

# Ranching Sustainability Analysis

A voluntary program developed by California ranchers for use by the California ranching community

University of California Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources  
& Rancher Project Team

Supported by the California Wildlife Conservation Board

**Project Team:** George Work<sup>1</sup> (Chair), Amy Breschini<sup>2</sup>, Cliff Garrison<sup>1</sup>, Kevin Kester<sup>1</sup>, Royce Larsen<sup>2</sup>, Aaron Lazanoff<sup>1</sup>, Chuck Pritchard<sup>1</sup>, Steve Sinton<sup>1</sup>, Karl Striby<sup>3</sup>, Bill Tietje<sup>2</sup>, Jack Varian<sup>1</sup>, and Jim Zingo<sup>2</sup> <<sup>1</sup>rancher, <sup>2</sup>UCCE, <sup>3</sup>NRCS>



**stew-ard-ship** (noun) – 1: the office, duties, and obligations of a steward; 2: the conducting, supervising, or managing of something; especially: the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care <stewardship of our natural resources> – Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary

## Mission Statement

To create and implement a voluntary self-assessment program that ranchers will use to evaluate all aspects of their ranching operations. To ensure the sustainability of production, lands, and families. To show good stewardship of animals and natural resources.

## Sustainability

Economically  
Viable

Socially  
Responsible



three vital cogs  
in the same  
wheel

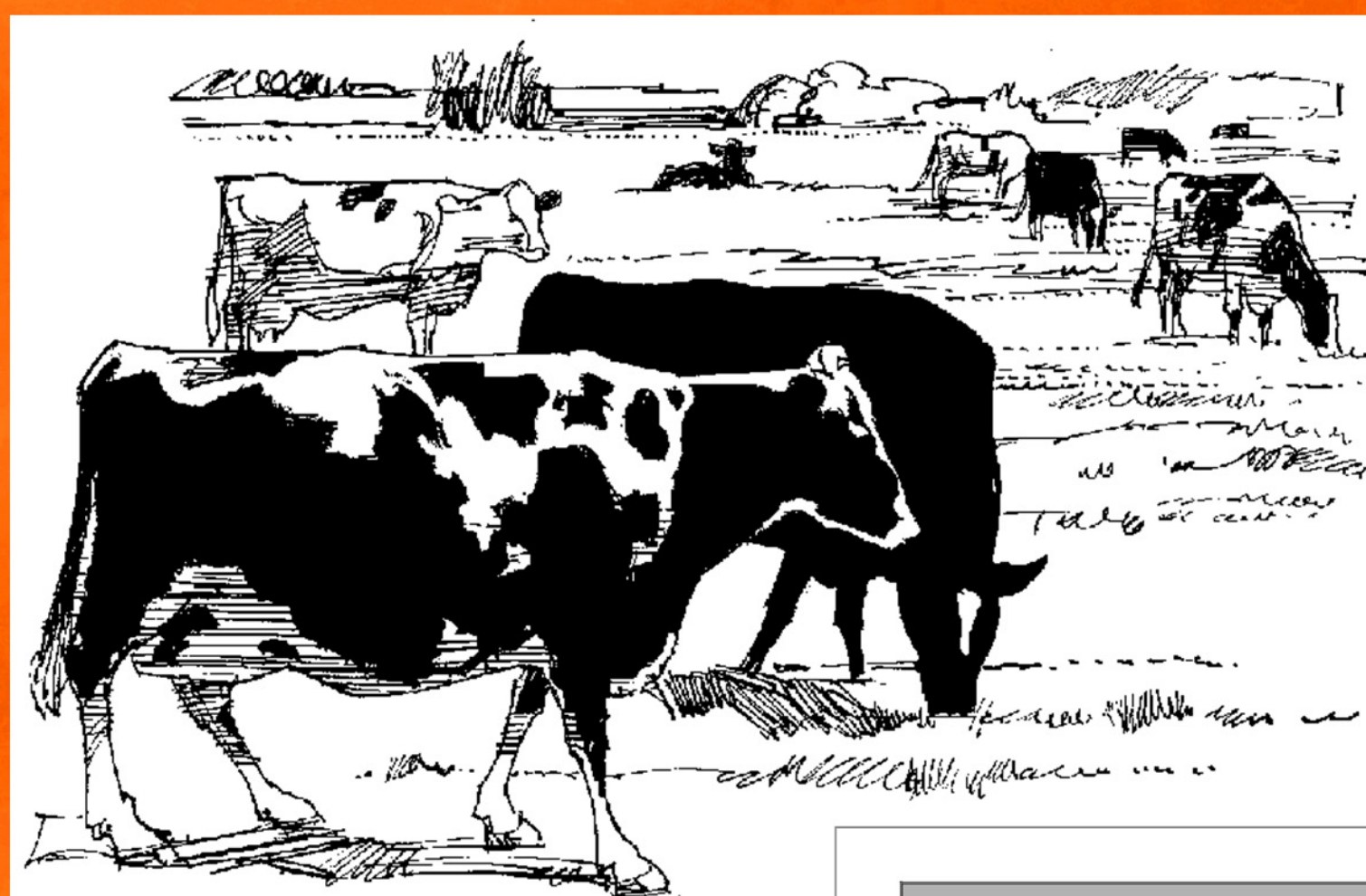
Environmentally  
Sound

Developed by a committee of ranchers with input by resource professionals, this project is intended primarily as a self-help tool to stimulate awareness and critical thought about how to achieve sustainability with a "positive points" philosophy; i.e., recognize existing efforts and motivate to continually strive to enhance successful operations.

This is a means for ranchers to document good practices and identify specific action items to improve their operation. This will help the individual rancher as well as the industry as it relates to finances, regulations, public relations, and overall good stewardship.

## Assessment Categories

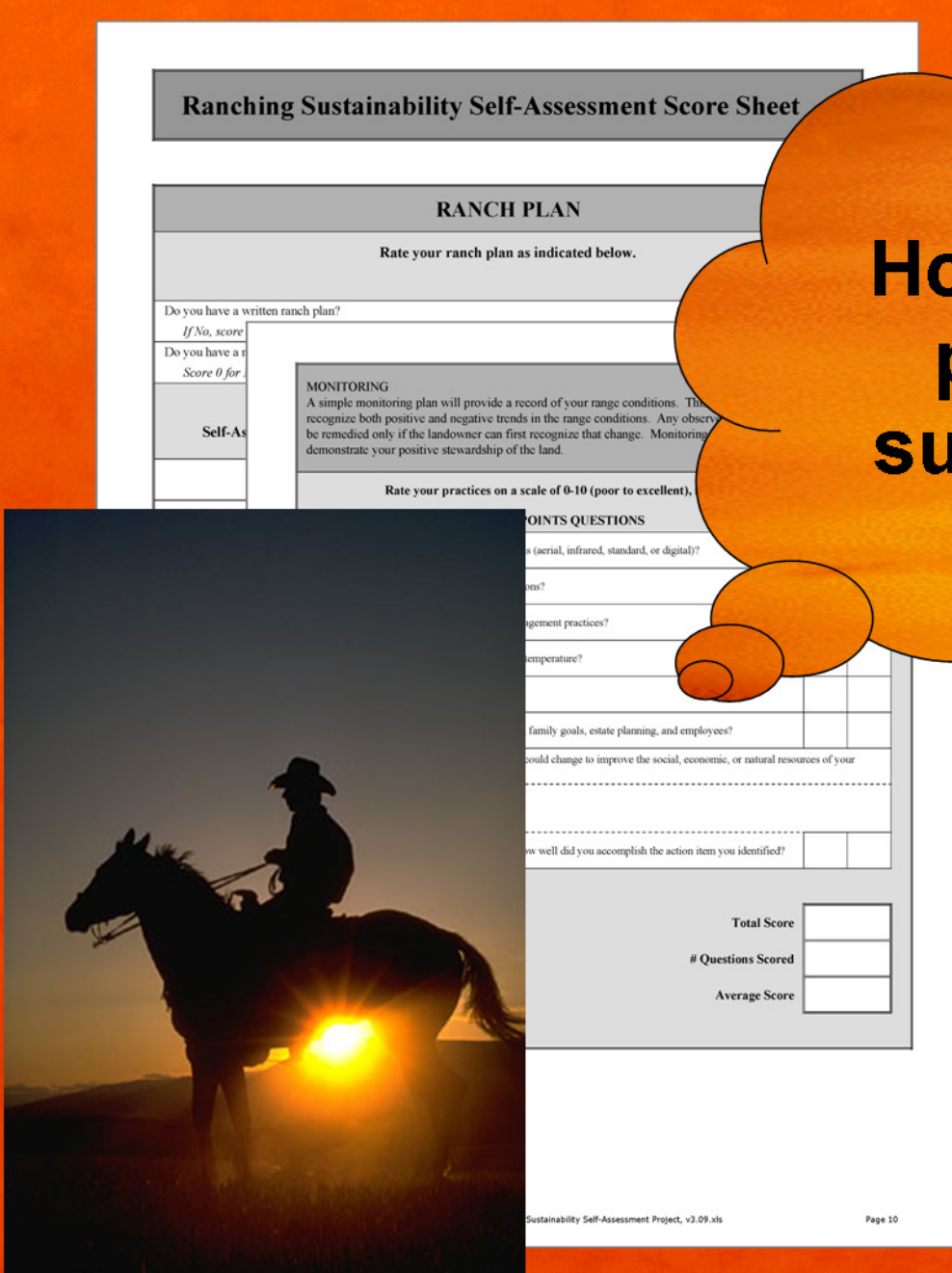
- Livestock Management
- Soil Management
- Forage Management
- Biodiversity / Wildlife Conservation
- Regulations and Regulators
- People Management
- Economics
- Energy
- Monitoring
- Pest Management
- Water Quality



There are up to 10 questions per category. Users score their practices from 1 to 10 (low/poor to high/best). Scores may be submitted to a confidential database to identify and track needs and progress. Further developments include self-help materials to facilitate improvement efforts.

Visit our website  
<http://ucanr.org/rsa>

How have YOU  
planned for  
sustainability?



**Project Acknowledgments**—Sponsored by the San Luis Obispo County Oak Woodland Stewardship Program ("Learning and Working Among the Oaks") and the San Luis Obispo County Cooperative Extension Office. Supported by a grant from The California Wildlife Conservation Board's Oak Woodland Conservation Act of 2001. Poster produced by Jim Zingo, UC Cooperative Extension, 2156 Sierra Way - Suite C, San Luis Obispo, CA, October 2009. Inspired by the tremendous success of the Central Coast Vineyard Team's (CCVT) "Positive Points System" for wine-grape growers and influenced by several other agricultural sustainability programs. For helpful comments, reviews, or discussions: Ray Allen, D.J. Funk (Upper Salinas-Las Tablas RCD), John Garn (California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance), Deb Garrison (Central Coast Ag. Coop.), Roger Ingram (UCCE Placer-Nevada County), Marti Johnson (Upper Salinas-Las Tablas RCD), Larry Harlan (SLO-RWQCB), Kris O'Connor (CCVT), Vance Russell (Audubon California), Kyle Weichert and Jill Whitacre (CCVT). In addition, many ranchers and other individuals provided feedback during UCCE landowner workshops in 2008-2009. All of your contributions have been most welcome and much appreciated. Our apologies for any omissions.

