

CALIFORNIA RANGELAND *Trust*

2007 ANNUAL REPORT

OUR MISSION

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

The California Rangeland Trust is the only rancher-governed, statewide land trust in California. The Rangeland Trust was created by the California Cattlemen's Association to provide, promote and safeguard the long-term viability and stewardship of rangeland agriculture and California's natural lands; to date we have protected 180,969 acres under conservation easement. Since our creation in 1998, we have worked successfully to create new models for the voluntary conservation of California's private working landscapes. As we look to celebrate our 10th year anniversary our focus remains true to our mission as we are ranchers helping ranchers.

RANGELAND CONSERVATION

Included in our total rangeland acres conserved of 180,969, there are 27 family ranches which spread across 18 counties. This tremendous success culminated in 2007 with four projects closing in the counties of Madera, Kern and Santa Barbara. These family owned and operated ranches total 4,633 acres, portions of which contain critical habitat for endangered species as well as some of California's most scenic viewsheds.

Rangeland conservation takes collaboration and partnerships to succeed and the Rangeland Trust has been honored to work with the following partners and funders on our 2007 conservation easement agreements:

- Wildlife Conservation Board and the Oak Woodlands Program
- USDA Farm and Ranchland Protection Program through the Natural Resource Conservation Service
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
- US Fish and Wildlife Service

MONITORING AND STEWARDSHIP

The Rangeland Trust's strength and integrity are determined by the caliber of our monitoring. To continue to remain on the forefront of monitoring and stewardship protocols, this year staff attended several workshops that enhanced their skills for conducting research, writing and monitoring. These courses include: the Oak Planner's Workshop through the University of California, two monitoring workshops through Natural Resource Conservation Service, Sierra Nevada Conservancy's web conference and the Stewardship Council's Board Meetings.

Supported by staff, the Board of Directors takes an active role in the monitoring of easement properties. In 2007, eight Rangeland Trust board members participated in annual monitoring of easement properties.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

• New bridges were built this year as the Rangeland Trust entered into a conservation easement agreement with a landowner, US Army Corps of Engineers, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Fish and Wildlife Service and the Natural Resource Conservation Service. This unprecedented partnership has made incredible strides in recognizing working landscape easements, where the existing ranching practices are supported, as a means to sustain endangered species habitat.

• Scott Stone, Rangeland Trust board director, and his family were chosen from among ranchers in seven states as regional winners for the Environmental Stewardship Award Program. Henry and Suzanne Stone, owners of Yolo Land and Cattle, along with their sons—Scott and Casey and their wives, Karen and Angela Stone—are being recognized for their numerous innovative ranching practices enabling environmental and economic sustainability in Yolo County.

• Darrell Wood, chairman of the board in 2006-2007, received one of three National Wetlands Conservation Awards from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior. Wood received the award for his management of the Pete's Creek Wetland and Riparian Restoration Project on 1,262 acres of the partnership's ranch, located in Lassen County just north of Susanville.

• Board and staff attended the Land Trust Alliance's annual Rally where they participated in meetings and seminars on land conservation issues and strategies. Keen interest was focused on fundraising training and classes for improving our monitoring reports and procedures.

• The Board and staff of the Rangeland Trust have worked along side the California Council of Land Trusts, as a member and board member, and with the Partnership of Rangeland Trusts to further our conservation efforts and mission-driven work.

• The Rangeland Trust built a successful partnership framework with the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County and the two organizations are leveraging their respective resources to accomplish cooperative key land conservation projects in the area. Two of these projects were completed in December and five more have been identified as priorities.

OUTREACH EFFORTS

• The Rangeland Trust's annual fundraising event, "A Western Affair", was held at the historic Rancho San Julian in Lompoc with our hosts Jim and Marianne Poett. Special guest Lt. Governor, John Garamendi welcomed the guests and kicked off a successful live auction. The site of this year's event held special significance to the ranching community and was the reason the Trust chose to honor exemplary individuals that have worked to keep our way of life alive. These guests included: Bobbi Ingersoll, Reno, Nev., Ronnie Richards, Kingsburg, Ted Robinson, Oakview, Cotton Rosser, Marysville and Sheila Varian, Arroyo Grande. The Trust's honored guests were chosen for their significant contributions to the ranching and equestrian industries and for their influence state-wide. The Rangeland Trust works to not only help ranching families stay on their land but also to keep our history and our traditions alive. The special guests at "A Western Affair" are just a few



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of these who keep passing our treasured customs on to the next generation. This event would not be possible without our corporate partners: AgriLabs, Fort Dodge Animal Health, Monsanto, Wildlands, Inc., Ridely Block, Safeway/Vons, and Rabo AgriFinance.

♦ The 2nd Annual "A Day on Cowboy Island" was like none other on Santa Rosa Island with nearly 125 friends, family and supporters of the Rangeland Trust. This all-day celebration of the cowboy spirit, the ranching culture and paying tribute to the heritage of the California rancher was one of a kind.

♦ The annual Cowboy Breakfast was held at the California Cattlemen Association's convention in Reno and featured cowboy poet Tony Argento and Bruce Hafenfeld of Kern County as the keynote speaker. Hafenfeld spoke about his experience closing a conservation easement on his land and how he was able to prove to federal agencies that his ranching practices are an asset to the environment and supports endangered species habitat. The Rangeland Trust holds the easement on the Hafenfeld Ranch which closed in July of 2007.

♦ The Rangeland Trust was excited to launch our new and improved website this year. The website contains many features such as our recent success stories and industry news, featured ranches, online donations, conservation resources and improved usability and navigation. The look and feel of the site captures the western way of life and showcases the industry we aim to protect while highlighting the families and ranches who have partnered with us.

♦ Staff and Board made multiple presentations to groups throughout the state this year to educate them on conservation easements, estate planning options with the Rangeland Trust, funding opportunities, monitoring and our overall mission. These groups included conservation minded organizations, university educators, business professionals, cattlemen, cattlemen and Resource Conservation Districts.

POLICY AND COALITION SUPPORT

♦ The Rangeland Trust has participated in collaborative efforts with the California Rangeland Coalition throughout 2007 and remains an active partner with this unprecedented group.

♦ Board and staff engaged in legislative meetings with the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, California Cattlemen's Association and the California Rangeland Coalition in Washington DC, in additions to meetings at the state level.

♦ Rangeland Trust staff and Board worked in coordination with the California Cattlemen's Association staff on letters of support and testifying on issues of concern, including the Williamson Act funding.

♦ Board and staff participated in strategic meetings during Administrative and Agency visits with: Lt. Governor, John Garamendi, Secretary of Resources, Mike Chrisman and with John Donnelly, executive director of the Wildlife Conservation Board.

♦ The Rangeland Trust continues to work actively on reauthorization of the 2006 Pension Protection Act, now written into the Farm Bill.

THE OUTLOOK

As California Rangeland Trust enters into its tenth year of operations, our organization is experiencing unprecedented demand from California ranchers with a large increase in project applications for conservation easements to be held and monitored by the Rangeland Trust.

- ♦ Nearly 400,000 acres, representing approximately 60 ranching families across 25 Counties
- ♦ Twelve of these counties are ranked as California's fastest growing counties
- ♦ Eleven of these are located within the California Rangeland Conservation Coalition's critical designation area.

It is the Rangeland Trust's highest priority to garner the funding to complete these pending projects and seek support from a wide array of California constituents, granting agencies and other conservation minded groups.



CALIFORNIA RANGELAND TRUST

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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- Kendra Wilber, Clements
- Mark Nelson, Wilton
- Jennifer Rice, Clements *
- Brandy Branquinho, Los Alamos *

* RESIGNED FROM BOARD POSITION IN 2007. CONTINUE TO WORK FOR RANGELAND TRUST IN A VOLUNTEER CAPACITY.

STAFF

- Nita Vail, Executive Director
- Michele Clark, Transaction Director
- Andy Mills, Stewardship Director
- John Vosburgh, Interim Managing Director
- Erin Lacy, Director of Marketing & Fund Development
- Jon Cartwright, Finance Manager
- Elizabeth Valdovinos, Conservation Associate