

Transplanting trees raises money for MALT

Spalding Trees, LLC, which typically purchases 200 or more mature living trees annually for landscaping purposes, has teamed up with MALT to purchase, remove, and transplant trees within the MALT service area – and raise money for land preservation!

Spalding Trees specializes in supplying native trees and does not acquire trees from the Denver area. The owners, Mike and Joan Spalding, are looking for healthy, mature ponderosa pines, Douglas fir, and spruce trees (some lodgepoles may be considered) and have agreed to pay market rates to the land trust for donated trees in lieu of purchasing similar trees from suppliers.

Each tree is valued by the height as well as the type, and could mean an average donation of \$150 to MALT. Trees between 12 and 35 feet tall are considered desirable.

Tree donors would receive a receipt for the donation from MALT as though it were cash; Spalding Trees will pay MALT (instead of the tree donor) by check after a tree has been removed. Donations are considered tax-deductible to the donor within the guidelines of the IRS.

Tree farmers needing to maintain agricultural zoning qualify for this opportunity. Trees to be donated must be healthy and accessible by the large equipment needed to remove the trees and root systems. It will be the sole responsibility of Spalding Trees to determine whether or not the trees being offered are usable, healthy, and accessible.

The service area for Spalding Trees includes Evergreen, Conifer, Bailey, Morrison, Georgetown, Genesee, and Lookout Mountain. The season for transplanting trees is generally April through mid-November.

One need not a tree grower to participate! Creating defensible space around a house, putting an addition onto a house, or simply thinning out an overgrown stand of trees are all good reasons to participate in this win:win opportunity.

The proceeds from this fundraising effort could be enough to fund the facilitation of conserving 200 additional acres of land, according to MALT representatives.

Call Spalding Trees directly at 303-526-1256 to inquire about donating your tree(s). Although actual removal cannot begin until the snow melts, a preliminary site visit before then could determine accessibility and desirability. ■



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Around the kitchen table.... *continued from Page 1*

As the landowners and MALT near agreement on the document as a result of a number of friendly sessions around the kitchen table, it is recommended that the landowners consult with an appraiser experienced with preserved lands to determine the value of the land both before and after the conservation easement is placed on the land. After these values are formalized (must be no more than 60 days prior to the signing), the difference between these values is used to determine the possible value of the federal tax deduction and the possible value of the Colorado state income tax credit. A preliminary title search is also performed to determine if any mortgages, mineral rights, or easements must be dealt with prior to signing. Title insurance is provided by the landowner near the time of signing.

If all of this begins to look like the process will be carried to completion, a baseline document is normally started. Provided by the landowner, this is a professionally prepared, detailed inventory (in words and pictures) of the land with emphasis on its value as a public viewscape and a wildlife habitat – two of the major qualities that the governments require. This document is the

basis of MALT's annual mandatory visit to the property to ensure that it is being preserved as prescribed in the conservation easement. Also, at this time, if a survey and associated legal description for the property cannot be provided by the landowner, it is prepared by a surveyor. After everything is completed, the final conservation easement is signed and recorded at the county.

By then, MALT volunteers and staff involved in the process often find that we have become friends with the families with whom we've facilitated conservation easements, and we look forward to working together over the years on the land's preservation. And most will never know that the land is officially preserved nor what the process was to ensure that it stays that way. ■

Written by Mel Andrew, MALT's VP of Land, a retired employee of Public Service Company of Colorado and a 12-year volunteer with the land trust. It is not uncommon for Mel to donate 60-80 hours per month investigating and facilitating opportunities for permanently conserving open lands.