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**Preserving Our Natural Heritage: NRLT Completes Conservation Easement on Butte Creek Ranch**

Bayside, CA – The Northcoast Regional Land Trust (NRLT) is excited to announce the completion of a conservation easement on the Butte Creek Ranch, a beautiful 3,079-acre working ranch owned by the Cottrell/Moore family in southeastern Humboldt County. This important achievement was recorded on June 26, 2024 and ensures that the land’s natural and agricultural values are protected forever, while still allowing for its use and enjoyment by current and future owners.

After generations of stewarding lands in the Larabee Valley, Gloria Cottrell and her daughter Leslie Moore have worked hard to put the family ranch back together. They purchased the Butte Creek Ranch back from other family members in 2021, and shortly after began work on a conservation easement with NRLT. Leslie and her husband, Wes, are taking a long-range approach to land management, and the completion of this conservation easement sets in stone their commitment to protecting this ranch for generations to come.

Butte Creek Ranch is home to nearly 10 miles of streams, 2,000 acres of commercial timber forests, diverse wildlife and, for six months of the year, up to 225 cow-calf pairs the family raises for beef production. Over the long-term, the landowners intend to utilize prescribed burning across the rangeland to maintain quality forage, stave off conifer encroachment, and improve fire resiliency in the region. With the conservation easement now in place, NRLT will conduct annual monitoring visits to maintain a constructive relationship with the landowners and to ensure that the land’s forest, agricultural, and wildlife values are protected forever.

The location of Butte Creek Ranch makes its long-term protection even more impactful. By linking to the existing Charles Mountain Conservation Easement and bordering Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land, Butte Creek Ranch creates a continuous corridor of protected land that further connects to the Diamond D Ranch and Chalk Mountain Ranch Conservation Easements, all held by NRLT. This connectivity is crucial for the health and resilience of our local ecosystems, and especially for water quality in the lower Eel River Basin. Additionally, protecting the Little Van Duzen River and its tributaries on the property conserves vital habitat for endangered and threatened salmon and steelhead populations.

Funds for Butte Creek Ranch were made available through the California Strategic Growth Council’s (SGC) Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program (SALC) in collaboration with the Department of Conservation. SALC is part of [California Climate Investments](https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.caclimateinvestments.ca.gov%2F&data=02%7C01%7CElena.Davert%40conservation.ca.gov%7Ca56c3afe557a46b8bc3608d738819641%7C4c5988ae5a0040e8b065a017f9c99494%7C0%7C0%7C637040001558713546&sdata=TtcmMtO3Yi8r3tmneHEyKwjDb9nfEzDh0CdtWbOe5mE%3D&reserved=0), a statewide initiative that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment – particularly in disadvantagedcommunities*.*

NRLT is very thankful to the Cottrell/Moore family, the SGC, California Climate Investments, the California Department of Conservation, and to our dedicated supporters in northwestern California and beyond for making this conservation easement a reality. Together, we are preserving our natural heritage, protecting irreplaceable waterways, and creating a sustainable future for our community and the environment.

This is one of several conservation easement projects by NRLT that aim to protect more than 100,000 acres of wild and working lands in northwestern California. To learn more about NRLT’s conservation efforts, or to support this important work, please visit [www.ncrlt.org](http://www.ncrlt.org).

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The Northcoast Regional Land Trust is a non-profit organization 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.