



IMPACT REPORT

2022-2023



REFLECTIONS ON OUR YEAR TOGETHER

In many ways, this past year has felt like a renewal of our promises to the community.

We successfully closed on projects that had been delayed and expanded our programs to invite more people to our preserves and to connect with nature.

Our strategic planning focus areas have each gone through impressive transformations. My colleagues on the board and I are honored to have participated in the planning that led to these transformational shifts over the last three years.

We are primed to advance our conservation goals at a pace and scale we couldn't imagine during the darker days of the pandemic and wildfires. Along with the talented staff, we feel energized and hopeful that as we realize our goals, a healthy, thriving future for people and nature will become a reality. I am thrilled to be leading such a dedicated board in what promises to be one of the most influential chapters in our 47-year history.



Scott Hafner, Board Chair

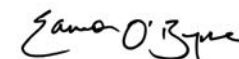


MESSAGES FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Reflecting on the many achievements from this past year, I was reminded of how many endurance athletes often “find another gear” even in the most grueling conditions. That certainly describes our team in bringing to close some of the most challenging land acquisitions in our history, implementing a cutting-edge ecosystem restoration in the Baylands, holding the State accountable to protect the natural resources of the Sonoma Developmental Center, and advancing the most ambitious urban park project in decades at the Santa Rosa Southeast Greenway.

The past year has also left me convinced of one unassailable truth: Solving the climate and biodiversity crises and securing the future of our own species, begins with the individual and echoes out through the community.

This has been a time of tremendous growth and I invite you to celebrate all that you've made possible and dig into that extra gear to meet the challenges ahead.



Eamon O'Byrne, Executive Director

INVESTING IN A NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

SCAN THE QR CODE FOR
THE STRATEGIC PLAN



LAND



PEOPLE



WATER



We kicked off 2023 with our new five-year strategic plan to guide us. Spread across six focal strategies, our plan prioritizes solutions that address the urgent challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss and gives life to our mission on the land, in the water, and in collaboration with the community. By sharing this plan, we are holding ourselves accountable to you, and we hope you continue to join us in making real and meaningful progress on the climate and biodiversity challenges before us, while nurturing our communities and fostering connections to nature.

INVESTING IN RELATIONSHIPS

We work in collaborative partnerships with many nonprofits, government entities, and foundations to increase our reach and impact. Within these partnerships, we act as the convener to educate, negotiate, and collaborate on behalf of the best interest of the land and natural resources.



YOUR SUPPORT LEVERAGES THESE RELATIONSHIPS AND STRENGTHENS THE CONNECTIONS THAT HELP US ACHIEVE OUR GOALS.

The Sonoma Mountain Vernal Pools Preserve was our first land purchase of 2023. It conserves a healthy, ecologically sensitive habitat while also contributing to California's 30×30 goals, the state's initiative to conserve 30% of its lands and coastal waters by 2030. **This acquisition protects rare and threatened plant species and seasonal vernal pools and conserves a significant portion of an important wildlife corridor adjacent to Trione-Annadel State Park.**

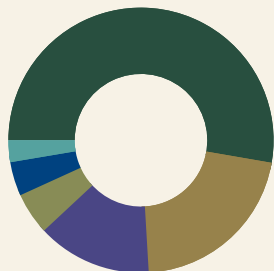
330+
unique species



174
ACRES

ACRES PROTECTED	PROTECTED LANDS	CONSERVATION EASEMENTS	PRESERVES
58,347	91	47	19

2023 PROTECTED LANDS BY TYPE & ACRES



- Acquisition Assistance 30,762
- Transfer 12,453
- Conservation Easements 8,166
- Ecological Preserves 2,995
- Anchor Preserves 2,422
- Stewardship Assistance 1,549

INVESTING IN OPEN SPACES & PROGRAMS TO RESTORE THEM

We are protecting biodiversity, recharging groundwater aquifers, and supporting climate-ready ecosystems through restoration projects across the region. Investments in restoration projects reconnect upland watersheds to tidal wetlands, advance forest management by thinning, pile burning, and returning low-intensity prescribed fire, and closely monitoring the positive changes that result from these efforts. The capacity to do this work is increasing with additional grant funding earmarked for climate resilience programs like ours.

INVESTING IN **THE NEXT GENERATION**

STUDENTS IN THREE NORTH BAY COUNTIES PARTICIPATED IN OUR FIELD TRIPS FREE OF CHARGE INCLUDING BUS TRANSPORTATION!



SLIME



STUDENTS LEARNING IN MARSH ENVIRONMENTS (SLIME) is an educational program that provides field trips for third and fourth grade school groups at the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge at Sears Point. This program introduces climate change resiliency as applied to tidal marsh ecosystem restoration and conservation efforts in the Baylands, creating meaningful connections with this special place.



Conservation Council Members conducted hands-on research on our ecological preserves and reported an increase in awareness of STEM and conservation careers while learning ways to protect the environment.

CONSERVATION COUNCIL



AN EQUITY-BASED, TEEN YOUTH-DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



BAY CAMP

86%

SPEAK SPANISH AT HOME

60%

1ST TIME AT SUMMER CAMP

Six weeks of day camp activities in a bilingual environmental education program teaches water safety, kayaking, bike riding, bird spotting and more.

Experiencing Nature Up Close



Bilingual Outings



Sonoma County Pride Festival



INVESTING IN THE COMMUNITY

Our **free outings** provide everyone the opportunity to enjoy the vast biodiversity and scenic landscapes we work to protect.

63

HIKES

925

ATTENDEES



We hosted a nature-based **family event** that raised awareness of the future Santa Rosa Southeast Greenway.



Monthly webinars on conservation and social issues that build awareness around environmental challenges and solutions.

LANGUAGE OF THE
LAND
A FREE WEBINAR SERIES

WEBINARS

10

1,500
VIEWERS

INVESTING IN CLIMATE SOLUTIONS

The climate is changing at an ever-accelerating pace. Conserving and restoring ecosystems builds resilient landscapes and restores natural infrastructure that provides clean air and water.

LAKEVILLE CREEK RESTORATION

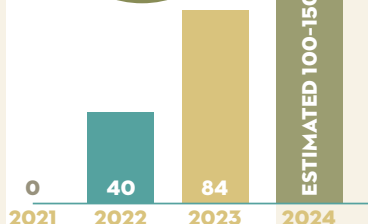
FIRST STAGE ZERO CREEK RESTORATION IN THE BAY AREA



The benefits of creek restoration not only allow the land to capture and store rainwater to help sustain us through drought but also provide moisture for habitats that support wildlife and increase resilience to wildfires.

—JULIAN MEISLER, BAYLANDS PROGRAM MANAGER

ACRES OF GOOD
FIRE ON OUR
PRESERVES



REAPING THE BENEFITS OF GOOD FIRE

Sonoma County has 500,000+ acres of forests that evolved with periodic fire. Without it, forests can become dense and susceptible to hot, destructive wildfires.



Fire-adaptive land management programs, crucial for forest health, are gaining local and global traction despite challenges related to weather conditions and public concerns. Prescribed fire can mimic natural weather patterns that are essential for maintaining our diverse ecosystems, minimizing the risk of severe wildfire, promoting native vegetation and biodiversity, and improving water quality.

MEET
OUR LAND
STEWARDS



CHRIS CARLSON



SHANTI EDWARDS



MELINA HAMMAR



JULIAN MEISLER



KYLE PINJUY



JOE PLAUGHER



TOM TOLLIVER

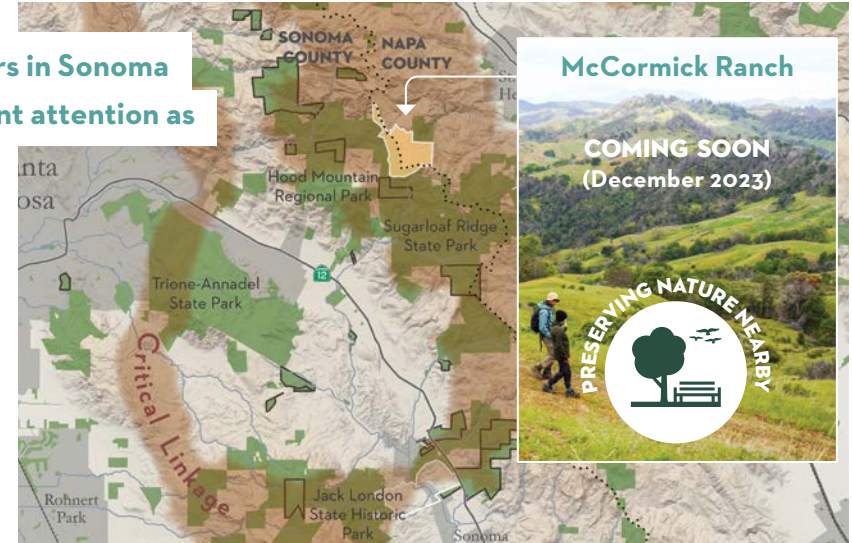
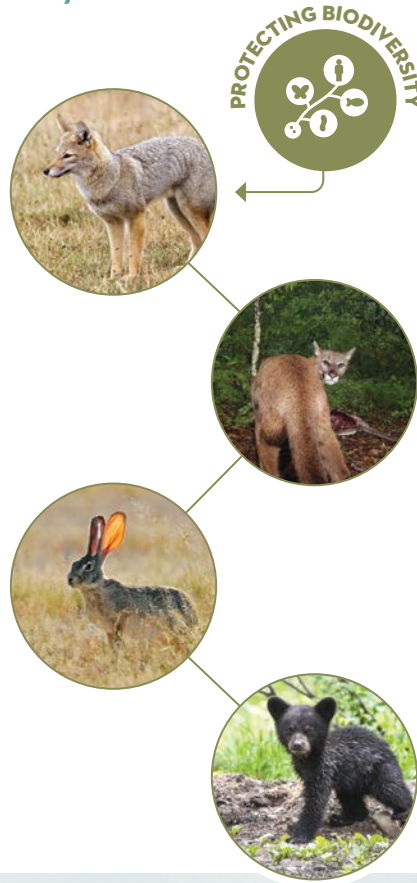
Restoring 1,000s of feet of eroded stream channel to a Stage Zero wet meadow requires the planting of 30,000 native grasses and trees.

INVESTING IN SPACE FOR EVERYONE

For decades, we have been caring for the needs of our wildlife neighbors in Sonoma Valley. Providing safe passage through our urban areas requires constant attention as development encroaches on their territory.

SONOMA VALLEY WILDLIFE CORRIDOR

The State progressed on plans for the Sonoma Developmental Center including selection of a developer for the 180-acre campus. Our persistent advocacy has garnered protections for maintaining this critical wildlife connectivity, including wider setbacks from creeks by 100ft, wildlife friendly restrictions on fencing and lighting, as well as additional habitat restoration to buffer the corridor. As the development plan evolves, we will remain a staunch advocate for protecting the wildlife corridor and the many surrounding ecosystems that depend on it.



ANOTHER BIG WIN FOR WILDLIFE!

The 654-acre McCormick Ranch lies within an 86-mile critical wildlife movement corridor and provides habitat for a diversity of species.

This project, originally slated to close in 2018, was delayed due to the devastating Glass Fire, followed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The unwavering dedication of landowner Jim Perry, our funding partners, and our board of directors ensured that this key linkage was protected at long last.

The transfer of 750 acres of open space from the Sonoma Developmental Center campus to Jack London Park Partners ensures wildlands remain wild.

INVESTING IN US TO GO FURTHER

An investment in Sonoma Land Trust provides nature with the financial protection necessary in a modern society to remain a stable and accessible place for generations to come. Through private donations and public grants, we transform dollars into programs that protect and care for landscapes, habitats, and lifegiving resources for everyone.

REVENUE FYE 2023

Contributions/Bequests	\$11,483,636
Government Grants	\$3,659,296
Foundation Grants.....	\$438,176
Program and Other Income	\$392,996
Investment Income.....	(\$256,162)

TOTAL REVENUE**\$15,717,942**

EXPENSES FYE 2023

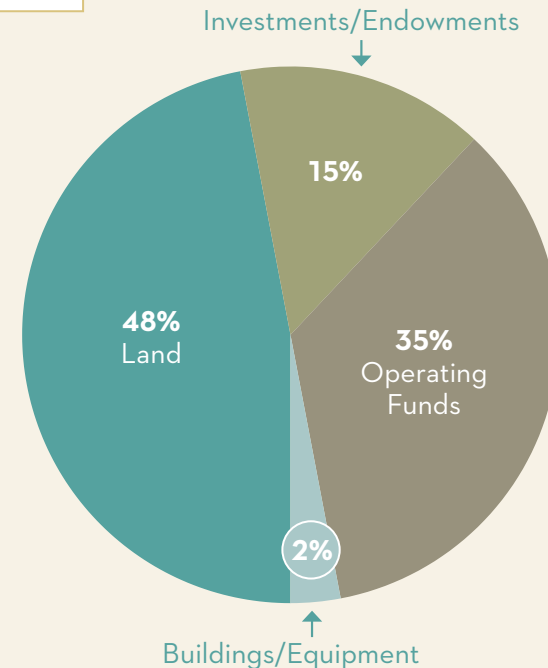
Land Acquisition/Stewardship.....	\$3,806,972
Community Programs	\$607,307
Total Program Expenses	\$4,414,279
Fundraising	\$1,537,397
Administration	\$1,374,651

Total Fundraising and Administration.....**\$2,912,048**

TOTAL EXPENSES.....**\$7,326,327**

Complete audited financial statements are available upon request.

ASSETS



OUR LASTING COMMITMENT

Land conservation takes time, and the work is shared across every department. An acquisition can take three years (or more) to complete. As a result, the three-year rolling average provides a more comprehensive view of our financial performance.



3-YEAR ROLLING AVERAGE

Land Acquisition/Stewardship.....	\$4,621,623
Transfers of Land.....	\$993,333
Community Programs	\$523,588
Total Program Expenses.....	\$6,138,544
Fundraising	\$1,543,024
Administration	\$1,241,452
Total Fundraising and Administration.....	\$2,784,476
TOTAL EXPENSES.....	\$8,923,020

People give to Sonoma Land Trust in many ways and at many levels. We appreciate each and every one of our supporters. We are excited to share a member spotlight and highlights from 2023 in celebration of our collective impact on behalf of nature.



GINNY FIFIELD—A LIFETIME OF STUDYING WILDLIFE

Volunteer and supporter Ginny can often be found on our preserves placing wildlife cameras in strategic locations—capturing videos of deer, raccoons, foxes, coyotes, mountain lions and even bears.

Ginny's fascination with wild animals began in childhood, when she was lucky enough to have “behind the scenes” privileges at the Milwaukee County Zoo (the zoo director was a close family friend). From playing with baby panthers and Siberian tigers at the zoo to working with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife on tracking mountain lions in the Eastern Sierras, Ginny brings a lifetime of expertise to her work with Land Trust staff to document critical wildlife corridors on our preserves. We are so grateful for Ginny's contributions to our efforts to understand and preserve biodiversity in Sonoma County.

THANK YOU!

We appreciate each and every one of our supporters!

MEMBER
SPOTLIGHT

LEGACY LEAGUE MEMBERS
215



312
NEW DONORS



ANNUAL DONORS
2,322



2023 GENEROSITY HIGHLIGHTS

Jeff and Laurie Ubben pledged \$1.8 million to acquire McCormick Ranch and support our ongoing work. • The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, a key partner, funded land acquisition projects such as McCormick Ranch and Camp 4. • The Peter E. Haas Jr. Family Fund generously supported our equity-based programming that helps youth and adults connect with nature. • 124 people gave through our automated monthly giving program.



Since our last impact report, our comprehensive fundraising campaign, A Force for Nature, has raised an additional **\$23 million** in gifts, grants, planned gift commitments and realized planned gifts. With just over **\$98 million raised and committed in total**, we are proud of the ways this campaign has helped build a more resilient Sonoma County. To all who have supported us during the campaign, thank you! You have conserved some of the most ecologically significant land in the region. We look forward to celebrating with you when the campaign officially concludes on March 31, 2024.

Legacy League Members are supporters who let us know that they included us in their estate plans. New and annual donor figures above reflect fiscal year ending 3/31/23.

INVESTING IN WHERE WE LIVE



Protecting 1.6 miles of Ward Creek that provides cool, clean water to Austin Creek and Russian River systems that support coho salmon and steelhead trout.

Twenty years ago, a 240-acre parcel of private property was gifted to Sonoma Land Trust to be held in a conservation easement. This year, the same landowner has added 160 acres to ensure her entire estate is protected under the easement. The 400-acre landscape contains pristine habitat of Douglas-fir, redwoods, oaks, and riparian wetlands. This expansion helps prevent habitat fragmentation while also preserving options for species migrating in response to shifting environmental conditions.



PROJECTS ON THE HORIZON FOR 2024 AND BEYOND



Active Acquisition Projects

- 1 Protecting Biodiversity
- 2-3 Adapting to Rising Waters
- 4-7 Preserving Nature Nearby

Technical Assistance

- 8-9 Protecting Biodiversity

Projects Under Evaluation

- 10-11 Securing Freshwater Flows
- 12-15 Protecting Biodiversity



Scan for the Impact Report PDF



Photo: © Joshua Asel

Our Board and leadership committees are composed of volunteer professionals who contribute their time, expertise, and generous philanthropic commitments to ensure that Sonoma Land Trust is a stable and thriving organization for today and tomorrow.

SONOMA LAND TRUST BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Scott Hafner, Chair
Gregory Appling, Vice Chair
Philip Jensen, Vice Chair
Ellie Rilla, Secretary
Marie Andel
Jennifer Bice
Simon Blattner
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Nancy Otto
Tim Portwood
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Judy Scotchmoor
Wendy Smit
Gymmel Trembly
Lewis Warren

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Peter and Ginnie Haas
Hal Hinkle
Quincey Tompkins Imhoff
Mary Love
Bill Osterland
Jean Schulz



IN NATURE'S ECONOMY
THE CURRENCY IS NOT
MONEY, IT IS LIFE.

—Vandana Shiva

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Back Cover Photo: © Joshua Asel



OUR
MISSION

Sonoma Land Trust partners with local communities to protect the open, natural, and working lands and waters of Sonoma County to secure healthy and thriving futures for all.