Cows, Crops, Cattails and Coho: Conserving This Place We Call Home

We're lucky. We live in a place where salmon still spawn in our streams. We're surrounded by rich forests of coastal redwood, Douglas fir, and black oak. We swim with our families in crystal-clear rivers and walk with friends along miles of stunning coastline. We're also incredibly fortunate to live in a place with an abundance of locally-produced, healthy food.

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust is proud to be a non-profit partner of the North Coast Co-op, because we believe that the production of healthy, local, and sustainable food is intimately linked with protecting the land and water we love. Every day we work with private landowners to establish conservation agreements that keep our region's working farms, and housed. We believe that finding this balance is possible because we have helped it happen — the Northcoast Regional Land Trust has worked with private landowners to forever protect more than 25,000 acres of working farms, ranches, and forests and is currently working on conserving nearly 30,000 more acres locally.

Often, we frame environmental issues as "us versus them," because that's an easy narrative to understand and communicate. It's hard, complex, and emotionally demanding work to engage with people of different backgrounds and find common ground. Since our humble beginnings in 2000, the Northcoast Regional Land Trust has worked to build bridges between agriculture and the environment, and to encourage and value the diversity of opinion among all of our stakeholders. Our board is filled with local agricultural producers, whose healthy foods fill your grocery basket—from Lee Mora's Humboldt Grass-fed Beef to Clif Clendenen's multi-generational apples, from Jill Hackett's lamb produced at Ferndale Farms to Blake Alexandre's pasture-raised eggs produced by the Alexandre Kids. Know your farmer? That's the first step.

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust believes that by working across perceived boundaries, we can protect the land we love and bolster the economy that keeps us fed, clothed, and housed. Land Trust is to protect wild and working land forever, standing alongside our local agricultural producers and building bridges across cultural and political divides. The North Coast is a place that demands the best we can give, because it provides us so much—our healthy food, our crystal-clean water, our livelihood, even our inspiration.

We understand that people are often not connected to a place without a story—the first time you caught a Steelhead trout on a wild river or the memories of harvesting your own vegetables from a family garden. We work to ensure that the next generation of stewards get out on the land and learn about their environment so that they can build their own story around it, because people only protect what they love.

If this is the kind of work that inspires you, join us. The Northcoast Regional Land Trust has many program areas, so whether your passion is about conserving open and scenic places, working on planning and land use issues, or educating youth, we are dedicated to it all. One fun way to see how the Northcoast Regional Land Trust world joins together is by coming to our Annual Celebration—known as "Boots and Birkenstocks"—on October 10 at the Fortuna River Lodge. This is a big
you can see that there is the potential for a lot of the land that makes our area special to be cut up and damaged over the next 20 years. That is not the kind of story about land that we want to tell our children.

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust is proud to be a non-profit partner of the North Coast Co-op, because we believe that the production of healthy, local, and sustainable food is intimately linked with protecting the land and water we love. Every day we work with private landowners to establish conservation agreements that keep our region’s working farms, forests, and ranches intact. This approach protects wildlife habitat while supporting agricultural production.

The threats to local agriculture and ecological health are real. A 2010 survey of agricultural landowners in Humboldt County found that 65% have no succession plan in place for conveying land to the next generation. These landowners represent 130,000 acres of intact agricultural land that produce food and fiber for our families and prime habitat for wildlife. And, the average age of respondents in this survey

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Students from Six Rivers Charter School participating in NRTL’s Biological Monitoring Program at Freshwater Farms Reserve.

Fortunately, there is another way. The Northcoast Regional Land Trust believes that by working across perceived boundaries, we can protect the land we love and bolster the economy that keeps us fed, clothed, between agriculture and the environment, and to encourage and value the diversity of opinion among all of our stakeholders. Our board is filled with local agricultural producers, whose healthy foods fill your grocery basket—from Lee Mora’s Humboldt Grass-fed Beef to Clif Clendenen’s multi-generational apples, from Jill Hackett’s lamb produced at Ferndale Farms to Blake Alexandre’s pasture-raised eggs produced by the Alexandre Kids. Know your farmer? That’s the first step. The next step is working side by side with your farmer to protect the land we all love.

In a recent survey that was completed by many Co-op shoppers, respondents indicated that the top social issue that the North Coast Co-op should champion is supporting local, sustainable agriculture. This is one of the reasons that the Co-op and the Northcoast Regional Land Trust collaborate. Put simply, the work of the Northcoast Regional Land Trust is all about building and protecting a community that can thrive together. For more information about the project, visit www.n мл.ORG or call the office at (707) 822-2242. A special thanks to the North Coast Co-op for being such a wonderful community partner and for understanding the complexities and importance of conserving this place we call home.

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