



TODAY

... to protect the land forever | February 2019

Starcross Monastic Community's coastal property now protected forever




Last Friday, Sonoma Land Trust closed on a conservation easement over a beautiful 90-acre property just inland from the Sonoma Coast. The owner of the property, Starcross Monastic Community, generously donated the easement in order to permanently protect their farmland and forestland. The Starcross Community has an orchard and gardens where they grow and process organic olive oil as well as a variety of fruits and vegetables, all of which they distribute at a food pantry and farmstand open to the community. Beyond the farm and monastery, the property includes an abundance of natural resources, including redwood and Douglas-fir forest and open grassland, locally uncommon stands of sugar pines and hybrid manzanita, and a stretch of Grasshopper Creek, a tributary of Buckeye Creek in the Gualala River Watershed. We are honored that Starcross chose to partner with Sonoma Land Trust to protect this special land forever!

[Read the press release](#)

DONATE NOW

Bay Camp 2019

 [Kayaks at Sears Point](#)

We are proud to announce that we are expanding to six one-week sessions of Bay Camp this summer at Sears Point for children ages 7 to 12. Give your children the opportunity to spend time exploring the bay marshes and getting close to nature. Registration opens March 8.

[Learn more](#)

Owls, squirrels and Nextdoor



Imagine, if you will: ground squirrels and burrowing owls in caHOOTs. Sound ridiculous? Well, our Baylands manager thinks that might just be happening at Sears Point. Learn more on [Mountains and Molehills](#).

Special farmer wanted

book release



Join us March 7 for a free celebration of local historian Arthur Dawson's newest book, *Where the World Begins: Sonoma Mountain Stories and Images*. This extraordinary book offers readers a lively and loving tribute to Sonoma Mountain, exploring its history, culture and natural diversity through a broad collection of photographs, writings and maps. "The sweeping, sloping mountain forming the backdrop to the Sonoma and Petaluma valleys has a rich history that Arthur Dawson presents here eloquently," says Dave Koehler, Sonoma Land Trust executive director. "Following the footsteps of the grizzly and the cougar, the Miwok and the settlers, to Jack and Charmian London and present-day ranchers and recreationists, this stunning book will inspire people for generations." The event is free and takes place from 6 to 8pm at the Finley Community Center in Santa Rosa. Books will be available for purchase and light refreshments provided. Registration is required.

[Get tickets](#)

With skill and insight — a message from our executive director

lease Laufenburg Ranch near Calistoga. Sonoma Land Trust supports sustainable agriculture and wishes to fulfill Charlie Laufenburg's vision of continuing agriculture on the preserve.

[Read the RFP](#)

Good-bye to Kate



Kate Freeman, stewardship assistant project manager, is leaving the Land Trust in mid-March to pursue a new career. Kate deftly handled the stewardship challenges that came her way while supporting our conservation easement and Sonoma Coast programs — and was also [an incredible writer](#) for our blog. We'll miss you, [Kate!](#)

Now hiring

Due to staff changes, we have two additional open positions: stewardship assistant project manager to support the conservation easement program and help manage the Land Trust's coastal preserves; and a project manager to join our acquisitions team and support acquisition of conservation lands throughout Sonoma County

[Learn more here](#)



“Over the past four years, I’ve had the privilege of working with one of the best staffs in the country. As National Employee Appreciation Day is observed on March 1 this year, I thought I’d write to let you know just how I feel about my colleagues — and make this proclamation of gratitude and respect for the staff of Sonoma Land Trust. The American author and conservationist, Aldo Leopold, wrote that, “Conservation is an exercise of skill and insight.” At the Land Trust, you can see this conservation exercise taking place every day under pressure — the pressure of growth gobbling up land and impacts of climate change pushing down on our ecological systems, threatening our communities. Under pressure, our staff is out in front being proactive in land protection, stewardship and community engagement. Because the future is not promised to us, they work every day to protect the land of Sonoma County forever.”

[Read more](#)

Check out our refreshed membership program

Cheese, please!



Join us for all things cheese at the [California Artisan Cheese Festival](#) March 23–24! Enjoy all the cheese and artisan foods you can eat while supporting the cheesemaking community and its sustainability. We’ll be representing at the Artisan Cheese Marketplace on March 24, so stop by our booth and say hi!

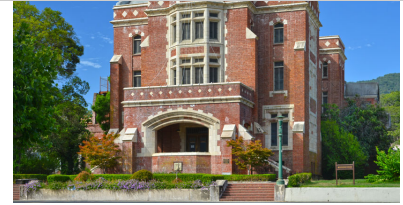
Tolay Park dedication Sat., March 30, 10:30–3



This event by Regional Parks, Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria and Sonoma Land Trust to “Celebrate the Land, People and Culture” of Tolay will offer numerous activities, including a hike to the new Tolay Creek Ranch portion of the park led by stewardship director Bob Neale.

[Register here](#)

SDC in the news



What's in store for the last big spread of undeveloped land in Sonoma Valley? Here's an excellent article from Sonoma Magazine by former SF Chronicle environmental reporter Glen Martin.

[Read it here](#)

SE Greenway EIR

A revised draft of the environmental impact report for the Santa Rosa Southeast Greenway is available for public review now through March 13, 2019. Copies are on file for public review at Santa Rosa City Hall and [online](#).

As you know, member support is vital to accomplishing our mission. Last year alone, members helped permanently protect three new properties, open Pole Mountain Preserve to the public, collaborate with partners to reduce wildfire risk in Sonoma Valley and host Bay Camp — our weeklong nature program for underserved youth. We've refreshed our membership program so that our members — longtime and new — can more deeply engage in land conservation if they wish.

In addition to the **special outings** you know and love (like the wildflower hikes coming this spring!), we're adding visits to special properties that we're currently working to protect. You'll also see some outings that will be more accessible to people with mobility limitations. That way, more members can connect with the land they're helping to protect. We're creating **more digital resources** so you can connect with nature at your leisure, as well as continuing our **print and email newsletters**. And, members and guests can join us at the annual **Heart of the Land gathering** to build community and celebrate the land that connects us all. Stay tuned for other special events on the horizon, as well.

To join or renew your membership, **make a donation at a level most meaningful to you**. Your gift today — *of any size* — advances land conservation throughout Sonoma County. Thank you. We really couldn't do this work without you by our side.

Question? Ideas? Feedback? Connect with Shannon Nichols, director of philanthropy, at shannon@sonomalandtrust.org today.

[Become a member or renew today](#)



Questions or comments? Email Sheri Cardo, managing editor.
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