



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NRLT Conserves the Kinsey Ranch: Family's Ranching Legacy to be Honored at the Boots & Birkenstocks Annual Celebration on October 10th

Bayside, Calif. — The Northcoast Regional Land Trust (NRLT) is proud to announce the completion of a conservation easement on the Kinsey Ranch, a historic 6,625-acre working cattle ranch along the East Branch of the South Fork Eel River in Benbow, CA. The easement permanently protects the ranch's agricultural, forest, and watershed values while allowing the Kinsey family to continue ranching the land they have called home for more than a century.



Cattle graze on Kinsey Ranch rangeland, with oak woodland behind.

"It's a great example of conservation and agricultural communities coming together to keep working lands protected and productive while preserving important habitat for the wildlife that depend on them," said Zach Wenderott, NRLT Project Manager. "We're grateful to the Kinsey family and our project partners, including the Department of Conservation and Strategic Growth Council, for helping create an outcome that benefits agricultural use, wildlife, and conservation for generations to come."

The ranch supports a cow-calf grazing operation across more than 4,500 acres of rangeland, alongside forestlands managed for sustainable timber production. Flowing through the property are more than five miles of the East Branch South Fork Eel River, plus over 10 miles of smaller streams that support endangered salmon and other wildlife. The easement also protects farmland soils, riparian habitat and wetlands — safeguarding both the land's productivity and the wildlife that depend on it.



David Johnson leads NRLT board members and staff on a tour of the Kinsey Ranch during a 2023 site visit.

Projects like this take years of dedication from many partners and supporters. At the heart of the Kinsey Ranch conservation effort was David Johnson, a member of the family that has owned and worked the ranch since his grandparents, Charles and Alice Kinsey, purchased it in 1914. David passed away in 2024, before the easement's completion, but his commitment to seeing this land protected carried the project through to the finish line.

"My brother really wanted to conserve it," said Marjorie Johnson Yates, whose family has owned the ranch for three generations. "If this hadn't been



funded, our kids couldn't afford to keep it. But now even if they do sell it, it will be protected as our family had wanted. It's too gorgeous and big a property to just let go to development."

The Kinsey Ranch's location adds to its conservation value. It sits within a few miles of NRLT's completed Wagner Ranch and Sproul Creek conservation easements, and near other projects currently in progress. Together, these projects are building toward a broader corridor of protected working lands and habitat in the Benbow and Garberville area.

"We all know that with time and money, damage to the land can be repaired and restored to its natural state," said Tom Strobel, who represented the Kinsey family throughout the process. "But it is much better to preserve, rather than to have to restore."

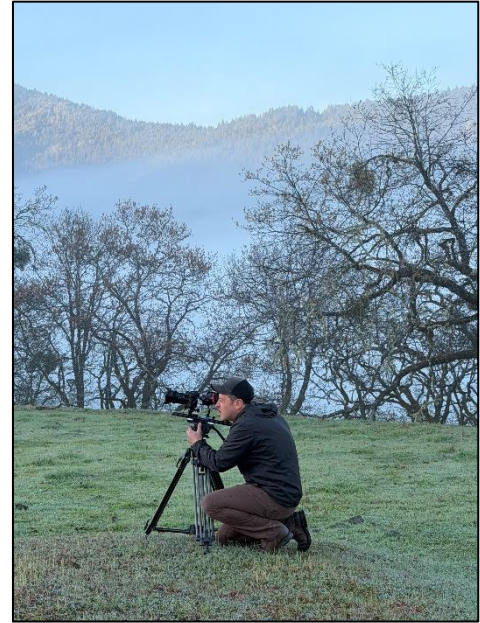
NRLT plans to honor the Kinsey and Johnson family's multi-generation dedication to the land during the Boots & Birkenstocks Annual Celebration on October 10th. Along with the evening's typical festivities – including live music, locally sourced dinner, and live and silent auction – representatives from the Kinsey Ranch will be present for a short documentary film premier about the project. Limited tickets for this event are available at ncrlt.org.

In collaboration with the Department of Conservation, California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) supported Kinsey Ranch with a grant through the Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program (SALC) The Program is part of California Climate Investments, a statewide initiative that puts billions of Cap-and-Invest dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment — particularly in disadvantaged communities.

NRLT is grateful to the Johnson, McKenna, and Yates families, Shayne and Lindsay Green of Green Conservation Consulting, the Strategic Growth Council, California Climate Investments, California Department of Conservation, and our dedicated supporters throughout northwestern California for making this conservation easement a reality.

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*The **Northcoast Regional Land Trust** is a nonprofit organization which conserves wild and working lands across northwestern California for the benefit of the region's farms, forests, watersheds, wildlife, and people. Since 2000, NRLT has protected over 87,000 acres through voluntary partnerships with landowners, tribes, public agencies, and community support. Learn more at ncrlt.org.*



A short documentary about the Kinsey Ranch Conservation Easement will premiere at NRLT's Annual Celebration on October 10th.