

SPRING 2017

NORTHCOAST REGIONAL LAND TRUST



Cochran Ranch: Liscom Slough

Matthew Filar

Building Bridges: Connecting People and Land

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust was founded seventeen years ago on the principal of building bridges – both in terms of connecting people and vital resource lands. We bring together a community of diverse perspectives who share a common goal: the conservation of working landscapes, farms, forests, ranches, and watersheds on the North Coast. Together, united in this purpose, we have achieved significant success in protecting over 25,000 acres where trees grow strong, cattle roam, and wild salmon swim free.

We are excited to report that this year we secured full funding for two projects that will permanently conserve over 3,000 acres. The Lost Coast Redwood and Salmon Initiative's Indian Creek conservation easement project will conserve 2,700 acres

of working forestland and five miles of critical salmon streams on the South Fork Eel River. The easement will serve to bridge Sinkyone Wilderness State Park with thousands of acres of privately conserved lands. The Panther Creek conservation easement along the Trinity River near Willow Creek will connect three conservation easements across 409 forested acres, expanding a Port Orford cedar reserve and protecting the headwaters of Summit and Panther Creeks.

Conservation easement projects are no small undertaking, often taking many years and numerous grant applications to secure the funding necessary to preserve the places we love. We are deeply grateful to our landowner and funding partners for their commitment to these unique places. Both projects are on trajectory for completion in 2018. See more on pages 4 & 5.

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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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 P.O. Box 398, Bayside, CA 95524
 Phone: 707.822.2242; Fax: 707.822.5210
 info@nrlt.org; www.nrlt.org

From the Executive Director

We are told that change is the only constant in life. We see this demonstrated in nature, as one season progresses to the next. We see this in our work in protecting the places we love, adapting constantly to the changing environment around us. And, we see this in our small office here at the Northcoast Regional Land Trust, where great people come and go, building on years of wonderful work.

The Land Trust has a great history of having an incredible staff and board, so I was honored to accept my new position here as Executive Director. After working at the organization for over a year as a Project Manager and having been a Director in the past at a local conservation non-profit, the transition was a natural one. Following in the footsteps of strong and successful leadership is a privilege, and I thank Mike Cipra, our exiting Executive Director, for his hard work, vision, and dedication. While Mike continues to be involved with the organization through executive training and volunteering, we miss his daily presence, clear direction, positivity, and penchant for good story telling.

With my arrival, I also have the pleasure of introducing three new board members: Alyson Hunter, Senior Planner for the City of Arcata; Clare Bugenig, Cattle Rancher at Perry Ranch; and Tom Hjerpe, Attorney at the Law Offices of Hjerpe and Collins, LLP. Our community work will be enhanced with their collective skills, interests, and dedication to long term land conservation.

Those who are close to the Land Trust – staff, board members, advisors, project partners, and supporters – know that it takes time and a great deal of commitment from many individuals to conserve and steward land for future generations. This shared dedication has facilitated the permanent protection of over 25,000 acres of wild and working lands in Humboldt, Trinity, and Del Norte Counties, and we are currently working to conserve over 20,000 more acres in this region within the next year.

Along with our work on conservation easements, we have remained committed to other conservation work, such as planning projects that directly benefit landowners, restoration projects that blend wildlife habitat improvement with sustained agriculture production, and education programs that directly influence our next generation of land stewards. We are dedicated to providing people with tangible experiences that connect them with land and promote the ongoing care of this special corner of the world.

It was this enduring pledge to conservation and the focus on connecting people to our vital resource lands and watersheds that brought me to the Northcoast Regional Land Trust. Now, after experiencing what it is like behind the scenes, I am even more impressed by the strong foundation and cohesive team, including you, which make this organization so successful. We are grateful to all of you who have given time, energy, and financial contributions towards achieving such long-standing conservation victories. You are true partners in this success and this organization would not be what it is today without your support. I look forward to working with you all in this exciting new role.



Dan Ehresman



Welcome Alyson, Clare, and Tom

Community Stewardship: Taking Care of Land Together



Humboldt State University Natural Resource Club members

Caring for and stewarding land takes time, knowledge, hard work, and patience. We have learned over the years that this labor of love is often much more successful and fulfilling when working together. Our property at Freshwater Farms Reserve has become an encouraging example of how community stewardship on a piece of land can yield incredible results, creating a space where we all have a sense of place. A place we have dug our hands into the dirt, helped to restore critical ecosystems, rehabilitated historic agricultural uses, and worked with students and the community to actively care for the land.

The diverse projects that have taken place at Freshwater Farms Reserve over the years would not have happened without our partners, supporters, and every single community member that has lent a hand. Throughout this past winter alone, over 200 volunteers have braved the rain and participated in stewardship activities on the property. Projects included building a rainwater catchment system, enhancing composting methods, weeding and mulching the native plant memorial garden, revegetating the Wood Creek restoration area with over 150 plants, planting approximately 30 trees along the Freshwater

Nature Trail, helping with the barn rehabilitation, and cleaning up the native plant nursery.

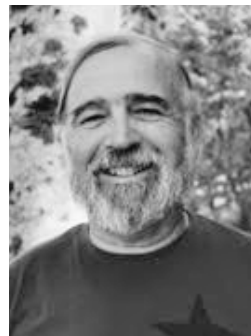
We would like to acknowledge the generous funding we've received from the Flora Family Foundation, The Joseph & Vera Long Foundation, Land Trust Alliance, and California State Coastal Conservancy which has allowed us to organize and coordinate community events, restoration activities, and stewardship days at Freshwater Farms Reserve. We would also like to thank our passionate volunteers at the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, California Conservation Corps, Watershed Stewards Program, Humboldt Trails Council, and Humboldt State University. And, a big thank you to the community at large for not only supporting and helping with this vision, but also for coming out and participating – reminding us that many hands make light work.

Please stay tuned for future Stewardship Sundays at Freshwater Farms Reserve, typically taking place the third Sunday of every month. Mark your calendars for upcoming events including an exciting BioBlitz data collection and stewardship day on Sunday, June 25th and an opportunity to participate in botanical field monitoring within the Wood Creek restoration area on Sunday, July 9th. Email info@nrlt.org to learn more!

Donor Voices: Dennis Rael

Local Business Owner, NRLT Advisor, and Long Time Supporter

I have been involved with the North-coast Regional Land Trust for most of its existence. After 9 years of service on the board, I recently stepped off and am currently acting as an advisor and a member of their Friend and Fundraising Committee. What originally brought me to the organization is still what inspires me – the Land Trust's unique ability in bringing together a diverse group of people from all walks of life around a common goal, the desire to conserve both our local landscape and



economy. As a business owner of Los Bagels, a fisherman and outdoor enthusiast, and someone who is dedicated to staying in this community for the long run, it is deeply important to me that we come

together to protect this area we love. The Land Trust does this with determination, professionalism, and passion.



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Indian Creek Conservation Easement

Many of our readers are undoubtedly familiar with the Lost Coast, a remote region in southern Humboldt and northern Mendocino counties that encompasses fog-draped forests, rugged terrain, and cool coastal streams. In the heart of this region, connecting the Sinkyone Wilderness State Park to over 10,000 acres of privately held conserved lands is a 2,700-acre forested property which we are working to conserve through the second phase of the Lost Coast Redwood and Salmon Initiative. This multi-partner initiative spans years of work with objectives of protecting vital salmon habitat and conserving productive redwood and fir forestlands that will be managed for sustainable timber harvest and enhancing habitat values.



Agency partners, landowner representatives, and NRLT staff on spring site visit.

In the final weeks of 2016, the Land Trust received exciting news that the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), through the Proposition 1 Watershed Restoration grant program, awarded the Indian Creek conservation easement project the final piece of funding needed to complete this landscape-scale project. CDFW joins the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, California Natural Resources Agency, and Wildlife Conservation Board as a key partner in this critical project's success.

By merging 27 parcels into one consolidated unit, the Indian Creek conservation easement will reverse the trend of land subdivision in an area at high risk of conversion to non-forest uses and development for both legal and illegal cannabis cultiva-

tion. Not only will the easement prevent further habitat fragmentation, set aside forest reserves, and prevent development, it will set the stage for several groundwater recharge projects that will also enhance channel complexity and bolster streamflows during the summer season when fish need cool water for survival.

When complete, this project will protect some of the most critical coho salmon habitat in the region, preserve healthy working forests, and serve as a habitat bridge connecting over 100,000 acres of conserved public and private lands of the Eel River and the Lost Coast. We are very grateful to our funding and project partners and to the innovative private landowner for their critical support in realizing this vision.



Hundreds of Acres to be Permanently Protected near Willow Creek

Panther Creek Conservation Easement

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust has received funding from the California Natural Resources Agency's Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program to expand a Port Orford cedar reserve across three privately held properties near Willow Creek, CA. The Panther Creek project is located within the headwaters of the Trinity River watershed along the Summit and Panther Creek drainages. In this wild landscape, Douglas-fir trees grow quickly, fish vehemently swim upstream to spawn, and Pacific fisher and other wildlife roam freely. The awarded money will fund a 160-acre conservation easement project enabling the completion of a greater conservation area totaling 409 acres of working forestlands, vital watershed areas, wildlife habitat, and globally significant stands of Port Orford cedar. Additionally, the easement properties complement regional conservation efforts already put forth through their connection

to the 1,600 acre Miller Forest reserve, completed in 2012, and the 950,000 acre Six Rivers National Forest.

Port Orford cedar is a Klamath Mountain endemic species and is one of the world's most valuable timber varieties. It has special cultural significance for Native American tribes of the coastal Pacific Northwest, and is highly restricted to suitable habitats in northern California and southern Oregon. The Port Orford cedar stands in the Panther Creek project area have been identified by the United States Forest Service and the scientific community as being particularly important to the recovery and long term viability of the species.

Port Orford cedar populations have been declining over the past century due to the combination of specialized habitat needs (stream edges, moist soils), heavy harvest rates, and the introduction of *P. lateralis*, which rots the root and trunk of infected trees from the ground up. Due to the water borne nature of the root rot pathogen, management of headwater stream reaches is critical to the conservation of riparian and downstream Port Orford cedar communi-

ties. The Panther and Summit Creek area, and the surrounding Miller Forest reserve, contain uninfected Port Orford cedar stands. The long term protections granted by the conservation easements will help to reduce the risk of future infection throughout the Willow Creek and Trinity River watershed.

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust would like to thank the landowners of the Summit Creek properties – John Ridlon for his thoughtful harvesting of chinquapin nuts and impressive stewardship, and Clifford Gibson for his dedication and positive attitude throughout the process. We would also like to thank Steve Miller, owner of the Panther Creek and Miller Forest reserve properties, for the passionate and visionary energy he puts forth, resulting in significant protections of wild and working lands. Lastly, we extend our gratitude to the California Natural Resources Agency's Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program for their generous funding to complete these vital conservation easement projects that will last in perpetuity.



ANNUAL REPORT 2016

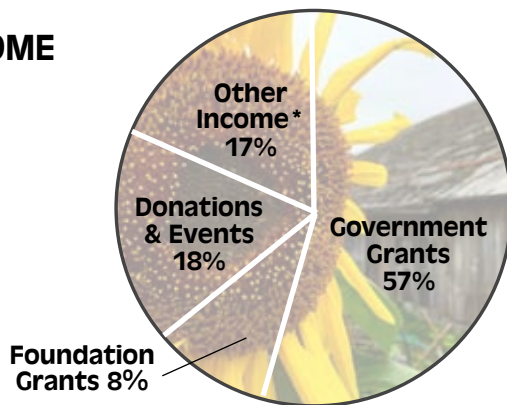
The Northcoast Regional Land Trust is pleased to provide our members with an accounting of organizational and programmatic accomplishments for 2016:

- In March, working with native plant enthusiasts, we closed the Red Mountain conservation easement, permanently protecting 25 acres in southeastern Humboldt County. This property hosts a globally rare plant species, the two-flowered pea (*Lathyrus biflorus*), and 95% of its entire population exists only on this special piece of land.
- With the Freshwater Nature Trail complete, we officially unveiled it to the public, hosting a grand opening in May with over 1,000 attendees. With the sun shining and live blue grass music playing, people explored the property and watched local landscape artists paint, while enjoying a BBQ and potluck featuring locally produced food.
- After years of work to secure funding and permits, we completed construction on the Wood Creek Phase II Enhancement Project at

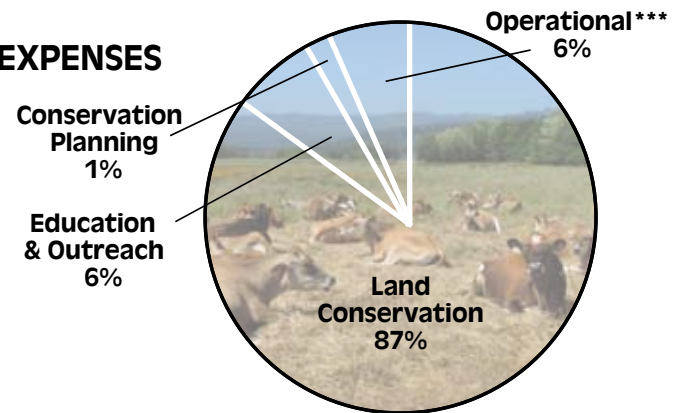
Freshwater Farms Reserve. The 19 acre site was restored to create habitat for salmonids, waterfowl, and native vegetation, while simultaneously alleviating flooding on our agricultural land, demonstrating how cows and coho can coexist. Our first field report showed that numerous young coho salmon are already using the area!

- In September, Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. signed AB 1958 updating the Forest Practice Act to allow for restoration of northern California's oak woodlands. The bill was introduced by Assemblymember Jim Wood and proudly co-sponsored by the Northcoast Regional Land Trust and the Buckeye.
- Facility improvements at Freshwater Farms were in full gear, nearing completion of the rehabilitation projects for the historic Graham-Long Dairy barn and the milking parlor – ensuring that future use of the property will incorporate this agricultural heritage.
- We remained committed to getting our community, in particular youth, out on the land to fall in love with wild and working places. Our outreach events and education programs got over 2,000 people out to explore, play, and learn.

INCOME



EXPENSES



INCOME

2015

2016

| | | |
|------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Government Grants | \$78,557 | \$416,966 |
| Foundation Grants | 57,500 | 60,500 |
| Donations & Events | 126,000 | 129,850 |
| Other Income* | 108,314 | 120,573 |
| Investments | 34,577 | 71,181 |
| Restricted Donations** | 0 | 37,500 |
| TOTAL | \$404,948 | \$836,570 |

EXPENSES

2015

2016

| | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Land Conservation | \$294,592 | \$739,907 |
| Education & Outreach | 52,213 | 56,820 |
| Conservation Planning | 6,666 | 6,225 |
| Operational*** | 33,036 | 50,581 |
| TOTAL | \$386,507 | \$853,533 |

*Includes fee for service & property leases.

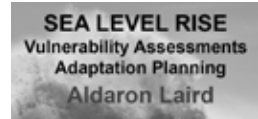
**Restricted donations are made to our stewardship fund which allows for the ongoing monitoring and stewardship of our easement properties.

***Includes administration, fundraising, staff development & board expenses.



L's KITCHEN
Fortuna, CA

CHRIS BELL
Appraisal Associates



THANK YOU NRLT Members and Supporters!

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust is forever grateful to the following who gave cash grants, donations, or support from April 1, 2016 through March 31, 2017.

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust is a tax-exempt, nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization listed with the Internal Revenue Service under EIN #68-0456290. All donations are tax deductible.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Pints for Non-Profits: *Wednesday, June 14, 12-11 pm, Redwood Curtain Brewery.* Come have a beer with NRLT board members, advisors, staff, and supporters to celebrate conservation. \$1 of each beer sale goes to NRLT. Live music and food.

Canoe-the-Slough Solstice Paddle: *Sunday, June 25, time TBD, \$45/\$40 members.* Paddle Humboldt Bay and Freshwater Slough in a canoe or kayak. Learn about the Bay's natural environment and the changes it has seen throughout the decades.

Freshwater Farms Interpretive Walks: *Sunday, July 9 & August 6, 10 am – 12 pm.* Visit nrlt.org for details, FREE. Join us at Freshwater Farms Reserve with special guest presenters on Wetland Restoration & Grass Identification and Creatures of the Night.

Folie Douce Fundraising Dinner: *Monday, July 24, 5-9 pm, \$50 per person.* Come have dinner with us! Profits from this dinner will be donated to NRLT.

Annual Celebration - Boots and Birkenstocks: *Saturday, October 14, 5-9 pm, Fortuna River Lodge.* Celebrate community conservation at our annual gathering. Enjoy a locally produced meal, open bar, music, and silent and live auctions.

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.*

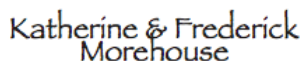
COVER ARTIST – MATTHEW FILAR

Matthew Filar fell in love with photography over 40 years ago. In 2002 he left his long time career in mechanical engineering to pursue photography full time. He works with medium and large format cameras in color and black and white film, as well as in digital. While his subjects are predominantly natural scenes, he also enjoys photographing interesting compositions and objects from bygone eras, as well as fine art, sports, event, and group photography. He resides in Arcata with his wife, Tami.



Cow Butts – County Fair

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