



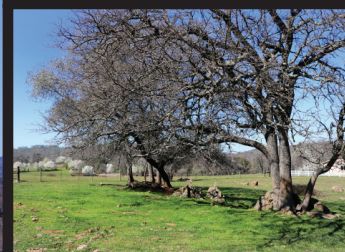
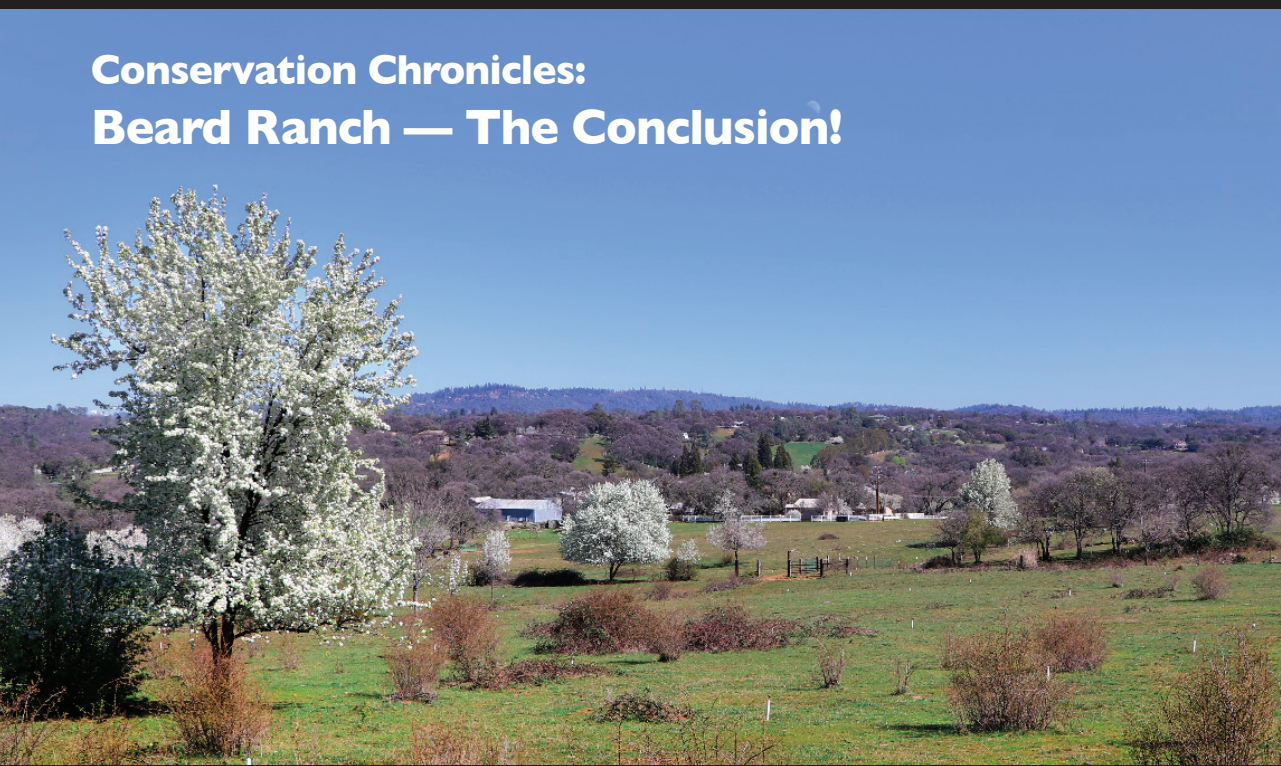
Natural Wonders Forever

WONDERS

Placer Land Trust Newsletter

Spring 2020

Conservation Chronicles: Beard Ranch — The Conclusion!



Every preserve has a story to tell, and each project comes with its own set of characteristics and challenges – that’s part of what makes each of our lands unique! Placer Land Trust has been sharing the process of what it takes to protect Beard Ranch for agricultural purposes for perpetuity, and we’re excited to share that the last chapter is complete...not to spoil the ending, but Beard Ranch is now an officially protected preserve!

Placer Land Trust and landowner Patti Beard have placed an Agricultural Conservation Easement on the 137-acre **Beard Ranch Preserve** in North Auburn, permanently protecting the property for farming and ranching, and prohibiting any future subdivision and residential development. This type of easement allows Patti to continue ranching with little to no change to her cattle operation. And since the easement stays with title

to the land, the ranch will retain the same protections under future landowners as well.

“Too often large productive agricultural properties in our rural countryside are paved over for subdivision and private development,” says Placer Land Trust Executive Director Jeff Darlington. “But when a landowner is willing to give up the right to subdivide and develop their land, then Placer Land Trust can ensure that some of our treasured agricultural heritage and productivity is protected, now and for future generations.”

The Beard family bought the ranch in 1955 and operated it as a dairy until 1982, when Patti took ownership and began running it as a beef cattle operation. The now-protected Beard Ranch Preserve features a mixture of irrigated pasture, annual grasslands, blue

oak woodlands, and some remnant fruit trees from the 1920s, when the property produced plums, pears, and grapes. It supports a diverse range of plants and wildlife in addition to pastured cattle.

Patti has fond memories of growing up on the ranch, where multiple generations of her family lived and worked in the family business.

“When I’m no longer working the ranch, it will be passed on to another farmer or rancher, instead of being subdivided and developed like so many other properties in the area,” says Patti. “The use won’t change — my neighbors will still see farmland or cattle grazing, not road traffic and houses. The Agricultural Conservation Easement ensures that future by protecting the land for active farming.”

(Continued on page 2)



Beard Ranch *(continued from page 1)*

Much care, time, and input from Patti, Placer Land Trust staff, and funders was put into the many required final documents, including the Purchase and Pledge Agreements as well as the Agricultural Conservation Easement and associated Management Plan, so that everyone’s needs and concerns were met. Equally important was to document the agricultural conditions of the property in a Baseline Report so that we can monitor the land over time and ensure its conservation values remain intact.

The final hurdle felt like the most fraught: securing final approval from the funding agencies and depositing those funds into escrow (where a

third party holds and regulates the payment). We encountered some very unexpected delays due to COVID-19, but the process went as smoothly as possible under such unprecedented circumstances. And the end result well worth every effort put in.

Thanks to the collaborative spirit and tenacity of Patti Beard, Placer Land Trust, funding partners (see sidebar), and the support of members like you, this historic ranching property is now permanently protected — with agricultural production, open space, and inspiring views to benefit our community now and forever.



To learn more, and to see a photo gallery of Beard Ranch, visit placerlandtrust.org.

The majority of the funding for the Beard Ranch Preserve project was generously provided by the California Strategic Growth Council’s Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program (SALC), administered collaboratively with the California Department of Conservation. The SALC program is part of California Climate Investments, a statewide initiative that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment. Funding was also provided by grants from the California Farmland Conservation Program and Placer County, by a generous contribution from Patti Beard herself, and by dozens of PLT members who made donations during a special agricultural land conservation auction at PLT’s 2018 Placer Conservator event. The individual contributions from Beard and other local supporters ensured Placer Land Trust had the resources to pursue these State grants and demonstrated to State funders that the local community supports Placer Land Trust’s work to protect rural Placer County.



Want to leave a legacy? Join the Forever Society at placerlandtrust.org/forever-society

It's going to be a WILD Placer Conservator!



Each year, Placer Land Trust honors an individual or group that enhances the quality of life in Placer County through resource conservation with the prestigious **Placer Conservator Award**. We're thrilled to announce that this year's award will be presented to **Sallysue Stein!**

Sallysue is the Founder and Board President of Gold Country Wildlife Rescue, a volunteer-led organization that has been dedicated to the rescue, rehabilitation, and release of injured and orphaned native Californian wildlife since 1991. Sallysue is also a Placer Land Trust member and big supporter of protected natural open space which provides healthy habitat for wildlife to thrive.

We hope you'll help us honor Sallysue for her generous service to our community, plus some other special volunteers who help make Placer Land Trust's work possible, at the **2020 Placer Conservator on September 24, 2020**.

Keep an eye on our website for more information, ticket sales, and opportunities to become a sponsor!

Recent Grants

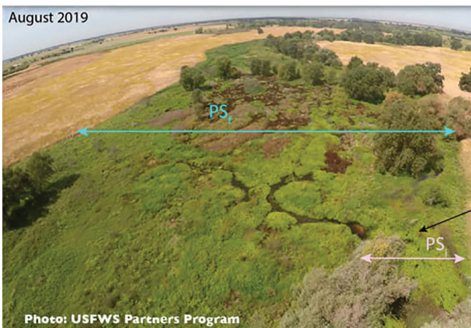
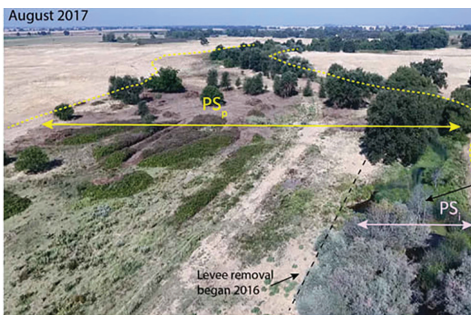
Over the last six months (since fall 2019), Placer Land Trust was awarded or recommended for more than \$4.2 million in grant funding, for five land protection projects totaling approximately 2,280 acres.

- **Sustainable Agricultural Land Conservation Program/California Climate Investments** Over \$2.3M awarded for two agricultural conservation easement projects: a 328-acre oak woodland cattle ranch, and an 186-acre walnut orchard, which would include restoration of stream habitat for salmon.

- **Sierra Nevada Conservancy** A \$75,000 planning grant was awarded to evaluate potential purchase and protection of 1,500 acres near Lake Clementine and the Auburn State Recreation Area. \$1M was awarded for purchase and protection of 185 acres of oak woodland and rangeland, which would add to Placer Land Trust's existing 361-acre Laursen Bear River Preserve, and support a trail corridor for docent-led hikes.

- **Wildlife Conservation Board** Approved an award of \$683,000 to support purchase of the 185 acres described above, and recommended an award of \$203,000 for purchase of 40 acres along the North Fork American River canyon rim. Both awards are anticipated to be finalized later this year.

Thank you to all our funders — we're so grateful for their support!



Restoring Doty Ravine

Doty Ravine Preserve is a 427 acres property along Doty Ravine northeast of Lincoln. Beginning in 2016, we removed an old levee that had disconnected the stream from its floodplain, and let the stream take its natural course. More recently, Americorps lent a helping hand with a "live staking" restoration project, planting branch cuttings of local native willows in the floodplain. The willows will provide more habitat and food material for local beavers, and help control erosion. The beavers will then build dams and continue to widen the active floodplain. This area is now providing habitat for juvenile salmonid and migratory waterfowl, and is fostering more complexity and species diversity, which will help this ecosystem be more resilient in the future.





Beard Ranch Preserve, Auburn



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Join the Placer Land Trust Members Facebook Group!

There's no time like the present to find new ways of staying connected! We've launched a new Facebook group for Placer Land Trust members. Share favorite places or hikes you recommend, trade ideas for keeping kids (and adults) busy and engaged with the outdoors, and keep in touch with other members of our community. It's like a virtual cafe where we can all meet up from the comfort of home!

To join, visit www.facebook.com/groups/placerlandtrust

In the interest of public health and safety, and in keeping with Placer County Public Health recommendations, all Placer Land Trust hikes and activities have been postponed until further notice, and our staff is working remotely. Email contact information for staff members can be found on our website. When recommendations allow, we look forward to resuming volunteer docent-guided hikes and preserve activities — and to seeing you out on the trails! Until then, stay healthy and well.

