could not meet the financial requirements to continue our work.

Ogden Valley Land Trust needs your support more than ever, and hopes you will support us in our conservation endeavors. Once this Valley is developed and the land is gone, it is too late.

The time is now.

Gail Meakins, Chair

Board Member Hail and Farewell

OVLT welcomed three new board members in December—Lisa Karam and Jami Taylor, both of Huntsville; and returning, former board member Scott Murri of Eden. All three bring skills and expertise that are essential to the land trust’s mission.

Mike Malmborg of Huntsville left the board in at the end of 2020 because of other commitments; he will continue to serve in the capacity of Trustee Emeritus, providing support on an as-needed basis. Lisa Fersch of Eden also left the board in December, but has volunteered to help with projects in the future as needed.

Each member of our all-volunteer board gives generously of their time and talents, which is so important to the success of OVLT’s mission. You can learn more about our board members by visiting our website at <https://ogdenvalleylandtrust.org/board-of-trustees/>.

The Hans Ehrbar Farm Conservation Easement



In December of 2017, Ogden Valley Land Trust (OVLT) celebrated the adoption of an exciting new conservation easement donated by private property owner Hans G. Ehrbar. The 69.5-acre parcel of property with the adopted conservation easement is located at 9356 E. 200 S. in Huntsville—on the north bench of property above SR-39, which leads to Monte Cristo.

In December 2020, OVLT celebrated again when Mr. Ehrbar placed a conservation easement on an additional 27 acres of property abutting the original easement property, bringing the total acreage under protection to just under 100 acres. The combined property is valuable, primarily for its agricultural resources; however, it also has significant natural, ecological, scenic, wildlife, educational, open space, and water quality values.

Mr. Ehrbar says he feels strongly about the importance of sustainable agricultural practices and is currently pursuing these interests on the land. Deliberate sustainable agricultural practices will also help to maintain and allow improvement of the quality of wildlife habitat in balance and co-existing with crop and food production, to protect prime wildlife breeding sites, to promote biodiversity and native species, to preserve the existing areas of wildlife habitat, and to allow the connection of patches of wildlife habitat on the entire property with those located off of the property to secure and protect migration corridors.

Under the conservation easement, agricultural use runs with the land and will remain protected in perpetuity.

The easement property will remain as prime open space, benefiting the entire community. The very nature of the



open space contributes to balancing the Valley's delicate and pristine aquifer's water table, allowing both surface and groundwater from rain and snowmelt within, around, and downstream of the property to flow and percolate freely—undisturbed by interference from hard-surface areas such as cement, asphalt, rooftops, and weed barrier. The large swath of open space is also conducive to maintaining Ogden Valley's highly-valued dark skies and natural nighttime environment.

**INTERESTED IN OBTAINING
INFORMATION
ABOUT APPLYING A
CONSERVATION EASEMENT
TO YOUR PROPERTY?**

Please contact
**Shanna Francis at
801-745-2688**

or

**Gail Meakins at
801-891-5179**

In Memoriam

Jolene (Jody) Nalder Smith



Members of the board of Ogden Valley Land Trust mourn the passing of former board member and chair Jody Smith who passed away October 2, 2020. As all who knew her will attest, Jody was one in a million! She made the world a brighter place wherever she went and whomever she was with. She was a force to be reckoned with!

In addition to the many contributions she made in the broader community and among her family—whom, without a doubt, she adored—she worked tirelessly and passionately for the cause of the land trust, especially as board chair. Like every other undertaking she pursued, she led with style.

As board members, we are very appreciative of the time spent and contributions made on behalf of the land trust. Like many others who had the privilege of knowing and working with Jody, we continue to miss her larger-than-life personality and dedicated service.

In honor of Jody, and as a legacy to her name and service, board members and other community members are making donations to the land trust in in her honor.

Jody is survived by her husband Bob and their four children: Chad (Kim) Smith, Matt (Marci) Smith, Kim (Dusty) Poulson, and Lindsey (Jed) Opheikens.

Jody's obituary can be found at <https://www.lindquismortuary.com/obituary/Jolene-Smith>

Be sure to visit our all new website
OgdenValleyLandTrust.org

Ogden Valley Land Trust Says “Thank You”

For all the challenges of 2020 due to COVID-19— i.e., no OVLT or CFOV events—the generosity of our supporters and CFOV Match donors enabled OVLT to receive the maximum matching funds from CFOV's annual fundraiser.

The Ogden Valley Land Trust board would like to sincerely thank all who supported the land trust throughout 2020. Organizations like ours are completely dependent on community support and activism; Ogden Valley Land trust could not operate without such amazing support for our all-volunteer organization.



**“I can no other answer make
but thanks, and thanks, and
ever thanks.”**

– William Shakespeare

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OgdenValleyLandTrust.org

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☐ Check if you are interested in obtaining information about applying a conservation easement to your property.

*“What we have done
for ourselves alone
dies with us;
what we have done
for others and the
world remains
and is immortal.”*

--Albert Pike



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