

*Our Mission: To conserve California's working ranches that provide stewardship, open space and natural habitat for future generations*

## In Range We Trust: Whole Foods Market Northern California 5% Day

BY ANNA-LISA GIANNINI, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

On September 25th, the California Rangeland Trust had the honor of being the recipient of 5% of all net sales in Whole Foods Market stores in Northern California and Reno. The day was a huge success. Aside from raising an outstanding \$164,990, stories like the one below actually happened. The opportunity to outreach to a group of food customers who may otherwise not have much interest in the Rangeland Trust or the ranching industry, was incredible. Each of the top 12 Whole Foods Market stores in Northern California and Reno had a Rangeland Trust representative and a Panorama Meats rancher performing meat demonstrations and sharing the good news about the Rangeland Trust! We had the chance to meet all kinds of consumers where they shop and to talk to them about the importance of rangeland conservation and the ranching community.

Picture this: a self-proclaimed vegetarian doing her weekly grocery shopping at a Northern California Whole Foods Store spots a man wearing a cowboy hat. She approaches the table where the man under the hat appears to be promoting something. He is offering meat samples. He greets her with a smile, and begins to tell her about the unique partnership between Panorama Organic Grass-Fed Meats and the California Rangeland Trust and how that partnership led the Rangeland Trust to be the recipient of that region's 5% Day promotion. The woman is intrigued by the Rangeland Trust and our work to conserve rangelands and open space, yet she continues to eye the organic grass-fed beef samples with a cautious curiosity. Sensing her interest, the rancher offers, "Would you like to taste our organic grass-fed beef?" Upon a whim, she accepts his offer and gives it a taste. Surprised by its robust flavor, she decides to purchase some of that delicious beef. A new beef consumer is born.

That's what Panorama Organic Grass-Fed Meats does every day. They



Rangeland Trust Immediate-Past Chairman Scott Stone, with Panorama's Vice President of Production, Wayne Langston and Legacy Council member George Nolte, passing out organic grass-fed beef samples at Whole Foods.

meet shoppers right there, in their favorite grocery stores, and they provide them with honest information about from where their beef comes. They

take the initiative to engage grocery buyers in a conversation about responsible beef production. And it isn't just about them. You see, they might be promoting their brand of beef and they may be explaining how organic grass-fed is different than conventional, but they are doing more than that. Darrell Wood, President, and Lori Carrion, CEO, of Panorama Meats take a stand for the ranching industry as a whole and helps people from all

walks of life better understand how the beef industry responsibly produces a safe and healthy product. That's why the California Rangeland Trust is so proud to partner with Panorama Meats.

September 25th was certainly one of the most exciting days in the history of the Rangeland Trust's outreach program. We could not have been so successful without the help of Panorama, Whole Foods Market, and you.

*"September 25th was certainly one of the most exciting days in the history of the Rangeland Trust's outreach program."*



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# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

BY DARREL SWEET, RANGELAND TRUST BOARD CHAIRMAN



California Rangeland Trust has a strong working presence in the San Francisco Bay Area that promotes increased appreciation for rangelands and the contributions of private ranching to conservation. With its Mediterranean climate, the Bay Area is one of the most biologically diverse regions in the world. With only 5% of California's land area, among all of the habitats found in the state, more than a third

of them can be found in the Bay Area's nine counties. The strong economy of the region has also made the Bay Area one of the six most important biodiversity hot spots in the nation. The Bay Area includes the nine counties touching San Francisco Bay. It is known worldwide as one of the most innovative, culturally diverse, and prosperous areas anywhere in the world.

What is often overlooked is that nearly half of the Bay Area's land mass is rangeland, or about 1.9 million acres according to the Conservation Lands Network and the Rangeland Trust's own mapping. Rangeland is defined as land that produces vegetation suitable for livestock grazing. Significantly, of the 1.9 million acres, about 1.35 million acres (70%) are privately owned rangelands.

The Spanish missions introduced cattle and sheep ranching to the Bay Area by the late 1700's. Consequently, as Dr. Lynn Huntsinger of U.C. Berkeley often points out, many of the habitats we value have evolved with livestock grazing for over 200 years. Thus, many habitats and species absolutely depend upon continued grazing and

management by ranchers on both private and publicly owned rangelands. The environmental community has come to recognize the value of grazing to reduce fire hazard and to promote and maintain plant and wildlife diversity.

Recognizing the vital role Bay Area rangelands play in wildlife habitat, watersheds and, very importantly, food production, a number of funders have graciously helped finance the Rangeland Trust's efforts to keep private working ranches and ranchers in the Bay Area. As a fifth generation Bay Area rancher and Rangeland Trust Board Member myself, I sincerely appreciate these funders: S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, Henry Mayo Newhall Foundation, and the Smart Foundation, all which specifically support the Rangeland Trust's Bay Area conservation efforts. I also acknowledge and appreciate the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund for providing

the original Rangeland Trust Bay Area funding.

The Rangeland Trust collaborates with other organizations to promote private rangeland values and conservation opportunities in the Bay Area. These include San Francisco

Public Utilities Commission, Coastal Conservancy, Alameda County Resource Conservation District, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Blue Ridge – Berryessa Conservation Partnership, Bay Area Open Space Council, California Rangeland Conservation Coalition, and Santa Clara County Open Space Authority. Valuable rangeland science support is provided by Dr. Stephanie Larson and Sheila Barry, University of California Cooperative Extension; Dr. Lynn Huntsinger, Professor of Rangeland Ecology and Management, University of California Berkeley; and Dr. Stuart Weiss, Creekside Center for Earth Observations.

Rangeland Trust's Bay Area staff representative is Nancy Schaefer, who resides locally and has extensive experience with Bay Area conservation. Her role is quite challenging, covering all nine counties to advocate and support private rangeland conservation efforts. Using conservation easements to conserve private ranches is a major re-direction in the Bay Area's conservation efforts, in contrast to the large amount of planning and funding used by public agencies to acquire ranches. With Nancy's diligence and dedication, board member support, and the valuable contributions of those noted here, the California Rangeland Trust is becoming an active leader in Bay Area rangeland conservation projects.

*Congratulations to Darrel on being named 2013 Livestock Man of the Year by the California Chamber of Commerce. Your work to improve and expand our industry is greatly appreciated by many. We feel honored to work with you day in and day out to conserve rangeland throughout California. To you, we tip our hats!*

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**“Nearly half of the Bay Area's land mass is rangeland, more than 1.9 million acres.”**

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Cows on Coyote Ridge in San Jose. PHOTO BY: Stuart Weiss

# Mitigation Easement Protects Historic Walker Ranch and Endangered Species Habitats

BY ANNA-LISA GIANNINI, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

A historic 400 acre section of a ranch in Contra Costa County, home to the Walker family, the California tiger salamander, San Joaquin Kit Fox, western burrowing owl and the California red-legged frog, will remain forever protected thanks to the teamwork of the family, an energy solutions company, and the California Rangeland Trust. Through that unique partnership, the Walker family will continue to operate the ranch they love; and the species the ranch supports will benefit from good land management practices.

In the early 1980's the Walker family, who has raised cattle on the Walker Ranch for nearly 100 years, was approached by a wind energy company that wanted to put windmills on their land to produce power for the surrounding communities. The Walkers agreed. With a lease of surface rights, that company put hundreds of windmills on top of the ranch's largest hills. Those windmills provided power to the East Bay for two dozen years without fail.

Years later, the wind technology on the ranch needed updating for increased efficiency. Commonly called "re-powering" by locals, the energy company replaced the aging windmills with 15 larger and more efficient, 3.2 mw Siemens turbines. That upgrade required the company to build new roads and slightly alter the landscape, triggering the requirement for a new permit.

During the permitting process, the energy company found out that the new roads would impact the habitat of the California tiger salamander, California red-legged frog, San Joaquin kit fox, and burrowing owl, all of which thrive on the cattle-grazed wind

farm. State and federal laws mandate the loss of those habitats must be mitigated by the permanent protection of similar habitat nearby. Together, the energy company and the Walker family found a viable solution to the problem using a conservation easement held by the Rangeland Trust. Because the Walker family employs sustainable practices to manage their ranch, the energy company was able to use 400 acres of the 1,956 acre Walker ranch near the wind farm for mitigation. That stretch of land protects a place for the endangered species to thrive.

Mitigation easements are similar to other types of conservation easements in that the land is protected from development in perpetuity. The difference is that when a mitigation easement is purchased, it is usually done so by a large corporation or entity at the direction of a state or federal agency. It protects

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**“Through a unique partnership, the Walker family will continue to operate the ranch they love; and the species the ranch supports will benefit from good land management practices.”**

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Cattle grazing near a wind turbine.

land containing wetlands, wildlife habitats, or other ecological areas and then sets it aside to compensate for loss of lands of similar ecological value through development.

“We feel honored to be able to help the Walkers, who are long-time advocates of the beef industry and rangeland conservation, forever protect the ranch they call home,” said Nita Vail, CEO of the California Rangeland

Trust. “Everyone who drives in the East Bay will be able to view this portion of the beautiful rolling hills of the Altamont forever.”

Conservation of the property also meets the goals of the Conservation Lands Network, a conservation plan for the region completed by the Bay Area Open Space Council, with participation from over 100 scientists and land managers.

The plan emphasizes the importance of rangelands and ranchers, whose management practices support the incredible diversity of plants and animals found in our area.

“This mitigation easement is another case where government agencies are endorsing the work of cattle ranchers to sustainably manage their land for generations,” said Darrel Sweet, California Rangeland Trust Board Chairman. “The Walker family ranch is one example of how good stewardship is protecting the environment.”

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the energy company and the Rangeland Trust have now entrusted the Walkers to sustainably manage the habitat of the California tiger salamander, and the California red-legged frog, San Joaquin kit fox, and burrowing owl in that area for decades to come.



## Gather at the Sweet Ranch

BY NANCY SCHAEFER, BAY AREA PROGRAM MANAGER

**O**n a sunny and windy Saturday in September, Rangeland Trust Chairman Darrel Sweet and his wife Karen and their family welcomed 25 guests to their ranch on the eastern edge of Livermore in Alameda County to enjoy a day on the land. The guests were treated to a tour while Darrel shared his family's history on the ranch dating back to 1868, adding that the ranch is home to the fifth, sixth and seventh generations of his family. Darrel also described the production cycle of the cow/calf operation the family runs, the management practices employed to sustain a cattle operation for 145 years, and the wildlife that reside on or frequent the ranch. Tour participants asked a lot of questions about ranching, water supply, and maintaining the stock ponds while enjoying a spectacular view of the Livermore Valley below. Two enthusiastic four-year-olds were especially appreciative of all the new calves scuttling around their mothers' legs.

The ranch tour was followed by a barbecue of Sweet Ranch estate hamburgers with Darrel's son, Eric, manning the grill, and Karen and Darrel's sister, Sylvia Chatagnier, preparing salads, side dishes and dessert.

While everyone was enjoying dessert, Judge Hugh Walker spoke to the gathering about his recent experience selling a 400-acre conservation easement that is held by the Rangeland Trust on his family's ranch nearby in Contra Costa County. Judge Walker

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**“Darrel shared his family’s history on the ranch dating back to 1868.”**

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The tour group learning about cattle. PHOTO BY: Hal Geren

expressed his appreciation to be able to conserve and continue part of his family's ranching heritage, allowing him and his partner, John Passama, to continue the ranching operation.

Guests included representatives from the local newspaper, Zone 7 Water District, the California Coastal Conservancy, the City of Livermore, AT&T, Mechanics Bank, UC Cooperative Extension, UC Berkeley, former Rangeland Trust Board member and current

California Cattlemen's Association President Tim Koopmann, and Rangeland Trust Legacy Council member Kelly Cash. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves and left with a better understanding of realities of

life on a ranch. The event was supported by Rangeland Trust staff members Nancy Schaefer and Randy Gustavus, who inspired the gathering as a way to improve understanding about rangeland.



Top: The first group of runners preparing for the race. Bottom: CRT Director Devere Dressler and his team of cheerleaders. PHOTOS BY: Nita Vail

## The Warrior Dash

BY ANNA-LISA GIANNINI, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

**Y**olo Land & Cattle Co. is one of the most scenic Northern California Ranches in the Rangeland Trust's conservation portfolio. Owned and operated by Rangeland Trust Director Scott Stone, along with his father, brother and their families, the ranch is in beautiful condition. Thousands of people from all walks of life had the opportunity to enjoy the ranch and its scenic landscapes in late October as the Stones hosted the 2013 Northern California Warrior Dash. The Warrior Dash is a 5k obstacle course that includes intense challenges like belly crawling under barbed wire, climbing over walls, running through fire, and even floating through mud pits.

Board members Scott Stone and Devere Dressler were brave enough to give the run a shot as were many other Rangeland Trust friends and supporters. The event was an excellent source of exposure for Yolo Land & Cattle Co., and a great place for the Rangeland Trust to help the general public to understand what we do. When asked "What is the California Rangeland Trust?" by a race attendee, CRT's COO, Michael Delbar, said it best "Look around at these golden hills and beautiful landscapes, we protect ranches like these so that this view and these resources will always be here."

# Sardella Celebration

BY ANNA-LISA GIANNINI, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

On August 17, Mike and Julie Sardella, of Sonora, California, hosted a once in a lifetime celebration. Not only was it their 25th wedding anniversary, but it was the celebration of the conservation easement they placed on their ranch with help from the California Rangeland Trust. The Sardellas invited their neighbors, friends, and those who have helped and supported them along the way to spend an afternoon on their ranch, complete with a great ranch BBQ. It was fun!

As his father was dying, Mike Sardella promised him that he would do whatever it took to keep the family ranch in one piece. The land, which was accumulated and compiled by his father, holds a special place in Mike's and Julie's hearts and they wanted to ensure that it would never be subdivided or sold in pieces. Without any heirs, the Sardellas hoped to make their land available once they retire for a young person to purchase that is interested in becoming a rancher. After pursuing many ideas the Sardellas submitted an application to the Rangeland Trust in hopes of putting a conservation easement on their land. They soon discovered the process wouldn't be a quick one.

Like many other landowners, the Sardellas waited several years as the Rangeland Trust's conservation staff worked day in and day out to find funding sources to conserve the Sardella's ranch. Eventually, the Rangeland Trust successfully secured funding for the Sardella's easement from the State of California Wildlife Conservation Board's Grazing Conservation program.



Top right: Mike and Julie Sardella. Bottom: Sardellas with Rangeland Trust's Devere Dressler and Marshall Cook.

The 523-acre Sardella Ranch located in Tuolumne County is home to a variety of plant and animal species. The Red Hills Roach fish is an endangered species that calls the Sardella Ranch home.

We feel very fortunate to have helped this great family conserve their ranch for future generations.

# Cocktails at the Cow Palace

BY ANNA-LISA GIANNINI, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Many groups are working to put the "Cow" back in the Cow Palace and California Rangeland Trust is one of them. This year, the Rangeland Trust made a splash at the Grand National Rodeo. Our outreach activities there included an educational booth in the event's Marketplace, where staff and directors visited with the many visitors to the rodeo, explaining the many benefits of cattle grazing and the protection of what matters, such as the western culture, water and air quality, and wildlife habitat.

Before the evening performance and on the Jumbotron above the

arena, our micro-documentary featuring Karen Stone on the benefits of rangelands to local food supplies was shown. A new addition to this year's rodeo was a cocktail reception for special guests in the Sky Room thanks to a new partnership with AT&T and the Cow Palace's Seth Doulton.

Truly the best seats in the house, the Sky Room is an amazing place to watch the Grand National Rodeo. We had a hosted bar, appetizers, networking, and plenty of conversation during the event. Guests included AT&T representatives, members of a local Marine Battalion, several guests of honor including the past and current presidents of the Salinas Rodeo, Rangeland Trust directors, donors and friends. It was a great time for everyone in attendance.

A huge "Thank You" to AT&T, Seth Doulton, Ken Alstot, and the Cow Palace staff for making the event a success!

Also on Saturday night, the Rangeland Trust was proud to help honor Livermore rancher and Rangeland Trust director Darrel Sweet as the California Chamber of Commerce's 2013 Livestock Man of The Year. With the award, Sweet, our incoming board chairman, joins a group of leaders who have shaped and molded California's livestock industry to be what it is today. Quite an honor, Darrel was presented the award on the floor of the arena. We tip our hats to Darrel for his dedication to improving the beef industry in California!



AT&T Guests take in the rodeo. PHOTO BY: Author



## Wilmar Ranch

The Wilmar Ranch is located in Monterey County and is approximately 2,100 acres in size. The Ranch neighbors an approximately 11,000 acre conservation easement currently held by the Rangeland Trust. The family that owns the Wilmar ranch is very happy to have completed the conservation easement transaction because the process allowed the family to reacquire the majority of the ranch that was put together by family members many years ago. A portion of this ranch is part of a memorial gift given to the Rangeland Trust 2009.



A SCENIC VIEW FROM THE WILMAR RANCH



DEER ON THE BUFFORD RANCH / PHOTO BY ERNEST BUFFORD

## Bufford Ranch

We were pleased to help Ernest Bufford conserve his ranch with the Rangeland Trust. The property, located in Kern County, is full of unique water resources, wildlife habitat and Native American artifacts. Our conservation team spent a lot of time discussing this project with Mr. Bufford the last couple of years and we are very happy to have helped him reach his conservation goal. Mr. Bufford continues to piece together additional grazing ground and we hope to help him continue his conservation efforts.

## Farm-to-Fork Festival

BY RANDY GUSTAVUS, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

As cowboys drove a herd of cattle across Sacramento's Tower Bridge, the Capital city was buzzing with excitement for the inaugural Sacramento Farm-to-Fork Festival. Celebrating California's agriculture and food industries, the main event was held on Saturday, Sept. 28, on Capitol Mall. The free festival – the largest zero-waste event in the country – featured a selection of everything Sacramento has to offer in farm-to-fork eating including, local chefs, farmers, and other food producers, to food trucks, animal displays, a kids' zone and live music. Festival-goers learned much about food from its source to the plate.

Events included a sushi demonstration from the California Rice Commission, pulled mozzarella showcased by Mulvaney's B&L, and a

butchering demonstration by Taylor's Market. In addition, the winner of the Santa Rosa Heirloom Festival, which The Rangeland Trust also attended, was on hand to talk about their produce.

The Festival was great opportunity for people to learn all about the Sacramento Valley's rich agricultural life and the amazing foods available in our community. The Rangeland Trust set up an informational booth and helped festival attendees learn more about how we "protect where your food grazes and grows". Our booth also included the always popular CRT bean bag toss game where winners were treated to locally produced beef jerky from Yolo Land and Cattle Company.

Other festival displays included tractors from Caterpillar, 4-H members with their projects, a dairy cow from the California Dairy Council, and an educational display about California agriculture and invasive species from the California Department of Food and Agriculture. It's estimated that nearly 25,000 people attended.

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

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CAROL TAYLOR AND ARTHUR  
KORNGIEBEL  
TEJON RANCH  
STEVE AND RENEE THOMPSON  
VIVIAN THOMPSON  
WILLIAM AND SHEILAH TIETJE  
JOHN TORPEY  
DANZEY TREATOR  
BEN AND CHERYL TROSKY  
TULARE COUNTY CATTLEMEN'S  
ASSOCIATION  
MARY VAIL  
NITA VAIL  
TIM AND JANE VAIL  
JACK AND ZEE VARIAN  
JOHN AND LINDA VELTHOEN  
VOGT SILVERSMITH  
HUGH WALKER  
VERONIQUE GILLARD AND WOLF  
WEBER  
WELLS FARGO  
EFFIE WESTERVELT  
WHOLE FOODS MARKET  
MARDEN AND KENDRA WILBER  
WILLIAM JAMES CELLARS  
KIM AND SHARON WILSON  
DOUG AND CATHERINE WINNETT  
JEFFREY WOESTE  
DARRELL AND CALLIE WOOD  
MARGIE WOOLLEY  
CHIP WULLBRANDT  
YOUNG AMERICA'S FOUNDATION  
KAREN YOUNG  
JIM YOUNGSON AND CAROLA  
NICHOLSON  
NEIL AND KARLA ZUEHLKE

If you have questions please contact Randy Gustavus at [rgustavus@Rangelandtrust.org](mailto:rgustavus@Rangelandtrust.org).

California Rangeland Trust

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## Thank You Yamaha!

**W**e are so excited to announce that Yamaha Motorsports has given us the use of this utility terrain vehicle for one year! The UTV will help our conservation team monitor ranches with more speed and efficiency. Thank you to Director Emeritus Darell Wood for helping us secure this gracious donation. We are still searching for the use of a trailer to haul it, so if you have any leads please don't hesitate to call our office at 916-444-2096 or email Michael Delbar, at [mdelbar@rangelandtrust.org](mailto:mdelbar@rangelandtrust.org).

