The new future of McNamara Dairy

When negotiations for the sale of the McNamara Dairy in Orick took place last year, the North coast Regional Land Trust was approached by several entities to see if we were interested in acquiring and managing the property. The land trust’s board of directors unanimously agreed that it was a natural fit for our nonprofit organization. So in March, thanks to Western Rivers Conservancy, the California State Coastal Conservancy, and the McNamara family, the land trust now owns the 77-acre property, located on the north bank of Redwood Creek.

Thanks, also, for those who came out to welcome us for our first public gathering at the McNamara Dairy. Several of our new neighbors, Orick community members, and county and state representatives joined us for a tour of the property. The lively discussion before and during the tour gave the land trust the opportunity to talk about the purchase of the dairy and to share our plans for its future.

MY WORD

Lindsay Magnuson

Regional Land Trust’s approach to conservation [is] consistent with the protection of working landscapes and their cultivation of working relationships with landowners is long overdue in Humboldt County and warrants the Conservancy’s full support. [It] has demonstrated that it has the expertise, local public support, and administrative capability necessary to commence and complete the project in a timely fashion.”

The land trust’s mission to protect and enhance farms, forests, rangelands, and wild areas in perpetuity involves finding ways to help keep farmers and ranchers on the land and continue to work our region’s rich, fertile soils. The McNamara Dairy is no exception. Our long-term goal is to keep the land in agricultural production. We will work closely with the current, and any future tenants (lessees), to restore and maintain the land, and associated infrastructure, for optimal yields. Protecting agricultural land from subdivision and development and keeping it in sound working condition is essential to produce the food, wood products and clean water necessary for a vibrant and sustainable local economy.

The land trust has several capable and knowledgeable directors and staff members to manage the property, but we understand that until we get to know the land and its capacity to produce, we are in for a steep learning curve. We hope we can turn to the local farming community for consultation and advice. We appreciate the warm reception we received at the recent celebration, and we look forward to a strong and long-lasting relationship with our neighbors while promoting the farming tradition and our unique way of life on the North Coast.

Lindsay Magnuson is the Executive Director of the North coast Regional Land Trust, a nonprofit conservation organization based in Arcata.

Opinions expressed in My Word pieces do not necessarily reflect the editorial viewpoint of the Times-Standard.