



# Bodega Land Trust



# 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*

## Headwaters of Coleman Valley Creek Protected

By Ann Cassidy

**B**odega Land Trust is very pleased to announce the acquisition of a "forever wild" conservation easement on 68+ acres covering the headwaters of Coleman Valley Creek. Coleman Valley Creek is the longest of the tributaries of Salmon Creek and its lower reach is a very important spawning ground for steelhead trout and, historically, coho salmon.

The landowners donated the easement to retain the property in a "*predominately natural, 'forever wild' condition; to protect the property's natural resource and watershed values; to maintain and enhance biodiversity; to retain habitat for native plants and animals; to maintain and enhance natural forest values; and to foster the return of large growth legacy trees.*" While preserving the west county's typical upland landscape, the easement also allows new construction within a residential envelope, and permits the construction of two wind generators with underground wires. Limited grazing is also permitted.

The topography varies from flat pastureland to sloping vernal meadows to steep draws which support both hardwood and redwood forest. Bodega Land Trust plans an in-depth vegetation survey in the future. Two streams originate on the property: the headwaters and an unnamed tributary of Coleman Valley Creek.

Bodega Land Trust is explicitly given responsibility for the water. This easement is thus an important addition to another easement in the works that creates a protected riparian corridor 300 feet wide along about 4000 feet of the lower Coleman Valley Creek spawning grounds.



Source of Coleman Valley Creek

(Continued on next page)

Bodega Land Trust

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<http://www.bodeganet.com/BodegaLandTrust.html>

Member: Land Trust Alliance

Historically, the property formed part of the eastern boundary of Captain Stephen Smith's Rancho Bodega Mexican Land Grant. Later, it was part of the Coleman Valley Ranch owned by C.E. and India Fuller. The Fullers owned a sawmill and logged the area around the turn of the century. They sold their ranch to Innocente and Helene Illia in 1903. The Illias continued ranching and cleared some of the hardwood forest for pastureland. Dante Calvi, whose father bought adjoining land from the Illias, relayed this history. Dante remembers his father digging out the hardwood stumps by hand for the pasture. The flat areas were used as hayfields and the slopes were grazed, first by goats, then by sheep and cattle.

Bodega Land Trust now has the responsibility to preserve the conservation values of this property, to "monitor compliance with the terms of this Easement... to prevent, terminate, or mitigate any activity or use of the property that is inconsistent with the terms, conditions or Purpose of this Easement and to require the restoration of areas or features of the property that may be damaged by inconsistent activity or use...". We have completed a baseline survey that includes photos and descriptions to accurately depict the present condition of the property. It may be added to in the future. It will be used as a guide for the required periodic monitoring to assure adherence to the landowners' wishes in granting the easement.



## Time and the Creek Flowing

By Alistair Bleifuss

*"The closer that you can have it like nature would have it the better off you are in the long run. It's economically sound."* An Oregon rancher

Left alone and given time, nature will create a mature riparian environment that supports a diversity of flora and fauna. Riparian vegetation stabilizes floodplains by allowing flooding to change parts but nurture continuance of the whole. Floodplains are productive land and easy to build upon. Changes to riparian lands affect the way in which a creek transports water and soil downstream. Not surprisingly, a double-edged sword enters the game. We like the benefits of using land along Salmon Creek but we don't want the creek flowing through our barn, or eroding streambanks and cutting into our pasture. To prevent this we decided to give a little land back to nature.

With the assistance of Bodega Land Trust we received a grant from California Department of Fish and Game for revegetation and streambank stabilization. The proposal was submitted in the spring of 1997 but funding was not received until after the El Nino floods of 1997/98, which caused changes to the creek. Work began last fall. Fish and Game was very supportive in revising the contract to address the evolving situation.

The main streambank stabilization structures were built with dormant willow cuttings which rooted once placed in the ground. Living willow wall revetments, willow wattles, and a brush mattress supported the most severely eroding streambanks throughout the winter. The willows are now sending up three-foot tall shoots. As they continue to grow, the roots will help hold the soil in place and the willows will dissipate the erosive energy of floods. These "biotechnical" methods blend into the landscape, providing more habitat while costing less than rock rip-rap or rock gabions. They help to absorb the energy of flood flows instead of concentrating flows or diverting the force to another part of the channel where another washout could occur. Our pasture had been cleared right up to the edge of the creek and the shallow grass roots did little to limit erosion into the pasture. We decided to "armor" the pasture with a wider corridor of trees. We sprigged

with willow shoots and cuttings of elderberry and ninebark. Native plants such as California rose were transplanted. Locally propagated riparian species were planted along the pasture edge, extending the wooded zone inland ten to twenty-five feet. We lost some pasture, and we were fortunate to have a little room to work with; but we felt that over time we would lose even more if erosion continued unchecked.

Fish and Game and a local creek restoration specialist provided technical advice. Community volunteers, hired help, and the Americorps program, which provides training and mentors to youth interested in natural resource management, supplied the labor. It was hard work and good times. We are now monitoring the results and will make a few additions in the fall.

Floods will continue to dictate the character of Salmon Creek. We don't pretend to have fooled Mother Nature. Hopefully, we have helped her by allowing a little more room for natural creek dynamics. Maybe we will decrease the amount of our land washing out to sea and protect our barn. We hope that increasing the number of trees will help deposit the sediment in floodwaters and replenish our pasture. Certainly we are more attuned to the inevitable changes that occur.

Fish and Game annually solicits proposals that aid in the preservation and restoration of natural habitat. Funding for fencing projects to manage livestock access to creeks might be of interest to landowners. Coastal salmonid streams such as Salmon Creek receive high priority. The Natural Resources Conservation Service offers a variety of programs to assist in erosion control and habitat restoration. Landowners can contract with Americorps on erosion control or habitat projects for a nominal fee. As a non-profit corporation, Bodega Land Trust will help interested landowners design and obtain funding for projects.



*Please contact BLT for further information and/or consultation.*

## **"Strangers in a Strange Land"**

A Dan Murley Presentation for the Bodega Land Trust

By Jane Schultz

On a chilly Wednesday night in Bodega, many interested townsfolk met at McCaughy Hall with 20-year veteran Fort Ross park ranger, Dan Murley. His presentation was entitled "Strangers in a Strange Land: Russians and Alaskans in Miwok/Pomo Land".

The audience became privy to Dan Murley's extensive and passionate research on this portion of early California history. The picture he painted through lecture, slides, and exhibits, including a hand-made *atlatl* (spear thrower) Dan received from a modern-day Kodiak craftsman, depicted a multi-ethnic global village circa 1812-1841.

The reconditioned fort that we see today represents only a portion of what existed at Fort Ross almost 200 years ago. Most familiar today is the stockade which once housed 25-30 high ranking Russian officials. The majority of the population, however, which included perhaps another 200 people speaking as many as eight different languages, lived outside the stockade walls.

On the southern side of the stockade was the native Alaskan neighborhood. Called "Aleuts" by the Russians, these were men from places such as the Aleutian Island chain, the southeastern side of Kodiak Island, and Sitka Island. Needless to say they were not all "Aleuts". They spoke different languages, wore distinct clothing styles, and used varying hunting techniques, tools and weapons. The only thing they shared in common was their unparalleled skill at hunting marine mammals. To the north and east of the stockade were the native Pomo and Miwok neighborhoods. The local peoples were quite distinct from the Alaskans in that they were land-based hunter-gatherer societies. Fort Ross is on what was Pomo land. The Miwok influence came from women coming to the fort to marry, and a handful of Miwok men who worked for the Russians.

To the north and along the bluffs was the Russian village, made up of artisans, laborers, hunters and seamen. Inland there were three farms (at least one at Bodega), and on the remote Farallon Islands an *artel* (food processing site).

These diverse populations were held together by marriage and family, a desire for community, the commercial urge represented by the Russian-American Co., and the general will to survive.

As colonists the Russians committed their share of social and environmental degradation. In only 14 years they demolished the local sea otter population. But because of their interest in scientific and cultural matters they left an irreplaceable record. Many written records survive as do excellent paintings and sketches depicting local life at that time. Collections of artifacts such as Pomo baskets survive in Russian museums.

For more information regarding this rich multi-ethnic past please contact Dan Murley at Fort Ross State Park: 847-3286; and/or the Fort Ross Interpretive Association: 847-3437; and by all means visit the library at Fort Ross.



## **Trust**

By Elizabeth Herron

Having no skin I fell in love with the sea.  
Amniotic beginnings, tides, tears -  
all the while the moon -  
rising and falling, gathering and loosing  
its light.      Blood harmonies.

Was it having no arms  
and so    unable to hold  
what I loved?

Having no voice  
was something else    to do with  
no one listening

but trees, the creek, the lonely old stones, deer  
like that heavy-antlered buck whose crown I  
just this morning glimpsed beyond the rise  
before he startled    into the dense woods -

and the fields, the wild grass, the air  
humming - crickets, bees.

They were my voice, the others.  
I loved their constancy -  
how it received me, how it endured  
even in my absence.

Words came late,  
had to be turned back  
into prayers.

Forget all this. I'm only trying to say  
I too fell in love with the world speechlessly.

I too offer only this hoarse croaking,  
this blunt hunger,  
this mute and mortal longing.

*Printed here for the first time, with the  
author's kind permission.*



# 

By Kurt Erikson

*This column is made available to the public for the expression of personal opinions not necessarily those of BLT. Please feel free to submit your own.*

Over nineteen months ago the Watershed Protection Alliance (WPA) was formed in response to the growing sight of vineyards inching ever higher up the Sonoma County hillsides. Initial funding came from The Sonoma County Sierra Club, Sonoma County Conservation Action, The Western Sonoma County Rural Alliance, RiverWatch and other groups.

The further up the hills the developments went, the greater the danger to the watersheds, hill and ridge-top viewsheds, animal and plant habitat, downstream salmonids, and other biotic resources. The grape-planting boom has been encroaching into every corner of rural Sonoma County. Even the microclimates that had been thought to preclude vineyards have been pushed into growing grapes.

The problems are not just with the major growers. Sonoma County's desirability and the economic role of a changing demographic aggravate the situation. The affluent's desire to own their own estate vineyard is increasingly becoming an environmental concern. Real estate people are offered bonuses to find and list anything that can be manipulated into vineyards. Everyone with money, it seems, wants his or her own "vin-yette", a vineyard story to tell when pouring those vanity label bottles over the holidays. Completely inappropriate property is being pushed, by grading, pesticide use and force feeding, into some bastardization of agriculture to squeeze out a bottle of namesake wine.

The WPA's purpose was to develop a set of vineyard development regulations to keep a handle on the overzealous or uninformed grower. There's a valid assumption that an owner wouldn't want his high investment in Sonoma County land to be washed away due to lax practices. But the high prices grapes currently bring make it so appetizing to push the limits of each acre that downstream environmental considerations may be overlooked in favor of the big bucks.

The WPA began with strong objectives. An Ex-

ecutive Committee was formed to sit down with the Growers and address the issues. If dealings were to become bogged down or, worse, compromised, there was always the threat of a countywide referendum. We looked at the regulations developed by Napa County and vowed not to accept a weak and timid document. The Growers came to the table with the attitude that The Environmentalists ought to be happy merely by their presence. It was the first time Growers had deigned to allow anything in Sonoma County viticulture to be regulated, and, as it turned out, to be regulated by something they themselves had watered down, re-written and carved into something as tough as buttersculpture.

The issues left out of the vaporous final directive approved by the Board of Supervisors and sent to County Counsel for a final writing are too numerous to mention. The ordinance is so loosely written that there is reference to following environmental guidelines not yet written! The only issue covered was erosion, and the protections are minimal. Slope averaging, for example, still isn't properly defined. A portion of a project may be very steep – up to 50%, so averaging can allow significant problems to be glossed over by hillside figure-fudging.

In insuring the economic sanctity of Growers, the Ordinance ousted the California Environmental Quality Act from the equation, deeming it unnecessary for review in projects overseen by the County Agricultural Commissioner.

Perhaps the saddest thing left out is that the Ordinance has no appeal process. Neighbors have no means to call foul when this self-regulated tool of agriculture confers a license that threatens their environment. No voice can be raised after the ticket is nailed on the stump on the future vineyard's corner. That is why it's more dangerous than no Ordinance at all. It potentially gives approval to environmental degradation! Once the permit is issued neither the human nor the more directly affected plant, fish, or wildlife communities can prevent irreversible damage.

Current regulations from Fish & Game and other departments will hold off flagrant violations for the near future. In the mean time the people of Sonoma County must find the strength to formulate a set of parameters that will give just protection to our unique bio-region.



# **FAY CREEK PROJECT UPDATE**

*By Sandy Sharp*

**T**he Fay Creek bank restoration and forestation project is two-thirds complete! Under the direction of Linda Esposito, who obtained grants from Partners for Wildlife, WHIP (an program of the Natural Resources Conservation Service [NRCS] ) and the Sonoma County Fish and Wildlife Advisory Board, the south portion – approximately 4½ acres – was finished in April.

As you may remember, the project involved a major stream bank repair using the biotechnical method (living willow stakes and branches mostly) designed and managed by Mike Jensen for Prunuske – Chatham of Occidental. It was completed in mid-October.

Next came the irrigation system, designed by Harold Appleton of Appleton Forestry, which also supplied the plants. It was finished in November (except for the drip lines to each plant).


Then the planting began. It went on all winter. Over 500 native trees and shrubs were planted, as well as 100 or so willow, dogwood and ninebark sprigs which were added to the stream bank thicket to increase bank stability and add shade to the spawning pools. Each plant (except the sprigs) was given a square yard of clearing, then planted, and then fitted with a weed suppression mat, a vertical protector, and drip fittings (five parts each). By March most of the work was complete.

Then, in late March the project was visited by a group of professional naturalists from the Wildlife and Natural Resource Managers conference going on in San Francisco. They were looking at a number of federally funded projects in the greater Bay Area to help evaluate the government's Farm Bill program. Jon Gustafson of NRCS suggested they look at ours. He also wanted to impress upon them the fine pasture improvement plan developed by Hazel Flett for Bodega Pastures sheep ranch. The plan was a result of a ranch planning class given by the UC Extension and sponsored by BLT. It had been awarded an Environmental Quality Improvement Program (EQIP) grant. The visitors listened to speakers and asked questions for almost an hour.

Recently Linda received a letter from Ronald R. Helinski of the Wildlife Institute in Washington, DC. It said in part: "Your success is an inspiration to us all.... Your impressive showing has inspired me to share our experiences with Congressman Mike Thompson, Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, and Governor Gray Davis.... It is my hope that you will continue to share your experiences with others in California.... You are to be commended for your efforts."

Looking back on it now it seems a near miracle that all this work was done free by enthusiastic volunteers – around 1200 hours worth. We might not have succeeded if Americorps hadn't sent crews of young, strong, dynamic men and women who volunteered their time at crucial moments when our local forces seemed to flag.

Much praise and gratitude to all who were involved.

But this is no time to rest on our laurels! Remember we are going to be installing irrigation and planting again this fall and winter on the 2½ acres remaining. So if you think working on a huge riparian planting project with other like minded souls sounds like fun, leave us your name and number and we will call you when we have a schedule. Many thanks to all once again. 

**Preparing the backfill**



**Installing the coir cloth**



**Covering the native grass seed**



# THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU!

The following helped make our last fund-raising dinner and silent auction a huge success:

*Aloha California Style Auric Blends Artisans' Co-op Belladonna The Bicycle Factory Bill's Farm Basket  
Blackstone Winery Bodega Landmark Studio Bodega Pastures Sheep Branscomb Gallery  
California Academy of Sciences Copperfields Books Earth Heart Chiropractic  
East-West Café Fiesta Market Hazel Flett Food for Thought  
G-Wiz Graphics and Printing Galleria Gourmet au Bay  
Gourmet Goat Anne Grant Massage  
Anne Greenfield Massage  
Hand Goods Hat in Hand Hearth Song Toys Barbara Hoffmann Pottery Joy Ridge Pottery  
Leapin' Lizards! Fun Store Lucas Wharf Naturalmente Flooring and Interiors  
Michelle, New West Hair Company Michael O'Brien and Edgar Furlong  
Occidental Choir Occidental Emporium Ocean Waves Styling Salon  
Osmosis Enzyme Bath Pacific Shores Gift Shop Pastoreale Patagonia Clothing  
People's Music Quicksilver Mine Company  
Rosemary's Garden Sandpiper Dockside Café  
San Francisco MOMA Santa Rosa Symphony  
Sea Cliff Designs Sebastopol Hardware Center  
Sharon's Garden Slice of Life Sonoma Coast Villa  
Dianna Sousa Straus Family Creamery Peter Stull Jack Stuppin  
Taylor Maid Farm Janet Thornton Traditional Medicinals Trinity Herbs  
VillageBakery Vintage Gardens Lorene Warwick Photography Bill Wheeler Wild Things The Woollery*



## Summer Fun Coming Up



**CAFF** (California Alliance with Family Farms). Wednesday July 21, 7:30-9AM. Irrigation System Workshop, Left Field Farm Contact Keith Abeles, 823 6788.

**Better, not Bigger: Grappling with Growth in Sonoma County.** Friday July 23 8:30AM-5:00PM, Oddfellows Temple, 545 Pacific Avenue, Santa Rosa. Conference and workshop sponsored by Sustainable North Bay/Sustainable Sonoma County, with lots of help from their friends. For information and registration call: 763-1532.

### **Greenbelt Alliance Outings, Summer 1999**

#### **Summer Farms and Fun Series**

Enjoy a fun and educational glimpse of life on the farm. These outings are perfect for families and hikers interested in the Bay Area's incredible agricultural bounty. Find out how you can help support local agriculture -- a big part of our regional Greenbelt. Reserve your spot early by calling 415-255-3233.

#### **Dairy Delight and Hike**

Saturday, July 24, Marin County. Tour the Straus Organic Dairy Farm, then stop by a nearby oyster stand and finally take a hike by beautiful Tomales Bay. What a day! From 11 AM to 5 PM.

#### **Flavors of the Farm**

Sunday, August 29, Sonoma County. Tour Kokopelli Farm, a unique organic berry farm near Sebastopol. This tour offers a stroll past wetlands and pristine pastoral views. From 11 AM to 1 PM.

**ADOPT A WILD HORSE BY SATELLITE ON AUGUST 6** from your home or a satellite downlink location. Arranged by The Bureau of Land Management. For information on how to apply, qualification requirements, etc., and a great website in general, go to: [www.ca.blm.gov](http://www.ca.blm.gov).



# A Real Plum of a Recipe

From The Potluck Cookbook: Bodega Cooks for the Bodega Land Trust, no.140

By Catherine Newman

## CINNAMON PLUM TART

### CINNAMON PASTRY

1 1/2 CUPS FLOUR  
1 STICK MARGARINE OR BUTTER,  
SOFTENED

1/3 CUP SUGAR  
1/4 TSP. GROUND CINNAMON

### FILLING

1 1/2 LBS. PLUMS (ABOUT 10-12)  
1/2 CUP SUGAR  
2 TBS. FLOUR

1/2 TSP. GROUND CINNAMON  
1/4 TSP. ALMOND EXTRACT  
1/4 CUP ALMONDS OR WALNUTS, CHOPPED

**To make pastry dough:** Measure flour, margarine, sugar and cinnamon. Mix just until blended with fingertips. Press dough on to bottom and up sides of 9 inch tart pan with removable bottom.

Preheat oven to 375°

**To make filling:** Cut each plum in half and remove pit; slice plums. Toss plums, sugar, flour, cinnamon, and almond extract. Arrange plum slices, closely overlapping, to form concentric circles in tart shell. Sprinkle chopped nuts over plum slices. Bake 45 minutes or until pastry is golden and plums are tender. Cool tart in pan on wire rack. Carefully remove side from tart pan and transfer to serving plate. Whipped cream or vanilla ice cream are delicious on top *Enjoy!*

BLT's *The Potluck Cookbook* may be purchased at the following locations: **Bodega:** Artisans' Co-op, The Gourmet Goat, Roadhouse Coffee **Guerneville:** River Reader **Occidental:** Hand Goods **Sebastopol:** Copperfield's Books, Food for Thought, Frizelle-Enos, Quicksilver Mine **Santa Rosa:** Copperfield's Books, Food for Thought

## BLT Membership Form

I would like to join or continue my membership at    \$10    \$20    \$50    \$100    Other

Please Make checks payable to: Bodega Land Trust and mail to: PO Box 254, Bodega, CA 94922

**All donations are tax-deductible**

### I would like to become involved as:

an interest group participant  
an advisor  
a Board member  
an occasional volunteer  
other:

My special interests are:

My special skills are:

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

## B.L.T.'S NOTECARDS CONTINUE TO BE POPULAR

One of eight drawings in the series "**Wild Plants of the Salmon Creek Watershed**". They are available as sets of notecards, at the following locations:-

**Bodega:** Bodega Landmark Studio;  
Artisans' Co-op; Northern Light  
Surf Shop

**Occidental:** Natural Connections

**Sebastopol:** Wild Things

Proceeds support B.L.T.



**Yarrow** (*achillea millefolium*) — Native to Europe, but fully naturalized here, yarrow can be seen along most county roads. It is also a popular decorative garden plant, with its white or pink flowerheads that bloom throughout summer.

Called "allheal" in traditional medicines, yarrow's entire above-ground portion is useful as a tea for fevers, head colds, or urinary or menstrual problems; or as a poultice to stop bleeding.



*Newsletter Staff:* **Editors:** Alistair Bleifuss, Hazel Flett, and Sandy Sharp  
**Design:** Sandy Sharp

*Board of Directors:* Mary Biggs, President; Alistair Bleifuss, Secretary; Linda Esposito, Sharon Welling Harston, and Sue Head



### BLT COOKBOOKS AND NOTECARDS MAKE GREAT PRESENTS!



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