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# Rush Ranch



PRESERVING AND STEWARDING  
COMMON GROUND

# Cowboys and conservation

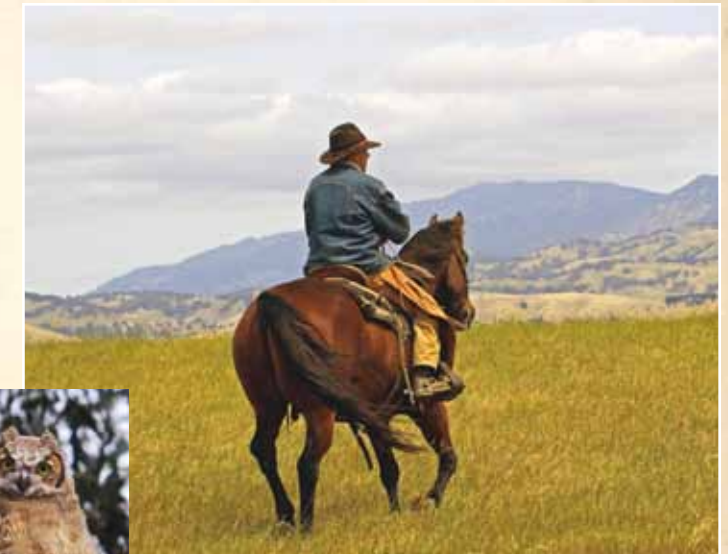
Welcome to Rush Ranch, a celebrated local and national treasure where schoolchildren learn about California Native people who once lived here, scientists study the wild marsh, families create memories, and visitors enjoy quiet walks with expansive views.

## Human History

People have long been a part of Rush Ranch. For millennia, the Suisun Marsh was home to generations of Patwin people. After the Gold Rush, the Rush family raised cattle and horses here for nearly a century. Today the marsh, surrounding grasslands, historic buildings, and Visitors Center provide a place for our community to learn, explore, and unwind.

## Wildlife and Wild Places

Tall grasses and tidal marshes offer home and habitat to rare, endangered, and endemic plants and animals such as the Suisun thistle, the salt marsh harvest mouse, and the California black rail. Visitors will see many birds, and may even catch sight of an otter in the slough.



## Cattle and Grassland

This land has been grazed for thousands of years, first by deer, elk and antelope, and then by livestock. Solano Land Trust and ranchers continue the agricultural tradition of managing grasslands. Our grazing program encourages native grasses and forbes, protects water quality, and enhances habitat.

## Community

In 1988 Rush Ranch was the first property that Solano Land Trust purchased and it holds a special place in our hearts. With significant support from the California Coastal Conservancy for purchase, management, and improvements, Rush Ranch has become a hub for birders, hikers, families, schoolchildren, scientists, historians, photographers, and community groups.





## Trails

Begin the **Marsh Trail** behind the Visitors Center. For an easy walk that is less than a mile, head west and around the hill to see the edge of the tidal marsh and a replica of a Patwin shelter. Climb the hill for views of the Suisun Marsh. For a longer walk, continue north on the levee trail for a 2.2-mile loop that returns to the Visitors Center through open pastures.

Begin the **South Pasture Trail** between the Blacksmith Shop and the antique farm equipment. Walk south for views of the Suisun Marsh and to observe a large Patwin grinding rock. Return to the main trail and head southeast for a 2.4-mile loop that passes through grasslands with Mount Diablo rising to the southeast.

Access the **Suisun Hill Trail** through the gate across from the Rush Ranch entrance on Grizzly Island Road. Head toward the hills and at the first fork turn left for a 500-foot climb to an overlook with expansive views of Mount Diablo, Suisun Marsh, and the western hills of Solano County. Continue down the other side of the hill for a two-mile loop. This is an excellent trail to see soaring raptors, especially in winter.



Dogs are not allowed at Rush Ranch except on Suisun Hill Trail and around the Visitors Center where they *must be leashed* to protect wildlife and cattle.



## Suisun Marsh

The Suisun Marsh is the largest tidal marsh on the West Coast. It is vital to the health of the San Francisco Bay and provides critical nursery grounds and plentiful food for fish, ducks, and many other species. Much of the Suisun Marsh is managed as seasonal wetlands for waterfowl. Rush Ranch is rare because of the 1,000 acres of natural tidal marsh on the property. The tides ebb and flow with brackish water, and the marsh supports many threatened and endangered species that have evolved to live in the transitional habitat between water and land.

Rush Ranch is a natural lab for the San Francisco Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR), which works to improve the understanding and management of estuaries through scientific research, monitoring, and education. Scientists study Rush Ranch's wetlands and surrounding watershed to learn about protecting endangered species, improving water quality, and maintaining healthy habitats. NERR is a program of the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and research conducted at the ranch informs management of similar habitats around the country.

## Working Together

Rush Ranch is owned and operated by Solano Land Trust. We partner with the following organizations to preserve and promote the health and integrity of Rush Ranch and the Suisun Marsh:

- Rush Ranch Educational Council
- NOAA's National Estuarine Research Reserve System
- Access Adventure
- Solano and Suisun Resource Conservation Districts

## Visiting

Rush Ranch is open to the public seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. November through February, and 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. March through October. For seasonal hours and special activities visit [solanolandtrust.org](http://solanolandtrust.org). By staying on the trails you help us protect special habitats.

The Nature Center and picnic area are available to rent. The shaded picnic area behind the barn has a built-in barbecue, 30 moveable picnic tables, and can accommodate 200 people. The 1,200 square-foot Nature Center accommodates 80 people for table seating and has a partial kitchen.

We hope you enjoy your visit!

