

Sisson Meadow Trails and Wetlands Completed

We're extremely proud to announce that the Land Trust has completed the first phase of restoration and trail building at Sisson Meadow. With the help of many volunteers and land trust members, and a grant from the State Resources Agency, we've built public boardwalks and trails on this 7.5 acre property in the heart of the City of Mt. Shasta, and we've restored meandering creeks and built a pond to increase wildlife habitat. Our partners in this project, which we hope to continue with further improvements for use by people and critters, include Mt. Shasta Rotary and The Mountain Runners. The Land Trust gives special thanks to all of you who showed up on our volunteer workdays . . . your help and hard work

Volunteer work parties assisted the boardwalks that are now being used by st



was invaluable!

professionals in constructing the raised schoolchildren, joggers, moms with

Who Got This Done?

Accolades for the professional contributions of Tom Hesseldenz of THA, Buzz Knight and Rick Knight of Timberworks, Rick Poore of Streamwise, our former Board member Sandra Spelliscy and Julian Colescott of North State Resources.

More to Come at Sisson Meadow!

Trail-building Continues

Through a joint effort of the Mt. Shasta School District, the Mt. Shasta Recreation District, and Mt. Shasta Rotary, construction is underway on the first segment of a multi-purpose public trail along the east edge of Sisson Meadow. The new trail is planned to extend from Lake Street to Alma Street, across the east side of the Sisson Meadow property, running past the ball field, the new pond, Sisson School and the library. It's the beginning of a safe bicycle path that we hope to see extended throughout the City of Mt. Shasta, and it's the result of the vision and many years of hard work by Tom Hesseldenz and others. The Land Trust will seek further funding to complete the multi-use trail.

Siskiyou Land Trust

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come by our offices:

Weed Mercantile Mall #2

Parents and their kids pitched-in to install landscaping around the new pond, so that in a few seasons the water birds will enjoy shelter among the rushes and (hopefully) many songbirds will sit in the replanted native rose bushes.



Legislative Boost for Land Conservation

Congress Acts to Support Conservation of Family Farms and Ranches

Changes in the tax code that will encourage permanent land conservation by family farmers and ranchers are included in legislation passed by Congress and signed by the President. The new law, which gained bipartisan support in Congress, combines an increased tax incentive for land conservation with more stringent rules to ensure the public benefit of conservation donations.

The new law extends to 15 years the carry-forward period for tax deductions for voluntary conservation agreements and raises the cap on those deductions to 50 percent of a donor's adjusted gross income - - and to 100 percent for qualifying farmers and ranchers. This allows ranchers, farmers and other modest-income-owners to get a much larger benefit for donating valuable development rights to



National press reports described the support for the tax law changes by land trusts, rural conservation groups, and farmers and ranchers across the country. "I know many ranchers who want to protect the land that they have lived and worked on for generations, but need some help to make it happen," said John Lunt, a family rancher and conservationist from Wyoming. "Better conservation tax incentives will help my friends and neighbors preserve their land without putting their family's economic future at risk."

A proposal to provide the same tax benefits at the State level for private conservation efforts is currently pending in the California legislature. AB454, sponsored by Assembly member Berryhill of Modesto, is endorsed by the California Farm Bureau Federation and other private farm groups. At the same time, Representative Mike Thompson of St. Helena has introduced a bill in Congress to make the favorable tax treatment permanent. Without this action, these benefits will expire at the end of 2007, so this year is a key "window of opportunity" for these donations.

Protecting the Public Interest in Conservation Easement Transactions

The new law also protects the public interest by including a significant tightening of the rules for appraisals of all donated property, including stiff penalties for inflated appraisals. In addition, the Internal Revenue Service has stepped up its scrutiny of land conservation donations, creating a task force to focus on strategic ways for preventing abuses while supporting legitimate conservation practices.

The national Land Trust Alliance, which represents more than 1,600 local land trusts, recently launched a training and accreditation program that will give a seal-of-approval to land trusts who work directly with private landowners to protect important lands in their communities. Commenting on the new legislation, Rand Wentworth, Land Trust Alliance President, said, "Congress, the IRS and the private-sector have all taken decisive action. This three-pronged approach will solidify and build public confidence in the private land conservation system."

The Siskiyou Land Trust is a member of the national Land Trust Alliance and has endorsed the Standards and Practices established by LTA to ensure that conservation projects are completed competently and in the public interest.



Letter from the President

Spring is an amazingly beautiful and inspiring time in Siskiyou County with blossoming trees and blooming flowers, bright green meadows and fresh-tilled soil, winging birds and migrating wildlife, the sound of tumbling creeks and cattle in the fields...all set against a backdrop of blue skies and towering snow-capped peaks. .

It's a powerful display of nature that delights our senses, renews our spirits, and reminds us why we moved here. It also serves as an important reminder that more people will be attracted to move here...and perhaps sooner than we think.

As Siskiyou County grows, so too will the importance of conserving the beauty and abundant resources that attract this growth. The two should...and can...move forward hand-in-hand.

This is our mission at the Siskiyou Land Trust, and your support helps us to accomplish it. Step-by-step...and hand-in-hand with your help...we can continue working hard to preserve the amazing natural beauty and resources of this magical region that we call home.

I hope that you enjoy our newsletter. We're very proud of the Sisson Meadow Restoration project, and especially of all of the volunteer effort and individual contributions that have made this possible. Now we've set our sights on the problem of the old barn that is teetering on the verge of collapse. We'll replace it with a sturdy weather-tight barn that reflects the beloved appearance of the original barn, and which will serve as a classroom and interpretive center for students and visitors to the meadow. Local architect Chris Brown has graciously donated his time to create the conceptual drawings of the new barn, and many others have offered to help. We'll need you, too, and we thank you for it.

Cheers, Jack

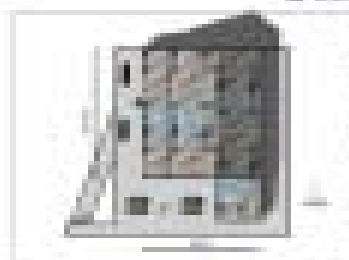
SLT Proposes Environmental Education Center to Replace Old Barn at Sisson



THANKS SLT DONORS!!

Without your help we can't do this work. The Siskiyou Land Trust thanks its many current supporters - -

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Sisson Meadow Barn is a one roomed, one story structure. It was built in 1900 and is made of wood. It is in poor condition and is not suitable for use as a barn. It is located on the Sisson Meadow property. The barn is a one roomed, one story structure. It was built in 1900 and is made of wood. It is in poor condition and is not suitable for use as a barn. It is located on the Sisson Meadow property.



The Land Trust is now seeking funding for the next phase of the Sisson Meadow Restoration Project - - creating an "environmental education center" where the old barn now stands. With the Sisson Scholl next to Sisson Meadow and the High School just a few blocks away, we believe that building a multi-purpose recreation/education facility at this site would be a cost-effective means to get more public benefit from our property. Unfortunately, the barn can't be repaired to serve this purpose, but the Land trust is working to have the replacement structure keep some of that "old-time" charm.

The Sisson Meadow Pavilion would provide for regular use by school groups conducting an environmental education curriculum. Throughout the week, the exterior seating area would also serve the general public. Interpretive displays at the proposed Pavilion would focus on water quality and wildlife habitat issues. The site where the new Pavilion would be built, is adjacent to the new public trail and is visible from the center of the City of Mt. Shasta three blocks away.

First Funding Secured!

We're happy to report that we have already had a major contribution to the Sisson Meadow Environmental Education Center project! The Mountain Runners, the local group most famous for the Mt. Shasta Fourth of July races, has already been a major supporter of the Sisson Meadow project. Now Mountain Runners has pledged to provide \$30,000 toward the cost of constructing the new Pavilion! To build the basic structure, the Land Trust will need to raise a total of about \$280,000. We are actively seeking that funding right now, and we're hoping to be able to draw on the new park bonds that were approved by California voters last fall. We're also making requests of private foundations and hoping that some "angel" will want to see their name alongside ours on this very worthwhile project.

When Will It Happen?

Completion of the project will require at least nine months. Weather permit-

Completion of the project will require at least nine months. Weather permitting, the Pavilion can be open for public use within a year after we secure the funds. The Land Trust will establish an advisory board to help in planning and

SLT Hires New Staff - - Welcomes New Board Members

We're extremely pleased to introduce our new Executive Director, Steve Horn.

Steve comes to the Siskiyou Land Trust following a long and distinguished conservation career in California, principally with the Coastal Conservancy where he served as Deputy Executive. During Steve's tenure with the Coastal Conservancy, he worked to permanently conserve tens of thousands of acres of land as public parkland.

The Board of SLT is excited to have found such an experienced and accomplished conservation professional to assist us in preparing for the challenges that increasing local population and global climate change will bring to our community over the next decade. Welcome aboard, Steve!

SLT Board Members

All of the members of the Siskiyou Land Trust Board of Directors are local residents who volunteer their time, contribute money, and donate hundreds of hours each year to help SLT accomplish its mission. We've recently added three new members to the Board - - John Brennan of Weed and Joseph Heller and Michael Zanger of Mt. Shasta.



Steve Horn - SLT Executive Director

Mission Statement

The Siskiyou Land Trust is dedicated to long-term stewardship of agricultural, forest and wildlands in Siskiyou County by working with willing landowners, agencies and organizations.

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