

AUTUMN 2013

NORTHCOAST REGIONAL LAND TRUST



Van Duzen River Watershed – View From Graybrook Ranch

Paula Golightly

NRLT Becomes Nationally Accredited

Rees Hughes, NRLT Board Member and Chair of Standards and Practices Committee

In July, after an extensive evaluation, the Northcoast Regional Land Trust was notified that it had been granted accreditation by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. This represented the successful conclusion to a multi-year process that had necessitated a major commitment from the entire organization.

Accreditation provides the community with confidence that a land trust is truly engaged in the long-term protection of land in the public interest and has the policies and structure in place to successfully endure. It is a rigorous process that requires accredited land trusts to follow best practices in twelve areas. These range from personnel and volunteer management, finances and fundraising, evaluating projects, working with landowners, and land stewardship. Although there are over 1,700 land trusts nationally and nearly 200 in California alone, only 230 have become accredited and until now, none on the coast of California north of Santa Rosa.

The process to become accredited was a long journey with an incredibly thorough examination. We talked about and revised countless policies and practices. We took a critical look at individual easements that NRLT had facilitated over the years. We pulled together reams of evidence and, thanks to the organizational acumen of NRLT staff and the Standards and Practices Committee, we prepared the materials for the Commission to review. More questions. More evidence. Still more questions.

As said by NRLT's former Executive Director, Lindsay Green, "This process was long and arduous, but in the end we were grateful for it as we now know that our foundation and practices are truly solid and sustainable." Tammara Van Ryan, the Executive Director of the Commission confirmed this saying, "Through accreditation land trusts conduct important planning and make their operations more efficient and strategic. Accredited organizations have engaged and trained citizen

conservation leaders and improved systems for ensuring that their conservation work is permanent."

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From the Land Trust: Transition & Opportunity

The end of 2013 marks a major transition for the Northcoast Regional Land Trust. After five years, I have decided to step down as Executive Director to care for the addition of twins to our family. While I intend to remain on staff in a different capacity, we are now in the midst of a search for a new Executive Director. We have thoughtfully been preparing for the upcoming change, and with our stable foundation and deeply dedicated staff, board and supporters, we feel prepared for this succession. NRTL is stronger than ever and will no doubt continue its tradition by recruiting incredible candidates to lead and support the organization. I look forward to seeing where NRTL will go next!

During my time, I was thrilled to watch us reach the milestone of 25,000 acres conserved, collaborating with a passionate and dedicated community to conserve breathtaking wild and working landscapes in our region. Working tirelessly to make sure NRTL has the policies, procedures and ability to sustain us into the future, we joined the ranks of land trusts that have achieved the Seal of Accreditation from the national Land Trust Accreditation Commission. I offer my deepest thanks to you, our partners and supporters, for making my time as NRTL's director an incredibly rewarding and fruitful time. I look forward to many more successes in the future!



*Shayne & Lindsay Green with twins
Allie Linnea and Avery Nathaniel*

Lindsay Green

Lindsay Green



*NRTL Interim Executive
Director, Martha Spencer*

I was honored to assume the role of Board President in March of this year, and am now even more excited to act as the Interim Executive Director as we conduct our hiring search. During this time, Dennis Rael has graciously offered to step in as President until I return to the position.

This is an exciting time for NRTL, filled with opportunity. We have great projects in the works and continue to receive several project inquiries every month. A special thanks to the landowners who continue to courageously step forward to consider permanent protections on their land! We have also been expanding our reach into the community like never before, with engaging community dialogues, house parties and fun gatherings like Pints for non-profits. In the past several months we have welcomed new Board Member Clif

Clendenen, and had the pleasure of working with Project Assistant Kerry McNamee.

Recently, our Board was complimented as heading an organization that is uniquely effective among the 1700 land trusts in this country. Our success as an organization truly blossomed under Lindsay's leadership and we are grateful for the time she spent directing NRTL. Thanks to her vision, hard work and unique ability to seamlessly collaborate with diverse stakeholders, NRTL is now positioned as a true leader in our community.

And now, with our strategic and regional conservation plans up for review next year, we look forward to working with a new leader to re-evaluate our strategic direction. A fresh set of eyes and a new dynamic energy, coupled with the continuity of our staff and board, has us excited about what the future holds for NRTL. We are confident that NRTL will be a strong community organization, while protecting the land we love in perpetuity.

Martha Spencer

Martha Spencer



Welcome Clif!

Reaching Out

The success of NRLT in conserving land stems in large part from strong, durable partnerships and a supportive community. For this reason, we have been doing outreach to bring people together to educate and excite them about preserving land in perpetuity, while creating opportunities that encourage creative and durable collaboration.

Resource Lands Dialogue

Since its inception, NRLT has had a focus on bringing diverse perspectives together to discuss land conservation and management. In July, various leaders from resource land groups and the conservation community joined to discuss wild and working landscapes and strategies for organizational collaboration. Facilitated by NRLT, participants included the Buckeye, Yager Van Duzen Environmental Stewards, Farm Bureau, Green Diamond Resource Company, Resource Conservation District and Cattleman's. Attendees shared about current projects and brainstormed on ways to work together in the future. With plans of meeting again in the coming year, we look forward to working with these great organizations and others to explore areas of long lasting partnership.

Durable Collaboration Initiative

The Durable Collaboration Initiative grew from discussions with conservation leaders around the country who agreed that there is a substantial need for more collaboration among land trusts that, unlike other non-profit organizations, have the challenge of perpetual land stewardship. Collaboration offers a way to address this, while building individual and collective capacity for participating groups. The North Coast California Cohort, which NRLT is a part of, is the first of four such groups forming across the country and will serve as the pilot study for this national examination. Many land conservation groups in our area are participating in this study which will: explore the various options for collaboration in our region; determine what benefits and challenges collaboration can bring to each organization; identify specific opportunities and potential partnerships and begin the process of establishing collaboration agreements with action steps. In October, NRLT participated in the first of three meetings to

explore these partnerships and we are very excited about the potential!

House Parties

Lay of the Land, NRLT's informative and dynamic presentation about our work to protect and enhance special places in our region, was taken out into the community, into businesses, organizations and homes. One such gathering was hosted by NRLT Advisor Eddie Tanner at his beautiful property, DeepSeeded Community Farm. Land enthusiasts and participants in his Community Supported Agriculture program came for an evening under the full moon to learn more about NRLT and eat food grown and prepared by Eddie himself. One attendee commented, "What a lovely place we live

in, a place where we can come together on a small family farm to share food, ideas and our love for the land." If you are interested in hosting a Lay of the Land at your house or work place, please contact Sarah at s.pilkington@ncrlt.org.

Pints for Land Conservation

In an effort to relax, have some fun and enjoy the hard work of land conservation, NRLT hosted Pints for Non-Profits at the Logger Bar and the Mad River Brewing Company in the historic and scenic town of Blue Lake. With live music from the Jim Lahman Band and La Patina, conservation enthusiasts came together to celebrate the land and its stewards.



Donor Voices: Dina Moore

NRLT Advisor, Lone Star Ranch Landowner

I have been an advisor of the Northcoast Regional Land Trust for about 3 years. Although my husband's fifth generation family ranch does not have a conserva-

tion easement, I am a strong supporter of NRLT. To me the concept "land trust" embodies much more than conservation easements. I have worked for many years with ranching landowners within the Van Duzen River Watershed and am currently participating in working landscape conservation on a national level. As an advocate for working landscape conservation I believe that landowners and managers need a suite of tools available to them for imple-

menting sustainable conservation on their properties. That can only be accomplished through networking, building collaborative relationships and taking calculated risks, which includes diversifying partnerships. There is 80% that we can all agree upon. By sharing our knowledge and skills and working safely on the 80%, I believe that we can communicate across traditional boundaries about what conservation looks like for varied landscapes. As stewards of working landscapes, we are responsible for ensuring that we are providing multiple benefits for ecosystems, species and water quality, while also making a living and leaving a resource that is enhanced by our management. To do all of this effectively, we need to partner with groups like the North Coast Regional Land Trust.



Jason M. Garlick
Attorney at Law

Renata's Creperie

CHRIS BELL
Appraisal Associates

NORTHCOAST REGIONAL LAND TRUST RETROSPECTIVE

In the past fourteen years NRTL has proven to be an incredibly effective organization. In our short history we have conserved more land, initiated further-reaching diverse projects and engaged a broader network of support than most organizations twice our size. We operate with a budget of less than \$400,000 and a staff of four, yet NRTL has brought millions into our community while also facilitating permanent conservation of the lands we all care about. Our success could not have happened without the support, hard work and thoughtful collaboration of community advocates, landowners, donors, board members, advisors and staff.

In honor of our recent recognition of being awarded with national accreditation, the following is a glimpse of organizational accomplishments by program area:

Land Conservation & Stewardship

NRTL's Land Conservation and Stewardship program seeks to protect and restore important wild and working lands in Humboldt, Trinity, and Del Norte Counties through voluntary conservation easements or acquisitions and to support landowners in the ongoing stewardship of their lands.

• Permanently protected over 25,000 acres of land, placing conservation easements on the following:

- Chalk Mountain Ranch
- Charles Mountain Ranch
- Dr. Watson Bequest
- Fortuna Family Forest
- Grizzly Mountain Ranch
- Iaqua Ranch
- Miller Forest
- Price Creek Ranch
- Valley View Ranch

• Assumed ownership of:

- Freshwater Farms Reserve and Nursery: restored 35 acres to tidal salt marsh; drafted plans for the ¾ mile Freshwater Nature Trail
- McNamara Dairy on Redwood Creek in Orick
- Martin Slough property in south Eureka
- Conserved 1,500 acres of riparian habitat, 60 miles of streams, 17,000 acres of forestland, 2,300 acres of oak woodlands, and 7,200 acres of grass/rangelands



Chalk Mountain Ranch

- Protected 320 acres of old and mature growth forest with salmon-spawning streams
- Continue to field 3-5 project inquiries a month, embarking on new conservation projects

Freshwater Farms Reserve



CURRENT PROJECTS

Our next newsletter will feature an exciting new project working with three landowners to expand a complex of conserved lands in an area known for its Port Orford cedar stands. Stay tuned!

Valley View Ranch



Iaqua Ranch

Conservation Planning

NRLT's regional Conservation Planning program identifies and prioritizes threats and opportunities for conservation across our three-county focus area.

- Developed the Humboldt-Del Norte Conservation Vision and the North Coast Conservation Action Plan to guide land protection projects
- Conducted the North Coast Farmland Conservation Study assessing conservation opportunities and threats on Humboldt County coastal agricultural lands
- Compiled Humboldt County Agricultural Survey to provide information about local agriculture in reference to economy, environment and quality of life
- Created the North Coast Dialogues to facilitate a community conversation about land use on the North Coast and developed a 100-year Working Lands Vision for Humboldt County
- Facilitated passing of the Oak Woodlands Resolution and Management Plan enabling landowners access to new funding for oak woodland restoration and conservation in Humboldt County
- Provided workshops for landowners on conservation easements, incentive programs for stewardship on private lands and estate planning; hosted conservation forums and community dialogues for community leaders to work on key conservation issues

Chalk Mountain Ranch



Building Community for Conservation

NRLT's Building Community for Conservation program is dedicated to education and outreach opportunities that engage people in our conservation efforts by promoting land based connections and sustainable stewardship.

- Began Cows and Cat-tails program taking hundreds of K-12 graders outside to learn about wetlands and working lands
- Started Biological Monitoring program offering high school students the opportunity to learn about scientific methods and data collection in the field
- Supported the Farm to School program enabling hundreds of students to have hands on experiences learning about food and farming
- Partnered with HSU to offer educational field trips on restoration, planning and ecology to hundreds of students at Freshwater Farms Reserve
- Began Lay of the Land and house parties, attended by hundreds of community members
- Provided opportunity for thousands to enjoy the land through interpretive walks, guided hikes, Canoe-the-Slough events and picnics on easement properties



Grizzly Mountain Ranch

Organizational Development & Capacity Building

- Organization formed with diverse community perspectives in 2000; earned federal designation as non-profit organization in 2001; became accredited in 2013
- Established conservation priorities and programmatic focus with three primary planning documents: a Strategic, Fund Development and Regional Action Plan
- Became founding member and later fiscal sponsor of the California Northern Region Land Trust Council
- Formed partnership with and provided project coordination support to the Yager/Van Duzen Environmental Stewards
- Participated in conservation collaboration through Northern Region Steering Committee for the California Council of Land Trusts and the North Coast Durable Collaborations Initiative

NRLT Becomes Nationally Accredited

Continued from page 1

In September at the national conference for the Land Trust Alliance, NRLT was officially awarded accreditation in front of thousands of fellow conservationists. Being granted this felt noteworthy, like we had truly accomplished something monumental. We all recognize that we are a better and stronger organization because we participated in this process. As Board Member Fred Neighbor observed, "This process has taken us to a new level. I am proud of the achievement. Now it is time to celebrate."



NRLT staff Sarah Pilkington and NRLT co-founder David McMurray

Boots & Birkenstocks

There are few gatherings quite like the Northcoast Regional Land Trust's Annual Celebration. The event, which happens in the fall every year, celebrates the diversity of landscape and people in our tri-county area. In our region, we have worked for decades to find a way to bring people together around our greatest and most treasured resource – the land. Thanks to the commitment and patience of many, it seems like people are working together as never before to collaborate on land use strategies and conservation.

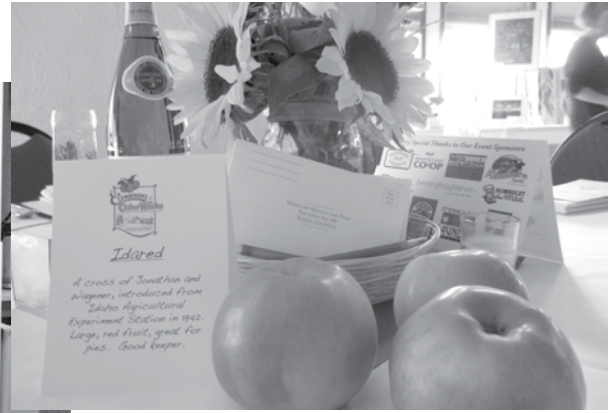
To see this diversity, all you need to do is attend NRLT's annual get together. In one room you will see dynamic movers and shakers in the field, sitting together sharing a drink while eating some of the most delicious locally produced food in the area. These are people you would not likely have seen sharing an evening together 20 years ago, perhaps even 10 years ago. More so, they all come together to support an organization that symbolizes what they all have in common, their deep devotion to the land. Many refer to the culture of NRLT as a Boots and Birkenstocks organization, and we have seen firsthand what magic can happen when uniting these forces. All you have to do is look around the room, hear



Peter Bussman, Beef Extraordinaire

the laughter and engaging conversation, and you are reminded of the hope that exists in our collaborative effort to preserve what is most important to us.

The theme of the evening revolves around celebrating wild and working landscapes, which is demonstrated through the unique and exclusive silent and live auctions. With a sold out venue, the event brought in over \$57,000, increasing its success once again! This occasion illustrates the tremendous generosity of our community. We are deeply grateful to



Photos: Tiborah Girczyc-Blum

the board, advisors, staff, volunteer groups, producers, farmers, landowners, businesses, and many generous individuals that helped to make this happen. A special thanks to our event sponsors: Alexandre Family EcoDairy Farms, American AgCredit, Emerald City Laundry Company, Humboldt Grass-fed Beef, Humboldt Land Title Co., Humboldt Redwood Company, Los Bagels, Northcoast Co-op, Pacific Watershed & Associates, Pierson Building Center and Zwerdling, Bragg, Mainzer LLP.

SAVE THE DATE!
NRLT Annual Celebration
Saturday, October 11, 2014
River Lodge, Fortuna

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR EVENT SUPPORTERS & VOLUNTEERS:

Additional thanks to Project Opportunity Fund donors & auction winners (p.7)

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In Memory Of

Tom Brundage: Diane C. DeFord
Christian DesMarets: Diane DesMarets & David Price
Kevin Ebbert: Erik Jansson
Randy W. Moore: Rusty & Alverna Moore
Dan O'Gara: Penne O'Gara
Tom Rowe: Jana & Lynn Wilkins
Teddy Trichilo: Ted & Josephine Trichilo

In Honor Of

Celestine Armenta: Bonnie Auerbach & Anne Hapgood
Bruce Hart, Dan O'Gara & Kerri Stone's father: Mike & Cindy Jeffress
June Thompson: Howard & Rebecca Stauffer





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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.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Land Trust Holiday Party: Friday, December 13, 4 to 7 pm, NRLT Office. Join landowners, conservation specialists, board members, advisors, staff and our members as we celebrate the holidays.

Freshwater Farms Interpretive Walk - Sea Level Rise: Saturday, March 1, 2014, 11 am. Join NRLT and natural resources consultant Aldaron Laird during a high tide to learn about potential sea level rise impacts on coastal bottomlands.

Canoe-the-Slough: Visit nrlt.org for Spring Dates Paddle Humboldt Bay and the Freshwater Slough with a NRLT naturalist. Learn about the Bay's natural environment and the changes it has seen throughout the decades.

Lay of the Land: TBD, NRLT Office Join the Land Trust for the Lay of the Land, a one-hour presentation that gives an overview of what we are doing to protect and enhance our region's farms, forests, rangelands and natural areas.

Special thanks to these sponsors for underwriting this issue:



COVER ARTIST – PAULA GOLIGHTLY

Paula Golightly has been painting and drawing since her childhood. Being raised in Northern California among horse and sheep ranches allowed her to become connected to open spaces and rural landscapes early in life and these places motivated her to express what she saw using pencil and paint. While completing a degree in Wildlife Biology at Humboldt State University in the early 1980's she also studied art. Her studies in wildlife biology provided a solid basis to understand fish, wildlife and habitat interactions and were a valuable background for creating her work. However, Paula says, "I now rely more on intuition when planning for a painting, while balancing the mechanical aspects of the process. I am more focused on capturing moments in time where light and color in a landscape are too amazing to miss without representing them on paper or canvas." Paula has displayed her artwork for nearly 30 years along the North Coast and continues to create and show her work.



Fog in the Bald Hills

Also thanks to:

