



Live Oaks Ranch



... to protect the land forever

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY 2019–2020

A MESSAGE FROM EAMON AND ALLISON

Dear Friends:

As we pause and reflect on a year that's brought so much pain and sadness in its wake, it would be entirely understandable to give way to despair and helplessness. Our hearts go out to all the individuals, families, workers and businesses that have seen their lives and communities upended, often tragically, by the events of the past 12 months. We have felt many of these impacts at the Land Trust. And yet, beneath the catalogue of heartbreak that is the daily news, there are powerful reasons to hope for a better future.

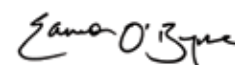
It's now become abundantly clear that human life and well-being is inextricably bound up with the health and well-being of nature. The monstrous wildfires, global pandemic, and even the corrosive inequalities

of our society—each of these has an ecological dimension. And there are proven, durable, cost-effective, nature-based solutions available to us. Whether it's reducing harm by restoring a balanced approach to tackling our fire and flood plains, or blunting the physical and psychological toll of the pandemic by protecting and extending our network of parks and open spaces, or ensuring the equitable distribution of nature's benefits, the Land Trust is helping to implement the systemic change needed for a just and climate-ready future across Sonoma County.

As we survey the damage, masked and carefully distancing from our colleagues, it can be hard to imagine how nature will reclaim our fire-denuded hillsides. It will take some help from us, and a little time, but nature's unquenchable thirst for life will

not be held back and will transform the blackened landscape into a glorious tapestry of color. And someday soon, we'll celebrate with you, as we have always done, with handshakes and hugs.

This annual report celebrates the impact we have when we work together to live our values and invest in them. There has never been a more important time to come together, with creativity, integrity and generosity, to create the future that we want for ourselves and future generations.



Eamon O'Byrne
Executive Director



Allison Sanford
Chair, Board of Directors

It will take some help from us, and a little time, but nature's unquenchable thirst for life will burst forth and transform the blackened landscape into a glorious tapestry of color.



OUR MISSION

Sonoma Land Trust protects the scenic, natural, agricultural and open landscapes of Sonoma County for the benefit of the community and future generations.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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NATURE MAKES THE FUTURE POSSIBLE

When we finalized last year's annual report and sent it to press, no one could have imagined the loss, hardship and grief that lay in the year ahead. Even so, looking back over the text, the tone of optimism is tempered by clear-eyed determination. That resolve is born of our hard-won experience that there will be setbacks and challenges that can seem overwhelm-

ing. And yet, in spite of all the difficulties we face, ultimately, we will succeed. The body of work you've helped us to achieve inspires our resolve not only to pursue a healthy, just and life-sustaining planet, but to meet this moment and redouble our efforts.

Thanks to your steadfast generosity and support, we

have advanced our climate-readiness strategies in the Sonoma Valley and Baylands, and added hundreds of acres of critical habitat and parkland at a time when we need it most. Knowing that you are here side-by-side with us, we are confident that we can make Sonoma County a stronghold for people and nature!



The body of work you've helped us to achieve inspires our resolve not only to pursue a healthy, just and life-sustaining planet, but to meet this moment and redouble our efforts.

PRESERVING BIODIVERSITY FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCY

Sonoma County comprises a large part of one of the world's 34 biodiversity "hotspots"—the richest and most threatened places on Earth for plant and animal life. What we do here matters far beyond our borders. Protecting land so that species can move and adapt across our landscapes is essential for preserving diversity of plant and animal life across our county.

Of the six land conservation projects that we have either completed this year or plan to complete by next spring, these three are key for protecting the plants, animals and natural processes on which we all depend.

GLOECKNER-TURNER RANCH

Protected in June by a conservation easement purchased by Sonoma County Ag + Open Space, with key financial assistance from Sonoma Land Trust, this expansive, highly forested property in the hills west of Lake Sonoma is a critical linkage extending wildlife connectivity across 40,000 acres of adjacent protected land.

TWO-HORSE RANCH

One of the largest remaining ranches along the Middle Reach of the Russian River, with three miles of nearly pristine streamside habitat, this historic property possesses large swaths of meadow and oak woodland, and opens up connectivity for wildlife movement between Fitch Mountain and Modini Mayacamas Preserve.

McCORMICK RANCH

Situated along the crest of the Mayacamas Mountains, McCormick Ranch, on average, receives three times as much rainfall as Santa Rosa and adjacent valleys. The ranch serves as Sonoma County's "continental divide" with Napa County, with tributaries and stretches of Santa Rosa Creek, Iron Mine Creek and Bear Creek flowing into the Russian River, Napa River and Sonoma Creek, respectively. Purchasing this property will support critical wildlife habitat and wildlife corridors and expand recreational opportunities and trails between Hood Mountain and Sugarloaf Ridge parks. We are working hard to raise the final \$1.4 million toward the \$14.5 million purchase price.



TACKLING THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Courtesy of Sonoma County Regional Parks.



Strongly supported by the community, and in consultation with local tribal representatives, we are hoping to create a model for community-led fire risk management that we can export to other areas of the county and beyond.

WILDFIRE

As this year's devastating Glass Fire proved yet again, a changing climate in the form of longer and hotter dry seasons, coupled with historic policies of fire suppression, have left our landscapes extremely vulnerable to combustion. Fire experts and ecologists agree that restoring fire to the landscape, similar to Indigenous practices, is one of the best ways for us to ensure the long-term safety of our communities and the health of our natural lands. Our 10-year, multi-partner Sonoma Valley Wildlands Collaborative with CAL FIRE is gearing up to perform an average of 300 to 500-acre controlled burns annually to remove ladder fuels across the Collaborative's 18,000 acres of protected land. The Collaborative is also actively conducting fuel reduction measures, such as forest thinning and installing shaded fuel breaks to create defensible space and equipment access in wildland areas.

Despite limited rainfall this winter, by working with CAL FIRE, we are continuing to make progress on our prescribed burning targets, and we completed priority hazard fuel removal on land adjacent to Oakmont and forest thinning in overgrown portions of the Mayacamas. Nothing could be more urgent than reducing the risks of yet another catastrophic wildfire for more than 9,000 structures (almost all homes and businesses) in the area and preventing long-term damage to the landscape. Strongly supported by the community, and in consultation with local tribal representatives, we are hoping to create a model for community-led fire risk management that we can export to other areas of the county and beyond.

FLOODING AND SEA-LEVEL RISE

As deeply as fire has impacted our community, our changing climate is also rapidly increasing the risk and severity of flooding events in the county. Stronger and more frequent atmospheric rivers are compounding rising seas in the southern part of the county. It's well known that Highway 37 is now flooding with every king tide event. Less widely recognized is the fact that we can solve this problem of rising sea levels along the bay by restoring marshes to buffer the effects of rising tides—as we have done at Sears Point. Our challenge is that further restoration must be completed or at least well underway by the end of the next decade!

We are focusing our restoration efforts on two key watersheds in the Baylands: Sonoma Creek and the Petaluma River. The Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy, which we completed in July, is our plan for habitat restoration, flood protection and public access in the lower Sonoma Creek watershed between Schellville and San Pablo Bay. Together with our partners, these projects represent one of the biggest opportunities for landscape-scale wetland restoration and flood risk reduction in the San Francisco Bay Estuary.



Lower Sonoma Creek by Jerry Doddrell.



Conservation Council field trip up Pole Mountain.

NATURE FOR ALL

Sonoma Land Trust acknowledges the historical injustice of many of our communities having been excluded from accessing the benefits of nature. In 2016, an initiative of the California Council of Land Trusts set us on the path to be one of the first eight land trusts in the state to develop specific plans to redress this inequity.

Since then, we've been providing unconscious bias education for staff and board members. This has engaged us in a series of humbling, but instructive, workshops in which community partners have

shared their frustrations with and aspirations for their participation in conservation.

To succeed in our mission, we must be fully committed to social, racial and environmental justice, starting with universal access to parks and open space, and addressing the disproportionate impacts of climate change on historically marginalized communities. To that end, we have focused on urban conservation to improve access, and inclusive education programs to empower a new and diverse generation of conservationists.



Protecting Cooper Creek will offer more people easy, walkable access to Taylor Mountain Regional Park and the many health and community benefits that parks provide. Photo by Jerry Doddrell Photography.



In time, the Greenway is expected to link Trione-Annadel State Park to Taylor Mountain Regional Park, thanks to our Cooper Creek acquisition.

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View an interactive map of all our protected properties at sonomalandtrust.org.

BRINGING NATURE TO PEOPLE

Santa Rosa Southeast Greenway

This year, we completed the land-use planning phase for this exciting project to convert a 47-acre Caltrans right-of-way into a park that will be the centerpiece of an “emerald necklace” linking Trione-Annadel State Park to Taylor Mountain Regional Park. We’ve also succeeded in raising most of the \$2 million purchase price.

Cooper Creek

A 54-acre addition to Taylor Mountain Regional Park and key component of the Greenway project. This acquisition, on which we closed in spring, extends and improves park access to urban neighborhoods on the northwestern boundary of Taylor Mountain park.

Sonoma Developmental Center

After several years of advocacy by us, our partners, the County and the community, the undeveloped lands of SDC will be transferred to the adjoining state and regional parks by the end of next year! At press time, the Land Trust is working with a contractor to develop bilingual trail maps for the community to use to explore and enjoy this new addition to our open spaces.



Santa Rosa Southeast Greenway.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

If it hadn’t been for COVID, this summer would have been our fourth year of offering our popular bilingual Bay Camp to youngsters from the southern part of the county, as well as our bilingual family hike program. When we had to suspend both, our community programs staff pivoted to develop lauded virtual and bilingual programming, as well as a teen-led Conservation Council that spent the summer helping us create an applied science program to be implemented during the school year.



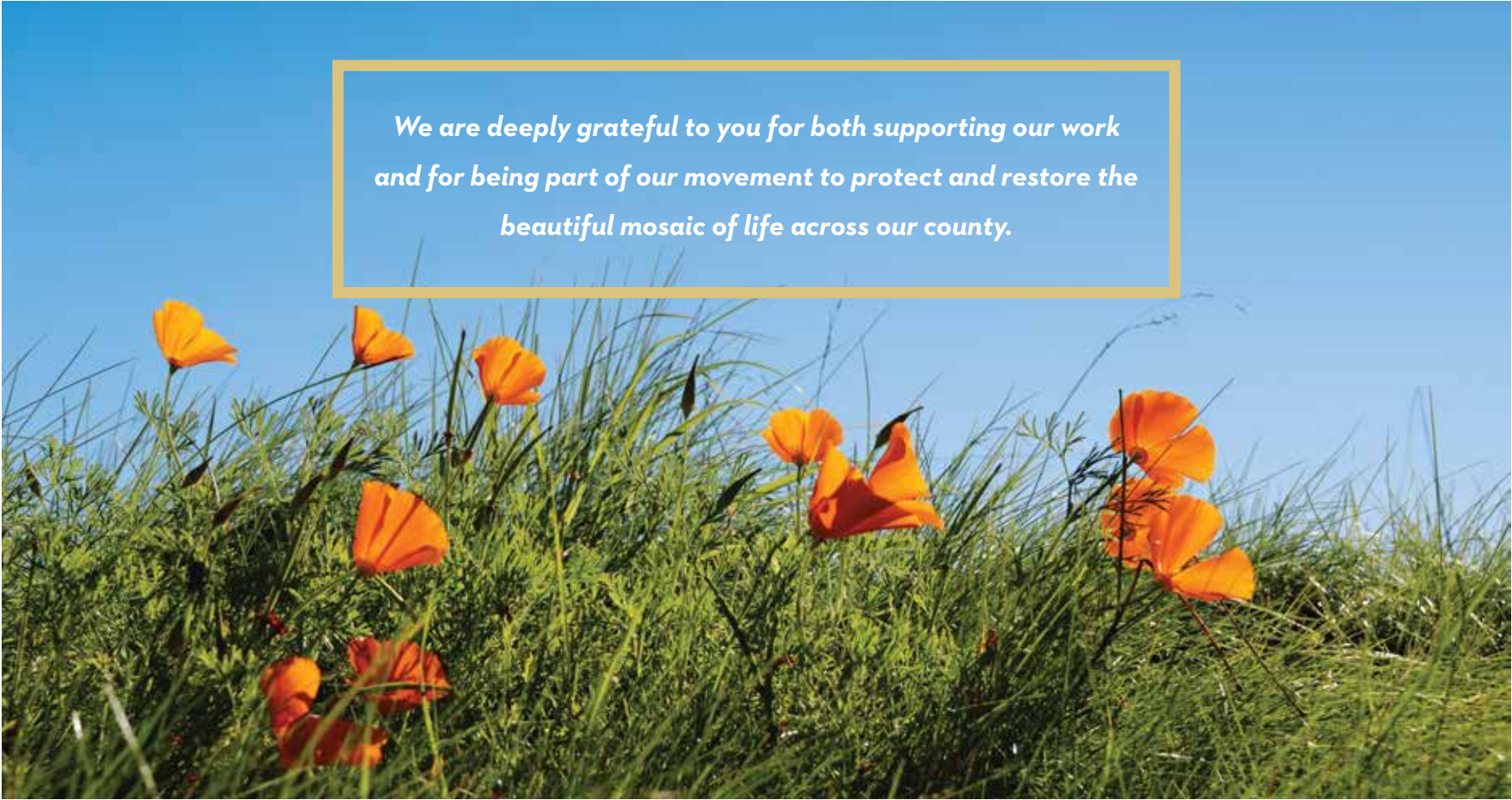
LOOKING AHEAD

We are working on so much more than we have space for here: a new program focusing on the Russian River, a fire prevention/livestock grazing program on Pole Mountain, a nature-based solution to levee erosion at Sears Point, fire recovery and invasive species management at Bear Canyon Wildlands,

restoring Lakeville Creek on the Sears Point uplands — and land acquisition projects we just can't talk about yet.

Despite the many obstacles we have encountered this year—historic wildfires, a global health crisis and

uncertain economic conditions, Sonoma Land Trust is working harder than ever to implement nature-based solutions to the challenges we face. We are deeply grateful to you for both supporting our work and for being part of our movement to protect and restore the beautiful mosaic of life across our county.



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and for being part of our movement to protect and restore the
beautiful mosaic of life across our county.*

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AT MARCH 31, 2020

03/31/2020 Actual

ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents.....	\$9,458,070.34
Contracts and other receivables.....	1,252,695.85
Contributions receivable.....	431,184.58
Deposits and prepaid expenses.....	321,663.36
Property (net)	317,841.28
Life estate.....	999,531.25
Conservation land fixed assets	22,831,538.25
Real estate held as investment.....	751,405.00
Long term investments	4,562,596.45

Total Assets..... \$40,926,526.36

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

LIABILITIES

Accounts payable and accrued expenses.....	\$589,026.29
Deferred revenue.....	1,656,758.87
Conditional grants and refundable advances.....	3,067,951.76
Notes payable.....	0.00
Deposits held.....	3,750.00
Use obligation of life estate	576,340.03

Total Liabilities \$5,893,826.95

NET ASSETS

Without donor restrictions

Available for operations	\$4,979,802.33
Board designated.....	3,003,589.98
Land value	22,509,681.34

With donor restrictions

Permanently restricted.....	277,220.69
Time restricted.....	229,277.00
With donor purpose restriction.....	4,033,128.07

Total Net Assets.....\$35,032,699.41

Total Liabilities and Net Assets..... \$40,926,526.36

REVENUE

Contributions and grants	\$6,887,801.00
In-kind contributions	64,072.00
Project revenue	148,203.00
Rental income	270,697.25
Investment income	-303,311.00
Other.....	9,016.00

Total Revenue \$7,076,478.25

EXPENDITURES

Projects and stewardship	\$3,271,564.27
Administration and finance	1,414,409.85
Fundraising.....	1,802,679.70

Total Expenditures..... \$6,488,653.82

Change in Net Assets from Operations \$587,824.43

Gain/loss on assets

Land-related expenses.....

Change in Net Assets.....-\$76,543.20

These figures are derived from the Sonoma Land Trust's financial statements for the year ending March 31, 2020. A copy of the audited report of the financial statement is available upon request.

LEAVING A LEGACY

For their foresight and generosity, we recognize the following individuals and families for making Sonoma Land Trust part of their estate plans.

LEGACY LEAGUE

Members we remember

Robyn Anderson
Ann Baumann
Barbara Baumgardner
Olive and Leonard Bavins
Donald Bradley
Betty Burrigde
Pat and Ted Eliot
Nan Kathryn Fuchs
Robert E. Kates
Charles and Muriel Kittel
Mary Anne Miller
David Robinson
Anne and William Schwarzer
Roberto Skinner
Susan Manuel Smith
Anne Teller
Thomas Tyrrell
David and Dorothy Van Winkle

LEGACY LEAGUE

Members

Anonymous (23)
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Stephen Album
Mary Allison
Allison Ash and Marc Schwager
Russ Bair and the late Peggy Bair
Richard Bartlett
Meg Beeler and Tom von Tersch
Reid D. Bennett
Ralph Benson
Janet Bosshard
Ellen Brantley and Ron Vitt
Robert and Paula Brent
Dianne Brinson and Mark Radcliffe
Sara and Dixon Browder
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Robert Carr and Andrea LoPinto
Marianne Cavanaugh
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Amanda Mills Hamilton
Michael and Denise Hammond
Lillian Hanahan and the late Don Hanahan
Jack and Deyea Harper
Bob and Carol Hasenick
John Helm
Diane and Bryant Hichwa
J. Duncan Higgons
Troy and Steven Hightower
Darla Hillard and Rodney Jackson
Sue and Mike Hoey
Michael Houlihan and Bonnie Harvey
Norm Howard
Tom and Caroline Hoyt
Stewart and Jane Hume
Michele Issel
Deborah Jacobi and the late Robert Jacobi
Mark Jacobsen and Pamela Laird
Paul Jaffe
Carolyn Johnson
Melanie and Perry Karsen
Joanna Kemper



Charles B. and Judith A. Kimball
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 Dave and Sharon Koehler
 Gary and Christine Kozel
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 Mary Lawrence and the late Jack Lawrence
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 Linda Lea, PhD
 Sarah Cameron Lerer and Jim Lerer
 Marcia and Jim Levy
 Elaine and Joseph Lieber
 Linda Liscom and the late Ed Power
 Reta Lockert
 Charles MacDonald
 Leo Malloy and the late Robert Buchanan
 Eileen Maloy
 Jonathan Marmelzat
 Sandra Martensen and Alan Selby
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 Daphne Smith
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 and Melba Ruffino Boehme
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LEADERSHIP CIRCLES

With a shared commitment to preserving the beautiful, wild and working landscapes of Sonoma County, Sonoma Land Trust celebrates those who contribute at leadership levels on an annual basis. The generosity of the following group is vital to the organization and our ability to protect the land of this county forever. We are deeply appreciative of these donors and their gifts and grants made from April 1, 2019 through March 31, 2020.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CIRCLE

\$50,000+

Anonymous (3)
Caryl Carr and David Presotto
Community Foundation Sonoma County
Fran Conley
Peter E. Haas Jr. Family Fund
Hal Hinkle
Janet Wright Ketcham Foundation
Mary Love and the late David Love
Manitou Fund
Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation
Bill and Jeanne Osterland
Resources Legacy Fund
Richard and Sharon Shlegeris
Sustainable Futures Fund
P. Lynn Woodward

SUMMIT LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

\$20,000–\$49,999

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The Bothin Foundation
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Katharine Butler
Joanne Dow
Judith and Paul Gray
Donna Halow and Paul Luca
The Robert and Shirley Harris Family Foundation
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\$10,000–\$19,999

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Sara and Dixon Browder
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\$5,000–\$9,999

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 Clark Mitchel and Carol Cole Mitchel
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 Joan Schwan and Geoffrey Skinner
 Don Seaver*

James D. Seaver*
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Thank you to each and every one of you who supports Sonoma Land Trust! Gifts of all sizes matter to us—we so appreciate your support. This year has caused us to take a hard look at how we spend our precious resources and we've decided to recognize donors differently this year. New this year, our Faithful Friends giving circle highlights those who have supported us consistently over the last 10 years at any level. We thank you for your support.

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We gratefully acknowledge our business partners, which act to protect and share the lands that make Sonoma County special.

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Supporting Sonoma County

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Thank you so much to our 2,175 members and business partners. It's through your support that we have collective impact that enables us to complete our work, not only described herein, but throughout our history.

Simply put, you make our work possible.



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The quieter we become, the more we can hear. —Rumi

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THE COLLECTIVE IMPACT OF PHILANTHROPY

We are grateful for a growing community of people, businesses and foundations that not only believe in the mission of Sonoma Land Trust, but also invest in it. Gifts of all sizes are important and, when combined, have a collective impact that is powerful.

Thank you for helping us bring about our shared vision of a healthy and climate-adapted Sonoma County.

TOGETHER, WE ARE:

- Restoring forests back to health
- Improving water quality
- Reducing wildfire risk to life and property
- Restoring wetlands to combat sea-level rise in San Pablo Bay along the Highway 37 corridor
- Helping more people have access to open space
- Helping wildlife have the habitat they need to survive