



Newsletter

"...When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."

... Aldo Leopold (1886-1948) American Forester

Bodega Land Trust Receives First Easement

by Sandy Sharp

Sections of Finley and Coleman Creekbanks are permanently protected! On May 25th your land trust was formally presented with a "Deed of Trust" by William Wheeler, the well known Sonoma County artist and member of the Sonoma Four. The easement consists of riparian corridors along Finley and Coleman Creeks where they border his property below Coleman Valley Road. The conditions of the easement require that there be "no logging or residences built, and every effort be made to restore and enhance the fish, animal, and bird habitat therein."

The occasion chosen for the presentation was a luncheon in the flower garden at Ocean Song Farm and Wilderness Center bordering the Wheeler property. The luncheon was jointly sponsored by the Open Space District and the Coleman Valley Watershed Project. It was the highlight of a tour taken by the State Coastal Conservancy to visit possible acquisition sites along the Sonoma Coast. A great time was had by all.

BLT board members have hiked this acquisition twice, taking notes and photographs for the base line study required by law. We were very fortunate to have been accompanied by Lisa Bush, a base line specialist, who volunteered her services. Thank you, Lisa!

We look forward to finishing the legal work in the near future.

Land Trust Dinner Food for Thought

by Anne Greenfield

The tables were all set with white dinnerware and decorated with the gold and orange of harvest fruits. Twelve youths stood excitedly in their pressed blacks and white waiting to serve the hundred people expected for dinner. Months of planning were to momentarily come together for the Bodega Land Trust's first community event.

Among land trusts, BLT is unique in placing equal emphasis on land and community. The November 11th dinner was intended to gather local community forces to buy, prepare and serve the dinner. (cont. on page 2)

Bodega Land Trust

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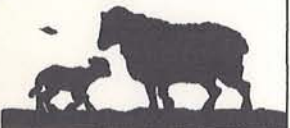
For Info Call (707) 876 3422 or (707) 876 3215

E-mail to: skilley@wco.com

<http://www.wco.com/~skilley/BodegalandTrust.html>

Member: Land Trust Alliance

Bodega Land Trust



(Dinner Continued) Twenty-two individuals generously volunteered to bring a hot dish of either marinated tofu or chicken to the Bodega Firehall where it was kept warm and dished out by other volunteers. Local growers donated potatoes, cranberry squash and salad makings. Then, in genteel manner the meals were taken to each guest by a corps of volunteer teens.

Guests had been seated in small dinner groups and asked to converse on what they valued about Bodega and what they wanted for Bodega's future. After dinner a spokesperson for each group relayed its sentiments to the group at large. Values predominately expressed were: community, open space, agriculture, and a good environment for kids. The most frequently voiced desire for Bodega's future was controlled growth. A more complete listing of the groups responses is in the box below.

The Bodega Land Trust board, in its first public presentation, shared its philosophy and history, answered questions and explained the reason for the evening: to find a community base for the land trust. Were people interested? Did they see the Trust as a vehicle to serve their needs? Was there energy for involvement? A questionnaire that was handed out yielded forty people who wished to participate on some level.

BLT directors have begun to call these people for particular projects and for interest groups. People interested in serving as board members have been invited to the monthly board meetings. Seven writers have come together to produce this newsletter and two women have stepped forward offering to lead a fund-raiser (see page 6).

Bodega Land Trust was heart-warmed and gratified by the success of the dinner and by the community's show of support. The Directors wish to thank everyone who has offered their involvement or has given their financial help in the form of membership. Truly, amidst the dinner linens and savory foods was felt the promise of an up-and-coming land-conscious community focus.

*If you wish to express an interest in Bodega Land Trust
please see page 5.*

VALUED ABOUT BODEGA: a community that is small, supportive, tolerant of different lifestyles and has a sense of history; the beauty of skyline, landscape, open and undeveloped space; agriculture, wildlife, wetlands, good lichen; fresh air, quiet, privacy, BVFD, Fern Grove, the coffee shop; a safe place for women and where we can watch the kids grow strong legs and a community consciousness.

DESIRED FOR BODEGA'S FUTURE: the conservation of soil, salmon and wildlife habitat, the smallness of the community and the name Bodega; no more stores, condominiums -- put it back the way it was; re-routing the highway, maintaining only one lane (Sebastopol to coast), promoting small organic farms, walking trails, a reliable water system, a library, coyote control, a new community center.

Community Bulletin Board

Nature Walks Sponsored by Bodega Land Trust "Winter Birds" Feb. 25, 9-3:00. with Roger Marlowe, naturalist and past chairman for Audubon field trips. Meet at Sizzling Tandoor, Hwy. 1 and Willow Creek Rd. Bring lunch, water, binoculars, bird book. Possible muddy conditions. Call 829-7039, info. *Earth Day Walk: "Woodland Flowers and Ferns"* April 21, 10-1:00. with Peggy Rockwood, botanist now finishing a plant survey of Bodega Pastures. Meet at Fitzpatrick and Salmon Creek Rd.; bring lunch, water, and wear sturdy shoes (some steep hiking). Call Hazel, 876-3402, for info.

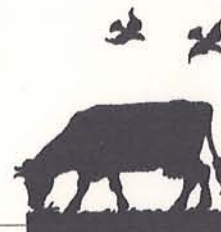
SurfRider Foundation chapter meeting. Tuesday, Feb. 20; 7:30 PM. McCaughey Hall, Bodega. Call 876-3020 for info.

More Fisherfolk needed who can show uninsured loss in designated years, to sign up for future creek restoration work. Call Colin Close at 836-0585.

Wanted: community organizer for Script Program: a way of fundraising for BLT while we shop. Stores donate a % of what we spend. Call Hazel at 876-3402.

Wanted: Recipes for Bodega Potluck Cookbook. Be part of this unique community project by having your favorite recipe published alongside your neighbor's. Just jot it down and send to BLT.

Wanted: Someone to teach orienteering, private or group. Call Anne 876-3402.



Bodega Potatoes

by Michael Presley

The rich sandy loam soils surrounding the Bodega area have raised many a potato. The local potato's historical roots go back to early Russian settlers and through every wave of immigration. They have been grown as garden favorites, family food staple, market-garden cash crop or in large commercial operations. Bodega potatoes were usually dry-farmed, using no irrigation but, rather, skillful and timely tillage and sowing techniques.

In 1859, "60,000 sacks of potatoes were shipped from Bodega," cites an old Petaluma newspaper. Today there are enough local potato stories to write a book, yet there remains no substantial amount of local potato growing. Successes and failures weave a jagged history of bounty and busts which leave us today with at least hope for renewed local production. Anne Greenfield and I decided to dig up some of the local history, with regard to potatoes, and talked with three local growers and their families. We are grateful to Bodega residents Ed and Columbina Albini, Gary and Vicki Watts (with memories of Victor Fomasi) and Louis Albini for their time and good recollections.

For Ed and Columbina Albini potato growing goes back to 1938. Cultivating the 2-3 acres around their house they have been able to move the potato patch around to fresh productive ground each year. Ed starts spading trenches in February and March, then plants when frost is gone -- usually April -- and always "by the dark of the moon." Ed fertilizes with weed-free steer manure, cultivates the two feet between rows and hills the plants up well to keep the young tubers from sunburn. Gophers are always a problem; even with trapping or baiting they claim about 15% of the crop. Columbina remembers her uncle in northern Italy planting three potatoes in a triangle: "one for the gopher, one for the bugs, one for us!"

The Albini's winter supply of potatoes are dug in September, fully ripe, and stored in a pile in a dry, cold, dark shed. Favorite planting varieties have been the British Queen, Burbank Russet, White Rose and Bodega Red. Columbina loves the versatility of the potato: "good for

breakfast, lunch or dinner!" and her favored style is cube-fries with salt, pepper and herb seasoning for special occasions. Fava beans and saffron crocus are also usual to the Albini garden. Plants are never sprayed: "if you spray them you're afraid to eat." The Albini's still grow potatoes every year and like to try new varieties.



Many Bodega area residents remember Victor Fomasi's potato fields and sacks of potatoes for sale just northeast of town. Victor passed away a couple of years ago but his daughter Vicki remembers some 30 years of potato growing summers. Over the past two decades Gary Watts (Vicki's husband) worked the fields with Victor, discing, plowing, harrowing and rolling, until the texture fully met Victor's approval.

Planting of Bodega Red, LaSoda Red, Burbank Russet and White Rose varieties was done during the week before a new moon, during May or even June, due to late frosts. Black Beetles, gopher and deer kept Victor busy stalking, trapping, baiting or spraying to protect his crop; the yield, however, was often six barn bins full (each 10x10) - "lots of 100lb. sacks." Vicki attests to how dusty it would get during the harvesting and sorting days.

Gary realized how much Victor knew, when he (Gary) went to carry on the family tradition the year after Victor died; he learned the intricacies of pest control and seed selection for the old potato planter (originally horse-drawn, now pulled with a field tractor). An old harvesting machine and the help of neighbors combined to bring in the potatoes just before the first rains.

The whole Watts' family enjoys eating potatoes fried and mashed, but Vicki and Gary remember the big pot of dry bean soup - full of kidney beans, spuds, onions and pasta - eaten with sausage, as one of Dad's favorite meals.

Louis Albini saw western Sonoma County potato production in its prime. During the war years (1941-1945) his family grew certified seed potatoes for a major grower in Bakersfield. "They wanted as many potatoes as we could grow" so pasture parcels from Salmon Creek to Tomales Bay sprung into production. The White Rose was predominantly grown but Pontiac, LaSoda and British Queen were popular in the San Francisco markets. Louis recalls a particularly good patch off Salmon Creek which yielded 6000 sacks from 30 acres -- that's 10 ton/acre; a lot of good food! Late rains combined with a rich soil, a warm and wind-protected site, and timely fertilizer application to bring such a good harvest. Louis confides that the only time they really made any money from growing potatoes was growing them for seed.

We thank the families who offered their stories and hope the information will help someone along the potato-growing path. Of all cultivated crops, potatoes are the best calorie and carbohydrate producer per square foot of land. Growing them can be like a low-stakes gamble with some pretty shady characters (gophers) at the table, but the prize is worth it. The freshest, creamiest and tastiest potatoes come from the ground we live on! Do we really want to get all our potatoes from Washington and Idaho? Have a good growing year in '96!

WANTED:
Bodega
Red

More information on
potatoes or agriculture in
Bodega. BLT at 876-3402.

Point of View

by Anne Greenfield

I teach young children. One of the most essential things I teach is how to resolve conflicts with each other. It's really quite easy. Each is asked to tell me what they want and with a few more questions I help them define their point of view. Then I say, "now...who has an idea of how you can both win?" And always they have ideas, good ideas too.

We adults become similarly frustrated (enraged?) when we don't get what we want. At the Salmon Creek Watershed Meeting held at the Bodega Firehall last March, a question was raised about how to deal with a neighbor who is doing something we think is wrong. Recommendations were made NOT to take one's complaint to a government agency, as a first step. (No one likes being "turned in"). Instead, the alternative of talking directly to the neighbor was lauded. Have you tried it? It's not easy.

Hence, this column. We'd like to offer you the opportunity of expressing your POINT OF VIEW about some land or community issue without having to point a finger, yell and rage, or call in a government agency. Send your comments to BLT. Maybe we'll begin to understand each other's perspectives and who knows, maybe we'll have some ideas about how we can all win.

Coastal Accessways Up for Grabs

by Sandy Sharp

The California Coastal Commission (CCC) is looking for organizations to accept Offers To Dedicate (OTDs) public coastal accessways on certain private properties along the California coast.

In 1980, wishing to mitigate the adverse impact of new development on public access, the CCC began requiring, "in appropriate circumstances," applicants for coastal development permits to record an offer to dedicate an easement for public access to an organization "acceptable to the Commission's Executive Director." Such organizations include land trusts. Most OTDs expire after 21 years if not accepted. Thus the expirations begin in 2002. The State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) has agreed to hold those OTDs that the CCC deems worth saving. But the SCC cannot develop or maintain them, so suitable organizations must still be found to accept the offers. A major problem is financing for construction, maintenance and insurance. Both the CCC and the SCC are working on new ways and means in these areas.

Of the 15 OTDs recorded along the Sonoma coast only one has been accepted and that by the county itself, in 1980.

The Surfriders Foundation is also interested in maintaining coastal accesses. BLT has begun discussions of the situation with Nick Marlow, head of the local chapter. He has volunteered a crew of 8-10 workers to construct the trails, stairs, etc., necessary to implement access. We will be doing a complete site survey in the near future. Some of the local OTDs may not be suitable. The one closest to us, at Gleason's Beach, for example, is on a cliff. The access wouldn't involve a trail or stairs so much as a very long ladder, and there already is good access elsewhere.

We will continue to report on any new developments. Anyone wanting to look at the OTD sites with us or help in securing them please let us know.

Bodega Land Trust Offers You:

- ◆ The opportunity to preserve and restore agricultural lands, forests, streams, wilderness, natural habitats and resources in perpetuity through acceptance or purchase of land or conservation easements. A conservation easement is a legal agreement a landowner makes to limit the nature of future development. Each easement is uniquely tailored to reflect a landowner's desired land use. Donations may result in tax advantages to owners.
- ◆ The opportunity to help develop and encourage rural communities through involvement in projects like the Salmon Creek Watershed Project.
- ◆ Participation in the preservation of land and community by joining Bodega Land Trust. Membership includes naturalist-led day hikes, nature seminars and newsletter.

The Bodega Land Trust would like to thank the following for their assistance in 1995; Mary Biggs, Dinner Facilitator; Lisa Bush, MALT baseline documenter; Nancy Conkle, Artist; Bill Cox, Fish and Game; Lee Erickson, Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District; Linda Esposito, Botanist; Katie Etienne, Biologist; Richard King, National Resource Conservation Service; Joan Vilms, Land Trust Consultant.

"This is our home, and we're all responsible for it." Sandy Sharp

Feds Fund 3 in 1 Watershed Project *by Kooch Daniels*

The Federal Northwest Emergency Assistance Program (NEAP) is providing funding for labor and some materials to repair badly damaged banks and to redirect the creek flow at two creekside properties in Bodega, the Dennis Albini Ranch and the Cassidy/Bleifuss homestead. Although storms have delayed much of the work, it is well underway, and these labor-intensive projects will be carried out as the weather clears.

The project is intended to provide temporary employment to commercial salmon fishermen who have been put out of work by federal fishing-area closures. The habitat restoration will not only benefit the spawning steelhead, salmon and their fry, but will put more fish in offshore fisheries (for the fisherfolk), and assist local citizens with the expense and labor of repairing badly damaged creekbanks.

Colin Close, project coordinator, is working with local folk in watershed communities. She seeks to understand landowner perspectives and strives for "a marriage between a healthy environment and healthy economy." Colin states that funding is still available for some small projects. If you have a project that needs assistance, you can submit a grant application. Call Colin Close, (707)836-0585.

Watershed Work Happening *by Alistair Bleifuss*

Salmonid habitat restoration is underway on a stretch of Salmon Creek downstream from the old Bodega creamery. Perennial pools in the area provide critical nursery habitat for juvenile steelhead and possibly coho salmon.

Funds for labor and some materials have been provided by NEAP (see article above). Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District is supervising the work, along with a general overview from the California Department of Fish and Game and the Natural Resource Conservation Service. The Rex Foundation has provided additional funding, administered through the Bodega Land Trust, to cover the cost of revegetation materials, tools and technical advice.

Habitat restoration has focused on preserving the existing vegetation and establishing new plantings. These efforts benefit the fish by stabilizing the streambanks, maintaining a lower water temperature, providing shelter against predators, and attracting sources of food.

Log jams that accumulated during flood flows have knocked down trees and diverted the force of the water into the banks, causing erosion. The log jams high on the banks have been removed. Tree trunks and other pieces of large woody debris which offer the young fish cover and protection have been left alone or moved into more strategic positions and anchored in place. Alders, Bays, and Willows will be planted along the creek to hold the bank together and shield the fingerlings from predatory birds. Further plantings in pastures bordering the creek will widen the wooded riparian zone, while exclusionary fencing will keep livestock out of the creek bed.

Employing fishermen/ women has utilized their knowledge of fish and the field training they received during an earlier restoration project on Walker Creek. The fish and other beings which dwell in Salmon Creek thank them.

LAND TRUST MEMBERSHIP FORM

I would like to become a member or continue my membership at ☐\$10 ☐\$20 ☐\$50 ☐\$100 ☐Other

Please check your address on other side of this form for accuracy and then mail this to B.L.T.

All donations are tax-deductible. Make checks payable to Bodega Land Trust.

☐I would like more information

I am interested in being involved as: ☐an advisor ☐an occasional volunteer ☐a Board member

☐an interest group participant

☐other _____

My special interests are _____

My special skills are _____

A project I would like to see Bodega Land Trust consider is _____

Our History by Anne Greenfield

Our world is composed of many kinds of communities that depend on the land for their sustenance. In the last hundred years much of our land has become degraded or threatened. If we and the other creatures are to flourish, we must take better care of the land which has sustained us. The Bodega Land Trust is a community committed to caring for the land.

The Trust began with a group of Bodega residents who had grown to appreciate the quality of life that came from living in a natural environment with a small town community providing its social hub. The group formed the Bodega Land Trust as a vehicle to preserve that quality of life and the Trust was granted its legal status as a 501(c)3 tax-exempt charitable organization in May 1992. An educational process ensued, in the ways and means of land trusts, and in 1994 the Directors began attending public meetings and establishing themselves in the conservation network. In 1995 BLT helped in the creation of the Salmon Creek Watershed Project and began its support of the Coleman Valley Watershed Project (sponsored by the Sonoma County Agricultural and Open Space District).

Also in 1995 a program of nature walks, open to the public, was begun and various information packets were prepared and made available. Bodega Land Trust has become a liaison force between public agencies and private landowners. Currently BLT is formalizing a conservation easement for two riparian corridors, is researching the acquisition of coastal accessways, and is continuing its involvement with the watershed projects.

Gong Show Returns!

by Tara Daniels

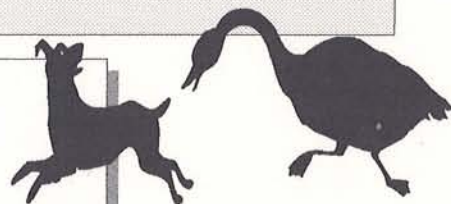
We know you've missed it, so we're bringing it back. It's Bodega's biggest combination of talent and fun, where everyone from children to adults is welcome to come perform, no matter how big or small they are. It's the Gong Show, and we need your help.

On Saturday, April 27th, the Bodega Land Trust will host the Gong Show along with a bake sale and raffle at McCaughey Hall (Bodega) in order to do the fundraising that is necessary for the land trust's success. However, it cannot be done without your help. We need people who would like to perform, donate prizes for the participants, or bring baked goods for the bake sale. If you can help, please contact Annie at 876-3351, or Kooch and Tara at 876-3208. We hope to see you there.



Board of Directors: Laird Sutton, *President*; Anne Greenfield and Gloria Molica, *Vice-presidents*; Sandy Sharp, *Treasurer*; Steve Killey, *Secretary*.

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