



TODAY

... to protect the land forever | November 2018

\$1 million yearend challenge

DONATE NOW



Soon to be protected forever with a conservation easement is the beautiful, 90-acre Starcross Farm near Annapolis.

Sonoma Land Trust's annual end-of-year challenge is a special time to support our mission. Thank you to all our supporters who helped launch this initiative! We're asking our friends to help us raise \$1 million dollars by December 31 to address critical projects on our conservation horizon. Whether you're a Land Trust member already (thank you!) or new to our work, your gift today can have tremendous impact for tomorrow. Your end-of-year challenge gift will help:

- Protect three new properties – including [Starcross Farm](#)
- Manage 17 preserves
- Connect more than 250 kids to the outdoors
- Host approximately 50 outings and hikes

If you haven't already, please consider making a [donation today](#). Your support makes land conservation in Sonoma County possible. *Thank you!*

YES for parks!



A huge thank you to Sonoma County voters for overwhelmingly supporting our parks and natural resources with a 70 percent YES on M vote! Because of your investment, we will all be able to continue enjoying the stunning diversity of Sonoma County's city and county parks.

[Learn more](#)

Tolay park opening



Have you had a chance to hike and enjoy Sonoma County's newest — and biggest — park yet? Tolay Lake Regional Park, which doubled in size with the addition of Sonoma Land Trust's Tolay Creek Ranch, opened to the public last month! Photographer Lance

Saying goodbye to Paul — much more than a CFO



Paul DeMarco (left) with volunteers Robert and Linda Judd.

After nine years with Sonoma Land Trust, and 32 years in nonprofit financial management, Paul DeMarco, director of finance and administration/CFO, is retiring in January. Along with ably managing all aspects of finance, as well as human resources, investments and risk management, Paul is also an ace tomato farmer and ceramicist. In the summer, he brings us the tastiest of tomatoes and, during the holidays, we all compete to win his beautiful, handmade mug of the year. We'll miss his humor and camaraderie, and we are also truly happy for him. He says: "It has been a joy and a privilege to serve with my outstanding colleagues here, particularly the incredibly talented and hardworking finance team. And I'm grateful for the support of so many donors and volunteers who make our outstanding programs possible. I look forward to spending more time outside enjoying the beauty of Sonoma County that we have helped protect."

Paul recently received North Bay Business Journal's CFO Recognition Award, for which he shared his philosophy on today's workplace. [Read it here](#)

Safety first on the Sea to Sky Trail

Beautiful images from the opening weekend.

[Check them out](#)

A message from our business partner: Cowgirl Creamery



(left to right) Co-founders Peggy Smith and Sue Conley.

"When we started [Cowgirl Creamery](#) in 1994, there were five cheesemakers in Marin and Sonoma Counties. Today there are 30 and most are on multi-generational family dairies. Land conservation easements alone cannot save farming. In our region, Sonoma Land Trust has been a force in successfully protecting agricultural land from development long enough to allow the next generation of farmers to create value-added products, like cheese, that bring increased revenue to the farm."

Catch up with stewardship



The Land Trust's stewardship crew is always busy caring for and managing our wild and working lands. Stay up to date on their activities by



TWC's Luke Farmer poses in Henry 1 with Sonoma Land Trust stewardship manager Shanti Edwards' son Austin.

One of the most interesting aspects of planning for the Sea to Sky Trail on the Jenner Headlands and Pole Mountain has been developing the emergency response plan (initially funded through [Sonoma Ag + Open Space](#)). The Land Trust and [Wildlands Conservancy](#) staff met with a variety of emergency response entities, including [Sonoma County Sheriff](#), [CalFire](#), [Monte Rio Fire](#), [California State Parks](#) and [CHP](#) for input on strategies to manage potential rescue operations associated with recreational activities. The project culminated in a recent fly-in by the sheriff's helicopter, known as [Henry 1](#), to familiarize the crew with the terrain and confirm landing sites for the map. With limited cell reception along the coast, it's important to be safe on the trail by paying attention to mile-marker signs and locations on the map, traveling with another person, bringing adequate water, checking weather conditions and utilizing the [safety information on our website](#).

[Watch Henry 1 in action](#)

Thank you, Sonoma Developmental Center

[medians + metrics](#). Here are some recent entries you're bound to enjoy:

[Stuart Creek fish survey reports positive findings](#) by Tony Nelson

[the daily affairs of birds and men](#) by Bob Neale

[what's down in the cellar](#) by Kyle Pinjuv

[conserving the coast in California and Chile](#) by Julian Meisler

[changing leaves, changing landscapes](#) by Trevor George

North Bay Science Day



Last month, our staff took part in the seventh annual [North Bay Science Discovery Day](#). They had a great time teaching kids about map reading and water flow on the land using our interactive [augmented reality sandbox](#), which projects contour lines and simulated rain onto sand that is shaped by the user. Looking forward to next year!



Kathleen Miller (L) and Karen Moen (R) dressed as SDC co-founders Julia Judah and Frances Bentley during the recent Halloween parade. Photo by Christian Pease.

Bitter and sweet — after 127 years in operation, the Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC) will close this December. Last month, the Land Trust, the [Parent Hospital Association](#), [Glen Ellen Forum](#) and [The Eldridge Portraits Project](#) held a week of events commemorating and honoring the workers, residents and families of SDC. During the final celebration at the Hanna Boys Center, our executive director Dave Koehler spoke to the importance of continuing to protect SDC: “The journey ahead for the land of the Sonoma Developmental Center is a call for stewardship. Stewardship of the land and the stories of its people. Going forward, on whatever path we may take together, we are and will remain stewards of this beautiful land on Sonoma Mountain.” Thank you, Sonoma Developmental Center, for all that you’ve done for our community for 127 years.

[Read Gaye LeBaron’s “Farewell to an institution”](#)

Questions or comments? Email Sheri Cardo, managing editor.
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