

EVALUATING CALIFORNIA'S ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

Values and Return on Investment of Conservation Easements held by the California Rangeland Trust

California's working landscapes sustain plant and wildlife ecosystems that offer myriad ecosystem services – goods and services produced in nature – to Californians including healthy food, clean water, vibrant plant and wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration, spectacular viewsheds, and more. But sprawling land development threatens these valuable resources that are essential to our way of life.

Our rangelands are disappearing at an alarming rate.

Rangelands provide a variety of ecosystem services, but are particularly vulnerable to development. The working landscapes that characterize the Golden State are at risk. Since 1984, **more than 1.4 million acres of California agricultural land have been converted to other uses, 78% of which is due to urban development.***

Protecting working lands protects our environment.

To protect California's open spaces and the benefits they provide, the California Rangeland Trust has conserved more than 340,000 acres of rangeland using conservation easements. These legal agreements ensure the land will remain undeveloped and will continue to support rich, diverse ecosystems now and into the future.

A new study shows the value of rangeland conservation.

Dr. Van Butsic, Dr. Lynn Huntsinger, and Dr. Reid Johnsen from UC Berkeley, evaluated 56 ranches conserved by the Rangeland Trust – encompassing 306,781 acres – to understand the economic value of the ecosystem services derived from these permanently protected properties and to evaluate the return on investment of its conservation easements.

THE FINDINGS

56 ranches conserved through the Rangeland Trust provide **\$900 million to \$1.44 billion in ecosystem services annually.**

California Rangeland Trust's conservation easements **return between \$3.43 and \$3.47 per dollar invested** under current zoning.**

Returns rise to between **\$104.28 and \$167.76 per dollar invested** when considering the loss of all ecosystem services under potential future rezoning.**

***The "return" is considered to be the production of ecosystem service values that would have been lost to land use conversion if the property had not been conserved.*

WHAT ECOSYSTEM SERVICES DO WE GET FROM RANGELANDS?

PROVISIONING

Services



Food



Raw Materials



Water



Medicinal Resources



Ornamental Resources

REGULATING

Services



Climate Regulation



Waste Treatment



Erosion Prevention



Nutrient Cycling



Pollination



Biological Control

HABITAT

Services



Lifecycle Maintenance



Biodiversity Maintenance

CULTURAL

Services



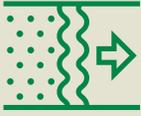
Aesthetics



Recreation

ECOSYSTEM SERVICE VALUES

Provided annually by 56 ranches conserved by the California Rangeland Trust

<p>FOOD</p>  <p>\$236,984,376</p>	<p>WATER</p>  <p>\$13,940,600</p>	<p>LIFECYCLE PRODUCTION</p>  <p>\$96,568,858</p>	<p>CLIMATE REGULATION</p>  <p>\$11,664,823</p>	<p>BIODIVERSITY MAINTENANCE</p>  <p>\$250,580,694</p>
<p>EROSION PREVENTION</p>  <p>\$9,447,398</p>	<p>WASTE TREATMENT</p>  <p>\$14,387,003</p>	<p>AESTHETICS</p>  <p>\$31,671,248</p>	<p>RECREATION</p>  <p>\$28,546,429</p>	<p>RAW MATERIALS</p>  <p>\$29,068,691</p>

What does this mean for the people of California?

The Golden State's private, working lands and the ranchers who steward them provide an abundance of ecosystem services on which Californians rely. **Conserving rangeland is a smart investment, especially as we look for ways to protect our environment and ensure a greener future.** With the rapid loss of agricultural lands posing an existential threat to California, we must take action to preserve the lands that are critical to our state's social, cultural, and economic well-being.

For more information about these findings and to learn how you can help conserve more of California's precious rangelands visit: www.rangelandtrust.org



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Trust

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