



Sheridan
Community
LAND TRUST
Conservation | History | Recreation

Connecting people to land and history

Annual Report & Highlights

July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024





The past year has been filled with opportunities SCLT could hardly imagine when it was founded in 2006. In February, the SCLT office moved to a new home along Big Goose Creek at Bridges. In August, we threw the first Backyard BBQ to celebrate and invite everyone out to see the beautiful land that wouldn't be protected without their help. About 600 people joined us! Wow!

Flocking to our new home at the Big Goose Natural Area

Perhaps the greatest joy at a community nonprofit is turning the dreams of many into a reality for all. This year, SCLT saw what began as a dream nearly 20 years ago take giant strides toward reality.

As more and more people have connected with land and history through fun trails, fascinating history programs and tours, and formative experiences like Discovery Sessions, Unplugs, and volunteer opportunities, SCLT outgrew its increasingly sardine-tin-like upstairs office downtown.

Thankfully, the Homer A. and Mildred S. Scott Foundation offered a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to move to a new home at its Bridges property along Big Goose Creek just a few miles outside Sheridan.

It is a place where SCLT can showcase its core missions of conservation, historic preservation, and outdoor recreation in a space where everyone in our community can access and experience those missions working together to create meaning and memories that inspire people to ensure our beautiful Bighorns backyard remains beautiful for generations to come.

Of course, what good is a move if you don't have a move-in party? On Aug. 28, SCLT held its first Backyard BBQ, and boy, howdy, was it a bash! Upwards of 600 people flocked to our new home,

where they were able to tour the new-to-us office, the SCLT Community Rooms (already being used as meeting and learning space by local nonprofits!), enjoy great meats, tasty eats, games, face painting, and some *gen-u-ine* Western tunes from our fine friend and true troubadour, Tris Munsick.

A beyond-gorgeous late-summer evening culminated with the announcement of what may be the most impactful project in SCLT history: that the office, community rooms, and about 116 acres of pasture, grassland, and streamside adjoining it will become the future SCLT Big Goose Natural Area!

"It is a testament to the good work of SCLT," said Jenny Craft, Executive Director of the Homer A. and Mildred S. Scott Foundation. She told the crowd the foundation believes that "investment in the community and our youth is vital for the future" and that its vision for Bridges is to "engage the community as we work to foster a premiere natural setting for active and passive uses for outdoor programming."

"We are excited to support SCLT and their valued mission," Craft said, and, as she looked out at the crowd of 600, concluded, "It is easy to see why this is such a great partnership."

"Many, many, many of you have helped along the



way,” said SCLT Executive Director Brad Bauer, noting how community members have shared their time, talent, and treasure to create trails, protect land, and preserve history in Sheridan County. “At the beginning of the land trust’s time, a turnout of 20 people for an event like this was a success. I think we beat that by a little bit,” he relayed.

“This is an awesome opportunity. We will open the Big Goose Natural Area to you, to our community,” Bauer continued, asking, “What does it mean? Take a moment and dream with me.”

Bauer outlined a vision of connecting families and friends to land and history together. That’s morning walks on an amazing trail through the land, grandfathers teaching granddaughters how to fish during an evening hatch, and weekend floats down the water trail. That’s seeing conservation in action on the land with wildlife-friendly fences and in the water with streambank willow plantings. It’s learning about the people and cultures who have hunted, gathered, farmed, ranched, and called this land home for tens of thousands of years. And it’s learning about its future as groups gather for Discovery Sessions, Unplugs, Explore History, and other programs on the land and welcome center, and teach one another in the community rooms.

“Can you see it?” Bauer asked, and the crowd answered a resounding “YES!!” “I can see it, too. And it’s only possible because of you,” he said. “But we’re not there yet.”

SCLT is utilizing existing funds to purchase the property. For now, the land around the office is not

“We expect to invest just shy of a half million into the property over the next five years, making it all the much better for wildlife, continue to use it for agriculture, improve its use for education and recreation, and preserve the history that’s here.”

~ Brad Bauer on the opportunity of the SCLT Big Goose Natural Area ~

“Thank you for dreaming with us. We need your help. With it, those dreams will come true.”

open for public access. We will announce more details once this jewel is ready for the community. Until then, you are welcome to visit us at the SCLT office Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. We’ll give you a tour.

“Thank you for dreaming with us. We need your help, and with it, those dreams will come true,” Bauer concluded.

That’s how SCLT is turning the dreams of many into a reality for all with the Big Goose Natural Area.

Help make those dreams a reality.

To see the plans and make a gift to the Big Goose Natural Area, scan the QR code or visit SheridanCLT.org/SCLT-Big-Goose-Natural-Area.





Molly Schroeder holds the fence post as her son Tristan removes a strand of barbed wire during a fence removal volunteer night at Soldier Ridge in June. The mother-son duo enjoyed “making a difference together, volunteering in ways that help local landowners protect land and give Tristan valuable skills and experience.

Schroeders cherish ‘making a difference together’

“Be sure to check for snakes before grabbing the bottom wire.”

Molly Schroeder shared that sage-like wisdom high on a grassy hill while working with her son Tristan at a fence removal volunteer night at Soldier Ridge this summer. Thankfully, there weren’t any snakes under the wire, but they both felt a sense of pride knowing they had made it easier for wildlife like mule deer and antelope to move across this beautiful patch of paradise.

“It’s important to protect the vulnerable and to be faithful stewards,” Tristan reasoned. “I feel doing so will serve a sense of purpose for me.”

Molly said she has always encouraged Tristan to live “a life of service” and has tried to “set an example of getting involved.” That service also aligns with his love of wildlife and the outdoors, which he plans to pursue after high school. SCLT’s volunteer night served as an opportunity to see if the work aligned with his passion. He called it “educational, but also rewarding.”

“I obtained new skill sets and knew our work would be helpful and meaningful,” Tristan offered.

Seeing Tristan actively pursue his passion made it even easier for Molly to serve alongside her son, even if her only prior fencing experience came from working with the animal enclosures around their home.

“A good attitude and willingness to try is all that’s needed,” Molly asserted.

Volunteering was also a great way to spend quality time together. Tristan said having his mom there was “pretty great” because “I knew she was supporting my interests. “Any activity I can do with him is very special, but even more so knowing we were making a difference together,” Molly explained.

The mother-son duo also assisted at a wet meadow restoration volunteer day along Sixmile Creek outside Ranchester. There, they helped create stone structures that can control erosion, improve habitat for grassland birds like grouse and pheasants, restore soil water storage, and develop drought resiliency.



Volunteers shared their time and talents with the community in many ways, including helping with trail maintenance, fence removals, stream cleanups, wet meadow restoration, leading Discovery Sessions and Explore History programs, at events, and serving on the SCLT board and advisory committees. Thank you all!

That experience gave Tristan “peace of mind and an eagerness to do more” volunteer projects like these that can help wildlife and conservation locally.

“We should encourage more projects that help our wildlife and their environment. The more people who not only read about the efforts being made but understand it through their own hands, the better we

“We need to recognize and support the landowners who are putting forth the effort and expense to work with nature rather than against it. Volunteering for these events is a meaningful way to do so.”

~ Molly Schroeder about why she values volunteering on projects that help ranchers work with wildlife.

all can be,” Tristan concluded.

Molly echoed her son’s sentiment: “Although we only helped with a small part of a larger project, we did something, and that’s fulfilling.”

She also praised the other volunteers who shared their time to help protect the land. “Families are busy. It’s easy to show interest and then find a reason not to take the time to volunteer, consequentially missing out on what could be an impactful experience,” Molly closed.

Has Molly and Tristan’s story inspired you? SCLT offers many ways you can connect to land and history through fence removals, trail maintenance, stream cleanups, history programs, and more. To give back in ways you find fulfilling, scan the QR code or visit SheridanCLT.org/Volunteer/Volunteer-Sign-Up.





Ms. Nina Amos, President of the 9th & 10th Horse Cavalry Association, speaks about the legacy of the Iron Riders. She was one of several guests from around the nation who joined us on Juneteenth for events that honored the military achievement and celebrated the legacy of the group of Buffalo Soldiers whose 1,900-mile bicycle ride in 1897 is told in SCLT's newest GPS-based audio history tour: The Iron Riders Trail.

‘The Ride Continues’ as community celebrates the achievement and legacy of the Iron Riders

The searing heat cooled, the wind died down, and the chairs on the Historic Sheridan Inn’s lawn soon overflowed with people. It was as if the stars and stripes aligned for a celebration that was equal parts historical, educational, and patriotic.

a deep dive into the story of these veterans, many of whom went on to serve in wars in Cuba and the Philippines.

The Juneteenth events were held to officially launch of SCLT’s newest GPS-based history tour: The Iron Riders Trail. The tour takes listeners through the harrowing story of a group of Buffalo Soldiers who, in 1897, rode bicycles from Fort Missoula to St. Louis - a journey of 1,900 miles!

Kevin Smith, a Park/Site Historic Specialist with

Missouri State Parks, narrated an audio tour brought to life by Sheridan-based voice actors Dan Cole and Ryan Legler.

“It is my hope the Sheridan community felt, from our Juneteenth visit, a sense of prideful history and hopefully created a new memorable part of ‘The Ride Continues - Preserving, Promoting and Perpetuating the History of the Buffalo Soldiers.’”
 ~ Bobby McDonald, Greater Los Angeles Chapter of the 9th & 10th Horse Cavalry Association.

Smith said the tour is “beyond what I could have

imagined,” and the celebration “made my wife and I feel as if we were family and welcome.”

The tour starts at the Historic Sheridan Inn and concludes in Clearmont. It allows riders to see the land through the eyes of the Iron Riders while taking

He described visiting Sheridan and the Juneteenth celebration events as an “overwhelming experience.” “SCLT really put together an outstanding program



Large crowds gathered at Iron Riders events at the WYO Theater and the Historic Sheridan Inn. Above, audience members honor the colors the American Legion Post #7 Color Guard presented as Beck Bridger Dahmke sang the national anthem.

that brought together members of the community and guests from across the country to be involved in a unique celebration of a little-known story,” he offered.

Bobby McDonald, a Greater Los Angeles Chapter member of the 9th & 10th Horse Cavalry Association, echoed that sentiment. He hoped programs like SCLT’s “showcase the positive local community celebration experiences encountered along the Iron

Riders’ five-state route.”
“Visiting Sheridan encapsulated the vision and the positive spirit of this celebratory local community” McDonald reflected.

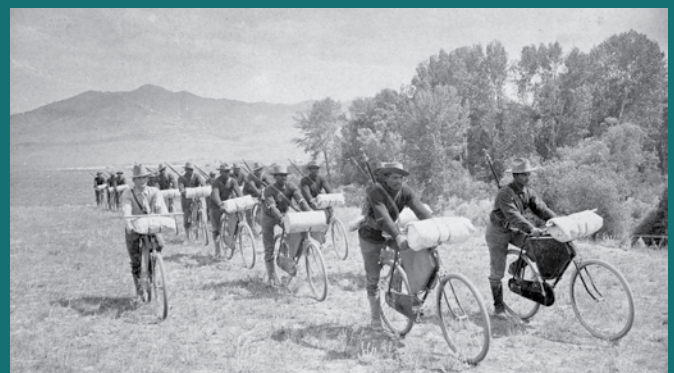
In that spirit, the Iron Riders Trail driving/biking tour that r vision of “The Ride Continues” by preserving, promoting, and perpetuating the history of Buffalo Soldiers.

Drive or ride into history on the Iron Riders Trail tour

SCLT’s newest history tour lets you drive or ride into history as you follow the route the 25th Infantry Regiment rode across Sheridan County in 1897 on the U.S. Army’s “Great Bicycle Experiment.”

Kevin Smith, a Park/Site Historic Specialist with Missouri State Parks, shares why the story of the Iron Riders fascinates folks across generations and cultures.

“I believe the story touches people in a way that not many do. There are so many layers to the Iron Riders story. The epic journey of the Iron Riders is one of determination that connects with anyone who has served or has family who has served in the military, ridden a bicycle, or visited any of the locations where



the Iron Riders stopped. This story is a reminder of the diverse narratives and multifaceted aspects that make up American history.”

Want to drive or ride into this story? Download the Iron Riders Trail and all of SCLT’s history tours by scanning the QR code or visit SheridanCLT.org/Tours.



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Margie Taylor

All contributor lists reflect the period beginning on July 1, 2023, and ending on June 30, 2024. The 2024-25 Annual Report will recognize contributions received after that date. If you do not see your name, please get in touch with Chris Vrba at (307) 673-4702 or Chris@SheridanCLT.org. We want to ensure you receive the recognition you've earned. If you want to become a Legacy Circle member, please get in touch with Brad Bauer at (307) 673-4702 or Director@SheridanCLT.org.

Empower Your Philanthropy - Alternative Ways to Give

Gifts of Stocks or Appreciated Assets: Donating stocks, bonds, or mutual funds that have appreciated over time can be a tax-savvy way to support our cause. If you've owned these assets for over a year, you can avoid paying capital gains tax and potentially deducting the full market value on your tax return. This means SCLT receives a larger donation than if you sold the assets and donated the after-tax proceeds, while you benefit from a greater tax deduction.

Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs): If you are 70½ years or older, you can give up to \$100,000 directly from your IRA to qualified charities like SCLT without including the distribution in your taxable income. A QCD can be a strategic way to meet your required minimum distribution (RMD) for the year, reducing your taxable income and potentially lowering your tax bill.

Grants from Donor Advised Funds (DAFs): Donor Advised Funds put you in the driver's seat when it comes to managing your charitable giving. You can receive an immediate tax deduction when you contribute to your DAF and then recommend grants to SCLT over time. This allows you to strategically plan your giving and potentially grow your funds tax-free, increasing the impact of your donations. Learn more and make a gift by scanning the QR code or visiting SheridanCLT.org/Get-Involved/Ways-To-Give.



Tribute Gifts

In Memory of Susan Bauer

Todd & Tracey Bauer

In Memory of Joe & Shirley Fletcher

Frank & Georgia Boley

In Memory of Gerald & Elizabeth Clarke

Edith & Gordon Clarke

In Memory of My Mom & Dad, Brother, & Nephew

Patti Denzler

In Memory of Susan Thorne

"She was happiest in the mountains."
~ Nan Fogel & Sarah Mentock

In Honor of Christopher Hayden

Mandy Galloway

In Memory of Andrew (AJ) Johnson

Pamela A. Haik

In Memory of Neil Anderson

Patricia Kemper

In Honor of Pam Marks

Laura & Martin MacCarty

In Honor of Our Grandchildren

Lynda & Jim Mayer

In Memory of Kasaburo Okazaki (Kimura) and Masano Kimura

Kathryn & Timothy Mlsna

In Memory of Delores Madzia

Jason Nunez

In Memory of Justin Barela

"For you and your love of the outdoors and being active. Here's to you and your heavenly 14'ers."

~ Phil & Doris Ostrowski

In Memory of Raymond Plank

Heather Plank

In Honor of John R. Giurgevich

"Most Generous Neighbor Award, including snake relocation services."

~ Anonymous

In Memory of Penny Ritterbusch

John Ritterbusch

In Memory of Art Jackson

Anonymous

In Memory of Wayland Cato

Patsy & Hardy Tate

In Honor of Sheridan County Veterans

Tier One Bar Association

In Honor of Lander Fenn VanHoosier

Paul VanHoosier

In Memory of Gary Vrba & Garry Vokes

The Vokes Family

In Honor of Jean C. Walters

Laurie Walters Clark & John Clark

In Memory of Kyara Weikel

"Missing you here with me."
~ Lourdes Weikel

In Memory of Mimi Wold

"She believed teaching history is our future."
~ Todd Wold & Shelley Strong

In Memory of Jay Huckaby

"No better outdoorsman or friend."
~ Todd Wold & Shelley Strong

In Memory of Chief Master Sergeant Ray Strong

Todd Wold & Shelley Strong

Do you have a family member or friend who inspired love for Sheridan County? A tribute gift can ensure that what they love about Sheridan County continues to inspire others. Make your tribute at SheridanCLT.org/Donate or scan the QR Code.



Fiscal Year 2024 Financial Data (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024)

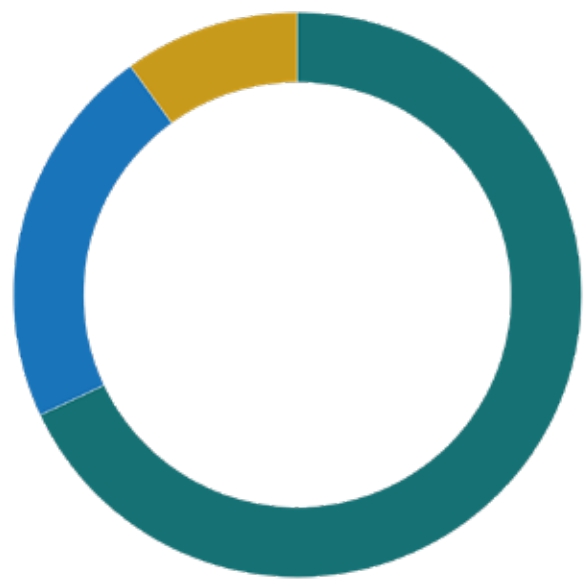
Revenue



Donor Contributions - \$478,441 - 49%
Investment Income - \$222,513 - 23%*
Government Grants - \$266,625 - 28%
Other Income - \$5 - 0.0%

*Primarily restricted for future community projects.

Expenses



Program Services - \$602,805 - 68%
Administration - \$195,025 - 22%
Fundraising - \$88,648 - 10%



Red Grade Trails offers visitors an opportunity to enjoy the mountains easily. One overlooked way to keep your outdoor adventures fresh and fun is to make alternate loops. SCLT Recreation Program Manager said the new trails out of the Aspens Trailhead are perfect opportunities to make longer adventures with “minimal to no backtracking.”

Need a new adventure? Try scooping the loops

Have you found an excellent spot you wanted to visit but looked on the map and saw it was too far away from the trailhead? Do you get bored with the same out-and-back route you have to take before seeing some new sights?

If that sounds like you, we’ve got great news: the new trails built at Red Grade Trails’ Aspens Trailhead this season are designed with alternate loops in mind so you can get to new terrain and new sights!

SCLT Recreation Program Manager Jared Koenig said Fire Up (bidirectional hiking and biking), Upper Let ‘em Roll (downhill biking only), and Upper Drifter (bidirectional hiking only) afford visitors ample opportunities to explore the mountain in new ways because the three trails all connect to upper and lower portions of Red Grade Trails. *Please note: These three trails were on track to be open this fall until the fire came and stopped everything.*

These alternate loops make it easier to see the many

scenic outlooks that afford breathtaking views of the mountain face and the valley. “They no longer require you to go trailhead hopping to visit your favorite spots,” he said. The short sections should also help clear congestion at popular places like Base Trailhead.

Want an example to try? Jared is particularly excited about Fire Up, which “takes you up one of the steepest

sections of the face and lets you explore the contrast of land that experienced a wildfire in 2007 and forest that escaped the flames side by side.”

Regardless of route, he said, visitors can enjoy the wildflower bloom from any loop as it works its way up the mountain each spring.

“It gives visitors a chance to see wonderful plants at different elevations,” he explained.

“Our trail systems have many exciting features that folks love visiting, like scenic outlooks. Alternate loops mean many features are only a fun hike or bike away.” ~ SCLT Recreation Program Manager Jared Koenig

Want to scoop the new trail loops? Get updated maps by scanning the QR Code or visit SheridanCLT.org/Recreation/Maps.





One of the hardest parts of trail maintenance is repairing damage on trails that turn from mud to concrete so quickly. SCLT's new two-wheel tractor has been a "game changer," fixing the trail faster while saving volunteers and staff hours of grueling labor!

A two-wheeled 'game changer' for your trails

It's rare that something billed as a "game changer" lives up to the hype. But SCLT's new two-wheel tractor has gone above and beyond in its first season.

"In five minutes, this machine can do what would take me and over ten volunteers an hour to do," SCLT Recreation Program Manager Jared Koenig gushed when he first put the two-wheel tractor to use repairing deep hoofprints on Hidden Hoot Trail.

The two-wheel tractor has done just that. This summer, it has reworked sections of Hidden Hoot, The Link, and Soldier Ridge. It's shined on Kicking Horse Trail, where, Koenig said, the damage would usually be fixed by "hours upon hours of grueling hand labor." The smoother trail is much easier for hikers' and runners' ankles and bikers. "We are going to use it every year. It will be a permanent and very important tool to keep the trails awesome!" he added.

Trail volunteer and mountain biker Rick Burchell said it has been amazing to see how much the two-wheel tractor has helped, noting it is "vital." "I have noticed pretty dramatic results as far as improved trail quality and the machine's ability to restore the trails to their original design," he concluded.

SCLT purchased the two-wheel tractor thanks to the generosity of a donor who wanted to make sure Jared had a

tool to improve the trails for everyone who visits. This year, Jared's "wish list" includes boot brush stations for trailheads to help keep invasive plants under control, vault toilets at trailheads, long-lasting posts and signs, weed eaters, a large bar chainsaw, and more hand tools to replace old and broken tools.

Want to make a "game changer" on the trails? Make a gift to purchase items from Jared's "wish list" by scanning the QR Code, visiting SheridanCLT.org/Donate, or email Jared at Jared@SheridanCLT.org.



"The new equipment used on Hidden Hoot is a game changer. It saves volunteer hours spent on repairing damaged sections of trail and allows us volunteers to work with Jared on priority projects."

~ Rick Burchell, SCLT trail volunteer and avid mountain biker ~

"I appreciate all of Jared's hard work on using the most effective and time-saving way of keeping our fantastic trail system in great shape."



Faith Ingwersen chose to protect the homestead where she was raised because she loves the land and thought it would be something her mother would have wanted kept “as our family heritage.”

Ingwersen conserves a ‘beautiful place with an alright ranch in the middle’

“I think it’s a beautiful place with an alright ranch in the middle,” Faith Ingwersen playfully opined as she talked about the B9 Ranch, which she permanently conserved in partnership with the Sheridan Community Land Trust.

Faith recalled a childhood on the Boswell family ranch along the banks of Soldier Creek, just over the hill from Beckton. There were no modern amenities. But there were her sister, Betty, and her mother, Anna. Together, the sisters ran sheep on the ranch’s hills and meadows until it was time for the girls to go to high school.

“In the summers, we were herding; in the winters, we were learning,” Faith reminisced. “The learning finally won out because we leased out the ranch at the end of the Second World War to move to Sheridan for school.”

Leaving the ranch was tough. She said they didn’t know anyone in Sheridan because they’d only travel to town twice a year for school supplies. She’d ride her horse to Soldier Creek School for classes.

That didn’t mean it was lonely on the ranch, “We had many kinds of animals,” she said; “they were our friends as well as our babies. We had to care for them and do the right thing by them, so they meant the world to us.”

When it finally came time to leave the ranch, Faith admits, “I had to be dragged kicking and screaming into town.”

Throughout Faith’s life, learning would win out. From Sheridan, she matriculated to Laramie, earning a bachelor’s and master’s degree in literature and political science. She next traveled to Norway to start her studies in Scandinavian Literature

at the University of Oslo. There, she met a Dane named Niels. They then enrolled at the University of Copenhagen and were married. After he completed military service, the Ingwersens settled stateside. Niels taught at the University of Wisconsin, was bestowed the honor of knighthood by the Queen of Denmark, and became an American citizen. Faith taught, wrote, translated, received a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, and edited an academic journal for some years.

A homing pigeon's epiphany

Through all the years and all her travels, Faith never forgot her Bighorns' home. About 25 years ago, Faith and Niels were driving through Montana. As they gazed at the gorgeous scenery of our northern neighbors, they dreamed of trading in the open fields of Wisconsin for a home with majestic mountain views.

"I used to think, 'If only we could live and work in such a place, but how could we do it?'" With retirement, the thoughts they had pondered for so long became an epiphany, "And suddenly," she had said to herself, "you do have a place to live here! Your home!"

Soon after, Faith and Niels set about restoring the old home and bunkhouse out by Beckton as their own. Together, the pair brought back electricity and plumbing to the buildings – amenities Faith had not enjoyed as a child. She felt lucky that Niels loved the land as she, her sister, Betty, and her mother, Anna, had. She described Niels beaming as bright as the lights in the old house when they could finally live there. When he passed away, she created a memorial garden in his memory.

When nearing ninety, Faith focused on the future of her foothills home. She chose to work with the Sheridan Community Land Trust to permanently protect her family ranch through the B9 Ranch Conservation Easement.

"I guess we're all homing pigeons, in reality," she laughed and explained, "I felt my mother would have loved to have kept the land as our family heritage, and I should do so if I could."

An eye-opening landscape

SCLT Conservation Director Meghan Kent said the B9 Ranch has been in continual agricultural production for over a century. It is also home to deer, elk, and antelope. The conservation easement, she explained, "ensures they have a place to roam as Sheridan County grows."

That's something Faith appreciates. "Seven deer were walking by the house this morning," she noted.

"It represents a valuable and intact landscape threatened by development," Meghan elaborated. "It is in the foothills area where many properties are being subdivided, and the long-term agricultural use is at risk of being lost."

SCLT utilized its new Conservation Revolving Fund to assist Faith with the upfront costs incurred conserving the ranch. A Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resources Trust grant aided the effort.

The B9 is not open to the public, but it is near other conserved lands, which Meghan said, "adds to a corridor of protected land for wildlife movement and open space far into the future."

"I felt my mother would have loved to have kept the land as our family heritage, and I should do so if I could!" ~ Faith Ingwersen on why she chose to conserve her family's ranch.

Faith is fond of the many trees growing on the ranch. She chose to conserve them so they, like the ranch, could stand the test of time. "I've always been told they were just junk trees. But they can live long if you care for them."

Words of wisdom that apply to more than trees.

"When I was very young, I didn't fully appreciate the landscape. I mean, it was just home," Faith mused, concluding, "It is almost as if you have to have your eyes opened by being somewhere else and doing something else."

And that's pretty good for an alright ranch in the middle of a beautiful place.

Are you interested in conserving your beautiful place? Contact Brad Bauer by email at Director@SheridanCLT.org, calling (307) 673-4702, scanning the QR code, or visiting [Sheridan.CLT.org/Land/Conservation](https://www.Sheridan.CLT.org/Land/Conservation).





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SheridanCLT.org



Because of you, Sheridan Community Land Trust preserves our open spaces, healthy rivers and creeks, working ranches, wildlife habitat and vibrant history, while expanding recreation opportunities to connect people with the places they love.

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