

El Chorro Ranch: Beyond Value

In a recent article on California ranches, Ethan Stewart, *The Independent*, wrote, "The California Rancho is a fundamental part of our state's cultural heritage, our modern identity and despite premature proclamations to the contrary, an essential piece of our future."

"We have cared for and ranched this property for sixty five years. Our mother's desire is that the ranch remains intact as a future home and center for her three sons and their spouses, six grandchildren, and two great grandchildren."

Bob Isaacson

He could have been writing about the Isaacson's love for the ranching life, family and their fourth generation ownership of their El Chorro Ranch. This scenic ranch nestled in the center of the San Julian Valley in Santa Barbara country can remain part of their family ranching legacy in perpetuity with a conservation easement held by the California Rangeland Trust. With funding

secured through the Wildlife Conservation Board, the Isaacsons await the final word of closing to bring that element of security to their ranching legacy.

Located at a midway point between the rural coastline of Gaviota and the expansive flower fields of the Lompoc Valley on California's scenic Highway 1, the El Chorro Ranch was once part of one of the three largest Mexican land grants in the country, the historic Rancho San Julian. Even earlier, El Chorro was within the La Purisima Mission lands, supplying beef to Santa Barbara's Spanish Presidio as a portion of Rancho Nacional. With this storied history, the Isaacsons are respectful of this venerable property that has been used for cattle production since the 1770's.

Bob Isaacson, who lives on the ranch along with his wife, Sally, and daughter Katie, explains, "We



*The three Isaacson brothers, Deming, Bill and Bob
(photo, Tom Moore)*

have cared for and ranched this property for sixty five years. Our mother's desire is that the ranch remains intact as a future home and center for her three sons and their spouses, six grandchildren, and two great grandchildren." Bob continues, "Having a portion of the property value converted into liquid asset funds will give us a number of options that would enable us to keep the ranch both in the family and in ranching."

Continued on page 3

In this issue

EL CHORRO RANCH: BEYOND VALUE	1 & 3
DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE	2
CONSERVATION CORNER	4

ESTATE PLANNING	5
EVENTS ROUNDUP	6
CALIFORNIA RANGELAND TRUST SUPPORTERS	7
IN MEMORIAM	8

Director's Message

A GOLDEN FUTURE IN FUND DEVELOPMENT

Last June at our signature event, "A Western Affair," I took a moment to reflect on the scene in front of me, to listen to the conversations of our supporters enjoying their meals while awaiting the excitement of the upcoming auction bidding. We were fortunate enough to have the scenic Hearst Ranch on the San Simeon ocean front as our site, and I was reveling in the ambiance as much as our guests. I was struck by how much support we've gathered so quickly and how much energy we have to go forward and continue our mission. It was an evening to celebrate not only our record-setting fund raising year, but also the contributions of so many who share our



Kendra Wilber

common goal of conserving our fragile yet significant heritage of family ranches in California. My deepest thanks and recognition are extended to all who not only attended our event but who help us in our efforts throughout the year.

It is my privilege as a Director and Chair of the Fund Development Committee to write an overview of our recent events and, most importantly, give you a preview of the positive changes coming to our growing organization. It has been an outstanding year, but I want to begin with our most significant step forward.

By establishing a staff position in fund development, California Rangeland Trust is making an important statement to our donors about future growth. It is my pleasure to introduce Donja Garvey as our new Director of Marketing and Fund Development. Please take the time to read about her (at right) in her introductory biography in this issue. We are confidently planning for powerful results in new major donor programs and corporate support for conservation and our common goal of protecting our ranches and the habitat they protect and nurture.

We will keep you informed of new programs and communications through our website, newsletters, personal letters and other outreach materials. Watch for the developments in planned giving and read the first in our series on families and estate planning from expert, Ron Hanson, in this issue. Mr. Hanson is a Distinguished Professor of Agribusiness at the University of Nebraska

and will also be our featured speaker at the CCA Convention in Reno, November 16, 2005.

Expanded efforts in fund development, marketing and outreach will bring our vision and mission to the millions of Californians and people throughout the world who love the western landscape of California. We thank you for your support, and ask you to join us in actively protecting our ranches for successive generations. There is urgency, energy and power in our appeal. We are dealing with an endangered asset. With your help, we can conserve the golden land of California.

CRT Welcomes New Director of Marketing and Fund Development

The California Rangeland Trust is pleased to welcome Donja Marie Garvey as their Director of Marketing and Fund Development.

"Ms. Garvey brings nearly 20 years of experience in marketing, advertising and fund development to the new position at the California Rangeland Trust," said Kendra Wilber, board director and chair of the fund development committee. "This is an important step for the California Rangeland Trust to have a Director of Marketing and Development to achieve our goals to conserve and preserve the rangelands in California."

In addition to directing fund development and marketing for several nonprofits both locally and statewide, Ms. Garvey has worked in the for-profit sector with Cessna Aircraft Company, Hesston, Coleman, and Ford as well as top advertising agencies.

"Donja's exceptional accomplishments and dedication to philanthropic fundraising have made her a highly regarded senior professional in the field" said Mike Bennett, chairman of the Board of Directors. "Her leadership and expertise in major gifts and annual giving will be tremendous assets to the Trust's fundraising efforts."

"With the accelerating loss of California rangelands and the various environmental resources that they support, the mission and work of the California Rangeland Trust could not be more important or compelling," said Ms. Garvey. "The Trust is recognized throughout the state for its leadership and groundbreaking work. I am very pleased to be part of this outstanding organization."



Donja Garvey

A former teacher, Ms. Garvey continues to be involved in education serving as the chief executive officer for the Natomas Unified School District Foundation, and as a board member of the Eureka Schools Foundation and the Roseville Joint Union School District Foundation.

El Chorro Ranch: Beyond Value

El Chorro Ranch, Continued from page 1

In the same issue of *The Independent*, Katie Isaacson, Bob's daughter, poignantly writes of her innate love of the ranch and her pride in her family. "In August 1939, my great-grandparents went to a public auction held on the steps of the Santa Barbara Courthouse, hoping to bid on a ranch for their son. The property was part of the original land grant given to the commandante of the Presidio, Jose de la Guerra. Baine, my grandfather, was away on a trip, but by the time he got back, the ranch was his. And so he moved to El Chorro where, with his wife Esther, he raised three sons and lots of cattle in the low, curving hills and gnarled oaks of the San Julian Valley. I was fortunate enough to grow up on that ranch, learning from and working with my parents ...who still run a cattle operation on the property today. Our brand is the Quarter Circle



El Chorro Ranch

Muleshoe, the same one used by my grandfather and his father before him, when our family first became a ranching family 99 years ago...I cannot see the ranch not fitting into my own future."

"Our brand is the Quarter Circle Muleshoe, the same one used by my grandfather and his father before him, when our family first became a ranching family 99 years ago... I cannot see the ranch not fitting into my own future."

Katie Isaacson

It is this deeply imbedded love of the land, of the wide open spaces, of cattle drives and callused skilled hands holding the reins that evokes the strongest images our California ranching heritage. There are 21 million acres of privately owned rangeland left in California and each family has their history, like the Isaacson's, that can be preserved.

As the commercial tag line intones, the value of the ranching heritage is priceless. It contains lifetimes of joy and celebration, pain and disaster that are beyond value. The El Chorro Ranch is beyond the described value of its pristine habitat and wildlife and native plants as noted in Wildlife Conservation Board minutes. El Chorro and the family owned ranches throughout the West must be valued by all Californians for them to continue to exist.

Credit: The Santa Barbara Independent, July 28, 2005

CRT BENEFITS FROM TEHAMA BULL SALE

Proceeds from the first lot to be sold in Tehama Angus Ranch's 31st annual Generations of Performance Bull Sale were donated to the California Rangeland Trust. Bill, Kevin and Linda Borrer, generously donated all revenue from the sale of "P760" to the California Rangeland Trust, as a way to "assist that organization in its endeavors." The spring yearling bull brought \$4,100 and was purchased by Bill Vogel, Sr. and his wife Carmen.

This donation is a first of its kind and is a testament to the leadership that Bill Borrer and his family have displayed in the California cattle industry. The California Rangeland Trust sincerely appreciates the generous contribution from both the Borrer family, as well as the Vogels. Like CRT, the Borrer family and the Vogels are committed to making ranching a viable part of California's future.

Donations, such as this unique contribution, allow CRT to continue its mission of protecting working ranches and the habitat, open space and stewardship they provide.



Left to right: CRT board members Darrell Wood, Kendra Wilber and buyers of the donated Tehama bull, Bill Vogel, Sr. and his wife, Carmen, at the Tehama Angus Ranch.

BIODIVERSITY OF RANGELANDS

Rangelands span a variety of ecosystems including grasslands, savannas, sagebrush steppe, shrublands, tundra, mountain meadows and deserts. The variety of life and its processes on them (biodiversity) is important for moral, aesthetic and economic reasons, as well as for the services biodiversity provides to society. Rangeland biodiversity is constantly changing by reduction in habitat, land use changes, loss of species, global environmental change and invasion of non-native species. Range scientists and managers, in partnership with the livestock industry and environmental groups, are working to improve the understanding of biodiversity so that the knowledge will be used to protect the vast rangelands of the world.

"... large tracts of land owned or managed by livestock operators can assist in protecting biodiversity by maintaining contiguous habitat."

A major threat to biodiversity is the reduced size of contiguous habitats. Most of the world's rangelands with sufficient rainfall for growing crops have been converted to agricultural land. In other areas, irrigation using imported water or groundwater has been implemented on traditional rangeland areas. In the U.S., more than 50% of the ecosystems determined to be critically endangered are grasslands, and almost 25% are shrublands. Rangeland that is marginal for agricultural, urban and industrial development remain less fragmented than many other ecosystems, but even low levels of fragmentation may negatively impact some species and the function of some rangeland communities. Maintaining sufficient area in each type of rangeland is necessary to sustain biodiversity on all levels.

Grazers influence community diversity by eating select plant species and trampling plant species with different abilities to respond. Moderate grazing and trampling usually increase the diversity of plants by decreasing the ability of any one plant species to become dominant and exclude other species. Grazing can create gaps in the plant community,



Oak Lake, El Chorro Ranch.

making light, moisture and nutrients available. The effects of grazing on plant community diversity depend on the grazing intensity, evolutionary history of the site and climate. If grazing is excluded, the number of species may increase in the short-term, but may decline in the long-term because the system itself changes. It may develop into a system that is less able to withstand other disturbances such as drought and fire. Rangeland professionals use a combination of management actions, such as grazing and prescribed burning to enhance landscape diversity by creating patterns of different communities across the landscape. In addition, large tracts of land owned or managed by livestock operators can assist in protecting biodiversity by maintaining contiguous habitat.

The best way to minimize species loss is to maintain ecosystem integrity across landscapes by placing a priority on maintaining soils and ecosystem functions. Without these features, overall potential for all biodiversity will be seriously diminished. The basic guideline is to prevent the loss of the inherent capacity of the land to produce life and maintain options for the future.

Reprinted with permission from an issue paper created by the Society for Range Management, "Biodiversity of Rangelands."

CONSIDER THE “FAMILY ISSUES” IN RANCH OWNERSHIP SUCCESSION

When transferring ownership of a family ranch to the next generation (i.e., especially if the ranch has been in that family name for several generations), this entire succession process itself can result in a lot of emotional stress among the family members involved.

There are “many family issues” which confront ranch families in working through this transition without disturbing the ranching or cattle operation due to legal fights that may take years to resolve. These ownership succession issues must eventually be discussed by all family members involved and resolved to everyone’s agreement to avoid the personal conflicts and family feuds that often arise.

One immediate issue is the fact that Dad is wearing two hats on the ranch (i.e. Boss Hat and Father Hat). When wearing the Boss Hat, Dad is in charge (authoritative power) and supervises the adult children as ranch employees. When wearing the Father Hat, now he listens and better understands their concerns. This presents a difficult task since Dad must know when (and how long) to be wearing which hat. The ranching adult children must make this distinction between the Boss and Father roles that Dad plays in the cattle ranch business.

“Parents must have a clear vision for the future of their family ranch business and then be willing to discuss their ideas with their children.”

Another related issue is that fact that Mom many times outlives Dad. What if Dad dies unexpectedly or before retirement? Will Mom operate the ranch “as if Dad were still living” or would Mom start making the changes she always wanted but Dad would not allow? Mom might rent out the ranch to a neighbor or even quickly sell the ranch. How does the ranching son or daughter now fit into this situation? Would Mom turn over full control and now allow them to make all decisions? Things really get complicated in the family if Mom remarries and now there is a new step-Dad to contend with. Also consider that Mom may actually wear the “Boss Hat” in the family.

The next article in this series will address the “Who is Family” issue when dealing with the in-laws in ranching operation and ownership succession. Also the issue of “Controlling Parents” and “Transfer of Ownership” will be introduced since some parents may pass on ownership of the ranch while still retaining control over their children. A third article will discuss the most sensitive issue of the non-ranching children when passing on ownership of the family ranch. It will also address the issue of “what is a fair selling price” if the parents decide to sell the ranch (or part of the ranch) to any of their adult children (particularly the children ranching with them who have invested their sweat equity in helping to build the parents’ estate).



Ron Hanson

Summary: Ironically, most parents try to avoid discussing these family issues. There are just too many personal emotions involved. Some parents may ignore these issues entirely and just assume that their children will work it out later by themselves. This only results in bitterness and feuding which often splits a family apart for future generations.

It important to have a strategic plan for ranch ownership succession. There are some rather sticky and emotional issues to work through and resolve among the family members but avoiding these issues could have disastrous consequences later. Parents must have a clear vision for the future of their family ranch business and then be willing to discuss their ideas with their children.

*** Ron Hanson is the Neal Harlan Professor of Agribusiness at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and a widely traveled and nationally recognized speaker regarding multi-generation family farming/ranching operations. He is a featured speaker at the Cattleman’s College, November 16, 2005

Coming Events Roundup

October 14–17

LTA Rally in October “Conservation in the Heartland”

Where: Monona Terrace Convention Center | Madison, Wisconsin
When: Friday, October 14 - Monday, October 17, 2005
Website: <http://www.lta.org/training/rally.htm>

October 15

Famoso Auction, CRT Benefit

Where: Western Stockman's Market, north of Bakersfield
When: Friday, October 15, 2005, approximately 1:00 pm
What: Ranch mare sale and Western Livestock Journal, Collector's Edition, with proceeds of both sales donated to CRT

October 28–29

Land Trust Summit 2005

Where: Heritage Complex, Tulare
When: October 28-29, 2005
Info: Theresa Kiehn (209) 522-5103 or theresa@greatvalley.org



Dave Stamey

California Rangeland Trust Breakfast & Entertainment:

Make sure you attend the fifth annual CRT breakfast during the CCA convention. Hear a rancher's perspective on conservation easements from Hank Stone of Yolo Land & Cattle Co. Additionally, a special highlight to this year's event is the cowboy serenade of Dave Stamey. Voted Male Performer of the Year by Western Music Association and Male Vocalist of the Year for the Will Rogers Award by the Academy of Western Artists, Dave Stamey has been a cowboy, a mule packer, a dude wrangler, and is quickly becoming one of the most popular western entertainers working today. His vast repertoire of classic and original Western folk music represents a link between today's Americana singer-songwriters and the old time cowboy balladeers. He has delighted audiences in seven states, and has found that he prefers this to being stomped on by angry horses. Dave Stamey will perform during the 7-9 am breakfast.

Cattlemen's College Session 2: Generational Succession

This session, cosponsored by the California Rangeland Trust, will feature Ron Hanson, Distinguished Professor of Agribusiness at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. Hanson will take a humorous look at family business succession issues in his presentation entitled, "You Can Buy the Ranch, but Just Remember I Still Own It." This Cattlemen's College session is another example of CRT's commitment to preserving the working ranches of California by providing ranchers with a variety of resources and options for operating a successful business. November 16, 1-4 pm.

November 16–18

CCA Annual Convention

Where: Reno, NV (John Ascuaga's Nuggett)
Website: www.calcattlemen.org

November 16

CRT Speaker, Ron Hanson

Where: Cattlemen's College, Reno, NV, Session 2
What: Generational Succession
When: November 16, 2005, 1-4 pm

November 17

CRT Breakfast @ CCA Convention

Where: Reno, NV
When: November 17, 2005, 7-9 am

Famoso 40th Anniversary Auction To Include Special Benefit For California Rangeland Trust

The Western Stockman's Market at Famoso will include a special benefit auction of an American Quarter Horse (AQHA) mare and a 1946 edition of Western Livestock Journal during its 40th Anniversary All-Breeds Bull Sale on Saturday, October 15, 2005.

The AQHA mare (registration number 3928609) traces back to the legendary Doc Bar and has been donated by John and Brandy Branquinho of Los Alamos, who also raised this working ranch horse. This is the only horse to sell during the Famoso 40th Anniversary All-Breeds Bull Sale.

This special benefit auction will also feature a copy of the December 10, 1946 issue of Western Livestock Journal (WLJ), which was donated by Crow Publications, Inc. The WLJ issue features an original Frank King article, editorial by Nelson Crow, and market reports from the Los Angeles Union Stockyards.

Both the mare and the collector's edition of Western Livestock Journal will sell at approximately 1:00 p.m. (PDT), just prior to the sale of the "Ideal Range Bull," and will follow the presentation of Chet Vogt buckles to the bull consignors.

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In Memoriam

Jack E. Russell

February 8, 1926 ~ July 22, 2005

At the request of the family of Jack E. Russell, California Rangeland Trust is accepting memorial donations in his honor. Mr. Russell, a CRT donor, strongly believed in the Trust's mission to conserve the open space, natural habitat and stewardship provided by California ranchers. The respect that he had for California rangelands is resulting in generous tributes to honor him.

Jack E. Russell, who passed away on July 22, 2005, left behind three loving daughters, Anne Russell (Daniel) Rudolph of Atherton, CA; Susan E. (Drew) Hagen of Walnut Creek and Gail B. (Daniel) Baum of Palo Alto.

Jack spent his childhood in Pacific Grove and the Bay area, also serving in the Merchant Marines during World War II. Jack was a trustee for C.M. Russell Museum of Great Falls, Montana, and an owner and developer of several businesses in Pacific Grove and Marina. He spent much of the last 25 years enjoying his avocado ranch, Stepladder Ranch, in Cambria, CA.

The following family and friends have graciously contributed to California Rangeland Trust in Jack Russell's memory:

Michael P. Bertrand	Graves Family (Hi Valley Development Corp)	Alida Lehman	San Simeon Creek Ranch
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