

Subject: Conservation Drives Colorado Economy
From: Eagle Valley Land Trust <jdenhart@evlt.org>
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To: sconklin@evlt.org

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The science is clear Scott, conservation is an economic driver.

Conservation and recreation are driving local economies in rural western states, especially in the Rocky Mountain region of Colorado. Rural counties, like Eagle County, that are managed more for conservation and recreation than for resource development have enjoyed greater economic success, from higher home prices to more jobs. In a recently released report, "[Conserving Lands and Prosperity](#)" by research firm Southwick Associates on behalf of Sportsmen for Responsible Energy Development, economists found that counties which have a higher percentage of land in conservation and open space have had greater economic growth since 1969.



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August 21, 2012 Vilar Performing Arts Center



The study explored the relationship between land use and economic growth from 1969 to 2009, and included research from 204 non-metropolitan counties in seven Western states, including many rural counties in the Rocky Mountain region of Colorado. [The report](#) found fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing and other passive outdoor recreation opportunities contributed to increased jobs and higher economic vitality in those rural Western counties that made conservation and open space protection a priority. The top 5 counties managed for conservation and recreation had 5.3 times faster job growth than the top five counties

managed intensely for commodity production. Those conservation counties also had higher median housing prices and faster population growth than their counterparts.

A [separate study](#), conducted by the Colorado Division of Wildlife in 2010 also supports these findings. Like the Southwick study, this report shows that lands conserved for outdoor sporting activities are a significant driver of the Eagle County economy. According to the Colorado DOW, \$28.7 million dollars was added to our local economy in 2010 due to [hunting and fishing](#) activities. Obviously, if we do not protect and conserve open spaces for our local wildlife, we will lose this \$28 million dollars in revenue. If we do not save local lands for these elk and deer and trout, the hunters and fishermen will go somewhere else, taking their dollars with them.

A third study, conducted by independent research group [Headwaters Economics](#), also supports these positive economic findings, showing that federally protected open space is also a primary driver of our statewide economy. This study showed that Colorado's federal lands - our national parks, wilderness areas, monuments and national forests - are leading our [economic growth](#). The study reports that non-metro counties with more than 30 percent of their land federally protected enjoyed a 345 percent increase in jobs since 1970, compared to only 83 percent job growth in non-metro areas without any federal lands.

All three of these studies dispel the notion that land protection hinders economic growth. This extensive research points to the fact that Colorado's vast collection of conserved open spaces and federal lands have helped and are continuing to help our state's economy grow and thrive. The quality of life in our state is based in outdoor recreation opportunities. Our open spaces, our conserved lands, our national forests, our wilderness areas and our trail systems are very appealing in attracting new companies, creating new jobs and propelling our local economies for continued growth in the future.

Eagle County depends upon protecting our natural environment which is such a strong part of our unique quality of life. Conserved lands play a vital role in our local economy by providing recreational opportunities, wildlife habitats and amenities that attract and keep good businesses and good employees in Colorado, thus keeping our economy strong. Your local Land Trust is proud to be at the forefront of efforts to grow our local economy and help Eagle County to thrive by increasing conservation and recreation opportunities. Thank you for your support!

Yours in conservation,
[Eagle Valley Land Trust](#)

Family Fun Day at the Eagle River Preserve Tomorrow @ 10am!

Looking for something fun to do with the kids on Saturday? Your local Land Trust will be at the Preserve with crafts, face-painting and a nature walk tomorrow, Saturday, June 30 at 10am. Permanently protected in 2005, Eagle River Preserve is at 72 acre "central park" for the community of Edwards. The Eagle River Preserve is located directly west of the Gashouse restaurant on Highway 6. To get there, head west from the intersection of Edwards Access road and Highway 6 and turn right at the green gate into Eagle River Preserve (Look for the Land Trust banner).





Eagle River Preserve has it all. Spanning over 72 acres, it has more than enough room for an off leash dog area, several ponds and streams and over 1 mile of river access. With several trails leading down to the river, Eagle River Preserve is a great place to fish or just enjoy the sites and sounds of the river.



The Preserve has great picnicking opportunities as well as an extensive trail system making it idea for a leisurely walk or hard core training routine alike. Family Fun Day is your chance to check it out in person this Saturday! "We really want to show the mid-valley community the work we've done in the past few years to ensure they have recreation opportunities within walking distance of their homes." said Scott Conklin, project coordinator for EVLT.

In addition to refreshments, a face painter and other outdoor fun, Family Fun Day at Eagle River Preserve will have a great hands-on craft project for kids of all ages, building miniature rafts.

EVLT will provide all the materials for participants to assemble. (Don't worry Moms, there won't be any sawing or drilling.)

See you tomorrow morning from 10am-12pm for Family Fun!

Save the Dates...

For upcoming EVLT happenings and events this summer! We hope you can join us.

The 4th Annual EverGreen Ball goes Into the Wild Live with Jungle Jack Hanna

- August 21, 6:30pm @ the Vilar Performing Arts Center
- Live animals, stage show, meet exotic animals up close
- Tickets available online at www.vilarpac.org
- For more information visit www.theevergreenball.org

Yoga for Land presented by EVLT and [Revolution Power Yoga](#)

- Saturdays- July 14, July 28, August 11 and August 25
- 10am @ the Eagle-Vail Community Garden
- \$10 suggested donation to your local Land Trust

2nd Annual Ed Fest presented by [Crazy Mountain Brewing Company](#)

- August 18th 3-7pm
- At the Riverwalk @ Edwards
- Sample over 20 craft brews.

- Tickets \$35 at the door or available at Crazy Mountain Brewing Company in Edwards
- EVLT is the charitable beneficiary of Ed Fest, 100% of the net proceeds will support local land conservation.

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Eagle Valley Land Trust | 51 Eagle Road #1 | Avon | CO | 81620