

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **SUMMIT LAND CONSERVANCY TO PURCHASE 23 ACRES IN OAKLEY**

***Conservation Purchase Will Permanently Preserve Public Riverfront Access,  
Water Quality, Rural Lifestyle, Scenic Views and Wildlife Habitat***



***A view of the Weber River in Oakley***

**(PARK CITY, Utah) October 28, 2016** – Summit Land Conservancy reached another milestone in its Weber River Watershed Initiative recently by officially entering into a contract to purchase nearly 23 acres along the Weber River in Oakley, Utah.

This is the first time the Conservancy is purchasing fee title to protect important conservation values. Because the organization is financially sound and maintains a strong membership, it was able to apply for a loan from The Conservation Fund and will pay fair market value for the parcel.

"We are able to make this landowner whole while preserving an incredible property that will provide public riverfront access, which is almost always taken away when developed privately," said Cheryl Fox, Summit Land Conservancy's Executive Director.

Once the Conservancy has completed its due diligence on the purchase, it will undertake a capital campaign with its dedicated members and others to raise the necessary funds to complete the agreement. This will likely take place in mid-November and the organization will have approximately two and a half months to raise \$200,000. The Conservancy will place a conservation easement on the property to remove the development rights and then sell it to a conservation buyer in the future, who will be allowed to renovate or rebuild the house that sits on the parcel.

"We are grateful for the Summit Land Conservancy's willingness to purchase this property as it goes a long way towards our city's goal of improving quality of life, preserving natural resources and keeping a rural lifestyle," said Oakley Mayor Wade Woolstenhulme. "It is a legacy project that will be enjoyed by future generations."

A group of Oakley residents including former Oakley Mayor Doug Evans, Tom Smart, Howard Sorensen, and the South Summit Trails Foundation have been working with the Conservancy.

"This property is a fabulous amenity for the community as a stand-alone nature preserve, but may provide a cornerstone to connect trails throughout the valley," said Former Oakley Mayor Doug Evans. "During the past 20 years, I have spent time working on plans for trails and open space and know from past surveys that these are two of the top issues for residents in our area."

This project is the seventh of the Conservancy's Weber River Watershed Initiative in seven years and will preserve riverfront angler access, water quality, agricultural land, scenic views and wildlife habitat. The Weber River Watershed Initiative works with willing landowners to preserve land along the Weber and its tributaries, a crucial effort because the Weber Basin provides 21 percent of Utah's population with irrigation and drinking water.

**SUMMIT LAND CONSERVANCY WEBER RIVER WATERSHED INITIATIVE PROJECTS:**

2015	<a href="#">Nana B's Preserve</a>	63 acres	Brown's Canyon Peoa
2015	<a href="#">Siddoway Ranch &amp; Wetlands</a>	73 acres	Peoa
2013	<a href="#">Dog Holler Organic Farm</a>	85 acres	Hoytsville

2013	<a href="#">Pyper Tracey Ranch</a>	50 acres	Henefer
2011	<a href="#">Judd Ranch</a>	35 acres	Wanship
2009	<a href="#">Fawcett Ranch</a>	44 acres	Henefer

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### **About Summit Land Conservancy**

Born in Park City in 1998 as a project of Leadership Park City, the Summit Land Conservancy works with Summit County communities to protect and preserve land and water for the benefit of people and nature.

In 2011, the Conservancy became the first land trust in the state of Utah to be nationally accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. It currently holds 27 permanent conservation easements on over 3,000 acres of open space, much of it with public access in and around Park City. It protects swathes of Round Valley, Quarry Mountain, Empire Canyon, and the McPolin Farmlands, as well as farms and ranches along the Weber River. It is currently working to preserve an additional 2,500 acres of land.

The Conservancy's goal when it started in 1998 was to raise money locally to save land locally, and that hasn't changed. But it has expanded its efforts throughout the years since to tap additional funding resources. In 2015 alone, it raised over \$3 million in federal funding for land conservation in Summit County.

As a local land trust based in Park City, the Conservancy understands that open space is the heart of the County's communities. Area residents' sense of place is clearly defined by the shared landscapes that anchor them here. The mountains, trails, farms, and rivers connect people to each other and to the natural world. The Summit Land Conservancy cares for these lands forever, nurturing a healthy community that is founded on its strong connection to the places it has protected together.

More information is available on the Conservancy's website ([wesaveland.org](http://wesaveland.org)) and on Facebook ([facebook.com/WeSaveLand](https://facebook.com/WeSaveLand)), Instagram ([instagram.com/wesaveland](https://instagram.com/wesaveland)) and Twitter ([@Summit\\_Land](https://twitter.com/Summit_Land) ([twitter.com/summit\\_land](https://twitter.com/summit_land))).