



Final Grant Seals Sonoma Land Trust Baylands Purchase December 8, 2004

The California State Coastal Conservancy Board on December 2 approved a grant of \$500,000 toward the Sonoma Land Trust's purchase of 1679 acres at the top of San Pablo Bay in the Highway 37 corridor. The Trust's \$20 million campaign to secure the property owned by investment group North Point Joint Venture, along with the 648-acre Dickson Ranch, will complete protection of the entire landscape where Sonoma County meets the San Francisco Bay. Other public funds were leveraged by the Trust's effort to raise \$2.5 million from private donors.

Land Trust Conservation Director Wendy Eliot attended the Coastal Conservancy board meeting in Palo Alto on December 2 and reported, "This action by the Conservancy is the final step in achieving our vision of protecting once and for all that incomparably rich swath of land along the bay." Eliot recently celebrated her fifth anniversary with the Land Trust and was drawn to the organization originally by her excitement over the potential for baylands protection. Her father, Ted Eliot, co-chaired the Trust's successful capital campaign over the past year.

The baylands region has been a target area for Sonoma Land Trust since the 1980s. Working with other conservation partners, the Trust has already secured 1,500 acres in the region in Sonoma County and manages 1,600 acres in Marin County at Bel Marin Keys. The current purchase will enable extension of the San Francisco Bay Trail and will provide a key link in wetlands restoration efforts from San Rafael to Vallejo.