



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Northcoast Regional Land Trust Invites Community to Celebrate Wood Creek Restoration Progress

Public Celebration Set for September 11 as Phase III Construction Nears Completion

Eureka, CA — The Northcoast Regional Land Trust (NRLT) invites the community to a free public celebration on Thursday, September 11 from 4:30 – 7:30 PM, marking the near-completion of construction on the **Wood Creek Phase III – Felt Ranch Off-Channel Rearing Habitat Project**. One year after breaking ground, NRLT and its partners — including landowners Sean and Kathy O’Day, the California State Coastal Conservancy (SCC), the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), the County of Humboldt, and others — will gather with the public to mark this milestone in a project more than a decade in the making.

“This fall we’ll wrap up construction on Phase III, rerouting Wood Creek out of a roadside ditch and back into a natural channel that benefits salmon, wildlife, and the surrounding agricultural community,” said NRLT Executive Director Dan Ehresman. “But the work doesn’t stop when the equipment leaves the site. Plantings, monitoring, and stewardship of this restored habitat will continue for years to come, and we’re excited to bring more volunteers into that effort in 2027.”

A Decade of Progress on Wood Creek

Wood Creek Restoration is a multi-phase, multi-partner effort to restore tidal connectivity and salmon rearing habitat in the Freshwater Creek Watershed, one of Humboldt Bay’s largest tributaries. Phases I and II, completed in 2010 and 2017, restored over 50 acres of tidal wetland and estuary habitat at NRLT’s Freshwater Farms Reserve. Research by CDFW has shown that juvenile Coho salmon are growing up to four times faster in this restored estuary than in faster-flowing sections of Freshwater Creek, directly contributing to their survival to the ocean.

Phase III, located on the adjacent Felt Ranch property with tie-in at Freshwater Farms Reserve, broke ground in August 2025 and builds on that success. When complete this fall, the project will have:

- Created more than 7,500 feet of high-quality salmon rearing habitat and improved fish passage
- Restored 12 acres of wetlands with increased tidal influence and diverse native plant communities
- Supported working lands by reducing flood duration and creating drought-resistant, spring-fed habitats

What's Next: Plantings, Monitoring, and Volunteers in 2027

While heavy construction wraps up this fall, restoration on the ground is far from finished. NRLT and its partners will spend the coming months and years establishing native plant communities, monitoring fish passage and habitat performance, and stewarding the site long-term. NRLT is planning more hands-on volunteer opportunities in 2027, inviting community members to take part in the next chapter of caring for this restored wetland.





NORTHCOAST REGIONAL LAND TRUST

Phase III has been supported by funding from CDFW's Cannabis Restoration Grant Program (CRGP), Point Blue Conservation Science's Roots Program, the State of California's Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). Planning for the project was led by The Buckeye Conservancy, with funding from the SCC and CDFW's Fisheries Restoration Grant Program (FRGP). Project partners include Michael Love & Associates, Thomas Gast & Associates Environmental Consultants, GHD, GR Sundberg Inc., Samara Restoration, Pacific Earthscape, the Wiyot Tribe Natural Resources Department, Cal Poly Humboldt, and the California Conservation Corps' Watershed Stewards Program, others.

Community Invitation to Public Celebration

The public is invited to a free celebration featuring a presentation on the project's past, present, and future, a community toast and light refreshments, and an optional walking tour of recently restored areas:

Wood Creek Restoration Celebration: Friday, September 11, 4:30 – 7:30 PM

Freshwater Farms Reserve Barn, 5851 Myrtle Ave, Eureka

Presentation 5:00 PM | Optional Site Walk 6:30 PM, with Live Painting by Matt Beard

Free and open to the public. RSVPs are encouraged, more info at ncrlt.org.

Presenters will include Mike Wallace, retired CDFW fisheries biologist and NRLT Board Member; Mark Bowen, Ph.D., senior associate scientist at Thomas Gast & Associates Environmental Consultants; and Michael Love, Principal Engineer at Michael Love & Associates— along with a Q&A panel of project partners, landowners, and Land Trust staff. Drinks and light refreshments generously provided by Wildberries Marketplace and NRLT Board members.

About the Northcoast Regional Land Trust

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust conserves wild and working lands across northwestern California for the benefit of our region's farms, forests, watersheds, wildlife, and people. Since 2000, NRLT has protected over 81,000 acres in Humboldt, Del Norte, and Trinity Counties through voluntary conservation efforts and partnerships with landowners, tribes, and public agencies.

To learn more, visit www.ncrlt.org.

Photos and interviews available upon request.

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