



# Lake County Land Trust

PO Box 1017, Lakeport, CA 95453 • (707)262-0707 • Fall/Winter 2016/17

## First Big Valley Wetlands purchase has been completed

By Roberta Lyons  
Member, LCLT board of directors

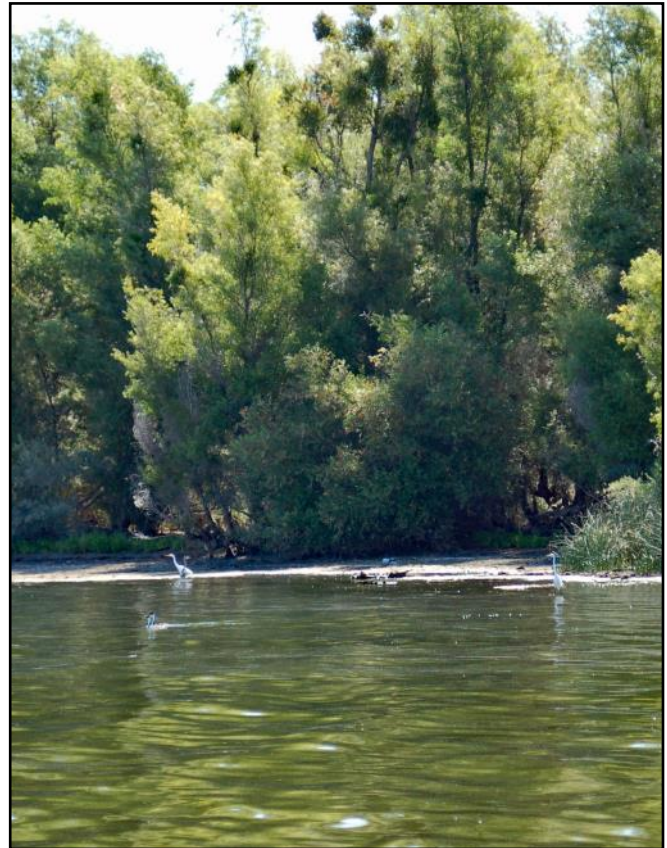
After almost six years, and with the help of numerous donors, the Lake County Land Trust (LCLT) is pleased to announce the completion of its first purchase of land in the Big Valley Wetlands preservation area. Purchase of the 34 acre shoreline and inland wetland piece of property from George and Lisa Melo was completed in October, 2016.

This property is a keystone parcel for what the Land Trust hopes will eventually be protection of the largest remaining area of wetland/riparian habitats adjacent to Clear Lake. The vital Clear Lake shoreline stretches from Clear Lake State Park, west to Lakeport and maintains high value habitats with pristine lakeshore vegetation and mature oaks used by a variety of species.

The Melo property, located on Clipper Lane off of Soda Bay Road includes beautiful native wetland and shoreline forests as well as upland wet meadow, pasture, and oaks. The Land Trust will steward this property for its wildlife values including its littoral shoreline that provides nesting habitat for both wildfowl and fish; and tules that provide a filtration system important to the water quality of Clear Lake.

A management plan will be developed for this parcel that may include some public access opportunities taking into consideration the ultimate goal of the project which is to protect the natural values of the land and shoreline.

The property is part of the Big Valley Wetlands Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP) developed by the Lake County Land Trust and approved by the State Department of Fish and Wildlife. The existence of the CAPP, which includes numerous properties along this



**Great Blue Herons on the shore of the newly acquired 34 acre Melo property that is now part of Big Valley Wetlands preservation area.**

shoreline, makes the area eligible for funding from the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) the land acquisition arm of the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The purchase price was \$215,000 plus appraisal and closing costs, of which \$110,000 was contributed by the WCB. The remainder of the funds came from individual donations, foundations and businesses. Of note was an original \$20,000 donation from John Sheridan and Andrea DuFlon which kicked off the fundraising campaign in 2014. The Pitzer Family Foundation of

*(Continued on page 10)*

# President's Message

By  
Val  
Nixon



**Val Nixon**

The fall leaves have burst into color and are now dropping around our beautiful county. It is a time of beauty and reflection before we head into a new year. Lake County Land Trust has had changes and accomplishments this year.

From a complete staff turnover to the final acquisition of the Melo property, we have grown and achieved

goals. We are now updating our infrastructure to allow for efficiency in our office, streamlining of procedures and uniform continual care for our properties.

If you go by Rabbit Hill Preserve in Middletown you will notice plant growth on the burned scarred land. Soon you will see a new sign replacing the old burned one. This year, Rabbit Hill became a destination for walkers during the first Tri-Uplifting event. Participants hiked to the top of the hill and tied ribbons of intention on the fence protecting three new trees. We look forward to building a coalition with local artists, schools and businesses to create more opportunities for use and appreciation of this unique historical spot.

Boggs Lake had a fair amount of water this past spring. This allowed for drone photography of the vernal pool. Now we will finish the educational kiosk with the spectacular photo on the final panel.

We will continue to work hard to acquire and protect areas of scenic, natural and historical significance in our county. With your help, as our county grows and political winds change, Lake County Land Trust will persevere in our efforts to assure that lands that preserve the health and beauty of our county are set aside.

Many thanks for your support.



**One of the panels at Boggs Lake designed by local artist Gerri Groody.**



**A drone picture of Boggs Lake.**



# Executive Director's Message

By Tom Smythe

Hello. I am the new Executive Director of the Land Trust, assuming the duties that Cathy Koehler performed admirably for the last six years. Cathy is now working full time for the University of California managing the McLaughlin Reserve. We wish her the best.



**Tom Smythe**

I have spent my 29 years in Lake County protecting water resources in Lake County, including surface and groundwater supplies. By protecting our water, I believe I have helped to protect important wildlife resources in Lake County, including the Clear Lake Hitch. In my new capacity as Executive Director of the Land Trust, I feel it is a continuation of these efforts.

While writing this column, I reviewed the vision statement of the Land Trust and was immediately aware that it refers to protecting the important “land and water resources” of Lake County. The protection of land and water resources is what protects the vitality of our diverse and rich plant, fish and wildlife resources.

I look forward to continuing the efforts of the Land Trust to protect the land, water, plants, fish and wildlife resources of Lake County. In the last year, the Land Trust has acquired three conservation easements and completed the purchase of the Melo property. These are some early steps in protecting the natural resources of Lake County for Lake County’s present and future generations. I look forward to working with you in the future.

### ***Follow us on Facebook***

You can now become a Land Trust fan on Facebook at [facebook.com/LakeCountyLandTrust](https://facebook.com/LakeCountyLandTrust)

# Annual Holiday Appeal will be starting soon

You will soon be receiving our annual Holiday Appeal in the mail and we look forward to hearing from our many supporters. Thank you all for your fantastic support in the past, and we thank you in advance for your continued support. We know you are as excited as we are about continuing to preserve Lake County’s beautiful natural places.



# Donate to the Land Trust while shopping on Amazon.com

Although we always encourage shopping at our local businesses first, if you do shop online using Amazon.com, you can designate part of the purchase price of your items to the Lake County Land Trust. Amazon offers a donation program wherein Amazon donates 0.5% of the purchase price of all eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. It does not cost you extra, you pay the same amount whether you use regular Amazon. Com, or the AmazonSmile interface.

Go to [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com) and sign in to your Amazon account (or create an account if you don’t have one). Then, if you have not already done so, you will be given an opportunity to choose a charity: just type “Lake County Land Trust,” into the search box, and select our organization and proceed to your normal shopping. During your shopping items eligible for the donation program will be noted on the item description page. Everything else about your shopping experience is unchanged. Whenever you place an order with amazon.com, go to [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com) first, and help support the Land Trust.



**Melissa Kinsel, Outreach Coordinator; Tom Smythe, Executive Director; and Anne Martin, Operations Coordinator.**

## **The Lake County Land Trust welcomes Tom Smythe as new Executive Director; Kinsel and Martin, new employees**

The Lake County Land Trust (LCLT) is pleased to announce the hiring of its new Executive Director, Tom Smythe. Smythe has been a long-time member of the LCLT board of directors and taking on the challenging job as the trust's executive director is a natural transition, noted the land trust's president, Val Nixon.

Catherine Koehler, the Lake County Land Trust's executive director for the last six has retired from her land trust position in order to devote her full time energies to her job as the co-manager of the McLaughlin Reserve in eastern Lake County. Koehler held both positions for six years and fortunately for the Lake County Land Trust she has agreed to become a member of the Board of Directors starting in January of 2017.

**Tom Smythe** has been a resident of Lake County since 1987. He recently retired from his job with the County of Lake where he worked as a Water Resources Engineer. Tom grew up in Kansas and Nebraska and received a Civil Engineering degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and an Environmental Engineering degree from the University of Kansas. Tom enjoys living in Lake County, boating, moun-

tain bicycling, and enjoying the great outdoors. Tom is married to Jackie, and has three adult daughters and three grandsons.

After working for the State of Kansas and a small engineering firm, he accepted a job with the County of Lake and moved to Lake County in July 1987. He served as Water Resources Engineer for the County for nearly 29 years, retiring in July 2016.

He supervised flood control facilities, administered numerous State grants, dealt with surface and ground water supplies, and dealt with numerous water quality issues. In 1995, he began coordinating the development of the Middle Creek Restoration Project with the Corps of Engineers and the State Department of Water Resources to reduce flood risk and improve Clear Lake water quality and habitat conditions. Tom joined the Board of Directors of the Lake County Land Trust in 2006 and has been an invaluable source of advice and knowledge during his board tenure. He now is bringing that knowledge and experience to the land trust as its new executive director.

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Along with welcoming a new executive director, the Lake County Land Trust is also welcoming our new Outreach Coordinator, Melissa Kinsel; and new Operations Coordinator, Anne Martin.

The Land Trust has recognized the importance of implementing a new approach to its community outreach and has created this new, part-time position; and at the same time is continuing its careful stewardship of its funds by engaging our Operations Coordinator, Anne Martin to handle bookkeeping and records management.

A Lake County resident since 2004, **Melissa Kinsel**, has a family history in Lake County dating back to the 1930s. Although a native of Washington State, Melissa was raised mainly in the Bay Area, and graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a BBS in Marketing.

Melissa’s professional background includes hospitality sales and marketing, as well as experience in development, philanthropy, and marketing for a local hospital. Melissa loves Lake County for its glorious landscapes, outdoor recreational opportunities, and close-knit sense of community. While raising her two daughters and son with her husband, Jim Kinsel, DDS, she spends lots of time volunteering at the school and

attending kids’ sports activities. Melissa, a marathon runner and triathlete, is also a member of the Lake County Board of Education and a founder of Tri Uplifting Mindfulness Triathlon.

She teaches yoga and fitness training to stay healthy and balanced, believes in the power of togetherness, and is thrilled to be a part of the Lake County Land Trust team!

**Anne Martin** is a relative “newcomer,” to Lake County, but during her one year residence here she has already fallen in love with this place. She is a Northern California native though, born in San Francisco and raised on the Peninsula. Anne had an exciting career in Silicon Valley hi-tech marketing, and finished her career as a graduate student advisor in Biological engineering at Utah State University. During her career she had profit and loss responsibilities for major accounts in the semi-conductor industry and she also developed budgets while working at the university.

Anne retired to Lake County in July 2015. When she is not helping the Lake County Land Trust, she is outside enjoying beautiful Lake County. A lifelong horse-woman, Anne pursues the art of dressage and trail rides at Highland Springs.

## 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 of the Lake County Land Trust!

- 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 1017, Lakeport, CA 95453

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



# Secretary of Agriculture attends Land Trust dinner; Peter Windrem is honored as this year's supporter

Over 100 people gathered at The Lodge at Blue Lakes on Oct. 8 to enjoy a late afternoon event featuring live jazz, a silent auction, delicious dinner, great speakers and the honoring of local attorney, Peter Windrem. The Land Trust holds its fundraising dinner every October to bring supporters together to hear interesting keynote speakers and to honor its "Supporter of the Year."

This year, local attorney and rancher, Peter Windrem, was honored for his many years of service to the Land Trust. Windrem has donated many hours of pro bono work to the land trust, helping the organization negotiate complicated escrows and options on properties. Windrem was presented with a plaque and a resolution of commendation from Congressman Mike Thompson, who was at the event to present the resolution in person to Windrem.

California State Secretary of Agriculture, Karen Ross, was the keynote speaker. She presented an uplifting view of 21<sup>st</sup> Century California agriculture. She pointed out that modern technology and an awareness of the limited nature of resources are leading to practices for sustainable farming. Ross believes there is a collective aim to leave future generations improved soil and water and to manage for the long term.

At the same time, she believes, there is an effort being made to link consumers with producers through an enlarged effort at making everyone aware of the processes and economics that link farms to tables. "Land Trusts and other environmental organizations are joining with agricultural businesses to establish easements and preserves that include working farms and farms that include habitat restoration as long-term goals," she noted. She stressed that enlightened government agencies must encourage such cooperative efforts with advice and funding.

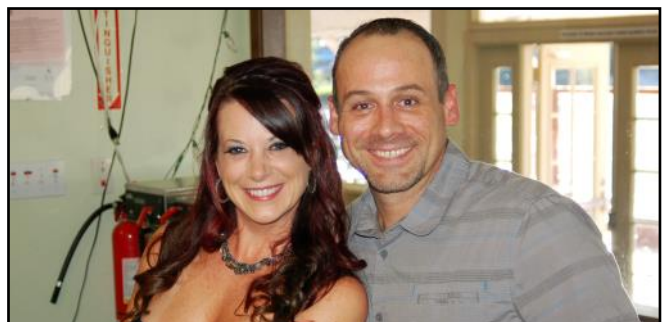
Those attending enjoyed a silent auction that featured local artwork and a delicious dinner. Lake County Land Trust president, Val Nixon reviewed the accomplishments of the land trust over the last year, including completing two conservation easements and the purchasing of a 34 acre wetland parcel on the shores of Clear Lake in Big Valley. She also thanked retiring Executive Director, Catherine Koehler, and welcomed new Land Trust staff: Tom Smythe, Executive Director; Melissa Kinsel, Outreach Coordinator and Anne Martin, Operations Coordinator.



**Peter Windrem was named the Land Trust's 2016 Supporter of the Year for his tireless work for the Land Trust over the years; helping with numerous complicated land transactions and always being on hand to offer sound advice. Pictured are Congressman Mike Thompson, who attended the dinner; Peter Windrem and Val Nixon, president of the Lake County Land Trust.**



**Olga Clymire and Kathy Barnwell peruse some of the nifty items available in the LCLT silent auction.**



**Every year Mandy Keller and Ryan Piccolo serve wine for the annual fundraising dinner.**

## *LCLT Annual Dinner in pics*



**California State Secretary of Agriculture, Karen Ross, was guest speaker for the annual Land Trust dinner; she is pictured with Land Trust board member, Bill Lincoln; Congressman Mike Thompson, and Carol Lincoln.**



**Tom, Rick and Harry entertained the crowd of over 100 people during the social hour.**



**Our local Clear Lake State Park volunteers Neil and Bobbi Towne enjoyed the evening.**

## **Thank you to everyone who made Annual Land Trust Dinner a success**

Once again our Annual Dinner and Silent Auction were very successful, raising over \$4,000 for the Lake County Land Trust. Thanks to everyone who attended and participated! We wish to thank all of the generous donors who contributed to the silent auction. Also, many thanks to our dinner sponsors this year: **The Law Office of Dennis Fordham, Barrick Gold Corp. (Homestake Mining Co.), Brad and Kathy Barnwell, Roberta and Harry Lyons, and the Law Office of Katzoff and Riggs LLP.**

Thanks also to our many community volunteers including: Kelseyville High School Volunteers, Bonnie Piccolo, Rian Piccolo, and Mandy Keller. Thanks to Tom Nixon, Rick McCann and Harry Lyons for providing music. Wine donations were especially appreciated from: **Steele Winery, Six Sigma, Wildhurst, Shannon Ridge and Chacewater wineries.**

**We also appreciate the attendance of our California State Secretary of Agriculture, Karen Ross and Congressman Mike Thompson.**

**As usual, Peter and Maryann Schmid did a fabulous job hosting the dinner at their beautiful facility, The Lodge at Blue Lakes.**

**Looking forward to seeing everyone next year!**

**Many Thanks to our Silent Auction donors!**

Lyle Madeson, Gene Paleno, The Lodge at Blue Lakes, Roberta Lyons, Pat Harmon, Monica Rosenthal, Mandy Keller, Bonnie Piccolo, Donna Thompson, Kathy Scavone, Val Nixon, John Sheridan, Karen Weston, Jeanne Vierra, Boatique Winery, Bethany Rose, Gregory Graham Winery, Ben van Steenburgh III, Congressman Mike Thompson, Lisa Wilson, Sandy Leggitt, Karan Mackey, Shannan King, Pam and Gary Maes, Cathy Koehler, Chacewater Winery, David Velesquez, Keith Dunkleberger, Lisa Kaplan/Middletown Art Center, Natasha Sokoloski, Tom Scavone, Steele Winery, Olga Steele and Joyce Anderson.



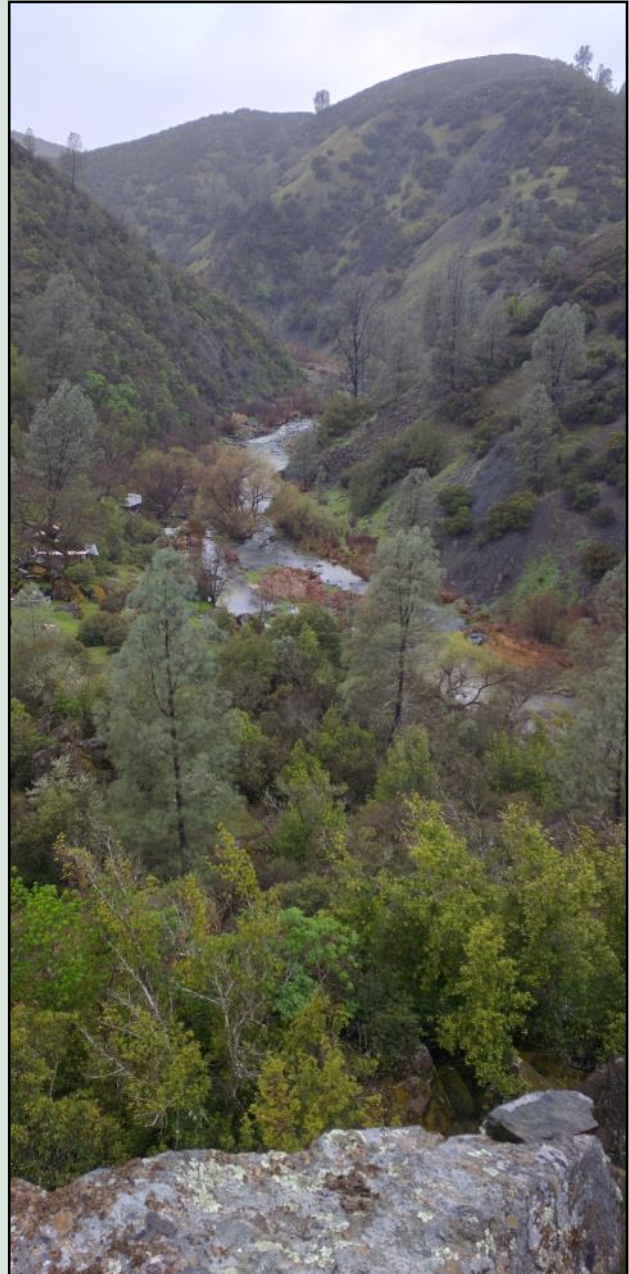
# Land Trust participates in important effort to preserve oak and chaparral lands

In March of 2013, the Lake County Land Trust was approached by a group calling themselves "The Graybeards" about their desire to protect a property at the foot of the Indian Valley Reservoir.

This 1280 acre property, known as the Silver Spur Ranch, is surrounded by federal BLM lands and encompasses upland Blue Oak Woodlands and Chaparral, and a significant stretch of the North Fork of Cache Creek downstream of where it emerges from the Indian Valley Reservoir dam.

The Graybeards loved this remote property and the excellent fish habitat of the creek, and were working with the property owners to find a conservation buyer. The Lake County Land Trust was not in a position to acquire this property, but we brought together other potential conservation partners to visit the property as a first step to exploring possible ways of conserving it. We asked our good friends from the conservation group Tuleyome to consider getting involved, and they agreed to come with us on the initial site visit.

Three years later, in the summer of 2016, Tuleyome purchased the property. It now protects high quality wildlife habitat and will provide public nature-oriented recreation opportunities in the future. Another check-mark for a successful conservation-partnership endeavor!



**The Lake County Land Trust was able to help protect the Silver Spur Ranch. Pictured are two views of the beautiful Silver Spur Ranch property.**



# Middletown residents hold Tri Uplifting healing event

Since the Valley Fire devastated the Middletown and Cobb areas over a year ago, the communities have made many efforts to heal and bring survivors together. In September a group of community members sponsored the Tri Uplifting event in Middletown. As part of the program, those participating walked around Middletown and up to the Lake County Land Trust's Rabbit Hill Park.

Participants wrote their "intentions for the community," on ribbons, and then tied them on a fence protecting new little McNab Cypress seedlings, trees planted by volunteers to signify re-growth and community.

Volunteers will water and care for the trees. The Land Trust would like to encourage anyone in the Middletown area who is interested in getting more involved with the Rabbit Hill Park to please call the Land Trust office at (707) 262-0707.



**A group of participants hiked up Rabbit Hill to tie ribbons on the fence surrounding the newly planted McNab Cypress. The ribbons represented intentions for the community.**



**Joanne Saccato points out one of the many mountain peaks that can be viewed from the top of Rabbit Hill.**



**One of the organizers of the event, Merci Hoskins, with one of the ribbons of intention.**



**Natasha Sokoloski ties a ribbon on the fence.**





## First Big Valley Wetlands purchase has been completed

*(Continued from page 1)*

Southern California also donated \$35,000; The Priest Foundation, the Keeling-Barnes Family Foundation, funds from both the Robert Morse and John Graham bequests were used as were donations from numerous individuals and businesses that are listed in the box on the next page.

“George and Lisa Melo need to be commended for their patience during this whole process,” noted Lake County Land Trust president, Val Nixon, “six years is a long time for a property transaction, but they were extremely patient and supportive the whole time.”

### LEAVING A LEGACY

What better legacy is there to leave than your commitment to protecting Lake County’s natural resources for future generations? Whether you are taking those first important steps toward planning your estate or are in the process of updating your estate plan, please consider a donation to the Lake County Land Trust. To discuss how you can name the Trust in your will or estate plan call the Land Trust’s Executive Director, Tom Smythe at (707) 262-0707.





# Lake County Land Trust's Big Valley Wetlands 'Melo' Property Contributors

## \$0- 999

Judy Cox  
Herman Garcia  
William & Susan Groechel  
Arnaud Hubert  
Larry & Kathy Jansen  
Rick & Suzanna Macedo  
Linda Marie  
The Oregon Foundation  
Weldon & Dee Parker  
Michelle Quere  
Harry Robinson  
Eugene & Delonee Rotter  
Nikki & Jerry White  
Thurston Williams & Annelle Durham  
Peter & Kathy Windrem

## \$1,000- \$4,999

Anonymous  
Anonymous  
Jonathan & Charlotte Ambrose  
Beckstoffer Vineyards  
Bruce Brugler  
Bernard & Lynne Butcher  
County of Lake  
Dennis Fordham  
Michael Friel  
Christine Groff  
Keeling-Barnes Family Foundation  
Catherine Koehler & Paul Aigner  
Tom & Aaltje Koski  
William & Carol Lincoln  
The Lodge at Blue Lakes  
Roberta & Harry Lyons  
Tom & Val Nixon  
Edward Oswalt  
Gillian Parillo & Pierre Cutler  
Russell & Joyce Porterfield  
Priest Family Charitable Fund  
Redbud Audubon Society  
John & Sasha Reynolds  
John Wise & Evelyn Wachtel  
Broc & Sharon Zoller

## \$5,000- \$9,999

Anonymous  
Richard & Angela Birk  
In memory of Mr. John Graham  
Charlotte Griswold  
In memory of Mr. Robert Morse

## \$10,000 and up

Anonymous  
In memory of Bita & Alton Duflon  
In memory of Ron & Dorothy Grew  
The Pitzer Family Foundation





# 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.

**Dec. 10, 2016 – Saturday** – Sierra Club Lake Group hike on the Glen Eden Trail. Fairly steep trail rewarded with great views including Clear Lake, Snow Mountain, Hull Mountain, Goat Rock area. Bring water and lunch. Meet 10 a.m. eight miles out Scotts Valley Road from the 11<sup>th</sup> Street/Scotts Valley Road exit off Highway 29 in Lakeport (approx. two miles from Hwy 20 at Blue Lakes). Call to reserve. Leader Paul Farley (707) 263-9320. Heavy rain cancels (call).

**Dec. 9, 2016 – Friday** – 6 p.m. Annual Sierra Club Holiday party at the Lower Lake Methodist Church Community Room, 16255 Second St. in Lower Lake. Potluck and completely free. The club will provide a main course but guests should bring beverages and a side dish and their own plates, glasses, and eating utensils. RSVPs please by calling Ed Robey at 994-8304 or email: edrobey@wildblue.net.

**Jan. 1, 2017 – Sunday** – Anderson Marsh State Historic Park will hold a free New Year's Day hike beginning at noon Jan. 1, 2017 as part of America's State Parks First Day Hikes being held in State Parks in all 50 states. The First Day Hikes offer individuals and families an opportunity to begin the New Year rejuvenating and connecting with the outdoors by taking a healthy hike at a state park close to home. First Day Hikes offer a great way to get outside, exercise, enjoy nature and welcome the New Year with friends and family. Anderson Marsh State Historic Park is located off Highway 53 between Lower Lake and the City of Clearlake.

## 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.

<b>Officers:</b>	<b>For info contact:</b>
President Val Nixon	Lake County Land Trust,
Vice-President Bill Lincoln	PO Box 1017, Lakeport
Treasurer John Wise	CA 95453 • (707)262-0707
Secretary Kathleen Windrem	(email)
Compliance Officer Gillian Parrillo	lclt@lakecountylandtrust.org
<b>Board Members:</b>	<a href="http://www.lakecountylandtrust.org">www.lakecountylandtrust.org</a>
Roberta Lyons	Tax I.D. No. 68-0332712
Melissa Kinsel-Outreach Coordinator	
Anne Martin-Operations Coordinator	

Executive Director: Tom Smythe

A sponsor member of the



Lake County Land Trust