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NORTHERN CALIFORNIA REGIONAL LAND TRUST (NCRLT)

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IN THIS ISSUE:

Farmland Protection Project	1
New Development Director	1
Message from the Exec Director	2
New Business Partners	3
Tuscan Headwaters Project	3
New Board Member & Volunteer	4
Farm Succession Workshop	6

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Executive Director

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*Stewardship Coordinator/
Administrative Assistant*

Jesika Jennings
Development Director

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NCRLT Irrigated Farmland Protection Project Update

In June 2007, the California Department of Conservation's (DOC) *California Farmland Conservancy Program (CFCP)* awarded NCRLT grant funding to perform farmer outreach and facilitate projects that use and support agricultural easements for the protection of irrigated farmland. NCRLT's *Irrigated Farmland Protection Project* seeks to encourage the long-term, private stewardship of irrigated farmland through the voluntary use of agricultural easements. As a result of our outreach efforts thus far, we have received numerous inquiries and eight applications from interested agricultural landowners who together own 769 acres of "high quality farmland" in our tri-county region. On April 17th, Jamison Watts and CFCP personnel made site visits to three properties in the Biggs/Gridley area totaling over 400 acres.



Photo courtesy of NRCS

Continued on page 5

New Development Director Joins NCRLT!

NCRLT is delighted to announce our newest staff member and our first Development Director, Jesika Jennings. In April we received a two-year grant that will fund her position. We extend our appreciation and thanks to the funder, choosing to remain anonymous, for their generous donation. Being raised in Butte County has given Jesika an appreciation and love for the landscape and agricultural vibrancy of the area. After graduating from CSU, Chico in 2001, Jesika spent 6 years working in various nonprofit positions in Sonoma County, gaining experience in fundraising, donor relations, membership coordination, major event planning, and nonprofit marketing. Jesika and her husband recently decided the time had



Development Director Jesika Jennings

Continued on page 2

New Business Partners Join NCRLT

Harvest Accounting & Management Systems

Eagle Security and Telecom Systems of Chico was the first company to be part of our Business Partner Program, donating a security system to NCRLT last fall. Since then three more organizations have joined our program.

Harvest Accounting & Management Systems, (Harvest AMS) became a Business Partner in February 2008 and specializes in the needs of Northern California nonprofits and small businesses and has assisted hundreds of organizations in implementing best practices for fiscal management. Harvest AMS's mission is to strengthen the financial health of organizations by increasing their understanding and use of financial data to facilitate growth and long-term financial and organizational sustainability. Vada Bouffard, founder and owner of Harvest AMS, has over 30 years experience working with various industries in the areas of accounting and business management. Vada has been an incredible asset to NCRLT since 2006. For more information contact Vada at (530) 872-9177, vada@harvestams.com or www.harvestams.com.

In March 2008, **Tempra Board, Resource Development Consultant**, became a Business Partner in designing NCRLT's new agricultural easement brochure. Tempra has more than 10 years of successful experience in resource development and specializes in grant proposal writing, publication design, and donor development for environ-

mental and conservation organizations, arts groups, and health and human service agencies. Her services include: grant proposal research, writing and submission to private foundations, corporations and public (State and Federal) funding sources. She also offers donor development and outreach, including newsletter design, brochures, annual reports, direct mail, and major donor solicitation materials. Lastly, she creates and

Tempra Board & Associates, LLC

issues with an experienced and talented staff. With offices in the Sacramento area (Rocklin) CA, Chico, CA, San Diego, CA, and Reno, NV, they serve clients throughout California and Western Nevada. For more information: (530) 893-6700 or www.foothill.com.



FOOTHILL ASSOCIATES

implements comprehensive fundraising development plans and campaigns. For more information contact Tempra at: (530) 342-0583, tempra@tempraboard.com or www.tempraboard.com.

In April 2008, **Foothill Associates** donated a desktop computer to NCRLT upgrading an older model in our office. Foothill Associates is a multidisciplinary California Corporation with Small Business Enterprise Certification that provides a wide range of environmental consulting services. Founded in 1995, they assist public and private clients and address difficult environmental and planning

NCRLT Business Partners consist of local businesses who believe in NCRLT's mission, and who show their support by contributing \$500 or more a year (including in-kind services, donations, event sponsorship, etc.), providing NCRLT with the reliable annual funding and support we need to pursue and complete large-scale projects like Llano Seco Rancho and the Ishi Wilderness Augmentation Project. For more info!

Call (530) 894-7738 or visit www.landconservation.org/becomeabusinesspartner.php.

THANK YOU Vada, Tempra and Foothill Associates!

Tuscan Headwaters Project Proposal

NCRLT recently submitted a proposal to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) to conduct coordinated outreach with local, collaborating, watershed conservation groups in Butte and Tehama counties. The capacity and outreach grant would

go towards NCRLT operations including salaries for a Land Protection Specialist (currently J. Watts) and the Executive Director, as well as outreach, printing, postage, and mileage reimburse-

Continued on page 4

Message from the Executive Director

According to the California Farm Bureau Federation, of the 2.13 million farms in America, 30% may pass to a second generation, but less than 10% will pass to a third. American agricultural imports grew by an estimated \$5.3 billion in 2005, requiring additional border inspections and resources. California farmers must pay average foreign tariffs of 62% in order to export commodities compared to an average tariff of 12% that foreign producers face. Nearly 100,000 acres of California farmland are permanently committed to non-farming uses every year. By 2040, California's Central Valley will become home to nearly 12 million people—double the 2005 population.

Hmmm...dramatically decreasing intergenerational farm succession, increasing agricultural imports and decreasing exports, disproportional international tariffs, large-scale agricultural land conversion, skyrocketing fuel costs and spiking urbanization in the midst of one of the most important food production regions in the world...hmmm. What does it all mean?

What about here at home in Glenn, Butte and Tehama counties? According to the American Farmland Trust, 4,020 acres of agricultural land were permanently converted to urban uses

between 1990 and 2004 in Butte County, including 1,772 acres of high quality farmland. The same study reported a loss of 641 acres of high quality farmland in Glenn County and 1,380 acres in Tehama County. These losses constitute a 22% conversion rate in Butte County, a 37% conversion rate in Glenn County, and a 21% conversion rate in Tehama County between 1990-2004.

What if the California Farm Bureau Federation's predictions are correct and 12 million people inhabit the Central Valley in the next 30 years? No one can really say for certain of course, but a conservative estimate of one eighth to one fourth of that number puts the number of people living in the Sacramento Valley between 1.5 and 3 million people. Crazy? It will never happen? Perhaps. But the area between Sacramento and Redding is one of the most attractive areas in the state to develop given the relatively low land prices, plentiful resources and significant re-zoning that is currently being proposed by several General Plan updates including Glenn, Butte and Tehama counties, not to mention several incorporated cities.

For those who value our local agriculture, what is to be done? Two organizations who are experts on the



Executive Director Jamison Watts

subject, the American Farmland Trust and California Farm Bureau Federation, offer the following suggestions: local governments (for they have the most control over local land use) must direct growth away from the highest quality farmland and towards less productive land, develop land as efficiently as possible, avoid rural ranchette development that fuels land speculation and drives up land costs, protect the integrity of the Williamson Act, ensure that local general plans factor water supply needs into planning for new development, and enforce the California Environmental Quality Act to conserve farming and ranching resources as a part of the existing environment.

Reasonable? Absolutely. Do-able? That all depends on us, the residents of Glenn, Butte and Tehama counties, and our local governments.

New Development Director continued from cover page

come to move their family back to Butte County and raise their two young children in the community-centered, family-friendly, natural environment of the North Valley. Jesika is excited and inspired about the mission of NCRLT and the energy and support of the staff and board, and looks forward to sharing that mission with the rest of the North Valley.

Jesika's educational background includes a

B.A. in English, with a Minor in Women's Studies and a Technical Writing Certificate from CSU Chico. Her past work includes: Fund Development Coordinator/ Executive Assistant to the CEO at Southwest Community Health Center in Santa Rosa, Development Officer at Quarryhill Botanical Garden in Glen Ellen and Database and Publication Manager for the Sonoma County Task Force For the Homeless in Santa Rosa.

Welcome to NCRLT Jesika!



New NCRLT Board Member, Secretary & Volunteer

Burt Bundy is our newest board member, joining in March 2008. He is currently the President of the Tehama County Farm Bureau Board of Directors and a graduate of the California Agricultural Leadership Program. Burt was the Manager for the Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum from 1999 to 2007. As Coordinator of the SB1086 Program, he helped form the current nonprofit, resource based, planning organization. Burt was a Tehama County Supervisor from 1981 to 1993 and during that time became very involved with resource and agricultural activities along the Sacramento River. He helped write SB1086, the legislation that instituted the Management Plan for the mainstem of the Sacramento River between Keswick and Verona. Later, as a representative of Sacramento Valley Landowners Association, he participated in the development of the Handbook that guides the planning process. He and his wife have a small commercial cattle and catfish operation at their home in Los Molinos where he has lived for over 50 years. Burt is also President of the Mill Creek Conservancy and a member of Central Tehama Kiwanis Club and the Tehama County General Plan Advisory Committee. **Welcome to NCRLT Burt!**



NEW BOARD SECRETARY

Dr. Kristina Schierenbeck joined the board in August 2007. In March 2008 she took on the role of board Secretary. The position was previously

held by ex-board member, Sharon Wallace. With her dynamic demeanor, Kristina is also dedicating her time on the Outreach and Fundraising Committee.

NEW VOLUNTEER ELICIA WHITTLESEY

After growing up in Dry Creek Canyon (near Butte College) and going to college in southern California, Elicia is glad to be back in the oak woodlands and open spaces of Butte County. Realizing that the County is leaning toward more development, she understands the value of land trusts in keeping this area a place she'll want to return to. She's been researching and writing grants for NCRLT with wildland and watershed protection in mind. In the fall, she's starting an M.A. program in Geography at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. Brrrrr! **Thanks Elicia!**

Tuscan Headwaters Project Proposal continued from pg 3

ment. The remaining \$45,000 would be equally divided among participating watershed partners over 18 months to be used for capacity building within their respective watersheds. Anticipated results include significantly increased stakeholder awareness and the permanent protection of private lands within the upper reaches and areas adjacent to the headwaters of seven prominent

creeks contained within the Tuscan Land Formation in eastern Tehama and Butte counties. These creeks include Paynes Creek, Antelope Creek, Deer Creek, Pine Creek, Little Chico Creek, Butte Creek, and Lower Feather/Honcut Creek. Capacity funding from SNC will enable NCRLT and several watershed partners to make significant contributions to SNC's program areas by improving watershed health, con-

ducting environmental and natural resource education and enhancing water quality monitoring efforts. Additionally, the protection of these creeks would benefit a number of important natural resources, including, but not limited to, the Tuscan Aquifer and several federal and state endangered and threatened species including several runs of Chinook salmon, and Central Valley Steelhead.

Irrigated Farmland Protection Project Update continued from cover pg



Photo courtesy of NRCS

Two of the three properties assessed have since been approved for free appraisals, which are currently being contracted by NCRLT. In November 2007, NCRLT began its outreach campaign to farmers in the tri-county region. We have shared our presentation titled: “*Agricultural Conversion and Irrigated Farmland Protection in Glenn, Butte and Tehama Counties*” to over 350 people at Rotary Clubs, Resource Conservation Districts, Farm Bureaus and Grange Halls. We will



Common Egret near rice field
Photo courtesy of NRCS

be participating in the following events and have a tabletop display with information on the project as well as our farmland, wildland and rangeland protection and mitigation programs—

- Sunflower CRMP Stewardship Day, Saturday May 3rd.
- Fire in the Foothills, Thursday June 12th.

Interested landowners should submit an application to NCRLT and will need to meet the following selection criteria to be considered for agricultural easement funding according to the specifications of the California Farmland Conservancy program.

PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA:

Desirable Soil Types

Irrigated Class I and II Soils.

Working Land

Land must have been cropped in the last 4 years; preference is given to active farmland.

Crop Type

Higher value crops (e.g., almonds, rice, walnuts) are ranked higher than lower value crops (irrigated pasture, alfalfa).

Property Size

>50 acres; >100 acres preferred.

Development Pressure

Current or future minimum parcel size (smaller minimum parcel sizes ranked higher) and parcels located in close proximity to City Sphere’s of Influence or City Limits.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

\$30,000 is available for appraisals on a first come first serve basis (appraisals typically average around \$6,000 per 50-100 acre property).

Agricultural easement funding is cur-



Blue Oak Woodlands in Butte County

rently available from the Department of Conservation (DOC) and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Farmland and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP).

Contact NCRLT at (530) 894-7738 or e-mail: jwatts@landconservation.org and request a CFCP Project Application.

www.landconservation.org

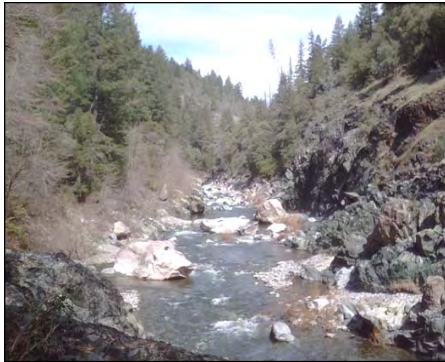


NORTHERN CALIFORNIA
REGIONAL LAND TRUST

167 East 3rd Avenue
Chico, CA 95926
Phone: (530) 894-7738
Fax: (530) 894-1189

www.landconservation.org

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West Branch of the Lower Feather River

Farm Succession Workshop & Llano Seco Rancho Tour

On **Friday, May 16, 2008** from **8:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.**, NCRLT and Northern California Farm Credit will hold a free **Farm Succession Workshop**. This workshop is open to the public and to all ages and will take place on NCRLT's Llano Seco Rancho easement, approximately 15-miles SW



Llano Seco Agricultural Easement

of Chico on Ord Bend Rd. along the Sacramento River. Workshop topics will include: challenges and goals for keeping land in agriculture, agricultural easements in farm succession planning and the nuts and bolts of farm succession planning.

The workshop will be held in the morning, followed by a complimentary lunch and a guided agricultural tour of the easement in the afternoon.

Please RSVP by **May 12th**. Space is limited to 50 people. We hope

“Keeping working land working and wildland wild for future generations.”

you will join us for this educational opportunity in a unique part of Butte County. For more information and to RSVP, contact Jesika at: (530) 894-7738 or jesika@landconservation.org

Web Site & E-newsletter

NCRLT launched a new web site last fall and we invite you to check it out: www.landconservation.org You'll find upcoming events and meetings, information on our programs, easements and facts about conservation and agricultural easements. Help us save paper—send us your e-mail and we'll send our e-newsletter instead.



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