



# YEAR IN REVIEW





What happens on private agricultural land affects us all. Farmers, ranchers and foresters who are good stewards of the land provide not only healthy food for our table, but clean, abundant water, healthy soil and thriving wildlife.

Sand County Foundation's dedication to the cause of private landowner conservation leadership is inspired by the writings and committed land stewardship of renowned author, scientist and conservationist Aldo Leopold. In his famous *A Sand County Almanac*, Leopold wrote, "the landscape of any farm is the owner's portrait of himself." Sand County Foundation's Leopold Conservation Awards honor outstanding landowners who believe in and live by the tenets of Leopold's land ethic. That is, a land ethic changes the role of people from conquerors of the land-community to members and citizens of it. "It implies respect for his fellow-members and also respect for the community as such," Leopold wrote.

The Leopold Conservation Award® Program recognizes and celebrates extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation by private landowners who inspire others by their examples. It provides a platform to elevate leading agricultural families as conservation ambassadors to citizens outside of agriculture. In addition, the program builds bridges between agriculture, government, environmental organizations, industry and academia to help advance the cause of private lands conservation.

Working with prominent state conservation partners in nine states, Sand County Foundation presents the \$10,000 award and a crystal depicting Aldo Leopold, in settings that publicly showcase the landowners' achievements.

Sand County Foundation and its many partners and sponsors actively seek others to become part of this important story. An award program of this stature could not exist without quality landowner nominees or sustainable funding.

Leopold Conservation Award Program sponsors are proud to be affiliated with a program that gives exceptional stewards of natural resources the recognition they deserve.

For more information, please visit: [www.leopoldconservationaward.org](http://www.leopoldconservationaward.org)

## PRIVATE LAND PRODUCTS WE ALL CAN USE



Landowners grow the crops and animals that fuel our bodies and rejuvenate our spirits. Across our nation, we are fortunate to have hundreds of thousands of farmers, ranchers, and other producers who use their private lands for their families' benefits. And ours.

Recognizing that private responsibility can grow and be reinforced for the broader benefit, renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold gave his metaphorical answer in the 1930s.

*It is the individual farmer who must weave the greater part of the rug on which America stands. Shall he weave into it only the sober yarns which warm the feet, or also some of the colors which warm the eye and the heart? Granted that there may be a question which returns him the most profit as an individual, can there be any question which is best for his community? This raises the question: is the individual farmer capable of dedicating private land to uses which profit the community, even though they may not so clearly profit him? We may be overhasty in assuming that he is not.*

While our 21st Century opportunities and challenges in private land use differ in both degree and kind from those of eighty years ago, we at Sand County Foundation find reasons for optimism in how landowners can make their land more productive while enhancing the environment. In Sand County Foundation's view there is no inherent contradiction between them.

With partners, we offer the Leopold Conservation Award® Program in a growing number of states. We identify, recognize, honor and celebrate leaders in conservation agriculture. With the Leopold Conservation Award families, now more than 70 strong, we can show that privately-owned, "working landscapes" are loved no less, and nurtured far more than many of the lands which the public would consider "wild." Even though their circumstances and crops differ greatly these recipient families have a common ethic. This is the "yarn" from which they weave the "greater part of the rug on which American stands."

It's our hope that these stories give you even more reason to appreciate the food that reaches your table. When you next gaze across the working landscape in your area or in your travels, I ask you to take a moment to thank the landowners, such as our Leopold Conservation Award recipients, who commit themselves to improve the land community – including its people.

Sincerely,

Brent M. Haglund, Ph.D.  
President



# CALIFORNIA

## ★ FULL BELLY FARM

*Andrew Brait, Paul Muller,  
Judith Redmond and Dru Rivers*

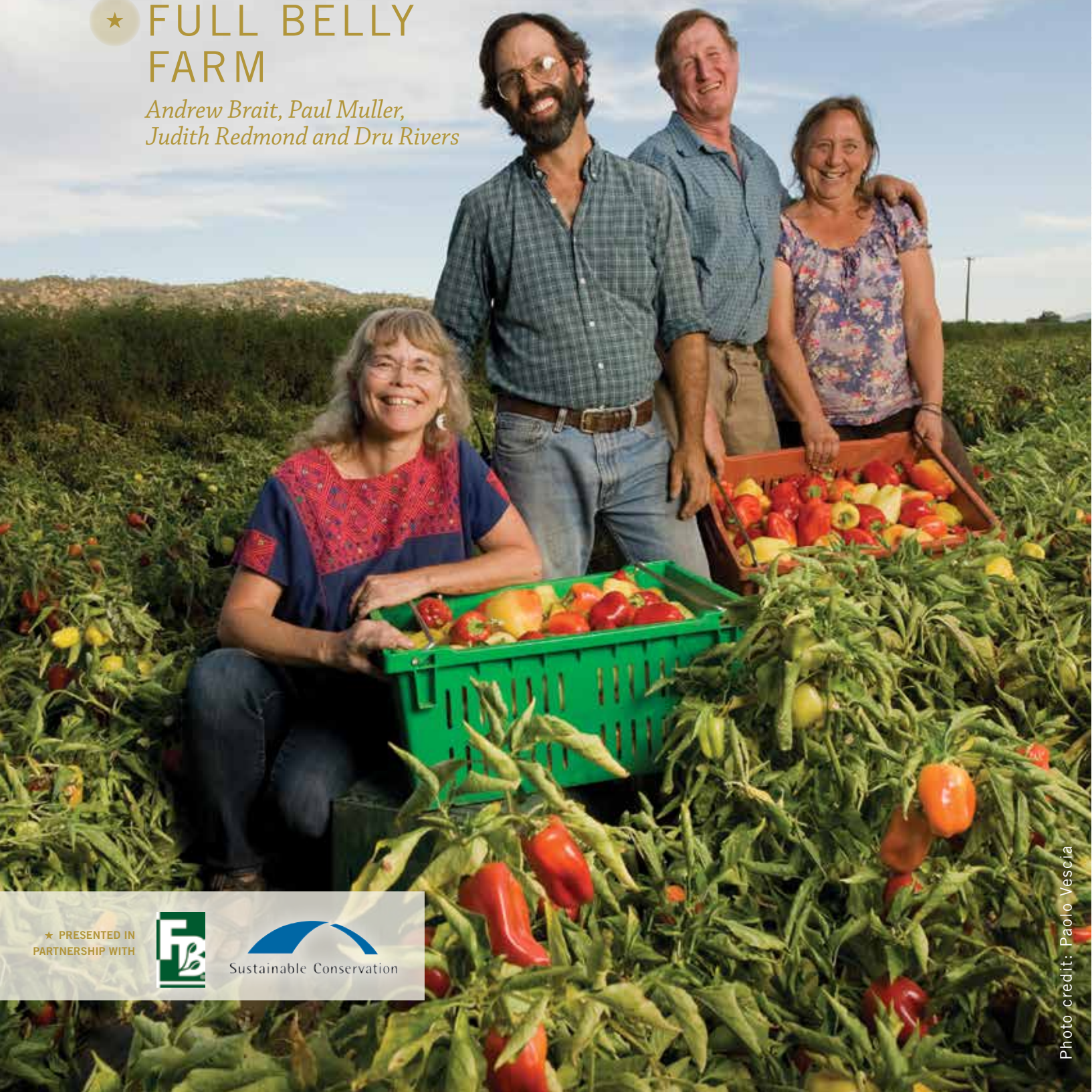


Photo credit: Paolo Vescia

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Sustainable Conservation



★ FULL BELLY FARM  
Sacramento, California



LEOPOLD CONSERVATION AWARD



### ★ PAST CALIFORNIA RECIPIENTS

- ★ 2013 GIACOMINI DAIRY  
*Bob, Karen, Diana, Lynn and Jill Giacomini*
- ★ 2012 GIACOMAZZI DAIRY  
*Dino and Julie Giacomazzi*
- ★ 2011 KOOPMANN RANCH  
*Tim Koopmann*
- ★ 2010 MONTNA FARMS  
*Al Montna*
- ★ 2009 RED ROCK RANCH  
*John Diener*
- ★ 2008 THREE CREEKS RANCH  
*Chet Vogt*
- ★ 2007 SIERRA ORCHARDS  
*Craig and Julie McNamara*
- ★ 2006 LANGETWINS WINE ESTATES  
*Brad and Randy Lange*

Located northwest of Sacramento, Full Belly Farm is co-owned by **ANDREW BRAIT, PAUL MULLER, JUDITH REDMOND AND DRU RIVERS**. They began farming together in the 1980's when many farms were failing and there was no established organic produce marketing system. The owners are dedicated to exceptional land stewardship and strive to balance the farm's bottom line with environmentally sound practices.

Since 1985, Full Belly Farm has been a California Certified Organic farm and an industry leader. Its owners believe the diversity of crops grown on the farm – annuals, perennials, grain, native plant hedgerows, and animals – contributes to both its ecological and economic resilience in the face of climate changes or crop failures. The farm successfully utilizes diverse management practices and innovations that incorporate both conventional and sustainable agriculture including soil health, riparian and habitat improvement, agrobiodiversity, crop and animal product diversity.

The farm pioneered a variety of innovative enterprise, marketing and outreach strategies that allow the business to grow and support a year-round work force. A solar plant provides energy for the irrigation

and cooler systems, and most row crops are irrigated with buried drip systems and orchards with micro-sprinklers. It pioneered Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farming and now serves 1,200 families each week. Products are also sold at farmers markets, in restaurants and stores and to distributors.

With nearly 90 full-time employees, Full Belly Farm conducts highly effective sustainable agriculture education and outreach efforts in Northern California. Popular summer camps for youth and an adult internship program inspire and teach future farmers. Urban consumers are reached through social media, the CSA food box program, informational booths and food sales at farmers' markets, and through tours and special events at the farm. More than 30 organizations benefit from funds raised at the annual Hoes Down Harvest Festival, and the farm owners actively participate in leadership roles of various agricultural organizations.

Thomas Tomich, Ph.D., University of California, Davis writes, "These remarkable farmers and the beautiful farm operation they steward jointly epitomize the ethical relationship between people and the land that Aldo Leopold articulated for us all, combining passion, purpose and science."



# COLORADO

★ **TURKEY CREEK RANCH**  
*Walker Family*



Photo credit: Lisa Sowell, Tri-State G&T



**LEOPOLD CONSERVATION AWARD**

★

**TURKEY CREEK RANCH**  
*Fort Carson, Colorado*

Turkey Creek Ranch, sandwiched between the U.S. Army's Fort Carson and the growing urban community of Pueblo West, is owned and operated by **GARY AND GEORGIA WALKER**, and consists of approximately 65,000 deeded acres managed for both wildlife and livestock.

The Walkers' ranch has been described as an island of intact natural systems, native species and quiet, open spaces. It is home to significant populations of three rare, indigenous plants and native wildlife species, including elk, deer, pronghorn and wild turkey. Management decisions, including even basic visitation to some areas of the property, are governed by the potential impact on wildlife.

"Few, if any, ranches of such size and natural condition remain so close to a major Colorado metropolitan area, a testament to the landowner who values his home and the land surrounding it for far more than development value," wrote Matt Moorhead of The Nature Conservancy in a nomination letter.

The act of cattle ranching and wildlife management go hand in hand, and the life's work of the Walkers proves it. Under a Safe Harbor Agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, they successfully re-introduced black footed ferrets, which were once thought to be extinct. A total of 55 ferrets were released on the ranch in 2013, reviving the species' presence in the region and providing a natural predator of the prairie dog.

The Walkers' forethought and long-term planning has also included the installation of pipelines, water storage tanks and stock ponds, playing an integral role in the viability of the Turkey Creek Ranch as a home to livestock and wildlife.

The Walkers are lauded by community leaders and fellow ranchers for their steadfast commitment to the land, wildlife and environment for the benefit of generations to come.

★ PAST  
★ COLORADO  
★ RECIPIENTS

★ 2013  
VISINTAINER SHEEP CO.  
*Dean and Gary Visintainer*

★ 2012  
WINEINGER-DAVIS RANCH  
*Russell and Tricia Davis*

★ 2011  
PIPE SPRINGS RANCH  
*McEndree Family*

★ 2010  
STANKO RANCH  
*Jim and Jo Stanko*

★ 2009  
MESA DE MAYA RANCH  
*John and Carolyn Doherty*

★ 2008  
COLEMAN RANCH  
*Jim, Frances, Tim and Teddi Coleman*

★ 2007  
SAN ISABEL RANCH  
*Mike and Sara Shields, Bet Kettle*

★ 2006  
BOHART RANCH  
*Dick and Sandra Tanner*

★ 2005  
MCNEIL RANCH  
*Mike and Cathy McNeil*

★ 2004  
RUSK HEREFORD RANCH  
*Randy and Claricy Rusk*

★ 2003  
CAPPS RANCH  
*Frankie and Sue Menegatti*

★ PRESENTED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust



**TRI-STATE**  
Generation and Transmission Association, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative





# KENTUCKY

## ★ SPRINGHILL FARMS *The Peery Family*



★ SPRINGHILL FARMS  
*Clinton, Kentucky*

While growing up in Hickman County in western Kentucky, **JERRY PEERY** operated a tractor on his father's farm starting at the age of seven. He farmed side-by-side with him during his teenage years, and began farming on his own after graduating from high school in 1957.

Today, Jerry and Valarie live and farm on the first piece of land they bought together in 1967. By purchasing other farms, their Springhill Farms operation has grown to nearly 1,600 acres of cropland, with 200 additional acres of unplanted land, and 300 acres of rented farmland.

Consistently seeking out new technologies and methods for improving their row crop operation, the Peerys began experimenting with no-till farming more than 40 years ago, before many farmers had considered it. They adopted a 100 percent no-till practice on every acre around 1985.

Dedication to conservation, especially soil health and water quality, led the Peerys to plant different varieties and blends of cover crops after harvest to protect the land from erosion while putting nutrients and organic matter into the soil. By constructing grass waterways and filter strips on the farm, they control gully erosion and filter rainwater runoff to protect water quality and limit soil erosion while reducing time and resources required to prepare fields for crops production.

These conservation practices, combined with the use of precision farming technologies to manage inputs like seeds and fertilizer, have lowered overall operating costs while increasing crop production. At the same time, valuable habitat and forage has been maintained for many species of wildlife.

Through their lifelong work, the Peerys are leaving a conservation legacy for their children, grandchildren and generations to come. They teach their belief that it is their moral and spiritual responsibility to do everything they can to leave the land in better condition than when they began farming it.

★ PAST  
★ KENTUCKY  
★ RECIPIENTS

★ 2013  
SHERWOOD ACRES  
FARMS  
*Jon & Sylvia Bednarski*





# NEBRASKA



## ★ PELSTER ANGUS RANCH

*The Pelster Family*

★ PRESENTED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



★ PELSTER ANGUS RANCH  
*Ericson, Nebraska*

When **DUANE AND NANCY (MALMSTEN) PELSTER** married in 1961, they began ranching with Nancy's father Marden, who shared their focus on the value of the land. His belief was, "If you're good to the land, the land will be good to you and future generations." Marden, and his father before him, Carl, were determined to preserve the natural integrity of the ranch from the beginning of the operation in 1934.

Years later, Duane and Nancy leased and then assumed ownership of the ranch as the third generation to manage this land along the Cedar River in the Nebraska Sandhills, one of the most fragile and ecologically unique landscapes in the world.

Duane's ongoing development of a management plan has increased livestock profitability and land health simultaneously. He is committed to responsible, sustainable land management and is recognized as helping to pioneer the use of rotational grazing in the area. The Pelsters' moderate and steady approach to grazing has resulted in good overall plant health across the ranch, especially during extended periods of drought. The cattle are never started in the same pasture two years in a row.

Through the rest-rotation grazing plan and on-going cedar and weed control, grass health has increased

and wildlife have thrived. Prairie chickens, deer, duck and geese abound on the ranch in addition to a pond with a family of otters. The practice of leaving standing grass for nesting and fawning has also enabled limited sustainable hunting on the ranch.

Over the years, the Pelsters have reduced the risk of soil damage and made conditions better for livestock and wildlife by installing over 25 miles of pipeline. And nearly 80,000 coniferous trees have been planted to provide shelterbelts and windbreaks on the ranch. To benefit water quality, Duane decommissioned 27 wells and made a special effort to maintain healthy stands of riparian vegetation along the entire length of the Cedar River on the ranch.

Duane and Nancy's desire for the land to stay in production drives their practices and decisions. Thanks to their commitment, dedication and vision, their goal of seeing the next generation enter and succeed in ranching is on the way to becoming reality, as their children and grandchildren are now involved in the operation. "Duane's conservation ethic has resulted in high quality grassland habitat across the entire ranch," said the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Kyle Graham in a nomination letter. "This management model is now emulated by area landowners seeking the same results."

## ★ PAST NEBRASKA RECIPIENTS

★ 2013  
BEEL RANCH  
*Beel Family*

★ 2012  
SHOVEL DOT RANCH  
*Buell Family*

★ 2011  
RGM Corporation  
*Mathewson Family*

★ 2010  
KALKOWSKI FAMILY RANCHES  
*Kalkowski Family*

★ 2009  
BLUESTEM VALLEY FARMS  
*Lyle and Alice Sittler, Kristen and Todd Eggerling*

★ 2008  
CALF CREEK AND 4-O RANCHES  
*A.B.Cox*

★ 2007  
CHRISTEN RANCH  
*Rod and Amy Christen*

★ 2006  
WILSON RANCH  
*Blaine and Bryan Wilson*



# SOUTH DAKOTA

## ★ ROCK HILLS RANCH

*Perman Family*



★ ROCK HILLS RANCH  
*Lowry, South Dakota*

LEOPOLD  
CONSERVATION  
AWARD



### ★ PAST ★ SOUTH DAKOTA ★ RECIPIENTS

★ 2013  
GUPTILL ANGUS  
*Guptill Family*

★ 2012  
KOPRIVA ANGUS  
*Kopriva Family*

★ 2011  
MORTENSON RANCH  
*Mortenson Family*

★ 2010  
DOUD RANCH  
*Rick and Marlis Doud*

Holistic resources management focused on long-term sustainability is a way of life at Rock Hills Ranch. **LYLE AND GARNET PERMAN, ALONG WITH THEIR SON, LUKE AND HIS WIFE, NAOMI**, raise crops and Angus cattle on the 7,500-acre ranch near Lowry.

Previous owners of the property operated a dairy and crop farm on marginal soils. But Lyle's father began the process of planting the tillable ground back to grass and alfalfa.

Over the years, the Permans learned more about grazing management and started adding cross-fencing in pastures, conservation-minded cropping practices and water developments like dugouts and pipelines. Their stewardship extended to protecting water quality, enhancing native plant communities, improving soil health and providing high quality wildlife habitat. Today, their diversified operation also includes hosting hunting groups and eco tours.

Lyle has taken a keen interest in how land management practices and soil health affect water infiltration, runoff, water quality and watershed hydrology. Decisions to institute rotational grazing, adopt no-till practices and plant cover crops were made to keep water on the land.

"Our number one goal is not to let a drop of water leave the ranch," Lyle said.

Beyond engaging in exemplary stewardship on their own land, the Permans actively share their story with others.

"The willingness and commitment to telling the story of sustainable farming and ranching...is one of the things that set the Perman family apart," said South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks Senior Wildlife Biologist Tim Olson in a nomination letter. "Lyle and his family strive to help the general public understand that raising high quality beef can indeed be compatible with maintaining and even enhancing the quality of grassland and wetland resources."

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PARTNERSHIP WITH





# TEXAS

## ★ WINSTON 8 RANCH

*Winston family*



★ PRESENTED IN  
PARTNERSHIP WITH



Photo credit: Earl Nottingham, Texas Parks & Wildlife

When the **WINSTON FAMILY** acquired their property just south of Nacogdoches in the 1980s, it was largely land that had been cut and not replanted. Since then, it has been carefully restored and transformed into a showplace on how to produce timber and quality wildlife habitat.

Today, Virginia Winston and sons, Simon and Dee, own and operate the 3,400-acre Winston 8 Ranch, a verdant medley of pine forest, longleaf pine, open range and wetlands providing food and shelter for a resurging population of white-tailed deer, northern bobwhite quail and wild turkey.

The property is used regularly by the College of Agriculture and Forestry at Stephen F. Austin State University for fieldwork and research and by state and federal agencies in East Texas as a demonstration area on forest management. It is also a destination for educational and recreational opportunities. Through a partnership with the National Wild Turkey Federation, the Winstons have hosted students and disabled hunters at special events on the ranch.

Dedicated to sound management principles and stewardship, the Winstons have implemented an active wildlife habitat improvement program that involves

timber management, prescribed burning, invasive species control and native habitat restoration. The family uses prescribed burning to reduce the threat of wildfires and to provide wildlife species, such as the eastern wild turkey, with places to nest near places to feed.

They have restored 180 acres of native longleaf pine, thinned 700-plus acres of loblolly pine to promote forest health and cleared and seeded 93 acres for native grass and forbs. Interspersed throughout the upland open pine habitat are more than 500 acres of riparian/wetland habitat and approximately 90 acres of native grasses and forbs growing in openings and on pipeline right-of-ways.

“The Winston legacy and dedication to stewardship is entrenched in their core family values,” said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist Jeffrey A. Reid in his nomination of the Winston 8 Ranch. “When John Winston acquired the property, it was largely a cutover tract of land. Intensive planting, management, and harvesting have led this property to be held up as one of the premier examples of multiple use forest land and open pine management.”



LEOPOLD  
CONSERVATION  
AWARD

★  
**WINSTON 8 RANCH**  
*Lufkin, Texas*



### ★ PAST ★ TEXAS ★ RECIPIENTS

★ 2013  
BUCKHOLLOW AND  
STOCKARD-SIRIANNI  
RANCHES  
*Jack and Jan Cato*

★ 2012  
COOK'S BRANCH  
CONSERVANCY  
*Mitchell Family*

★ 2011  
TEMPLE RANCH  
*Buddy & Ellen Temple*

★ 2010  
ANDERSON RANCH  
*Jim Bill Anderson*

★ 2009  
SELAH, BAMBERGER  
RANCH PRESERVE  
*J. David Bamberger*

★ 2008  
LLANO SPRINGS  
RANCH  
*The Vandivier Family*

★ 2007  
77 RANCH  
*Gary and Sue Price*

★ 2006  
TREADWELL BRADY  
RANCH  
*John and Brian Treadwell*

★ 2005  
RICHARDS RANCH  
*John and Brent Hackley*



# UTAH

## ★ JOHNSON MOUNTAIN RANCH LLC

*Johnson Family*



### ★ PAST UTAH RECIPIENTS

- ★ 2013  
H.A. FARMS  
*Stowell Family*
- ★ 2012  
HEATON LIVESTOCK COMPANY  
*Heaton Family*
- ★ 2011  
RED PINE LAND AND LIVESTOCK  
*Osguthorpe Family*
- ★ 2010  
DELLA RANCHES  
*Tanner Family*
- ★ 2009  
TAVAPUTS RANCH  
*Butch and Jeanie Jensen*
- ★ 2008  
JOHNSON RANCH  
*Darrell and Carol Johnson*
- ★ 2007  
HAROLD SELMAN, INC.  
*Fred and Laura Selman*

Johnson Mountain Ranch is owned and operated by Stuart Johnson with this wife, Carma, along with their son, Jared and his wife, Ginger. Stuart's grandfather started the original family farm and ranch in Utah's Sevier Valley in 1904.

**THE JOHNSONS** run a herd of cow calf pairs and replacement heifers during summer and fall. In order to keep the herd during the winter and spring, the family has made great efforts to acquire additional grazing land and improve what they manage. They purchased winter grazing permits on the San Rafael Desert and have purchased spring range to make the operation more complete for grazing all year on very different landscapes.

With help from The Grazing Improvement Program, NRCS, Division of Wildlife Resources, USU Extension and others, the family has worked to improve the health

and productivity of the ranch. Their practices include developing a rotational grazing program, removing juniper and other brush and reseeding spring range infested with cheat grass.

Wildlife is always considered when determining which seeds are planted, how fences are built and how pastures will be utilized. The Johnsons manage the ranch as a Cooperative Wildlife Management Unit and have hosted hunters for over 50 years.

"As our range improves...our cattle are becoming more productive. Production costs decrease as the grazing season is extended," Stuart Johnson said. "Our goal is to take the opportunities we have been given by those who struggled before us and through our efforts be able to continue their legacy for future generations. We can only do that by making sure our land is healthy and productive."

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# WISCONSIN

## ★ HERRICKS DAIRY FARM

*Herricks Family*



★ PRESENTED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



### ★ PAST WISCONSIN RECIPIENTS

★ 2013  
CATES FAMILY FARM  
*Dick & Kim Cates*

★ 2012  
HEBBE FAMILY FARM  
*Jim & Val Hebbe*

★ 2011  
BRAGGER FAMILY DAIRY  
*Joe & Noel Bragger*

★ 2011  
KOEPKER FARMS INC.  
*Koepke Family*

★ 2008  
TERRY PETERS\*

★ 2006  
GERRY MICH\*

*\* Presented in partnership with the Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association*

Jack and Pat Herricks, along with two of their three children, operate a 600-cow dairy farm in Cashton in the rolling hills of Monroe County.

**THE HERRICKS** have practiced no-till farming since 1992 before many farmers had considered it. Jack made up his mind to become a no-till farmer when he could see erosion on his cropland. Today, erosion is reduced substantially, even on the steep hillsides the family farms.

Inspired by his father's land ethic, Jack Herricks' decades-long commitment to conservation has proven that good land management and profitability go hand in hand. In addition to no-till farming, the Herricks' practices include reduction of runoff into area waterways, forestry management, enhancement of wildlife habitat and careful manure management.

Sod waterways allow rainwater to run on grass to the stream below. Where a great deal of water comes together, the Herricks have built erosion control structures to prevent damage downstream. The

structures also maintain a pool of water that benefits wildlife on the farm.

Water quality in Brush Creek has improved with help from the Herricks' conservation efforts. The waterway was considered a dead trout stream some twenty years ago. But today, it is a Class 3 trout stream with active natural reproduction of fish.

The family also made a decision to stop grazing in the farm's woodland areas. Over time, natural re-vegetation of oak, maple and hickory trees has taken place.

"When I think of farmers as conservationists, one farmer comes to mind as having a truly contagious passion for agriculture and natural resources: Jack Herricks," said Monroe County Soil & Water Conservationist, Bob Micheel. "Jack has shown leadership in wise land use management by always stepping up and addressing land use issues, even if it meant taking some risks. He took those risks because he acutely understands taking care of the land means that it will take care of you, and, in turn, protect his farm for the future."



# WYOMING

## ★ LADDER RANCH

*O'Toole Family*



LADDER RANCH  
Savery, Wyoming



### ★ PAST ★ WYOMING ★ RECIPIENTS

★ 2013  
PADLOCK RANCH  
*Sommers Family*

★ 2012  
SOMMERS RANCH  
*Sommers Family*

★ 2011  
FIELDGROVE RANCH  
*Ryan & Teresa Fieldgrove*

★ 2010  
7E RANCH  
*Ron and Linda Heward*

★ 2009  
FOY RANCH  
*Rocky and Nancy Foy*

★ 2008  
PAPE RANCH  
*Norm and Barbara Pape*

★ 2007  
GOLDEN WILLOW  
RANCH  
*Paul and Catherine  
Kukowski*

★ 2006  
BARLOW  
LIVESTOCK, INC.  
*Glenn and Joy Barlow*

**PAT AND SHARON O'TOOLE** were always taught to keep one eye on the livestock and one eye on the landscape of Ladder Ranch, because one does not do well without the responsible management of the other.

Established in 1881 by A.W. and Anna Louise Salisbury near the confluence of the Little Snake River and Battle Creek, Ladder Ranch has been home to six generations, raising cattle since the 1920s.

Sharon Salisbury O'Toole grew up on the ranch and now runs the balanced cattle and sheep operation with her husband, Pat, son, Eamon, daughter, Meghan and their spouses. Daughter, Bridget and her husband help with marketing. The family also raises Quarter Horses, Border collies and livestock guardian dog, and operates a ranch recreation business.

Conservation stewardship has always been important to the family, beginning with a rotational grazing system using private and public lands in the 1950s.

The O'Tooles have implemented beneficial river projects with Wyoming Game and Fish, Little Snake River Conservation District and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Partners Program. These integrate the fishery and the irrigation system.

The O'Tooles also work to protect and enhance habitat for Greater sage-grouse and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse. The ranch is home to a Wyoming Audubon Important Bird Area and provides critical winter range to deer and elk. In recent years, antelope migrate to their high country pastures.

With a goal of giving future generations an opportunity to work the land and protect their beloved landscape and its wild and domestic inhabitants, the O'Tooles are involved in their community. They are proud to promote conservation values in Wyoming and beyond.

★ PRESENTED IN  
PARTNERSHIP WITH







The 2014 Leopold Conservation Award was made possible through the generous support of:

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The Nature Conservancy  
Environmental Defense Fund  
SILVER  
Bob Giacomini  
Craig McNamara

★ COLORADO ★

PLATINUM  
American AgCredit  
Peabody Energy  
Tri-State Generation & Transmission  
GOLD  
USDA NRCS  
SILVER  
Michael Dowling

★ KENTUCKY ★

GOLD  
USDA NRCS  
SILVER  
Farm Credit Mid-America  
Kentucky Department of Agroculture  
Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation  
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★ NEBRASKA ★

PLATINUM  
Cargill  
Nebraska Environmental Trust  
SILVER  
Farm Credit SERVICES of America  
Nebraska Cattlemen Research  
& Education Foundation  
Rainwater Basin Joint Venture  
Sandhills Taskforce  
Tri-State Generation & Transmission  
World Wildlife Fund

★ SOUTH DAKOTA ★

GOLD  
South Dakota Department of Agriculture  
South Dakota Department of  
Environment & Natural Resources  
Discovery Center  
South Dakota Department of  
Game, Fish & Parks  
South Dakota Farm Bureau Federation  
South Dakota State University Foundation  
USDA NRCS

SILVER  
American State Bank  
Belle Fourche River Watershed

Daybreak Ranch  
Ducks Unlimited  
Millborn Seeds  
Mortenson Family  
Professional Alliance

South Dakota's Association of  
Conservation Districts  
The Nature Conservancy  
World Wildlife Fund Northern  
Great Plains

★ TEXAS ★

PLATINUM  
Lee and Ramona Bass Foundation  
GOLD  
Texas Parks & Wildlife Departmen

★ UTAH ★

PLATINUM  
Western AgCredit  
GOLD  
USDA NRCS  
SILVER  
Producers Livestock Marketing  
The Nature Conservancy  
Utah Farm Bureau Federation

★ WISCONSIN ★

GOLD  
Badgerland Financial  
Rural Mutual Insurance Company  
Wisconsin Corn Growers Association  
Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation  
Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board

SILVER  
Alliant Energy Foundation  
American Transmission Company (ATC)

★ WYOMING ★

PLATINUM  
Peabody Energy  
GOLD  
Monaghan Management  
SILVER  
Tri-State Generation & Transmission  
World Wildlife Fund

# Our Program is Growing!

Join Us!



*“There are two spiritual dangers to not owning a farm. One is the danger of supposing that breakfast comes from the grocery, the other that heat comes from the furnace.”*

- ALDO LEOPOLD  
A SAND COUNTY ALMANAC

**SHARE** in our vision – that extraordinary private landowner stewardship of our natural resources should be recognized, shared, and celebrated.

**SPONSOR** the Leopold Conservation Award® Program. With your support, you can help bring national recognition to agricultural land stewardship.

**CONTACT** Leopold Conservation Award Program Director, Dave Neu at [dneu@sandcounty.net](mailto:dneu@sandcounty.net) or 608.663.4605 Ext. 27





Sand County Foundation's mission is to advance the use of ethical and scientifically sound land management practices and partnerships for the benefit of people and the ecological landscape.

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