



Sheridan  
Community  
LAND TRUST  
Spring 2019



In valleys and draws, on the ranch and along the stream  
***YOU MAKE CONSERVATION HAPPEN***

Whether it's wide open views, a working ranch, clean water, or keeping pastures and draws free of noxious weeds, you know how important it is to conserve what makes Sheridan County so special. By that measure, 2019 has already been a banner year - and could well be one for the record books!





On a January afternoon, it was evident how the Deer Haven Conservation Easements got their names. The 113 acres provide habitat for songbirds and moose, guards 1.5 miles of streambank, and ensures prime hay ground can go from the current generation to the next generation of family farm. Not to mention conserving that view (below)!

On January 2, the Deer Haven Conservation Easements became the ninth and tenth voluntary conservation agreements under SCLT's aegis. Now 113 acres of prime hay ground is home to hundreds of deer, scores of songbirds, and one big bull moose - along with unbroken Bighorn views and 1.5 miles of streambank - are conserved.

Thanks to your help, that's 3,000 total acres of Sheridan County conserved! And momentum's building. Since Deer Haven was announced, several caring people have asked Brad to explore how a voluntary conservation agreement can ensure the hard work they've invested to keep their land productive for livestock and wildlife stays productive long after their working days are done.

This year, you've helped make the daily work of conservation happen, too.

This spring and summer we are working with landowners to remove Russian olive, a Wyoming designated noxious weed. Russian olive replaces native trees and shrubs along draws, irrigation ditches, and streams. Because of that, Russian olive's harm outweighs its benefits.

In response, SCLT has administered grants for landowners interested in removing Russian olive on their land. We've teamed up with the City of Sheridan to take down Russian olive on 10 acres of parkland. Once removed, the olives are chipped and used to mulch the native birch, alder, aspen, maple,







Peter Veinbergs can be seen removing and shredding invasive Russian olive from Hume Draw in early April. The Russian olive chips will be used as mulch for native riparian trees and shrubs planted in May. This partnership with the City of Sheridan is the largest of several Russian olive “remove and replace” projects that have been undertaken as a way to control a plant designated as “noxious.”



Ponderosa pine, hawthorn and chokecherry planted in its place. The circle of life comes full circle.

But that’s just one example of how you’re making the daily work of conservation happen.

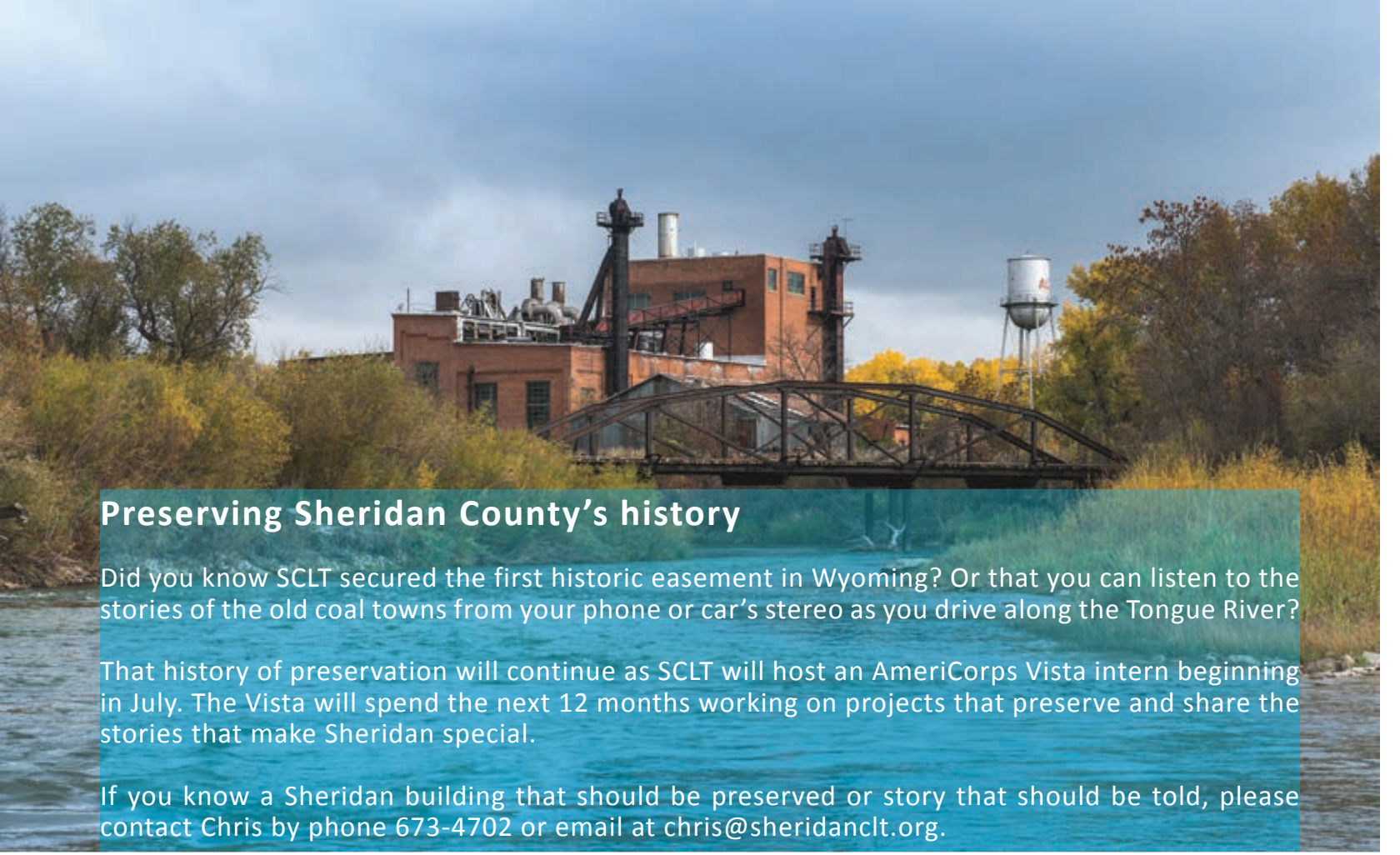
This summer, two other programs can help ranches maintain and even increase profitability. In partnership with Sheridan County Weed & Pest Control District, two interns will spend the summer going door-to-door teaching people how to identify and remove *Ventenata* and *Medusahead* - two



invasive grasses that have no forage value, decrease wildlife habitat, and dramatically increase fire risk. On June 27, a field workshop will demonstrate how cover crops suited for northeast Wyoming can be effectively and profitably incorporated into ag operations.

As you can see, 2019 is shaping up to be a banner year for conservation in Sheridan County - conservation that wouldn’t happen without you. If you’d like to take an even more active role in conservation through any of these programs, please contact Brad by phone (307) 673-4702 or email: [director@sheridancldt.org](mailto:director@sheridancldt.org).





## Preserving Sheridan County's history

Did you know SCLT secured the first historic easement in Wyoming? Or that you can listen to the stories of the old coal towns from your phone or car's stereo as you drive along the Tongue River?

That history of preservation will continue as SCLT will host an AmeriCorps Vista intern beginning in July. The Vista will spend the next 12 months working on projects that preserve and share the stories that make Sheridan special.

If you know a Sheridan building that should be preserved or story that should be told, please contact Chris by phone 673-4702 or email at [chris@sheridanc.lt.org](mailto:chris@sheridanc.lt.org).

## Welcoming three new board members

This winter, Scott Newbold, Sarah Wallick and Steve Maier joined SCLT's board. Here's why they volunteered to work for you:

*"It's hard to imagine a more forward-looking organization, with an awesome vision of preserving open space in Sheridan County. I owe thanks to Dan and Rosemary Rieder, Barbara and Charlie Walter, and of course Colin for introducing me to the SCLT years ago when we first moved to town. I've marveled and cheered at all SCLT has done ever since, and I'm honored to be affiliated with this group!" ~ Scott*

*"Syncing people up with nature's harmony changes lives." ~ Sarah*

*"I had the opportunity to work with SCLT as a county commissioner and to understand its mission and values. I'm fortunate now to be able to be part of SCLT as it continues to enhance Sheridan County." ~ Steve*



Scott Newbold, Sarah Wallick and Steve Maier bring enthusiasm, passion, and leadership to Sheridan Community Land Trust. The trio joined the board of directors this winter. They follow Dan Reider and Susanna Meyer, whose service goes beyond words. Meyer continues as an Emeritus member.

## During internship, Songer shares love of outdoors

A passion for the outdoors and a desire to share that passion with others led Mindy Songer to choose an internship with SCLT.

Whether its snowshoeing up Red Grade, using a Jake's to yank 'bows out of Big Goose (gold with red spots, she says), or pulling stuck trucks out with the wench on her FJ Cruiser, Mindy, a lifelong Sheridanite, has partaken in nearly every outdoor rite of passage to be had living in the shadow of the Bighorns.



She especially enjoyed watching those kids' eyes get wide and their smiles grow even wider as they saw chickadees, ducks and pheasants. The kids even investigated some of the owl pellets they found underneath several trees on the Trail End Historic Site grounds.

"They're so eager to learn about science!" she concluded.

Even though the school year's out, it's not a full "swan Songer" as Mindy has laid

Having frequented The Classic Soldier Ridge Trail and Red Grades Trails with family and friends, Mindy was quite intrigued when she learned SCLT, through the generosity of the Scott Foundation, sought a Sheridan College student to help expand outdoor education opportunities. After a couple conversations, she was on board.

Early on, Mindy edited the bumpers and transitions between films at last fall's Trailfest. She said it was "cool" to get to learn something new and fun - and even cooler that her work would help make a community event happen.

Of course, that wasn't her last community event. She's organized a suite of programs this spring, including a bird watch with Bighorn Audubon Society, a plant hike on Red Grade Trails, and a nature scavenger hunt as part of SCLT's ongoing UNPLUG collaboration with Science Kids.

"It's super fun!" she said of the events. "You get to meet people you may not have otherwise met and the kids have a great time."

the groundwork for UNPLUG's June and July events as well as cover crop field workshop coming up on Thursday, June 27.

Once she's finished at Sheridan College, Mindy plans to enroll at the University of Wyoming to study physiology prior to pursuing a medical degree in optometry. Mindy is the daughter of Brian and Moana Songer.

**SAVE THE DATE**

**TRAILFEST 2019**

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 24**

**RED GRADE TRAILS**

**ONE MORNING ONLY!**

**BIKE ON RUNNING TRAILS**

**RUN ON BIKING TRAILS**

**YOGA      STRIDER BIKES**

**FOOD      FAMILY      FUN**





## Making an important connection with Hidden Hoot

With 3 beautiful miles of natural habitat in a quiet, sheltered setting and a connection to Sheridan Pathways, *YOUR* new trail lets you go from your front door to the outdoors easier than ever before!

Saturday, April 13, 2019, is a day that will be quite important in the annals of Sheridan Community Land Trust History.

Why?

Because that's the day ground officially broke on Hidden Hoot Trail - a trail that's not just a welcome way for folks to walk, run, or ride without pavement underfoot, but a trail that connects directly to the City of Sheridan's extensive Pathway System.

What makes that connection so important?

Your desire for natural trails close to home has been a driver dating back to SCLT's first days. That desire is still strong. This spring, walking and biking trails topped the list of facilities most important

to Sheridan households. In a Parks and Recreation District survey, 2 of every 3 respondents deemed walking and biking trails as a top priority - that's 20% higher than the national average *and* 24% higher than parks! Third on Sheridan residents' priority list? Open space conservation areas and trails.

Hidden Hoot Trail checks all those boxes! Over the course of 3 miles, you'll get to enjoy a peaceful trek along Gillispie Draw - peaceful that is unless the frogs that fill ponds and wetlands are singing their spring chorus of chirps and croaks.

You'll also get to take in spectacular views of wide-open ranchland with the beautiful Bighorns as a backdrop. And because it connects to Sheridan Pathways, access is available anywhere!





When can I experience Hidden Hoot Trail, you ask? Soon.

The trail builders are building about 500 feet per day. If Mother Nature cooperates, the trail will be cut around the end of May.

Following behind the builders are a small army of people like you. With hammers and saws and drills, they're applying the finishing touches. On Easter Saturday, volunteers were hard at work turning a big pile of lumber and stone into 3 fully-built footbridges with the framework set for 2 more! And their work continues today.

Thank you for making Hidden Hoot Trail a reality. Everyone benefits from your help.

Want to help on Hidden Hoot and other trails this summer? Email our trails manager, Tami, at [trails@sheridanc.lt.org](mailto:trails@sheridanc.lt.org) or give her a call at 307-751-0735 to learn more. We'd love to work with you, and there's a way everyone can help.

Please be sure to follow Sheridan Community Land Trust on Facebook and Instagram for updates on Hidden Hoot Trail and other SCLT news. Once the trail's ready, we can't wait to share it with you. You're sure to have a hoot - a Hidden Hoot that is!

## Eaton's Ranch is 1st Proud Trail Maintainer

Great trails are an investment you've made in making Sheridan County a truly special place. To keep them great, they must be maintained - a cost of about 87 cents/foot annually. Local businesses know how important maintenance is, because like you, they've made that investment. That's why we created a "Proud Trail Maintainer" business sponsorship opportunity where every cent maintains your trails. In April, Eaton's Ranch saw that value and signed on as SCLT's first Proud Trail Maintainer. Will your business join them? Please contact Chris at (307) 673-4702 or email: [chris@sheridanc.lt.org](mailto:chris@sheridanc.lt.org) to learn how.

### Proud Trail Maintainer



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2019



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 Sheridan Community Land Trust

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[sheridanc.lt.org](http://sheridanc.lt.org)

*Sheridan Community Land Trust works to preserve our heritage of open spaces, healthy rivers and creeks, working ranches, wildlife habitat and vibrant history, while expanding non-motorized recreation opportunities to connect people with the places they love.*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## Upcoming programs and events

Don't forget to bring a friend



### Conservation Brown Bag Series

Wednesday, June 5<sup>th</sup> | Noon-1pm | Inner Circle, Fulmer Library

Hear from several Sheridan County conservation organizations each Wednesday in June and learn about the exciting work underway to benefit nature and people in your community.

### Cover Crops in Northeast Wyoming Field Workshop

Thursday, June 27<sup>th</sup> | 8am-2pm | UW Extension, 3401 Coffeen

Learn how you can effectively and profitably incorporate cover crops into your ranching operation as you hear from 3 speakers and tour 2 ranches. Lunch & transportation from Sheridan provided. There is no cost to attend. RSVP requested.

### UNPLUG: All About Bats

Tuesday, June 18<sup>th</sup> | 7pm | South Park, Sheridan

For this UNPLUG session WGF Bat Biologist Laura Beard will teach us all about our misunderstood flying friends. After the main session concludes, Beard has a special activity up her wing...er, sleeve for those who choose to stay. It'll be absolutely batty!

For more info or to RVSP, call 673-4702 or email [chris@sheridanc.lt.org](mailto:chris@sheridanc.lt.org).