

**CHRONOLOGY OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE
BACA RANCH PROJECT**

Early 1990's	The Nature Conservancy identified the Great Sand Dunes ecosystem as a globally important site, and the protection of the Baca Ranch and its associated water as a critical step in conserving the dunes ecosystem and the wetlands resources of the San Luis Valley.
1995	The Conservancy unsuccessfully attempted to purchase the Baca Ranch from AWDI to protect the important groundwater resources of the San Luis Valley.
June 1999	The Conservancy purchased the Medano/Zapata Ranches (100,000 acres adjacent to the Baca Ranch and Great Sand Dunes National Monument) to conserve its rich wetland, upland and wildlife resources.
1999	The Conservancy was invited by a group of San Luis Valley business leaders to meet in Alamosa to discuss plan to launch an effort to call for public acquisition of the Baca Ranch. The local leaders asked the Conservancy to take a lead role in driving this concept forward.
1999	Local San Luis Valley leaders, water conservation districts, the Conservancy and others work with Representative McInnis, Senators Allard and Campbell, Attorney General Salazar and Secretary Babbitt to support the idea of the Great Sand Dunes National Park (the Sand Dunes "Summit" was held in December, 1999).
2000	Local San Luis Valley leaders, water conservation districts, the Conservancy and others worked with Representative McInnis and Senator Allard to draft and secure support for the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve Act (the legislation was enacted in November 2000).
Nov. 2000	The Conservancy began active negotiations with Cabeza de Vaca for the purchase of the Baca Ranch.
Jan. 2001	The Conservancy signed an agreement with the U.S. government stating that the government would buy the Baca Ranch from the Conservancy when sufficient federal appropriations were secured.

Dec. 2001	The Conservancy signed a purchase agreement with Cabeza de Baca for the Baca Ranch and water rights for \$31.28 million.
2002	The Conservancy secured commitments from the Great Outdoors Colorado Trust Fund, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, and the Colorado State Land Board to fund the \$31.28 million purchase price.
March 2004	The Conservancy and sellers close the purchase agreement into escrow.
Sept. 2004	The Conservancy and federal government completes purchase of the Baca Ranch. Interior Secretary Norton re-designates the Great Sand Dunes National Monument and Preserve as the Great Sand Dunes National Park.