

# HIGH COUNTRY BANCORP, INC. ANNOUNCES QUARTERLY EARNINGS

The Board of Directors ("the Board") of High Country Bancorp, Inc. (OTC: HCBC. PK)("the Company") has declared a cash dividend in the amount of \$0.30 per share to the stockholders of record at the close of business on May 15, 2009, payable on or about May 22, 2009. The per share dividend rate remains level with the previous dividend declared by the Company in consideration of its core earnings, and continues to reflect the strategy adopted by the Board to maintain prudent capital levels at High Country Bank ("the Bank"), the Company's banking subsidiary, as well as provide a reasonable return to the Company's shareholders. The Board believes that the strategy of maintaining prudent capital levels by the Bank is in the best interest of the stockholders, as well as the customers of the Bank.

In addition, the Board has announced its quarterly earnings for the period ended March 31, 2009. For the quarter, consolidated net income was \$285,000, or \$0.33 per share. This compares to net income of \$405,000, or \$0.47 per share, for the three months ended March 31, 2008. For the nine months ending March 31, 2009, consolidated net income was \$559,000, or \$0.65 per share. This compares to \$1,032,000, or \$1.20 per share, for the prior year period. The results of the current three- and nine-month periods were significantly impacted by provisions to the Company's subsidiary bank's allowance for loan losses of \$500,000 and \$1,000,000, respectively. 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 \$3.8 million from \$195.9 million at June 30, 2008 to \$199.7 million at March 31, 2009. Deposits increased by 5.4% or \$8.2 million during the quarter from \$150.1 million at June 30, 2008 to \$158.3 million at March 31, 2009.

The Company's net interest income before provision for loan losses decreased by 0.27% for the three-month period ending March 31, 2009, compared to the prior year period. Conversely, the Company's net interest income before provision for loan loss increased by 6.00% for the nine-month period ending March 31, 2009, compared to the prior year. Noninterest income increased 58.2% and 4.1%, respectively, for the three- and six-month periods ending March 31, 2009, compared to the prior year periods. The increase in the current year period was primarily due to income from loans sold to the secondary market. Noninterest expense decreased 2.0% during the three-month period ending March 31, 2009, compared to the prior year period primarily due to a reduced level of controllable operating expenses. Noninterest expense increased 3.6% during the nine-month period ending March 31, 2009 primarily due to recorded losses on the sale of real estate owned and a loss recognized on the sale of the assets and dissolution of a subsidiary, net of decreases in controllable operating expenses.

"Although the economic recession has negatively impacted the financial results of the Company, the strength of our core earnings, conservative management philosophy and the strength of our capital position have provided a foundation for stability and perseverance of the organization," said Larry Smith, Chairman of the Board and President of the Company, "and has allowed us to continue to pay a dividend to our shareholders." We continue to stress the importance of

maintaining strong capital levels in a troubled economy and remain focused on managing asset quality."

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 March 31, 2009, 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 anticipated 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 not undertake any obligation to publicly revise these forward-looking statements to reflect events or circumstances that arise after the date of such statements.