

# Leading in Conservation and Agriculture

The O'Toole's Ladder Ranch, located on the CO and WY border in one of the most effective conservation districts in the country, is proof that conservation and agricultural production go hand-in-hand. The decade-long conservation work comprising wetland, forest, and river restoration activities; sustainable pasture management; and protection of threatened bird populations benefits the valley as a whole while simultaneously sustaining ranch production.



**COLORADO**  
Headwaters of the  
Colorado River

**Organizations involved with this project include:** Ladder Ranch, Trout Unlimited, National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), U.S. Forest Service, United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

**Funding partners include:** NRCS Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program (PL-566), NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), USFWS Partners Program

## PROJECT SUMMARY

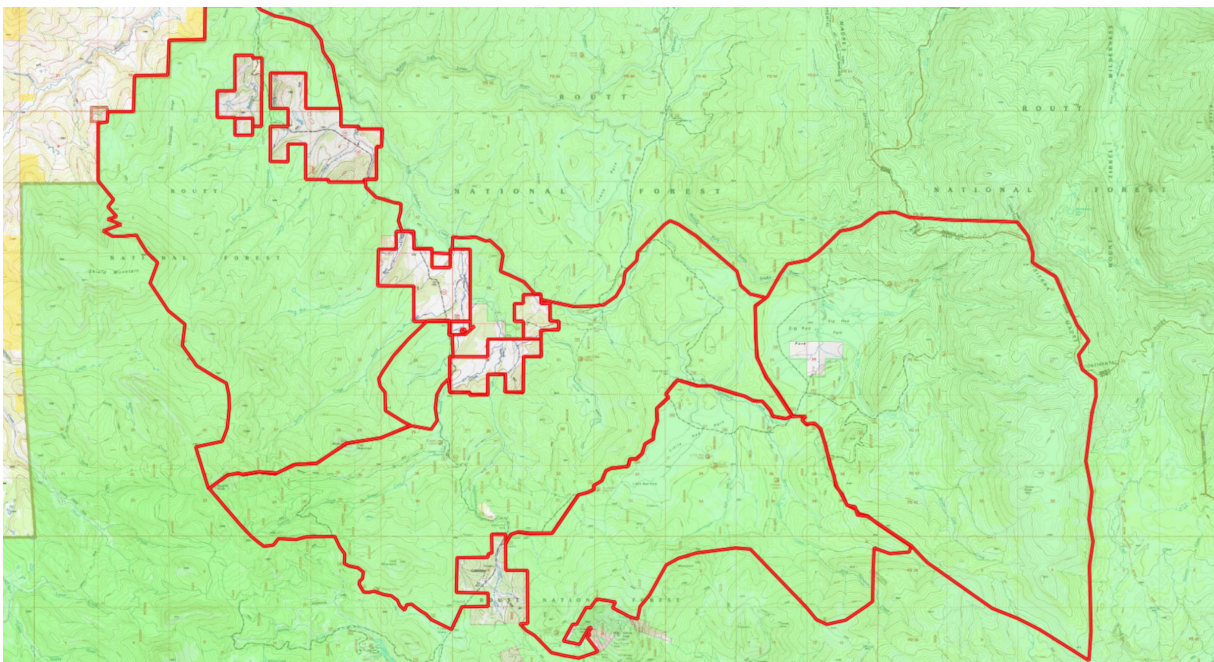
For six generations, the family of Pat and Sharon O'Toole have raised livestock on their ranch in the Little Snake River Valley. Stemming from a deep appreciation of their home valley, the O'Tooles and their partners are blazing new paths in comprehensive conservation efforts and sustainable land stewardship.

Beginning with a partnership with Trout Unlimited to improve valley fish passage, Ladder Ranch has continued to doggedly pursue conservation efforts with various partners. These projects focus on a wide range of ecosystems, including sage grouse protection initiatives, forest restoration, conservation easements, river restoration, pasture management, and more. "We're doing all of these projects simultaneously, because they are all connected," says Pat O'Toole.

The focus on conservation has not been at the cost of production, even in recent drought years. The O'Tooles and their partners firmly subscribe to the concept that "a healthy forest delivers more water", which supports reliable food production. They hope to expand their efforts and continue to advocate for food production in the context of watershed health for decades to come.

## KEY PROJECT BENEFIT

- Protection and creation of enhanced habitat for the greater sage grouse and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse
- Provides critical winter range for deer and elk
- Houses a Wyoming Audobon Important Bird Area
- 2,600 acres of ranch lands put into conservation easement



Map of Ladder Ranch Conservation Projects. Credit: Ladder Ranch

For more information please visit: [fcasolutions.org/WACCprojects](http://fcasolutions.org/WACCprojects)

## WACC MEMBERS

