



IMPACT REPORT

2021-2022

A photograph of three children standing on a large, mossy rock in a vast, green field filled with yellow wildflowers. The children are smiling and have their arms outstretched, embracing the landscape. In the background, there are rolling green hills and a dense forest of evergreen trees under a clear blue sky. The text 'LAND is the HEART of the COMMUNITY' is overlaid on the left side of the image in a white, sans-serif font, with 'LAND' and 'COMMUNITY' in bold and 'is the' and 'of the' in a smaller, regular weight.

LAND is the **HEART**
of the **COMMUNITY**

A MESSAGE FROM MARIE AND EAMON

Dear Land Trust Supporters,

It's been said that we are the first generation who will witness the impacts of climate change, and the last generation capable of doing something about it. This responsibility to sustain life sits squarely on our shoulders.

The extraordinary foresight and generosity of our Sonoma Land Trust community of friends, advisors, trustees, and donors has provided us with the tools to tackle these challenges and prepared us for what lies ahead.

This year, the midpoint of our current strategic plan, we have refined and deployed innovative, science-based solutions that are designed to maintain the resiliency of Sonoma County's ecosystems in the face of a rapidly changing climate. Our biologically rich communities of

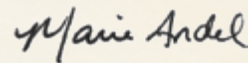
plants and animals produce clean air, clean water, and decrease carbon emissions.

Our goal is to conserve and support the health of these essential ecosystems by implementing our six focal strategies designed to protect and restore life-sustaining habitats.

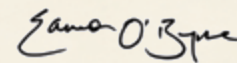
What will our work achieve? If we accomplish what we have set out to do, we will reconnect natural landscapes which allow plants to flourish and room for animals to roam. By securing key locations like vernal pools and headwaters, we will rejuvenate our watersheds to safeguard us from continued drought. Through restoration of wetlands and tidal marshes, we will relieve the impacts of flooding. By applying healthy fire and careful land management practices, we will reduce the risk of wildfires and provide space for native plants to return.

We believe the health of the land is inseparable from our own well-being. Our future depends on nature, and nature depends on us.

Thank you for your generous support and sharing this vision for the future—together we are a force for nature!



Marie Andel
Chair, Board of Directors



Eamon O'Byrne
Executive Director



We owe it to ourselves and to the next generation to conserve the environment so that we can bequeath our children a sustainable world that benefits all.—Wangari Maathai

TOGETHER, WE PROTECT THE LAND FOREVER

With your generous support, we are bringing more land into the protected forever status and contributing to our 30x30 conservation goals. In the coming months, several acquisitions will be finalized to enhance wildlife linkages across the Mayacamas, advance critical watershed and wetlands restoration projects, and add hundreds of acres of new park access.

SOMETHING SPECIAL AND UNEXPECTED

During a rainy-season visit to a property near Trione-Annadel State Park, we discovered something extraordinary: two vernal pools (seasonal wetlands) that are home to rare plant species endemic to California and found nowhere else on the planet.

Sonoma Land Trust is excited to announce that we are under contract to purchase this 174-acre

Sonoma Mountain Vernal Pools property for \$3.47 million in Spring 2023. The Bennett Valley area is threatened by both residential and agricultural development that would impair watershed health and wildlife habitat. The property has remarkable natural features including mature and intact oak woodlands, chaparral, meadows, grasslands, and portions of the steelhead trout-supporting Yulupa Creek. Just as importantly, its location provides a unique opportunity to link large wildlife habitat

strongholds between Jack London State Park, North Sonoma Mountain Regional Park, and Trione-Annadel State Park.

Once purchased, the property will be held by Sonoma Land Trust while we work with Sonoma County Regional Parks and Ag + Open Space on a stewardship plan prior to transferring to the county.

**CONSERVE RARE
PLANT SPECIES ENDEMIC
TO CALIFORNIA**

**PROTECT YULUPA CREEK,
VERNAL POOLS, AND
A HEALTHY WATERSHED**



**UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY
TO LINK LARGE
HABITAT AREAS**

**HEALTHY, INTACT, OAK
WOODLANDS RICH IN
NATIVE WILDLIFE**

Sonoma Mountain Vernal Pools



SONOMA MOUNTAIN VERNAL POOLS

We discovered something extraordinary: two vernal pools (seasonal wetlands) that are home to rare plant species endemic to California and found nowhere else on the planet.

A VOICE FOR NATURE

Collaboration among decision makers, community stakeholders, and partners is key to accomplishing large-scale public projects, yet too often the most important voice is lost in these discussions—Nature’s! We bring nature’s voice to the table to ensure that the crucial role nature plays in sustaining our community is always an essential part of any planning process.

SECURING WILDLIFE CORRIDORS

This has been a critical year for the Sonoma Developmental Center as the State prepares to sell the property and the County finalizes a land use plan. Our involvement has focused on two main areas: ensuring the protection of the wildlife corridor with mandatory setbacks and management requirements, and the transfer of 750 acres of open space into park ownership.

A positive response: The Sonoma County Planning Commission recognized the critical importance of the wildlife corridor by expanding protected areas on the campus and delegating management of the preserved open space to the park agencies.



Wildlife Corridor

ILLUSTRATING A MODEL OF CLIMATE RESILIENCE INFRASTRUCTURE WITH NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

Coastal wetlands buffer the land from sea level rise and destructive wave action. They reduce the threat of flooding by naturally absorbing and containing storm surges and king tides.

Our Baylands restoration work continues to exemplify how natural infrastructure, such as coastal wetlands, functions to build climate change resiliency and offer long term protection to critical human infrastructure like Highway 37. Together with our partners, we released a position paper laying the framework for an improved transit infrastructure that incorporates wetland restoration—modeling the future of innovative climate-ready planning. We coordinated meetings and site visits to the San Pablo Baylands with landowners, elected officials, and environmental and government agency leadership to collaborate on a vision for a multi-benefit redesign that supports resilient communities and healthy environments.

Great news: On September 14, 2022, Caltrans chose an elevated causeway design for the long-term future of Highway 37, which will open up the southern baylands of Sonoma County for up to 20,000 acres of wetland and habitat restoration.

PROTECTING NATURE TO PROTECT US

Years of planning and consultation between the state and environmental groups, including the California Council of Land Trusts, culminated in the Governor’s 2020 Executive Order to conserve 30% of California lands by 2030. Today, through our participation in the 30x30 implementation plan, the state is funding programs to protect biodiversity and enhance climate resiliency, including our acquisition and restoration work throughout the county.

Reason to celebrate: Climate change is finally being taken seriously at the highest levels of government and they are working with land trusts and environmental agencies to expedite this vitally important work.

CONSERVATION COUNCIL

83%

Learned about the
impacts of climate change
on their community

100%

Felt more connected
to the environment
and nature

80%

More likely to
pursue a career in
conservation

71%

Would be the first in their
family to graduate college

92%

Discovered new places
in Sonoma County

83%

Increased interest in
science & conservation

***No one will protect what they don't care about;
and no one will care about what they have
never experienced. – David Attenborough***

TOP CLIMATE THREATS TO SONOMA COUNTY...

A SONOMA LAND TRUST MILESTONE— RETURNING GOOD FIRE TO THE LANDSCAPE

In June, we hosted our first prescribed burn on our own property at Laufenburg Ranch Preserve to control invasive species, promote healthy grassland habitat, and increase fire resiliency.

This nine-acre controlled burn was conducted with the Northern Sonoma County Fire Prevention District, the Good Fire Alliance, and many community members, launching our initial effort to restore fire's ecological role on Land Trust preserves. Over the next three years, our annual prescribed burns will dramatically reduce invasive species, such as the yellow-star thistle and medusa head, while allowing room for native plants to

return. This is an important step in our goal of restoring the biodiversity of this historic ranch.

These prescribed burns provide the much-needed training and practice for local firefighters in advance of the most dangerous part of the fire season in Sonoma County and create strategic anchor points for future firefighting efforts.

UPCYCLING LOCAL MATERIALS FOR WETLAND RESTORATION

The Wildlife Conservation Board funded a \$1 million Sears Point Levee Adaptive Management Project. Anchored by repurposed logs destined for the landfill, the wave-eroded levee was regraded and replanted to restore natural buffers

along two miles of shoreline within the Sears Point Restoration Project site.

This nature-based solution demonstrates one of the bay's leading examples of adaptive management practices to reinforce our shoreline, simultaneously solving an environmental problem while creating tidal marsh habitat.

HOW RESTORING A WATERSHED REBUILDS A NATURAL RESERVOIR

Adapting to periods of drought in Sonoma County has required new methods to capture and regenerate natural water systems in order to increase water flow and function. Using an innovative approach, we completed the final



Wildfire
PRESCRIBED GOOD FIRE



Sea Level Rise
WETLAND RESTORATION

design of the Bay Area's first Stage Zero creek restoration project, restoring a coastal hill stream called Lakeville Creek in the Petaluma River Valley.

This project is considered such a high priority by the State of California that it received a statutory exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This exemption streamlines the CEQA approval process for beneficial habitat conservation projects. Ours was only the second restoration project to receive such an exemption under the new Cutting the Green Tape initiative.

By restoring Lakeville Creek to its natural state, or Stage Zero, the creek will resemble the wetland complex it should be, instead of the deeply eroded

channel it has become. It's a slow process but returning the creek to its natural state will raise groundwater levels, restore seasonal wetlands, and create wildlife and plant habitat. Over time, as we restore adjacent parcels, we envision a complete ecosystem in which streams feed wetlands that then flourish along the edges of the bay's tidal marshes.

COOL IN THE SHADE—A CASE FOR NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

As temperatures rise incrementally each year, heatwaves have become the leading cause of weather-related deaths in the United States. They are most dangerous when heat indexes rise above 110°F. On September 5, 2022, downtown Santa Rosa reached 115°F, making it the hottest day

ever recorded in Santa Rosa's history.

In 2020, a study conducted by the Trust for Public Land found cities and towns with areas in which a park was within a 10-minute walk were six degrees cooler than areas outside of that range. Our Nature Nearby strategy seeks to expand access to parks close to where people live. We are partnering on community-centered projects that will increase available park and open space access in Santa Rosa, Petaluma, and across the Sonoma Valley, with a focus on the communities most in need of green spaces. Not only will these parks provide new hiking trails, community gardens, and play areas, but they will also provide clean air and natural cooling centers for everyone.

...AND WHAT WE ARE DOING TO ADDRESS THEM



Drought
REGENERATING WATER STORAGE



Heatwaves
GREEN SPACES

FINANCIALS

We measure the value of our work by the impact it makes on supporting life, healthy communities, and thriving biodiversity. We approach the management of our finances with the same diligence and care that we apply to our land. We are grateful to our supporters who make this work possible and put their trust in us.

REVENUE FYE 2022

Contributions/Bequests	\$7,420,025
Government Grants	\$4,677,291
Foundation Grants.....	\$496,320
Program and Other Income	\$690,794
Investment Income	\$206,193
In-Kind Contribution of Land/CEs.....	\$50,000

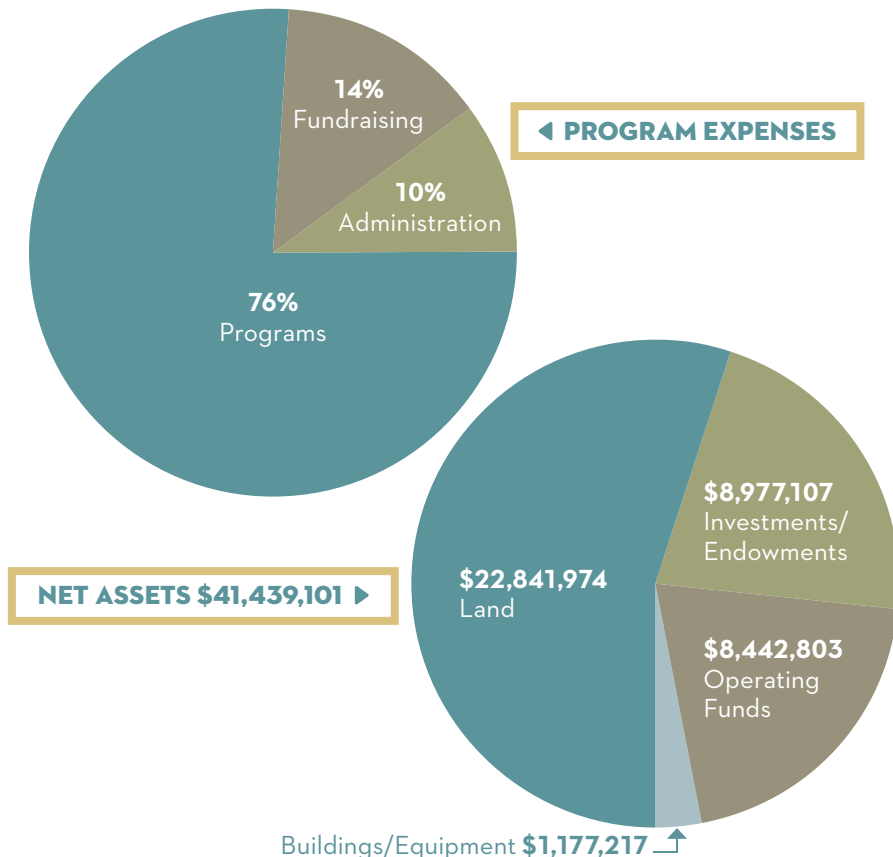
TOTAL REVENUE \$13,540,623

EXPENSES FYE 2022

Land Acquisition/Stewardship.....	\$7,040,575
Transfers of Land.....	\$1,130,000
Community Programs	\$520,058
Fundraising	\$1,631,199
Administration	\$1,171,176

TOTAL EXPENSES\$11,493,008

Complete audited financial statements are available upon request.



RECONNECTING TO THE LAND AND EACH OTHER

We host a variety of programs designed to engage our community members with nature. From outings (in-person, virtual and bilingual), to educational webinars and youth programs (summer camp, teen curriculum, and school field trips), we develop opportunities for connections to nature that are beneficial for both the land and our community.

ON-THE-LAND



2,600

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
IN THE 11 WEBINARS
AND 52 HIKES OFFERED

BAY CAMP



80%

PERCENTAGE OF CAMPERS
WHO ATTENDED ON FULL
SCHOLARSHIP

CONSERVATION COUNCIL



180

HOURS EACH TEEN
ATTENDED WORKSHOPS/
FIELD WORK

BILINGUAL OUTREACH



100%

PERCENTAGE OF
COMMUNITY PROGRAMS
AVAILABLE IN SPANISH

Our programs are designed to build a deep relationship with nature and open space so that we can work together to protect Sonoma County's parks and ecosystems for future generations.

Hired a **BILINGUAL OUTINGS GUIDE** to expand Spanish-speaking community participation

A FORCE FOR NATURE—MID-CAMPAIGN UPDATE

This is one of the most consequential decades for the health of our planet. The changing climate threatens our safety, biodiversity, health, and economy. We launched the campaign, A Force for Nature, to build a more resilient Sonoma County by raising money and awareness for land conservation, land restoration, stewardship and inclusive educational programming.

- | | |
|--|--|
| ① Bear Canyon
250 acres | ⑦ Mill Bend
113 acres |
| ② Cooper Creek
54 acres | ⑧ Starcross
91 acres |
| ③ Gravelly Ranch
978 acres | ⑨ Weeks Ranch North
888 acres |
| ④ Gloeckner-Turner
3,364 acres | ⑩ Sunsrays
63 acres |
| ⑤ Foppiano Ranch
758 acres | ⑪ Santa Rosa Creek
Redwoods
40 acres |
| ⑥ Fitzsimmons
200 acres | |

To date we have raised more than \$75 million to acquire and restore the land and natural resources that sustain us! With your support, and our partners, we have conserved...

**6,000
ADDITIONAL
ACRES!**



Land acquisitions completed, with partners, as part of A Force for Nature Campaign 2018–2022

6,000 ADDITIONAL ACRES



Conserving greenways, forests, coastlines, wetlands, meadows, rivers, streams, farmland and ranches

NATURE NEARBY



Connecting wild spaces, expanding parks and preserves, and protecting wildlife corridors

NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS



Reducing flood risk, recharging ground water, decreasing fire risk, and protecting biodiversity

NEW PROGRAMS



Growing an inclusive movement for nature and inspiring future conservation leaders

READ
MORE



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the QR code.

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A FORCE FOR NATURE CAMPAIGN LEADERSHIP

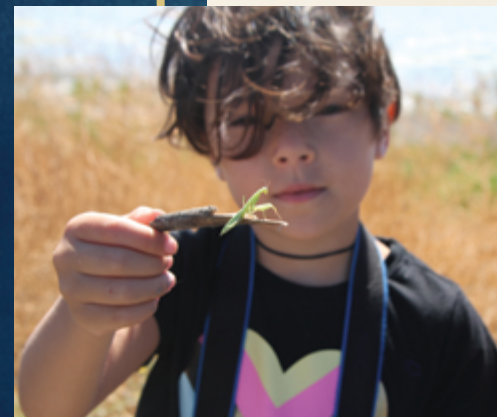
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**In loving memory of Dick Hafner (1925-2022), whose motto was "Save it today, enjoy it tomorrow."*



**EVERY DOLLAR YOU DONATE
RAISES ANOTHER \$2 FROM
GOVERNMENT GRANTS AND
FOUNDATIONS.**

a FORCE for NATURE

WE LEVERAGE YOUR ANNUAL DONATIONS TO SECURE MORE FUNDING TO PROTECT SONOMA'S LAND AND WATER

*Learn how you
can take part in
the campaign*

With more than \$75 million raised since April 2018 to date (November 2022) A Force for Nature is helping make Sonoma County more resilient to the effects of climate change by investing in land and fostering an inclusive community for nature.

Campaign contributions can be recurring or one-time donations, multi-year pledges, planned gift intentions, and realized planned gifts, which help raise government and foundation grants. All donations, pledges and funds will be counted toward the campaign and will support the work outlined in our strategic plan.

Shannon Nichols, Director of Philanthropy (707) 933-7220 shannon@sonomalandtrust.org



A scenic landscape photograph showing a lush green forested hillside in the foreground, with a body of water and distant hills in the background. The sky is clear and blue. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image.

We believe that when we **PROTECT**
and **CARE** for the land, the **LAND**
protects and cares for us.

Sonoma Land Trust | 822 5th Street, Santa Rosa, CA 95404 | sonomalandtrust.org

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