



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cowiche Canyon Conservancy announces the launch of a Capital Campaign to protect 200 acres

Cowiche Canyon Conservancy announces its Capital Campaign "*Protect This Last Piece*" to raise funds for the purchase of 200 acres within the Conservancy's Snow Mountain Ranch conservation and recreation area on Cowiche Mountain. This project will permanently *protect the last piece* of privately owned land and knit together the landscape, preventing future development in the heart of the Conservancy's ownership. These strategically located acres offer scenic views of the eastern slopes of Snow Mountain Ranch and are home to badger burrows, meadowlarks, and colorful wildflowers. CCC must raise the funds for this purchase by September 2016.

Snow Mountain Ranch (SMR) is located just 14 miles west of downtown Yakima and is one of Yakima's premiere destinations for outdoor recreation. SMR currently encompasses 1,800 acres and has over 20 miles of hiking trails of varying length and difficulty. Trails wind through sagebrush, grasslands, flowering meadows, oak woodlands, and basalt cliffs. Cowiche Creek, a tributary of the Naches River, flows through the property at Snow Mountain Ranch.

Cowiche Canyon Conservancy is working to connect people to nature. CCC is a private, non-profit land trust formed in 1985 and is committed to protecting shrub-steppe habitat – a unique landscape home to some of the most iconic, beautiful and diverse wildlife in Washington, ranging from the majestic golden eagle to the highly camouflaged and tiny Pygmy short-horned lizard. CCC owns and manages 5,000 acres of land and provides nearly 30 miles of trails for outdoor recreation – a place to walk, hike, mountain bike, horseback ride, snowshoe and experience the beauty of all four seasons in the Yakima Valley. CCC has an active education program, providing quality environmental education for all ages.

Cowiche Canyon Conservancy needs to raise \$200,000 by September 2016 for the purchase and stewardship of this land. CCC's Executive Director, Betsy Bloomfield said, "This is what we do best, we gently transform the traditions of the western landscape into a living legacy by protecting and sharing the remaining wild lands close to home." Donations of all sizes are needed and welcome. Those interested in more information about this property and the campaign are invited to contact Cowiche Canyon Conservancy at (509) 248-5065 or info@cowichecanyon.org.