



Lake County Land Trust

BIG VALLEY WETLANDS PRESERVATION PROJECT

Purchase of the 31-acre parcel known as the Melo property

CASE FOR SUPPORT • 2014/15



VISION STATEMENT

The Lake County Land Trust is purchasing the 31-acre Melo property at 2590 Clipper Lane in the heart of the Big Valley Wetlands to serve as a keystone for the ambitious effort to protect portions of the last remaining significant habitat on Clear Lake.



Lake County Land Trust

Big Valley Wetlands Preservation

Melo Property Purchase

PROJECT GOALS

Guiding Philosophy:

The Lake County Land Trust works to protect the unique and valuable wildlife habitats in Lake County, particularly on Clear Lake. The Land Trust will ensure that all lands purchased or conservation easements established in this effort as part of the Big Valley Wetlands Project will be managed so as to honor this responsibility, and to maintain the integrity and natural values of the shoreline wetlands.

Goals

- The Clear Lake shoreline from Clear Lake State Park, west to Lakeport, represents the largest remaining area of unprotected wetland/riparian habitats adjacent to Clear Lake. The shoreline currently maintains high value habitats with pristine lakeshore vegetation and mature oaks used by a variety of species.
- The goal of the Melo Property project is to purchase a keystone 31-acre parcel located on Clipper Lane and owned by George Melo. This property includes beautiful native wetland and shoreline forest 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.
- This project is the start of an ambitious plan of the Lake County Land Trust to protect either through conservation easements or fee title purchase the significant portions of wetland and upland habitat in the Big Valley area.



Lake County Land Trust

Melo Property Purchase • Overview

DEVELOPMENT OF LAND CONSERVATION PRIORITY PLAN

In 2007 the Lake County Land Trust developed a Land Conservation Priority Plan to identify and rank unique areas/ecosystems in Lake County, California, in order to prioritize our conservation efforts. The Land Trust held two workshops in the summer of 2006 attended by Land Trust board members and 17 experts in local land use and natural resources. The workshop participants were asked to prioritize areas and/or issues they believed, based on their familiarity and experience, most worthy of conservation in light of future threats from development and conversion.

Information derived from these workshops resulted in designation of three areas around Clear Lake as the highest conservation priorities. These areas were the Clear Lake Shoreline between Clear Lake State Park and south Lakeport, Mt. Konocti, and the Rodman Slough/Middle Creek Marsh area. Mt. Konocti has since been protected by BLM and the County of Lake and the Middle Creek Marsh restoration project is continuing under the direction of the County of Lake; the Lake County Land Trust was instrumental in the purchase of the Black Forest on the slopes of Mt. Konocti, and currently owns and manages a natural preserve in the Rodman Slough area.

BIG VALLEY WETLANDS PROJECT CONCEPTION

The Lake County Land Trust made the decision to focus on the No. 1 priority in its conservation plan which is the protection of shoreline habitat between Clear Lake State Park and south Lakeport. This project has been named the Big Valley Wetlands Project.

CONCEPTUAL AREA PROJECT PLAN (CAPP)

The Land Trust has developed its Conceptual Area Project Plan (CAPP) a document that was submitted to the Department of Fish and Wildlife for initial review and is now in the final stages of review. This document is vital for potential funding from both State and Federal agencies to purchase conservation easements and/or fee title properties.

MELO PROPERTY OPTION AND PURCHASE

The 31 acre parcel dubbed the “Melo Property,” became available for sale several years ago. Located at 2590 Clipper Lane and owned by George Melo, it includes beautiful, native wetland and shoreline forest. It would serve as the Keystone project to the Lake County Land Trust’s efforts to protect the wetlands of this region. The Lake County Land Trust holds an option – valid until March 2015 – to purchase this property for the agreed-upon price of \$225,000. To date (January 2014), we have raised \$66,000 towards this purchase and are hoping you will help us raise the remaining \$159,000.



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The property is located at 2590 Clipper Lane, in the heart of our Big Valley Wetlands project area.



American Bitterns utilize
the Big Valley Wetlands habitat.



The wetland preservation project area in Big Valley.

Big Valley Wetlands Preservation

The Melo 31-acre parcel



Lake County Land Trust



A large lagoon-type wetland is part of the Melo property purchase.



Willow and tule habitat are a large portion of the 31 acre parcel.



Great Blue Herons wade in the wetlands on the property.



Lake County Land Trust

Big Valley Wetlands preservation

FUNDRAISING

The Lake County Land Trust will raise funds to complete the purchase of the 31 acre Big Valley Wetlands key parcel through private, business, and corporate donations as well as by applying to foundations and state and federal agencies that provide funding for such projects. The total purchase price of the property is \$225,000.

- An option payment of \$20,000 has secured the property until March of 2015, and an additional \$46,000 has been raised, leaving a total of **\$159,000** to be raised.
- The Lake County Land Trust is approaching community leaders to help us reach our financial goal of \$159,000 with gifts of \$1,000 or more.
- The Trust seeks individuals who embrace our mission to protect and preserve Lake County properties with unique value to our community.
- We believe the Big Valley Wetlands Melo property is a true Lake County gem, and offers an opportunity to instill in our community a deep pride and respect for our natural resources by protecting this resource in perpetuity.

You can play a critical part in this effort to preserve a vital wetland habitat on the shore of Clear Lake, a premier natural feature of Lake County, and of the State of California. The inaugural preservation of this shoreline habitat, with the purchase of the 31-acre Melo property will authenticate the broader effort by the Lake County Land Trust, and the people of Lake County to preserve the last remaining unprotected great wetlands on Clear Lake.

Please consider making a donation of \$1,000 or more.



Lake County Land Trust

List of project donors to date:

INDIVIDUALS

John Sheridan and Andrea DuFlon

Charlotte Griswold

Val and Tom Nixon

Harry and Roberta Lyons

Michael Friel

Kristine Groff

William and Carol Lincoln

Sasha and John Reynolds

Bernard and Lynne Butcher

Russell and Joyce Porterfield

Anonymous donors

BUSINESSES, NON-PROFITS, FOUNDATIONS, AND AGENCIES

**Lake County Land Trust –
Robert Morse & John Graham Bequests
Keeling-Barnes Family Foundation**

**Pitzer Family Foundation
The Lodge at Blue Lakes**



Heron and egret rookeries are included in the Big Valley Wetlands Preservation Project area.



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Sponsorship Recognition

\$1,000 - \$2,500 and up: Acknowledgment in press releases, Land Trust publications and on our website. Permanent recognition on plaque located at Rodman Preserve office.

\$5,000 and up: All of the above, plus listing on a donor display area at the Melo property.

\$10,000 and up: All of the above, a donor's plaque on a trail sign, bench, or viewing area (donor's choice) at the Melo property.



Willows and tules and other wetland habitat, along with oak grassland make up the 31-acre Melo property purchase.



Lake County Land Trust

Big Valley Wetlands Preservation

ABOUT US

The Lake County Land Trust was formed in 1994 and is a private, nonprofit 501 c(3) organization dedicated to protecting important land resources in Lake County. Our goal is to preserve land permanently and, when possible, provide public access for aesthetic and recreational uses. We work cooperatively with landowners, private groups and governmental agencies to protect property that has unique scenic, cultural, ecological, agricultural, education or historical value.

SUCCESES:

- **Rodman Preserve** – 279 acres of wetlands and oak woodlands preserved on the north shore of Clear Lake. Walks offered every Saturday with educational programs presented throughout the year and a children's nature education program every summer.
- **Rodman Preserve Nature Education Center** – A small nature education center that hosts programs open to the public and a children's nature program during the summer. Open to the public twice a week.
- **Black Forest** – Over 250 acres of a scenic landmark forest on the slopes of Mt. Konocti has been preserved.
- **Indian Creek project** – Facilitated protection of Indian Creek wild and natural chaparral lands near Cache Creek – 231 acres.
- **Rabbit Hill Park** – Continuing stewardship and protection of 10 acres of open space in Middletown.

CONTACT US:

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Lake County Land Trust

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Big Valley Wetlands Preservation Project

DONOR RESPONSE FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Yes, I want to help the Lake County Land Trust:

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____

Charge my credit card (Visa or MasterCard) for this amount: \$ _____

Credit Card Number _____

Expiration Date _____ Signature _____

**Make checks payable to:
Lake County Land Trust BVW Project
Mail to: PO Box 711, Lower Lake, CA 95457**

Keep this donation entirely anonymous.

For recognition and publicity purposes, indicate that gift is (choose one):

Donated by: _____

In memory of: _____

In honor of: _____

YOUR GIFT IS DESIGNATED SOLELY FOR THE PURCHASE OF THE 31 ACRE MELO PARCEL
ON CLIPPER LANE, KELSEYVILLE. LAKE COUNTY LAND TRUST IS A NOT-FOR-PROFIT,
TAX-EXEMPT ORGANIZATION. NO GOODS OR SERVICES WILL BE PROVIDED
IN EXCHANGE FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE LAND TRUST, MAKING
YOUR GIFT 100% TAX-DEDUCTIBLE. LCLT TAX ID# 68-0332712