



Notes from the NRC Regional Get Together in Siskiyou County May 6th, & 7th, 2016 *Hosted by the Siskiyou Land Trust*

1:00 - 4:00 Regional meeting- Siskiyou Land Trust office

In attendance: Bob Neale, Sonoma Land Trust, Kathleen Hitt, Siskiyou Land Trust, Renee Casterline, Siskiyou Land Trust, Renee Crowley, Sanctuary Forest, Scott Demers, Friends of the Dunes, Keri McNamee, Northcoast Regional Land Trust, Dan Ehresman, Northcoast Regional Land Trust, Carol Vander Meer, NRC Coordinator, Sam Baxter, Siskiyou Land Trust, Nancy Correll and Judy Haggard, McKinleyville Land Trust, Steve Bollock, Siskiyou Land Trust, Jeff Morris, Inner Coast Range Conservancy.

Update on the Guide to the Trails of the Northern Region

Carol briefly discussed the status of the guide to the trails of the Northern Region, current funding status. The updated total budget needs to print \$10,000 is: \$11,590. Carol has some pending requests in to the Humboldt Lodging Alliance and the Trust for public land. The Sonoma Land Trust has also pledged between \$1,000 to \$2000. The remaining funds needed are approximately \$4,500. There were some ideas discussed for other sources of funding including the Wildlands Conservancy, REI, Land Trust Alliance. There as also the suggestion made to consult with Megan and Louisa at Mendocino to see if it makes sense to use the same app template as the new Mendocino Land Trust trails app. You can download their trail app at: <http://trails.mendocinolandtrust.org/trails> Renee suggested looking at East Bay Regional Parks to see how their trail maps are put together. There were also suggestions about looking to Business Partners to see if there is some value in having places like outfitting stores help sponsor the map.

Inner Coast Range Conservancy and Public Land Bill-Jeff Morris

Jeff Morris shared updates on two major projects he is working on. The Inner Coast Range Conservancy and a Public Land Bill for the Region.

Inner Coast Range Conservancy:

The Inner Coast Range Conservancy which is being proposed by CA State Senator Lois Wolk through SB 1356. **There are a number of amendments** being considered that include reworking the concept to be a program of the Wildlife Conservation Board (or another existing agency) and instead of a independent governing board with a mix of local electeds and state appointees, the amendment would designate a Program Advisory Board that would be made up exclusively of local electeds/representatives. This pending amendment would also expand the area to include all of Siskiyou County (pending Board of Supervisors support of course) and a few other areas. Jeff is looking for feedback from NRC on this last point. There were some concerns expressed as to how this would affect other conservancies, would direction with members of the BOS be the best model for leadership that is as effective as other conservancies?

Jeff has relayed some of the groups concerns regarding state agency processes and streamlining those when possible and we hope to have some conversations with key folks at the state level prior to the next hearing, which will be on Monday May 23rd.

Additional information on the current version (no amendments) is attached. Jeff will keep us posted about updates.

Mountains and Rivers Public Land Bill for Region

Mountains & Rivers is a proposal of draft legislation to be presented to our Congressman, Jared Huffman, to protect these special places, restore watersheds and fisheries, support economic development, enhance recreational opportunities, and protect communities from catastrophic fire. This proposal will aim to establish the South Fork Trinity River Restoration Area to restore the forests, habitat, and fisheries in this essential watershed. The proposal will also help restore fire-resilient forests in wilderness areas and clean up public lands that have been damaged by illegal trespass marijuana grows. Funds to implement this bill would address trespass marijuana grows, maintenance for infrastructure fund, regional trails study. S.Fork Trinity restoration area, jobs back in the woods, Bigfoot Trail, Letters of support from NRC would be helpful. Maps and more information is attached and information can be found at: <http://www.mountainsandrivers.org>.

Member Updates

Northcoast Regional Land Trust

NCRLT recently opened up their Freshwater Nature Trail. Their grand opening event on May 1st was a big success and included food, music and plein air painting by local artists. Kerry posed the question to other land trusts about how to handle transient/homeless populations miss-using the trail.

Dan gave an update about the North Coast Oak Woodland Conservation Project they are involved in to provide funds for private landowners to restore oak woodlands. They are also involved in supporting legislation that would provide an exemption to land owners to remove conifers to enhance oak woodlands. Efforts are underway to allow private landowners to have more tools to enhance oak woodlands. Right now, AB 1958 sponsored by Jim Wood proposes a pilot program for 7 years that would allow 100-acres/landowner exemption in forest practices. They are looking to the Board of Forestry to develop a prescription for oak woodland enhancement. They will keep NRC updated as to the need for support letters.

Siskiyou Land Trust

Kathleen discussed 2, long-term easement in Mt Shasta and the upper Sacramento watershed. The Scott Valley easement has been what she calls an “anchor point” that has served as a catalyst for other acquisitions in the valley, paving the way for other acquisitions. She is also excited about their Greenway trails project, moving through informal partnerships to develop something more formal. They are in a growth phase, with a lot of transitions, but they seem to have the “magic land sauce”, helping to make things happen. It is a challenge to learn how to say no, but finding other ways there can be a “yes” to exciting projects. The outreach committee has huge heart for making community conservation happen. Steve Bullock will be leading a Klamath River Rafting trip looking at some TNC properties.

The Garden Greenway project is in the middle of town. The SLT office sits on 3 acres that is being developed into a demonstration farm to support the work they do together. Edible alleys, orchards etc.. Kids continue to return, connect with the land. They just planted their first orchard trees. There is a lot of energy from the board to develop an active transportation corridor in Mt. Shasta. Kathleen likes the idea of

developing “interim trails” as a pre-cursor to developing long-term, hardscaped trails. It builds momentum and support.

McKinleyville Land Trust

Developing trail at Cha-GAH-Cho site. Funding through a mitigation grant. RCAA doing the interpretive sign development. Next week the CCC will be working on the trail. Question about how to make it attractive to visitors and how to deal with the issue of homeless on the trail. There was some suggestion about future topics to address how land trusts respond constructively to the issue of homelessness in our communities while insuring that a diversity community members having access to land. MLT has established a Friends of Mad River Bluffs Committee that has been very successful in engaging community support.

Sonoma Land Trust

Bob Neale shared information about the upcoming North Coast Forest Conservation Conference, June 7th&8th 2017. Amy Chestnut is organizing and it will be held in Santa Rosa. She will be sending out invitation to participate. It was agreed that this conference could be a good one for NRC members to participate in and possibly get more involved in the organizing of the conference, or at least have a table or presentation. For more information, contact Amy Chesnut, at: amy@sonomoalandtrust.org.

Bob shared some additional comments about mitigation funds as a potential source of funding. Getting access to these funds often depends on relationships with agencies. Often these agencies like working with land trusts. Carol mentioned that CDFW is looking entities to hold ecological preserves that are generated through their Advanced Mitigation Initiative. Riparian mitigation is the hardest to find. It would be good to have conceptual plans ready and projects shovel ready. Bob advocated for being proactive looking for mitigation lands. The topic of mitigation funding could potentially be explored further at upcoming meetings.

Friends of the Dunes

Scott Demers noted that Friends of the Dunes is still looking for an Executive Director. They are in the process of updating a Coastal Development Permit for a new 2.8 acre property acquired with mitigation funds. Carol added that she is working on the outreach portion of the Dunes Climate Ready grant from the SCC, looking at how to make the coast more resilient to climate change and sea level rise.

Sanctuary Forest

Renee is getting more involved again with Sanctuary Forest and is very interested in getting Galen Doherty more involved with NRC. He gave a great talk at CCLT about retaining water along the upper Mattole river.

Prop one collaborative funding opportunities

Carol briefly went over the new priorities for prop one funding, wondering if there were opportunities for collaborative funding. Applications are due June 24. CDFW has released its FY 2016-17 Proposal Solicitation Notice (PDF) for its Proposition 1 Restoration Grant Programs and is now accepting applications.

<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/conservation/watersheds/restoration-grants>

Field Tour of Mt. Shasta Greenway

A hearty crew braved the rain and walked some of the land that makes up the Mt. Shasta urban greenway trail partnerships. The trails connect gardens, wetlands, and waterways. NRC members toured the Garden Greenway, Sisson Meadow and City Park to Downtown greenway trail where work has started to connect the Headwaters of the Sacramento River trails with the downtown area. Dinner and socializing followed at the Mt. Shasta Resort

Day 2- Field Tours

Scott River Ranch

We visited with Gareth Plank, owner of the Scott River Ranch, Etna – Scott River Valley. The Plank & Whipple ranches are privately owned ranches with 5 conservation easements held by various family members. Gareth was the first and key to securing additional easements. 3 miles of the Scott River flows through the ranch that is also home to beaver, Coho salmon, golden eagles, and just about every species that lives in the Klamath Mountains. This certified organic beef operation is also certified as salmon safe and animal welfare approved. Gareth shared his outside the box approach to working with the land in an ecologically sensitive way. The group enjoyed a delicious lunch on the property.

Townley Ranch, Shasta River Valley

Townley Ranch is a privately owned ranch with 2 conservation easements held by Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. The Townleys' grow their crops the old fashioned way – with rain versus irrigation – so they are not concerned with the issues of taking water from instream like so many ranchers are in this area. Steve Townley shared his story of the easement was developed, how compromises were reached and the land is now managed in a way that is compatible with dryland farming, wintering elk herds and is protected from future subdivisions.

Shasta Big Springs Ranch, Shasta River Valley

This Nature Conservancy ranch lies on the Shasta River. TNC staff met us on the land and shared how riparian restoration is inviting the return of spawning salmon along-side working ranches. Some interesting insights included; planting with simply willow poles instead of rooted whips yielded higher results, simply fencing off the river allowed for emergent vegetation to provide shade and bioengineer faster channels leading to lower temperatures. TNC bought the ranch with WCB funds with the intention of showing how ranching and salmon restoration could co-exist. The purchase of the land included the sale of the water rights to the State, with an agreement for managing the land in a way that favored water in-stream. The State required that no water be used for ranching, which was in opposition to TNC's management priorities of ranching with conservation. TNC is now selling this property – showing us all that the putting management decisions for water in the States hands can be challenging even with the best of intentions.

Dinner at the Weed Brewery

We had a great time getting to know each other and talking about possible locations and hosts for the next gathering. Renee will investigate whether or not Sanctuary forest might host the next gathering. Stay tuned for more details.