



Lake County Land Trust

LCLT Newsletter • PO Box 711, Lower Lake, CA 95457 • (707)262-0707 • Spring/Summer 2016

Partnering for conservation

By Cathy Koehler

Conservation of wildlands is always more rewarding when it happens through partnerships. What better way of assuring that you've made the right conservation decision than having numerous other groups and individuals beside you, believing in it as much as you do?

That is one of the reasons why conservation easements are so valuable. At least two independent parties strongly support the conservation decision: the land owners, who wish to see their lands protected in perpetuity, and the conservation organization that has the qualifications and passion to uphold the easement that protects the land forever.

In a 12-month period, between April 2015 to April 2016, the Lake County Land Trust acquired its first conservation easements – three of them! All three were products of partnerships between groups and/or individuals who were passionate about the value of the wild lands and strove to add a layer of protection to the lands that would secure their natural state.

While conservation easements typically focus on enabling a private land owner to protect the conservation values of their private lands, some easements involve partners that may offer wildland experiences to the public. A unique partnership involving the Lake County Land Trust (conservation easement holder), Tuleyome (conservation organization and conservation buyer), and the University of California's Natural Reserve System (property owner) offered wildflower enthusiasts a chance to visit one of the Land Trust's conservation easements in eastern Lake County in April. This group of partners has been working for two years to protect a 23 acre parcel with sensitive serpentine meadows and wetlands, located adjacent to the Univer-



Wildflower walk attendees consider an interesting plant specimen.

sity of California's McLaughlin Natural Reserve. Tuleyome, with support of generous donations targeting conservation in the inner coast ranges of Northern California, purchased the property, and this past December donated the property to the University of California, simultaneously donating a conservation easement on the property along with stewardship funds to the Lake County Land Trust.

This property is nestled between the McLaughlin Reserve, a University of California research station which protects a complex wildland landscape including serpentine ecosystems, and the newly designated Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument. Wildfires burned through the area in the summer of 2015 - the combined ecological effects of the fires and the stewardship of the Reserve lands, which targets restoration of native plant communities in serpentine eco-

(Continued on page 8)

President's Message

By
Val
Nixon



Val Nixon

As I watch this beautiful County burst into spring and the green return to the charred hills, I am reminded how amazed I was the first time I saw Clear Lake from the top of Hopland Grade as my car was overheating. It was a breathtaking moment that put any doubts about our move here behind me. I was fortunate enough to spend 30 years working for California State Parks protecting some of California's most outstanding features, and now in retirement I hope to continue in that vein. Volunteering for Lake County Land Trust has opened my eyes to the web of entities that work diligently to protect the natural and cultural features that make this area unique.

Lake County Land Trust's recent acquisition of three vital easements, in opposite ends of the county, will protect a wetland, a serpentine habitat and a scenic corridor. This is an important step in balancing the many local land uses with the need to rehabilitate our wetlands and protect wildlife.

Our future focus will be to continue working on stewardship protocols and management plans for all our properties. I look forward to coalitions with public agencies, private companies, individuals and other nonprofits to continue the work of the Land Trust's mission to protect lands of natural and cultural significance.

The balance of economic opportunity, recreation and preservation are crucial to the health of Lake County. I am privileged to work with such dedicated board members and volunteers.

I hope you are enjoying the sights and sounds of spring.



Catherine Koehler

Catherine Koehler has served the Lake County Land Trust as Executive Director for six years

By Roberta Lyons, Board of Directors

Catherine Koehler was hired as our Lake County Land Trust Executive Director (ED) in 2010. Catherine is first and foremost, a scientist, with a BS in Zoology, and an MS in Behavioral Ecology. Her education is impressive as is her performance as co-director of the McLaughlin Reserve in Eastern Lake County and as the Executive Director for the Lake County Land Trust. For six years she has shared her organizational skills, her scientific knowledge and her abilities to connect with people in the continual development of our organization.

Her "Land Trust," work is empowered by her great appreciation for the ecology of Lake County, as she shares insights with not only board members, but volunteers and Land Trust supporters as well. Her deep understanding of the landscapes of this special place we call home has benefitted numbers of people.

Sadly, Catherine's duties with her "other job," as manager of the McLaughlin Reserve have become so extensive that she can no longer split her time and she has had to choose to manage full-time the Reserve for the University of California, Davis.

Happily, Catherine has agreed to join our Board of Directors, so we will not be losing her altogether. We will, however, miss her strong presence and excellent guidance on a weekly basis. She has stood the Land Trust well these last six years and taught us all a great deal about stewarding our lands, managing our organization, and paying attention to details.

The Land Trust will continue to move forward: We will be choosing a new Executive Director soon and will be announcing it on Facebook, our website and in local media.



Former Lake County Land Trust office assistant, Brittany Poco, is pictured with Catherine Koehler, executive director, with the STARS award presented to the Lake County Land Trust in November of 2015.

Land Trust presented with Stars of Lake County Award

By Roberta Lyons, Board of Directors

The Lake County Land Trust was honored in November of 2015 with the Stars of Lake County Environmental Award. The Stars of Lake County event, presented by the Lake County Chamber of Commerce, has celebrated 18 years of recognizing local individuals, organizations, and businesses for their contributions to the community.

The Land Trust was proud to accept the award and thanks Maryann Schmidt of the Lodge at Blue Lakes for the nomination. Maryann and her husband Peter are longtime supporters of the Land Trust and go out of their way to make sure that Land Trust events held at their facility are always of the highest quality.

The Land Trust was honored for its efforts in preserving and protecting the beautiful open spaces and natural habitats of the county which it has been doing for over 20 years. Founded in 1994, the Land Trust is a 501(c)3 charitable nonprofit that has protected over a 1,000 acres in Lake County through ownership (Rodman Preserve), conservation easements, facilitation of several projects in cooperation with other agencies, and co-management of important areas like Boggs Lake on Mt. Hannah.

Join us for our annual Spring Celebration Fundraiser



Please join the
Lake County Land Trust
on June 12; 3 – 6 p.m.
for our
Spring Celebration event

Hosted by Lynne and Bernie Butcher in the Garden of the **Blue Wing Restaurant and Tallman Hotel in Upper Lake.**

Enjoy wine, hors d'oeuvres and live music by David Neft in the company of other friends of the Land Trust. Tickets are \$50 per person with all funds going to support the **Lake County Land Trust.**

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

Email LCLT@lakecountylandtrust.org

or call **(707) 262-0707** to reserve, or reserve by paying online at the "Donate" button at

www.lakecountylandtrust.org

Payment in advance requested.

Looking forward to seeing you!



February is the month that birdwatchers everywhere participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count presented by the Cornell laboratory of Ornithology. This year Cindy Jacobson and several parent chaperones brought students from Lucerne Elementary School out to Rodman Preserve for a field trip and to look for birds. Val Nixon, Land Trust president and retired State Park ranger did a fabulous job guiding the students. They saw Red-winged Blackbirds, Acorn Woodpeckers, Golden-crowned Sparrows, Western Bluebirds, Red-tailed hawks and more.



Students from Lucerne Elementary and their chaperones pose under the gazebo at the Rodman Preserve.



Brock Zoller, Kelseyville, and his granddaughter Ella, check out some items through the microscope at the Rodman Preserve Family Day event in the summer of 2015.

Family Days at Rodman Preserve

For several years the Land Trust has presented a Children's Nature Education Program at the Rodman Preserve on the third Saturday of the month, most recently for June, July and August. Local nature education specialist, Elaine Mansell worked on this project with the Land Trust for all of this time but has decided to retire from these duties. We wish to thank Elaine for getting this idea started and for many enjoyable Saturday's at the Preserve, teaching kids about nature and letting them become "Rodman Explorers."

The Land Trust will continue to present these education and fun opportunities to youth, but the exact form of how it will be created is not quite complete. Instead of having programs on the third Saturday, dates will be chosen in a more flexible manner and publicized in local media, Facebook, and the Land Trust website. So, look for information on programs that will be scheduled at Rodman Preserve this summer. We have decided to call the events "Family Days at Rodman Preserve." Hope you can join us!

LCLT celebrates Earth Day



2015 Financial Statement

REVENUES:

Lands and Conservation Support:

Donations toward Big Valley Wetlands Project \$ 2,300.00

General Donations:

Fundraisers and community events 21,353.20

General Membership contributions 61,856.64

Stewardship Support Fund 5,000.00

Internship Support 5,000.00

Other Revenue Sources:

Interest Earned 152.23

TOTAL REVENUES: \$95,662.07

EXPENDITURES:

Lands and Conservation Work:

Land Stewardship and Conservation \$ 4,741.55

Internship 5,000.00

General Operations:

Fundraisers and Community Events 6,423.47

Membership Support and Development 9,694.29

Administration (wages & professional services) 38,567.85

Regional Partnerships and Associations Dues 2,850.00

Conferences and Professional Development 1,912.12

Program Support (office expenses, insurance, etc.) 7,987.48

TOTAL EXPENDITURES: \$ 77,176.76

NET GAIN: \$ 18,485.31

MONETARY ASSETS:

Big Valley Wetlands/Melo Property Acquisition Fund \$ 97,124.00

Grants & Board Designated Funds (committed to specific projects) \$ 57,707.19

Operating Reserves (unrestricted) \$ 62,436.32

TOTAL MONETARY ASSETS AT CLOSE OF 2015 \$ 217,267.51

(Above) Every year the Lake County Land Trust is part of the Earth Day event at the Clearlake campus of Woodland Community College (formerly Yuba). For 2016 the event was titled the Earth and Wellness Fair and was a fantastic success with hundreds of people enjoying the many booths and informational tables that were presented by local community groups and agencies. Val Nixon, Lake County Land Trust president, was on hand to visit with people who stopped by to check out the many projects the Land Trust is involved with. She talked with Debi Sally, left, and Bill Christwitz, both residents of Clearlake.





Eight volunteers were at Rodman Preserve in April to help weed non-native grasses. There are several species of native California bunch grasses and many native Forbess that we are attempting to encourage by reducing the invasives. Catherine Koehler, Land Trust Executive Director, (center) shows Nancy Harby, left; and Darlene Hecomovich, the easiest way to differentiate between the natives and non-natives.



Pam Capito is a stalwart Land Trust volunteer who does everything from helping in the office, cleaning house and hosting parties to weeding the native bunch grasses!



The group of students and 4-H members that helped on the Native Grass project at Rodman Preserve include, in front: Adel Mukanova, Kelsey Rolfe, Katie Rolfe, Robin Adams, Catherine Braider, and Lilli Hill. In back are Jaden Bussard and Charlie Adams.



Darlene Hecomovich was one of the helpers at the yearly April weeding “party,” at the Rodman Preserve.



In February, 2016 student/4-H volunteers were at Rodman Preserve to weed non-native grasses and plant some of our California Native bunch grasses. Many thanks to Kerry Smith and Peggy Alexander for organizing the group and many thanks to the students and volunteers.



Charlie Adams and Jaden Bussard were a great deal of help at an early Spring work day at Rodman Preserve.

Grass Project update

The Rodman Preserve is home to several native California bunch grasses. An ongoing project there includes weeding around the bunches that already exist and planting new seedlings grown from seeds collected from the grasses on the property.

In early Spring a group of students from Clear Lake High School and several 4-H volunteers, organized by Kerry Smith and Peggy Alexander, came to the Rodman Preserve to help weed areas around the house and place the seedlings in the ground, along with flags to mark them. The youth primarily planted California Brome (*Bromus Carinatus*) and Blue Wild Rye (*Elymus glaucus*).

In April another group of volunteers participated in an annual “weeding party” along the walking trail where numerous types of bunch grass, like Squirrel Tail (*Elymous Elymoides*), Blue Wild Rye and Purple Needle Grass (*Stipa pulchra*) are growing.

If you are interested in getting involved in this project, contact Roberta Lyons at (707) 994-2024.



Enjoying total immersion in wildflowers during the Wildflower Walk & Conservation Celebration.



Standing at the property boundary with the newly protected lands stretching behind into the distance, Paul Aigner, stewardship director of the McLaughlin Reserve, celebrates the day.

Partnering for conservation

(Continued from page 1)

systems, resulted in wildflower displays hearkening back to legendary historic records describing vast sweeps of riotous colors blanketing the landscape. Goodness gracious, this was worth showing off! The McLaughlin Reserve posted an invitation to a Wildflower Walk and Conservation Celebration, led by McLaughlin Reserve staff, which was shared on social media by the Land Trust. Nearly 40 people showed up on a blustery but sunny April morning to walk through marvelous fields of wildflowers, with the ultimate destination being the newly protected lands.

The Land Trust is looking forward to fulfilling its role in protecting this valuable landscape. The conservation easement on this 23 acre parcel solidifies the integrity of the previously-conserved lands around it, ensuring that ecological processes and wise land stewardship can continue unhindered. I would wager that there will be more opportunities in the future for wildland lovers to visit this lovely and unique corner of Lake County.

Follow us on Facebook

**You can now become a Land Trust fan
on Facebook at facebook.com/LakeCountyLandTrust**

Gaia rises from the cinders

Rabbit Hill Preserve is vibrantly displaying its vigorous spring growth stimulated by last summer's fire



Diogenes Lantern is enjoying the full sun this year.



Common Woolly Sunflower and young Yerba Santa at the Rabbit Hill Preserve show off well against a backdrop of vigorously resprouting Leather Oak.

Become a member of The Lake County Land Trust

Membership Benefits include:

Golden Eagle: \$1,000+

All of the Member Benefits listed below, plus:
Exclusive invitation-only event at unique venue &
Reserved seating at our Annual Benefit Dinner

Osprey: \$500-\$999

All of the Member Benefits listed below, plus:
Private guided hikes by reservation of Land Trust properties

Blue Heron: \$200-\$499

All of the Member Benefits listed below, plus:
Invitational reception at the
Rodman Preserve Nature Center

White Pelican: \$100-\$199

The Member Benefit listed below, plus:
Invitation to our annual "State of the Land Trust" Coffee

Snowy Egret: \$20-\$99

Acknowledgement on Land Trust website, updated annually

Membership period is for one calendar year.

Yes! I want to become a member

- Yes, I would like to join the LCLT
- Please renew my membership with LCLT
- Please increase my membership support with the below contribution

Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City, ST, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Make checks payable to: LCLT
Mail to: PO Box 711, Lower Lake, CA 95457

I'd like to pay with my credit card:

Card Type: VISA MasterCard (circle one)

Card# _____

Expires ___/___ Security Code* _____

(*the 3 digit code on the back of your card)

Signature: _____

Please send my newsletter by Email US Mail

Lake County Land Trust Annual Coffee



We had a great turnout for our annual "State of the Land Trust," coffee on Saturday, March 26, 2016 held in honor of all of our \$100 plus yearly donors. Those attending heard about our major accomplishments over the past year and enjoyed delicious breakfast treats and coffee. The event was held at the Land Trust's Rodman Preserve near the Nice-Lucerne Cut Off. Jeanne Vierra and Sissa Nelson Harris enjoyed the morning.



Land Trust supporter Jim Harvey chats with LCLT president, Val Nixon, at the March 26 annual Land Trust coffee. This event is a great opportunity to visit with Land Trust board members and get updates on Land Trust projects and properties.



Land Trust volunteer and supporter, Pamela Capito, visits with board member Bill Lincoln, Carol Lincoln, and former board member, Barbara LeVasseur.



Kathleen Windrem, Sharon Zoller, Joyce Porterfield and Leanne Harvey enjoying some of the breakfast treats. Kathleen is secretary of the Lake County Land Trust.



The back porch at the Land Trust's Rodman Preserve is a great place to congregate. Nature walks are held at the preserve every Saturday morning with walks starting at 8 a.m. in the summer from June through August and 9 a.m. September through May.

Walks at Rodman Preserve fun for all



Spring is also a great time to enjoy the Preserve. This group showed up for the May 2016 walk and enjoyed viewing the native California bunch grasses and wildflowers.



All ages are welcome on the walks. Mason Elsa, left; Quinn Wynaacht and Leanne Rivera came out in February to participate in the Big Backyard Bird Count.



Lauren Rivera and Pamela Bordisso enjoyed a rest on the rocks during a summer walk at Rodman Preserve.

Walks at the Rodman Preserve are held every Saturday, weather permitting. Starting in June, through August, the walks start at 8 a.m. September through May walks start at 9 a.m. All ages are welcome, it is a fairly easy walk with only one significant hill. It usually takes about an hour and a half, depending on what comes up of interest! Because of the sensitive nature of the Preserve, dogs are not allowed. All ages are welcome; sturdy shoes are recommended and binoculars. Please join us!

Save the Date! Annual Dinner will be Saturday, Oct. 8

Please save the date for our Annual Land Trust Dinner which will be held on Oct. 8 this year at The Lodge at Blue Lakes. Festivities will start at 4 p.m. and include live music, appetizers, dinner and Lake County wines. As always a fun Silent Auction will be displayed and the Land Trust will present its Supporter of the Year Award. Tickets are \$75 per person.

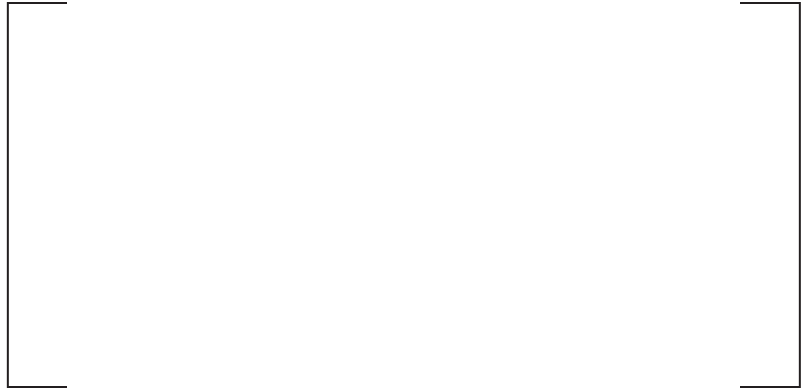


Lake County Land Trust

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2016 Calendar of Events

The Lake County Land Trust shares a common goal with many other organizations in the County, the State and the Country, that of preserving and enhancing our environment and educating the public about the wonders of nature. Through our newsletter we are able to publicize other events, both locally and some out-of-county that we believe will interest our members. The public is cordially invited to all of the events listed here.

Every Saturday – Walks at Rodman Preserve – The Lake County Land Trust holds Saturday morning walks at the Rodman Preserve. Walks start at 8 a.m. June through August, and start at 9 a.m. September through May. Participants are asked to meet at the Rodman Preserve Nature Education Center at 6350 Westlake Road (the corner of Westlake and the Nice-Lucerne Cutoff). No dogs please, and moderate to heavy rain will cancel. Call Roberta Lyons at (707) 994-2024 for information.

June 4 – 5 - 2016 - Sierra Club Yolano Group Snow Mountain hike/car camp. Snow Mountain is the northern anchor of the newly created Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument. As one book describes it, "The trip to the twin summits of Snow Mountain offers scenery that includes serene forests of pine and fir, a psychedelic assortment of multi-hued rocks, and sweeping vistas of mountains and valleys stretching to the far horizons." The 8+ mile roundtrip hike climbing 2200' to the twin peaks above 7000' certainly provides breathtaking views. Those attending will drive to Letts Lake Campground on Saturday, car camp overnight, and climb the mountain from the Summit Springs trailhead and drive home Sunday. No dogs, rain or snow cancels. Trip limited to 12 hikers. For logistical details contact the leader, 530-756-3973 or cramerjc@gmail.com.

June 11 - 8:30AM – AMIA nature walk at Anderson Marsh State Historic Park. The easy walk should last about 2 hours; Ranch House tour following. Free parking for participants. More info: info@andersonmarsh.org or (707) 995-2658.

June 12 – 2016 – Spring Celebration for the Lake County Land Trust. 3 – 6 p.m. hosted by Lynne and Bernie Butcher in the Garden of the Blue Wing Restaurant and Tallman Hotel in Upper Lake. Enjoy wine, hors d'oeuvres and live music. Tickets are \$50 per person with all funds going to support the Lake County Land Trust. Reservations required. Call (707) 262-0707. Payment in advance is encouraged.

Who We Are

The Lake County Land Trust is a local, 501 (c) (3) charitable nonprofit organization directly involved in protecting important land resources. These include: wetlands, wildlife habitats, parks, forests, watersheds, riparian stream corridors, lakeside areas, and trails. The trust is also concerned with property that has unique scenic, cultural, agricultural, educational, or historical value.

Officers:
President Val Nixon
Vice-President Bill Lincoln
Treasurer John Wise
Secretary Kathleen Windrem

Board Members:
Roberta Lyons, Tom Smythe,
Kathleen Windrem, and
Gillian Parrillo

Executive Director: Cathy Koehler

For info contact:
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