

FLENTGE RANCH: PROTECTING A FAMILY GIFT SO IT WILL KEEP ON GIVING

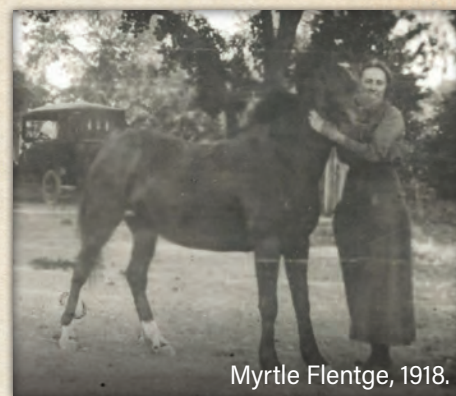
"It is a common story," explained Steve Sinton, founding chairman of the Rangeland Trust and current emeritus council member. "Someone wants out, but that is part of the reason we decided to form the Rangeland Trust, to keep these California family ranches together."

Ranchers are ardent conservationists that recognize the need to care for the land so it will take care of them in return. While a fundamental desire to safeguard the land and its natural resources holds true for most landowners that pursue conservation, selling their development rights can also provide significant financial relief for these ranching families. Conservation agreements can offer solutions to ranchers looking to pay off outstanding debt, invest in other business ventures to support the viability of their ranching operations, or buy out other family members that want to divest their interests. The latter was the case for the owners of the Flentge Ranch.

Just outside of Parkfield in Monterey County, California stands the Flentge Ranch—3,000 acres of rolling hills, vibrant grasslands, magnificent woodlands, and ancient oak trees. The ranch was established in the 1880s by Henry Flentge, with his wife and four children. After Henry passed away in 1899, the land and hard work that went along with it were left to his children. Although rewarding, ranching did not make for an easy life, and the Flentges put everything they had into making it work. Never marrying or having children of their own, the four Flentge siblings worked day in and day out, just barely scraping by.

"The Flentges lived dirt-poor lives, but in doing so, they left no debt to us," Kyler Hamann, current co-owner of the property, explained.

Myrtle Flentge, the last remaining Flentge sibling, passed away in 1972. After her passing, the ranch was left to multiple distant relatives: the Hamanns, Metzlers, and another set of cousins. Unfortunately, the other cousins had no connection to the ranch and quickly sold their portion, which included the original home, without notifying the Hamanns or Metzlers.



Myrtle Flentge, 1918.

"Losing that piece of property was extremely disheartening for the family," Kyler stated. "We lost such an important piece to our family heritage."

In the early 2000s, Kyler feared that history would repeat itself when he noticed the Metzlers were spending less and less time out on the ranch. Rather than sit back idly and watch another piece of the Flentge Ranch disappear, Kyler and his sibling, Kris, also a co-owner of the property, began planning and researching potential avenues that would allow them to buy out their cousins.

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Flentge Ranch, Monterey County

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Dear Rangeland Enthusiasts,

Land gives us life. Whether you work every day with your hands in the dirt, have a career that takes you out to commune with nature and agriculture, or only spend your weekends out in open space – you know that the land is providing for you. What you choose to eat, where you live, your quality of life, maybe even your career or retirement all include choices ultimately connected to the land.

The simple truth is that without responsible, dedicated stewards, there are no healthy landscapes to help sustain our lives. We need people on our lands, salt of the earth people who care about the planet, animals, and local communities. People with grit who won't quit when things get tough. Innovative people who forge ahead with new solutions when they see opportunity. People who know the nuances and unique needs of their lands and who see the subtle shifts so they can prepare for whatever comes next. People who continue to work for their neighbors, despite natural disasters, regulatory hurdles, volatile markets, and a global pandemic, to make sure we can all emerge stronger on the other end.

At the Rangeland Trust, we make a forever promise that lands will be available so that people can care for our open spaces as working lands – an approach scientifically proven to provide the greatest benefits to society by keeping our needs in harmony with nature.

That is what we do. Why we do this is because you need us to.

We can't achieve any of this without our landowners, ranchers, and stewards who are out there every day, fighting for our future often against steep odds, doing the work on the land. As our mission states, we are committed to these people as much as we are to the land itself. We are committed to being reliable partners, creating access to valuable resources, connecting you to one another, and so much more.

The Rangeland Trust is not just an organization that has a transaction with landowners then moves on to the next. This is a community, built by you and nourished by you. This is a movement that gathers people who all want the same thing: a better today, a more resilient tomorrow, an honored heritage, and a way to feel good by doing good on a significant scale.

In the following pages, you will see how this community comes together to accomplish great things. We lift up one another because that is what it means to be part of a great community. Your continued involvement is inspiring more people to join us, enabling your neighbors to conserve more land, and making a big difference for everyone who is touched by this work. We need the participation of each and every one of you to keep moving forward.

Thank you for being part of the Rangeland Trust.

Sincerely,



Andy Mills
Andy Mills
Board Chairman



Michael Delbar
Michael Delbar
Chief Executive Officer

IT FEELS GOOD TO BE PART OF THE SOLUTION

Many of us devote our time, skills, expertise, and financial contributions because it's the right thing to do and we want to make an impact. Sharing our gifts also provide us with an immense feeling of satisfaction. And we all need a little joy sometimes, especially these days.

Giving makes you feel good because it can:

1. **Make a real difference.** Sometimes "thank you" doesn't convey how much your support truly means to us and the people with whom we work. Your gifts to rangeland conservation enable you to make a powerful impact that will carry on past your lifetime. Helping to spread the word can also connect you to your impact firsthand.
2. **Reflect your values.** We all want to be part of a community that shares our values. Showing support, either through gifts of time or finances, can extend your personal connection and give you a sense of belonging.
3. **Serve as inspiration.** Your generosity may inspire others to follow your lead. Engage neighbors, colleagues, and loved ones in a dialogue about your Rangeland Trust interests and encourage them to join you as an ambassador, volunteering time and talent, or raising funds for more families to realize their dreams of conservation.
4. **Create an everlasting impact.** You have an opportunity to leave your mark on the world. Planning a future gift—such as one in your will or trust—helps ensure that generations to come will benefit. It can also help protect the lands you love beyond your lifetime.
5. **Recognize individuals.** We are often inspired to give back by people who have touched our lives. Tribute gifts are a way to honor those individuals, and enable us to help keep their memories forever connected to the land.

Giving Takes Many Forms

There are myriad ways to give financially that can benefit both your family as well as your rangeland conversation goals. You can also think outside the box! Do you have a special place where we could gather with friends and bring them closer to our mission? Is there a product or service that you can provide (or connect us to) that might make one of our gatherings extra special? Perhaps you have a story to share that might inspire more people to get involved in this work. What else? We are always happy to explore ideas and find meaningful ways for you to connect through our mission.

Ready to see the benefits of your generosity? **Contact Shannon Foucault at (916) 444-2096 or sfoucault@rangelandtrust.org** to discuss ways you can help more of California's working rangelands and the people who steward them.



LEGACY COUNCIL

Between meetings and raising awareness of the California Rangeland Trust, the Legacy Council has been hard at work.

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REUNIR WITH THE RANGELAND TRUST

On May 19, over 80 guests gathered at the Santa Ynez Valley Historical Museum in Santa Barbara County for our *Reunir* celebration. Friends, both new and familiar, had a great time connecting with one another and hearing from Andy Mills, Rangeland Trust Chairman; Pam Doiron, Spanish Ranch Owner; and Sharyn Main, Climate Resilience Program Director for the Community Environmental Council, about how local rangelands and ranching families are adding to the resiliency of the iconic Santa Barbara Region.



A SACRAMENTO ROUNDUP

Over 100 guests gathered in Downtown Sacramento at Mulvaney's B&L on June 29 for a delightful evening of food and friendship. Hosted by longtime Rangeland Trust supporters, Bob Slobe and Russell Austin, the evening offered a wonderful opportunity for the Rangeland Trust to get to know its neighbors in America's Farm-to-Fork Capital. As a special treat, guests heard from California Department of Food and Agriculture Secretary, Karen Ross, and farm-to-fork pioneers and proprietors of Mulvaney's B&L, Bobbin and Patrick Mulvaney, about the importance of rangelands for quality food and a thriving local economy.



DONOR SPOTLIGHT: BERT AND CAROL BRAUN

A trip to Elko, Nevada forever changed the lives of Bert and Carol Braun.

Bert and Carol first moved to Loomis, California in 1975. They purchased 5 acres and a feed store which Bert ran for 30 years. They were always active in the community, starting with their involvement in the Chamber of Commerce, volunteer fire department, and local schools. After making a trip to Elko to see the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering, they were inspired to introduce Loomis to this fantastic art form. The Cowpoke Fall Gathering was born in that car ride home.

Founded in 1995, the annual Cowpoke Fall Gathering event celebrates cowboy poetry, music, and storytelling. By exposing audiences to Western folklore, entertainment, and experiences, they honor the "cowboy way" and help preserve Western heritage. Since that first year, the event has grown five times bigger and moved into a larger venue.

"When the Cowpoke Fall Gathering took off, we knew instinctually that we would pay it forward, we just needed to figure out how," said Bert and Carol. "We contacted our CPA and formed The Cowpoke Foundation, we set it up so that no compensation is taken by the trustees."

The Foundation has donated more than \$340,000 to 24 beneficiaries over the past three decades, including many scholarships to local high school students who perform original poems. According to Bert, "We are deeply inspired by our community and believe that the ability to support these organizations in a meaningful way is a gift."

Bert was first introduced to the Rangeland Trust through a friend and fellow Ranchero Visitadores rider who knew how aligned the organizations' missions were in perpetuating a love for the land and our shared Western heritage. The connection and urgency were apparent right away.

Carol explained, "We believe that preserved open spaces and rangelands contribute to a greater overall well-being for our state, and during the past 30 years, we have seen land and open space devoured by developers who have little to no imagination. We believe land that is preserved becomes a treasure. We also believe that preserved rangelands assure a resilience to future generations in a way they might not see."

Their firsthand experience, passion, and involvement with cowboy culture led Bert and Carol to get more deeply involved with the Rangeland Trust. They are longtime supporters of the Rangeland Trust's signature *A Western Affair* event and annual Silver Spurs donors as well. Aside from donating, the Brauns volunteer their time and ranching connections in the greater Sacramento Area. The support and respect for Western heritage is mutual as the Rangeland Trust helps sponsor the annual Cowpoke Fall Gathering event every November. You can learn more about the event at: www.cowpokefallgathering.com

The Brauns are proud to be part of the Rangeland Trust community and donate towards its mission. The way they see it, "Without land for cattle and livestock, this way of life and the hardworking values of honesty, loyalty and courage are in danger. [The Rangeland Trust] helps keep these places alive so that new stories can continue to emerge."



INTRODUCING THE SILVER SPURS

This Spring we kicked off our brand-new donor community, the Silver Spurs. Who are the Silver Spurs? These Rangeland Trust donors are the backbone of our organization who make sure that we can continue to operate and grow, year after year. These folks make up just 20% of our total supporters, but they provide over 50% of the funds that enable conservation. Needless to say, we could not continue our work and mission of conserving California's working rangelands without their help.

Our Silver Spurs show their generosity annually and when we need it most. They step up to help conservation directly, like right now with the Spanish Ranch. And the pandemic woes could have been dire without their continued dedication to the good we are accomplishing together.

We formed the Silver Spurs to say thank you. We look for meaningful ways to connect with this membership group of like-minded conservation enthusiasts at no extra expense to our organization, because we know where these valuable dollars are meant to go. Silver Spurs are invited to special events near them, provided exclusive digital content and communications from Rangeland Trust leadership, and given access to more opportunities to get involved and learn about advancing conservation.

So far this year, we have enjoyed visiting with each other on the Central Coast and in the Sacramento Region and have more events planned for the rest of the year. Cumulative giving of \$500 or more annually will be recognized through membership in the Silver Spurs. Send your gift today to become part of this community and make a difference for California's rangelands. We look forward to seeing you at our Silver Spurs membership events soon.

MEET A SILVER SPUR



Mary Heyden is a longtime supporter of the Rangeland Trust who made a gift to conserve the Spanish Ranch and then came out on the land for a tour on the Ranch in May. Though her family's ranch is nearby, she had never been out to the Spanish Ranch before and was enchanted by the land and the historical adobe headquarters. According to Mary, "California rangelands are disappearing and it's important for myself, my family and for everyone in California to hold on to them. I support the Rangeland Trust because my grandmother, Ailie Chamberlin, who was born and raised in California and went to Cornell to get her master's in biology and entomology, taught us a love for the land. It's important to continue that and pass on that passion for the land to the next generation."

SPANISH RANCH TOUR

On May 20, friends of the Rangeland Trust visited the historic Spanish Ranch in the Cuyama Valley. During the tour, ranch owners, Pam and Dan Doiron, recapped the landscape's rich history dating back to 1843. Holistic grazing expert, Richard King, also spoke about some of the management practices he's helped the Doirons implement. All in all, it was a wonderful day filled with captivating story-telling, a delicious barbecue lunch, and scenic views.



LANDOWNER APPRECIATION DINNER

The Rangeland Trust hosted the inaugural Landowner Appreciation Dinner on June 21 to honor and celebrate the landowner partners who represent the history, hard work, integrity, and resilient spirit behind the organization's success. Sponsored by **California Outdoor Properties** and held in conjunction with the California Cattlemen's Association's Mid-year Meeting, the event welcomed nearly 80 landowner partners and friends to Rancho Murieta, California. The evening provided a wonderful opportunity for guests to connect with fellow ranchers and learn about recent happenings at the Rangeland Trust.



CALIFORNIA RANGELAND TRUST RECOGNIZES LEADERS IN CONSERVATION

During the recent Landowner Appreciation Dinner, the 2022 conservation awards were presented. The Conservation Impact Award recognizes individuals who have excelled in environmental protection and made significant contributions to the advancement of conservation, while the Conservationist of the Year Award recognizes achievement in voluntary conservation by a private landowner.

The 2022 Conservation Impact Award was presented to Ceci Dale-Cesmat. Ceci had a longstanding career with the Natural Resource Conservation Service where she served as the State Rangeland Management Specialist and took a pragmatic approach to helping ranchers develop management plans that worked for them and their operations.



The 2022 Conservationist of the Year Award was presented to Merrie and the late Don Tompkins. In 2020, after two decades of patiently waiting for funding to be secured for their conservation easement, the Tompkinses worked with the Rangeland Trust to conserve their beloved TS Ranch in Yolo County. Rather than receiving the total easement value, a large portion of the value was donated by the Tompkinses to ensure the ranch's continuity after their passing.

We tip our hats to these individuals and thank them for their extraordinary contributions to preserve working lands for the future of California.



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IN MEMORY OF SHEILA VARIAN

WILLIAM "BILL" KING IN MEMORIAM



Sixth-generation Californian and Santa Barbara County cattleman, William "Bill" King, passed away on February 13, 2022 at the age of 81. Bill attended Santa Clara University where he played sports. After graduating in 1962 Bill attended law school for, in his words, "about 10 minutes" while running a few cattle with his brother, Chuck. The brothers leased the rugged Flentge Ranch from Myrtle Flentge in Parkfield, California and realized their true passion – the cattle business. Bill and Chuck continued to run cattle and operate King Bros. Cattle Company for the next decade. After the partnership dissolved, Bill ran his own cattle herd and operated the receiving station in Buellton for the Templeton Livestock Market until he retired in 2014.

Bill was a great friend, ambassador, and donor to the Rangeland Trust. He sang the National Anthem at various Rangeland Trust events and regaled guests with stories of his family out on the land. It will soon be the Trust's honor to conserve one of the historic pieces of his family's land in the Cuyama Valley, the aptly named Spanish Ranch, which he so loved. Bill never met a stranger and made everyone he met feel special; he is greatly missed.

HORTON ALEXANDER "COTTON" ROSSER IN MEMORIAM



Horton Alexander "Cotton" Rosser peacefully tipped his hat for the last time on June 22, 2022 at the age of 93. Cotton began his life in rodeo as a competitor and was a champion saddle bronc rider in the 1950s. After a ranch accident, he ended his competition career but remained an integral part of the rodeo world throughout his life. In 1956, Cotton bought the Flying U Rodeo Ranch, building it to become one of the most prominent suppliers of rodeo animals and the oldest rodeo livestock company in the U.S. He also worked to raise the profile of rodeo, becoming known for his showmanship in rodeo opening ceremonies. In 1995, Rosser was inducted into the ProRodeo Hall of Fame, and in 2019, he was honored with the Hall of Fame's annual Legends of ProRodeo award. Cotton will forever be remembered as a legend in the sport of rodeo.

Cotton was a loyal friend and longtime supporter of the California Rangeland Trust. He and his wife, Karin, regularly donated National Finals Rodeo tickets for the live auctions at the Rangeland Trust's signature event, *A Western Affair*. Through their generous support over the years, Cotton and Karin helped raise significant funds to support rangeland conservation.

Long live the King of the Cowboys, Cotton Rosser. He will forever be in our hearts.

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FLENTGE RANCH CONT.

As fate would have it, Kyler and Kris's father, Duane Hamann, knew Steve Sinton through the local school board. Kyler started picking Steve's brain to learn about conservation easements and how the Rangeland Trust may be able to help the family keep the ranch intact as they looked toward succession down the road.

Then in 2012, Kyler got the call he had been anticipating. The eldest Metzler cousin informed him that they were looking to sell. Fortunately, Kyler and his cousin had a great relationship, and although the Metzlers wanted out of the ranching business, they also wanted to make sure the Hamanns had their fair shake at acquiring the land.

"My cousin was actually the one that brought up the Rangeland Trust in that conversation," Kyler recounted. "He told me to run the numbers and see if conserving both portions of the ranch would be a comparable sale price to buy them out."

Kyler returned to Steve to start the application process.

Once an application is received and approved, the Rangeland Trust immediately gets to work to secure funding for conservation, but because of funders' priorities and the complex processes for grant submissions, the journey to secure funding can be a lengthy one. For landowners struggling to save their ranches, time is not always on their side.

Kyler knew this and feared that the time required to achieve conservation may deter his cousins from waiting until he and his family could come up with the cash to buy them out. But, understanding how much the property meant to the Hamanns and wanting to see the ranch stay in the family and functioning as a working landscape forever, the Metzlers held off on putting their half of the ranch up for sale.

Once the conservation budget was finalized and the value of the conservation agreement was determined, Kyler went back to his cousin. The number was slightly less than what the Metzler's portion of the ranch could have sold for on the open market, but Kyler's cousin told him to continue with the conservation easement anyway.

Finally, in 2015, Kyler got the call he had been waiting for. It was the Rangeland Trust reaching out to inform him that the project was fully funded.

"I had to sit down where I was standing in the yard because I was overcome with relief and excitement," Kyler exclaimed.

Kyler quickly contacted his cousin to tell him the good news. After a few short months, the conservation documents were signed, the Metzlers were paid, and the Hamanns became the sole owners of the Flentge Ranch.



Flentge family decedents, including members of the Hamann and Metzler families, gathered on the Ranch.



The Flentge Ranch consists of 3,000 acres of rolling hills, vibrant grasslands, magnificent woodlands, and ancient oak trees. In 2015, Kyler Hamann and his family partnered with the Rangeland Trust to conserve the ranch and carry on the Flentge family legacy.

"Everyone has their own type of treasure, ours are these 360-degree views that were given to us," said Duane. The entire Hamann family recognizes the responsibility they have to care for the land, and they feel fortunate to be able to carry on the Flentge family legacy.

Today, the ranch offers a striking resemblance to what it looked like when Henry Flentge purchased the land over 140 years ago. It remains a place for cattle to graze, wildlife to roam, and families to gather, just as Henry always intended. And because of the determination of the Hamann family, it will stay that way for generations to come thanks to their partnership with the Rangeland Trust. ☺

By: Madison Goss, Communications Coordinator

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