The Northcoast Regional Land Trust was founded seventeen years ago on the principal of building bridges – both in terms of connecting people and vital resource lands. We bring together a community of diverse perspectives who share a common goal: the conservation of working landscapes, farms, forests, ranches, and watersheds on the North Coast. Together, united in this purpose, we have achieved significant success in protecting over 25,000 acres where trees grow strong, cattle roam, and wild salmon swim free.

We are excited to report that this year we secured full funding for two projects that will permanently conserve over 3,000 acres. The Lost Coast Redwood and Salmon Initiative's Indian Creek conservation easement project will conserve 2,700 acres of working forestland and five miles of critical salmon streams on the South Fork Eel River. The easement will serve to bridge Sinkyone Wilderness State Park with thousands of acres of privately conserved lands.

The Panther Creek conservation easement along the Trinity River near Willow Creek will connect three conservation easements across 409 forested acres, expanding a Port Orford cedar reserve and protecting the headwaters of Summit and Panther Creeks.

Conservation easement projects are no small undertaking, often taking many years and numerous grant applications to secure the funding necessary to preserve the places we love. We are deeply grateful to our landowner and funding partners for their commitment to these unique places. Both projects are on trajectory for completion in 2018. See more on pages 4 & 5.
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The Northcoast Regional Land Trust is a member of the Land Trust Alliance, California Council of Land Trusts, Northern Region Council of California Land Trusts & Northern California Assoc. of Non-profits

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From the Executive Director

Welcome Alyson, Clare, and Tom
Community Stewardship: Taking Care of Land Together

Caring for and stewarding land takes time, knowledge, hard work, and patience. We have learned over the years that this labor of love is often much more successful and fulfilling when working together. Our property at Freshwater Farms Reserve has become an encouraging example of how community stewardship on a piece of land can yield incredible results, creating a space where we all have a sense of place. A place we have dug our hands into the dirt, helped to restore critical ecosystems, rehabilitated historic agricultural uses, and worked with students and the community to actively care for the land.

The diverse projects that have taken place at Freshwater Farms Reserve over the years would not have happened without our partners, supporters, and every single community member that has lent a hand. Throughout this past winter alone, over 200 volunteers have braved the rain and participated in stewardship activities on the property. Projects included building a rainwater catchment system, enhancing composting methods, weeding and mulching the native plant memorial garden, revegetating the Wood Creek restoration area with over 150 plants, planting approximately 30 trees along the Freshwater Nature Trail, helping with the barn rehabilitation, and cleaning up the native plant nursery.

We would like to acknowledge the generous funding we’ve received from the Flora Family Foundation, The Joseph & Vera Long Foundation, Land Trust Alliance, and California State Coastal Conservancy which has allowed us to organize and coordinate community events, restoration activities, and stewardship days at Freshwater Farms Reserve. We would also like to thank our passionate volunteers at the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, California Conservation Corps, Watershed Stewards Program, Humboldt Trails Council, and Humboldt State University. And, a big thank you to the community at large for not only supporting and helping with this vision, but also for coming out and participating – reminding us that many hands make light work.

Please stay tuned for future Stewardship Sundays at Freshwater Farms Reserve, typically taking place the third Sunday of every month. Mark your calendars for upcoming events including an exciting BioBlitz data collection and stewardship day on Sunday, June 25th and an opportunity to participate in botanical field monitoring within the Wood Creek restoration area on Sunday, July 9th. Email info@ncrlt.org to learn more!

Donor Voices: Dennis Rael
Local Business Owner, NRLT Advisor, and Long Time Supporter

I have been involved with the Northcoast Regional Land Trust for most of its existence. After 9 years of service on the board, I recently stepped off and am currently acting as an advisor and a member of their Friend and Fundraising Committee. What originally brought me to the organization is still what inspires me – the Land Trust’s unique ability in bringing together a diverse group of people from all walks of life around a common goal, the desire to conserve both our local landscape and economy. As a business owner of Los Bagels, a fishermen and outdoor enthusiast, and someone who is dedicated to staying in this community for the long run, it is deeply important to me that we come together to protect this area we love. The Land Trust does this with determination, professionalism, and passion.

Humber State University Natural Resource Club members

AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards Program members
Connecting over 100,000 Acres of Protected Public and Private Lands

Indian Creek Conservation Easement

Many of our readers are undoubtedly familiar with the Lost Coast, a remote region in southern Humboldt and northern Mendocino counties that encompasses fog-draped forests, rugged terrain, and cool coastal streams. In the heart of this region, connecting the Sinkyone Wilderness State Park to over 10,000 acres of privately held conserved lands is a 2,700-acre forested property which we are working to conserve through the second phase of the Lost Coast Redwood and Salmon Initiative. This multi-partner initiative spans years of work with objectives of protecting vital salmon habitat and conserving productive redwood and fir forestlands that will be managed for sustainable timber harvest and enhancing habitat values.

In the final weeks of 2016, the Land Trust received exciting news that the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), through the Proposition 1 Watershed Restoration grant program, awarded the Indian Creek conservation easement project the final piece of funding needed to complete this landscape-scale project. CDFW joins the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, California Natural Resources Agency, and Wildlife Conservation Board as a key partner in this critical project’s success.

By merging 27 parcels into one consolidated unit, the Indian Creek conservation easement will reverse the trend of land subdivision in an area at high risk of conversion to non-forest uses and development for both legal and illegal cannabis cultivation. Not only will the easement prevent further habitat fragmentation, set aside forest reserves, and prevent development, it will set the stage for several groundwater recharge projects that will also enhance channel complexity and bolster streamflows during the summer season when fish need cool water for survival.

When complete, this project will protect some of the most critical coho salmon habitat in the region, preserve healthy working forests, and serve as a habitat bridge connecting over 100,000 acres of conserved public and private lands of the Eel River and the Lost Coast. We are very grateful to our funding and project partners and to the innovative private landowner for their critical support in realizing this vision.
Hundreds of Acres to be Permanently Protected near Willow Creek

Panther Creek Conservation Easement

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust has received funding from the California Natural Resources Agency's Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program to expand a Port Orford cedar reserve across three privately held properties near Willow Creek, CA. The Panther Creek project is located within the headwaters of the Trinity River watershed along the Summit and Panther Creek drainages. In this wild landscape, Douglas-fir trees grow quickly, fish vehemently swim upstream to spawn, and Pacific fisher and other wildlife roam freely. The awarded money will fund a 160-acre conservation easement project enabling the completion of a greater conservation area totaling 409 acres of working forestlands, vital watershed areas, wildlife habitat, and globally significant stands of Port Orford cedar. Additionally, the easement properties complement regional conservation efforts already put forth through their connection to the 1,600 acre Miller Forest reserve, completed in 2012, and the 950,000 acre Six Rivers National Forest.

Port Orford cedar is a Klamath Mountain endemic species and is one of the world’s most valuable timber varieties. It has special cultural significance for Native American tribes of the coastal Pacific Northwest, and is highly restricted to suitable habitats in northern California and southern Oregon. The Port Orford cedar stands in the Panther Creek project area have been identified by the United States Forest Service and the scientific community as being particularly important to the recovery and long term viability of the species.

Port Orford cedar populations have been declining over the past century due to the combination of specialized habitat needs (stream edges, moist soils), heavy harvest rates, and the introduction of *P. lateralis*, which rots the root and trunk of infected trees from the ground up. Due to the water borne nature of the root rot pathogen, management of headwater stream reaches is critical to the conservation of riparian and downstream Port Orford cedar communities. The Panther and Summit Creek area, and the surrounding Miller Forest reserve, contain uninfected Port Orford cedar stands. The long term protections granted by the conservation easements will help to reduce the risk of future infection throughout the Willow Creek and Trinity River watershed.

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust would like to thank the landowners of the Summit Creek properties – John Ridlon for his thoughtful harvesting of chinquapin nuts and impressive stewardship, and Clifford Gibson for his dedication and positive attitude throughout the process. We would also like to thank Steve Miller, owner of the Panther Creek and Miller Forest reserve properties, for the passionate and visionary energy he puts forth, resulting in significant protections of wild and working lands. Lastly, we extend our gratitude to the California Natural Resources Agency’s Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program for their generous funding to complete these vital conservation easement projects that will last in perpetuity.
The Northcoast Regional Land Trust is pleased to provide our members with an accounting of organizational and programmatic accomplishments for 2016:

- In March, working with native plant enthusiasts, we closed the Red Mountain conservation easement, permanently protecting 25 acres in southeastern Humboldt County. This property hosts a globally rare plant species, the two-flowered pea (Lathyrus biflorus), and 95% of its entire population exists only on this special piece of land.
- With the Freshwater Nature Trail complete, we officially unveiled it to the public, hosting a grand opening in May with over 1,000 attendees. With the sun shining and live blue grass music playing, people explored the property and watched local landscape artists’ paint, while enjoying a BBQ and potluck featuring locally produced food.
- After years of work to secure funding and permits, we completed construction on the Wood Creek Phase II Enhancement Project at Freshwater Farms Reserve. The 19 acre site was restored to create habitat for salmonids, waterfowl, and native vegetation, while simultaneously alleviating flooding on our agricultural land, demonstrating how cows and coho can coexist. Our first field report showed that numerous young coho salmon are already using the area!
- In September, Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. signed AB 1958 updating the Forest Practice Act to allow for restoration of northern California’s oak woodlands. The bill was introduced by Assemblymember Jim Wood and proudly co-sponsored by the Northcoast Regional Land Trust and the Buckeye.
- Facility improvements at Freshwater Farms were in full gear, nearing completion of the rehabilitation projects for the historic Graham-Long Dairy barn and the milking parlor – ensuring that future use of the property will incorporate this agricultural heritage.
- We remained committed to getting our community, in particular youth, out on the land to fall in love with wild and working places. Our outreach events and education programs got over 2,000 people out to explore, play, and learn.

### INCOME 2015 2016

- Government Grants $78,557 $416,966
- Foundation Grants 57,500 60,500
- Donations & Events 126,000 129,850
- Other Income* 108,314 120,573
- Investments 34,577 71,181
- Restricted Donations** 0 37,500
- **TOTAL $404,948 $836,570

### EXPENSES 2015 2016

- Land Conservation $294,592 $739,907
- Education & Outreach 52,213 56,820
- Conservation Planning 6,666 6,225
- Operational*** 33,036 50,581
- **TOTAL $386,507 $853,533

*Includes fee for service & property leases.
**Restricted donations are made to our stewardship fund which allows for the ongoing monitoring and stewardship of our easement properties.
***Includes administration, fundraising, staff development & board expenses.
THANK YOU NRTL Members and Supporters!

The North Coast Regional Land Trust is forever grateful to the following who gave cash grants, donations, or support from April 1, 2016 through March 31, 2017.

In-Kind Donations
Does not include businesses or Annual Celebration donors.

In-Kind Organizations

Our Business Partners
Make our community strong. Please support the following businesses:

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NORTH COAST REGIONAL LAND TRUST • SPRING 2017
Matthew Filar fell in love with photography over 40 years ago. In 2002 he left his long time career in mechanical engineering to pursue photography full time. He works with medium and large format cameras in color and black and white film, as well as in digital. While his subjects are predominantly natural scenes, he also enjoys photographing interesting compositions and objects from bygone eras, as well as fine art, sports, event, and group photography. He resides in Arcata with his wife, Tami.