

Adopt A Cowboy Video 2 Content Ideas (Ecosystems Services)

Ecosystem Services & Wildlife on the Ranch

Video 2 focuses on helping students understand how ranches support wildlife, natural resources, and healthy ecosystems. This is a great opportunity to show students that ranches provide much more than food—they also provide important habitat for plants and animals and help care for the land.

Please remember: You do **not** need to include every item on this list. These are simply ideas to help you showcase the natural resources, wildlife, and conservation practices found on your operation. Every ranch and every state is different, so choose the examples that best represent your area.

Important Filming Notes

- Keep all footage positive, educational, and family-friendly.
- Showcase healthy landscapes, responsible land stewardship, and wildlife habitat.
- Adapt these ideas to fit your local environment and ecosystem.
- Not every ranch will have the same wildlife, plants, or conservation practices—and that's okay!

Wildlife on the Ranch

Consider showing wildlife commonly found in your area, such as:

- Deer
- Birds and songbirds
- Wild turkeys
- Eagles and hawks
- Sandhill cranes
- Turtles
- Lizards
- Caterpillars and insects

- Otters
- Fish
- Snakes
- Coyotes
- Wild hogs
- Bears
- Panthers (where present)
- Other local wildlife unique to your region

Great Wildlife Footage Ideas

- Wildlife sharing space with cattle.
- Birds following cattle through pastures.
- Animals using ranch ponds, wetlands, or water sources.
- Wildlife moving through natural habitats on the ranch.
- Seasonal wildlife activity.

Cattle & Ranch Life

- Cows with young calves.
- New calves welcomed to the ranch.
- Family members working cattle together.
- Daily ranch activities taking place within natural landscapes.
- Cattle grazing in native habitats or open pastures.

Plants, Flowers & Pollinators

- Native wildflowers.
- Different grasses and plants found on the ranch.
- Flowering plants throughout the seasons.
- Bees visiting flowers.
- Butterflies pollinating plants.
- Other beneficial insects.
- Unique trees, shrubs, and native vegetation.

Water Resources

- Ponds and other wet areas
- Ponds with aquatic plants or flowers.
- Creeks and streams.
- Wetlands and marshes.
- Water flowing through natural areas.
- Explain how ranches help protect water quality and provide wildlife habitat.

Unique Ranch Habitats

Depending on your location, consider showcasing:

- Cypress hammocks
- Wooded areas
- Native prairies
- Rangelands
- Forested areas
- Wetlands
- Riparian areas along creeks and rivers
- Other unique habitats found on your ranch

Land Stewardship & Conservation

- Prescribed burning, when appropriate and safe to show.
- Explaining the benefits of prescribed fire.
- Habitat management practices.
- Conservation projects taking place on the ranch.
- Examples of how ranchers care for the land for future generations.

Scenic Footage Ideas

- Sunrise over the ranch.
- Sunset across pastures.
- Aerial or drone footage of ranch landscapes.
- Wildlife at dawn or dusk.
- Scenic views that showcase the beauty of your operation.

Student Connections

- Photos or videos from classroom visits.
- Photos or videos from in-person events with students.
- Messages to students about why caring for natural resources is important.
- Encourage students to look for wildlife and plants in their own communities.

Most Important

Students are often surprised to learn how many animals, plants, and natural resources exist on working ranches. The best videos help students see the connection between agriculture, wildlife, water, and conservation. Share the parts of your ranch that make it unique and help students understand how ranchers care for both livestock and the environment.