

AUTUMN 2009

NORTHCOAST REGIONAL LAND TRUST



Fog Bank (acrylic on canvas)

Joan Katri

Breaking Ground on Freshwater Farms Reserve

If you have passed by the Land Trust's Freshwater Farms Reserve property on Old Arcata Road over the past month, you may have seen some unusual activity: excavators and bulldozers digging trenches in the pasture. That's because the Land Trust finally began construction on the wetland enhancement project that has been long planned for the property. Named the *Wood Creek Tidal Marsh Enhancement Project*, it is intended to create brackish (slightly salty) water habitat for salmon, steelhead

and a suite of other wetland dependent species. Those trenches, actually new slough channels, connect to Wood Creek, a tributary to Freshwater Slough, and will fill up with water when the tide comes in throughout the day. The project is designed to provide a habitat type that has been lost around Humboldt Bay, due to diking and the installation of tide gates. The Land Trust will continue to lease the eastern half of its property to a local beef rancher.

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The Northcoast Regional Land Trust is a member of the Land Trust Alliance and the California Council of Land Trusts.

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From the President

The photograph used for this column was taken at a wonderful occasion (although not for the bull who was annoyed), the dedication of the purchase of the McNamara Dairy by the Northcoast Regional Land Trust with funds from the Coastal Conservancy. Land Trust board members, agency representatives and a cross section of Orick citizens came to the ceremony, held on a perfect early summer coastal day. As with the other property we own, Freshwater Farms Reserve, part of the land will be kept in agricultural production and a portion restored for natural resources, if appropriate.

Last spring, at a productive retreat and training, I was honored to be selected as board president. Following Blake Alexandre's tenure will be a challenge however; he very capably took the land trust through a number of transitions and we cannot thank him sufficiently for it. I also would like to give a warm and grateful thank you to the long term loyal board members who rotated off this past year: John Laboyteaux, Wes Anderson and Jack Limmer.

I think that different issues draw people to support land trusts. I grew up in San Francisco and Marin County and have lived in Humboldt County since 1980. As a child I spent summers in the high Sierras, and hiked in Marin County during the rest of the year. I was there when the efforts to establish Point Reyes National Seashore began, and lived in Sonoma County when the Marin Agricultural Land Trust started up in the 1970s.

I still return to West Marin, and realize that the community and place is what it is because of the efforts of these two organizations. Open space is plentiful, ranching is still part of the community and people there support and appreciate this. In Humboldt County, after working for the national park service as a Cultural Resources Manager and liaison with the Native American Governments, I served on the City of Arcata Planning Commission for ten years - again with an appreciation for planning, open space, a sustainable community that includes ranching, and the people who work for these goals. So that is what drew me to the land trust - our mission, our amazing staff, and the people in the community who support our work by donations, serving on the board, or assistance.

This coming year will be busy. We have started our monthly "Lay of the Land" presentations. Restoration work at Freshwater Farms began in late August. In October, board members and staff will attend the annual Land Trust Alliance rally in Portland, always an energizing gathering. And, as a result of our board retreat last spring, board members are productively working on committees concerning projects, accreditation, fund raising, strategic and conservation area planning, and board and staff governance.

We thank all of you for your continuing support.

Ann King Smith



Of People and Place

The Land Trust would like invite you and your family to get out on the land and be more involved in our conservation work. We hope you will decide to join us for at least one of our land-based education and recreational events listed on page 8. Please call our office at 822-2242 or email info@ncrlt.org to RSVP for these events. We are also offering the following opportunities to groups and volunteers. Please let us know of your interest.

Group Interpretive Walks

We are excited to provide guided public access to Freshwater Farms Reserve to view the restoration that is still taking place on the 54-acre property. We invite educational and civic groups to the site for an interpretive walk with one of our knowledgeable staff.

Monitoring & Restoration Volunteers

We are also looking for volunteers to help us monitor properties under NRLT's responsibility. Volunteers will have the opportunity to visit Land Trust properties and assist in the documentation and evaluation of various management and stewardship parameters.

You can also help the Land Trust complete restoration on Freshwater Farms Reserve. Volunteers are needed from

February to April 2010 to help replant the newly-constructed wetland area with native plants gathered on site before the restoration commenced. We will also need to closely monitor the area for opportunistic, non-native plants. Volunteers will be needed throughout the next year to help hand-pull those invasive plants that take hold through a series of half-day-long treatments. Invite your friends too!

Lay of the Land

More than 40 people have joined us for our new Lay of the Land events, so far. We started Lay of the Land in July to spread the word about the Northcoast Regional Land Trust and what we are doing to protect and enhance special places – our region's farms, forests, rangelands, and natural areas – in perpetuity. The presentations are a mix of information, personal stories and spectacular images, and include a short video. Please join us for these events. They are held the second Thursday of every month from 4 to 5pm. Seats are limited, so please call Linda at 822-2242 or email info@ncrlt.org to reserve your seat for next month's event.

Thank you to [Rep. Mike Thompson](#) for introducing and working diligently to make the Conservation Easement Incentive Act (H.R. 1831) permanent. This bill provides tax incentives to landowners for protecting their land and conserving hundreds of thousands of acres nationwide.



In memory of Thomas Brundage

Tom was one of the gentlest and kindest souls in the North Coast community. His passions ran from land and forest preservation, to the love of rocks and streams. His legacy and gift to Humboldt County lie in the teachings of his life lived with integrity and compassion. He will be missed.

LANDOWNER PROFILE: The Barnwell Family



The Barnwell Family has lived on Chalk Mountain Ranch, near the town of Bridgeville, CA for more than 125 years.

"Our primary goal is to keep the land that has been in our family for six generations. Keeping one's land intact is becoming increasingly difficult these days," says Les Barnwell. "We want to keep Chalk Mountain a working ranch and timberland, as well as continue to offer recreational activities."

The Barnwells are working with the Land Trust and our conservation partners, including Agland Engineering, to place a conservation easement on the 7,276-acre ranch, located in the Larabee Creek watershed. Chalk Mountain Ranch is naturally scenic: conifer forests line its slopes and gullies and open oak woodlands and grasslands cover a good portion of the property. Its perennial streams and creeks provide good spawning and rearing habitat for native salmon and steelhead trout, and on iconic Chalk Rock, a pair of peregrine falcons has fledged every year since 1994.

Gloria Barnwell appreciates the abundant wildlife and marvelous scenery. "From the highest points on our ranch, you can see for miles in every direction. Chalk Mountain is mostly wildlife habitat and productive forests. We have beautiful rock formations like Chalk Rock and waterfalls. I do not want all of this natural beauty to be destroyed over time. Instead I hope it will flourish for many generations to come."

We expect the first phase of the Chalk Mountain Ranch conservation easement to close before the end of 2009. An easement on the Barnwell's property will ensure the continued stewardship of healthy wildlife habitat and open space. A conservation easement will also help protect clean drinking water for people living in the downstream communities of Fortuna and Ferndale.

BREAKING GROUND ON

(Continued from page 1)

The following photos illustrate some of the highlights during the first half of construction.



NRLT project manager Ryan Wells and Greg Turner from Hooven & Co. pull posts from the old fence line.



Isaac Mikus and Allan Renger from the CA Department of Fish & Game remove fish and other aquatic wildlife from Wood Creek prior to construction.



Checking slough channel depth. The project was engineered to facilitate proper sediment transport and drainage throughout the tidal cycle.



Ryan and co-manager Don Allan (Redwood Community Action Agency – NRS Division) look over the site plans.



Salvaging Lyngbye sedge (*Carex lyngbyei*), a sensitive wetland plant species, from the project footprint prior to excavation. The salvaged plants will be potted and used for re-vegetation scheduled for next spring.



Ryan and Don discuss the restoration project with John Driscoll of the Times-Standard. The project was featured on the front page of the Wednesday, August 26th edition.



Much effort was made to limit the disturbance of existing wetland vegetation. Disturbed areas will be revegetated, either through the large planting effort scheduled for next spring, or through passive plant colonization.

FRESHWATER FARMS RESERVE



Another channel is nearly finished. This phase of the project will be completed when the existing tide gate at the mouth of Wood Creek is removed in October.



Two slough branches meet near Wood Creek. In all, more than 3,700 feet of slough channels were constructed on the project site.



Many educational groups have come to the site to experience the restoration for themselves, including classes from the Six Rivers Charter School, Humboldt State University's Applied Ecological Restoration class and College of the Redwood's Film Production class (shown here).



The rising tide brings the first flush of water into a completed slough channel. Small native fish and numerous aquatic insects have already been observed using the new habitat.



On September 13, more than 30 community members joined the Land Trust to view the project.



Re-vegetating with native plants, project monitoring, and eradicating opportunistic invasive plants are next on the list for project completion.

The Land Trust also plans to construct a three-quarter mile long interpretive trail that will be situated between Freshwater Slough (shown here) and Wood Creek. The trail will have majestic views of both watersheds and expansive vistas of the Humboldt Bay bottomlands.

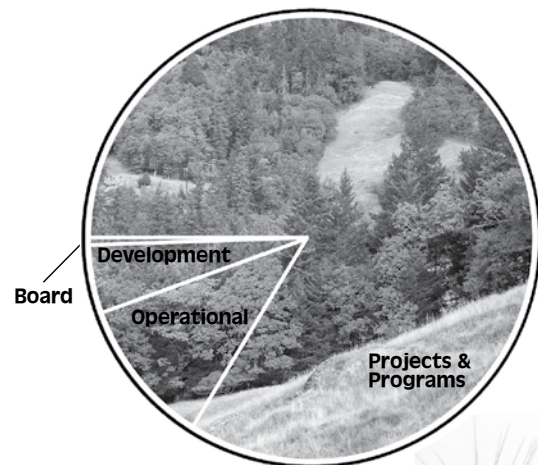
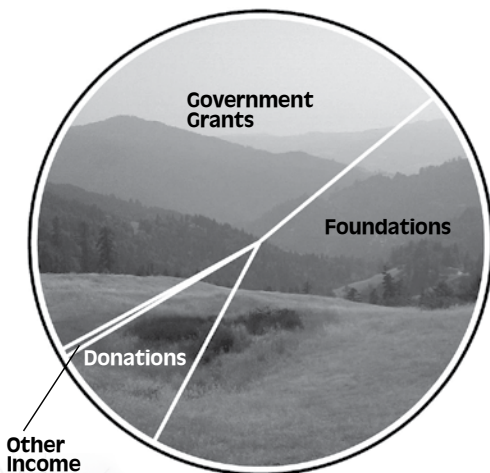
ANNUAL REPORT 2008

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust is pleased to provide our constituents with the accounting of organizational and programmatic accomplishments for 2008, as follows.

- In March 2008, we completed a conservation easement for Valley View Ranch (1,532 acres) outside of Petrolia, CA.
- A conservation easement on Grizzly Mountain Ranch (1,131 acres) in Zenia, CA, Trinity County in the last days of 2008 boosted the total of land protected under the *Six Rivers to the Sea Initiative* to 11,220 acres.
- We worked on easements for two other *Six Rivers to the Sea* projects – Chalk Mountain and Charles Mountain ranches. We expect conservation easements to be placed on these properties, totaling more than 15,000 acres of productive forest and rangeland and abundant habitat for wildlife and fish, within the next two years.
- NRLT staff fielded more than 30 inquiries by landowners wanting to know more about protecting their properties. NRLT is working diligently on four of those projects, amounting to nearly 3,000 acres, which promise conservation and economic values that are consistent with sustaining the North Coast's rural landscape.
- We worked with our partners to produce the final project design for restoration activities on Freshwater Farms Reserve. The design

was completed in April and all environmental compliance requirements were met by the end of the year.

- Enlisting the services of HSU's Natural Resources Planning Department, NRLT produced a background report on oak woodlands as a component of our Conservation Action Plan (CAP). The report will be used toward the development of an *Oak Woodlands Conservation and Management Plan* for Humboldt and Del Norte Counties. We also established an advisory committee to provide scientific and technical input at various stages of the project.
- The first phase of our North Coast Dialogues project saw the formation of a 10-member steering committee and a 30-member working group. These diverse leaders of our community developed a set of 100-year vision statements for productive working lands in Humboldt County.
- NRLT's outdoor education program was initiated with Six Rivers Charter School, giving 10th grade high school students the opportunity to practice scientific inquiry in the field.
- We brought members and the general public to four events to broaden awareness of our work. We held a canoe-the-slough event, two interpretive hikes at Freshwater Farms Reserve, and brought members out to Chalk Mountain Ranch for our annual Board of Director's Picnic.



Income

Government Grants	233,074
Foundations	222,500
Donations	42,078
Investments (loss)	(56,902)
Other Income	1,830
TOTAL	442,580

Expenses

Projects & Programs	415,700
Operational	53,230
Development	28,481
Board	1,275
TOTAL	498,686

THANK YOU NRLT Members and Supporters!

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust is forever grateful to the following who gave grants or gifts from September 1, 2008 through September 1, 2009.

Agencies & Foundations

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Andrus Family Fund
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CA Wildlife Conservation Board
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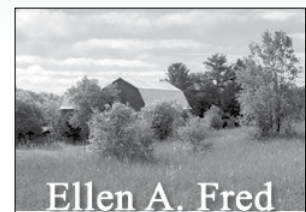
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Calendar of Events

LAND TRUST HOLIDAY PARTY

Join landowners, conservation specialists, board members, staff and our members as we celebrate the holidays. **DATE: Thursday, December 10 from 4-6 pm.**

LAY OF THE LAND

Learn more about NRLT and our work to protect natural areas and working land on the North Coast. Hour-long events are held every second Thursday of each month from 4-5, at our office 901 Samoa Blvd., Arcata.

FRESHWATER FARMS INTERPRETIVE WALKS

Experience, firsthand, the Land Trust's restoration of wetlands on the 54-acre Freshwater Farms Reserve. **2010 DATES: Apr.17; Jun.12; Aug.21; Sept.11.**

CANOE-THE-SLOUGH

Paddle Humboldt Bay and the Freshwater Slough with an NRLT naturalist. Learn about the Bay's natural environment and the changes it has seen throughout the decades. **2010 DATES: March & July. Days and times to be determined according to weather and tide.**

BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S PICNIC

Join NRLT's Board of Directors for a hike and spring picnic at one of the Six Rivers to the Sea easement properties. **DATE: May 29, 2010**

Please call the NRLT office at 822-2242 or email info@ncrlt.org to RSVP for all events.



COVER ARTIST - JOAN KATRI

Joan Katri is a third generation Ferndaler. "Ferndale is my source of inspiration: the fog shrouded landscapes, fog clouds floating across the fields, the flowers fog filtered, the colors soft. My goal is to create a peaceful serenity. My work is about color, closely related hues; landscapes capturing the essence of color, light and space; the flowers embracing the form." Visit Joan's website and see her work at <http://www.ferndaleartgallery.com/joankatri.htm>.

NRLT's Mission

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust is dedicated to the protection and enhancement of farms, forests, rangelands, and wild areas in perpetuity. Our vision for the future includes vibrant communities, sustainable economies and healthy landscapes.

THANKS TO:

