



Spring 2020

NORTHCOAST REGIONAL LAND TRUST



Eaton Roughs

Claudia Lima

Crossing Boundaries Together to Conserve Working Forest Lands

Conservation of our region's wild and working lands is achieved by building long-standing relationships and working together, often over many years. In December, thanks to the concerted efforts of a group of devoted landowners and assistance from key funding partners and many supporters, the Northcoast Regional Land Trust completed a project comprising three contiguous conservation easements near Willow Creek, CA.

With similar values and goals in mind for their land, three neighboring landowners decided to pursue conservation easements together to keep their contiguous properties whole, protect significant Port Orford cedar stands, and conserve the remainder as a working forest. This project required an ongoing commitment from the landowners, NRLT, and partnering agencies over the course of seven years. The completion of the Panther Creek and Summit Creek easements demonstrates the

power of collaborative efforts to conserve land across property boundaries.

Situated in a manner that maximizes their conservation benefits, the three easements comprise over 400 acres of working forest that connect with the previously conserved 1,600-acre Miller Forest as well as the 950,000-acre Six Rivers National Forest.

The easements protect globally significant stands of Port Orford cedar, an ancient conifer species with a native range limited to southwest Oregon and northwest California. Importantly, Port Orford cedar trees within the project area are currently not infected by root rot, caused by a fungal pathogen that is decimating Port Orford cedars throughout its range. The completion of these easements coupled with appropriate ongoing management are necessary steps to help reduce the spread of the disease in the southernmost range of the species.

This project is a great example of the positive effect collaboration across ownerships can have on the landscape as a whole,

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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

More than two months have passed since California and much of the rest of the country began following measures aimed to reduce the spread of Covid-19. While this beautiful spring has helped to soften the edges, the past few months have come with their fair share of challenges. I would guess I am not alone in yearning for the day when we can be in the same room without a facemask and again hug our dear friends and family without fear of spreading the virus to the most vulnerable among us.

Even so, amidst the challenges and hardships I know so many are grappling with, our present reality underscores the importance of finding new ways to maintain connections with friends, colleagues, and other partners in conservation. These times further illustrate how critical it is to conserve our vital open spaces, farms, and forestland – the places that feed and shelter us and provide solace in trying times; the places we call home.

While some things have slowed down, our Land Trust's work is moving full speed ahead. In April, our board approved three new conservation easement projects, bringing us to eight projects in various stages of development. Of those projects, we recently received the very positive news that our 11,907-acre Travis Ranch conservation easement project ranked 16th in the nation for funding through the U.S. Forest Service's Forest Legacy Program, which means we are a big step closer to completing this expansive easement. We are also excited to announce that our Wagner Ranch easement project is now fully funded thanks to two grants from CAL FIRE and CA Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) – ensuring that the 3,348-acre family-owned forestland in the critical South Fork Eel River watershed will be kept intact.

In these challenging times, we are more grateful than ever to work with so many amazing people on projects that will have such far-reaching and long-lasting benefit for all who share our tenuous but resilient world.



Dan Ehresman

Transitions at NRLT

Earlier this year, we said thank you to Gary Flosi as he transitioned off the Board of Directors. Gratefully, we will continue to benefit from Gary's expertise as an NRLT advisor and member of the Projects Committee.

We are pleased to announce Mike Wallace as our newest board member. A retired fish biologist with years of experience studying juvenile salmonids, Mike regularly volunteers to help monitor NRLT's habitat restoration projects in addition to his board service. In his free time, he enjoys hiking, kayaking, fishing, and birding.



This spring, we also said goodbye to former Project Manager Lance Spece. Lance is now living closer to family and working with two land trusts in the Sacramento area. He will be missed.

We are excited to welcome Andria Townsend, our new conservation easement Project Manager, to the team! Andria received her BS in Wildlife and her MS in Natural Resources from Humboldt State University. She has worked for the University of Wyoming counting songbirds, the U.S. Forest Service searching for Northern spotted owls, and for the Wildlife Conservation Society as a technician on a fisher reintroduction project outside of Chico, CA. In 2019, Andria completed a thru-hike of the Pacific Crest Trail, walking 2,650 miles from the Canadian border to the Mexican border in under five months. Andria's substantial research and field experience and her enthusiasm for private land conservation will play a large role in moving forward exciting projects and advancing NRLT's mission overall.



Feathers, fur, and frogs, oh my!

It's not news that Freshwater Farms Reserve (FWFR) is an area where wildlife thrives alongside livestock, row crop cultivation, and other human activities. Thanks to a recently completed research project, we now have even more documentation. With

funding from the Sequoia Park Zoo, NRLT undertook a wildlife game camera study at FWFR in 2019 and identified 22 species – one amphibian, seven mammals, and 14 bird species. Observations were shared via iNaturalist (inaturalist.org), an online social

network of people sharing biodiversity information, and included 169 research grade observations. Notable sightings included gray fox, northern harrier, and great blue heron. In combination with other biological monitoring over the years, our "Areas of Cowexistence" study further demonstrates the incredible diversity of our region!



Deer passing through restored wetland habitat along Wood Creek



Great Egret utilizing restored wetland habitat along Wood Creek



Project Manager Karlee Jewell checking one of two game cameras used to capture photos of 22 species at Freshwater Farms Reserve in 2019.

Fisheries Monitoring Moves In House

Multiple phases of restoration have been completed in recent years at Freshwater Farms Reserve along Wood Creek, providing essential off-channel and slow water habitat for threatened and endangered aquatic species while also improving the property's agricultural viability.

Ongoing monitoring of the property affirms that proper habitat restoration and management can allow cows and coho salmon to comfortably coexist. In fact, recent fisheries monitoring conducted by CDFW and NOAA detected several hundred juvenile coho utilizing the slow water habitat created through the Wood Creek Enhancement Project. Performed monthly,

fisheries monitoring consists of visiting established sampling locations to deploy baited minnow traps and collect water quality data like salinity, dissolved oxygen, and temperature. Seine nets (see photo, bottom right) are also used to observe fish that are present in the area.

In order to support continued monitoring of the long-term benefits of restoration work, NRLT is pleased to be obtaining the permits necessary to conduct our own water quality and fish monitoring at Freshwater Farms Reserve and Martin Slough. Our ability to conduct fisheries monitoring will enable us to add to the critical data gathered by State and Federal resource agencies. Monitoring data will be shared with resource managers region wide to assess the long-term impacts of restoration actions, influence future restoration project design, and increase data sharing with the restoration community and public activities.



Juvenile coho salmon found during a monitoring event - monitors record length and weight of the young salmon.



NRLT volunteer, Casey preparing to deploy a baited minnow trap in Wood Creek as part of our fisheries monitoring effort.



NRLT Board Member, Mike Wallace and NOAA partner, Bob Pagliuco using a seine net to survey Wood Creek during a fisheries monitoring event.

Crossing Boundaries Together to Conserve Working Forest Lands

Continued from page 1

protecting forests for ecological, economic, and social benefits. With critical support from the California Natural Resource Agency's Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program, we are proud to partner with landowners Steve Miller, John and Peggy Ridlon, and Linda Tabacco to protect important habitat and safeguard productive forestlands with future generations in mind.

Former NRLT Project Manager, Lance Spece, Landowners Linda Tabacco, Peggy Ridlon, John Ridlon, Clifford Gibson, and NRLT Executive Director Dan Ehresman celebrate the signing of the conservation easement documents in December 2019.



Streams are present throughout the easement properties.



Looking out over the Panther Creek Conservation Easement

Producer Lens – Shakefork Community Farm, Melanie and Kevin Cunningham

Enterprise diversity has always been our strength as a farm and our best insurance against the vagaries of nature and a fickle marketplace.

When we first bought our farm in 2009, my husband and I dry-farmed 15 acres of mostly small grains, had a pumpkin patch, and kept a small herd of dairy goats. We turned up enough rocks with our triple bottom plow to quickly learn that most of our land was not suitable for tillage, being the historic path of the Van Duzen River just 100 years ago. Since then we've traded goats for cattle and diversified our pasture offerings to include eggs, chicken and turkeys. Our garden has shrunk to 6 acres, but each year we grow more food for our community, year-round, using primarily draft oxen power and low till practices, while producing all of our own fertility through our on-farm composting program.

We farm to feed our community good food grown with soil and soul, food capable of nourishment in the deepest sense of the word. We farm to regenerate the land on which we live, to encourage microbial life, improve soil health, promote ecological diversity and sequester carbon. We farm to inspire the next generation of farmers, improve local food security, increase resilience in the face of drought, fire, flooding

and other challenges, and to build strong relationships within our community.

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust embodies qualities that we hold dear: connection to place, diversity, and resilience through relationship. If we are to achieve the future resource base we envision and uphold the thriving and dynamic community we value, we need smart, compassionate people engaging the land with a sustainable future in mind, producing food, managing resources, and creative problem solving. That's what the NRLT staff, board and community do and why we support their work.



Service Through Stewardship

The annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service inspires hundreds of thousands of Americans to come together to serve their community. This year NRLT teamed with Humboldt State University students, faculty and staff to celebrate the 25th anniversary with a morning of invasive Himalayan blackberry removal at Freshwater Farms Reserve. And what a successful day it was!

In addition to MLK Day, NRLT partnered with AmeriCorps' Watershed Stewards Program to host a stewardship event at Freshwater Farms Reserve in February 2020. Nearly sixty volunteers opted outside for a morning of restoration. We watched a beautiful transformation as volunteers removed invasive plants and engaged in native planting.

We are inspired by the hard work of our community and appreciate our partners who help drive these community events: HSU Clubs and Activities, HSU's African American Center for Academic Excellence, YES Humboldt, AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards Program, and HSU Natural Resources Club.



Humboldt State University students, staff, and faculty volunteered at Freshwater Farms Reserve during the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service in January 2020.



Members of the HSU Natural Resources Club haul away brush at the Watershed Steward's Program stewardship event at Freshwater Farms Reserve

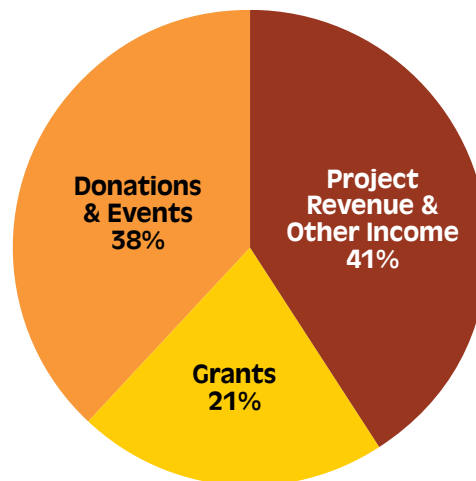
ANNUAL REPORT 2019

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust is pleased to provide our partners in conservation with an accounting of accomplishments for 2019.

- We completed three new conservation easements, the Panther – Summit Creek Conservation Easements near Willow Creek, CA, conserving a total of 412 acres of working forest (see cover story for more information).
- We continued work on several other conservation easements across the region ranging in size from 20 acres to over 12,000 acres.
- After completing substantial habitat restoration at our Martin Slough Conservation Property in 2018, cattle have returned to the property and fisheries monitoring has demonstrated that juvenile coho and tidewater goby are utilizing the new wetland, slow-flow habitat. Project partners continued restoration efforts upstream on the neighboring golf course property.
- At Freshwater Farms Reserve, we began strategic deconstruction of the milk parlor and continued to partner with lessees – Kneeland Glen Farmstand, California Native Plant Society – North Coast Chapter, and Freshwater Gardens. Three new four-legged friends moved in – the goats! They are on the property mostly year-round.
- We had our first Freshwater Farms Summer Celebration, a concert featuring Huckleberry Flint and Wild Abandon, that brought close to 450 community members out to Freshwater Farms Reserve.
- Our environmental education field trips, Cows and Cattails and Know Your Farmer, as well as biological monitoring activities performed by Six Rivers Charter School students, served over 300 local students.
- Over 200 community members attending volunteer stewardship events this year with an additional 150 people attending various interpretive events at NRLT properties.

REVENUE & SUPPORT *

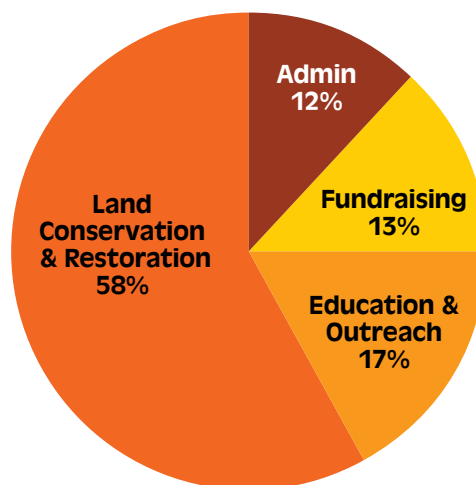
Grants	\$103,453
Donations & Events	189,870
Project Revenue & Other Income	201,074
TOTAL	\$494,397



*Income reported above pertains to operational income. NRLT also received \$90,000 as a restricted stewardship donation upon completion of an easement project. This restricted donation was placed in an investment fund, allowing for the ongoing monitoring and stewardship of easement terms.

EXPENSES

Land Conservation & Restoration	\$271,030
Education & Outreach	77,483
Administration	56,296
Fundraising	62,226
TOTAL	\$467,035



Thank you to our business partners!



Hunter, Hunter & Hunt, LLP



Michael Love & Associates



ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Thank You NRLT Supporters! We are grateful to the following who gave grants, donations, or support in 2019.

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Karee Jewell: Miles Raymer
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Ann King Smith: Deborah Fitzpatrick
Rondal Snodgrass: Carrie Grant

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Marilyn Hafield: Lisa Monet
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Covid-19 has made it difficult to plan future events and it is unclear when we will be able to safely be together again in person. Please check our website (ncrlt.org) and social media (Facebook and Instagram) periodically for virtual event offerings and updates on in-person events.

Save the Date for Boots and Birkenstocks, NRLT's Annual Celebration: Saturday, September 26 – stay tuned for more information regarding logistics.

Thank you for your support and your patience in these unpredictable times!

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.*

Featured Artist – Claudia Lima

Claudia Lima was born in San Diego and grew up in the small town of Julian, California. She is the oldest of nine children. After graduating from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo with a degree in Animal Science, she went to work in the family lumber business in San Diego. In 1982 she moved to Ukiah, California and opened her own wholesale lumber brokerage business. A decade later she married her husband John, a logging contractor, and moved to Humboldt County. She currently lives in Arcata, California with her husband John and son Christopher.

A lifelong artist, she began focusing on oil painting through classes at Humboldt State University. She then began to paint what she found meaningful, the beauty of Humboldt County, the lifestyle, but most of all the people. Claudia's impressionistic style focuses on Humboldt County logging and agricultural subjects. www.claudialimaart.com.



Five Cows

