2020
APRIL

Journal

Bodega Land Trust

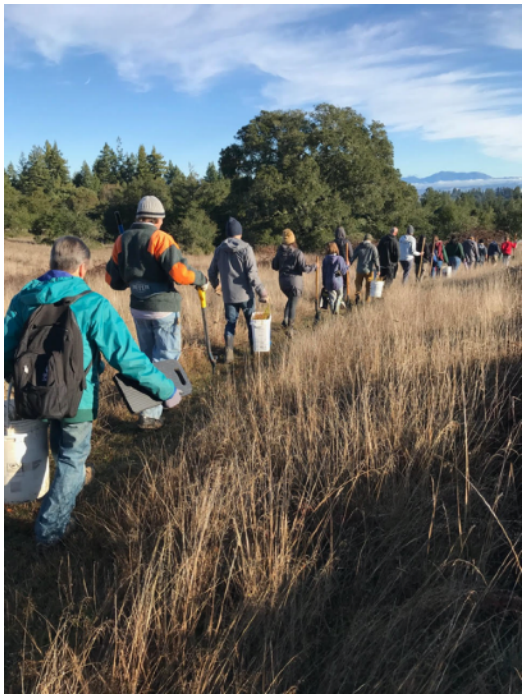
". . . When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect." . . . *Aldo Leopold (1886-1948), American Forester*

New Conservation Easements

We are very pleased and grateful to have donations of three conservation easements since the last issue of the Journal. These donations demonstrate the generosity and care for the land that make the work of Bodega Land Trust possible.

Szecsey-Zweig Easement

Christopher and Mary Szecsey, and Peter Zweig and Heidi Schmidt, as co-owners of the land, donated 55 acres of their 74 acre parcel adjoining the Occidental Arts and Ecology Center (OAEC) on Coleman Valley Rd, Occidental. The easement protects about 34 acres of redwood forest and potential forest, and about 16 acres of coastal prairie. Provision is made for management of the property to speed the recovery of both areas to fully mature ecological systems. The property is part of the watershed of Dutch Bill Creek and protects a seasonal tributary that is an important water source for OAEC.



Off to work we go!
Photo by Kimberly Burr of Forest Unlimited

Because the land was protected by this new conservation easement, Forest Unlimited mobilized over 70 volunteers to plant 1,000 redwood seedlings on the property in early January. This was a special opportunity to partner with friends from a local conservation organization. –

BODEGA LAND TRUST
PO BOX 254, BODEGA, CA 94922
FOR INFORMATION CALL 707.874-9001
WWW.BODEGALANDTRUST.ORG E-MAIL TO: INFO@BODEGALANDTRUST.ORG

Our Mission

Our primary purpose is the conservation of land and its communities, especially in the Salmon Creek watershed. Our main tools are conservation easements and education.

A Message from the President


Don Sherer

Elsewhere in this issue of the Journal we describe three new conservation easements donated by friends of Bodega Land Trust, who felt a connection to the land. When you feel a connection to the land, you want to protect it. Bodega Land Trust relies upon you, our supporters and West County neighbors, to act upon your feelings of connection to the land, which is our collective home. It is only your support and donations which allow us to progress in our mission: to preserve the health and beauty of our human, agricultural, and natural communities.

In spite of the disruption of the Covid-19 pandemic the Bodega Land Trust continues to pursue its mission wherever possible. We pray that all of you, our neighbors, friends, and supporters, will be well and safe during this difficult time.

Don Sherer
President, Bodega Land Trust

PLEASE SUPPORT BODEGA LAND TRUST

DONATE to Bodega Land Trust
(look for the Donate button on our website)

or mail a check to: Bodega Land Trust
PO BOX 254, BODEGA, CA 94922

SIGNUP for our email list

Please go to **BODEGALANDTRUST.ORG**
to find this and past Journals online

Thank You!

Find us on

We are sad to say goodby to a very dear friend of Bodega Land Trust Board

Sandy Sharp

Sadly we report the passing of our dear long term friend Sandy Sharp; he passed early Saturday morning on June 29th, 2019. His last day was spent at home looking out the window of his beautiful home overlooking the hills of the Bodega Pastures that he loved so much.

Sandy was both one of the founders of Bodega Land Trust and an invaluable long term member in many capacities, from board member to treasurer, from monitoring coordinator to Journal editor. We fondly remember him and wish him well on his next journey.

Bodega Land Trust Advisory Council

Harold Appleton
Registered Professional Forester, Certified Professional Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Specialist

Carl Blanco
Website administrator

Alastair Bleifuss
Director, Santa Rosa Creek Stewardship Program, former BLT Board member

Ann Cassidy
Board member, Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District

Ellie Fairbairn
Post-Doctoral Research Fellow, Bodega Bay Marine Lab; BLT Walks & Talks; former BLT Board member

Hazel Flett
Shepherd; BLT Walks & Talks Program; BLT Journal editor

James Hansen
California Fish & Wildlife

David Katz
past ED, Sonoma Land Trust

Eric Koenigshofer
Former Chair, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, former BLT Board member

Allison Pharis
Real Estate Broker

Robin Rudderow
President, Rancho Bodega Historical Society; lawyer

Subir Sanyal
Mycologist; chef

David Shatkin
Salmon Creek Watershed Council

Nick Tipon
Native American educator ❑

Introducing Michele Larkin, our newest Board Member

Michele Larkin grew up in the hills west of Sebastopol and returned to Sonoma County after graduating from Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo. She has lived in Occidental since 2001, has taught Spanish at El Molino High School in Forestville since 1997, and yoga classes in Occidental since 2009. She and her husband, Ted Richardson, own Bella Ridge Farm, where they grow apples and pears. They sell their certified organic fruit at Santa Rosa and Sebastopol farmers markets and to locally-owned grocery stores and restaurants. Michele is a California Naturalist. She loves to hike and study local plants and wildlife. She volunteers as a docent for LandPaths at the Bohemia Ecological Preserve and as a monitor for Sonoma Land Trust and Bodega Land Trust.

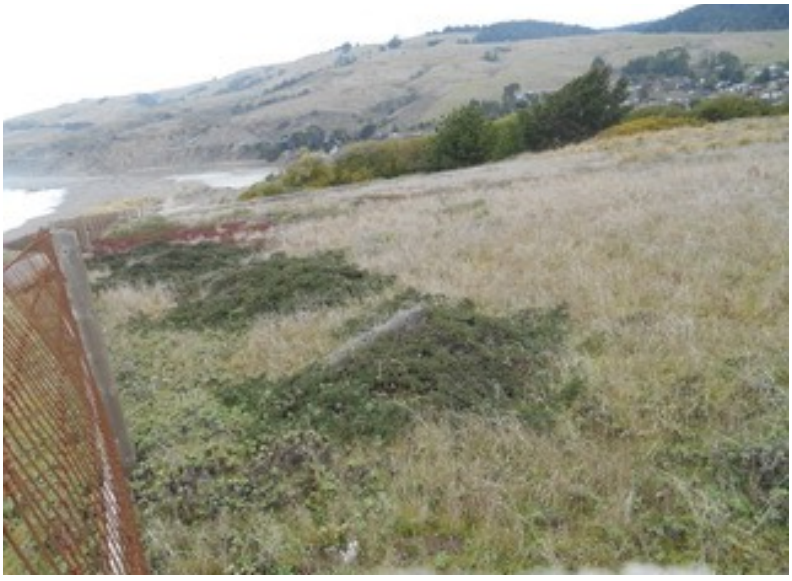
Bernstein Easement

Allan and Laura Bernstein donated a conservation easement protecting 23 acres of forested property as permanent wilderness, while allowing recreational use. The easement borders and protects one-eighth of a mile of Fay Creek, a tributary of Salmon Creek. Bodega Land Trust now holds three easements along Fay Creek, protecting about a mile and a half of its length.

Bernstein Easement - Photo by Michele Larkin

Elias-Williams Easement

Mary Williams and Peter Elias donated a small but important conservation easement covering a one acre parcel overlooking Goat Rock at the mouth of the Russian River. The easement prevents construction, which would negatively affect the view of the ridgeline. The property adjoins Sonoma Coast Park.



Elias-Williams Easement - Photo by Sharon Sadler

SEEING THE FOREST FOR THE TREES: A DEFENSE OF ACTIVE FOREST MANAGEMENT

Jason Wells, Sonoma Resource Conservation District

As a forester and native Petaluman, I'm proud to be a member of the west county community. It's obvious to me that Sonoma County's residents have the health and wellbeing of our incredibly diverse and beautiful northern California ecology at heart. I've been working as a professional forester in Sonoma County for almost two years, and in that time I will confidently state that the most common questions I receive are about fire, its role in our local ecology, and whether or not reactions by Cal Fire and other agencies to streamline fuels reduction are overzealous. One of my favorite things about living and working in Sonoma County is the general interest that residents here have for doing right by the land and doing right for the people that live here. There is a long history of environmentalism in Sonoma County that should be praised, and it's encouraging to know that I live in a place where people care about leaving a functional planet for future generations. With this mind, I know that my message may be controversial, but I have faith that the community will hear me out: our forests need more active management, and yes, that includes removing some trees.

Let me take a step back and acknowledge our local history. Historically, we humans have done a great deal of damage to the environments in which we live, and Sonoma County has not been exempt. Logging in the region began with the introduction of Russian settlers in the early 1800s, but their operations were fairly limited in scope and were localized to the area around Fort Ross. The newly independent Mexican government was also eyeing the area, and multiple land grants were issued to encourage settlement; again most logging in the area was limited in scope but a booming tanbark industry began around this time. Local tanoak trees were stripped of their bark for tanneries, which resulted in the death of many of the larger tanoak trees in the region. By the 1840s the Russians were leaving the area due to a declining pelt supply (their primary motivation for colonization of the area) as well as the extensive costs associated with maintaining operations so far from their homeland. As history tells, the Mexican Government would not become the beneficiary of the former Russian land claims. The Mexican-American war ended in 1848 with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which gave the United States ownership of California. The Gold Rush immediately preceeded this annexation of land, and in response to a flood of immigrant miners from the eastern United States who dramatically increased the local demand for wood, logging of the redwoods began in earnest.

As time went on, technological advances, such as the advent of the steam donkey, improved the ability of loggers to increase production. Fast forward to the production boom following World War Two: logging technologies had increased to include the use of handheld chainsaws, which meant an old growth tree could be felled in under a day, rather than a week. Caterpillar tractors were employed to build roads and to skid logs, which were still being skidded downhill to the nearest stream channel. These roads and skid trails increased the pace at which logs could be delivered to the mill, and to our great detriment, also increased the erosion and mobi-

lization of fine sediment in every logged watershed. Eroded soils filled in our local rivers and streams, the negative effects of which are still being felt by local fish and wildlife populations. At the time, in order to meet the growing demand for wood products, the government was actively encouraging the liquidation of timber resources by taxing landowners on the standing value of their trees.

Ladder fuels unthinned - Photo by Jason Wells

By the 1960s and 70s, there was a growing awareness regarding the destruction of the environment, which gave rise to a movement that brought along protections such as the Porter-Cologne Clean Water Act, the Federal Clean Water Act, and the Federal Endangered Species Act. In 1973 the Z'Berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act was signed, creating the modern California Forest Practice Rules, and in 1976 the Z'Berg-Warren-Keene-Collier Forest Taxation Reform Act was signed, exempting timber from taxation until the point of sale. These laws were just the start of the fight for a better environment, and in the 40 or so years since their passage there has been considerable fight both in the courts and on the ground to improve industry practices related to forestry, agriculture, and other land use practices.

Clearly, a lot of good has come from the environmental movement. With that said, it's important to recognize that much of the modern environmental movement's stance on forest management is largely rooted in John Muir's ethic of preservation. The preservationist ethos makes the case that America's wildlands can restore and manage themselves in the absence of human

influence. This approach has been popular for many years, and is the management strategy taken by National Parks. But John Muir, however well intentioned, disregarded the extensive and integral influence native inhabitants have had on the land.

Humans have been living in and around Sonoma County's coast for at least 8,000 years. The original inhabitants of this land were adept hunters, gatherers, and active managers of the landscape. They managed the local ecology to maximize the abundance of the plants and animals which provided food and materials for their continued survival. One of the key tools in the native population's management toolbelt was prescribed fire, which was used for a number of beneficial purposes: promoting foraging grasses, stimulating acorn production, promoting open understories for hunting, and stimulating coppicing of sedges and willows for basketry. By burning often and regularly, natives not only cultivated this landscape to promote an environment that was beneficial for their needs, they had a widespread effect on the ecology as a whole. Over time this kind of management promoted large and well-spaced trees with adaptations, such as thick bark, that were resistant to fire. These practicers managed pest and disease populations by cleaning the forest floor and effectively fumigating the canopy. With the introduction of European-style land management--removing large trees for lumber and suppressing fire--the fire-dependent ecology was greatly disrupted. The result is forests that are crowded with small trees, rife with invasive plants and susceptible to disease.

Understory thinned - Photo by Jason Wells

Does this sound familiar? Chances are you have driven our country roads and seen the road flanked by impenetrable woods, trees two-inches-thick growing just a few feet from the next tree. When discussing heathy forests, it's important to remember that trees require soil nutrients, water, carbon dioxide, and light in order to survive. An acre of land can only support a given number of trees, and this number is largely influenced by the availability of those necessary resources on that acre. Additionally, any given acre of land can support a higher number of smaller trees than it can large trees, and as trees grow they need more space to be successful. As trees begin to compete for these resources, they become more susceptible to disease and insect damage.

Taking no action is a management decision, and it is one that has left us with forests in a poor and fragile state. These forest stands are probably the ones that keep you lying awake at night, thinking of the next great wildfire. Unlike those forests that natives adapted to fire— forests with large trunks, thick bark and well-spaced trees—these forests are made of kindling-size trees. The bad news is that we may not be able to manage our forests with the broad use of fire like natives did. The good news is that we can mimic the effects of fire in our forests by physically removing trees. And we can do this in a more ecologically responsible manner than our historical counterparts.

So, what does this really look like? If we want our forests to be resilient to disease and fire, if we want to have long-lived trees that sequester carbon for decades, we should promote active forest management that encourages maintaining larger trees and a number of trees per acre of a given size that the ground can support. If you want to promote late-seral redwood ecology, you are promoting the growth of trees that may be in excess of 60 inches in diameter. The ground may only support a few dozen trees of that size, which means a (common) stand containing 200+ trees averaging 18 inches in diameter is going to lose 150+ trees before those conditions are met. In other words, having a healthy forest stand in the future may eventually require removing most of the trees currently in the stand.

I understand that the idea of removing trees may be difficult to face, but I hope to convince you that it really is in the forest's best interest, and in ours, too. The next time you go out walking your woods, or take a drive on our wooded country roads, take a look at the forest with fresh eyes. Could you imagine the forest looking more open? Looking safer? Looking more beautiful? It's time for Sonoma County to think with an open mind about the benefits of ecologically- and scientifically-sound forest management, which, counter-intuitively, may include logging to meet our goals. –

Jason Wells is California Registered Professional Forester #3014. He serves all of Sonoma County as the forester for the Sonoma Resource Conservation District. Contact him to learn more about developing a LandSmart® Conservation Plan for your forested property. JWells@SonomaRCD.org, (707) 569-1448 x107

Hayfield by Jim Grant

An agricultural picture of Bodega Pastures
To Hazel this is the sheep's feed for next winter

WALKS & TALKS 2018-2019-2020

Birdwatching Walk in Bodega - May 19, 2018
Lisa Hug led a bird walk on Salmon Creek Rd and talked about the newly updated Madrone Audubon Sonoma County Breeding Bird Atlas (http://madroneaudubon.org/).

Kortum Trail - July 22, 2018
Cea Higgins, the Executive Director for Coastwalk, led a walk on the beautiful Kortum Trail.

Jasper O'Farrell - October 14, 2018
Frank Baumgardner, author of Blood Will Tell, shared the fascinating history and lasting impacts of Jasper O'Farrell in Sonoma County & beyond.

Lambing Walk at Bodega Pastures - January 12, 2019
Hazel Flett led a walk at Bodega Pastures, discussing sustainable ranching,
visiting the adorable new generation of lambs.

Traditional Environmental Knowledge (TEK) & Climate Change - February 23, 2019
Nick Tipon, a Pomo Tribal Elder, discussed the science of climate change and the use of TEK, including the use of prescribed burns to manage our forests.

Tannery Canyon Rim Trail Hike - April 7, 2019
Darlene LaMont led a moderate hike at the gorgeous, privately-owned Tannery Creek Preserve. Darlene is a nature photographer and has been hiking in Tannery Creek Canyon for 40 years.

Photography Workshop with Jerry Dodrill - May 19, 2019
Award winning photographer Jerry Dodrill shared photos and techniques in the classroom and in the field at Bodega Pasture Ranch.

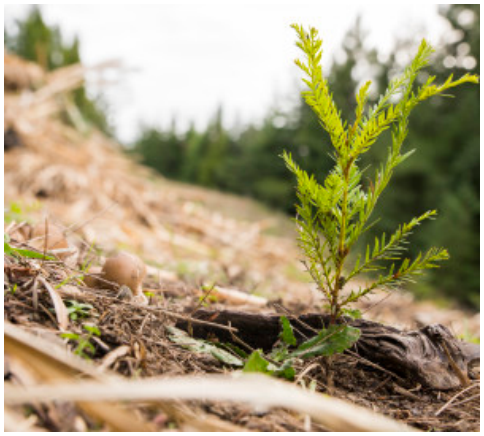
Lambing Walk at Bodega Pastures - January 18, 2020
The first walk of the year was, as usual, a walk through the lambing fields at Bodega Pastures. We noticed fields that had been grazed in rotation, fed hay and admired this year's beautiful lambs and their moms.

Planting Redwoods For Wildlife At Tannery Creek - February 16, 2020
Gold Ridge RCD & Bodega Land Trust hosted a planting of 350 redwood seedlings and discussion of the newly installed wildlife habitat enhancement project for the benefit of coho salmon, steelhead trout and other wildlife in Tannery Creek.

PLANTING REDWOODS FOR WILDLIFE AT TANNERY CREEK

Adriana Stagnaro, Gold Ridge RCD

On a windy Sunday morning in February 2020, more than 30 volunteers arrived at the Bodega Pastures ranch, just one mile from the town of Bodega, to plant hundreds of redwood seedlings along Tannery Creek, a salmon-bearing tributary to Salmon Creek. Though small now, these redwood seedlings will someday grow tall and shade the creek, cooling its water for the coho salmon and steelhead trout that call it home.



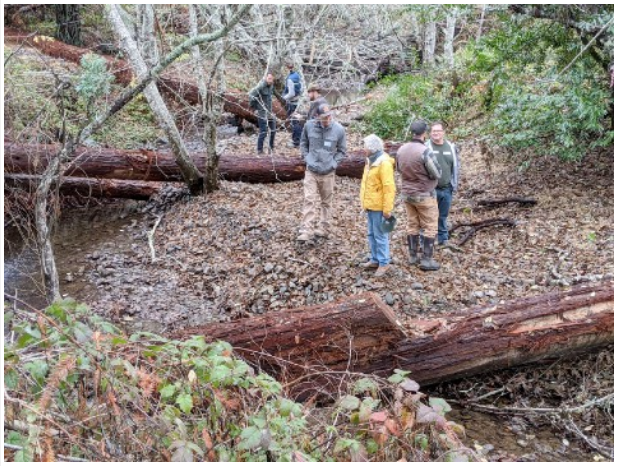
Redwood seedling
Photo by Savetheredwoods.org

Volunteers were invited to this workday by the Bodega Land Trust and Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District (RCD), two organizations working with Bodega Pastures to keep the thousand-acre ranch an enduring home for wildlife and an open space for agriculture. The redwood planting is a final step in a project that aims to improve Tannery Creek's habitat for salmonids like steelhead and coho. Funded by a grant from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Fisheries Restoration Program and managed by the Gold Ridge RCD, the project installed fifty redwood and Douglas fir logs into the stream channel to mimic the natural occurrence of fallen

riparian trees. Fallen trees provide immense benefits to wildlife in the creek by offering shade and shelter for aquatic species, as well as an above-water perch for terrestrial and semi-aquatic wildlife. Large wood also encourages the formation of pools in the creek and can help sort the gravels that adult salmon rely on for spawning and rearing their young.

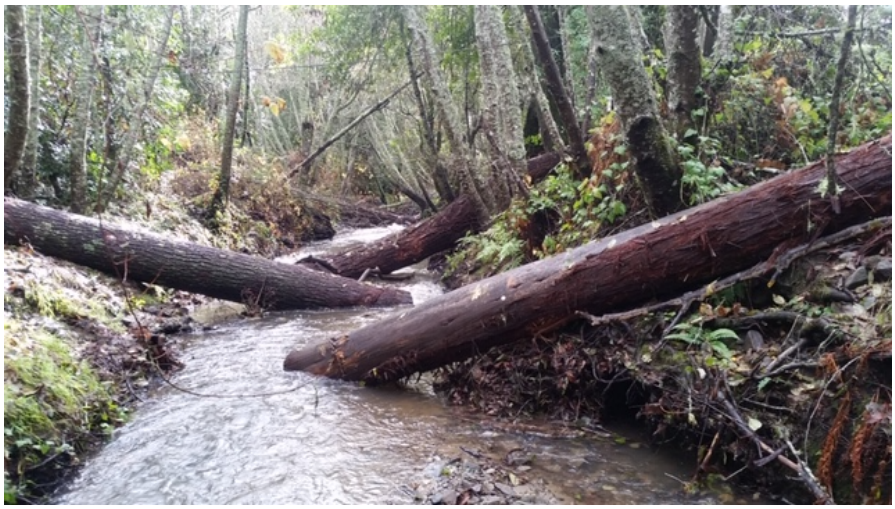
Energetic volunteers of all ages walked the third-of-a-mile project area, entering the open trails created by heavy equipment in what is otherwise a thickly vegetated riparian forest. Three hundred and fifty redwood seedlings were carried, planted and watered in less than two hours. Each young tree also received a "twig tent" made of branches and fallen bark to protect against hungry deer. With their roots near to the creek, their crowns in full to partial sun, the program organizers anticipate 80 percent of the seedlings will survive.

Historically landowners and managers have removed fallen trees to prevent flooding; nowadays natural resource agencies are encouraging landowners to allow fallen trees to remain in the creek when safe, citing their numerous benefits to wildlife and stream hydraulics. These trees will rack up more woody debris as time goes on, and that is a good thing. These wood jams are a natural feature of healthy streams. And when waters rise in the winter, the wood debris will slow floodwaters, causing them to top the channel and flow on to the floodplain—an area that can be a refuge of slower moving water for young salmonids and other wildlife during intense high flow events.



Visiting the project site
Photo by Noelle Johnson

The landowner, Delia Moon, is an enthusiastic supporter of this project. She is excited to see the changes that will come and hopes the salmon population in Tannery Creek will grow. Watching the fish in the creek is a past-time she shares with her grandchildren, and for her, stewarding this creek is all about the future generations. –

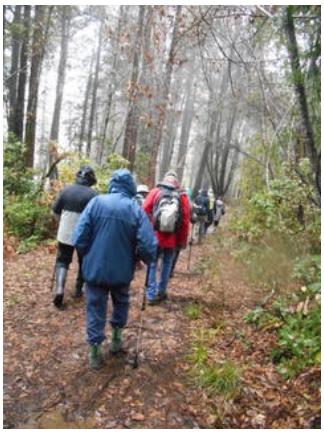


Wood in the creek, a functional part of a healthy ecosystem!
Photo by Adriana Stagnaro

MONITORING UPDATE FOR 2018 AND 2019

We had two great years monitoring the BLT easements. Many thanks to the landholders and monitors who make this possible.

Changes to the Monitoring Program



Monitors off to work

Monitoring protected properties has become more complex than in other years because of wildfire concerns and new and changing land practices in relation to climate change. Also we are getting acquainted with new landholders of which we have had quite a few in recent years. (See below)

The monitoring program is now incorporating GPS in newly acquired easements. We held a GPS training (taught by Devan Hemmings of Foresite Mapping LLC) in spring 2019 and will hold another in 2020 if/when possible.

The Sherer easement got GPS coordinates added to the monitoring protocol thanks to Steve McNeal and Bart Simmons.

Outreach to the next generation of monitors and land stewards will be a priority these next few years. Right now, we are taking a break but… if you are a younger person, know of young people, classes, groups or students who would like to intern with us in the future or who may want to get involved in land stewardship please help our community with outreach to the next generation.

Projects that they could be a great help with besides annual monitoring include digitizing documents, creating baselines, mapping, GPS/GIS, and photography for upcoming easement acquisitions. We could also use interns to help get the Journal out twice a year,

The latest Basic BLT Monitor Training was held in May 2019. We may hold one this year 2020 or rely on the crews from last year. Feel free to contact Sharon Sadler at (707) 483-5407 if you are interested in volunteering in any capacity.

Many Thanks to Monitors for 2018 and 2109!

Becky Baumgras, Mark Burchill, Lori Curtis, Marc Dunia, Kevin Dwan, Heidi Fantacone, Tim Flynn, Devan Hemmings, Eileen Jang, Kathleen Kamins, Michele Larkin, Steve McNeal, Connie Myers, Michael Parrish, Jackie Screechfield, Jeremy Sharp, Bart Simmons, Carol Sklar, Jay Sliwa, Paula Smith and Janet Vallance .

Carol Sklar
Jack Proctor

A Very Big Thank You to

Carol Sklar and Jack Proctor who have now retired from the monitoring program after many years of traipsing up and down the Salmon Creek Watershed.

Welcome New Landholders to the Bodega Land Trust Community

In the last six years we have had a number of new landholders of conservation easements held by BLT. Some have taken on the conservation easement through an inheritance of land, others through purchase of a property with an existing conservation easement. (Still others mentioned elsewhere in the Journal have just recently put conservation easements on their properties.) We would like to warmly welcome them to our community.

Madan and Anna Kumar (*Freeman Easement*)
Heather and Phillip Luongo (*Gilchrist Easement*)
Charles Zedlewski and Megan Riddle
(*Brown's Canyon Creek Easement*)
Aliza Wheeler and Jack Dunlea
(*Finley Creek and Coleman Valley Creek Easements*)
Ilya and Kimberly Sone (*Sone Easement*)
Benjamin Shea (*Shea Easement*)
Michael Wills (*Sone Wildlife Preserve, LLC Easement*)

Buckeye leaf unfurling
Heidi Fantacone

Douglas Iris
Michele Larkin

VOLUNTEERS AT THE 2018 & 2019 BODEGA LAND TRUST ANNUAL DINNER

A HUGE THANK YOU TO: JODIE RUBIN FOR COOKING AND PROMOTING THE EVENT

AND TO THE YOUNG SERVERS:
DEMETRI & MOSES VOELKER, ORION BURNHAM-POHLMANN & CAYDEN MARTIN

AND TO OUR VOLUNTEERS IN THE KITCHEN, SETTING UP & DECORATING THE HALL, PROCURING AUCTION ITEMS AND RUNNING THE AUCTION, CLEARING AWAY AND CLEANING THE HALL

ABEL DAMKOHLER
ALYSSUM REVALLO
AUTUMN ANDERSON
BARBARA PETERSON
BECKY BAUMGRAS
BENEDICTA JACOBS
CHARLOTTE REIS
DAVID KATZ
DAVID SHATKIN
DEVAN HEMMINGS
DONNY FRAITS
EILEEN JANG
ELAINE HARDS
ELLIE FAIRBAIRN
ERIC MENUEZ
HAZEL FLETT
JAMES FITZGERALD
JAY SLIWA
LAURA PARRISH
NASTASHA MCGUIRK
SANDY SHARP
SHARON SADLER
STEVE KILLEY
SUE HEAD
TRACY FLYNN

BOARD MEMBERS ALSO PLAYED A BIG PART

THANK-YOU TO OUR ANNUAL DINNER AUCTION DONORS of 2018 & 2019!

- A HAPPY PLACE
- ABBY KILLEY
- ALEX SHERER
- ANN HINES
- ARTISANA
- ARTISAN'S COOP
- AUBERGINE
- BACKYARD RESTAURANT
- BARBARA HARVIE
- BIRD'S CAFÉ
- BODEGA BAY LODGE
- BODEGA BAY SURF SHACK
- BODEGA LANDMARK GALLERY
- BODEGA PASTURES
- BOHEME WINES
- BO'S PHOTOGRAPHY
- BRIAN CLUER
- BURNSIDE ROAD WINERY
- CANDY & KITES
- CAPE FEAR RESTAURANT
- CAROL COVEY
- CAROL CULP
- CAROL SKLAR
- CHARLES EDEY
- CHRISTINE PASCHAL
- CINNABAR THEATRE
- CIRCLE OF HANDS
- CLAYPOOL CELLARS
- COLLEEN'S COFFEE
- COMMUNITY MARKET
- COPPERFIELDS BOOKS
- CRACK'D TOFFEE COMPANY
- CULTIVATE HOME
- DAVID MURPHY
- DOLAN HAKELA
- DON SHERER
- DUTCH BROTHERS COFFEE
- DUTTON-GOLDFIELD
- ERICA JORDAN
- ESTERO CAFE
- FRANCESCA SCALPI
- FREEMAN WINERY
- FREESTONE ARTISAN CHEESE
- GALLERIA
- GINOCHIO'S KITCHEN
- GRAVENSTEIN GRILL
- GREEN MUSIC CENTER
- GROW GARDENS NURSERY
- GREEN VALLEY FARM
- HANDGOODS
- HARBOUR GIFTS
- HARMONY FARM SUPPLY & NURSERY
- HAZEL FLETT
- HAZEL RESTAURANT
- HINTERLAND
- HOPMONK TAVERN
- HOWARD STATION CAFÉ
- INN AT OCCIDENTAL
- JACQUES LEVY
- JERRY DODRILL PHOTOGRAPHY
- JIGAR VINEYARDS
- JIM DIXON
- JIM GRANT
- JIMTOWN STORE
- JUDY FISHER
- KELLAR ESTATE WINERY
- KISS THE FLOWER (MEAD)
- LAGUNA FARMS
- LAGUNITAS BREWERY
- LANDMARK GALLERY
- LIBBY KIRK
- MANY RIVERS BOOKS & TEA
- MARY BIGGS
- MICHELE ANN JORDAN
- MICHELE LARKIN
- MYCOPIA
- NAN KOELER
- NANCY CONKLE
- NATURLICH
- NEGRI'S RESTAURANT
- NORTHERN LIGHT SURF SHOP
- NUMI TEAS
- OCCIDENTAL ARTS & ECOLOGY CENTER
- OCCIDENTAL CENTER FOR THE ARTS
- OCCIDENTAL COMMUNITY CHOIR
- OCCIDENTAL HARDWARE
- OSMOSIS
- OWL RIDGE WINERY
- PACIFIC MARKET
- PATTY O'ROURKE
- PETER LOWELL'S
- RALPH HARMAN
- RAMEN GAIJIN
- REN BROWN GALLERY
- RIALTO THEATRES
- ROBERTA DEMARTINI FACIALS
- ROCKER OYSTERFELLER'S
- SANTA ROSA SYMPHONY
- SANTA'S TREES
- SAROJ HERON
- SEBASTOPOL HARDWARE
- SEED BANK
- SILK MOON
- SINGING FROG FARMS
- SOLAR WORKS
- SONOMA COAST VINEYARDS
- SONOMA GOURMET
- SPIRIT WORKS DISTILLERY
- SPRING HILL CHEESE
- SPUD POINT CRAB COMPANY
- STEMPLE CREEK RANCH
- TAYLOR LANE COFFEE
- TERRAPIN CREEK CAFE
- THE COUNTRY STORE
- THE DOG HOUSE
- THE DRESSMAKER
- THE FEED STORE
- THE LINKS AT BODEGA HARBOUR
- THE NECTARY
- THREE LEAVES FOOD
- TIM & TRACY FLYNN
- UNION HOTEL
- WESTERN HILLS GARDEN
- WILDFLOUR BAKERY
- WM. COFIELD CHEESEMAKERS
- WILLOWBROOK CELLARS
- WIND WALKER DESIGNS
- WORKER BEE FARMS
- WORLD CENTRIC

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR WONDERFUL GUITARIST PABLO RODRIGUEZ !

In response to wildfire threats and the devastating fires of the past few years, a group of Occidental residents began to organize district-wide efforts to create a safer community. “Living next to wildlands like these beautiful forests requires a greater level of stewardship,” said Amy Beilharz, one of the Fire Safe Occidental (FSO) Steering Committee members. “We are joining forces with our neighbors to help all of us, and the forests surrounding us, become more resilient.”

Since organizing, FSO volunteers expanded their horizons creating Safer West County a non-profit that encompasses south of the Russian River, west of Sebastopol, north of Bodega Highway and east of the coast. Beilharz explained, “We started Safer West County because emergencies like fires don’t hold to man-made boundaries and to truly improve all of our safety we needed to involve our neighbors across watersheds, not political boundaries.”

What started with about 12 people in winter 2018 has grown to 600 members. While only a few dozen people are active, the group hopes that will change in 2020. Both Fire Safe Occidental and Safer West County is made up completely of volunteers and looking for additional help in both time and financial support. Volunteers are getting involved in sub- committees tackling important issues like emergency preparedness (including evacuation planning), reducing the threat of fires, community education, and galvanizing neighborhood groups. “We are looking for a wide variety of skills including forestry, grant writing and even administration, because it truly takes a village,” said Elizabeth Lawson, another FSO member.

FSO has sponsored community educational meetings bringing in a variety of experts, with 200 and more in attendance, covering topics from home hardening and forest management best practices to evacuations. They have also hosted an Empowering Neighborhoods event to galvanize smaller neighborhoods to join together, get connected, and identify priorities on their particular streets and neighborhoods. Carolyn Sell, an FSO member said, “Underpinning our efforts is that a connected community is a safer community.”

Property owners, businesses, and renters alike can get involved, or learn more, by contacting FSO at info@FireSafeOccidental.org.

FireSafeOccidental.org

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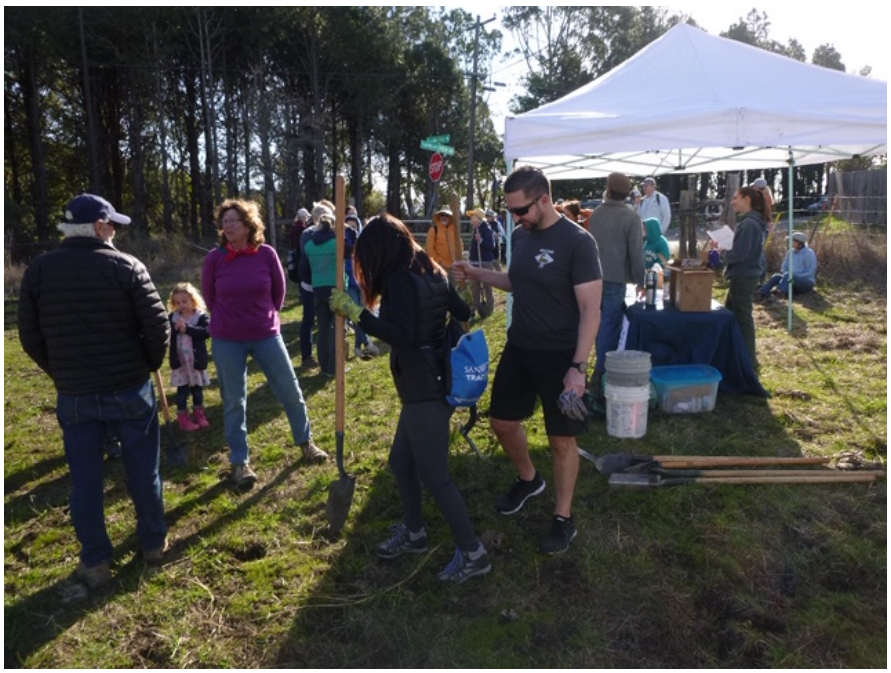

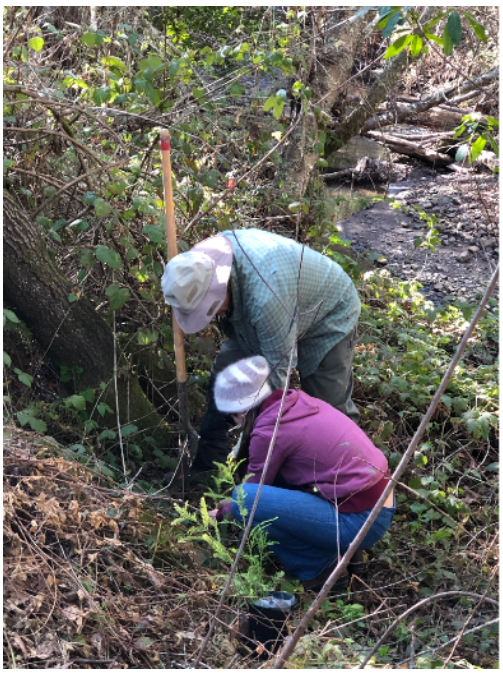

PLANTING REDWOODS FOR WILDLIFE AT TANNERY CREEK

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