

CALIFORNIA RANGELAND *Trust*

2006 ANNUAL REPORT



OUR MISSION

*Conserving the open space,
natural habitat & stewardship provided
by California's ranches.*

By working with the ranching families who provide sound stewardship on California's ranches, the Rangeland Trust ensures the continuation of a cultural heritage that is quickly evaporating. As an organization founded and led by ranchers, the California Rangeland Trust is working to create a sustainable future for the state's cattle industry. Because we have stayed close to our core values, dedicating ourselves to conserving both the land and a way of life, **we are now one of the largest land trusts in California.**

RANGELAND CONSERVATION

- The intent of our organization is to work in partnership with landowners who want to continue the integrity of their ranches and establish a lasting protection for its natural habitat through conservation easements.
- In 2006 the Trust added nearly 3,500 acres to our conservation portfolio, bringing the total acreage of rangeland under permanent conservation to 176,329 acres. The two latest projects, in Stanislaus, Calaveras and Santa Barbara counties, are family owned and operated.
- Over the last two years the Trust has more than doubled the number of acres conserved with a two-year total of 101,038 acres. These additional ranches were in the counties of Plumas, Sierra, Alameda, Yolo, Merced, San Luis Obispo, Stanislaus, Calaveras and Santa Barbara. The year ahead is full of promise and we expect to close additional ranch projects before the end of 2007.

NEW TAX INCENTIVES

In conjunction with the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, California Cattlemen's Association, California Farm Bureau, and other cattlemen's land trusts in the West, the Rangeland Trust worked with key legislators to secure passage of significant tax incentives for farmers, ranchers

and property owners who donate conservation easements. If you are interested, be sure to ask us about this important new law!

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS, AWARDS & AWARENESS

- California Rangeland Trust received from Governor Schwarzenegger one of the state's most prestigious environmental awards in the category of Environmental and Economic Partnerships for the Hearst Ranch Project. The Rangeland Trust received the award with the Hearst Corporation, American Land Conservancy and the State of California for permanently protecting the historic cattle ranch in San Luis Obispo County. Funding was provided by voter-approved bond funds earmarked specifically for this transaction.
- In a radio campaign designed to educate listeners and emphasize the importance of the new tax incentives on the ranching community, the interview of the Rangeland Trust's own Chairman of the Board Darrell Wood was heard by nearly 6 million people across the country.
- California Rangeland Trust gained positive visibility in *USA Today* when Executive Director, Nita Vail and Rand Wentworth, President of Land Trust Alliance (LTA), discussed growing land conservation in the West. *USA Today* has the highest daily circulation of 2.2 million.
- The *San Diego Union-Tribune* gave the Rangeland Trust notable mention in an article highlighting the ranching community's movement to preserve the valuable resources found on our state's private rangelands.
- The *San Francisco Chronicle* featured Darrell Wood in an article focusing on conservation easements being a potential answer to the growing problem of ranching remaining viable on the land and also meeting the environmental communities push for wildlife friendly agriculture.
- Before an audience of nearly 2,000 at the annual LTA conference, their president, Rand Wentworth, gave credit to the California Rangeland Trust for our efforts in



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helping get passed the federal conservation tax incentives in the Pension Protection Act of 2006.

• Each year the Rangeland Trust holds its annual signature event to raise the necessary funds to conduct our mission driven work. Last year we held our most successful event ever thanks to the generosity of John and Carole Harris at their River Ranch in Sanger. Nearly 400 guests joined the Rangeland Trust for lively bidding at the silent and live auctions and enjoyed dinner and musical entertainment in one of the most beautiful settings in California.

• The Rangeland Trust's annual Cowboy Breakfast at the California Cattlemen's convention featured speakers who educated nearly 150 attendees on the newly passed tax incentives, and Mike Beck who serenaded the audience with his lyrical cowboy songs.

• For the first time ever, the Rangeland Trust held a unique all day event on Santa Rosa Island to raise awareness about the organization and to show what can happen when we lose the cultural heritage of historic cattle ranches. Almost 200 local ranchers, agency representatives, Rangeland Trust friends, environmentalists and media representatives toured the ranch headquarters and listened to the story of the ranch's historic legacy.

• In continuing efforts toward collaborative partnerships, the Rangeland Trust hosted the annual Partnership for Rangeland Trusts (PORT) meeting in Livermore, California with support from the Alameda Resource Conservation District. Attendees came from Montana, Colorado, Wyoming, Oregon, Nevada and Kansas. PORT

members represent over 700 easements and over one million acres of ranch land conserved in the West.

• The Rangeland Trust has been very active in the California Rangeland Coalition. This is a truly groundbreaking coalition that brings together environmental groups, federal, state and local agencies and business interests to support common goals for land conservation and grazing stewardship. The consensus developed by the Coalition has received national attention.

 ORGANIZATIONAL &
 FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

As the Rangeland Trust continues to see increased interest and application submissions with each year, we have made it a top priority to formally assess our needs as an organization to be able to successfully meet the demands of ranching families who want to protect their ranches. With the generous support of the Hewlett Foundation, we have undergone the first phase of an extensive organizational assessment process to better position us to receive additional funding for continued success in fulfilling our mission.

The Rangeland Trust's fundraising efforts continue to grow and move forward with a new fundraising plan that has been developed and accepted by the Board of Directors. Securing new fundraising software to aid in outreach and donor recognition strategies will also enhance our overall fundraising efforts.

 THE OUTLOOK

As the California Rangeland Trust looks to the future, our priorities include:

1. Continue to identify all potential funding support for pending and new projects;
2. Secure grant funding to grow our operational capacity and increase donor awareness;
3. Finalize our next three to five year strategic plan;
4. Reach out to urban constituents about the benefits to them of conserving working landscapes through major media outlets and events;
5. Completing additional voluntary conservation easements on California ranches.

For more information visit www.rangelandtrust.org

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