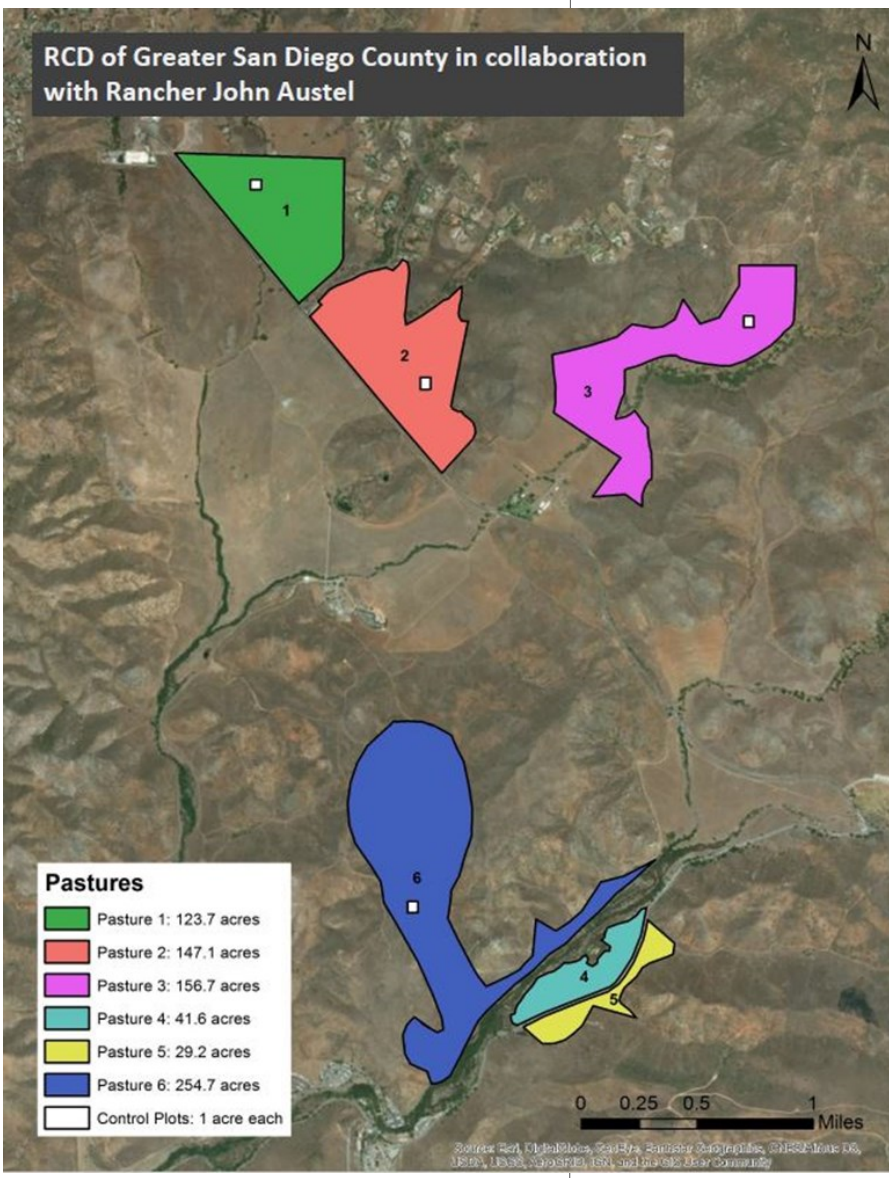
Demonstration Project

Prescribed Grazing
Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve

We started the project in August of 2019 with establishing a baseline for the content of soil organic matter. The soil organic matter content will be measured every year for the duration of the project. We also measure the ability for water to infiltrate.



Through practicing climate-smart agriculture on ranches, we can restore the natural ecosystem services that recycle nutrients, water, and energy in the rangeland that have been lost after decades of mismanagement.

A grazing management plan has been developed for the project, it focuses on how plant communities, their composition and structure are affected by the timing of when and for how long the cattle herd stays in a particular pasture. The goal is to see an increase in perennial grasses with deeper roots which will lead to sequestration of carbon. Carbon sequestration and increased soil organic matter in the soil results in an increase in soil moisture and therefore boost watershed function. This positive feedback loop between soil carbon and soil moisture will boost the amount of forage for livestock, which will, in turn, decrease the fuel load for wildfires, and increase resistance to other climatic events affecting San Diego County.

This map shows the pastures and the one acre control area where cattle will be excluded throughout the project.

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