

# Update

Summer 2014



## WORKING TOGETHER TO KEEP RANCHERS RANCHING

*The California Rangeland Conservation Coalition builds relationships that promote rangelands and private ranching through outreach and education, participation in research, and facilitation of conversations to reduce barriers to ranching and conservation and to make new opportunities to achieve the goals of the Rangeland Resolution.*

### OUTREACH

The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Summit was held in Oakdale in partnership with University of California Cooperative Extension. It brought together more than 360 participants including ranchers, land managers, academics, conservationists, businesses and government officials. The theme of the Summit was rangeland conversion, its causes and impacts. Topics included the economics of cattle production in California and the effects of rangeland conversion on wildlife habitat and water resources. Summit participants were able to learn first hand from ranchers in the Oakdale area about the challenges of keeping ranches viable. Several ranchers presented their experiences with various conservation programs that support ranching viability. Numerous ranchers and ranching businesses helped sponsor the event. The Coalition is grateful for all sponsorships, donations and in-kind support. The list of sponsors, presentations and contest photographs are posted on the website.

The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Summit will be held jointly with the Society for Range Management meetings scheduled for February 3 in Sacramento.

A field trip was hosted in partnership with the Marin Carbon Project. It is a consortium of producers, agricultural institutions and producers in Marin County, university researchers, agencies, and nonprofit organizations seeking to understand and demonstrate the potential of enhanced carbon sequestration in Marin's agricultural

and rangelands soils. Participants learned about the results from research trials evaluating the potential environmental and forage productivity benefits of adding compost as a soil amendment on rangelands.

Watch for a new website, thanks to an Adams Legacy Foundation grant and a new brochure, too produced with S. D. Bechtel, JR. Foundation support.

### CONSERVATION

In partnership with the NRCS, and the Alameda and Contra Costa Resource Conservation Districts, the Coalition launched the Wildlife-friendly Livestock Pond and Rangeland Health Initiative. It leverages EQIP funds to restore ponds that benefit ranchers and wildlife like the California tiger salamander and the California red-legged frog among other species. Funding is available for ranchers in Alameda County and will be available to ranchers in Contra Costa County. The Coalition and its partners are hoping to expand the initiative to other counties in the future.

### MEETINGS

A working group is in conversations with staff from the California Department of Parks and Recreation discussing potential sites where grazing can be used as a tool to achieve conservation goals. Coalition staff joined a group of conservation organizations convened by the World Wildlife Fund to develop standards for sustainable beef production.

### RESEARCH

A partnership among USGS, Defenders of Wildlife and the Rangeland Coalition is evaluating the effects of land use change and climate change on privately-owned rangelands and the environmental benefits (ie ecosystem services) that they provide including wildlife habitat, water and carbon sequestration. The research team has been conducting extensive outreach and has held several training sessions with Resource Conservation Districts. Results are available online.

<http://climate.calcommons.org/aux/rangeland/index.html>.

### BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

Coalition staff is helping a budding regional partnership in northern California. With leadership from the Northern California Regional Land Trust, the Working Lands Conservation Partners (WLCP) are trying to coordinate efforts to protect and enhance working landscapes in Tehama, Butte and Glenn Counties.

### FUNDING

With funding from the S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation an advisory committee and Coalition staff are finalizing a 5-year business plan that will provide an organizational structure and funding plan for the Coalition to continue implementing its Strategic Plan.

### CONGRATULATIONS

to the University of California Cooperative Extension on the event of the Smith-Lever Act Centennial. The California Rangeland Conservation Coalition appreciates the important contributions of UCCE to the Coalition and to rangeland science research and education.

### YOUR PARTICIPATION IS ENCOURAGED!

- Subscribe to bi-monthly E-Update for news and workshops offered by Signatories by sending an e-mail to [pelayo@carangeland.org](mailto:pelayo@carangeland.org)
- Join a committee – e-mail [pelayo@carangeland.org](mailto:pelayo@carangeland.org)
- Make a donation – CRCC, PO Box 73470, Davis, CA 95617
- Request a Coalition speaker or include the Coalition in rangeland projects - e-mail [pelayo@carangeland.org](mailto:pelayo@carangeland.org)
- “Friend” the Coalition on Facebook

## California Rangeland Resolution

*The undersigned recognize the critical importance of California’s privately owned rangelands, particularly that significant portion that encircles the Central Valley and includes the adjacent grasslands and oak woodlands, including the Sierra foothills and the interior coast ranges. These lands support important ecosystems and are the foundation for the ranching industry that owns them.*

WHEREAS, these rangelands include a rich and varied landscape of grasslands, oak woodlands, vernal pools, riparian areas and wetlands, which support numerous imperiled species, many native plants once common in the Central Valley, and are home to the highest diversity and density of wintering raptors anywhere in North America;

WHEREAS, these rangelands are often located in California’s fastest-growing counties and are at significant risk of conversion to development and other uses;

WHEREAS, these rangelands, and the species that rely on these habitats, largely persist today due to the positive and experienced grazing and other land stewardship practices of the ranchers that have owned and managed these lands and are committed to a healthy future for their working landscapes;

WHEREAS, these rangelands are a critical foundation of the economic and social fabric of California’s ranching industry and rural communities, and will only continue to provide this important working landscape for California’s plants, fish and wildlife if private rangelands remain in ranching;

THEREFORE, we declare that it is our goal to collaboratively work together to protect and enhance the rangeland landscape that encircles California’s Central Valley and includes adjacent grasslands and oak woodlands by:

- Keeping common species common on private working landscapes;
- Working to recover imperiled species and enhancing habitat on rangelands while seeking to minimize regulations on private lands and streamline processes;
- Supporting the long-term viability of the ranching industry and its culture by providing economic, social and other incentives and by reducing burdens to proactive stewardship on private ranchlands;
- Increasing private, state and federal funding, technical expertise and other assistance to continue and expand the Ranching community’s beneficial land stewardship practices that benefit sensitive species and are fully compatible with normal ranching practices;
- Encouraging voluntary, collaborative and locally-led conservation that has proven to be very effective in maintaining and enhancing working landscapes; and
- Educating the public about the benefits of grazing and ranching in these rangelands.

The website has the complete list of Signatories. Entities wishing to become Signatory to the Rangeland Resolution are invited to send an email to that affect with contact information to [Pelayo@carangeland.org](mailto:Pelayo@carangeland.org).