

Land Trust of Napa County Newsletter

Winter 2025-2026

How Proactive Efforts Help
Reduce the Impact of Wildfires

Story begins on page 18



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Welcoming a New CEO in January

Following an extensive national search, the Land Trust has selected its next CEO, who will assume the role in mid-January 2026.

While the formal announcement will be shared at the start of the new year, the Board and staff are enthusiastic about welcoming a leader who brings deep experience, strong strategic vision, and a shared commitment to the Land Trust’s mission.

“We are tremendously grateful for Doug’s years of service, and we are equally excited about the next chapter,” said Mike Fisher, Incoming Board Chair. “This transition marks a moment of continuity and momentum. Our new CEO will build on Doug’s legacy by advancing land protection, strengthening active land management, and ensuring the long-term financial health of the organization.”

The incoming CEO expressed gratitude and enthusiasm for the opportunity, noting, “I am honored to join an organization with such an impressive history of conservation leadership. I look forward to working alongside the Board, staff, and community to protect Napa County’s extraordinary landscapes for generations to come.”

More details about the new CEO and their background will be announced in January.

Looking Ahead With Gratitude and Confidence

Doug Parker leaves behind a legacy defined by collaboration, strategic thinking, and an unwavering belief in the importance of permanent land protection.

Thanks to his leadership, the Land Trust is stronger than ever—financially, organizationally, and in its ability to take on ambitious conservation projects that benefit the entire community.

As we prepare to welcome a new CEO, we do so with deep appreciation for Doug’s remarkable service and with great optimism for the future.

The Land Trust’s mission remains as vital as ever, and the foundation Doug has built ensures that the next era of conservation in Napa County will be one of continued progress, resilience, and lasting impact. 🌱

Letter from the CEO



First—Thank you!

It has been a deeply rewarding privilege to lead the Land Trust of Napa County since 2012.

Sometime ago, I talked to our board about my plans to retire. I also said that I was happy to stay on as long as it took to find my successor. The end of that timeline is now on the horizon—

mid-January. As that time nears, of course, I know I will miss being part of what the Land Trust does every day. However, I’m also thankful and pleased about everything that we have been able to accomplish with your help.

This starts with our most lasting impact—more than 43,000 acres protected since I arrived. In total, the Land Trust has now protected over 96,000 acres, which is a tremendous accomplishment—and the most for any land trust in the Bay Area.

At the same time, our capacity to steward protected lands has also grown significantly so that now we are doing much larger-scale projects, restoring native species, removing invasives, and successfully implementing a wider range of techniques, from prescribed burns, to rotational grazing, to forest thinning, pursuing our obligations to reduce the risk of wildfires, while protecting and restoring Napa’s native species.

The capacity of the organization to carry out all these projects and also the other absolutely essential tasks needed for any successful organization—the administrative, legal and fundraising capacities—have all grown significantly as well, along with the growth and capacity provided by our key volunteers, including our strong board and committees and all the volunteers who help with stewardship,

monitoring easements, getting people onto protected lands by leading field trips and helping in the office. You’ll see a number of great examples of all this work in this newsletter. I hope you enjoy it. And again, thank you so much! None of these conservation accomplishments could have been possible without your support.

I think the future holds even greater promise for our work. One new initiative, which I have been working on for some time, is the development of a funding measure for open space and wildfire risk reduction, in partnership with Firewise, to ensure that conservation and appropriate stewardship of Napa’s lands can continue sustainably into the future. I’m sure we’ll have more information to share about this over the next few months, with a goal of having a measure on the November ballot one year from now. This holds the potential for enormous long-term benefits for Napa.

Right now, we have a strong pipeline of land protection and stewardship projects in place so that I’m sure the Land Trust will be able to continue to accomplish its mission at a high level straight through the transition. The new CEO of the Land Trust is a great person, very experienced and accomplished in conservation, who I know you will enjoy meeting and working with, going forward.

So, when that day in mid-January arrives, I am very confident that the Land Trust of Napa County will be well-positioned for a great future—and so will the beautiful landscapes of Napa.

Best wishes for the Holidays and the New Year.

Doug Parker



Land Trust Protects 120 Acres of Scenic Ridgeline Habitat Above Calistoga

The Land Trust is pleased to announce the permanent protection of 120 acres of undeveloped ridgeline property in the northern Napa Valley. The land has been in the Kent family for almost 60 years and has long been valued for its natural beauty, outdoor recreation opportunities, and scenic prominence.

The newly protected property lies along the dividing ridgeline between Dutch Henry and Pickett Canyons and directly borders the Land Trust’s 1,000-acre Duff Preserve. It is also located near other protected lands, thereby further expanding the network of protected habitats in the area.

The land features a remarkable diversity of vegetation, ranging from steep grasslands and mixed chaparral near the Duff Preserve boundary to regenerating hardwood–conifer forests on its north-facing slopes. Its high ridgeline position provides habitat benefits for both the Dutch Henry and Pickett Canyon watersheds and contributes to the scenic open space visible from parts of Calistoga and the broader Napa Valley.

The newly protected acreage will become part of the Land Trust’s

Duff Preserve, expanding this protected landscape to ensure ongoing corridors for wildlife across this area of northern Napa County.

By permanently protecting the property, its second-generation owners—three brothers—wished to honor the environmental legacy of their father, Marshall Kent, who purchased the property in 1968 and cared deeply for its rugged beauty. Their decision to entrust its future to the Land Trust ensures that this landscape will remain protected for generations to come.

“Our parents loved and appreciated nature, sharing that love with us and our siblings,” said Michael and Joel Kent. “This land has been part of our family for more than fifty years. We’ve always appreciated its natural beauty, and it means a great deal to us to know it will remain protected and undeveloped in accordance with our parents’ wishes. We’re grateful to the Land Trust for ensuring it will stay this way for future generations.”

By protecting this property, the Land Trust safeguards critical habitat, supports watershed health, and preserves an iconic stretch of open space in northern Napa.

“This is a great addition to our protected lands,” said Doug Parker. “The property’s location—adjacent to our Duff Preserve and near other protected lands helps strengthen a large conservation block in a sensitive ecological area.

Its protection supports wildlife, watershed function, and the scenic landscapes that define our County. And adding this property to the Preserve will allow us to appropriately manage the land as well.”

Land Trust of Napa County Protects 145 Acres Along Putah and Pope Creeks

The Land Trust completed the permanent protection of 145 acres of riparian habitat and oak woodlands through two transactions with two different landowners.

“This acquisition reflects our continued commitment to safeguarding Napa County’s natural heritage and biodiversity,” said Doug Parker, CEO of the Land Trust. “By acquiring these properties, we’re protecting two important streams and ensuring habitat connections across thousands of acres of protected lands in this ecologically rich region.”

The protected properties, spanning three parcels, help connect thousands of acres of protected lands, including lands managed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Bureau of Reclamation.

“Over the last few years, we have acquired and now own more than 2,200 acres in this area, all adjacent to federal and state lands,” added Parker. “It has become one of our largest preserves, filling in critical gaps and ensuring continuous corridors for wildlife movement and ecological resilience well into the future.”

The three parcels—shown in dark green on the attached map—include two with direct frontage on Putah Creek, the largest water source for Lake Berryessa. Other Land Trust properties are indicated in medium green, along with their acquisition dates, while additional protected lands are shown in lighter green.

Alana Cloutier, who, along with her husband Paul, owned one of the properties, reflected on the significance of the conservation, “Paul and I are so happy that thanks to the Land Trust of Napa County, our little corner of Napa will stay as it is. We spent a lot of time up there—camping, hiking, hanging out with friends, and napping in hammocks, listening to the breeze in the oaks. After having a game camera set up for many years, we were amazed at how often mountain lions, bobcats, bears, turkeys, and deer used the trails on our ridge. It’s a really special place, and now it gets to stay that way. The Land Trust was very easy to work with—we have only nice things to say about the Trust and the process as a whole.”

This area supports remarkable biodiversity. A number of rare plant species have been documented nearby, including Tracy’s clarkia, a rare wildflower that exists in only five counties in northern California.



Above: Tracy’s clarkia (*Clarkia gracilis* ssp. *tracyi*), a rare wildflower found in only five counties in northern California. Left: Riparian habitat along Putah Creek, now permanently protected.





Land Trust Purchases 262 Acres at Hotspot for Rare Wildflowers

The Land Trust completed the acquisition of 262 acres in an area of the county that is a top priority for biodiversity. The property is next to the Land Trust's Wildflower Preserve on Snell Valley Road. This area of serpentine soils has some of the highest numbers of rare wildflower species in the region.

To protect these native wildflowers from invasive species and to reduce fuel loads, the Land Trust has completed several controlled burns in this area. The burns remove fuel created by invasive species, particularly barbed goat grass. Because of its barbs, this grass does not provide good forage for cattle, and controlled burns are the best way to remove it. Once removed, the native wildflowers can expand their numbers without any need for re-seeding.

This latest acquisition is also adjacent to over 5,000 acres that the Land Trust has protected in the last few years through a number

of transactions. "Besides its rich botanical treasures," said Doug Parker, "the property is in a strategic location. It is situated directly between the 1,400-acre Snell Valley Ranch, which we protected a couple of years ago, and our Wildflower Preserve, as well as the Grinsell Preserve, now encompassing 1,800 acres. This acquisition connects them together. And this is also a key step in protecting a priority wildlife corridor that extends eastward from protected land around Mount St Helena and Robert Louis Stevenson State Park."

The property is completely undeveloped and includes a stretch of a perennial stream, Butts Creek.

This acquisition was made possible with the support of the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, which provided grant funding for the purchase. 🌿



Rare wildflowers, left to right: Broad-lobed *Leptosiphon* (*Leptosiphon latisectus*); Green Coyote Mint (*Monardella viridis*); Yellow Hyacinth (*Triteleia lugens*); Two-carpellate Western Flax (*Hesperolinon bicarpellatum*)

Land Trust Protects 280 Acres next to Cedar Roughts Wilderness Area



The Land Trust permanently protected 280 acres adjacent to the 6,400-acre Cedar Roughts Wilderness Area, just south of Pope Creek near Lake Berryessa.

This newly protected land safeguards a stretch of Trout Creek, a tributary of Pope Creek. It also connects 240 acres of existing Bureau of Land Management land to the Wilderness Area, part of the Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument.

"This property is a remarkable addition to our growing network of protected land," said Doug Parker. "It connects together existing protected lands, supports wildlife corridors, and also protects streams and a number of rare plant species." The project is also part of a larger-scale strategy to connect and consolidate a contiguous 25,000-acre block of protected land west of Lake Berryessa. The property borders federally protected lands on two sides.

A botanical survey identified 11 distinct vegetation types, including Blue Oak Woodland, Sargent Cypress Forest, White Alder-Willow Riparian Forest, Serpentine Chaparral, and Serpentine Freshwater Marsh. The survey also confirmed the presence of 10 special-status plant species, including wildflowers that exist only in a

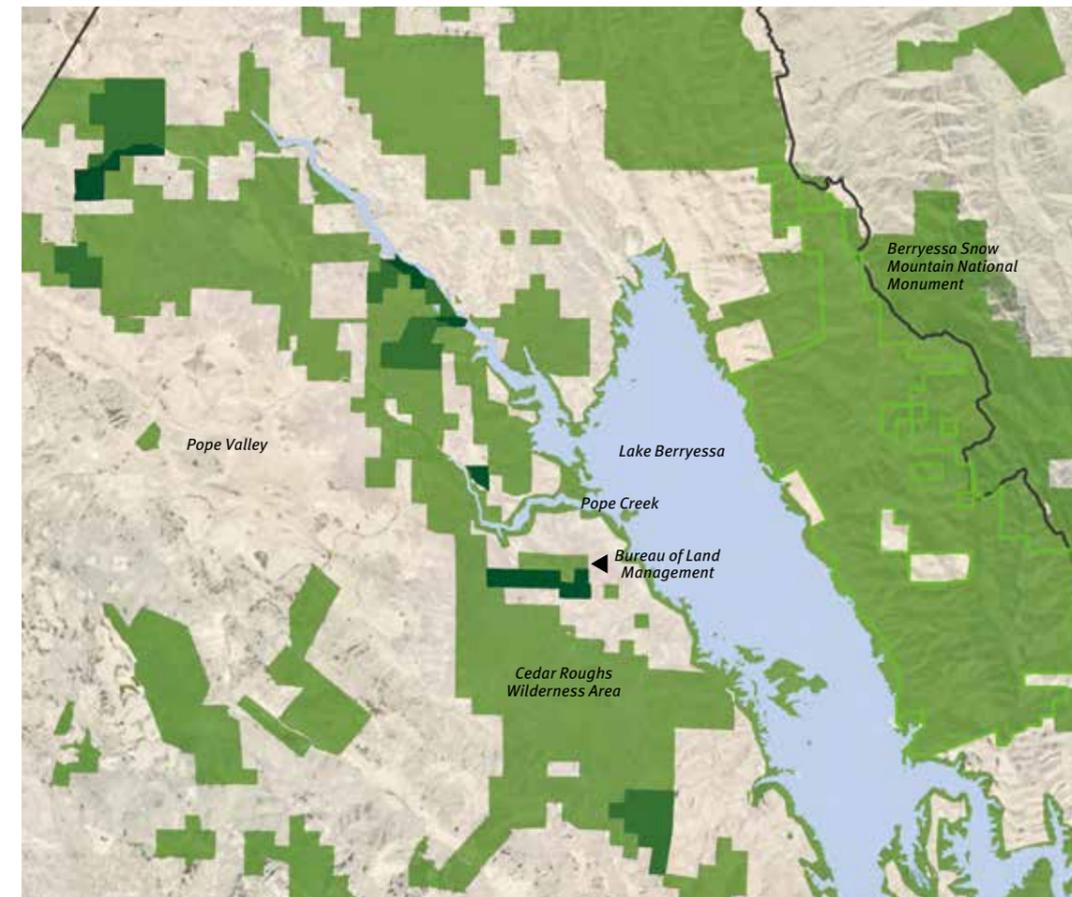
handful of nearby counties and nowhere else in the world.

"The presence of ten special status species on a property of this size is exceptional," said botanist Jake Ruygt. "The diversity of plant communities—including rare serpentine habitats—makes this an incredibly valuable conservation acquisition."

The property is designated as a "High Priority" for protection in the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Blue Ridge Berryessa Conceptual Area Protection Plan. It is entirely within an area identified as "Essential to Conservation Goals" by the Bay Area Conservation Lands Network.

Bill Harrison, one of the owners of the land, said, "Our families have enjoyed this property for the last 75 years. It is special that the property will be preserved by the Land Trust of Napa County."

"This acquisition represents an important step in our ongoing strategy to connect protected lands throughout Napa County," Parker added. "By protecting this property, we are building on past conservation work to safeguard these irreplaceable landscapes into the future." 🌿



Expanding a Wildlife Corridor

The latest land acquisitions (in darkest green at the top) joins other recently protected property (also darkest green below it) and others acquired in the past two years (medium green), consolidating a 25,000-acre block of protected lands in this important area.



Prescribed Burn Restores Rare Prairie

This year, the Land Trust, in partnership with CAL FIRE, conducted a prescribed burn on our Missimer Wildflower Preserve, a significant step in restoring native species in one of the region's most biodiverse ecosystems: the serpentine prairie.

These serpentine meadows are among the most important botanical sites in Napa County and the greater Bay Area. Serpentine soils are high in heavy metals and low in essential nutrients. These prairies support an extraordinary diversity of plant life adapted to these unique conditions.

Despite covering only 434 acres, the Missimer Preserve in Snell Valley is home to over 300 native plant species, nearly a quarter of all known native species in Napa County. Several of these species are listed as threatened or endangered by the California Native Plant Society and the State of California, underscoring the area's exceptional conservation value.

This fire-adapted landscape relies on periodic burning to maintain ecological health. Prescribed fire helps suppress invasive annual

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Top and middle: Firefighters, supported by engines and water tenders, systematically apply controlled fire to sections of the project area during the 51-acre prescribed burn in Snell Valley. Bottom: Post-controlled burn landscape at Missimer Preserve, where the boundary between burned and unburned areas highlights the precision containment of the prescribed fire.



grasses such as barbed goatgrass (*Aegilops triuncialis*) and medusahead (*Taeniatherum caput-medusae*).

The burn was the culmination of a major planning and preparation process, including Land Trust staff, CAL FIRE, and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. CAL FIRE Battalion Chiefs Robert Wettstein and Jason Freyer carried out the operation safely and efficiently, ensuring complete combustion of invasive species.

CAL FIRE Environmental Scientist Hailey Laskey worked with Land Trust staff and CAL FIRE crews to protect sensitive, rare, and threatened resources, including western pond turtles (*Actinemys marmorata*) and foothill yellow-legged frogs (*Rana boylei*).

“The Missimer Preserve’s serpentine prairies are one of the county’s most biologically rich and ecologically significant areas,” said Mike Palladini, Land Trust Stewardship Director. “This prescribed burn builds on our ongoing efforts to restore these outstanding conservation values. This is a great example of how we can reduce fuel loads and provide wildfire protection benefits for local communities ... while restoring native plant diversity and rare species at the same time.”

Prior prescribed burns on this site have yielded striking results, including the resurgence of rare wildflowers like Pink star-tulip (*Calochortus uniflorus*) and Brewer’s milk-vetch (*Astragalus brewerij*). By reducing the dominance of invasive species, fire opens space and resources for native plants and animals to recover.

In addition to biodiversity benefits, this prescribed fire reduced the fuel load and created an emergency evacuation zone for the nearby community of Berryessa Estates. Removing dried invasive grasses can reduce the potential spread of wildfire, making this an important step in managing fire risk. Prescribed fire can further mitigate wildfire impacts, offering a proactive tool amid increasingly extreme fire seasons and climate volatility.

This prescribed burn is part of the Land Trust’s long-term strategy to restore rare habitats and strengthen community resilience in a changing climate. It sets the stage for a vibrant wildflower bloom next spring and a healthier landscape.

The Land Trust will continue to monitor the site closely to assess habitat response and inform future restoration efforts. 🌱



*Clockwise from top: Western pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*); Pink star-tulip (*Calochortus uniflorus*); Foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylei*); Resurgent wildflower bloom in springtime after a previous prescribed burn*

Celebrating the Stanton-Lazar Fund for Art & Nature



This year, we are honored to recognize the generosity of Ken Stanton and Julie Lazar whose support through The Stanton-Lazar Fund for Art & Nature has made a lasting difference at Linda Falls and along Conn Creek.

Thanks to their investment, a beautiful new trail re-route at Linda Falls—leading to the historic Saw Mill Site—is now complete and open for the community to explore. The former route had become inaccessible, and this new trail not only restores access but also elevates the visitor experience. Permanent signage is coming soon, with temporary wayfinding in place for hikers in the meantime.

Their commitment also advanced our long-term riparian restoration along Conn Creek, funding ACE (American Conservation Experience) crews in August to remove invasive species and support the health of this vital corridor. This work strengthens habitat resiliency and protects one of the Land Trust's most important waterways.

We are grateful to Ken and Julie. 🌿

New Peer-Reviewed Study Shows Targeted Grazing Boosts Native Diversity in Napa's Oak Woodlands

The Land Trust is proud to announce the publication of new applied research in the peer-reviewed journal *Ecological Solutions and Evidence*. The paper, titled “Dry-season grazing enhances native diversity in invaded oak woodlands,” highlights how carefully managed grazing practices can increase native plant diversity in California's oak woodland ecosystems.



The research, co-authored by Mike Palladini, Stewardship Director, and Dr. Tosha Comendant, Senior Stewardship Program Manager at the Land Trust, represents years of fieldwork, data collection, and implementation of grazing as a restoration treatment on the Land Trust's Wantrup Preserve in Pope Valley.

The study tested how targeted grazing—strategically timed to reduce a heavy buildup of invasive plant growth during the dry season—affects native plants in the understory of oak woodlands. Removing this heavy buildup of invasive, dried-out plant cover can reduce stressors on native wildflowers and grasses, potentially giving them a boost. The results are highly encouraging—managed dry-season grazing significantly increased both the number of native plant species and the cover of native plant species—thereby

bolstering biological diversity, a critical component of ecological health and resilience.

“This research confirms what many land managers have observed anecdotally for years, that grazing, when applied with intention and ecological insight, can be a powerful tool for restoration,” said Dr. Comendant. “We're thrilled to contribute to the growing body of science supporting adaptive management and restoration of natural areas.”

The paper was authored in partnership with Dr. Justin Valliere, Assistant Professor of Cooperative Extension in Invasive Weed and Restoration Ecology at UC Davis, Dr. Morgan Gray, Principle and Quantitative Ecologist at Pisaster, and professional botanist Jake Ruygt. The collaboration reflects the Land Trust's commitment to advancing land stewardship through applied science, partnership, and long-term ecological monitoring.

“This study highlights how well-planned grazing can reduce fuel loads, lower fire risk, and support native biodiversity, ultimately strengthening the resilience of California's oak woodlands. It also underscores the value of collaborative, science-based restoration for evaluating and improving land management practices,” said Dr. Valliere.

“This is an exciting accomplishment for our land stewardship program,” said Mike Palladini. “It highlights the value of a data-driven, evidence-based approach to addressing land stewardship challenges.”

The article is available open-access through the Wiley Online Library: <https://besjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/2688-8319.70149>



Unlocking Mount Veeder for Hikers



The Napa Open Space District, working in partnership with the Land Trust of Napa County, completed the purchase of a 42-acre property on Mount Veeder. Situated in the Mayacamas Mountains on the west side of the Napa Valley, this beautiful, shaded property abuts The Cove, a historic Girl Scout camp already owned by the District. The acquisition will allow public access to the Cove and the development of what will be a phenomenal hiking park on the western ridge of the Napa Valley.

The new property is a beautiful parcel carpeted in redwoods and features its own viewshed, facing down into Napa. Just twenty minutes from the Browns Valley neighborhood, visitors will be transported to the wild forested slopes of Mount Veeder. They will eventually have access to vigorous day hikes once the new park is fully developed.

“This addition is very worthy in and of itself,” said Chris Cahill, General Manager of the Napa Open Space District, “but the really exciting piece is that it unlocks a world of possibilities for getting the public access to the peak of Mt Veeder and establishes a

hiking park in the hills west of Napa, something that is sorely lacking in that area now.”

Once referred to as the Napa Redwoods, The Cove and the surrounding area were a major summer resort destination for nearly a century. In the 1860s and 1870s, the nearby Lokoya Lodge, Solid Comfort Resort, and Mt. Veeder Resort were popular family destinations for visitors from San Francisco and beyond. Mount Veeder has an extensive local history dating back to the early 1800s, including colorful stories such as the tale of Robber's Roost, which some claim was located on the newly acquired property and is detailed in Larry Hicks' 1975 report, *The History of Mt. Veeder*.

The Cove was purchased by the Girl Scouts of Northern California in 1964, using funds raised from selling their famous cookies, and operated as a scout camp for decades, with innumerable campers and families building lifelong memories on the property. In 2016, when the Girl Scouts organization decided to sell this historic property, they were very concerned (*continued next page*)

that it might be closed to visitors once sold. The group approached the Napa Open Space District about the sale of the property, and the District rallied the public and raised funds to purchase and save the property for the outdoor enjoyment of future generations.

As the sale was nearing completion, the devastating 2017 fires occurred, decimating the forest and all of the camp infrastructure on the property, including doing severe damage to the easement access road. The District completed the purchase, understanding the value of this property for public use and enjoyment, but public access has been stymied ever since by the logistical issues of access to the property.



While the 2017 fire destroyed the camp's infrastructure and burned most of the forest at The Cove, it also exposed features that had been hidden for more than a century.

In a serendipitous turn of events, the fire revealed expansive views of the Napa Valley and the south toward the San Francisco Bay, which are unique due to the vantage point. It also exposed the stunning geological features that were hidden beneath the forest, allowing visitors to see the full false-caldera that earned The Cove its name, spectacular rock formations that are part of the Sonoma Volcanics, and scree fields the likes of which are usually only seen in the Sierra Nevadas. The new park, once developed, offers an amazing potential for hikers and school groups to explore and learn about geology, while experiencing these incredible views.

The acquisition of this new property was made possible by the Land Trust of Napa County's ability to respond quickly when the property was placed on the market. Upon learning of the opportunity, the Land Trust immediately recognized the property's value and potential as a connection to The Cove. The Land Trust worked out an agreement in which we would purchase the property and then re-sell it to the District, giving the District time to raise the funding.

"We're very pleased that we could help the Napa Open Space District acquire this property," said Doug Parker, "and help provide the opportunity for the public to hike to the top of Mount Veeder and enjoy the impressive views from there."

For more information about The Cove and the Napa Open Space District's work rehabilitating this historic property, see www.NapaOutdoors.org.



Moore Creek Park Expansion Completed

Image courtesy of the Napa Open Space District

This year, in partnership with the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District, the Land Trust helped protect 523 acres of land adjacent to Moore Creek Park, expanding the popular park to over 2,100 acres.

This addition connects Moore Creek's trails to the Pacific Union College Demonstration Forest, where the Land Trust, working with the college, CAL FIRE, the U.S. Forest Service, and the State of California, protected 1,100 acres of the college's forested land. By linking protected lands together, this new addition creates a 10,000-acre corridor of contiguous protected lands.

This is the final property needed to protect the entire length of Moore Creek and establish a protected corridor for wildlife, extending from Lake Hennessey to Angwin. It's an extraordinary example of what conservation partnerships can achieve.

"We're thrilled to complete this project and increase the size of Moore Creek Park, protecting even more habitat in an important ecological area," says Chris Cahill, General Manager of the Napa Open Space District, "and we're looking forward to helping even more residents and visitors get outside to enjoy and experience this amazing part of our county."

In recent years, the Napa Open Space District, Land Trust of Napa County, and other partners have been making progress in securing protection along the east ridge of the Napa Valley.

"The Land Trust is very pleased to work with the Napa Open Space District and Dave Phinney to protect this strategic property," said Doug Parker, CEO of the Land Trust. "This is the final

property needed to protect the entire length of Moore Creek and, at the same time, create a protected corridor for wildlife from Lake Hennessey to the PUC forest in Angwin."

The newly acquired property connects Moore Creek Park's 25-mile trail network to the 35-mile Pacific Union College Demonstration Forest network. It allows for four new miles of dedicated multi-use Bay Area Ridge Trail. These trail connections represent the final step in a long-term effort to secure a recreational trail between Moore Creek Park and Angwin that dates back to the Napa Crest Trail plan of the 1970s.

Nature lovers and recreational park users have been able to access portions of this new addition for several years on the Dan's Wild Ride Trail, which follows an easement generously donated by the previous owners, the Phinney family.

"My wife and I are proud and honored to be a part of protecting Moore Creek and the surrounding acreage for generations to come," said Dave Phinney.

The State Coastal Conservancy and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission awarded grant funding for this project.

"Conserving land that connects habitats, supports healthy creeks and forests, improves climate resilience, and expands public access to nature is a top priority for the State of California," said State Coastal Conservancy Executive Officer Amy Hutzel. "The Coastal Conservancy is excited about the many benefits this land acquisition will bring to the people and wildlife of Napa County and everyone who visits this spectacular park."



Continuing a Legacy of Trust: Re-Accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission

We're proud to share that this year, the Land Trust of Napa County completed our reaccreditation review with the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, joining an esteemed group of land trusts that meet the highest national standards for conservation performance, financial accountability, and ethical practices.

This is our third accreditation. The accreditation seal is not a one-time achievement—it is a reaffirmation, each time, of our ongoing commitment.

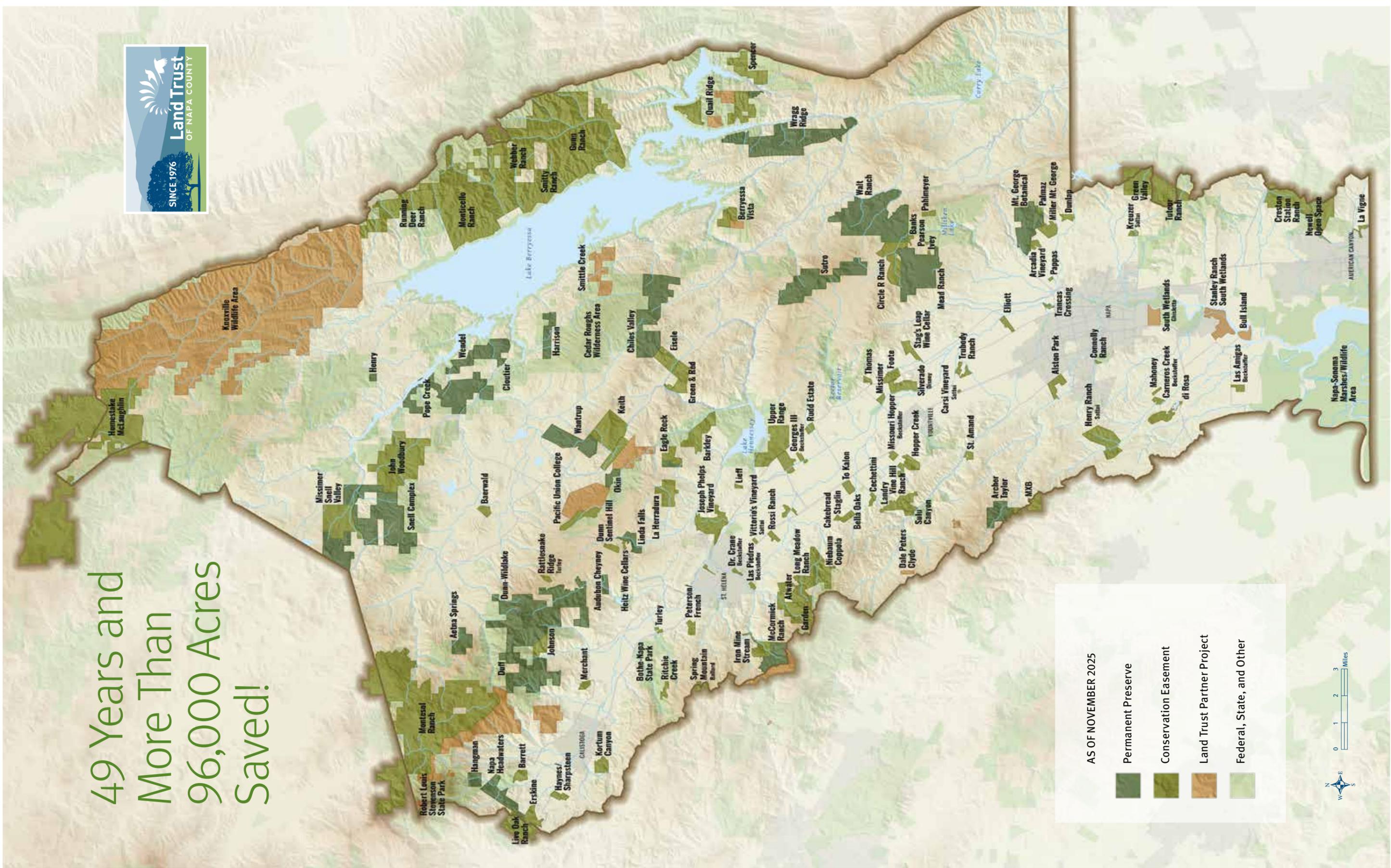
Every five years, accredited land trusts undergo this audit to demonstrate that they continue to meet the rigorous standards outlined in the indicator practices set forth by the Accreditation Commission.

For the Land Trust, this reaccreditation reflects our unwavering dedication to the lands entrusted to us and to the community of supporters, donors, and partners who make our work possible. As we celebrate this milestone, we also

renew our promise. This reaccreditation reassures our community that we are working with transparency, integrity, and a focus on conservation that will benefit not only everyone today, but also generations far into the future.

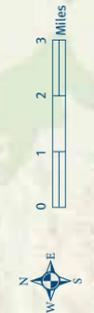
We sincerely thank each person, business, and organization that supports us. Because of you, the Land Trust of Napa County continues to serve as a trusted guardian of our region's natural heritage—deeply rooted in place, nature, and intention.

49 Years and More Than 96,000 Acres Saved!



AS OF NOVEMBER 2025

- Permanent Preserve
- Conservation Easement
- Land Trust Partner Project
- Federal, State, and Other



Window on Wildlife: Tracking the Pulse of Our Native Species

Across Napa County's protected wildlands, the Land Trust maintains a network of motion-activated wildlife cameras that help us understand how local species are faring over time. For the past ten years, we've used the Wildlife Picture Index (WPI)—a standardized, science-based monitoring protocol—across nearly 5,000 acres to track changes in wildlife presence, abundance, and movement.

This long-term dataset is crucial for understanding ecosystem health and informing our stewardship decisions. Along the way, these remote cameras capture remarkable glimpses into the daily lives of the birds and mammals that call these landscapes home. Enjoy a few of our favorite views from 2025—glimpses into the thriving natural world that your support helps safeguard. 🌿



Clockwise from top left: Columbia black-tailed deer with fawn (*Odocoileus hemionus columbianus*); Bobcat (*Lynx rufus*); Mountain Lions (*Puma concolor*); Black bear with cub (*Ursus americanus*)



Clockwise from top left: Black-tailed jack rabbit (*Lepus californicus*); Western grey squirrel (*Sciurus griseus*); Grey fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*); Coyote (*Canis latrans*)

Picket Fire: How Proactive Land Trust Stewardship Helped Reduce Fire Impacts

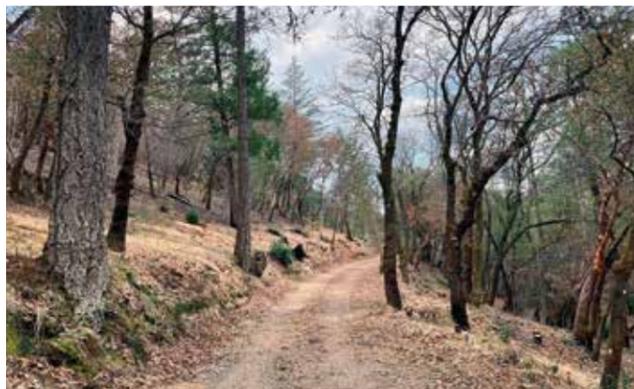
A wildfire that began on the outskirts of Calistoga on August 21, 2025, ultimately burned across three Land Trust preserves, testing years of pre-fire fuels reduction and road access improvement work completed by the Land Trust, and demonstrating the importance of our active land management program.

When the Pickett Fire ignited on a privately owned property along Pickett Road within the city of Calistoga, it spread rapidly

across steep terrain. As it advanced, the fire crossed property boundaries and moved onto three Land Trust preserves—Duff, Dunn-Wildlake, and Aetna Springs, burning more than 2,100 acres of protected land.

These preserves contain important habitat for a broad array of wildlife, and support a highly diverse flora, including numerous rare plant species.

Stewardship that made a difference



Left photo shows condition following roadside forest thinning completed by the Land Trust within the Aetna Springs Preserve. Right photo illustrates how the Pickett burned through the thinned area at a low severity, and was effectively contained at the road edge.

Land Trusts Preserves Heavily Utilized for Fire Suppression and Containment

The Land Trust's undeveloped wildland properties proved crucial in effectively fighting the Pickett Fire, preventing it from reaching neighborhoods and communities. We now have confirmation from firefighters assigned to the fire that four Land Trust fuels reduction and road access improvement projects within the fire footprint helped reduce fire severity and aided in containment. Senior Land Trust staff actively coordinated with CAL FIRE, Napa County Fire, Napa Community Firewise Foundation, members of the Napa County Board of Supervisors, and preserve neighbors during the fire, participating in daily briefings at the incident command center throughout the incident.

Land Trust Preserve Roads Heavily Utilized for Emergency Access to Key Areas

The Land Trust actively maintains over 90 miles of access road on its preserves. Improved road systems on all three Land Trust

preserves within the Pickett Fire area were heavily utilized for fire suppression and containment.

The Land Trust had completed erosion prevention, clearing, and repair on its Dunn-Wildlake Preserve road system near Angwin prior to the fire. Firefighters heavily utilized these roads to access and hold the fire along key ridgelines. Additionally, prior to the Fire, the Land Trust partnered with the Napa Communities Firewise Foundation to re-establish and improve key road connections between the Duff Preserve and adjacent access points. These roads also proved key to emergency access and firefighting efforts during the Fire.

Land Trust Forest Thinning Reduced Fire Severity and Facilitated Containment

In addition to emergency road access, two forest management projects that the Land Trust had completed on the Aetna Springs Preserve were shown to have reduced fire severity and helped contain the fire.

With support from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Land Trust implemented a roadside shaded fuel break project along the entire 1.6 miles of Aetna Springs Road running through the preserve in 2022. In 2023, the Land Trust implemented a 32-acre forest understory thinning project within the Preserve, significantly reducing ladder fuel loads.

We now have confirmation from firefighters operating in the area during the fire that these areas were heavily used for defensive firing operations (back burning) to help successfully contain the fire along Aetna Springs Road. In addition, the fire intensity in these project areas was low overall.

A Mosaic of Impacts and Early Signs of Resilience

The Pickett Fire produced a patchwork of effects across the preserves, characterized by a mix of high, moderate, and low fire severity.

Land Trust stewardship staff have become increasingly concerned about the prevalence of shorter and shorter fire return intervals. All Land Trust land burned in the Pickett Fire had just burned in

the 2020 Glass Fire. While these ecosystems and species are fire-adapted, fire that is too frequent can prevent native species from recovering, favoring non-native and invasive species that thrive with high levels of disturbance. While that remains a concern, signs of resilience and recovery began to emerge just days after the fire. Staff documented multiple native trees, shrubs, and grasses resprouting, while motion-activated cameras deployed in the area as part of a large-scale, long-running wildlife monitoring project (napalandtrust.org/our-work/wildlife-picture-index-project) showed mammal species quickly returning to burned areas.

Assessment, Repair, and Long-Term Monitoring

Immediately after containment, the Land Trust began coordinating with CAL FIRE and Napa Firewise on repairing suppression impacts, such as dozer lines and road disturbances, critical work before winter rains. Land Trust staff continue to survey ecological impacts, identify priority restoration areas, and prepare for long-term monitoring. *(continued on next page)*

Clockwise from top left: Improved preserve road that was heavily utilized for firefighting; Forest thinning along Aetna Springs Road significantly reduced fuel loads; Following containment, the Land Trust worked with CAL FIRE and Napa Firewise to repair access roads and install erosion control on containment lines before winter rains; Signs of recovery emerge days after the fire as mammal species returned to burned areas.



Picket Fire, continued

With nearly 90% of Land Trust preserve lands having experienced fire at least once in the past decade, our team has developed a robust post-fire monitoring program. This includes tracking oak survival after high-severity fire, tracking changes in the presence of mammal and bird species post fire, and tracking the occurrence of rare, fire-dependent, and fire following plant species.

Looking Forward with Gratitude

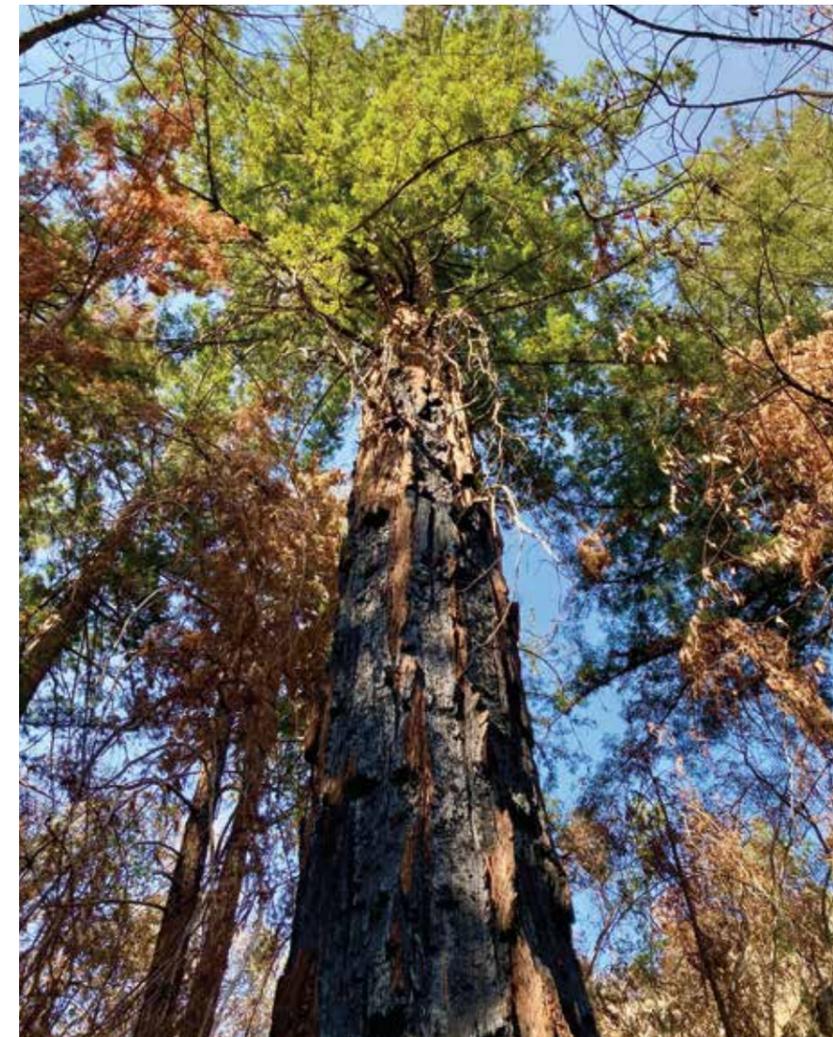
We extend heartfelt gratitude to the firefighters, emergency personnel, County Supervisors, and

partners who acted swiftly as the fire spread across the region and onto our lands. Wildfire will always be part of Napa County's natural systems. While the Pickett Fire did not originate on Land Trust property, it demonstrated clearly that proactive land management reduces severity, supports safer suppression, and strengthens ecological resilience.

With continued stewardship and community partnership, these landscapes will regenerate and continue to support Napa County's remarkable biodiversity. 🌿



Resprouting Scrub Oak (Quercus berberidifolia), Duff Preserve



Unique, Old Growth Redwoods Weather the Wildfire

For the second time in five years, unique old growth redwood stands on the northeastern slopes of the Dunn-Wildlake Preserve have made it through a wildfire. These trees, which have been the subject of research by the Steven Sillett lab at Cal Poly Humboldt, are among the interior-most redwoods within the range of the species.

Because they are isolated deep in remote and rugged canyons, these stands were spared from the logging that occurred in nearly all other redwood forests in Napa County, and they contain trees that are over 800 years old.

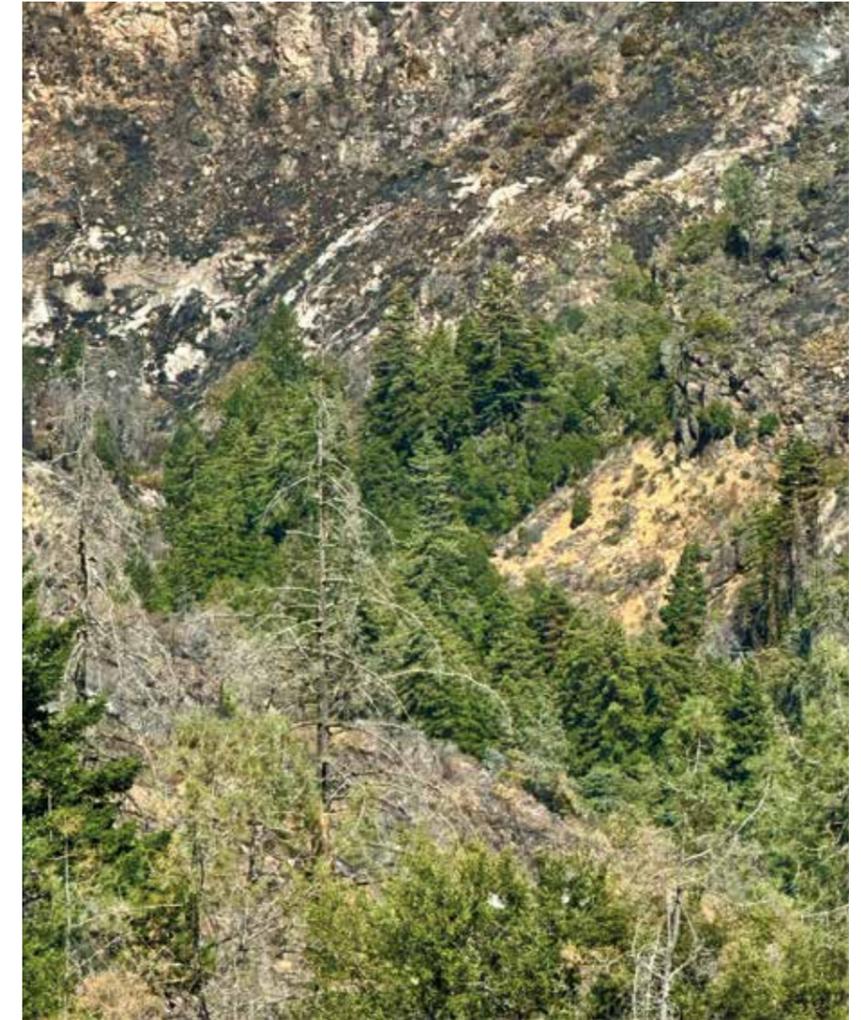
These are truly redwoods on the edge—the edge of their range and the edge of their climactic tolerance. They are almost entirely cut off from the coastal fog belt on which redwoods typically rely (redwoods have the ability to take up water directly through their leaves). By comparing annual growth with the climate record, the research showed that these redwoods are very sensitive to drought conditions and high summer temperatures during the growing season.



Above: Sillett research team member collecting data at base of tree. Right: photo from ridgeline showing intact stands after Pickett Fire.

A testament to their resilience, most of the trees within these stands have now survived both the 2020 Glass Fire and the recent Pickett Fire, despite these fires burning through the entirety of these stands. Tree ring analysis also revealed evidence of older fires in the growth histories, showing that many of these trees have survived multiple fires during their lifetimes.

These redwoods represent one of the most unique and fascinating ecological features within the Land Trust's preserve network. We've had many inquiries from concerned members and supporters about how the redwoods were impacted by the Pickett Fire, and we are so happy to report that these resilient organisms made it through! 🌿



The Dunn-Wildlake Preserve is a remarkable conservation area encompassing 3,030 acres of diverse ecosystems, including rocky outcrops, old growth redwood stands, pine and Douglas fir forests, oak woodlands, and chaparral.

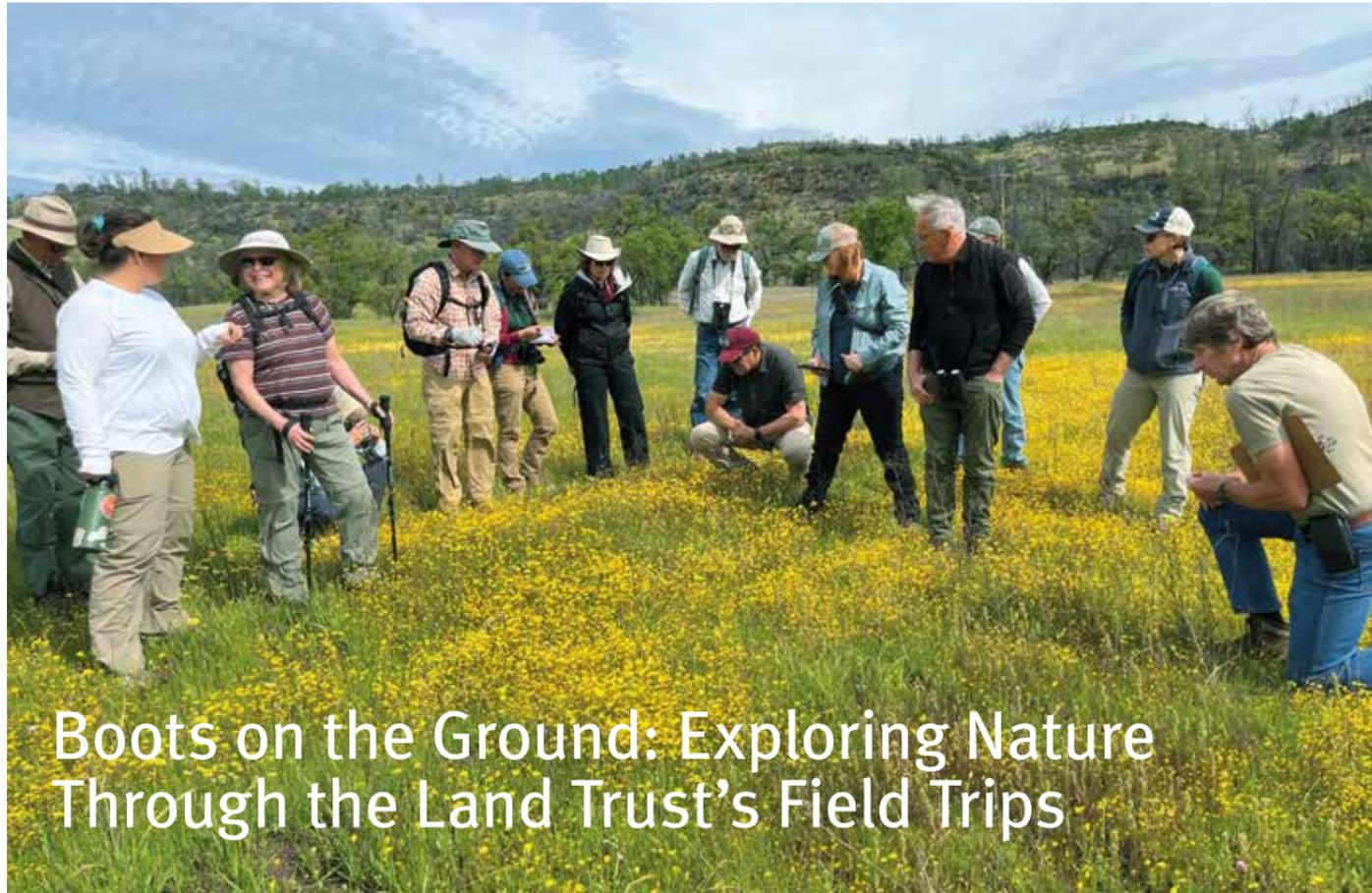
Situated along the Howell Mountain plateau between Calistoga and Angwin, this preserve safeguards critical natural resources and offers breathtaking vistas of Napa County (2018 photo).

There's no better way to connect with the wonder of Napa County's protected landscapes than by experiencing them firsthand.

Each year, the Land Trust offers immersive field trips designed to bring people into the heart of the places we care for, showcasing the beauty, complexity, and significance of our local ecosystems. These guided experiences invite community members to explore

protected lands, learn about native habitats, and deepen their relationship with the natural world.

Led by expert staff, dedicated guides, and an exceptional team of volunteers, our field programs highlight the region's remarkable biodiversity and offer hands-on ways to support the vitality of our lands and watersheds. 🌿



Boots on the Ground: Exploring Nature Through the Land Trust's Field Trips



2025 Highlights:

- **98** total organized events
- **49** guided hikes with **450** participants
- **22** volunteer stewardship events with over **60** volunteers
- **22** orientation events and **145** participants
- **5** guided school programs, serving **130+** students
- More than **770** attendees joined us this year to discover, explore, and care for the land!

Participants enjoyed a wide range of experiences, including:

- Planting native species and removing invasive plants at the Archer Taylor, Dunn-Wildlake, Linda Falls, and Sutro Preserves
- Spring Botany Walks at the Missimer, Mead, and Wantrup Preserves
- Birdwatching adventures at the Ghisletta Wetlands, Mead Preserve, and Newell Open Space Preserve
- Challenging and rewarding summit hikes to Mt. St. Helena, Mt. George, and Maggie's Peak

Stewardship Workdays continued to unite volunteers in meaningful, hands-on conservation efforts, from removing invasive species such as French broom and star thistle to enhancing trails for safe and enjoyable public access. These activities have a significant positive impact on the health of our landscapes.

Orientation Events at Archer Taylor and Dunn-Wildlake Preserves offered participants the opportunity to gain access for self-guided exploration. Once oriented, visitors can return at any time to explore the trails, observe the wildlife, and experience the world-class botanical diversity at their own pace.

Land Trust members also receive exclusive benefits, including priority sign-ups and carefully curated members-only hikes. Join us in the year ahead as we explore, restore, and celebrate the natural wonders of Napa County together! 🌿

Welcome New Board Members Chris Millich and Nick Orum

Chris Millich brings deep financial leadership and a passion for conservation to the Land Trust. He currently serves as Chief Financial Officer at Quintessential, a leading fine wine importer, marketer, and sales company representing family-owned wineries.



Previously, Chris was CFO at Folio Fine Wine Partners, guiding long-range strategic planning and overseeing financial operations. He also served as Managing Director at Premier Pacific Vineyards, further strengthening his connection to Napa Valley's agricultural and natural landscapes.

Chris holds an MBA from Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business and a dual B.A. in Economics and Political Science from UC San Diego. An outdoor enthusiast who loves hiking and exploring the region, he has a deep appreciation for Napa County's natural beauty, making his role with the Land Trust a natural extension of his values.

"I am thrilled to join the Land Trust of Napa County Board of Trustees," Chris said. "I look forward to using my skills and experience to support the lasting impact and legacy of this vital organization—benefiting both the people who live here and the many visitors who cherish our beautiful lands."

Nick Orum joins the Board with a distinguished career in private equity and a long-standing commitment to Napa County. He co-founded Gryphon Investors in 1995 and now serves as its Co-Chief Executive Officer and Co-Chief Investment Officer.



With approximately \$10 billion in assets under management, Gryphon has completed over 600 investments throughout its 30-year history, supporting companies through transformative growth. Nick previously served as the firm's President and led its healthcare, software, and business services investment teams.

Nick and his wife, Caren, have lived in Napa since 1999 and are proprietors of Arborum Napa Valley. In 2023, Arborum released its first wines while pledging \$1 million to organizations supporting vineyard workers, their families, and environmental conservation efforts. Going forward, 100% of Arborum's net earnings will continue to support these causes, underscoring the family's commitment to community and stewardship.

"I am honored to join the Board of Trustees at the Land Trust," Nick said. "I look forward to contributing my experience in finance and strategic growth to further the organization's important mission and its long-term impact."

Farewell Outgoing Board Members Josh Harrington and Jason Johnson



Josh Harrington has been a dedicated member of the Board of Directors since 2019, providing thoughtful and steady leadership throughout his six years of service. Even before joining the Board, he supported the Land Trust through his early involvement with the Finance Committee, where he began serving in 2018. His financial expertise and analytical approach strengthened the Land Trust's fiscal stewardship during a period of growth and complexity.

In 2022, Josh expanded his service by joining the Audit Committee, quickly establishing himself as a trusted voice on governance and accountability. His commitment to transparency and strong

internal systems led to his appointment as Committee Chair in 2023 and 2024, where he guided the work with clarity and care.

Throughout his service, Josh has been valued for his calm, measured perspective and deep commitment to the mission. His behind-the-scenes contributions—ensuring strong financial oversight and sound processes—have been essential to the Land Trust's long-term stability.

"Serving on the Board has been an honor. I have tremendous respect for the mission, for the staff who carry it out every day, and for the community that supports this work. It has been a privilege to contribute to the Land Trust's ongoing success."

(continued on next page)

Jason Johnson has brought an entrepreneurial spirit and thoughtful perspective to the Board of Directors during his tenure. As Founder & CEO of August Home, a leader in smart home access technology, and Managing Partner of Founders Den in San Francisco, he has long been at the forefront of innovation.



Jason also founded the Internet of Things Consortium and previously co-founded the mobile security company AirCover and the ebook software startup BookShout! His experience building companies and fostering collaboration in emerging technology added a fresh, future-oriented lens to Board discussions and decision-making.

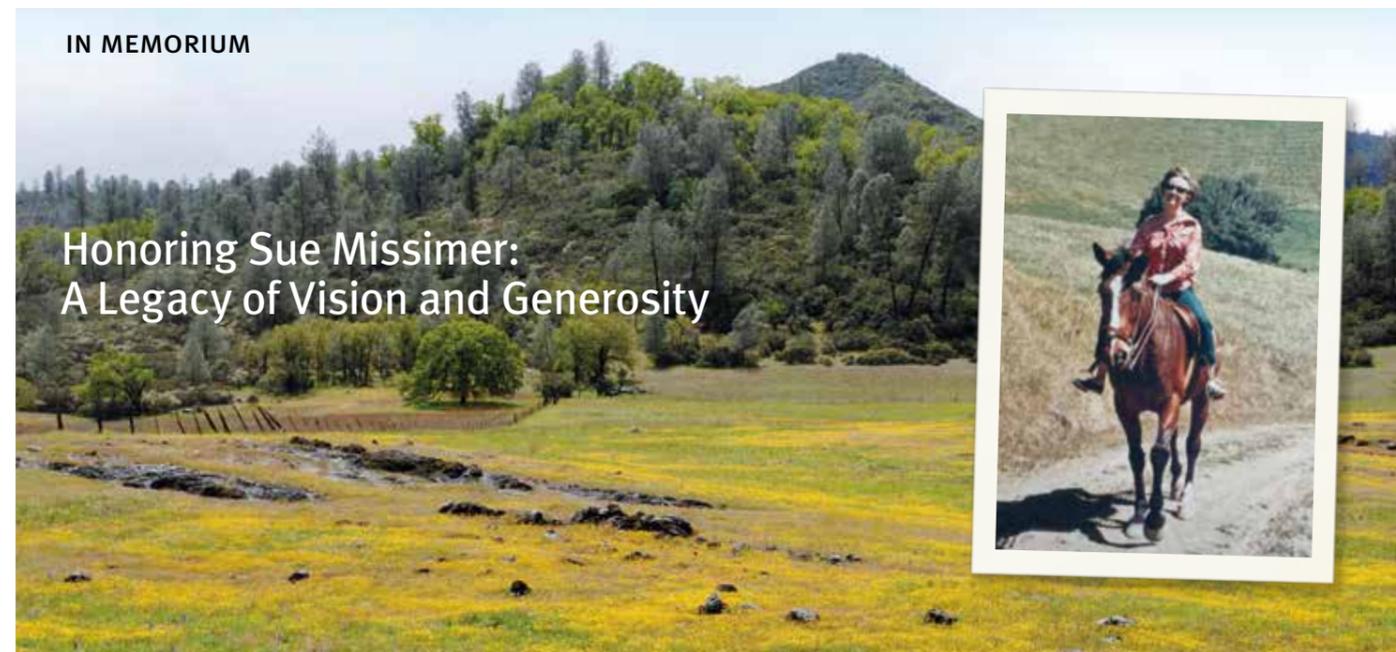
Throughout his tenure, Jason has been appreciated for his strategic thinking, collaborative approach, and genuine enthusiasm for the Land Trust's mission. His contributions have helped strengthen the organization during a period of growth and change.

"It's been a privilege to support the Land Trust's work. This team is doing significant conservation, and I'm proud to have been part of it," Jason said.

Thank you, Josh and Jason, for your dedication and invaluable support. Your leadership has been instrumental in helping the Land Trust protect over 22,000 acres during your time on the board. We are deeply grateful.

IN MEMORIAM

Honoring Sue Missimer: A Legacy of Vision and Generosity



With great respect and gratitude, we remember Sue Missimer for her enduring commitment to land conservation and her transformative impact on the natural heritage of Napa County.

In 1999, Sue and her husband, Dale, made a landmark contribution to the Land Trust by donating the funds to purchase the original acreage that became the Missimer Wildflower Preserve. This gift laid the foundation for safeguarding native wildflowers, rare plant communities, and riparian corridors in a region of exceptional botanical diversity. In addition, the Missimers donated a conservation easement to the Land Trust to permanently protect their vineyard property outside Yountville.

Their vision for the Wildflower Preserve continued to grow: In 2022, the Preserve was expanded by an additional 160 acres, bringing the total protected area to approximately 400 acres, ensuring that the ecological value of this special place would be strengthened for generations to come.

The Missimer Preserve, nestled in Snell Valley, encompasses serpentine meadows that support an extraordinarily rich plant community—over 290 native species have been documented. These soils are rare and challenging for vegetation, making the survival of specialized flora all the more remarkable.

Sue's early leadership helped set the stage for ongoing science-based stewardship, invasive species removal, and prescribed fire practices that protect this delicate habitat. Her legacy lives in every bloom and every acre secured. Sue believed deeply in the power of land to connect people with place, to sustain community, and to carry meaning forward. Because of her generosity and the partnership she fostered, the Land Trust's work is stronger and more enduring.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to the Missimer family and to all who were touched by Sue's vision. Her memory enriches our mission and renews our commitment to the land she loved.



Perfect Holiday Gift: A Lasting Legacy for the Land

This holiday season, share the spirit of giving in a way that truly lasts—with the gift of conservation. A Land Trust of Napa County membership is a meaningful present for family, friends, and colleagues alike—a thoughtful way to celebrate special occasions or to show you care.

Your gift does more than honor your loved ones. It helps protect the wild places, scenic vistas, and agricultural lands that make Napa County extraordinary. Every membership supports our ongoing efforts to *protect and care for the land—forever*.

With donation levels to fit every budget, giving the gift of membership is simple, heartfelt, and impactful.

Visit napalandtrust.org to share the joy of conservation this season—and make a difference that endures for generations. 🌱



Celebrating Conservation: A Night with Our Cornerstone Society

Land Trust Cornerstone Society members gathered for a truly memorable evening at Favia Wine Estate in Coombsville, generously hosted by Annie Favia and Andy Erickson.

Surrounded by the beautiful gardens of native species on the property, together, we celebrated the collective impact of conservation and the power of community in protecting Napa’s natural resources and unique landscapes.

This year’s gathering marked a significant milestone: with the steadfast support of our members, the Land Trust has now protected 96,000 acres of Napa County’s irreplaceable lands. These acres preserve critical wildlife habitat, safeguard clean water, and ensure that Napa’s natural and agricultural beauty endures for generations to come.

The evening also held special meaning as it was the final Cornerstone event with our longtime CEO, Doug Parker, before his retirement. Doug’s visionary leadership over the past 13 years has been instrumental in achieving this extraordinary conservation legacy. His dedication and passion will continue to inspire the Land Trust’s work for years to come.

To our Cornerstone Society members—thank you. Your generosity and commitment fuel our mission, making these lasting achievements possible.

And to Annie and Andy, our heartfelt gratitude for your hospitality and for sharing your beautiful Coombsville estate with our community. Your stewardship embodies the values we all hold dear. Together, we are protecting Napa’s natural legacy—forever. 🌱

Land Trust of Napa County Honors Larry Turley and Suzanne Chambers Turley with 2025 Acre by Acre Award

The Land Trust is proud to recognize Larry Turley and Suzanne Chambers Turley as the 2025 recipients of the Acre by Acre Award, which honors extraordinary commitment to land conservation in Napa County.

Longtime champions of conservation, Larry and Suzanne have demonstrated a deep commitment to preserving open spaces in Napa and beyond. They have donated three conservation easements to the Land Trust of Napa County, permanently protecting their properties on both the valley floor and in Angwin.

Additionally, they donated an easement in Paso Robles, protecting an additional 150 acres. “Larry and Suzanne embody the very spirit of the Acre by Acre Award,” said Doug Parker. “Their vision, generosity, and dedication ensure that Napa’s most treasured landscapes—and some of California’s oldest vineyards—remain protected for future generations.”

In addition to their land donations, Turley Wine Cellars is widely recognized for leadership in sustainable viticulture.

Their Estate Vineyard in St. Helena and the historic Pesenti Vineyard in Paso Robles are certified organic and dry-farmed, with every cluster hand-harvested. Larry’s pioneering commitment to preserving old vines has saved dozens of heritage vineyards—some more than a century old—safeguarding healthy soils, thriving biodiversity, and a living legacy for California wine.

“These are not just acres of land—they are places of beauty, heritage, and habitat,” said Parker. “Larry and Suzanne’s actions reflect a true legacy of conservation that will inspire and benefit generations to come.”



In addition, Suzanne and Larry have been long-time supporters of the Land Trust and have hosted events to engage others in conservation.

The Acre by Acre Award, presented annually by the Land Trust of Napa County, honors individuals whose vision and leadership have had a lasting impact on the Napa landscape. 🌱

Land Trust of Napa County:

As of November 2025, the Land Trust has permanently protected 96,000 acres—18% of Napa County. Here is how we’ve protected land:

- Through 161 Conservation Agreements (properties stay in private ownership, but the Land Trust holds the land conservation agreement)
- Through 26 property transfers to resource agencies (such as Fish & Wildlife and State Parks)
- Through 29 property acquisitions, donated or purchased directly
- 46,700 acres are under Land Conservation Agreements
- 27,273 acres have been transferred to resource agencies
- 22,000 acres are owned by the Land Trust



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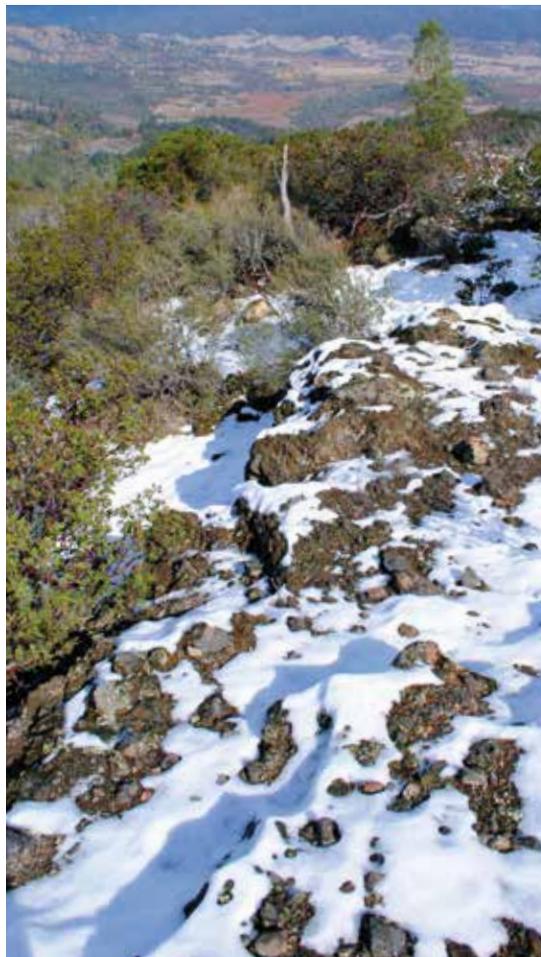
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Land Trust of Napa County
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to preserving the character
of Napa by permanently
protecting land. Updates
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 napalandtrust.org

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**Upcoming Field
Trips & Events**

For details, to register or to join as a member, visit napalandtrust.org or call 707.252.3270.

We'd love to see your adventures! Please share your pictures and use #gohikenapa

JANUARY

Jan 1: New Year's Day Hike Up Mt. St. Helena

Jan 10: PUC Mushroom Hike

Jan 17: ATP Visitor Orientation

Jan 18: Linda Falls Volunteer Work Party

Jan 25: Mead Ranch Walk

Jan 30: Foote Botanical Preserve Workday

Feb 14: ATP Meadows Volunteer Workday

