



TODAY

... to protect the land forever | September 2020

A message from our executive director,
Eamon O'Byrne

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Finding strength in these perfect days for the fight ahead



As I write this, it's turning out to be one of those classic fall days in Sonoma County, where everything is bathed in crystalline morning light, and the air is sweet and filled with the tang of departing summer. For the first time, we begin to notice autumnal blooms of scarlet and gold and russet. We can't help, given all we've been through these past six months, but give way to an almost shocked delight in such perfect days.

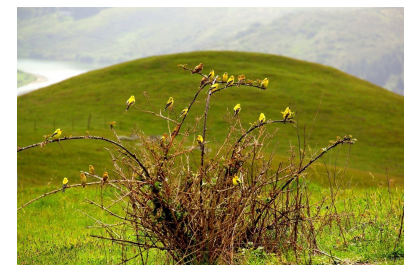
We've had so many struggles lately and so much loss that it's easy to forget to stop and relish the overwhelming beauty surrounding us. It's an especially important reminder as we survey the aftermath of the LNU Complex fires. While our West County preserves (Cedars Gateway, Little Black

Reducing fire impacts

The website devoted to the Sonoma Valley Wildlands Collaborative is now live! Check it out and learn more about this innovative public-private partnership that, with CAL FIRE, is coordinating management of 18,000 acres in the Sonoma Valley region to reduce future impacts of wildfire on neighboring communities.

[Here's the website](#)

Watch birds and reduce stress



If you missed Thursday night's talk by Teresa and Miles Tuffli of [I'm Birding Right Now](#) on how birdwatching can help reduce stress, anxiety and social isolation, you can now watch the recorded program.

Some of our conservation easement landowner partners in the Mill Creek area suffered significant loss and damage. We will be working with them to develop post-fire cleanup plans and with local partners to assess the potential for reducing longer-term impacts on the Russian River watershed.

Finding the strength and resilience to carry out this work was the theme of our presentation Thursday night: “Birdwatching to Reduce Stress, Anxiety and Social Isolation.” Watch the recorded version [here](#). Hosted by the delightful Teresa and Miles Tuffli, I promise you’ll be both entertained and enlightened.

Despite all that’s happened, there is still so much to cherish and fight for. So we’ll enjoy the gift of days like today and, inspired by our breathtaking landscapes – and together with you, our tight-knit and supportive community – we’ll keep working to secure a vibrant future for nature and people.

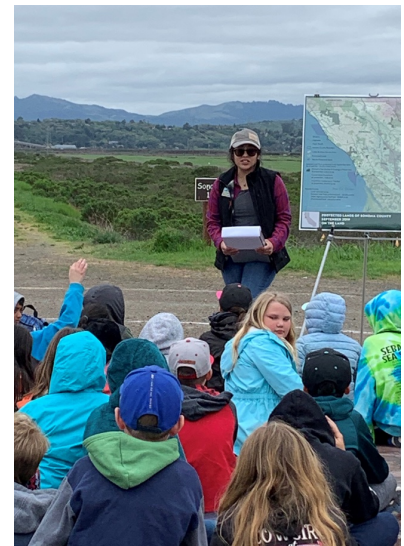
Putting science to work to preserve the Petaluma River Baylands



The ancient Petaluma River Marsh.

Sonoma Land Trust has convened a Scientific Advisory Panel to advise on the implementation of an Adaptation and Resilience Plan for the Petaluma River Baylands. We are working with the San Francisco Estuary Institute, Point Blue Conservation Science, Sonoma Resource Conservation District and Ducks Unlimited to help the region’s marshes adapt to climate change. Rising seas threaten to drown the bay’s largest intact “ancient” marsh, the 3,400-acre Petaluma River Marsh. At least 2,000 years old, this important habitat and others may disappear by 2100. In addition to the scientific analysis, we are also gathering input from those

SLIME’s now online



Thanks to our partnership with Ag + Open Space, Sonoma Land Trust is virtually offering our free SLIME (Students Learning In Marsh Environments) field trip program for 3rd and 4th grade students. The program focuses on newly restored wetlands of the Sonoma Baylands.

[More info here](#)

Conservation Council



This summer, high school teens helped us design a new program for high school students to connect to the outdoors and conduct conservation science research. The teens described this “Conservation Council” pilot as “exciting and educational” – and said they enjoyed taking field

hope to begin implementing the plan next summer.

conducting applied scientific research.

[Learn more & apply.](#)

Tune into RiverSpeak Podcast, a new project by former executive director Dave Koehler



RIVER SPEAK
STORIES THAT RIPPLE



RiverSpeak Podcast, a new series that kicked off Wednesday, is devoted to inspiring river conservation and exploring rivers through stories from the people who work to save them. It's a labor of love for Dave, who's been a passionate river advocate throughout his career. The debut podcast features Sonoma Land Trust's work in an episode entitled, "Sara Press: Russian and Gualala Rivers." In it, you'll hear from Sara about the Russian River watershed and coastal regions, and learn about our conservation priorities for those two critical watersheds. Sara also talks about creating a new playbook for protecting environmental water assets.

[Check out the RiverSpeak podcasts](#)

SDC virtual public workshop

Sept. 30, 5:30 pm



Join us and others for an important community conversation as Sonoma County embarks on creating a long-term plan for the Sonoma Developmental Center. This free workshop will provide a summary of the current property conditions and an opportunity for small group discussions to help craft a vision statement for the future.

[Register here](#)

It's Nat'l Disaster Preparedness Month

HALTER Project
LEADING RESIDENTS TO
SAFETY & PREPAREDNESS

The HALTER Project, founded by Land Trust donor Julie Atwood, encourages everyone to get prepared for the next natural disaster or crisis. It offers resources on large animal evacuations during wildfires and COVID, information for preparing for PSPS and relief resources.

[Learn more here](#)



Questions or comments? Email Sheri Cardo, managing editor.
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