

For Immediate Release

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One of Park City's Most Beloved Canyons Will Be Protected

Through a collaborative effort between Utah Open Lands, Park City Council, in particular Mayor Dana Williams, and of course the Armstrong Family, approximately 135 acres of Thaynes Canyon will be permanently protected, pending a successful closing on September 30, 2009. The Armstrong Family is in the process of placing a conservation easement on the property and, subsequently, the City of Park City will purchase the land using open space funds.

Park City's canyons are critical to what makes the town unique and the preservation of Thaynes Canyon will forever protect a part of this communities' mountain resort character. Beyond its scenic value, the property hosts wildlife species such as neotropical songbirds, elk, deer, moose and is even considered high value habitat for black bear by the Division of Wildlife Resources.

"Since the first open space efforts began in Park City, we have all seen this property as a priority for preservation," said Mayor Dana Williams. "After years of discussion, it is tremendous to see this day arrive," said Williams. The property can be seen from several vantage points throughout the City, including the town's entry corridor on S.R. 224. The City is also planning a low impact trail for public access away from the Armstrong's residences.

The purchase of this property is being recommended to City Council by the City's Citizens Open Space Advisory Committee (COSAC). "COSAC's and the City's goal is to protect the vital habitat on the property and respect the private property that the Armstrongs retain" explained Director of Environmental Sustainability Diane Foster.

Watching the surrounding canyons fall to development the Armstrong family has stayed true to the Park City they grew up in and have always loved by their careful stewardship of the land over many decades. "Virtually every canyon around here is developed except this one, it would break our hearts to see this canyon suffer the same fate" commented Kerry Armstrong. "We have had a long relationship with Utah Open Lands, and it was never a question of if just when was the right time to protect this Canyon," Armstrong explained.

Herb Armstrong described the family's interest in protecting the property. "We love this land and we want to see it protected – and we want the people of Park City to have the chance to enjoy this amazing place." The Armstrong Family has owned the property since the mid 1930s raising cattle on the front pastures and protecting the water resources and incredible ecology of the land. "We all owe the Armstrongs a debt of gratitude for the decades of stewardship and care they have taken of this beloved canyon," remarked Wendy Fisher, Executive Director of Utah Open Lands. With the permission of the

Armstrong Family, Utah Open Lands plans to host wildflower tours of the property for the public in the coming years. "The riparian ecosystem of the property will be a protected example of one of the most valuable but endangered habitats in the State," said Fisher.

In the coming month, the family will grant a conservation easement to Utah Open Lands and Park City hopes to finalize the purchase by September 30, 2009.

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