

Conservation provides river access for public

Public access to our rivers and streams is a priority for our community. Our active, outdoor lifestyle in Eagle County and the central Rocky Mountains revolves as much around our waterways as it does around our mountains. The Eagle River is a hub of activity for our residents and guests, and the river serves as a prime economic driver for our local outdoor recreation and tourism-based economy. It is extremely important that we protect and preserve access to our Eagle River for people — for ourselves, our future generations and our economic well-being. But let's not forget, we cannot talk about providing access to rivers and streams without talking about protecting the lands that surround them. Your access to your Eagle River means that we must save and conserve riverfront land and protect properties that border the river.

Several marquee conservation projects led by the Eagle Valley Land Trust, in partnership with Eagle County's Open Space Department and local municipalities, and with the support of Vail Resorts and our philanthropic investors, have preserved important lands along the Eagle River for the benefit, education and enjoyment of our locals and guests. We are proud to protect the integrity of the Eagle River while providing public access to the river through conserved lands.

The Miller Ranch Community Open Space provides public access on 32 acres and more than one mile (that's more than 17 football fields!) of river frontage along the Eagle River just east of Edwards on the edge of the Miller Ranch neighborhood. The Eagle River Preserve is a 72-acre open space oasis in the heart of Edwards which boasts more than a half-mile (eight football fields) of public river access for our community. And the 4-acre Boneyard property recently acquired by the town of Minturn will soon become a permanent conservation area with a quarter-mile-long (four football fields) stretch of Eagle River open for public enjoyment. Whether your passion is fly-fishing, paddleboarding, boating, rafting, kayaking, tubing, berry picking, bird watching or simply enjoying a leisurely stroll listening to the sounds of rushing water, there are some wonderful stretches of land and very special places along the Eagle River that have been protected forever to provide you with the opportunity to enjoy your river.

Another local conservation project that will provide important public access to the Eagle River is the Duck Pond recreation and conservation area. The Duck Pond property is nearly 50 acres of prime river frontage between Gypsum and Dotsero with more than two-thirds of a mile (11 football fields) of public access to the Eagle River. A conservation easement with the Land Trust is being placed on the property this fall to preserve it forever. In addition to access to the Eagle River with a boat launch and take-out, and public fishing, duck blinds and picnic areas, the county-wide EcoTrail bike path will also travel through the property.



Jason Denhart
Trust Our Land

We are very excited about an upcoming large-scale volunteer restoration project at the Duck Pond Conservation Area being held this Saturday. Due to the generosity of Vail Resorts and its employees, the annual Vail Resorts Echo Day will be hosted at Duck Pond. Registration begins on Saturday at 8 a.m., with numerous volunteer projects beginning at 9 a.m. Vail Resorts Echo Day is a companywide volunteer day hosted by Vail Resorts, which provides important man-power to fuel positive environmental impact in the community. More than 300 Vail Resorts employees, families and friends will converge on the land to provide much-needed cleanup and restoration at this newest location for public access along the Eagle River. We hope you will consider joining us for VR Echo Day this Saturday!

The Land Trust and our conservation partners are excited about our positive and successful work to save the natural spaces and special places that provide public access to our rivers, creeks and streams. We are especially proud to preserve and protect lands along our Eagle River for the benefit of the people of our community. Your local Land Trust will continue to work tirelessly to save land adjacent to and near the Eagle River and other important local waterways so the residents and guests of Eagle County will always have access to their rivers, forever.

Jason Denhart is the director of communications and development for the Eagle Valley Land Trust. By using conservation easements to protect and save our land, the Trust preserves scenic views, precious landscapes, historic lands, open spaces, waterways and wildlife habitats for the benefit of the people of our community. Learn more at www.evl.org.