



Lake County Land Trust

LCLT Newsletter • PO Box 711, Lower Lake, CA 95457 • (707)262-0707 • Winter 2010

Lake County Land Trust welcomes Catherine Koehler as new director

By Roberta Lyons

The Lake County Land Trust is pleased to welcome its new Executive Director, Catherine Koehler. After Executive Director (ED) Susanne Scholz announced her retirement plans for March of 2010, the Trust set about searching for someone to fill her shoes, "Not an easy task!" noted one board member. But, as it turned out, Koehler, with a strong background in science and most importantly a love for Lake County, was among the many qualified applicants who applied for the position.

Our new ED has a BS in Zoology and an MS in Behavioral Ecology. She currently works as the resident co-director, along with her husband Paul Aigner, for the Donald and Sylvia McLaughlin Reserve in Eastern Lake County. She will continue in this position as both it and the land trust ED positions are half-time.

Koehler has an impressive background in the biological sciences and a deep appreciation of the combinations of geology and ecology that comprise the often rare and unique ecosystems of Lake



New Executive Director for the Lake County Land Trust, Catherine Koehler, is pictured with Land Trust President, Pete McGee, left; and Land Trust board member, Jon Ambrose.

County. She is proud of her ability to work with diverse groups of people, fostering positive outcomes for common goals. She is currently Chair of the Blue Ridge Berryessa Natural Area Conservation Partnership and has a background in developing and conducting science

and natural history based public outreach and education.

Koehler has worked on projects ranging from restoration projects for Inland Coastal Sage Scrub, to bird inventories on U.S. Navy Lands in Southern California and

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Letter from the President



Pete McGee

I had a phone call on Christmas from my old college roommate, Steve. He and I always held vastly different political views. Steve was always very conservative and I was quite liberal. I have become more traditional in my thinking over the years, but I feel really blessed to have had this friendship for nearly 40 years in spite of our strongly held positions on social and political matters.

The beauty of the land trust movement in America is that it rarely divides people along political lines. Both liberals and conservatives can agree on the importance of saving farmlands, and beautiful natural areas. The waters get muddy when you start to talk about the role of government in this process, but a grass roots, community-based land trust is generally appealing to both sides.

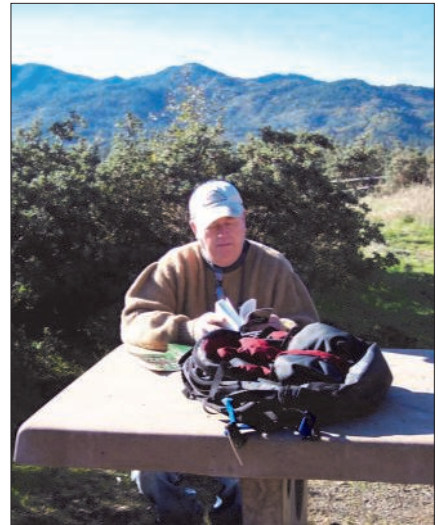


This year will be filled with challenges for the Lake County Land Trust. We will be saying difficult good-byes to Susanne Scholz who is retiring from the Executive Director position. However, we welcome Catherine Koehler to the job. Catherine has her degrees from the University of Calgary; a Bachelors Degree is in Zoology and a Masters Degree in Ecology. Catherine is currently the Co-Director of the McLaughlin Reserve. Working for U.C. Davis half time, she is able to take on the Lake County Land Trust job, which is also part time.

Although we will deeply miss Susanne Scholz, we are confident that Catherine can help guide our mission through this coming decade. Catherine will attend some meetings with us in January and start in February. Susanne has set the table for a seamless transition. About a year ago, Susanne pushed for the purchase of new software called eTapestry. This new program will allow Catherine to manage databases efficiently, and this should streamline the work of coordinating a membership-based organization. Also, Susanne will stay on long enough to see that Catherine has a solid understanding of the challenges of the job.

Thank you Susanne for all the years that you dedicated to the Lake County Land Trust.

Rabbit Hill



Pete McGee takes a moment on Rabbit Hill before quoting from "Silent Spring" by Rachel Carson.



Remnants of the stone lavatory built for the Hamanns by the Department of Forestry.



Dash Merrick-Kamm and Pete McGee walk up Rabbit Hill with Dash's dog, Zip.

Follow us on Face Book & Twitter

You can now become a Land Trust fan on Face Book at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Lower-Lake-CA/Lake-County-Land-Trust/137282176534?ref=mf> and follow us on Twitter, www.twitter.com/lcandtrust.

Cultural resource investigation completed for Rabbit Hill

By Susanne La Faver

A recent cultural resource investigation, as part of a land management plan at Rabbit Hill in Middletown, identified one historic archaeological site and several isolated historic features. Conducted by Dr. John and Cheyanne Parker of Archeological Research in Lucerne, the findings help Lake County Land Trust directors preserve the site and determine best public activities at the park.

“The study concludes that, as a Land Trust property, Rabbit Hill teaches us about the natural world,” said Susanne Scholz, executive director, Lake County Land Trust. “But it also contains important information about the history of Middletown.”

As part of the study, Dr. Parker, a registered professional archaeologist, and Cheyanne, with 12 years archaeological field and lab experience, conducted a field inspection of Rabbit Hill.

“Historic records provide information about major events and prominent citizens in Middletown’s past, but no record of daily life for Middletown residents exists during the time a stage came through town once a week,” John Parker said.

Items found in the historic archaeological site suggest general household refuse from the late 1800s, including pieces of ceramic ware, glass bottles, a soldered milk can, and a brass kerosene lamp reservoir.

A concrete cistern reinforced with scrap pieces of farm equipment, suggesting late 1800 or early 1900 construction, was most likely the remains of a water tank that



Lake County Land Trust President Pete McGee, left, led a stroll up Rabbit Hill for the Sierra Club-Lake Group Sunday, November 15, 2009. Participants included, Theresa Dickinson, back to camera, Lower Lake; John and Cheyanne Parker, Lucerne; Lyle La Faver and Ed Dearing, Hidden Valley Lake. Not photographed are Dash Merrick-Kamm, Lower Lake, and Susanne La Faver, Hidden Valley Lake.



John Parker, Ph.D. discusses archaeological research of native cultures. Also pictured are Cheyanne Parker and Pete McGee.



Atop Rabbit Hill.

would have allowed gravity flow of water down slope to a residence.

Corrugated roofing material, perhaps remains of a kid’s fort,

and a sheep shear stamped with “Keiser Made in the USA” were also found. Though no structure

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Rodman Slough Preserve provides habitat for the disappearing pond turtle

By Roberta Lyons

The western pond turtle (*Clemmys marmorata*) is a fun reptile to view at the Rodman Slough Preserve. The turtles can sometimes be seen on the nature walks at the preserve that are held every Saturday morning. Try to be quiet and view the creatures at a distance as they sunbathe on one of the snags along the channels that are part of the wetland habitat at the preserve.

The pond turtle is the only fresh-water turtle native to the North American Pacific Coast west of the Sierra-Cascade divide, according to a website article from *Atlantis Magazine*. There are two subspecies of western pond turtle: the northwestern pond turtle, found from the area north of the American River, and the southwestern pond turtle, found from the coastal area south of San Francisco.

As Bob Garrison wrote in *Outdoor California*, western pond turtles are quietly disappearing from the California landscape. Loss of habitat and predations by bullfrogs and black bass are two reasons for their decline. Both of these creatures disturb the nesting grounds of the turtles and even in places where turtles are present, many of them are not producing offspring. Another threat is the introduction of non-native species, like the Red Slider turtle which competes with the western pond turtle for food and habitat.

The western pond turtle can also be found at the Boggs Lake Preserve on Boggs Mountain. The Lake County Land Trust has been working with The Nature Conservancy, owners of the preserve, on clean-up and management issues at the preserve. During a cleanup project at the preserve, graduate students from Sonoma State University biology department were also present attaching tracking devices to the turtles to help in their research.

Another place to view pond turtles is at Clear Lake State Park. Nature walks are held often at the park and the turtles can be viewed on snags and rocks there.

As Bob Garrison points out in his article: "As a wildlife viewer, you can help the turtles a number of ways. First, watch from a distance. Stay back so you don't scare the turtles from their basking areas. Do not create a path to the water's edge. Raccoons, skunks, cats and other predators will use your trail to hunt for nest sites. Keep track of the locations and numbers of western pond turtles you observe. In particular, watch for young turtles to determine if the population is successfully breeding. Keep land managers informed of your observations.



In this picture it is suspected, but not confirmed, that the turtle on the far right is a Red Slider, a non-native species that is slowly becoming more common in waterways.



This turtle was caught basking on the tip of a snag at Clear Lake State Park.



Turtles will bask in the sun in groups on snags in channel waterways.

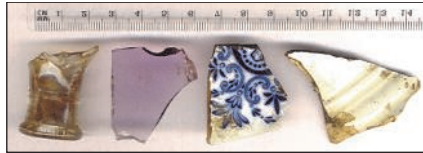
*Photos by
Brad
Barnwell*

We would like your email addresses!!! If you are a member of the Lake County Land Trust Rookery Membership Club and would like to receive your Land Trust newsletter via email, email your email address to membership chair, Roberta Lyons, at roberta.lyons@att.net or call her at (707) 994-2024.

Rabbit Hill (Continued from page 3)

remains of Huck and Skee Hamann's residence, the area is marked by concrete on rocks and embedded telephone pole sections. One rock had a concrete base where a commemorative plaque was placed. Local lore says three embedded rail pieces once supported a lighted cross atop Rabbit Hill. Remains of a stone lavatory, constructed in the 1950s, is slightly downhill from where the Hamanns lived.

Little remains of their residence that is of historic or scientific value; however, Rabbit Hill itself is significant due to the association with the Hamanns. The Hamanns lived on Rabbit Hill between the 1950s and 1970s. They used their land's magnetic attraction as a way to introduce Middletown's youth to the natural world and the concept of living with, not on, the earth. The couple left Rabbit Hill to Sonoma County's Madrone Audubon Society, which later deeded the property to Lake County's Land Trust for protection.



(Left) Ed Dearing shared his knowledge of Putah Creek watershed with John Parker, from left, Theresa Dickinson, Dash Merrick-Kamm, Pete McGee, and Lyle La Faver. (Above) Found artifacts.

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, Susanne LaFaver and Christian Ahlmann

Executive Director:
Cathy Koehler

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

www.lakecountylandtrust.org

Tax I.D. No. 68-0332712

A sponsor member of the



Benefits of the Rookery Membership Club:

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 join the Rookery Membership Club:

- Golden Eagle: \$1,000+
- Osprey: \$500-\$999
- Blue Heron: \$200-\$499
- White Pelican: \$100-\$199
- Snowy Egret: \$20-\$99

Amount Enclosed \$ _____

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

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Susanne Scholz reflects on tenure as executive director

By Susanne Scholz

It has been my pleasure to serve as the Executive Director of the Lake County Land Trust for the past 10 years, but it is now my time to retire. I have enjoyed getting to know so many of you and to appreciate the high level of commitment and support you have for the work of the Land Trust. With your help Rodman Preserve was acquired and the house renovated into a functioning Nature Education Center; the Black Forest is preserved; Mount Konocti is a County park; and Rabbit Hill is undergoing a renaissance of interest and stewardship. Another major accomplishment was the completion of the Conservation Priority Plan which serves to guide the Land Trust's preservation activities.

All of these projects took time to accomplish and the same is true for the current projects. The biggest is the permanent preservation of the wetlands along the Big Valley Shoreline, currently stewarded by owners using the land for primarily agricultural activities. A second project of interest is the joint stewardship of Bogg's Lake with The Nature Conservancy.

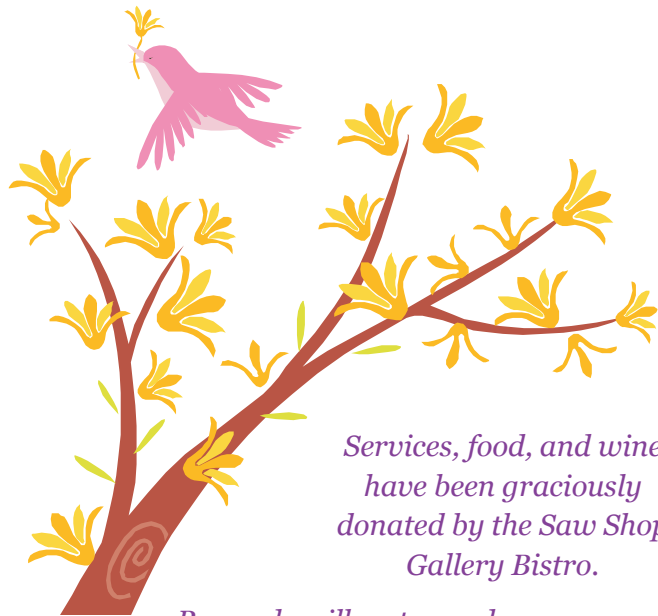
The past 10 years has seen significant development of the organization and its board of directors. This development was evident as they conducted a successful search for a new Executive Director and selected Cathy Koehler. So, it is with pride in the accomplishments of the past 10 years and with confidence that the organization will continue to be successful that I will hang up my Executive Director hat on February 26, 2010 and turn my duties over to Cathy and the Board of Directors.

My plans are to remain in Lake County, do more hiking, biking, kayaking, and birding and after a time perhaps become involved again in some capacity with the Land Trust. It will always have a special place in my heart for I truly believe that Lake County is a treasure with special places worth the effort to provide them with permanent protection.

*Please join the Lake County Land Trust
For an enjoyable evening at the
Saw Shop Gallery Bistro
for our 9th annual...*

Spring Dinner

*Tuesday, May 11th Saw Shop Gallery Bistro
3825 Main Street in Kelseyville
Social hour 6 pm
Four course dinner served with wine at 7 pm*



*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.*

Lake County Land Trust

2009 Financial Statement

Income

Rodman Slough Preserve	\$807
Spring Benefit Dinner (net)	\$7,693
Annual Dinner (net)	\$4,790
Donations and Membership	\$44,380
Other	\$86
Operating Reserves Used	\$15,526
Total	\$73,282

Expenses

Rodman Slough Preserve	\$3,753
Other Projects and Programs	\$937
Technology Development	\$6,107
Program Support	\$41,681
Development	\$20,804
Total	\$73,282
Operating Reserves (Checking and CDs)	\$47,474

Contributors to Appeal appreciated

We would like to thank everyone who has already sent in their contribution to our 2009 Holiday Appeal. As most of you know, we do two financial appeals per year, the second one being the Spring Appeal. These appeals combine to provide the capital that is necessary for the ongoing work of the Land Trust. With your generous support we are able to carry on the work of permanently protecting the most critical habitats in Lake County. We especially appreciate the support this year as we understand that many people are feeling the economic pinch of a struggling economy. But, if you have not yet sent in your contribution, it is not too late and we appreciate your support.

Contributions to the appeal provide membership in the Rookery Membership Club and contributions throughout the year also serve to increase your membership level and the associated benefits. The benefit levels are outlined next to the membership form in this newsletter. Once again, thank you for your continued support.

New director (Continued from page 1)

Arizona. She was also involved with an endangered species recovery project for the San Clemente Island Loggerhead Shrike, and developed community outreach programs for Rancho Santa Ana botanic Garden. Locally, in addition to managing research and land stewardship at the McLaughlin Reserve, Koehler has conducted many outreach programs at the Reserve, worked with educators to develop and implement science workshops for grades 4 – 6, and mentored teachers. She has also been successful in acquiring grants for public outreach and facilities at the Reserve. “We are extremely pleased to welcome Cathy as our new Executive Director and look forward to her working with us on our many projects,” noted the Trust’s president, Pete McGee.

“Lake County is a wonderful place, with a great mix of cities and small communities, agriculture, natural lands, and intact historical and prehistoric sites. I look forward to playing a part in helping ensure that our county continues to be a great place to live for generations to come,” Koehler stated.

Thanks to volunteer, Lori Barrett

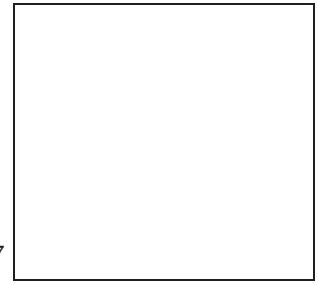
Volunteers are a very important part of how things get done at the Rodman Slough Preserve. Recently, volunteer Lori Barrett of Lucerne offered to help properly size curtains at our Nature Education Center at Rodman. Lori, a custom seamstress, generously re-sized our curtains at the center at no charge. Thanks Lori! It is people like you who help us keep our center functioning!

Leaving a legacy: What better legacy is there to leave than your commitment to protecting Lake County’s natural resources for future generations? 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.



Lake County Land Trust

PO Box 711, Lower Lake, CA 95457 ~ Phone (707)262-0707



2010 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 events, both locally and some out-of-county, that we believe will interest our members. The public is cordially invited to all.

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 Nature Education Center 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.

Feb. 20 – Saturday – Sierra Club Hike with Friends of Boggs Mountain at Boggs Mountain State Forest. Hike various trails. Appropriate footwear required water/snack advised. Neutered dogs on leash welcome. Class M-4-A. Meet at 10 a.m. at the covered kiosk, main parking area. Entrance Forestry Road 1.3 miles north of Cobb village on Hwy 175. Carpooling to more remote trails possible. Leader: Boone Lodge. (707) 928-5819. Rain cancels.

April 24 & 25 – Heron Festival and Wildflower Brunch – Redbud Audubon and the Clear Lake State Park Interpretive Association present this wildlife festival and delicious brunch at the Clear Lake State Park. Look for information at www.redbudaudubon.org or www.heronfestival.org.

May 11 – Annual Land Trust Spring Dinner at the Saw Shop Gallery Bistro – The annual Spring Dinner to benefit the Lake County Land Trust will be held on Tuesday, May 11 at the Saw Shop Gallery Bistro, 3825 Main Street, Kelseyville.

May 22 – Day in the Park at Anderson Marsh – Second annual “Day in the Park,” at the Anderson Marsh State Historic Park, Lower Lake. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tours of historical ranch house, live music, old-fashioned games, vendors by the KUSD Career pathway program and various classroom fundraising activities.