

## Yolo Land and Cattle Co, Woodland, Calif.

Located on the outskirts of Sacramento, Calif., the Yolo Land & Cattle Co. is a family-owned limited partnership. This cow/calf, stocker and registered cattle operation, owned by the Stone families, won the 2007 National Environmental Stewardship Award.

**Operation History:** Yolo Land & Cattle Co. was formed as a partnership between Henry Stone and John Anderson in 1976. When the partnership was dissolved in 1983, Henry Stone retained the ranch headquarters and carried on the Yolo Land & Cattle Co. name. His sons Scott and Casey later joined the business, helping Henry further develop and diversify the operation.

Yolo Land & Cattle Co. runs on deeded, leased and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) land that encompasses more than 12,000 acres. In addition to the cattle business, the Stones also operate a farming business that includes wheat, corn and hay crops.

### Conservation Practices:

- The Stone family has provided conservation leadership in Yolo County for many years. Hank Stone and his son Scott both served as Associate Directors of the Yolo County Resources Conservation District. In the early 1980s, Hank worked with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection to coordinate prescribed burns with private land owners.
- Yolo Land & Cattle Co. has implemented a detailed rotational grazing program using a newer, wildlife-friendly fencing system and the expertise of Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff. In some areas, solar-powered pumps send pond water to irrigate pastureland and fill cattle troughs.
- The Stones partnered with the California Audubon Society and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection to create the largest Vegetative Management Plan (VMP) in the state in order to conduct annual spring grass burns and fall brush burns on 45,000 acres.
- About eight years ago, Yolo Land & Cattle Co. cleared a 30-acre parcel that was plagued with erosion and invasive weed problems to plant native perennial grasses. Now, the land is a lush riparian area with native vegetation that is used as a testing site for controlling annual grasses and invasive weeds.
- Yolo Land & Cattle Co. is partnering with NRCS, the University of California-Davis and USDA's Agricultural Research Service on the Carbon Sequestration Field Trial that is identify whether ranchers could provide carbon credits to more resource-intense industries in the future.
- About 20 miles south of the main ranch, the Stones irrigate an additional 5,300 acres of rangeland and 155 acres of farmland using rinse water from the nearby Campbell's Soup tomato processing cannery. The practice is more energy efficient than typical irrigation and preserves water table levels.
- The Stones helped reduce wildfire hazards, cut down invasive weeds and restore native grasses on important California pastureland by working with the Conservation Reserve Program to establish a strategic grazing conservation plan.

### Conservation Partners:

- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Audubon California-Landowner Stewardship Program
- University of California, Davis; California State University, Chico; and Michigan State University, Department of Botany and Plant Pathology
- Yolo County Resource Conservation District
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agriculture Research Service (ARS)
- State of California Wildlife Conservation Board
- California Department of Forestry
- United States Geological Survey