# AUTUMN 2021 NORTHCOAST REGIONAL LAND TRUST



Bald Hills Rick Tolley

# Change Is the Only Constant

riving down Myrtle Avenue past Freshwater Farms Reserve this past year, you may have noticed the transformation of the former milking parlor building that runs along the eastern edge of the Northcoast Regional Land Trust's Freshwater Farms Reserve property. After the strategic deconstruction of the eastern portion of the building that was being undermined by Freshwater Slough, the Land Trust invested in rehabilitation of the remaining structure in order to better serve continued agricultural production, public access, and wildlife habitat on the property. While the whole community has supported the many improvements at Freshwater Farms Reserve over the years, we would like to recognize a few key people whose continued investment and support has made so much possible. Giving generously of his time and expertise to bring the old building new life, Bob Felter's volunteer involvement from the beginning gave us what we needed to literally get the project off the ground and away from the slough. The financial and moral support provided by Deborah Fitzpatrick and Bob Battagin made the building's rehabilitation possible and will make additional improvements to the property possible in the months ahead. Of course there are many other donors, contractors, tenants, and volunteers who have been key in building Freshwater Farms Reserve into what it is today and we are so grateful to all of you for your continued investment to help our ambassador property flourish.

As you may have already seen, the search has begun for a new tenant for the farm stand and the rehabilitated nursery building who will assist us in maintaining Freshwater Farms Reserve as a safe and

Continued on page 4

### IN THIS ISSUE

From the Board President	2
Boots on the Ground	3
Shop Local	3
Changes	4
Travis Forest CE	5
Prescribed Fire	5
Monitoring Musings	6
Virtual Events	7
Featured Artist	8

#### **Board of Directors**

President, Susan Moranda,
Principal, Hunter, Hunter, & Hunt, LLP
1st Vice President, Ann King Smith, Retired
Cultural Resources Consultant

**2nd Vice President, Mike Miles,**Forest Manager, Humboldt/Mendocino Redwood Co., LLC

**Secretary, Thomas Hjerpe,** Attorney, Law Office of Hjerpe & Godinho, LLP

Treasurer, Peter Jermyn, Entrepreneur Joseph Alexandre, Dairy Manager, Alexandre Family Farm

Clare Bugenig, Cattle Rancher, Perry Ranch Julia Cavalli, Sr. Environmental Analyst, Humboldt County Public Works

Nancy Diamond, Attorney, Law Offices of Nancy Diamond

**Todd Fulton,** Rancher, Land Security, Green Diamond Resource Co.

**Erin Kelly,** Forestry Professor, Humboldt State University

**Christine Manhart,** Certified Hydrogeologist, LACO Associates

Martha Spencer, Retired Land Use Planner Robert Vogt, Senior Environmental Analyst, Humboldt County Public Works Dept. Mike Wallace, Ret. Environmental Scientist

#### **Board of Advisors**

Blake Alexandre Mark Andre Greg Blomstrom Heidi Bourne Clif Clendenen Maya Conrad Melanie Cunningham Jeff Dunk Yvonne Everett Gary Falxa Gary Flosi Annette Holland Rees Hughes Peter Jackson Aldaron Laird Roland Lamberson Mandy Marquez David McMurray Dina Moore Leland Mora Fred Neighbor Chuck Powell Dennis Rael Rondal Snodgrass Eddie Tanner

#### Staff

Dan Ehresman, Executive Director Beth Bray, Outreach & Development Dir. Karlee Jewell, Project Manager Zach Wenderott, Project Manager Sheri Deppe, Development Asst.

Leslie Scopes Anderson, Newsletter Volunteer

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust is a fullyaccredited member of the Land Trust Alliance, California Council of Land Trusts, Northern Region Council of Land Trusts & Northern California Assoc. of Nonprofits.

Newsletter published twice a year by NRLT P.O. Box 398, Bayside, CA 95524 Phone: 707.822.2242, info@ncrlt.org; www.ncrlt.org

# From the Board President

"And all at once, summer collapsed into fall."

– Oscar Wilde

As autumn is upon us and the holiday season approaches, I find myself giving thanks for all of you. Our donors who gave generously this past year, our landowner partners who offered their support and graciously hosted staff for their annual monitoring visits, our business partners who faithfully and regularly support our organization and mission, our board of directors and advisors who bring a vast amount of knowledge and experience together towards a shared vision, and of course, our staff who work tirelessly to put those visions and goals together to help make them a reality.



Susan Moranda

It's truly been a privilege to serve as the Board

President of the Northcoast Regional Land Trust the past year and a half. While it's been a wild ride for a number of reasons, I'm really proud of what the Land Trust has accomplished this year. NRLT is busier than ever with ten conservation easements underway--we're excited to share success stories in 2022! Inquiry calls continue to come in and we look forward to working with the community to conserve more land.

Conservation easements are an important element in ensuring wild and working lands stay intact and productive for future generations. They are a testimony to how production agriculture, forest stewardship, and resource conservation work together and are mutually beneficial.

As you read about in this issue's cover story, change is the name of the game at Freshwater Farms Reserve these days with the restoration of the former milking parlor building nearing completion, the search for a new tenant for the farm stand underway, and new plans on the horizon for continued improvements.

Our event season was virtual again this year, and a successful one at that. Huckleberry Flint kicked off our Summer Celebration with some new music and while we had planned on an in-person event, circumstances dictated we move to the virtual platform and staff and organizers pulled it off without a hitch. Our Annual Celebration, Boots and Birkenstocks, also went virtual again and our auction results and attendance numbers confirm the vast amount of support from our local community as well as nation-wide. Once again, we can't do this without your support!

As we move into the "Cozy Season", on behalf of our board and staff, we thank you for your continued support and wish all a healthy and happy autumn and holiday season.

With Gratitude,

Susan Moranda

NRLT Board President

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Freshwater Farms Reserve Interpretive Walks: Visit ncrlt.org for spring dates.

**Stewardship Days:** Dates to be announced - Stay in the loop through our email list or social media pages. Join NRLT Projects staff and volunteers at Freshwater Farms Reserve for wetland restoration, trail maintenance, and invasive plant removal. Email info@ncrlt.org to sign up for the volunteer email list.

**NRLT'S Mission** The Northcoast Regional Land Trust is dedicated to the protection and economic viability of working landscapes, farms, forests and grazing lands, and to the preservation and protection of land for its natural, educational, scenic and historic values. We work with landowners on a voluntary basis to promote stewardship of Northern California's healthy and productive resource base, natural systems and quality of life.

### **Boots On the Ground at Freshwater Farms Reserve**

his spring, we saw the return of limited in-person community events with an interpretive tour of Freshwater Farms Reserve. The small group in attendance marveled at blooming willow trees and a green landscape. Now with fall in full swing, the Reserve is experiencing increasingly crisp mornings and cottonwoods leaves are falling on the trail. After more than a year without organized opportunities for people to gather at Freshwater Farms Reserve, we're so pleased to have in-person events happening again!

With the return of our Cows and Cattails elementary school field trips this fall, some students are getting out for their first field trips after nearly a year and a half of hybrid or virtual learning. We love getting outside with local students, seeing their curiosity and love for the land.

In August, community volunteers came together for a Blackberry Pick 'n Pull event.

Participants harvested sweet, summer blackberries that would soon be turned into pies, flavored scones, or enjoyed fresh from the source. After filling their baskets and bellies, they grabbed loppers and shovels to promote native biodiversity on the property by removing invasive Himalayan blackberry plants.

Groups of college students from Humboldt State University and College of the Redwoods got out to Freshwater Farms Reserve this fall for class tours and volunteer opportunities. While on the property, they had the opportunity to see first-hand how NRLT cultivates a landscape that balances community, agriculture, and wildlife.

From student tours to volunteer workdays to elementary school field trips, we could not be more pleased to get our community back together out on the land. Rio Dell students playing Migration Madness on a field trip at Freshwater Farms Reserve.



Volunteers pulled invasive blackberry plants at the Blackberry Pick 'n Pull Event in August.



NRLT Project Manager, Karlee Jewell, leads a tour of Freshwater Farms Reserve this spring.

# **Shop Local This Holiday Season**

T-shirts and sweatshirts featuring Freshwater Farms Reserve are available at the NRLT office and make wonderful gifts. The hand-carved and letterpress-printed graphic was created by local artist Lynn M. Jones at Just My Type Letterpress. NRLT swag is not only a great gift for family and friends but also supports conservation efforts in our community.

The image shown on the shirts and bags is also available as a limited-edition print at Just My Type Letterpress Paperie (235 F Street, Eureka). Prints are \$150 and \$50 of each print will be donated to NRLT.

Help spread the word about the Northcoast Regional Land Trust and Freshwater Farms Reserve by sporting one of our sweatshirts or t-shirts or by purchasing an original print! To purchase, contact Outreach and Development Director Beth Bray at b.bray@ncrlt.org to set up an appointment.



Crewneck sweatshirts are available in charcoal grey, red brick, moss green, or heather grey. Hooded sweatshirts are available in navy blue. Three-quarter sleeve baseball t-shirts are grey and green and short-sleeved t-shirts are blue and green.

# **Change Is the Only Constant**

#### Continued from page 1

welcoming place, provide our community access to locally grown foods, and conduct operations consistent with local and state regulations and in compliance with our lease. We are accepting applications now (more information is available at ncrlt.org) and hope to have someone in place in early 2022. The North Coast Chapter of the California Native Plant Society will remain an anchor tenant on the property.

And finally, another big change for the Northcoast Regional Land Trust – our current office building has been sold by the previous owner so we'll be moving to a new office space in early 2022. While it is a big undertaking to move out of the office we've been in for the past 15 years, we look forward to a new beginning in a new office location. Stay tuned for the details about when and where we're moving!

You may be asking yourself if the new office will be at Freshwater Farms Reserve – we get that question a lot. In short, the answer is no. While Freshwater Farms Reserve remains our ambassador property, it's not an appropriate location for our offices. The property is zoned agricultural and we want the Reserve to continue to be a space that supports local agriculture. Plus, given the extent of improvements that would be necessary to make it a viable office location, its existence in the 100-year flood plain coupled with the effects of sea level rise, along with the daunting permitting challenges, we believe it is most prudent to look elsewhere.

They say that change is the only constant. And as hard as change can be, we also know that with change can come opportunity. We look forward to seeing what opportunities are in store for the Northcoast Regional Land Trust in the coming year.



Volunteer Bob Felter was essential in the early phases of improvements to the former milking parlor building.



Deborah Fitzpatrick and Bob Battagin generously support improvements at Freshwater Farms Reserve.



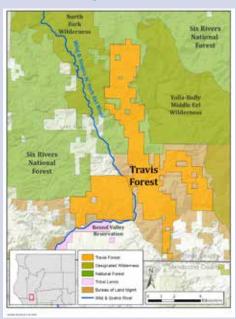
# Farm Stand and Nursery for Lease (February 2022)

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust is seeking a new farm stand tenant who will assist us in maintaining Freshwater Farms Reserve as a safe and welcoming place, provide our community access to locally grown foods, and conduct operations consistent with local and state regulations and in compliance with our lease.

Details regarding space available, rates, and application instructions can be found at ncrlt.org. Applications due Nov. 30, 2021.



# **Funding Secured for Travis Forest Conservation Easement**



With support from the US Forest Service's Forest Legacy Program and California's Wildlife Conservation Board, the Northcoast Regional Land Trust is pleased to



NRLT Staff meet with landowner and funding agency representatives on a site visit to the Travis Forest in September 2021.

announce that we have secured full funding for our Travis Forest Conservation Easement project and we have commenced work to complete this project within the next year!

The property is an expansive 11,907-acre working ranch straddled by the Yolla Bolly-Middle Eel and North Fork Wilderness Areas in southwestern Trinity County. Currently comprising 60 legal parcels, a completed conservation easement will ensure that the property is kept whole and that its productive conifer forests, oak woodlands, rolling prairies, and streams will be forever protected. Our Land

Trust is proud to work with our funding partners and the landowner to protect this special place in perpetuity.

# One Less Barrier to Burning

he forests and grasslands of Northern California were historically shaped by fire and yet many lands in our region haven't seen the benefits of the responsible application of fire in decades. With every catastrophic wildfire season, the need for more thoughtful management through preemptive burning becomes more evident. Not only is prescribed fire an invaluable tool for fuels reduction, but it can be used to restore habitat, control invasive species, improve rangelands, and promote cultural resources and values. Unfortunately, concerns over potential liability have deterred landowners from engaging in prescribed burning despite exceedingly rare instances of fire escape, property damage, and personal injury.

To help address liability concerns and further support prescribed fire as a tool, earlier this year California Senator Dodd introduced Senate Bill 332 which was signed into law by Governor Newsom in October. Much anticipated by the prescribed burning community, the bill establishes a "gross negligence" liability standard for statecertified burn bosses and those who contract with them, replacing the higher standard of "simple negligence". This means highly trained practitioners can now only be held liable for damages resulting from reckless or willful misconduct. As a result, landowners are expected to experience increased access to liability insurance and be able to take on more, and more impactful, burns. The effect

will be multiplied over time as more burn bosses are certified through the State Fire Marshal's new certification program.

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust is proud to support legislation like SB 332 given the benefits of prescribed fire to regional wildfire resilience, community safety, and wild and working land values. We are encouraged by efforts of community leaders and organizations seeking to make prescribed fire more accessible to landowners with whom we work and are bringing "good fire" back to the landscape.





Klamath Prescribed Fire Training Exchange, Credit: Jenny Staats, Klamath Salmon Media Collaborative

# **Monitoring Musings**

In May, Zach Wenderott joined the Northcoast Regional Land Trust team as our newest Project Manager. Zach spent his early years wandering the open prairies of Kansas where he cultivated a passion for an outdoor lifestyle and an enthusiasm for exploring. In 2013, he settled in Arcata where he cast a wide net gathering experience in fisheries ecology, forestry, and forest conservation. In 2021, he graduated from Humboldt State University with an MS in Forestry, Watershed, & Wildland Sciences. In his free time, you might find him deep in the Humboldt forests lugging a backpack full of fresh chanterelles or navigating the alpine lakes of the Klamath Mountains

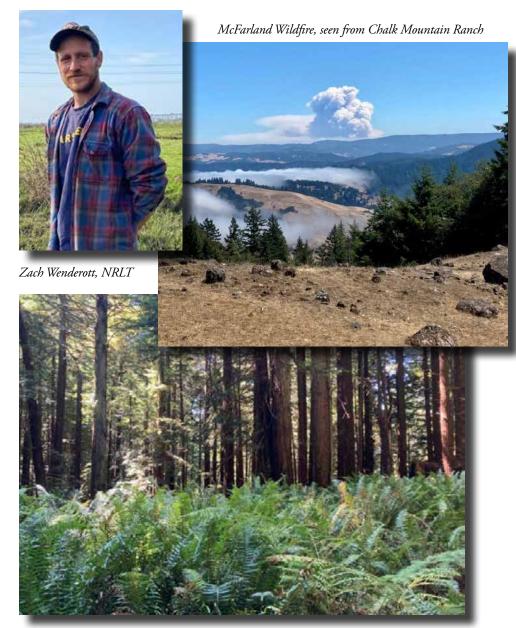
An essential part of a Project Manager's work at NRLT is the annual monitoring of the increasing number of conservation easement properties. Zach spent his first summer on the job visiting the easement properties and getting to know our landowner partners. Here are some highlights of his travels, in his own words.

rips to Iaqua Ranch and Charles Mountain Ranch brought seemingly endless native oak woodlands, representing one of California's most iconic and culturally important landscapes. It was amazing to see the amount of time and attention required to maintain road networks and fence lines so crucial to the functioning of these large working landscapes.

A visit to Chalk Mountain Ranch offered a new appreciation for the effort required to ranch across such a vast and rugged terrain. I could barely comprehend keeping track of cattle that seem to vanish the second they step into the understory. The unique experience of seeing the distant McFarland wildfire plume from the ranch is etched into my memory.

I toured Red Mountain, one of NRLT's smallest easements, with Dave Imper. While we walked, I scanned the ground with keen eyes for the endemic two-flowered pea (Lathyrus biflorus) and was thrilled when we finally found a few crispy summer remnants from what was just a few weeks before a thriving 2.5-acre reserve containing an estimated 95% of the world's population of this species.

Fortuna Forest is a redwood-dominated property quietly tucked away on the out-skirts of Fortuna filled with an understory bursting at the seams with evergreen foliage.



Redwood forest at the Fortuna Forest Conservation Easement property

There I was treated to fresh baked zucchini bread and a hot cup of coffee while reminiscing over the history of the property with landowners Gary and Lynn Baker.

I traveled to Hunter Ranch and saw the historically significant Pilot Rock for the first time and visited the cold, crystal clear Mad River, spawning grounds for numerous threatened salmonids.

And let's not forgot meeting Francis Sweet at his coastally influenced Valley View Ranch. Francis seemed to have a story for every rock and gnarled tree on the property. Rarely have I met someone with such a deep connection and love for their land. By the time I drove away, I felt like I was leaving an old friend and we assured each other we would meet again within the year.

There are many more stories of course because every property is unique, but I don't have the space to share them all here. North-coast Regional Land Trust staff monitored fifteen easements this summer and fall, each with unique ecological, agricultural, and historical values. I look forward to visiting them all again next year.















# **Celebrating Virtually**

We started off the summer with plans for an in-person Freshwater Farms Summer Celebration, but after careful consideration we cancelled the in person event and hosted a virtual concert with Huckleberry Flint instead. The community showed up in a big way with many people donating the cost of their tickets and others making a donation through the virtual event platform. Our sponsors generously stuck with us – a big thank you to American AgCredit, Law Offices of Hjerpe & Godinho, Humboldt Mendocino Redwood Company, LACO Associates, Los Bagels, and Pierson Building Center for all of their help with this event. Thank you to the members of Huckleberry Flint and everyone who supported this event which raised \$6,500 to support the conservation of wild and working landscapes!

#### Missed the show? Visit givebutter.com/ HuckFlint2021

This year's Annual Celebration, Boots and Birkenstocks, was held online this fall for the second year in a row. The event featured an online auction with over 80 auction packages and bidders joined in from far and wide. Accompanying the online auction was a short film about the Northcoast Regional Land Trust's largest conservation easement completed to date, the Hunter Ranch. Featuring Jeremy Fulton, the cattle rancher who leases grazing land on the ranch, and Shayne Green, a conservation easement consultant involved in the protection and restoration of the property, the film showed that Hunter Ranch is a truly special place and that the conservation easement on the property helps keep it that way.

We're grateful for the more than 150 people who participated in the auction and viewed the film, quite a few of whom were new to the Land Trust. This year's event raised nearly \$40,000 for conservation in our region. Thank you to everyone who participated in the event, the NRLT Friend and Fundraising Committee for their leadership in planning, the NRLT Board of Directors, and our generous sponsors - Humboldt Mendocino Redwood Company, American AgCredit, Points West Surveying, Pierson Building Center, Hubbard's German



Auto, Harber's Insurance Agency, Baldwin, Blomstrom, Wilkinson & Associates, Inc., the North Coast Co-op, REMAX/Humboldt Realty, Alexandre Family Farm, Hunter, Hunter, and Hunt, Stillwater Sciences, Planwest Partners, Ramone's Bakery and Café, Umpqua Bank, Humboldt Grassfed Beef, and Los Bagels.

To watch the Hunter Ranch Mini-Documentary, visit ncrlt.org/AC2021.

#### **Thank You Auction Donors**

The following generously contributed an auction item to this year's event – thank you!

A&R Design Adventure's Edge Alexandre Family Farm Almquist Lumber Company Backcountry Press Camille Regli Christian and Callie Alexandre Clendenen's Cider Works David Bray and Kathy Clark David McMurray Dead Reckoning Tavern DeepSeeded Community Farm Dennis Rael Dick Taylor Craft Chocolate Dina and Mark Moore Eric Nelson

F/V Schultzie Baby Captain and Crew

Fern Creek Nursery

Fish Brothers

Foggy Bottoms Boys Gary and Jan Flosi Gary and Lynn Baker Gary Friedrichsen Greg Blomstrom Holly Yashi Humboldt Cider Company Humboldt Grassfed Beef, Inc. Humboldt/Mendocino Redwood Companies Hunter Ranch LLC Jason Lopiccolo Jerry and Gisela Rohde Jim McVicker Julie Ofman Kathy O'Leary Kellogg Supply, Inc. Kinetic Koffee Lance Spece Law Offices of Hjerpe & Godinho, LLP Liscom Hill Pottery

Flora Organica Designs

Los Bagels Marie Granshaw Marsha Bray Martha Spencer Max and Nena Creasy Michael Kraft Miles Garrett Wines Morgan and Macee Marquez Nilsen Company Northtown Books One Seed Designs Pacific Mindfulness Paul Rickard Peter Jermyn Ramone's Bakery & Cafe Redwood Roots Farm Rees Hughes Revolution Bicycle Repair Scott Mitchell Shakefork Community Farm Sharon Ruchte Steven Vander Meer The Jonsteen Company Tim and Jackie Pricer Tracy Schilling

#### Thank you to these 2021 business partners!

Aalfs, Evans & Company, LLP; Azure Bay Psychotherapy; Backcountry Press; Conservation Partners; Dandelion Herbal Center; Gyppo Ale Mill; Humboldt Association of Realtors; Jitter Bean Coffee Co., Kelly-O'Hern Associates; Kinetic Koffee; Lost Coast Ranch and Old Growth Timbers; Marimba One; Maya Conrad; EXP Realty; North Coast Cleaning Services; Pacific Mindfulness; Pure Water Spas; Roy E. Corsetti, CPA; Samara Restoration













PO Box 398 Bayside, CA 95524

**Change Service Requested** 

NONPROFIT ORG US POSTAGE PAID Eureka, CA Permit No. 46









# Featured Artist – Rick Tolley

Rick Tolley (December 25, 1948-October 5th, 2021) was a man who always searched for beauty, joy, adventure, and purpose.

His social activism and desire to live with the land led him to building community and homes through woodworking. Many Humboldt County homes are graced with his cabinets and carvings of roses and wildflowers. Others are adorned with his paintings of Mad River poppies (his favorite flower), the Pacific Ocean, and the Six Rivers region. He found the divine in nature, and the human form, and for years attended the Ink People's figure drawing nights. He was very active with the plein-air painting community which brought him boundless joy and helped extend his life as he battled Stage 4 lung cancer.

Many of his friends called him "Ranger Rick" and for decades he led art hikes with the North Coast Chapter of the California Native Plant Society, Benbow Excursions, Sanctuary Forest, and Ananda Men's Retreats. He delighted in hosting Art Night during the Native Plant Society's annual plant sale and outreach programs. Rick taught art at Arcata Parks and Recreation, Klamath River Early College of the Redwoods, and Sunnybrae Middle School. In the last three years he led adventure excursions with his painting friends and taught his two grandsons the love of watercolor. The South Fork of the Trinity River was one of his favorite places to paint wildflowers in the spring, and camp in the summer with his family. "Rick's Beach" above Surprise Creek is where friends and family will tell stories about him stargazing and painting for decades to come.

Rick was always searching for beauty and taught many people the joy in backpacking into waterfalls, how to find the perfect river rock to nap on, and how to enjoy making art while absorbing the magnificence around us. He believed in conservation and protecting the land for the next generations. He organized multiple group art shows that highlighted the beauty of our wonderful North Coast, promoting and supporting groups that do conservation and environmental work. Rick had



both solo and group shows, all of which attempted to express the delight, the wonder, and the beauty that is found both in the natural world and within ourselves.

There will be a celebration of Rick's work and life and a benefit show for his family on January 1st, 2022, from 6 pm - 9 pm (or by appointment) at C Street Studios (208 C Street, Eureka). The show will include Rick's paintings, as well as pieces donated by other artists. For more information, contact Paul Rickard at (707) 407-9952.





























UMPQUA BANK











