

DRAFT: Central Coast Rangeland Coalition--Holistic Goal

We exist to catalyze awareness of rangeland stewardship, including a cooperative, experimental approach to sustain biological diversity and natural resources and to enhance the wisdom and economic viability of rangeland stewards in the Central Coast area of California.

The CCRC

The Central Coast Rangeland Coalition (CCRC) is a diverse group of citizens from California's central coast, including students, land owners and working ranchers, government agents, representatives of conservation organizations, teachers, scientists, and families. This "multi-cultural" membership makes it a unique group at work on the issue of rangeland-society sustainability, for it actively pursues improved rangeland stewardship from all sources—from the scientific disciplines to the cultural knowledge wrought over time through sustained use of this place. Fundamentally, the CCRC recognizes the unique qualities of the Central Coast rangelands, their beauty, and that we, as members of a community of communities, depend upon them for clean air and water, food, fiber and other necessities of a quality human life.

Its efforts to support rangeland stewardship will add to the body of knowledge that is being accumulated around the world by groups like it and with which it will collaborate when possible. Within this organization, the day to day decisions will be made by a core of dedicated individuals, who will depend upon a broad base of people and their ideas, in order to move toward our goal of ecologically healthy rangeland watersheds, economically sound uses of them, and peaceful and just communities that depend upon them.

The resources available to these decision makers are primarily composed of a richly diverse group of people who are prepared to share their experience and some time. Through them archives of printed research, as well as non-printed scientific and cultural knowledge, may be accessed. Furthermore, through these people, land based resources, including livestock, facilities, equipment and land itself may be made available to facilitate the activities of the organization.

The money to fund the efforts of this organization initially is comprised of small donations from the budgets of the participants. It is anticipated that various external sources of income, such as grants and contributions may be needed as the efforts of the group develop and projects are proposed and pursued.

What do we want to see?

The CCRC is recognized as being balanced, inclusive of diverse perspectives, respected for our contributions to the common good of society through work leading to economic, ecological, and social stability on the Central Coast of California. It is structured in a way that fosters openness and respectful communications. Land use policy-makers, scientists, land managers and environmentalists look to the CCRC for counsel on practices and tools that improve the viability of the human use of rangelands on the Central Coast.

The CCRC is known as a facilitator of change--from an environment, an economy, and a society in distress to a landscape of beauty and vigorous health, and a community of people with life in abundance and purpose, adequate finances to achieve their life's purpose, and the desire and wisdom required to share the planet with others.

Those who steward the land enjoy economic security and the time and energy to manage it in ways that enhance its ability to support the communities that share and depend upon it. Their management practices are evolving, energized by the creative tension between their holistic view of their desired future and the close monitoring of their present circumstances.

The rangelands of the Central Coast are of vigorous health and are appreciated by the public as full of wonders and of fundamental value to their own health. They support a range of communities whose inter-relationships are not fully understood (and possibly cannot be).

What do we need to do?

In order for us to have the things we desire, we need to encourage diversity among our members. We need a monitoring system that is simple for land managers to use, that produces information that helps managers adjust their decisions about the use of tools to manage the land, as well as data that can help scientists discern long range trends in the health of the ecosystem processes of Central Coast rangelands. We must produce meaningful conversations with those who are in the position to regulate or otherwise affect rangeland management on the Central Coast of California. We will demonstrate various stewardship techniques that sustain living soils, drinkable water, and habitat for myriad life forms, and we will present new knowledge to the broader community of rangeland managers and those interested in their sustainability. We need to produce the time and money necessary to allow participation in CCRC and these demonstrations by busy people.

What must our resource base look like?

In order for the things we value to persist far into the future to support generations subsequent to ours, our resource base must be sustainable. Participation in the CCRC must be challenging, fun, rewarding and respected.

The ecosystem processes must be functioning well. For example, the water cycle is very effective, rapidly capturing the rain that falls and slowly relinquishing it through underground seeps and springs. Formerly perennial creeks again run clear and year round. Perennial grass communities on the Central Coast are recruiting young plants on a regular basis, oak populations are no longer disappearing, and the niches and edges of the rangelands support a vast array of biological diversity. Increased amounts of solar energy are being captured by green plants at the earth's surface and flowing through these diverse forms of life. Within the soil profile nutrients are cycling and increasing amounts of biological capital are accruing while increasing the amount of carbon being sequestered.

The human population of the Central Coast is increasingly in balance with its place and demonstrates due respect for the inter-relationships between rural and urban cultural and

economic contributions. Ranchers and other land managers are economically viable without compromising the integrity of the ecosystem processes. People understand that the production of health is not the same as fighting disease. Decision-making reflects the creative impetus of producing what we want.

The people who live on and in the midst of Central Coast rangelands appreciate not only their beauty from afar but that the value of intact rangelands has implications for the health of a host of communities; that both private and public lands contribute in integral ways to that health; that water, food, fiber and economic relationships flow through their living soils; that cultures are shaped through practical and careful use of them; that access to them implies responsibility for them; and that, in fact, the rangelands of California's Central Coast contribute profoundly to the quality of all of our lives.