



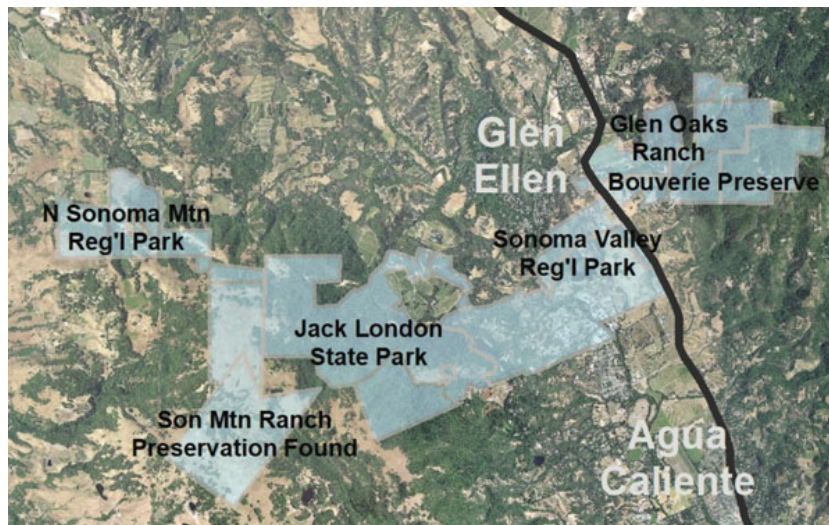
TODAY

... to protect the land forever | April 2019

\$1 million grant secured for Sonoma Valley fire management

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CAL FIRE has awarded the new Sonoma Valley Wildlands Collaborative a grant for \$1,055,575 to undertake fuel reduction and vegetation management measures to reduce the impacts of future wildfires, protect communities and improve ecosystem health. Members of the Collaborative are:

[Audubon Canyon Ranch,](#)

[California State Parks,](#)

[Sonoma County Ag + Open Space,](#)

[Sonoma County Regional Parks,](#)

[Sonoma Land Trust,](#) and

[Sonoma Mountain Ranch Preservation Foundation.](#)

Together, these organizations own and manage 18,000 acres of protected land in the Sonoma Valley. Among the treatments being planned are controlled burns, targeted



Download our new [Five Most Instaworthy Sonoma County Hikes](#) guide — it's beautiful, useful and free!

Welcome, Sara and Christine



Join us in welcoming Sara Press as our new Russian

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fuel breaks, and clearing vegetation along roadways to improve access for emergency personnel. “Embarking on these activities was dependent on securing funding so we are very pleased to receive this grant from CAL FIRE,” says Tony Nelson, Sonoma Valley program manager for Sonoma Land Trust, which is the group’s fiscal agent.

[Click on the map to see its full scope](#)

[Read Press Democrat story](#)

[Learn more about the Collaborative’s plans](#)

Wildlife are using Bear Canyon Wildlands — still waiting for a bear, though



Remember our newest preserve, Bear Canyon Wildlands? This rugged landscape, located in the foothills of the Mayacamas northeast of Healdsburg, is special not only because it boasts 250 acres of rugged, largely untouched habitat, but it also forms an important link between the Land Trust’s Bear Canyon Conservation Easement to the west and a complex of 12,000 acres of protected land to the east. Since we received the donation of this wild property in December, we’ve captured some stunning footage (thanks to Ginny Fifield) of a variety of wild animals passing through, including mountain lion, bobcat and coyote. “We accepted the generous donation of Bear Canyon Wildlands with the primary objective of protecting wildlife,” says preserve manager Trevor George. “We’re thrilled to know that these critters are present and thriving on this newly protected property.”

Check out our [YouTube page](#) to see these videos!

\$43 million for SDC!

land acquisition program manager and Christine Walker as our new donor engagement officer. Sara comes to us from [Sonoma County Ag + Open Space](#), where she worked as a land acquisition specialist for the past 10 years.



Christine most recently served as a development officer at the [Marin Agricultural Land Trust](#), where she managed a portfolio of 140 donors and helped a small team surpass a \$20 million goal in one year. *Glad to have you both on board!*

SLT in the PD



Starcross donates conservation easement over 90-acre haven in Annapolis

[Read it here](#)

Gaye LeBaron provides Starcross’ history of compassion

[Read it here](#)

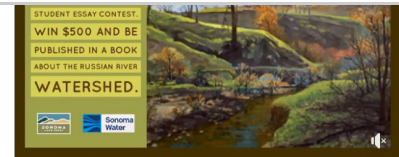
Student essay contest

for reuse plan and land protection



The California Department of Finance has released budget documents requesting \$43 million over three years to ***“manage the Sonoma Developmental Center ... until the final disposition of the campus is complete ...”*** in 2022. The funding will cover the State’s “warm shutdown” maintenance costs for SDC, and provide Sonoma County with the time and money needed to prepare a specific reuse plan for the property. In a big win for advocates of protecting SDC’s invaluable wildlife corridor lands, the draft legislation directs that ***“all lands outside the core developed campus and its related infrastructure be preserved as public parkland and open space.”*** This budget proposal is a big step forward and thanks go to Governor Newsom and our legislative leaders for crafting this deal. For more information, visit the transformsonoma.com blog site or contact [John McCaull](#).

Grazing underway at Pole Mountain



If you know high school students who live or attend school in the Russian River watershed, please let them know that they could have a personal essay published in a beautiful new coffee-table book about the watershed.

[Learn more](#)

Ciao, Ali



We have sadly said good-bye to membership manager Ali Records, who returned to her home state of Washington. Ali built a strong foundation of engagement and communication for our donors and we’re thrilled that she’ll continue working in land protection with her new job at the [San Juan Preservation Trust](#).

Spring hikes



As you trek the [Sea to Sky Trail](#), you may now see cattle on Pole Mountain Preserve; they were recently brought on to manage the vegetation. The property's grazing plan calls for seasonal grazing in the spring, while the plants are still edible, to reduce exotic annual grasses and, thus, reduce seed set and competition. By preventing the buildup of thatch, cattle grazing can promote the establishment of native plants. Over time, we hope to see native species that have been suppressed begin to repopulate the site. Livestock grazing can also reduce the accumulation of fine fuels and risk of wildfire. Relative to other options for controlling invasive plants (herbicide, mowing or prescribed fire), livestock grazing is the most viable management tool in this steep and remote terrain, and also supports our local food system and local economy.

Meet Yvonne — rock star volunteer



While our spring outings season is nearly over, space is still available for our “Families Outdoors” hike and “Fire Writing With Poet Laureate Maya Kholsa.”

[Register here](#)

Skaggs Island bike tour



The [San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge](#) is hosting an open day on the island for bicycling, walking and birding on Saturday, May 18 from 10am–2pm.

[Register here](#)

Neal in the news



Our director of community programs, Neal Ramus, has been named one of the North Bay Business Journal's

Volunteer program manager Karen Arrington.

Watch: 00:00, Next.

In honor of National Volunteer Month, we've been celebrating the hard work and selflessness of our remarkable volunteers this month through stories, like [this video](#) of a bulb planting project at Glen Oaks Ranch. Today, we're honoring rock star volunteer Yvonne Horn. Yvonne is an award-winning professional writer, avid traveler and exceptional gardener who often writes about her travel adventures that have taken her to [native gardens around the globe](#). When she's home, she frequently volunteers; she joined the Land Trust family two years ago after becoming aware of our tiny native garden at the Benson Center. That garden is getting a makeover this year with the help of Yvonne's expert eye for plant selection and design. She is selecting low-maintenance plants that will require nothing more than seasonal rain after becoming established, providing year-round beauty. Keep an eye on our social media for updates as Yvonne curates the garden!

Seeking development manager

The right person for this position will have experience with fundraising from mid-level donors, marketing, project management, direct mail and community engagement. Sonoma Land Trust was voted one of the North Bay's Best Places to Work. First review of resumes takes place May 1.

Learn more [here](#)



Questions or comments? Email Sheri Cardo, managing editor.
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