

AUTUMN 2017

NORTHCOAST REGIONAL LAND TRUST



Oak and Rocks

– Alan Sanborn

Celebrating Community Conservation at Freshwater Farms Reserve

At the core of the Northcoast Regional Land Trust's mission is the preservation of this region's wild and working lands. While the majority of properties we work to conserve are not regularly open to the public, your support has made possible the establishment of Freshwater Farms Reserve as our ambassador property and living laboratory where visitors can experience firsthand much of what we work to achieve.

Freshwater Farms Reserve has blossomed into a destination where members of the public can explore the Freshwater Nature Trail or purchase produce grown onsite at the Kneeland Glen Farm Stand; where volunteers can lend a hand in restoring natural tidelands; and where learners of all ages can come to understand the compatibility of agriculture and wildlife habitat.

Throughout the year there are ample opportunities for visitors to enjoy, interact, study, volunteer, and otherwise engage in a way that connects us all more deeply to this place we love. And this past year, the

property has seen perhaps the most activity to date.

Thanks to generous support from partner agencies and individuals like you, this past year – in addition to our work on several large-scale conservation easement projects – we've completed two ambitious projects at Freshwater Farms Reserve: a habitat restoration project that created over-wintering habitat for coho salmon, improved adjacent grazing land, and enhanced native plant habitat; and a facilities improvement project, which involved the complete rehabilitation of the historic Graham-Long Dairy Barn, adjacent nursery building, and hoop house. Read more about these exciting projects on pages 3 & 5.

Although the size of the property is relatively small at 74 acres, it is an amazing amount of work to maintain it. We could not do it without your support and the hard work of many volunteers, including those with the California Conservation Corps, the AmeriCorps' Watershed

Stewards Program, and the Volunteer Trail Stewards. Special thanks to our 2017 restoration and community conservation funding partners: The Joseph and Vera Long Foundation, Flora Family Foundation, Land Trust Alliance, and California State Coastal Conservancy.

For those who have not yet hiked the trail, canoed the slough, or volunteered as part of our ongoing Stewardship Sundays, we hope to see you out there!

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From the Board President

Though the rain has made its way back to the North Coast, the impacts from the smoke, heat, and fires of this past summer still linger. As the landowners we work with can attest, living in Northern California can be a challenge economically – and wildfire so close to home reminds us of the additional challenges faced in this region.

The economic realities coupled with impacts brought by Mother Nature – whether wildfire, drought, or the more than occasional landslide typical of our local geology – are constantly reinforced. Conservation easements can be a key strategy to help meet these challenges. NRLT is excited to be nearing completion on a series of easement projects that will conserve over 18,000 acres throughout the region. We are also pleased to report entering into agreement on two additional conservation easement projects that will protect redwood forest and coastal prairie in southern Humboldt County.

Change is always certain – across our northern landscape and within our organization. But like this place we call home, the resilience and adaptability of those who live here shines through.

A suite of welcome changes have come to pass this year at our ambassador property Freshwater Farms Reserve, including the rehabilitation of the Graham-Long Dairy Barn and nursery, restoration of coastal wetland habitat, and improvement of the pasture. With each passing day Freshwater Farms Reserve is looking better and better – and it hasn't gone unnoticed! Earlier this year, NRLT was selected to be one of three Land Trusts featured in a film being produced by the Land Trust Alliance and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Coastal Program. We expect the film to be released early next year.

As I said, change is constant – in sources of easement funding, types of properties brought to us as possible conservation projects, staffing in our office, and even in the makeup of our annual celebration. Amidst the changes, NRLT is fortunate to have such committed staff, supporters, and project partners whose perseverance and dedication bring far-reaching projects to fruition. Such work supports the economic, environmental, and social qualities that make our North Coast a unique and beautiful place to live. Thank you for being such an instrumental part of this work to conserve important resource lands for the benefit of all.

– Greg Blomstrom
Board President

A Grateful Goodbye and a Warm Welcome

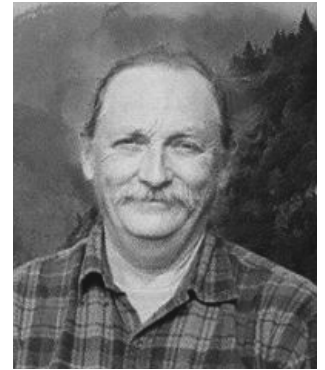
We would like to send out a heartfelt thank you to long-time Outreach & Development Director, Sarah Pilkington, who stepped out of her role in August. Sarah helped build many of the successful development programs and events at NRLT, including our treasured Annual Celebration. While we know she is not going far, we wish her the best on her next adventures!

We'd also like to extend a warm welcome to Julia Cavalli, who joined NRLT as our Projects Assistant in June. Julia is a recent graduate of UC Berkeley's College of Natural Resources and brings substantial experience as a field biologist and educator. We're also excited to welcome Beth Bray, our Annual Celebration Event Planner, who was responsible for organizing an elegant and successful evening this October. We are proud to announce that Beth will continue working with us as NRLT's new Outreach & Development Director. Beth brings nearly ten years

of experience as a professional fundraiser in local non-profits and is the Lead Instructor for New Designs for Fundraising, a fundraising certificate program offered through Humboldt State University. Both Beth and Julia are tremendous additions to the NRLT team and we hope you will join us in welcoming them on board!



Welcome Julia and Beth!



Notes from the Field: Conservation Easement Monitoring

Each year Northcoast Regional Land Trust monitors our completed conservation easements to ensure that practices on the land are honoring and upholding the conservation values protected under the easement. This past August and September, NRLT Staff and some members of our Board of Directors toured protected properties and caught up with landowners about the past year's challenges and successes. Staff were able to view active improvements to conservation values as well as the impacts of the past winter's storms. The difference

a year of growth and fluctuation can make is always astounding.

Because the protection of working lands is central to NRLT's mission, most easement properties are actively managed ranches and timberlands. Yearly visits provide a clear window into the planning and flexibility necessary to work with, on, and for the land. The amount of hard work, planning, and time that landowners put into sustainably managing this region's farms and forests is truly awesome. NRLT is fortunate to work with landowner partners so strongly committed to conservation.



NRLT-owned property, Martin Slough



Iaqua Ranch



Chalk Mountain Ranch

Donor Voices: Les and Janet Barnwell

Owners of Chalk Mountain Ranch and NRLT Donors

Janet and I are deeply connected to this land. My family has owned and stewarded Chalk Mountain Ranch for over a century. Our sons and nephew are the fifth generation of our family to take on management of the ranch.

Before we knew about conservation easements, we had a plaque on the wall that read, "Dedicated to the proper use of natural resources into perpetuity." We know how productive land can be when managed well and we have seen what happens when it is managed poorly.

After the family fell on hard times in the 1990's, we learned about conservation

easements as an opportunity to keep the land whole. We started working with NRLT to develop an easement on the property in 2011. After a number of years, in two phases, we are proud to say that we have conserved over 7,200 acres as a permanent benefit to our rural economy and environment.

My mother, Gloria Barnwell, supported NRLT so that future generations could continue to work the land. We are happy to continue to support NRLT in the ways that we can – whether in attending and providing donations for the Annual Celebration



or talking with other landowners about the value of conservation easements.

Staff at NRLT have been very helpful. After five years, we are glad we made the decision to place a conservation easement on the ranch – it has allowed us to continue with business on the property and it will continue to be stewarded for generations to come.

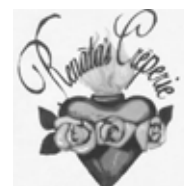


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Graham-Long Dairy Barn Rehabilitation Complete

In mid-June, major donors and supporters of the Northcoast Regional Land Trust gathered to celebrate the grand opening of our rehabilitated Graham-Long dairy barn. Over 100 people came out to commemorate this monumental rehabilitation project which conserves an important piece of our local agricultural heritage.

As part of the Northcoast Regional Land Trust's mission to conserve farms, forests, and grazing lands of our region, this significant structure will now last for generations to come, supporting existing and future

agricultural, educational, and recreational activities at Freshwater Farms Reserve.

Rehabilitating this symbol of our region's shared agricultural heritage was a true community barn raising made possible by the generosity, time, and vision of many individuals, businesses, agencies, and foundations. Thanks to everyone who helped make this special project become a reality! Special thanks go to:

California State Coastal Conservancy, T.S. and K.D. Glide Foundation, McLean Foundation, Almquist Lumber Company,

ERA Forest Products LLC, Humboldt Redwood Company, Mendocino Forest Products, Green Diamond Resource Company, Ryan Sullivan (Fine Woodworking and Custom Homes), Bill Hole (Creative Home Construction), Tim and Jackie Pricer, Doris Fearrien, Judith Hinman, Schorr Berman, Deborah Fitzpatrick, Ron & Melanie Kuhnel, Christopher Honar, Suzanne Guerra, Joan Wantanabe, our hardworking and dedicated volunteers, and all the donors who gave at our Annual Celebration to support this special project.



An exterior view of the completed Graham-Long dairy barn



NRLT donors and supporters celebrating together under the barn's new roof

NRLT on the Big Screen

Earlier this year, NRLT's Freshwater Farms Reserve property was one of three properties in the nation picked to be featured in a video project collaboration between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Program and the Land Trust Alliance.

The Wood Creek Tidal Marsh Enhancement Project was chosen for this film because it so successfully demonstrates the restoration of wildlife habitat, the enhancement of agricultural lands, and what can be achieved through public-private partnerships.

In late June, a crew from Washington D.C. spent three days filming at Freshwater Farms Reserve, showcasing the many compatible uses of the property and how community partnerships can conserve the places we love. The video will take viewers through a visual tour of the Wood Creek restoration site, rehabilitated dairy barn,

and the Freshwater Nature Trail – now in its second year of service. Perspective interviews from those most intimately connected to the property and to the Wood Creek restoration project will inform viewers of the history and progress of each.

During this same weekend, NRLT partnered with AmeriCorps' Watershed Stewards Program to host a volunteer restoration day and Bioblitz citizen science event.



LTA film crew at Freshwater Farms

Volunteers of all ages helped improve habitat for juvenile salmon in the slough and learned to collect data on native plants and wildlife. The weekend was capped-off with our annual Canoe the Slough event where NRLT partnered with Humboats Kayaking Adventures to lead yet another group of enthusiastic visitors in a colorful contingent of kayaks down Freshwater Slough through the tidal lands to the open waters of Humboldt Bay.



Kayaks of all colors at Canoe the Slough event

Good News for Salmon: Promising Results at Wood Creek



The Wood Creek Phase II Aquatic Enhancement Project, largely completed in September 2016, has shown tremendous results this past winter and spring! The slow moving off-channel habitat that the Wood Creek Phase II channels provide is paradise to a young salmon trying to feed, grow, and survive in its first year of life. Winter precipitation sends pulses of fast moving water through the region's rivers and creeks. Habitats created through Wood Creek Phase I (completed in 2010) and Phase II (completed in 2016) offer a critical refuge to juvenile salmon and other aquatic species who are fighting to escape the strong winter flows in major Humboldt Bay tributaries. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has been monitoring this project and has detected or caught over 500 juvenile coho salmon this past year in the new channels. Data recorded from the captured salmon show that the Wood Creek Phase II project area supports the second fastest growth rate for juvenile salmon of all Humboldt Bay tributaries – a true measure of success!

This past September, NRLT put the finishing touches on the Wood Creek Enhancement Project. Twenty-five-hundred cubic yards of excavated cattail and soil – left to decompose after previous restoration efforts – were processed and graded to restore a high brackish marsh and enhance agricultural production. In the channels, 25 large wood structures were installed to increase cover and protection for juvenile salmon that rely on the waters flowing through Freshwater Farms Reserve.

Bob Pagliuco, NOAA Project Biologist overseeing woody debris installation

NRLT would like to thank our wonderful project partners: US Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA Habitat Conservation Restoration Center, State Coastal Conservancy, the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, Land Trust Alliance, the California Conservation Corps, and the AmeriCorps' Watershed Stewards Program. We'd like to give a special thank you to Mike Wallace and his crew at CDFW for the many years of hard work monitoring the Wood Creek Phase I and II projects! And last but not least, we'd like to thank our volunteers for exemplifying true community conservation through their diligence and dedication.



HSU students installing deer fence during a recent Planting Day



Woody debris installed in Wood Creek as shelter for juvenile salmon

Boat Carts Ready to Roll!

We are proud to announce the installation of a bicycle rack and boat cart system at Freshwater Farms Reserve! Our boat carts allow for swift and easy boat transportation from the parking lot to the boat launch about one-half mile down the Freshwater Nature Trail. Many thanks to the Rotary Club of Eureka for making this new and exciting community asset possible!

The combination code necessary to use the boat carts is available by contacting the NRLT office (typically open Mon-Fri from 9-5 pm). Please plan ahead if you would like to go boating on the weekend.



Kerry McNamee trying out a new boat cart



Volunteers preparing to plant along Wood Creek

Friends and Stewards Gathered 'Round!

Saturday, October 14th was a beautiful Fall evening and the Fortuna River Lodge was abuzz with energy. Over 300 people gathered to support the Northcoast Regional Land Trust, celebrate wild and working lands, and enjoy each other's company. As the room filled, people from across the region greeted one another and perused the auction items donated by over 100 local businesses and individuals while enjoying the sounds of That Buckin' String Band. At the same time, the bar was flowing and the kitchen was bustling – both staffed by enthusiastic volunteers serving food and drink contributed by generous local businesses and farms. Lee Mora, of the Humboldt Auction Yard, led an exciting live auction from the stage, moving the evening right along.

A highlight of the night was the presentation of the Visionary Award to David McMurray, co-founder of the Northcoast Regional Land Trust. David was honored with the award to recognize the enduring commitment, support, and stability that his love of the land has given to our community. Through all the hard work of conserving lands for future generations, David inspires and encourages those around him by emphasizing the immense value of our forests,

farmlands, and waterways and of the importance of working together to protect them.

Due to the generosity of those who attended, sponsored, and donated to the event, over \$60,000 was raised to support Northcoast Regional Land Trust programs that help protect the land so integral to our lives. We would like to thank the producers, farmers, landowners, businesses, board members, advisors, staff, and volunteers who gave their time and resources to make this event a success. The Annual Celebration wouldn't be possible without you!

We would also like to thank our event sponsors: *Pierson Building Center, American Ag Credit, Emerald City Laundry, Humboldt Redwood Company/Mendocino Redwood Company, North Coast Co-op, Pacific Watershed Associates, Points West Surveying Co., Stillwater Sciences, Baldwin, Blomstrom, Wilkinson & Associates, Green Diamond Resource Company, Hubbard's German Auto, Inc., Planwest Partners, GHD, GreenWay Partners, Harbers Insurance Agency/The Shaw Group, Maya Conrad/Coldwell Sellers Realty, Ramone's Bakery & Café, The Land Man, Wildberries, Conservation Partners, Humboldt Land Title Company, Alexandre Family Farm, Clendenen Cider Works, Humboldt Grassfed Beef, and Los Bagels.*



David McMurray, Visionary Award recipient



That Buckin' String Band live

SAVE THE DATE!
Annual Celebration
Saturday, October 13, 2018,
River Lodge, Fortuna

Thanks to Event Supporters & Volunteers

Additional thanks to our Adopt an Acre donors & auction winners (p. 7)

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COVER ARTIST – ALAN SANBORN

Channeling both talent and discipline through his brush, Alan Sanborn's distinctive watercolor style amplifies the magnificence of our region, as well as the quiet beauty of ordinary things. He particularly enjoys highlighting the work of small organic farmers, whom he admires for bringing integrity to the soil and abundance to the North Coast. He has exhibited fairly extensively nationally, but is best known for his images featured on the posters for the local Farmers' Market every year. Alan can be reached at www.alansanbornart.com, lala@arcatanet.com, or (707) 822-7958.



Kneeland Vista

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Holiday Party: Friday, December 8, 4-7 pm, NRLT Office. Join landowners, conservation specialists, board members, advisors, staff, and our members as we celebrate the holidays.

Freshwater Farms Interpretive Walks: Visit nrlt.org for Spring Dates. Each walk features a guest speaker.

Canoe-the-Slough: Visit nrlt.org for Spring Dates. Paddle Humboldt Bay and Freshwater Slough with NRLT.

Stewardship Sundays: Stay in the loop through our mailing list or Facebook page. Join NRLT Projects staff and volunteers at Freshwater Farms Reserve for wetland restoration, trail maintenance, and invasive plant eradication.

Lay of the Land: Upon request. NRLT presentation that gives an overview of what we are doing to protect our region's wild and working landscapes. Contact Dan at d.ehresman@nrlt.org.

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 these sponsors for underwriting this issue:

