

# HIGH COUNTRY BANCORP, INC. ANNOUNCES QUARTERLY EARNINGS

The Board of Directors (“the Board”) of High Country Bancorp, Inc. (OTC: HCBC. PK)(“the Company”) has announced its quarterly earnings for the period ended December 31, 2008. For the quarter, consolidated net loss was \$16,000, or -\$0.03 per share. This compares to net income of \$285,000, or \$0.33 per share, for the three months ended December 31, 2007. For the six months ending December 31, 2008, consolidated net income was \$272,000, or \$0.32 per share. This compares to \$628,000, or \$0.73 per share, for the prior year period. The results of the current three- and six-month periods were significantly impacted by provisions to the Company’s subsidiary bank’s allowance for loan losses of \$100,000 and \$400,000, respectively, during first and second quarters of the current fiscal year. The provisions were recorded due to deteriorating economic conditions, and their potential impact on the credit quality of the bank’s loan portfolio.

Total consolidated assets increased approximately \$2,100,000 from \$195.9 million at June 30, 2008 to \$198.0 million at December 31, 2008. Deposits increased by 3.7% or \$5,560,000 during the quarter from \$150.1 million at June 30, 2008 to \$155.7 million at December 31, 2008.

The Company’s net interest income before provision for loan losses increased, by 11.9% and 9.3%, respectively, for the three- and six-month periods ending December 31, 2008, compared to the prior year periods. Noninterest income decreased 24.7% and 27.0%, respectively, for the three- and six-month periods ending December 31, 2008, compared to the prior year periods. The decrease in the current year period was primarily due to nonrecurring gains on sale of property recognized in the prior year. Noninterest expense increased 9.35% and 266.2%, during the three- and six-month periods ending December 31, 2008, respectively, compared to the prior year periods. This was primarily due to recorded losses on the sale of real estate owned and a loss recognized on the sale of the assets of a dissolved subsidiary.

“The recorded provisions to the allowance for loan losses, in addition to the bank’s existing capital level, put the organization in a better position to endure the current economic crisis. We continue to stress the importance of maintaining strong capital levels in an uncertain economy and remain focused on managing asset quality,” said Larry Smith, Chairman of the Board and President of the Company. “We remain committed to increasing the value of the organization and will continue to support the communities we serve.”

High Country Bancorp, Inc. is the holding company for High Country Bank, which conducts business through its main office in Salida, Colorado, and branch offices in Salida, Buena Vista and Canon City, Colorado. At December 31, 2008, the Company had 860,501 shares of common stock issued and outstanding.

This report contains certain forward-looking statements pursuant to the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Such statements are subject to certain risks and uncertainties including changes in economic conditions in the Company’s market area, changes in policies by regulatory agencies, fluctuations in interest rates, loan demand in the Company’s market area and competition that could cause actual results to differ materially from

historical earnings and those presently anticipates or projected. The Company wishes to caution readers not to place undue reliance on any such forward-looking statements, which reflect management's analysis only as the date made. The Company does no undertake any obligation to publicly revise these forward-looking statements to reflect events or circumstances that arise after the date of such statements.