

NORTHCOAST REGIONAL LAND TRUST

Year in Review – Accomplishments for 2009

Organizational Transitions

Blake Alexandre ended his tenure as the President of the Northcoast Regional Land Trust's Board of Directors in 2009. Blake is staying on the board to share his valuable experience and depth of knowledge with Ann King Smith, the new Board President. Ann's unique perspective on the conservation of wild and working lands and her tenacity for organizational development has already launched us into the next chapter of revitalization and growth.

Humboldt County native Lindsay Magnuson replaced Kevin McKernan as Executive Director in 2009 as well. Kevin agreed to stay with the Land Trust as a board member, allowing for a relatively seamless change in staff leadership.

As executive director, Lindsay oversees the day-to-day operations of the organization, from project implementation and fiscal oversight to program development and community relations. Lindsay is a natural visionary and is committed to working with a multitude of partners to inspire a culture of natural resource stewardship for our region. She has touched thousands of lives with her enthusiasm and drive. She is sure to impact thousands more as she continues to help our community connect to the beautiful landscapes that grace this part of the world.



*Lindsay Magnuson,
the Land Trust's new
executive director.*



*Grizzly Mountain Ranch was forever
protected on the last day of 2008.*

Landscape Conservation

Six Rivers to the Sea: The Land Trust closed its first donated conservation easement (also its first completed project in Trinity County) on the very last day of 2008. The easement assures that these 1,131-acres remain as a working land and that its Eel River tributaries and wildlife habitat are protected throughout time.

Land Trust staff continued preparing easements for three other Six Rivers to the Sea properties – Chalk Mountain Ranch, Charles Mountain Ranch and the Miller Forest. Funding for and easements on these properties will protect more than 17,000 acres of working forest, rangeland and prime habitat for wildlife and fish, within the next two years. Staff also monitored more than 8,600 acres on

four different properties; each complied with the terms of its easement.

Approximately 30 people attended two, full-day workshops which provided landowners with information about proven, innovative ways to keep their land working and productive while meeting financial goals related to retirement and estate planning. NRLT staff, UC Cooperative Extension, and estate planning professionals helped families begin to develop a plan for transferring a financially successful farm or ranch business to the next generation.

Restoration on Freshwater Farms: The much anticipated Freshwater Farms Reserve restoration project broke ground on August 25 this year. The project is designed to provide habitat for salmon, waterfowl, and many other wetland-dependent plants and animals while maintaining 19 acres of grassland for low-impact agricultural. Local contractors constructed a slough channel system, installed in-stream fish habitat structures to create a complex and inviting brackish marsh habitat, and altered the 100-year-old tidegate to allow for tidal influence on Wood Creek. Future work will include re-vegetating of a series of tidal hummocks with native wetland plant species and creating an interpretive trail.

McNamara Dairy: In March, thanks to Western Rivers Conservancy, the California State Coastal Conservancy, and the McNamara family, the Land Trust acquired the 77-acre McNamara Dairy, located on the north bank of



*Restoration activities on Freshwater
Farms Reserve started in August.*



The Land Trust became the new owner of McNamara Dairy in March.

Redwood Creek in Orick, CA. We will work closely with the property's lessees to restore and maintain the land for optimal agricultural production. The Land Trust looks forward to a strong and long-lasting relationship with our neighbors and joins them in continuing the farming tradition and our unique way of life on the North Coast.

North Coast Dialogues

"A Draft Vision for Working Lands" is currently being developed as part of the North Coast Dialogues project. This vision will act as the guiding document to support a 100-year vision crafted in 2008. The Vision used a landscape-level analysis to evaluate patterns of land use patterns and other factors related to the productive capacity of forestry, agriculture, and fisheries in Humboldt County.

The purpose is to establish a shared understanding of the current patterns and trends as they relate to the long-term viability of these industries and the natural resources on which they depend. The analyses are intended to provide an objective basis for deciding what collaborative actions, if any, are needed to help maintain productive lands and waters over time. Findings of the analysis were presented to the diverse 30-person working group in October and will be the focus of a community event to be hosted on November 13th. We anticipate 2010 to be a year filled with new possibilities and certainly broader accomplishments.

Regional Planning

Following on our Conservation Action Planning for oak woodlands from 2008, we hosted an informational session with Wildlife Conservation Board staff to discuss their funding program for oak woodlands conservation in California. The event was well-attended by landowners and resource professionals from our region and has assisted us in better planning for the restoration and conservation of oak woodlands in Humboldt County.

We also began a revision of our Strategic Conservation Action Plan. This document has guided our regional planning and land conservation projects for five years and will be updated to better reflect our broadening suite of program opportunities.

Building Community for Conservation

Outdoor education and informational events received a strong show of support from our local community in 2009. In March, 30 people, including several of our new neighbors, Orick community members, and county and state representatives joined us for a celebration and tour of the McNamara Dairy property.

Monthly, one-hour Lay of the Land events commenced in July, bringing more than 70 community members to our Arcata office to learn more about land trust work. The events are a great way for the Land Trust to work with community members to create opportunities which lead to the protection of wild and working land in our region.



Community members came out to view the Freshwater Farms Reserve restoration project in September.

Freshwater Farms Reserve is proving to be a valuable venue for outdoor education. More than 40 people attended the Freshwater Farms Reserve field day in September to view and discuss the restoration. Many educational groups came out to the Freshwater Farms site to experience the restoration as well, 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. In addition, Freshwater Farms was the location for our outdoor education program with Six Rivers Charter School. Now in its second year, the program offers 10th and 11th grade high school students the opportunity to practice scientific inquiry and learn about wetland ecology, sustainable farming, and the dynamic interactions between working lands and sustainable landscapes on the North Coast region.



Funding for oak woodlands conservation is needed to establish a program offering for landowners.