

## 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, 2013. For the second quarter of fiscal 2014, consolidated net income was \$469,547 or \$0.52 per share while for the six months then ended net income was \$921,246 or \$1.03 per share. This compares to \$459,156, or \$0.53 per share and \$1,038,344 or \$1.20 per share, for the three and six months ended December 31, 2012, respectively.

The Company’s net interest income after provision for loan losses for the six months ended December 31, 2013 has increased by \$34,499 or 0.8% when compared to the prior year period. For the same period comparison, noninterest income decreased by \$235,614 or 24.6% and noninterest expense increased by \$52,997 or 1.5%. The decrease in noninterest income was due to a 52.4% decrease in loan fee income from mortgage loans sold on the secondary market and is indicative of the striking slowdown in the mortgage refinancing market.

Total consolidated assets decreased approximately \$269 thousand or 0.1% from \$196.7 million at June 30, 2013 to \$196.4 million at December 31, 2013. Loans Held for Investment, net increased by \$2.9 million to \$134.3 million (2.2%) and the total Securities portfolio increased by approximately \$7.9 million from June 2013 to December 2013. However, Deposits have decreased by approximately \$742 thousand (-0.4%) during the comparable period while Equity, net of the second quarter dividend payment, grew by \$131 thousand (0.6%).

On November 26, 2013, the Company paid a cash dividend of \$896,780 on outstanding shares of common stock. The dividend in the semi-annual amount of \$1.00 per share was payable to stockholders of record on November 11, 2013.

“On the positive side and as a result of some loan growth, net interest, both before and after provision, for the first two quarters of fiscal 2014 show improvement over the same period of the prior fiscal year. However, the dramatic reduction in mortgage refinance volumes, due to higher market interest rates, is reflected in the decline in non-interest income and has had a negative impact on the Company’s period over period net income,” stated Larry Smith, Chairman of Board and President of the Company. “While operating results have been solid and capital levels remain strong, we expect continued compression of net interest margins, particularly as pressure builds on the cost side where costs have been near historic lows for some period of time. This along with the noted downward pressures on fee income from sold loans will make ongoing expense management critical. Problem assets continue to be manageable but with uncertainty in the economy, we remain cautiously optimistic. As always, our efforts will be focused on serving the needs of upper Arkansas River Valley”.

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, 2013, the Company had 896,780 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.