**Title:** The Art of Ranching: A 4-H Youth Oral History Project of Centennial Ranches in Routt County

**Lead Mentor:** Tami Eggers (4-H Youth Development, CSU Extension, Routt County, Northwest Region, Steamboat Springs, CO; [teggers@co.routt.co.us](mailto:teggers@co.routt.co.us))

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**Location:** This project will take place both in Fort Collins and Routt County.

**Project Description:**

The Art of Ranching (AOR) project engages 4-H youth in examining the significance and diversity of agricultural production through the collection of oral histories. Routt County has a strong 4-H program and ranching legacy. Many 4-H youth in the county are deeply engaged in ranching on their families or neighboring operations. The county contains eleven Centennial Ranches (those History Colorado has identified as remaining in the same family continuously for 100 years or more; are a working farm or ranch; and have a minimum of 160 acres) and even more long-term family ranches. This project seeks to use Routt as a pilot to create a model that can be replicated across the state.

The shared authority protocols (producing histories through collaboration) inherent in oral history collection, archival historical research, and public history interpretation allows participants to co-create and interpret their own past. Oral history collection by 4-H youth engages multiple generations, often within the same family, in sharing and transferring knowledge to younger generations. The AOR project launched in Summer 2021. The CSU Routt County 4-H program conducted oral histories with five ranching families and the first Extension intern conducted deep archival research on agricultural history in Routt County, made site visits to participating ranches and conducted follow-up interviews, and drafted a digital public-facing product that reflects the work of the 4-H youth.

**Goals, Scope, and Objectives:**

This Extension internship builds upon the existing work of the Art of Ranching Project from Summer 2021. The overall goal of the internship is to A) provide the intern with opportunities to develop their youth engagement and programming skills and B) provide the intern with opportunities to build upon their public history and public communication skills. During the course of this internship, the intern will: 1) support and assist in the training of 4-H students in oral history interviewing; 2) engage in site visits to ranches and conduct follow-up interviews; 3) conduct additional archival research and work with local historians and preservation groups as needed; 4) sssist in finalizing the digital public-facing product; and 5) construct the Art of Ranching 4-H curriculum, which will serve as a template for AOR projects in other Colorado counties. Any travel within Routt County will be covered. Accommodations during overnight stays in Routt County will also be provided.

**Outcomes:** By the end of the internship the intern will develop important skills necessary to: 1) facilitate, manage, and replicate youth-based community history projects and 2) produce public-facing historical interpretations that utilize community and oral history.