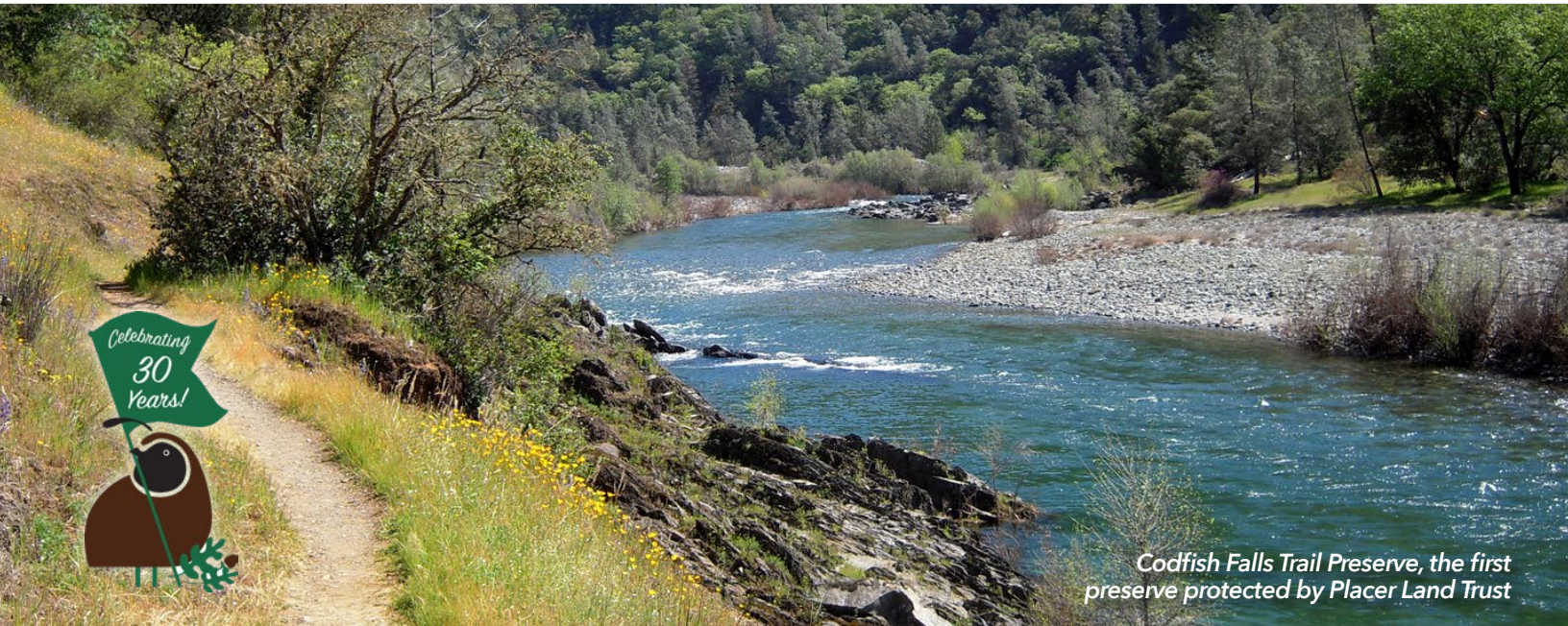




WONDERS

PLACER LAND TRUST NEWSLETTER

Summer 2021

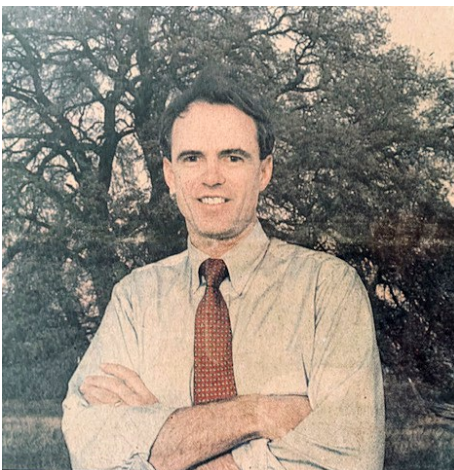


Codfish Falls Trail Preserve, the first preserve protected by Placer Land Trust

A Founder's Story of Our Past, Present, and Future

Placer Land Trust has been protecting land for 30 years. In that time, we've preserved nearly 12,000 acres of the natural and agricultural treasures that make Placer County special. It's hard to imagine what would have happened to these landscapes had a group of concerned citizens not done something about it three decades ago.

David Manhart was one of those



David Manhart

visionary citizens. David was born in Sacramento in 1950 and grew up in Roseville. From an early age he enjoyed traveling with his family in a small camper trailer to visit the state and national parks. He attended Sierra College and UC Davis, where he studied biological science.

"In 1979, I met my beautiful and brilliant soon to be wife, Joan Levers," recalls David. "We married and lived in a small apartment in Roseville. Because of her, I wanted to become a much better human being and to do something bigger than myself—trying to do something good for the community."

David and Joan moved into a house on Linda Creek in Roseville, near a wonderful greenspace with a noticeably short section of existing bike trail. David wondered why the trail did not go farther and envisioned a system of trails linking all of Roseville's creeks, neighborhood parks, and open

spaces. Eager to put his vision into action, David formed Friends of the Roseville Parkway, who worked with the City of Roseville to adopt the trail bike plan.

Around that same time, David was appointed to the Roseville Project Review Commission. There he saw firsthand how quickly the greater Roseville area was becoming urbanized. "After learning about the impact that land trusts can make, I joined with Rocklin Chamber Manager Martha Totaro, physician Mike Totaro, and accountant Scott Daulton, and formed Placer Land Trust in 1991," recalls David. "All of us had a passion for conservation. We didn't really have a heck of a lot of knowledge about what we were doing, but we had hope and faith."

Community engagement was important to David from the beginning. "Until people feel that connection to the land, it's difficult to get them to want to protect it," he says.

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"That was my reason for forming the Roseville bikeway system, and later Placer Land Trust – I saw development coming down the line, and I wondered how we could leverage that momentum to save our green space. I felt the way to do it was to get people out there, to touch and experience it directly, so they can see what our goals and vision are."

David moved to Oregon a few years after the formation of Placer Land Trust and just before the permanent protection of our first preserve, Codfish Falls Trail Preserve. But he has stayed involved in the conservation field and greatly values his time at Placer Land Trust.

"I think my role with the Land trust was as a catalyst," he says. "The people we convened, forming the Board of Directors, bringing people

on and making them aware – I'm very proud of that."

Having been with Placer Land Trust from the beginning, it's only fitting that David and Joan want to see us succeed long after they're gone. That's why they decided to join our Forever Society. "Placer Land Trust was an easy choice to be among our legacy beneficiaries, because of its remarkable conservation track record," says David. "Having been raised in Roseville, I was especially interested in continuing to support Placer Land Trust's good work to preserve its share of California's natural heritage."

We are so grateful to David and all of our founders for their vision and hard work in making the Placer Land Trust dream a reality – and we are committed to carrying that vision forward, today and for future generations!

To find out more about our history, visit the "about us" section of our website at placerlandtrust.org. To learn about legacy giving, visit placerlandtrust.org/forever-society.



David and Joan

The Placer Conservator is back in person – let's celebrate!

Placer Land Trust's annual Placer Conservator event is all about celebrating the people who make land conservation in our region possible, so to say that we're EXCITED to spend the evening with you again in person is definitely an understatement!

We are ecstatic to be back with our members and can't wait to honor our 2021 Placer Conservator Awardee, **Paul Aronowitz**! Paul has been a "rock" for Placer Land Trust, serving as our legal counsel since



2021 Placer Conservator award winner Paul Aronowitz

our early days, helping to ensure that our conservation projects are legally sound and positioned to provide the best possible outcomes for all. Paul, along with his wife Diane, has also been a member for nearly two decades, helping to fund the permanent protection of our valued lands. We simply wouldn't be where we are as an organization without Paul's involvement!

The Placer Conservator will take place at The Ridge Golf Club and Events Center on Wednesday, October 20, 2021. This year's event will take place outdoors with a shorter program to allow for more time to mingle and reconnect with each other. Plan on a festive evening of drinks, heavy hors d'oeuvres, activities, honoring Paul, and more. And most of the auction will take place online, meaning you can participate whether you're able to attend in person or not.

The funds raised at the Placer Conservator are critical to our success as an organization, supporting Placer Land Trust's work of protecting natural and agricultural land, restoring habitat, and enhancing outdoor recreation which makes Placer County a great place to live, work and play – now and forever.

Keep an eye on our website for more information. Tickets will go on sale later in August and opportunities to sponsor the event are available now. *We hope to see you there!*

Learn more about sponsorship:
placerlandtrust.org/conservator-sponsor

Let's reach 30 for 30!

You may have heard of the "30 by 30" initiative, a conservation push to protect 30% of U.S. land and ocean by the year 2030. Local land trusts like Placer Land Trust will be leaders in this work, working with willing landowners to ensure local landscapes all over the country are protected for future generations. In addition, Placer Land Trust has our own campaign with a similar title – **30 for 30!** In honor of our 30th anniversary, we have set a goal to reach a total of **30 Sustaining members** and **30 Forever Society members** by the end of this year.

Why is that so important? Because while ALL members are needed and appreciated, these two categories of members really help set up Placer Land Trust for another successful 30 years.

Whether it's caring for land, or managing a budget, it's critical to do so sustainably. That's why Placer

Land Trust is extra appreciative of our **Sustaining members** who set up automatic donations on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis. Regardless of the frequency, we know it's investment we can rely on to keep operations going and make the biggest impact possible. It's a great way to make sure your membership never expires, and many people find they can support our mission a little extra by spreading out their donation.

Forever Society members help protect the natural wonders of Placer County for generations by making a legacy gift. These visionary members will continue to make a lasting impact long after they're gone by including Placer Land Trust in their will, trust, or other estate plans. Can you think of a better legacy than protected lands that will ensure clean drinking water, beautiful landscapes, sustainable

farms and ranches, recreational opportunities, healthy habitat for wildlife, and more?

Are you ready to help us reach our 30 for 30 goal? Learn more and sign up at www.placerlandtrust.org/ways-to-give, or contact Kara Walker at 530-887-9222 or kara.walker@placerlandtrust.org.

And if these membership types aren't a good fit for you right now, please consider honoring our 30 years of successful land conservation by increasing your annual membership by 30% or an additional \$30!

Finally, we'd like to say a **HUGE THANK YOU** to our existing Sustaining and Forever Society Members—you inspire us to keep moving forward on a daily basis!



Taylor Ranch Preserve, photo by Keith Sutter

Teaming With Beavers to Restore Doty Ravine Preserve

Picture a flat, dry, dusty grassland with a few scattered trees. Alongside it runs an arrow-straight stream channel. The stream banks are eroded and are falling into the stream. The stream bed itself is a few feet below the top of the bank, and the remains of century-old levees still linger. The tall, dry grass stretches as far as you can see.

Now flash forward a few years, and you're standing in the same spot, looking upstream. You see a lush, green expanse with willows, cottonwoods, and water everywhere. You're not sure where exactly the old stream channel is, and several new stream channels now wind lazily throughout the landscape. Honeybees and other pollinators buzz through wildflowers and native plants. Egrets wade in the shallows, and wood ducks paddle in the deeper water. And, come nightfall, you might catch a glimpse of the engineers behind this remarkable transformation: *Castor Canadensis*, the North American Beaver!

Beavers are native to North America and found throughout the continent, north to south, east to west. They're known as "ecosystem engineers" – one of the few animals that modify their habitat by creating dams that flood streams. So, when we saw our earlier restoration efforts at Doty Ravine Preserve struggling to take effect, we teamed with these little native experts to find a solution.

Beavers often pose challenges to wetland restoration work and are frequently trapped and removed from restoration sites. At Doty Ravine Preserve, we changed our approach, allowing them to move into the area and to do what they naturally do: build small, wooden dams that slow the flow of water, causing it to spill out onto the floodplain.

This approach is called **process-based restoration**, in which the natural process of flooding is allowed to return to the area where it used to exist. To help get it started, we built

beaver dam analogues (BDAs), or artificial beaver dams, which help give the native beavers the right idea.

We also removed an old levee that was installed in the 1880s to contain the stream and control flooding. The approach typical of traditional agriculture was to drain land so that crops could be planted, moving water off the land as quickly as possible. But with drought, fire risk, and the changing California climate, there are advantages to keeping water in the landscape for longer before it flows downstream.

While flooding is often seen as dangerous and destructive, open floodplains like Doty Ravine Preserve are naturally designed to flood, slowing the flow of water and holding it in place for a period of time. This recharges groundwater supply, creates wildlife habitat, provides a natural firebreak, and can even lessen the impacts of flood events downstream.

"To see how quickly the wetlands came back, and with relatively little effort or expense on our part, was amazing," says Conservation Director Lynnette Batt. "It was remarkable to see this area reactivate, with water, meandering stream channels, and plants and birds and wildlife all returning in a few short years. This method is gaining a lot of traction, and this site has served as a model and demonstration site for federal trainings on this technique."

As you can see, the results are a resounding success! In fact, our beaver friends are making headlines from Sacramento to London to Toronto. See more photos and video, and check out the press coverage, at placerlandtrust.org/beavers.

This project received invaluable assistance from Damion Ciotti of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as funding from the California Waterfowl Association through the North American Wetland Conservation Act.



Clockwise from top left: A beaver works by night at Doty Ravine; water pools around a beaver dam; aerial view of the restored floodplain.

Happy Trails...

Sarah Darney has been the first staff member a person meets when they call or come into the Placer Land Trust office for the past 9+ years. We are now wishing Sarah “happy trails” as she moves to Oregon to follow a wonderful family opportunity.

Sarah came to Placer Land Trust in January 2012 through a work experience program with Placer County. She volunteered in our office for 24 hours every week to gain work experience and develop skills in an office setting. She logged in about 360 hours of volunteer time in a few months, and after one year she was brought on as a staff member.

One of Sarah’s first projects was to complete an internal audit of all our property files, which was a huge

undertaking. She was the only one out of our four staff at the time to complete the job, in record time, and soon became an invaluable part of the Placer Land Trust team.

During her time at Placer Land Trust, Sarah has been instrumental in our annual fundraising campaigns and events. She managed our database, led our accreditation process, kept track of donations, and made our members feel appreciated as the friendly voice on the office phone. And with former Land Manager Jim McBride, she planned and organized everyone’s favorite Placer Land Trust event, the Pie Party!

We also appreciate how Sarah has made her work a family affair, bringing in her mom (and sometimes



kids) to volunteer, and both her parents on board as donors.

All the best to Sarah and family in their next adventure!

... and New Beginnings

With Sarah moving on to new adventures, we’re excited to welcome two new staff members to the team!



Our new **Membership Specialist, Elia Rivas**, is a Placer native with a background in Environmental Studies and Sociology, combining her love of the natural world with her love of people, and her desire to strengthen the connection between the two. She is excited to share our mission with our community, strengthen relationships with our members, and ensure that people from all different backgrounds feel welcome on the land we protect together.



Our new **Office Manager, Heather Harden**, has lived in Lincoln since 2007. Her background includes a decade as Office Manager as well as experience a writer at the Modesto Bee and as a freelancer. Heather has long followed our progress and signed up as a volunteer during the pandemic. She enjoys time on trails in Auburn and is looking forward to joining the team and contributing to Placer Land Trust’s mission.

**Keep an eye out...
Hikes are happening!**



**August 21: Moonlight hike
September 18: Sunrise hike**

*Info and registration at
placerlandtrust.org/calendar*

Follow us on Facebook to stay in the loop about upcoming events!

Preserve Passport Program a success for June's Great Outdoors Month

Placer Land Trust's Community Council launched our first-ever **Preserve Passport program** in June in celebration of National Great Outdoors Month. Participants visited their choice of public preserves, enjoyed the benefits of being outdoors, and earned cool prizes!

Sarah Gillmore and her children, Weston and Eva, enjoyed a hike at Canyon View Preserve. "We were actually training for a backpacking trip and did two loops," says Sarah. "The best part was identifying a tree swallow!"

Brian Anderson and his family heard about the Preserve Passport from the sign posted at Canyon View. "We had never been to any of these places – we didn't even know about them," Brian says. "We have young kids, ages 3 and 5. At first I was worried that there would be a lot of poison oak, but the trail was very well cleared. Our favorite part was getting the wildflower flyer and then identifying all the flowers along the trail."

Congratulations to everyone who completed their Passports – we're so glad to share these beautiful places with you! And thanks to our Community Council volunteers for organizing this program!

It's always a great time to get outdoors, and we love hearing your stories! To learn more about our preserves that are open to the public, visit www.placerlandtrust.org/trails. To share your experience, tag us on social media @placerlandtrust or drop us a note at communications@placerlandtrust.org.

Photos, clockwise from top right: Eva and Weston Gillmore at Canyon View; Richard and Jean at Canyon View; two drawings by the Greene family; the Anderson family at School Park Preserve and Miners Ravine Preserve.



Summer sunrise at Swainson's Grassland Preserve



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