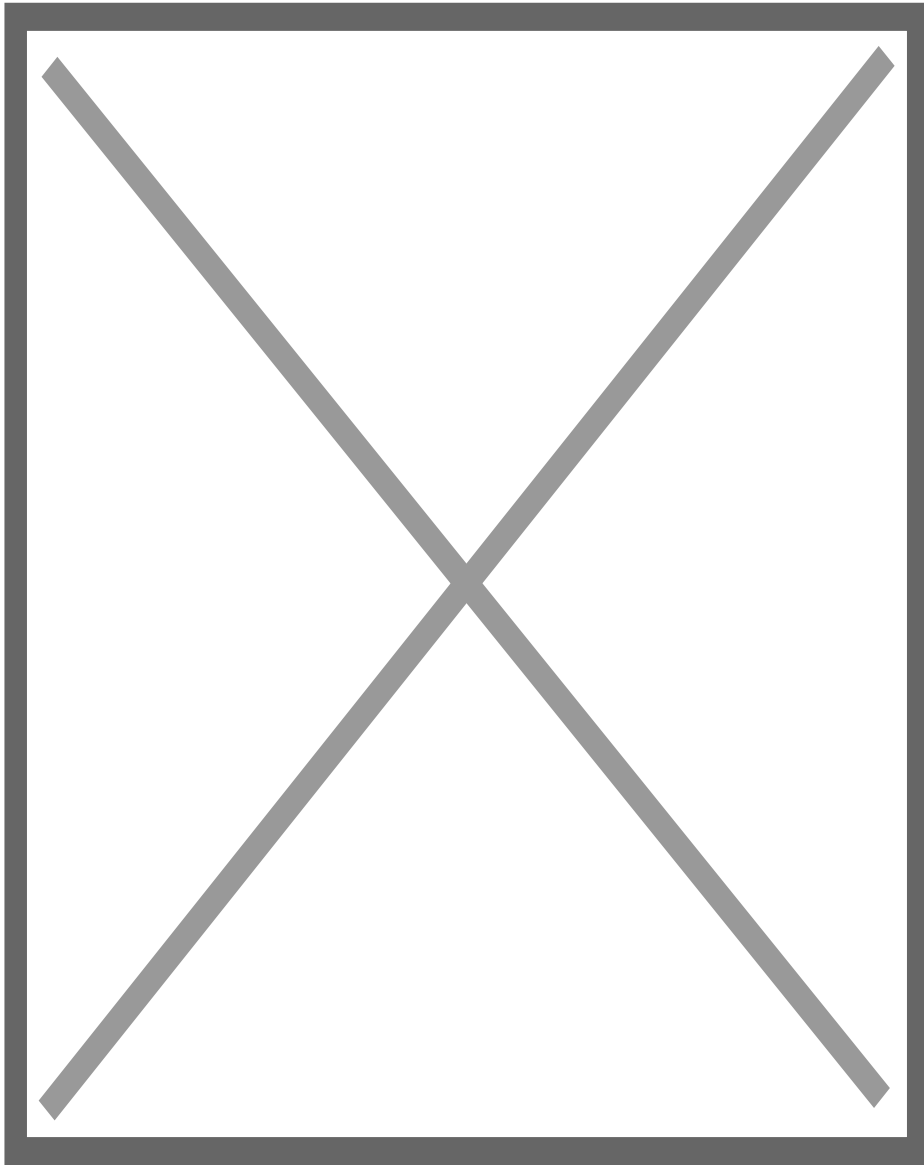


PCUSA's Ghost Ranch announces new conservation partnership

by [Presbyterian News Service](#)

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Ghost Ranch (photo via Facebook)

The National Ghost Ranch Foundation and the [Presbyterian Foundation](#) jointly announced plans to preserve the landscapes and vistas made famous by artist Georgia O’Keeffe through a new partnership with the State of New Mexico and the New Mexico Land Conservancy.

Ghost Ranch has served as a Presbyterian conference and retreat center since 1955, when Arthur and Phoebe Pack donated the land to the Board of Christian Education, which is now part of the Presbyterian Foundation.

The Ghost Ranch Conservation Plan will protect 6,000 acres of land, water, and wildlife habitat in Northern New Mexico through conservation easements while ensuring sustainable operations for Ghost Ranch's educational programs for years to come. A conservation easement is a voluntary agreement to preserve land for conservation purposes while allowing landowners to retain ownership.

"We are pleased to welcome this new era of conservation for Ghost Ranch," said Tom Taylor, CEO of the Presbyterian Foundation. "For more than 70 years, we've taken seriously our responsibility to steward these lands for the public good, and we're confident we've found the right partners to carry out that longstanding tradition."

The state of New Mexico is devoting \$930,000 for the initial phase, which will help cover transaction costs. Funding comes from the Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund, the state's first funding source for land and water conservation, agriculture, and outdoor recreation.

The New Mexico Land Conservancy will hold the conservation easements in trust for the public benefit and traditional land users on behalf of the Presbyterian Foundation, the National Ghost Ranch Foundation, and the state of New Mexico. The easements will not affect the 550 acres of the main Ghost Ranch facilities, which include the visitor's center, trails, lodging, stables, and museums.

Ghost Ranch, nestled amidst the breathtaking red and yellow cliffs of the Piedra Lumbre, was a well-known place of solace and inspiration for O'Keeffe, whose depictions of the majestic areas are some of the most recognizable paintings in art history. O'Keeffe owned a small house and seven acres on Ghost Ranch and a larger home and studio in the nearby village of Abiquiú, which are now owned and managed separately by the [Georgia O'Keeffe Museum](#) in Santa Fe.

While the conservation plan does not directly affect these properties, the easements help preserve the landscapes and vistas made famous by O'Keeffe's paintings for future generations. This includes the mesas that overlook Abiquiú Lake, the Rio Chama, and Cerro Pedernal (Tewa: Tsip'in). —Presbyterian News Service