Russell L. Rustici Endowed Specialist in Cooperative Extension in Rangeland Watershed Sciences

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Professor
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RESEARCH
Rustici Endowed Specialist funding provides me the flexibility and capacity to act on timely rangeland extension and research opportunities. For example, I used some funds to co-support a group of graduate students during their survey of CA ranchers about the importance of Williamson Act as an economic and conservation tool essential to maintaining rangelands as a working landscape. A link to learn more about this project is listed below(1).

The endowment has also allowed me to establish the Rangeland Science Symposium. The first and second symposium were held January 2012 and 2013 on the Davis campus, in conjunction the CA Rangeland Conservation Coalition Summit. The 2-day events featured innovative partnerships among researchers, ranchers and rangeland managers, agencies and conservation organizations. We had over 400 attendees both years. More information about the event, including links to some of the presentations, may be accessed through the URL below(2).

Finally, I am using funds to support our Stakeholder Prescribed Adaptive Grazing Project. This is a 10-year grazing project at the UC Sierra Foothill Research and Extension Center which involves 1200 acres of rangeland and over 375 cattle. The project goals and grazing treatments were developed in direct collaboration with ranchers, range managers, and conservation professionals. This is a novel participatory research approach designed to fully integrate management and science to address management challenges important to stakeholders. Please read more about this important project using the link below(3).

TEACHING
My teaching focuses on the intersection of agriculture and the environment. In both graduate and undergraduate courses, I try to bring my on-the-ground experiences as a Cooperative Extension specialist to the classroom. I encourage students to take a problem solving approach to find a sustainable balance between agricultural and environmental goals.

STUDENT TRAINING
My direct work and support of students varies from year to year. This past year I used some funds to assist with the Williamson Act mail survey conducted by the 2008-09 UC Davis REACH IGERT cohort - William C. Wetzel, Iara L. Lacher, Daniel S. Swezey, Sarah E. Moffitt and Dale T. Manning. For more on REACH IGERT see link below(4).

We also subsidized student registration and poster session at both the 2012 and 2013 Rangeland Research Symposium.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES AND/OR DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES
I plan to focus the funding this year on continuing to support the Stakeholder Prescribed Adaptive Grazing Project described above.
ACTIVITIES DIRECTLY SUPPORTED BY THIS FUND

- Rustici Rangeland Research Symposium
- Student and staff support to coordinate and implement rangeland research and outreach
- Travel to the Society for Range Management conference to share results of our research with the broader range management and science community

THANKS

I am deeply indebted to Russ for his commitment to range management and science, and his mentoring early in my career. I am focusing our efforts and the use of these funds on projects and activities which I think Russ would have valued and approved. Every project has direct involvement and input from California's ranching community. I am leveraging other funds and support almost dollar for dollar in the process, which I know Russ would have liked. I am really excited about where we are headed with range science in CA, and it is in large part due to Russ's investment.

ADDITIONAL LINKS AND RESOURCES


2) Link to 2nd Annual Rangeland Science Symposium, including presentations made at the event: http://rangelandwatersheds.ucdavis.edu/main/Symposiums.html


4) More information about REACH (Responding to Rapid Environmental Change) IGERT (Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship) Program: http://reach.ucdavis.edu

5) Link to the Rangeland Watershed Laboratory web site: http://rangelandwatersheds.ucdavis.edu/index.htm