



SPRING 2019

# NORTHCOAST REGIONAL LAND TRUST



*Petrolia Hayfields*

*Debee Holland-Olson*

## Leaving a Legacy We Can All Be Proud Of

Thanks to your support, 2018 was a big year for wild and working lands in Northwestern California. With landscape-level conservation in mind, NRLT completed conservation easements on three expansive properties, altogether comprising over 27,000 acres. Together, these easements more than doubled the acreage of NRLT-conserved lands to date and represent nearly a decade of work! They are now part of NRLT's completed project portfolio that spans over 53,000 acres (see map on page 5). Together these easements share the central principal of keeping our rural places whole in perpetuity and protecting them for wildlife habitat, natural resource production, open space, and other important values.

While all NRLT projects share the same core tenants, the three recently completed

easements are good examples of how every project is unique. The three easements were each tailored to the specific property, their unique habitats, and the wishes of the landowners. They also stand apart in how each project was funded.

Finalized in September, the Hunter Ranch conservation easement in eastern Humboldt County conserves over 15,600 acres of rolling oak woodlands, mature Douglas-fir forest, and scenic Mad River frontage – a stretch known to be important habitat for summer-run Steelhead. It incorporates specific protections for oak woodlands, restrictions on timber harvest, and limits new residential development. Thanks to funding from the Wildlife Conservation Board coupled with a significant landowner donation, this expansive

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*The Northcoast Regional Land Trust is a member of the Land Trust Alliance, California Council of Land Trusts, Northern Region Council of California Land Trusts & Northern California Assoc. of Non-profits.*

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## From the Executive Director

Two years ago, fresh in the role of Executive Director, I wrote about the force of change in this organization and in our daily lives. And over the past several months our community has had ample reminders of the changes and challenges that life brings. For this newsletter, however, I want to focus on what remains constant: the consistent commitment to conservation – whether you are a landowner steward, devoted volunteer, new donor, or supporter of many years.

With ongoing commitment in mind, it was twenty years ago this year that a group of individuals from a cross-section of our community got together to begin charting out what was to be the formation of the Northcoast Regional Land Trust. Although NRLT officially became a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in 2000, and we often refer to that as the year of our founding, this year we can celebrate NRLT's foundational beginnings.

Since its formation, thanks to the hard work and generosity of so many – including you, our donors, landowner and agency partners, students, businesses, and volunteers – NRLT has conserved over 53,000 acres of vital forests, farms, wetlands and range in northwestern California – including 27,000 acres last year alone with the completion of easements on Hunter Ranch, Sproul Creek and Indian Creek.

This year marks another milestone – an anniversary of sorts for which NRLT's commitment to maintaining a strong foundation is central. First accredited in 2012, NRLT is proud to announce it has renewed its land trust accreditation as of February 27th! Not only did we make it through the Land Trust Accreditation Commission's extensive audit process that resulted in the 5-year renewal of our accreditation, we also received special commendations for our Board's policy review process. This very much affirms NRLT's commitment to permanent land and water conservation and the vital role that our partners in conservation – including you – play in making it all happen!

In closing, thanks to all of you who have lent your support, whatever the form, to building and maintaining this organization and furthering landscape-level conservation throughout the North Coast.



Dan Ehresman

## Giving Thanks for Board Members Old and New

This spring we said thank you to Yvonne Everett and Rees Hughes as they transitioned off the board. Both contributed greatly to the organization during their tenure on the board – Yvonne chaired the Program and Planning Committee and brought countless HSU students to Freshwater Farms Reserve on field trips (which she plans to continue!). Rees Hughes contributed in so many ways, but most notable was his leadership in the re-accreditation process this past year. Luckily, Rees and Yvonne will remain involved with NRLT as they now join our group of dedicated Advisors.



Stepping in as new board members are Nancy Diamond and Erin Kelly. Nancy Diamond has practiced law locally for over 30 years, representing local governments, nonprofits, small businesses and advising in real estate transactions. Nancy is looking forward to giving back to the community in an area where her legal land conservation experience comes in handy. She and her husband live in Westhaven and enjoy being outdoors as much as possible. Erin Kelly is an associate professor in the Department of Forestry and Wildland Resources at Humboldt State University and is also a registered professional forester. She enjoys bicycling long distances on back roads through redwood forests and oak woodlands and hopes to help protect the open space and working landscapes that thrive behind the redwood curtain.



## Fun in the Mud!

I could hear “rock, paper, scissors, SHOOT,” to my right and “rock, paper, scissors, SHOOT,” to my left as an enthusiastic group of fifth graders worked their way through the stages of the salmon life cycle in an interactive game. The students were standing on the banks of Freshwater Farms Reserve’s Wood Creek learning about the recently restored juvenile salmon habitat, having just finished observing invertebrates from the same creek using dip nets.

This was my first season leading Cows and Cattails field trips and I was excited and nervous alongside the students. Be it brilliant sun or fierce rain we bravely pulled on our rain boots and donned our metaphorical adventure caps as we explored Freshwater Farms Reserve together. Between the “Ewws,” “Awesomes,” and “Ahs,” I asked students how they felt about walking in the mud at Freshwater Farms Reserve. One student enthusiastically shared,

**“This is my first time in this much mud and it is satisfying!”**

All that mud means a lot of rain and all the rain this spring meant we got to use the new wet weather classroom at Freshwater Farms Reserve during our Cows and Cattails field trips. We’re so grateful for the classroom renovation and environmental education supplies funded by the Coast Central Credit Union Dean G. Christensen



*Project Manager Karlee Jewell teaches the salmon life cycle through a Rock, Paper, Scissors game with students.*

Community Investment Program and Eric Almquist, as well as many other individuals, businesses, and foundations who supported the development of Freshwater Farms Reserve and the renovation of the Graham-Long Dairy Barn.

On each field trip out to Freshwater Farms Reserve, I look forward to sharing lessons about wetlands, fish, birds, and cattle with our youth. I believe it is important to provide opportunities for students to get out on the land, connect young people with the outdoors and empower them to continue to explore it. I’m already looking forward to field trips in the fall! A special thanks to Vanessa Muñoz and Suzie Fortner from Friends of the Dunes for their help making this season of Cows and Cattails a success.

*– Karlee Jewell, NRLT Project Manager*



*Students on a Cows and Cattails Field Trip at Freshwater Farms Reserve head into the Wet Weather Classroom to get a break from the rain.*

To sign up, visit [ncrlt.org](http://ncrlt.org)

- \$10/month provides 100 grass plugs for restoration!
- \$20/month pays for a work day at Freshwater Farms Reserve!
- \$50/month funds one conservation easement workshop for landowners!

**JOIN THE STEWARD'S CIRCLE!**

## NRLT Earns National Recognition



First accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission in 2012, NRLT is proud to announce we have renewed our land trust accreditation – showing once again that, as part of a network of over 400 accredited land trusts across the nation, we are committed to professional excellence and to maintaining the public’s trust in our conservation work.

“As an accredited land trust, the Northcoast Regional Land Trust is a stronger organization. Renewing our accreditation shows the ongoing commitment to permanent land and water conservation in northwestern California,” said Mike Miles, NRLT Board President. “This commitment means special places – such as Indian Creek and Hunter Ranch – will be protected forever, making this region an even more special place for those here now and for future generations.”

Only 30% of land trusts in the United States are accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission and NRLT is proud to be one of them!



## Leaving a Legacy We Can All Be Proud Of

### *Continued from page 1*

property will remain intact and its unique habitats will continue to be stewarded with the future in mind.

Completed in November, the Sproul Creek easement in southern Humboldt County keeps whole over 9,200 acres of working redwood and Douglas-fir forest in an area that has seen the consequences of subdivision for illegal and environmentally destructive cannabis cultivation. The easement specifically prohibits subdivision and development on 94 separate parcels, preserves a 21-acre oak woodland grove, and contains provisions to protect instream flows for Sproul Creek, a watershed deemed critical habitat for coho salmon. The Sproul Creek project was made possible thanks to the landowner generously donating the easement's full value.

Completed in December, the Indian Creek easement, which is in the extreme northern end of Mendocino County and located within the South Fork Eel River watershed, conserves over 2,700 acres of working forest and vital salmon habitat. In addition to prohibiting subdivision and limiting development, the easement places restrictions on timber harvest so that stands are managed to enhance mature (late seral) forest characteristics over time and, similar to Sproul, contains additional instream flow protections. This easement was a fully funded project that would not have hap-

pened without the support of four funding agencies: CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, CA Wildlife Conservation Board, Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

For all three projects, the landowners paid for project development costs and contributed to a fund that ensures ongoing easement monitoring, stewardship, and, if necessary, legal defense. With these landowner investments, coupled with support from donors like you, we can ensure the vital lands and waters of our region are conserved for decades to come.

### **Looking ahead**

This year, NRLT is working with three partnering landowners to complete a series of three conservation easements, Panther Creek and Summit Creek (I & II), that will protect healthy and productive Port Orford cedar groves. With funding from the Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program, the completed easements will adjoin the previously conserved Miller Forest, altogether conserving 2,100 acres – and ensuring a lasting legacy with the protection of these stately trees. Also in 2019, we are working to complete another legacy project – one that enables the

Dunn family to continue to steward lands that have passed from one generation to the next. Thanks to a grant from CAL FIRE's Forest Health Program, together with a generous donation from the landowner, the easement will ensure that the Diamond D Ranch is kept whole and that the family's stewardship of the land can continue for future generations.

NRLT will also continue to advance two expansive easement projects across some 24,000 acres in southwestern Trinity County, Travis Ranch and Trinity Timberlands, and we will continue to lend support to other far-reaching easement and restoration projects in collaboration with our landowner, agency, and community partners.

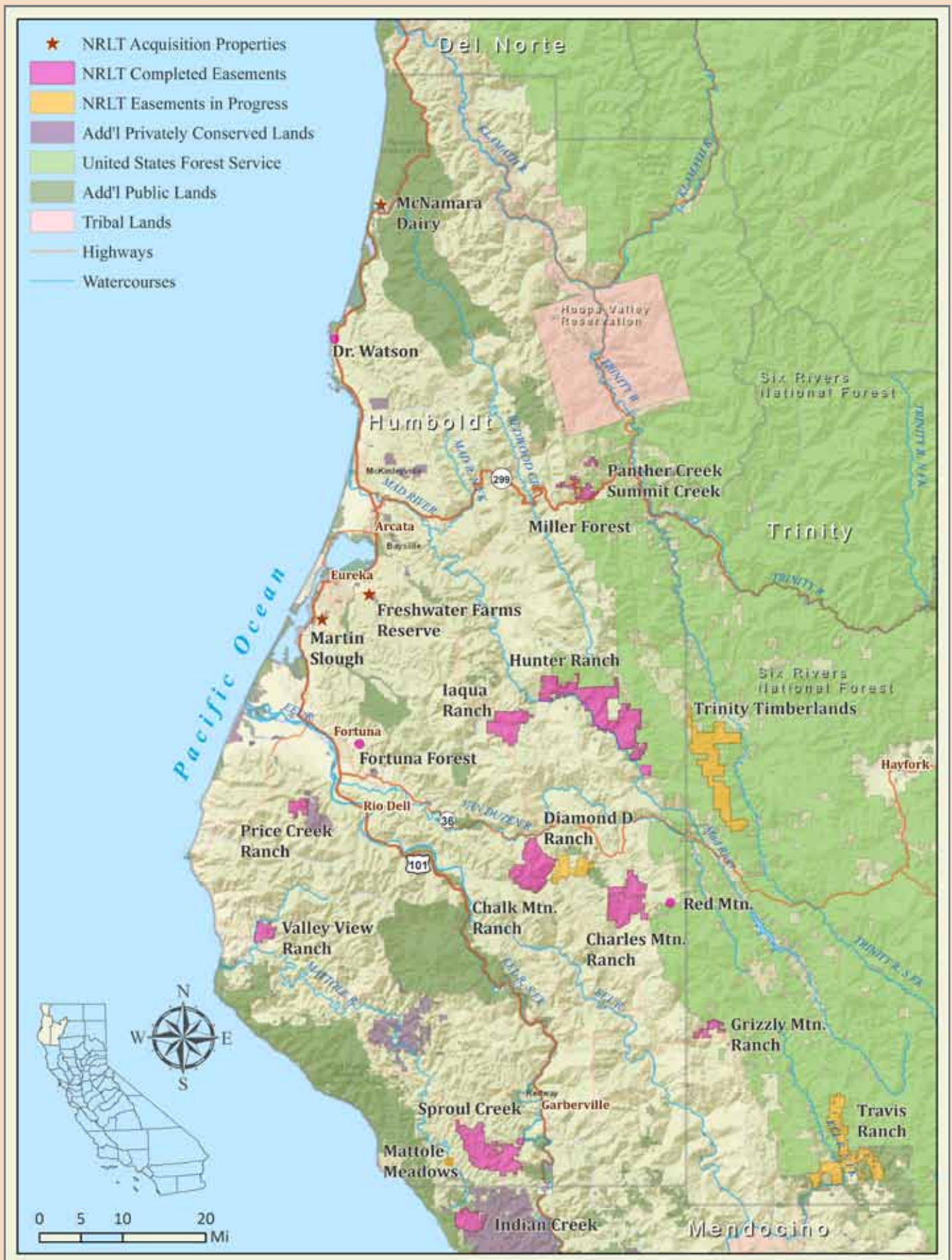
We are proud of the legacy that you help to make possible and we are excited to continue working with you to conserve the vital lands and waters of this place we call home!

*Forester Dan Cohoon looks out on the Panther Creek Conservation Easement Project*



*Cattle graze at Travis Ranch in Trinity County*





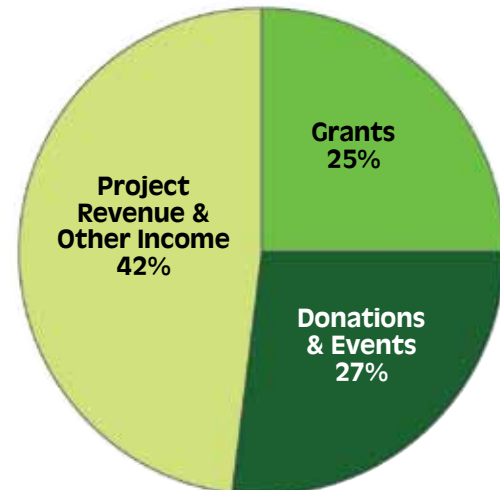
## ANNUAL REPORT 2018

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust is pleased to provide our partners in conservation with an accounting of accomplishments for 2018.

- Three new staff members joined the NRLT this year, bringing energy, experience, and enthusiasm to the organization.
- We completed three conservation easements – Hunter Ranch, Sproul Creek, and Indian Creek – conserving a total of 27,000 additional acres of wild and working lands in our region (see cover story for more information).
- We completed substantial habitat restoration at our Martin Slough Conservation Property along with many dedicated project partners. Fish monitoring shows juvenile coho are utilizing the new habitat, especially the southwest tributary created in as part of the restoration.
- Our Freshwater Farms Reserve property continues to flourish. The North Coast Chapter of the California Native Plant Society hosted their first on-site plant sale in September, beautiful doors were hung on the restored Graham-Long Dairy Barn, and the Kneeland Glen Farm Stand remains a community hub.
- Two of our education programs, Cows and Cattails and Know Your Farmer, underwent a curriculum revitalization this year. Between these two programs and the biological monitoring performed by Six Rivers Charter School students, our education arm served over 350 Humboldt County students.
- Over 200 dedicated volunteers participated in stewardship events at Martin Slough and Freshwater Farms Reserve, planting native plants and tending to the nature trail.

## REVENUE &amp; SUPPORT \*

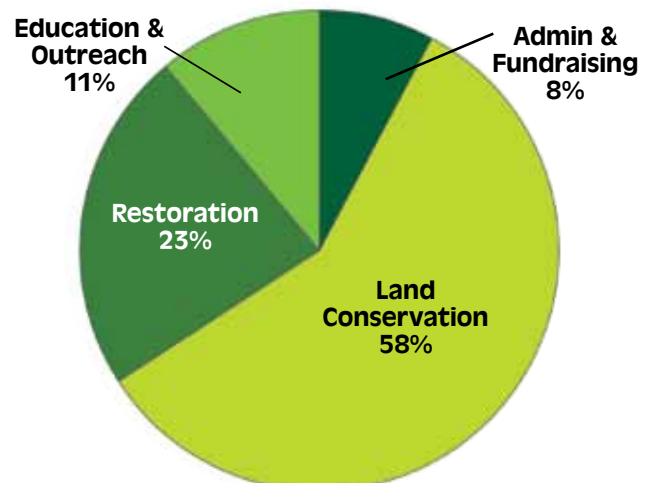
Grants	\$119,364
Donations & Events	127,263
Project Revenue & Other Income	223,597
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$470,224</b>



\*Revenue and support refers to operational income. NRLT also received \$412,690 in restricted stewardship donations upon completion of three easement projects, allowing specifically for the ongoing monitoring and stewardship of these properties. Investment revenue of \$38,350 is similarly restricted and not included as part of our operational budget.

## EXPENSES

Land Conservation	\$270,886
Restoration	104,953
Education & Outreach	50,477
Admin & Fundraising	39,667
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$465,983</b>





## ANNUAL REPORT 2018

## Thank You NRLT Supporters!

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust is grateful to the following who gave grants, donations, or support in 2018.

## Agencies &amp; Foundations

AmeriCorps' Watershed Stewards Program  
The Buckeye  
CA Conservation Corps  
CA Council of Land Trusts  
CA Department of Fish and Wildlife  
CALFIRE  
CA Natural Resources Agency  
CA Native Plant Society – North Coast Chapter  
CA State Coastal Conservancy  
CA Wildlife Conservation Board  
CCCU Dean G. Christensen Community Investment Program  
County of Humboldt  
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Humboldt Area Foundation  
Humboldt Trails Council  
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Land Trust Alliance  
National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program  
National Fish & Wildlife Foundation  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
NOAA Fisheries & Restoration  
North Coast Growers' Association  
Northern California Association of Nonprofits  
Northern Region Council of Land Trusts  
Northwest California Oaks Network  
Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture  
RCAA Natural Resources Services  
Redwood Region Audubon Society  
Retired & Senior Volunteer Program  
The Strong Foundation for Environmental Values  
UC Cooperative Extension  
U.S. Bank  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Coastal Program  
U.S. Forest Service, Forest Legacy Program  
Umpqua Bank

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## In Honor Of

*Greg Blomstrom:* Kate McClain  
*Maya Conrad:* Nancy Noll  
*Rahim Malelu:* donna lucky  
*David McMurray:* Jeff Schwartz  
*Ermalee Bonar Skillwoman:* Sherry Skillwoman  
*Ann King Smith:* Maya Conrad

## In Memory Of

*Arlin Grandy:* Dennis Grandy, Karen and Darren Hansen, Dorene Pedrotti  
*Alyson Hunter and Bill Richards:* Ken Hunter  
*Milo Johnson:* Dee Johnson  
*Michael O'Hare, my brother who loved land:* Nezzie Wade  
*Tom Rowe:* Jana and Lynn Wilkins  
*Elda Schneider:* Bob Schultz  
*Edy Schwartz:* David and Madeline McMurray  
*Flo Sylvia:* Marlene Sylvia  
*Doug Smith:* Bob Battagin and Deborah Fitzpatrick  
*Laurie Anderson Wainwright:* Sarah and Corin Pilkington  
*Richard Wolf:* Lorraine Miller-Wolf

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*Does not include Annual Celebration donors.*

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Martin Slough Stewardship Day:** *Saturday, May 25, 10am - 2pm.* Help Watershed Stewards Program volunteers with wetland planting at Martin Slough in the 900 Block of Pine Hill Rd, Eureka.

**Freshwater Farms Summer Celebration:** *Saturday, June 22, 4pm - 8pm.* Join NRLT for an evening of music featuring local band Huckleberry Flint, food, drinks, and kid's activities.

**Kayak Humboldt Bay in partnership with Latino Outdoors:** *Sunday, July 14.* Celebration of Latino Conservation Week. Visit [ncrlt.org](http://ncrlt.org) for more details.

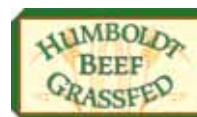
**Roll up your Sleeves Work Day with Assembly Member Jim Wood:** *Saturday, August 10,* Participate in trail maintenance and wetland restoration alongside your Assembly member. Check [ncrlt.org](http://ncrlt.org) for exact times.

**Freshwater Farms Reserve Interpretive Walks:** Visit [ncrlt.org](http://ncrlt.org) for dates. Each walk features a guest speaker.

**Stewardship Days:** Email Karlee, [k.jewell@ncrlt.org](mailto:k.jewell@ncrlt.org) to volunteer.

**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.*

Special thanks to our  
underwriter



## Featured Artist – Debee Holland-Olson

Debee L. Holland-Olson owns and operates a studio in Weaverville, CA, working full time in visual arts. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree concentrating on illustration, painting, and print-making. Holland-Olson is a contemporary American Realist whose imagery seeks to explore the gap between the actual landscape of inspiration and the painting of the landscape, the gap between nature and art. Her works are almost exclusively in pastel/dry pigment and oil and feature vanishing rural landscapes and habitat areas. Visit her website at [www.debeeholland-olsonfineart.com](http://www.debeeholland-olsonfineart.com) or visit the Highland Art Center in Weaverville.



*Loleta Dairy Pasture*