



WONDERS

PLACER LAND TRUST NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2025



Celebrating Conservation, Collaboration, and Traditions of Stewardship

Thanks to everyone who joined us for Conservation Celebration Week! We had a fantastic time gathering with our community, honoring the 2025 Placer Conservator Awardees, the Colfax-Todds Valley Consolidated Tribe, dancing the night away at Laursen Bear River Preserve, and raising a toast to all that we've accomplished together over the past year.

"The Placer Conservator Award has always been about celebrating the people who make land conservation in our region possible," said Jeff Darlington, Executive Director of Placer Land Trust. "Over the past few years, the Colfax-Todds Valley Consolidated Tribe has built capacity and become one of Placer Land Trust's key partners, making more conservation possible in our region. We are honored to celebrate and support this partnership for conservation."

In 2022, Placer Land Trust transferred the Yo' Dok'im Pakan - Gerjuoy North Fork Preserve to the Tribe and their Koy'o Land Conservancy. This preserve sits in the ancestral homelands of CTVCT, and is now stewarded

by the Tribe using cultural practices such as prescribed cultural burnings and native plant revitalization. Placer Land Trust is honored to be able to return the land to its original stewards, and to continue our collaborative work together, including our upcoming Owl Creek LandBack and Equitable Access project.

"The Colfax-Todds Valley Consolidated Tribe is a great example of reaching out and building partnership," said Jenny Hatch, Executive Director of the Sierra Nevada Alliance. "We've been working with the Tribe for at least five years now as part of our tribal technical assistance program, and what they're doing is just amazing - elevating the workforce, their community, being open and building partnerships. The Tribe really brings in wisdom of traditional ecological knowledge and caring for the land, and approaches that have a greater intimacy with the land and a greater knowledge of how everything interacts... We just so appreciate that wisdom, and their gentle hand on the land."

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“This has been a really great experience, this whole week, acknowledging the Tribe and the work that has been done, and seeing the community come together,” said Clyde Prout III, Tribal Chairman of the Colfax-Todds Valley Consolidated Tribe, in his acceptance speech. “When we started working with Placer Land Trust, I didn’t know that something so beautiful could happen... it’s a gift to be here today with everybody. I’m looking forward to the future, and to our continued partnership.”

And speaking of accomplishments... thanks to all of YOU, our generous sponsors, auction item donors, auction-bidders, donors, and event-goers, we raised nearly \$115K to protect more land in our beautiful region! AND over 100 new people helped us celebrate Conservation Celebration Week this year – that’s 100+ new members who are learning about and furthering Placer Land Trust’s mission. We are so grateful to be part of this generous, visionary, enthusiastic, and all-around amazing community, and we’re already looking forward to celebrating with you next year!

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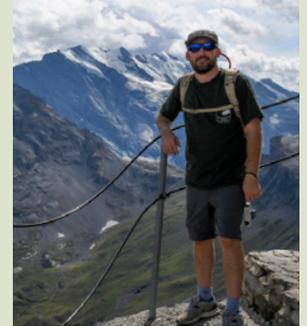
Jeremy & Paula Wolfe

The Yeager Family

Welcome to Our New Staff

The seasons are changing from summer to fall, and Placer Land Trust is seeing a few transitions as we increase our capacity to take on all the exciting work ahead. Please join us in welcoming our two newest staff members!

Land Manager **Joe Sims** grew up along the Delaware River, where he developed an early appreciation for watersheds and the wildlife that depend on them. After graduating from Temple University with a degree in Environmental Science and a minor in Geography, he ventured west to work with the Colorado River Indian Tribes. He continued his career in the Southwest, later joining efforts in the San Bernardino National Forest before moving to Joseph, Oregon, where he worked alongside the U.S. Forest Service to help prevent the spread of invasive species.



Following several seasons in Oregon, Joe returned to the Southwest to work along the Rio Grande River, supporting rural communities in protecting critical riparian habitat and water resources. Now back in California, he is excited to be collaborating with the community members of Placer County to safeguard vital habitats. In his free time, Joe can often be found cycling or hiking with binoculars in hand, searching for new fishing spots and birds to add to his life list.



Stewardship Specialist **Bellamy Wooten** grew up in the Rolling Plains of Texas, where early experiences in student leadership shaped her commitment to community service. It wasn’t until Winter Storm Uri in 2021, though, when small towns like hers faced extreme circumstances, that her interest in climate resilience and equitable public policy was sparked.

Bellamy earned a bachelor’s degree in Geography and Sustainability Studies from the University of Texas at Austin, where she also interned at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, the Colorado River Alliance, and Public Citizen, exploring environmental compliance, education, and policy. Her most exciting endeavor there was studying vegetation response in the savannas of Botswana, an experience that confirmed the career path she wanted to take.

After graduating in December 2024, Bellamy moved to Sacramento for an AmeriCorps fellowship, supporting the California Health Collaborative in policy implementation, grant writing, and developing a streamlined, citizen-science process for Tobacco Product Waste collection. When she’s not in the field or at the office, you’ll find her hiking, camping, and most recently, birding across Northern California.

Welcome, Joe and Bellamy – we’re so glad you’re here, and we’re looking forward to diving in together on the many exciting projects ahead!

Placer Land Trust Is Safety-Forward!

For many years, Placer Land Trust has ensured our staff and volunteers are certified in first aid and CPR. And now, we have the ability to train and certify our team as a Health & Safety Institute training center!

Every year we provide training for First Aid & CPR certification, tailored to be relevant and responsive to the activities that we undertake on the preserves. This fall, longtime EMT Instructor Jason Price, with whom we have worked for several years, led a "Train the Trainers" program for four Placer Land Trust volunteers to become certified instructors for PLT. Further, Jason helped staff set up PLT as an independent, nationally-recognized Health & Safety Institute training center.

PLT volunteers Bryan Wright, Andy Polik, Cathy Scott, and Gladly Rutherford were selected for their strong First Aid experience, reliability, and interpersonal skills, and have already proven invaluable by providing Adult First Aid/CPR certification courses for more than 20 of our volunteers this past month!

Who are these amazing instructors? Former police officer/firefighter Andy Polik has embraced his new role as an opportunity to help Placer Land Trust in a new way. He applies his lifetime of experience to present training in a way that is practical, relevant to our situation, and easy to remember, showing how these skills are applicable every day as well as when volunteering.

Cathy Scott, with a deep background in wilderness first aid training, spends a lot of her time outside being active in higher-risk activities such as bike and horseback riding, as well as trail work. She believes that PLT staff have so many responsibilities that any help she – as a volunteer – can contribute, better allows PLT to meet its mission.

Bryan Wright has over 30 years of experience with emergency response, having been trained as an EMT, BLS instructor, and Wilderness First Responder. Teaching is one of his favorite things to do, and he told us that he



Gladly Rutherford, Bryan Wright, Cathy Scott, and Andy Polik

feels "it is important to have more people available and capable if the situation arises."

Gladly Rutherford trained teachers as an RN for a school district in Southern California and now works with elderly and disabled veterans as a case manager, care coordinator, advocate, health educator, and cheerleader. In her "spare time" she is an active member of the Placer County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue team, is trained in Wilderness First Aid, navigation, communications, and rescue operations. She became a PLT First Aid/CPR instructor so that she can "share knowledge and experience with our wonderful PLT staff and volunteers."

Placer Land Trust is truly in very capable and skilled hands for furthering our preparation in First Aid and emergency response. In the future we may be able to offer training to other organizations, but for now we are thrilled to have the ability to offer certification and skill refresher opportunities to all interested PLT staff and volunteers on a regular, timely, and creative basis.

Thanks for Giving: Reflections on the Season of Generosity

As we near the end of the year, many of us reflect on all we have to be thankful for and start looking ahead with visions and goals for a bright future. This makes it the perfect time to support the causes that enrich our lives and make our hopes for future generations a reality.

That's why this season of giving, ***we hope you'll consider one more donation or a gift of membership for a loved one*** to Placer Land Trust. Your investment today through the end of December will protect lands that **benefit our physical and mental well-being**, support our **local food sources**, reduce pollution in our

water and air, provide **habitat for local wildlife**, create opportunities for **outdoor exercise and play**, improve **resilience** to drought and other climate change impacts... **and so much more!**

Help us reach our goal of protecting 25,000 acres by 2030 – not because the numbers are important, but because of all the benefits that protected lands provide! We thank you, and future generations will thank you!

Make your gift: placerlandtrust.org/donate





Dancing the night away at Party on the Preserve!



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Want to Make a Difference for Conservation?

Join Our Community Council!

Interested in sharing your passion for conservation with others who will benefit? Please consider applying to be part of Placer Land Trust's Community Council. It's a one-year commitment that will make a difference over lifetimes!

The Community Council is a small group of committed members who help raise awareness and support for protecting the natural and agricultural lands that are so important to our region. It's more than just an advisory group—these supporters help to amplify Placer Land Trust's voice and impact as our region continues to grow at a rapid pace. Are you interested in keeping up on Placer Land Trust's progress, serving as a resource within your area of expertise, and helping to broaden and deepen our connections within the community? Then apply today! Application period for the 2026 Council is open November 1st through 30th.

To learn more and apply, visit:
www.placerlandtrust.org/join-community-council

