



Media Alert from Solano Land Trust

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Contact: Nicole Byrd, Assistant Executive Director 707-432-0150 x 210

SOLANO LAND TRUST FINDS A NATURAL FIT IN RANGELAND RESOLUTION

Solano Land Trust joins cattlemen, environmental groups and government agencies in becoming a partner in the California Rangeland Coalition. The coalition aims to build common cause and collaboration to preserve California's privately owned rangelands, particularly in the Central Valley and adjacent grassland and oak woodlands of the Sierra Foothills and interior coastal ranges.

The Rangeland Coalition recognizes that many mutual interests of ranchers, environmental groups, and regulatory agencies are furthered by grazing and other land stewardship practices of the ranchers that own and manage their land. "The missions of the Rangeland Coalition and of the Solano Land Trust are in perfect alignment," said Ian Anderson, "Preservation of agriculture, open space, and resources are long-standing and central values for the Solano Land Trust. The coalition exemplifies that we can preserve all these values at once."

According to Anderson, Solano County has some of the best grazing lands in the state. The land trust is actively working with local ranchers through its conservation agreement program to keep these grazing lands in private ownership while protecting this important resource for the long term. Purchasing development rights from a willing landowner assures that a property can remain in agriculture in perpetuity.

Additionally, land trust properties, such as Lynch Canyon, Jepson Prairie Preserve, King-Swett and Rush ranches are grazed as well as managed for open space for the public. Visitors will often find grazing cattle herds roaming amid equestrian, mountain bike and hiking trails. While the public enjoys these properties for recreation and the beauty of their natural resources, these land trust rangelands continue to offer a working landscape and important ecosystems that are the foundation for the ranching industry.

Among the current partners in the coalition are California Farm Bureau Federation, California Cattlemen's Association, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Dept of Fish and Game, and Audubon California and The Nature Conservancy. Partners in the coalition hope to work collaboratively to preserve California's rich and varied rangelands and maintain them as healthy working landscapes for agriculture and California's plants, fish and wildlife.

Potential benefits of the resolution include shared research and technical expertise on effective rangeland management practices that are compatible with both ranching and the preservation of critical habitat for sensitive species. Among other goals, the resolution encourages voluntary and locally-led conservation efforts and working to streamline permitting processes and minimize regulations on private lands. It also calls for increased funding and other assistance to encourage and reward beneficial land stewardship practices and public education about the benefits of grazing and ranching.

"Private ranching that has been a way of life in the Central Valley and interior Coast Ranges for over 100 years and continues to provide significant economic, social and environmental benefits to the state. The land trust welcomes the opportunity to enhance relationships with all others committed to a healthy future for rangelands and the long-term viability of the ranching industry," Anderson said. "We have always valued rangeland and this is a natural fit."

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Full text of the resolution is available online at:

<http://www.carangeland.org/Files%20to%20Link/Rangeland%20Resolution.pdf>

The Solano Land Trust is a private, non-profit organization that has protected working farms and natural areas in Solano County since 1986.



Cattle herd on Lynch Canyon. (Photo by Solano Land Trust staff.)