



“Voice of the Western Slope Since 1953”

A coalition of individuals, businesses and local governments

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Ag Land Protection

WHEREAS agricultural lands provide not only economic benefit to the Western Slope, but also supply much of the open space, and . thus the quality of life, which Coloradans value, and

WHEREAS the rate at which open space is being lost to development has become a crisis in many Western Slope counties, threatening to destroy the rural ambiance of many mountain communities, and

WHEREAS the impact of such urbanization on formerly rural farm areas has a serious economic impact on the future of these areas, hurting the tourism economy, and making it increasingly difficult for working people to afford to live and raise families on the Western Slope, and

WHEREAS the various tools for preserving open space which have been devised (including conservation easements, transferable development rights, tax credits and others) are important and useful, but in the long run are only partial solutions and can never generate enough money to save all Western Colorado's open space,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that

- CLUB 20 believes the only permanent way to preserve open space is to keep farmers and ranchers in business; therefore, we generally support proposals which enhance the economics of agriculture (including protection against ordinances which interfere with farming operations and restrictions on eminent domain), and oppose policies (regulatory or tax) which make agriculture less viable or which take or diminish the value of property without compensation.
- CLUB 20 continues to support programs for voluntary preservation of agricultural land in exchange for financial incentives, including conservation easements, transferable development rights, and other such programs.
- CLUB 20 encourages the counties of Western Colorado to consider the option of Agricultural Planned Unit Development to determine whether it could be a useful tool in their area.
- CLUB 20 believes that state and federal income tax credits should be extended to businesses whose activities protect agricultural lands and productivity, including the availability of such credits for easements of a limited time.
- CLUB 20 supports voluntary agricultural enterprise zones so long as all affected property owners and the affected county government agree to the district's creation.

Adopted March 31, 2006