

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, 2011. For the second quarter of fiscal 2012, consolidated net income was \$403,500 or \$0.47 per share. This compares to \$546,900, or \$0.62 per share, for the three months ending December 31, 2010. For the first six months of fiscal 2012 net income was \$714,700 or \$0.83 per share as compared to \$907,900 or \$1.06 per share for the same period of fiscal 2011.

The Company’s net interest income after provision for loan losses increased by approximately \$31,700 or 1.71% during the three-month period and approximately \$135,400 or 3.62% during the six-month period ending December 31, 2011, compared to the prior year periods. For the same three month period comparison, noninterest income decreased by \$376,900 or -52.65% and noninterest expense increased by \$83,400 or 5.45% while for the six month period comparison, noninterest income decreased by \$523,400 or -45.91% and noninterest expense increased by \$137,200 or 4.39%. The overall improvement in net interest income in the current periods, noted above, was offset by additions to the provision for loan loss of \$180,000 in each quarter of fiscal 2012 which is \$30,000 higher per quarter than the provision taken in comparable periods of fiscal 2011. The decrease in noninterest income was primarily due to a decrease in loan fee income from mortgage loans sold on the secondary market and a decrease in miscellaneous other non-interest income. The increase in non-interest expense is primarily attributable to increased expense on noninterest earning assets.

Total consolidated assets increased approximately \$3.8 million or 2.13% from \$177.8 million at June 30, 2011 to \$181.6 million at December 31, 2011. Cash increased by \$5.9 million to \$20.1 million and the total Securities portfolio increased by approximately \$3.7 million from June 2011 to December 2011. The following major asset groups decreased: Loans Held for Investment \$4.6 million (-3.45%) and Other Real Estate Owned \$0.7 million (-21.53%). Correspondingly, Deposits increased by approximately \$4.7 million (3.04%) during the comparable period and Equity grew by \$0.3 million (1.51%).

“As the Company celebrates its 125th year of service to the upper Arkansas River Valley, the focus remains on asset quality issues, core deposit growth and preservation of net margin,” stated Larry Smith, Chairman of Board and President of the Company. “The subdued economy, low loan demand and historically low interest rate environment continue to pressure gross margins. However, as a result of asset quality improvement, decreases in noninterest earning assets and cost of funds management, core earnings remain solid and the Company’s capital position continues to strengthen.”

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, 2011, 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 not undertake any obligation to publicly revise these forward-looking statements to reflect events or circumstances that arise after the date of such statements.