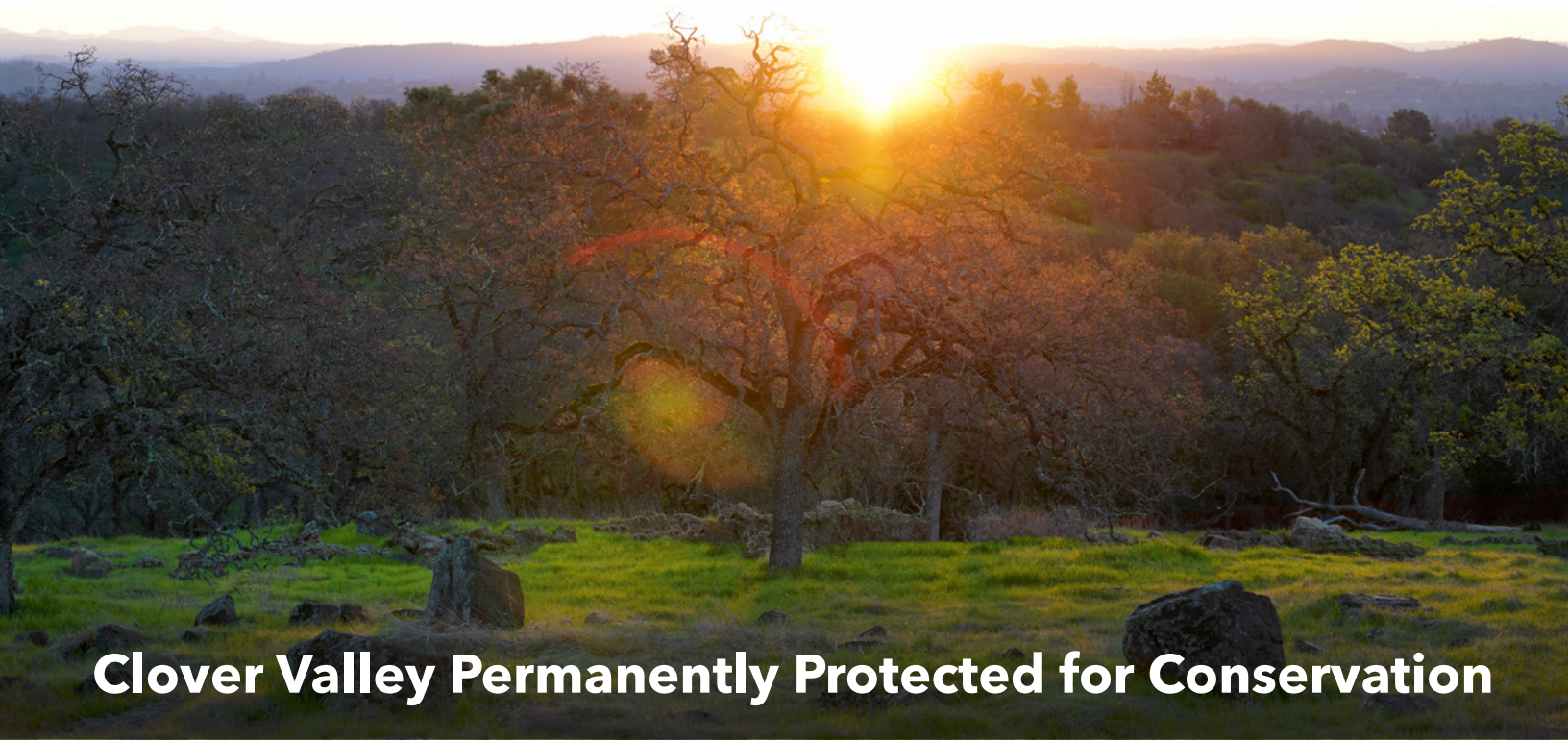




# WONDERS

PLACER LAND TRUST NEWSLETTER

*Spring 2025*



## Clover Valley Permanently Protected for Conservation

First of all – can we just say how amazing it feels to write that headline at last?! Finally, after years of effort, we can announce the permanent protection of 402 acres in the heart of Clover Valley for conservation, education, and public benefit!

Clover Valley represents one of the last remaining intact sections of oak woodlands in western Placer County. The valley is home to a wide variety of ecosystems, wildlife habitat, and historic Native American sites.

“The protection of Clover Valley holds so many benefits to our community and the environment,” said Jeff Darlington, Executive Director of Placer Land Trust. “From habitat for rare and threatened species, to historic Native American heritage sites, this land is truly unique to Rocklin and our region. This project has met with many challenges, but we have always felt that it was vital to pursue its protection – no matter how long the odds. The unprecedented collaboration of so many local supporters and partners shows just how much Clover Valley means to our community.”

For decades, Clover Valley has been under intense pressure from development, with approvals and entitlements in place for 500+ single-family homes and a roadway across the valley floor. Community members rallied together to hold off the construction of roads and

subdivisions in the valley, but permanent protection for the valley remained challenging to secure.

From 2022-2025, working with the original landowner as a willing seller, Placer Land Trust and Rocklin-based Jessup University purchased and protected the land, making a down payment with the goal of placing it under conservation easement to ensure its preservation for future generations.

To pay off loans to complete the acquisition project, Placer Land Trust led an ambitious fundraising effort, rallying local agencies and organizations in an extraordinary collaborative partnership.

The Placer County Office of Education, City of Rocklin, Placer County, City of Lincoln, and the local community made significant contributions.

Individual community members contributed significant funding through Placer Land Trust, including an anonymous \$1M individual donation and a \$3M private foundation gift. Hundreds of people wrote to elected officials or spoke at public meetings advocating to save Clover Valley.

Clover Valley will provide a valuable learning resource for students of all ages in Placer County. As an outdoor classroom, the valley offers opportunities for studying Native American history and our environment,

*Continued on Page 2*





*Clover Valley, on the left, is the last major undeveloped open space in Rocklin*

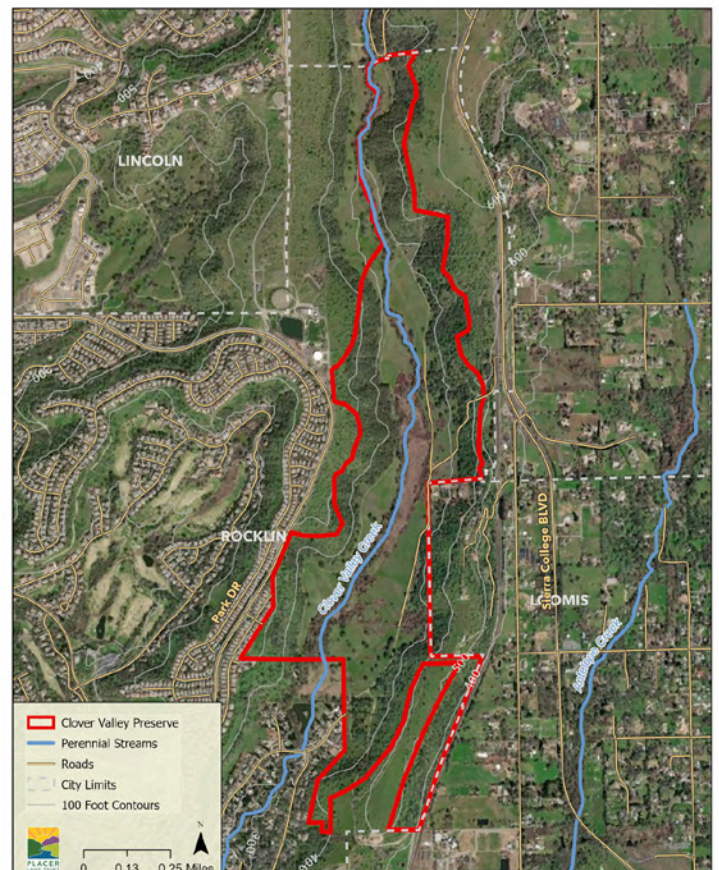
conducting research projects, and much more. This world-class outdoor education space will inspire curiosity, learning, and stewardship among students for years to come.

Home to Native Americans for over 7,000 years, the valley was a major tribal center. This rich history is still present, with over 30 historic sites identified on the preserve.

The valley also contains critical foraging habitat for the threatened Swainson's hawk, and another rare and threatened bird species, the California black rail, has been observed in the wetlands along Clover Valley Creek.

Placer Land Trust and Jessup are working with key partners on plans for stewardship and for educational and recreational access. When guidelines are established for safe, legal and compatible public access, Clover Valley will eventually be accessible by the public in ways that align with the protection of the natural and cultural values of the land.

"Being able to save this valley from subdivision and hundreds of new homes is a huge win for our environment, our community, and current and future generations," said Darlington. "Placer Land Trust is so grateful to Jessup, our funding partners, and our community of supporters who have helped us to protect the heart of Clover Valley forever."



*Map of the newly-protected 402-acre Clover Valley Preserve*





# DOUBLE your donation – *and your impact!*

## Big Day of Giving MAY 1

**The first \$75,000  
in donations will  
be DOUBLED!**

Big Day of Giving is THE online giving opportunity of the year that unites and inspires our community to support the hundreds of nonprofits that make the greater Sacramento region an amazing place to call home. It is a critical fundraiser for Placer Land Trust as it helps us raise the funds needed to keep our mission moving forward. Over the past eleven years of our participation, the investment of members like you have allowed us to permanently protect and care for over 13,000 acres in Placer County, and more is needed to continue this vital work for our lands, waters,

wildlife, and ways of life. ***Mark your calendar to help Placer Land Trust continue to protect these essential resources through Big Day of Giving!***

Big Day of Giving is May 1<sup>st</sup>, with early giving starting on April 17<sup>th</sup>! Most giving takes place online starting on April 17<sup>th</sup>, but we can also accept gifts made directly to Placer Land Trust via check or cash. All checks and non-electronic gifts should be mailed to 922 Lincoln Way, Suite 200, Auburn, CA 95603. Please allow enough time to ensure we receive your gift by May 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Exciting News** – some generous Placer Land Trust members have already come together to create a **\$75,000 matching fund** that will double donations made between April 17<sup>th</sup>–May 1<sup>st</sup>, while funds last! A huge thanks to **Emigrant Trails Greenway Trust, Christine Pieper & Dennis Grossman, Graeme & Debra Plant, Side Hill Citrus, J.P. Tindell, and an anonymous donor** for making this fund possible, and thank you in advance to all who plan to participate this Big Day of Giving!

## Show the region how much you value protected land this Big Day of Giving:

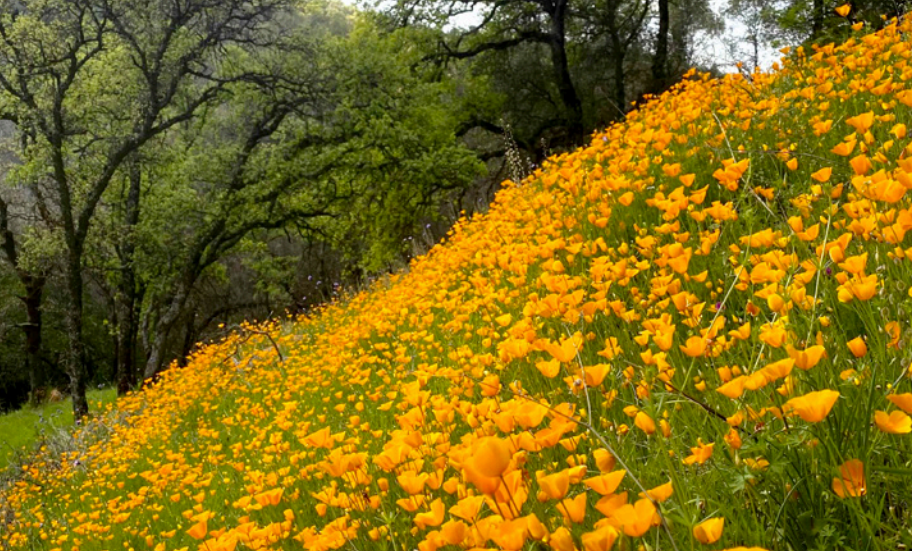
1. **Donate TODAY through May 1<sup>st</sup>** at [www.bigdayofgiving.org/placerlandtrust](http://www.bigdayofgiving.org/placerlandtrust). All major credit cards are accepted, and gifts made through a Golden 1 Credit Union debit/credit card earn additional funds for Placer Land Trust. \*
2. **Share your support!** Please tell your friends! Follow us on Facebook and Instagram @[@placerlandtrust](https://www.instagram.com/placerlandtrust) and share our posts. Or introduce a friend to one of Placer Land Trust's public preserves and help us get the word out to protect the land that gives life and makes our future brighter.

\* You can also give to Placer Land Trust directly via **check, cash, stock, donor advised fund, IRA charitable rollover**, etc. Simply mail your donation or drop it off at our office: Placer Land Trust, 922 Lincoln Way, Suite 200, Auburn, CA 95603. We must have it by May 1<sup>st</sup> for it to be included in our Big Day of Giving totals. If you have any questions, please contact Kara at [kara.walker@placerlandtrust.org](mailto:kara.walker@placerlandtrust.org) or 530-887-9222 x109.

**THANK YOU** for being part of our community of supporters who are protecting the quality of life in Placer County for generations to come!

# [www.bigdayofgiving.org/placerlandtrust](http://www.bigdayofgiving.org/placerlandtrust)





## Save the Date for Conservation Celebration Week

### *Now seeking auction items!*

The weather is just warming up, but believe it or not, we're already starting to think about Fall! Conservation Celebration Week, which is taking place September 22-28, will be here before we know it. We can't wait to shine a spotlight on all the great conservation work our community makes possible, and to honor a very special group with the 2025 Placer Conservator Award (we think you'll be as excited as we are once you hear our honoree)!

We also look forward to hosting our annual Conservation Celebration Auction that week and wanted to invite you to help Placer Land Trust raise critical funds to further our mission with a contribution to the auction. Do you have a vacation home or a unique experience to offer our bidders? If so, please contact Elia Rivas at [elia.rivas@placerlandtrust.org](mailto:elia.rivas@placerlandtrust.org) or 530-887-9222x110. Auction item donors get recognized as event sponsors for their in-kind contribution. Thank you so much for your consideration, and we hope to see you at one of our events that week!

## Upcoming Events

April 26 - Nature Quest: Wildflower Stroll at Canyon View Preserve

April 26 - Plein Air Outing at Big Hill Preserve

April 27 - Spring Bird Stroll at Big Hill Preserves

May 17 - Nature Quest: Picnic by the Creek!

May 17 - Plein Air Outing at Laursen Bear River Preserve

**More event info and registration:**  
[www.placerlandtrust.org/calendar](http://www.placerlandtrust.org/calendar)

**Follow us on Facebook to hear about upcoming hikes and events:** [www.facebook.com/placerlandtrust](https://www.facebook.com/placerlandtrust)

## Recent Grants

Placer Land Trust is honored to have a great working relationship with the Colfax-Todds Valley Consolidated Tribe. We're thrilled that we get to continue our work together through the generosity of three funding partners.

CAL FIRE has awarded a generous \$1.3 million grant to Placer Land Trust to fund the purchase of the 308-acre "Owl Creek" property in Foresthill. This forested preserve will be owned by the Colfax-Todds Valley Consolidated Tribe (CTVCT) through its affiliated nonprofit, Koy'o Land Conservancy, with Placer Land Trust holding the conservation easement to protect the land forever. This grant will fund essential project management and planning, as well as efforts to diversify and amplify our communication strategies about the project.

The California Council of Land Trusts has also awarded us a 2024 Project Advancement Grant of \$56K to support our work with CTVCT on the upcoming Owl Creek LandBack and Equitable Access project. As part of this project, Placer Land Trust will partner with the Tribe to share resources and equipment to help us more efficiently steward our protected lands.

Placer Land Trust and the Tribe also recently received a grant from the Rose Foundation to fund the purchase of a trailer and tools for bringing "good fire" back to the land. Stay tuned for more on this partnership and the exciting work we're doing together!





# Vista Ranch preserves rural agriculture and oak woodlands habitat



It has been a busy spring here at Placer Land Trust – with multiple exciting land protection projects reaching completion, we’ve had our hands full in the best possible way! We are now finalizing the permanent protection of Vista Ranch, 279 acres of blue oak woodlands and cattle grazing land in rural Placer County. This land protection project is a collaborative effort between Placer Land Trust, Placer County, and the relatively new Placer Conservation Authority (PCA).

Vista Ranch is located along the south shore of Camp Far West Reservoir and the Bear River north of Lincoln. The ranch has been used for cattle grazing for generations of local ranchers from the Church and Barrie families. It was purchased by Munson Church during WWII, and stayed in the family until 1979. Although the family ranch was eventually sold, it remained undeveloped, and the Church and Barrie families continue to run cattle on the property.

“I think it’s great that Placer Land Trust is going to keep the property like it is,” says Jim Barrie, Church’s grandson, who currently holds the grazing lease. “Too much has changed over time in the Lincoln area. When I was a boy, everything was ranches out here. I’m thrilled it will stay as agricultural land.”

The area between Raccoon Creek and the Bear River represents the largest contiguous area of oak woodlands remaining in Placer County. Approximately 331 species of wildlife inhabit Placer County’s oak woodlands. Placer Land Trust’s Bear River Protection Program envisions protection of oak woodlands and rangelands in the Bear River watershed from Lake Combie to Camp Far West Reservoir.

Krista Abrahams sold the property to Placer Land Trust at a discount because she wanted to contribute to protecting the agricultural heritage of Placer County.

“The first time my husband and I visited this jewel along the Bear River, we were struck by how special this property is,” Abrahams said. “It has panoramic views from Sacramento and Mount Diablo to the south and the volcanic mountains marching north, but the most notable impact is to experience the hidden, quiet, isolated wilderness. Over the years, I have admired Placer Land Trust’s dedication to preserving the heritage of Placer County, so when it came time to protect this land, Placer Land Trust was the natural choice.”

Funding for the acquisition and permanent protection of the property came from Placer County fees that help offset the loss of oak woodlands and its associated wildlife habitat from rapid development in other areas of the County. Fee title ownership of the ranch will be held by Placer Land Trust; Placer County and the Placer Conservation Authority (PCA) will co-hold a conservation easement on the property. The PCA is a joint powers authority created in 2020 to administer the Placer County Conservation Program (PCCP) to support a balance of growth and conservation in western Placer County.

Together, Placer Land Trust, the County and the PCA will ensure the property is never subdivided and developed, and it will remain as protected open space forever. The property will be included in the PCCP “Reserve System” and will be managed to protect the blue oak woodlands, Bear River corridor, wildlife habitat, and livestock grazing.





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## Pie Party on the Preserve

The 2025 Pie Party on the Preserve was a delightful day with good food, great company, and beautiful weather! Our original day was rained out, but the spring showers made the preserve extra-green and glorious for our backup date. Partygoers enjoyed exploring the Laursen Bear River Preserve trails, spotting early wildflowers, playing games in the meadow, and catching up with friends old and new. And of course, the pie selection was epic as always! Thanks to all who joined us!

