



Lake County Land Trust

LCLT Newsletter • PO Box 711, Lower Lake, CA 95457 • (707)262-0707 • Winter 2011

Making a difference in land preservation

By Catherine Koehler, Executive Director, Lake County Land Trust

Sometimes it's challenging being a small land trust! In early March, staff and board members from land trusts across California flocked to the California Council of Land Trusts' annual conference in Sacramento. It was great seeing again some of the faces I first became familiar with last year, as I just began my adventure as executive director with LCLT and attended my first CCLT conference. This time, after a year of experience and being on a slightly less steep section of the learning curve, I was more alert to the variation in land trusts across California, and what their challenges and achievements are.

As you might expect, our beautiful state has many dedicated people working hard to protect its natural, cultural, and scenic values. Some work through tiny land trusts, with no staff and a very limited

scope of what lands they plan to or can protect. Others work in dynamic teams, with 5, 10, 15, or more staff members who run a tight ship of conservation excellence. Lake County Land Trust is on the small end of things (although not as small as some!), which got me thinking of what we would like to achieve, and how to

achieve it.

As with most land trusts, member support is what keeps us afloat. Donations allow us to manage the lands we protect, work towards protecting more lands, and cover programmatic costs. We can't thank our members enough for their donations, which keep us working to ensure Lake County continues to be a great place for people and nature. But, as with all the dedicated land trust people across the state, our group is working at capacity. How do we grow programmatically? How



A Saturday morning nature walk at Rodman Slough Preserve.

(Continued on page 6)

Letter from the President

We have had such lovely weather recently that it is hard to remember that we had a really tough patch of storms back around late December and again in February. I had tons of downed trees



Pete McGee

and downed limbs here on the ranch to clean up. When you live in the middle of a large forest, a downed tree here and there does not seem to create any loss of habitat for woodland birds or mammals. In town, however, the loss of a single tree can be significant.

A lady in town asked me to help her drop a tree that was leaning over her house and appeared to be mostly dead except for a tremendous wealth of healthy vines that had completely covered the skeleton of the tree. Generally I do not like to mess with heavy objects hanging over houses, but I had some help and thought I could do it with some persuasion of two guys pulling on a heavy rope. The tree came down into an open area causing no damage. A

couple of nights later I went in to clean up the log and haul off the debris. It was dusk. Two golden crowned sparrows were still upset about the loss of their nightly roosting spot. They hopped from fence to roof to stump and complained about the loss of their nightly home. Mostly critters adapt. They find new homes. But, in the case of Clear Lake, there has been so much riparian habitat lost to development that there only remains a couple of stretches of undeveloped shore.

The Lake County Land Trust is committed to trying to find ways to protect these undeveloped corridors, and as you may know, we call this the Big Valley Wetland Project. Some animal species can adapt to habitat change more readily than others, and some do not adapt well at all. The broader the diet, the more flexible the species is to habitat loss. Raccoons and coyotes are great scavengers and seem to adjust to urbanization quickly and efficiently. Crows and ravens seem to find new food sources as need be. In these trying economic times, I have had friends that have adjusted to change better than others. Change can be for the good. But in the case of wildlife habitat, some has to be preserved.

Directions to the Rodman Slough Preserve and Nature Education Center

The Rodman Slough Preserve and Nature Education Center is located at 6350 Westlake Rd., Upper Lake, 95485. Take the Nice-Lucerne Cut-off off of Highway 29, between Lakeport and Upper Lake. Turn east onto the Nice-Lucerne Cut-off, then left on to Westlake Road. The preserve entry is to the immediate right after turning on to Westlake. The preserve is owned and operated by the Lake County Land Trust and this is the area where walks and events are held. The Rodman Slough Park, further down the Nice-Lucerne Cut-off near the bridge that goes over Rodman Slough is the County Park.

We would like your Email addresses!!!

If you are a member of the Lake County Land Trust and would like your Land Trust newsletter via email rather than regular mail, please let us know what your email address is. Simply email your email address to membership chair, Roberta Lyons, at roberta.lyons@att.net or call her at (707) 994-2024. The goal is to start sending the newsletter electronically to save on postage and paper, as well as to let our Land Trust members know about Land Trust events. If you are not a member and have been receiving our newsletter by mail, we will eventually be phasing out that portion of our mailing. However, our newsletter will be on our website: www.lakecountylandtrust.org. Also, hard paper copies of the newsletter will continue to be sent to those members who prefer that format.

Roberta Lyons, Membership Chair

Annual Holiday Appeal a success

By Roberta Lyons, Membership Chair

Our annual Holiday Appeal was once again a big success, bringing in much needed funds to help support the Land Trust in our efforts to preserve the beautiful places of Lake County. Many thanks to everyone who responded so generously to this appeal, one of the two requests for support that we make every year.

We continue to provide access to our Rodman Slough Preserve by offering Saturday morning walks throughout the year. We will soon be erecting signage at the preserve, doing some minimal drought-tolerant landscaping, and will be offering special children's programs.

Our Conceptual Area Project Plan (or CAPP) prepared for the Big Valley Wetlands project, which we have been working on for the last two years, is ready to be sent to the Department of Fish and Game. The concept is to protect the Clear Lake shoreline area between Clear Lake State Park and south Lakeport through the use of Conservation Easements and Fee Title purchases.

Work is continuing at Rabbit Hill to clean up downed hazardous brush, repair the gate and create a more inviting walk-in entry, and place new signs. Once again, thank you to everyone for continued support of the Lake County Land Trust.

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, Catherine Koehler at (707) 262-0707.

Please join the Lake County Land Trust
For an enjoyable evening at the
Saw Shop Gallery Bistro
for our 10th annual...

Spring Dinner

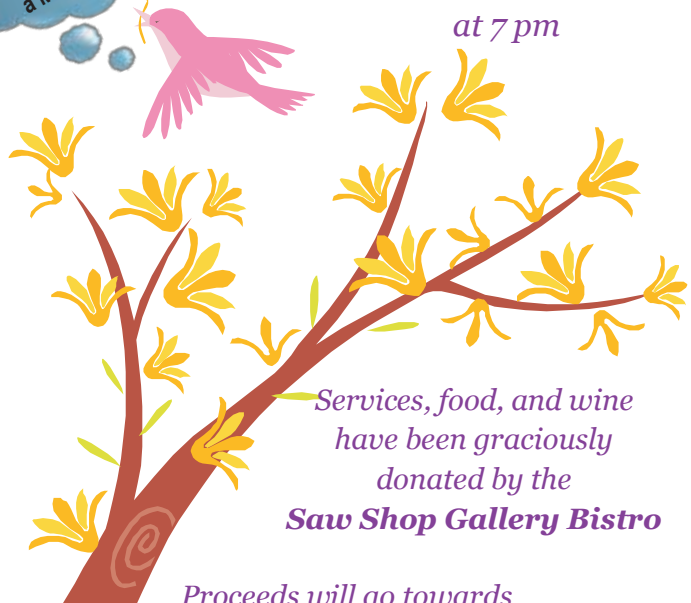
Monday, May 9th ~ Saw Shop Gallery Bistro
3825 Main Street in Kelseyville

Social hour 6 pm

~

Four course dinner
served with wine
at 7 pm

Remember, this
year's dinner is on
a Monday night!



Services, food, and wine
have been graciously
donated by the
Saw Shop Gallery Bistro

Proceeds will go towards
Lake County Land Trust projects, the Rodman
Slough Preserve, and the Nature Education Center

Reservations required.

Call (707)278-0129

Payment will be taken that evening.

Tickets \$60 per person.

Enjoy your dinner knowing that you have helped
preserve the natural beauty of Lake County.

Please phone the Saw Shop at
(707)278-0129 to reserve your table.



Visitors on Rodman Slough Preserve Saturday morning walks enjoy taking a break at one of the viewing benches.



Photo by Brad Barnwell

American Kestrels are often seen at the Rodman Slough Preserve.



Photo by Brad Barnwell

Rodman Slough Preserve provides excellent habitat for birds like the Northern Flicker.

Another pleasant day at Rodman Preserve

By Roberta Lyons

Saturday morning walks at the Rodman Slough Preserve are a quiet adventure. We never know what we will see and who we will meet. But I can honestly say, I've never had a bad day at the Rodman Preserve.

On one of our recent walks, I was happy to meet a couple from Wisconsin and a couple from Minnesota. Both couples were visiting California and staying at the lovely Bell Haven Resort in Soda Bay. After talking about the Land Trust and the Nature Center, off we went on an unseasonably warm and beautiful February morning.

Our first sighting was a beautiful American Kestrel, perched in the lower branches on the blue oaks as you head east on the trail to circle the hill that we usually walk around. Next came the Acorn Woodpeckers and Western Scrub Jays, and of course the ubiquitous Red-winged Blackbirds. We came upon the Acorn Woodpecker cache tree, which is also the home of numerous tree-swallows, and noticed the swallows are already back – Feb. 4! As we headed into the oak forest on the east side of the hill, looking over the slough and the rice fields in the distance we heard numerous little songbirds chirping away in the woods...probably the Yellow-rumped Warblers and Dark-eyed Juncos that hang out there in the winter. A Great Egret winged by, as did a White Pelican, then we saw the resident Red-shouldered Hawk circling in the distance.

Moving around to the west edge of the hill, looking down on the little ponded wetland in the field closer to Westlake Road, there were lots of ducks and geese in the ephemeral waterway. There were Canada Geese, Mallards, a few Gadwalls, and American Wigeons.

Heading back to the nature center on the trail that's a bit soggy this time of year, we came across a flock of Golden-crowned Sparrows and then, to top off the morning, a nice flock of Western Meadowlarks.

No, you can't have a bad day at Rodman.

Follow us on Facebook

You can now become a Land Trust fan on Facebook at

facebook.com/LakeCountyLandTrust.

“Why is our region a hotspot of botanical diversity?”

On Wednesday, April 13, a special program entitled: “Why is our region a hotspot of botanical diversity?” will be presented at the Rodman Slough Preserve Nature Education Center at 6350 Westlake Road. The program will start at 6 p.m. and because of limited space at the center, reservations are being requested. This can be accomplished by calling the land trust office at (707) 262-0707.

* * * *

If you asked the average person on the street where the nearest global biodiversity hotspot was, what answers would you expect? Maybe the Brazilian rainforests? Indonesia? Well, how about California....and even more specifically, right where we are living, in Lake County?

In our region, a unique climate and a complex geologic history result in tremendous variation in how moisture, temperature, soil types, and soil nutrients come together. These factors govern how plants distribute themselves across the landscape, and provide opportunities for the evolution of species that associate with unique conditions. The end result is that we are living in one of the 25 locations across the globe that together comprise only 1.4% of the earth’s surface but contain 44% of vascular plants and 35% of vertebrate species on the planet.

Cathy Koehler, Executive Director of the Lake County Land Trust and Co-Director of the McLaughlin Reserve, will give an overview of the processes that have lead to California, and our small corner of it in particular, being one of these amazing hotspots of biodiversity. We hope you can join us!

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.

Lake County Land Trust

Officers: President Pete McGee
Vice-President Tom Gilliam
Treasurer Kristine Groff
Secretary Jon Ambrose

Board Members: Tom Smythe,
Michael Friel, Nina Marino,
Brad Barnwell, Roberta Lyons,
Gaye Allen, Christian Ahlmann,
and Keith Petterson

Executive Director: Cathy Koehler

For info contact:
Lake County Land Trust, POB 711, Lower
Lake, CA 95457 • (707)262-0707

(email) lclt@lakecountylantrust.org

www.lakecountylantrust.org

Tax I.D. No. 68-0332712

A sponsor member of the



Become a member of The Lake County Land Trust

Membership Benefits include:

Snowy Egret: \$20-\$99

Acknowledgement on Land Trust website, updated annually

White Pelican: \$100-\$199

The Member Benefit listed above, plus:
Invitation to our annual “State of the Land Trust” Coffee
Annual recognition in the local media

Blue Heron: \$200-\$499

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

Osprey: \$500-\$999

All of the Member Benefits listed above, plus:
Guided hikes of Land Trust properties

Golden Eagle: \$1,000+

All of the Member Benefits listed above, plus:
Invitational wine tasting at local winery
Reserved seating at our Annual Benefit Dinner

Yes! I want to become a member of the Lake County Land Trust!

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I would like to join the LCLT | <input type="checkbox"/> Golden Eagle: \$1,000+ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Please Renew my membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Osprey: \$500-\$999 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Blue Heron: \$200-\$499 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> White Pelican: \$100-\$199 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Snowy Egret: \$20-\$99 |

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Card# _____

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

Signature: _____

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Making a difference in land preservation

(Continued from page 1)

can we aspire to achieve more? Certainly, gifts of financial significance can help! But studying the many ways in which our state's many preservationist make advances sheds light on one key element – People Power! Yes, volunteers.

Our land trust has a small core of volunteers who have dedicated their time selflessly by leading public hikes, assisting with office chores such as preparing bulk mailings and keeping up with filing, participating in volunteer work days that include activities such as pulling weeds or building fences, and helping with various other chores. But are there other ways in which our supporters can help the Lake County Land Trust not just maintain where we are, but strive to grow and achieve more? I've learned by networking with other land trusts that the answer to that question is yes. And herein I take the opportunity to reach out to you all, to see if you would be willing to help the land trust advance in some specific ways. I'll restrain myself and focus on just a couple of areas for now: Accreditation and Land Stewardship.

In each of these areas, we are offering the opportunity for qualified volunteers to contribute significantly to the Land Trust's mission and advancement and to work closely with Board Members and Staff to make significant gains in our effectiveness as a land conservation organization. If you, or someone you know, are interested in applying your skills to moving these projects forward, we are welcoming applications!

Accreditation: Land Trusts across the nation are aligning their organizations with the practices and standards that have been vetted as indicators of integrity and effectiveness by the Land Trust Alliance (LTA). To date, 130 land trusts have been accredited – i.e., their conservation portfolios and records of organizational practices have been reviewed by the Land Trust Alliances' Accreditation division, and found to be in compliance with standards for excellence in conservation. Accreditation speaks loudly to the public and funders that the job of land conservation will be undertaken with professionalism by the accredited land trust. For this reason, the Lake County Land Trust seeks recognition that it is a quality conservation organization by become accredited in the future. Other land trusts with few staff members have attained accreditation through the dedicated work of volunteer

accreditation teams – we can do the same! In order to work towards accreditation, we need to review our record to ensure we are aligned with LTA standards and practices. This is a process requiring an eye for detail and great organizational skills. It is best done in a small team and can take many months to achieve.

Land Stewardship: When lands are protected, baseline documentation is developed which provides information on the conservation values of those lands at the time of protection. This baseline is referred to regularly to ensure that the conservation values are maintained. Many land trusts rely heavily on assistance from a cadre of volunteers to visit protected lands and monitor them to ensure they are stewarded to maintain their conservation values. This process requires physically fit individuals who enjoy hiking, have an eye for detail and good observation skills in natural history, are willing to be trained to become conservation monitors, and are willing to make a long-term commitment to monitor a few specific properties on an annual basis. While we do not yet have a need for a large group of monitors, our need will continue to grow as we protect more lands.

For more info on the above projects, or for information on how to apply, please contact Cathy Koehler at lclt@lakecountylantrust.org or at (707) 262 0707.

Susanne LaFaver retires from three years service on the LCLT Board

The Lake County Land Trust is saying good-bye to Susanne LaFaver who has retired from the board of directors after three years of excellent service to our organization. Susanne has spear-headed projects at the Rabbit Hill preserve in Middletown and has lent her excellent public relations and publicity skills to the trust. She will be greatly missed but has graciously agreed to continue with volunteer projects that involve our Rabbit Hill property. Thank you Susanne for all of your hard work!

LAKE COUNTY LAND TRUST 2010 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

INCOME

Lands and Conservation Support	\$5,360.00
Fundraisers and community events	\$23,176.00
General Membership contributions	\$44,305.00
Bequest.....	\$88,919.00
Total Income	\$161,760.00

EXPENSES

Lands and Conservation Work.....	\$4,522.00
Fundraisers and community events	\$9,659.00
Membership support and development	\$12,541.00
Administration (employees, accountants, independent contractors, land trust and non-profit association dues)	\$34,813.00
Conferences and professional development.....	\$1,968.00
Program Support (office expenses, insurance, etc.)	\$10,089.00
Total Expenses	\$73,592.00

NET INCOME (DEFICIT).....\$88,168.00

MONETARY ASSETS:

Project Reserves (committed to specific projects/expenses)	\$3,000.00
Operating Reserves (unrestricted)	\$41,474.00

Total monetary assets at close of 2010:.....\$132,642.00
(final figure subject to records reconciliation)

Restricted Assets (endowments): \$3,000.00

“I Love Tules” film fest

By Victoria Brandon

Submissions are now being accepted for the second annual “I Love Tules” film festival focusing on the wonders of Clear Lake. Videographers of all ages, perspective, and levels of expertise are invited to create a film of approximately four minutes duration with Clear Lake as the star. All genres are welcome; possible techniques and subjects could include History, Nature Images, Animation, Sunsets, Music, Silly, Drama, *etc.*

Films must be in a format playable on a DVD player and be submitted to festival organizer Cheri Holden at Watershed Books (305 N. Main in Lakeport) by 5PM on March 30. More info is available online at <http://redwood.sierraclub.org/lake/filmfestival.htm>

A gala premier screening is set for 7 pm, April 7, 2011 at Lakeport Yacht Club (15 5th St). Filmmakers will be honored and prizes awarded. The event is free with refreshments; RSVPs required. For reservations call Cheri at 263.5787 or cheri@watershedbookco.com

The Lake Sierra Club group joins Lakeport Main Street Association and Watershed Books in sponsoring this event; the April 7 premier will also constitute the Sierra Club Lake Group general membership meeting for March-April.

Land Trust welcomes new board member, Gaye Allen

The Lake County Land Trust welcomes Gaye Allen to our board of directors. Gaye grew up in England and graduated from the University of Reading, U.K. with a degree in Typography and Graphic Communication. She then began a career in book design, working as Creative Director for a variety of British



Gaye Allen

publishing houses producing highly-illustrated coffee table and reference books. She has produced books on a wide range of subjects: mountaineering, fly fishing, art, architecture, antiques, interior design, gardening, health, food and wine and a large international travel guide series. She was Creative Director of Mitchell Beazley, a UK company producing award winning wine books and atlases, where she learned about wine making, cartography and the importance of terrior.

In 1999 Gaye was head-hunted to the United States to head the Creative Department for San Francisco based Weldon Owen, a publisher and packager specializing in producing branded book publishing programs for retail clients. As Vice President and Creative Director she designed a large number of book programs for clients such as Williams-Sonoma, PotteryBarn, The Body Shop, Gymboree, 3M, and Hallmark.

In 2005 she bought a weekend house in Lake County -discovered bird watching -and has not wanted to leave ever since! She became a member of the Lake County Land Trust in 2007, and is now a board member. She regularly leads hikes at Rodman Slough. In 2009 she moved to Lake County permanently to set up Meadowlark Publishing, an independent graphic design and publishing company with the aim of bringing her experience of quality book publishing to a more local arena.

She is currently working on a bird guide to Lake County with fellow land trust board member Brad Barnwell. The book aims to show the important relationship between the wide variety of habitats found in Lake County, and the dependence of the 310+ different bird species found here, on these. She would also like to produce other books showcasing the amazing beauty of Lake County.



Lake County Land Trust

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2011 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 Slough Preserve – The Lake County Land Trust holds Saturday morning walks at the Rodman Slough 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 Slough Preserve Nature Education Center on 6350 Westlake Road (the corner of Westlake and the Nice-Lucerne Cutoff). No dogs, please, and heavy rain will cancel. Call Gaye Allen at (707) 928-4590 or Roberta Lyons at (707) 994-2024 for information.

March 20 – Sunday – Lake Sierra Club group hike on the Redbud Trail to Cache Creek. Moderate hike in Cache Creek Wilderness. Possible sightings of bald eagles or other raptors. Bring water and snacks. Meet at parking lot off Highway 20 just before the bridge over the North Fork of Cache Creek (eight miles to the east of Clear Lake Oaks) at 10 a.m. Reservations required. Leader Jackie Farley myotan@sbcglobal.net. Rain cancels.

March 30 – Wednesday – “I Love Tules” film festival submission deadline.

April 10 - Sunday- "Grateful Dead" Hike in eastern Lake County. Rated Strenuous. Please contact Cathy Koehler at (707) 995 9005 or koehler@ucdavis.edu for details.

April 13 – Wednesday – “Bio Diversity Hotspot,” program presented by Cathy Koehler at the Rodman Slough Preserve Nature Center, 6 p.m. Reservations required, call 262-0707.

April 30 – May 1 – 17th annual Heron Festival and Wildflower Brunch presented at Clear Lake State Park. Vendors, food, pontoon boat rides, nature walks, presentations. Go to www.heronfestival.org for information and reservations for the brunch and boat rides.

May 1 – Sunday- "Three Counties" Hike in eastern Lake County. Rated Strenuous. Please contact Cathy Koehler at (707) 995 9005 or koehler@ucdavis.edu for details.

May 9 – Monday – Annual Spring Dinner for the Lake County Land Trust at the Saw Shop Gallery Bistro in Kelseyville, 6 p.m. Note day change from Tuesday to Monday. Call the Saw Shop for reservations: (707) 278-0129.

March 2011 Winter