
The McKinleyville Land Trust Newsletter



Winter 2005

Number 19

Death, Taxes, and Land Trusts

By Jeff Dunk

I'm sure you're wondering what this article could be about, with that catchy title and all. Well, I've gone to the cliché well and grabbed a bucket full. What are two certainties in life – “death and taxes”. Sure, but what have these got to do with land trusts? Taxes are related to land trusts in terms of donations being tax-deductible. OK, now for death... Well, if you're a supporter of the McKinleyville Land Trust, it is possible for you to continue your support us “from the grave.” If you'd like to support us now, but cannot, perhaps you believe you'll have more discretionary income after you die. Sounds a bit morbid, but I don't intend it to. If you've put together a will, family trust, etc. then you have put some thought into the fact that you will not live forever – and what is to be done with your worldly assets and possessions. Have you considered giving a portion of your estate to the McKinleyville Land Trust? If you're like me, you can provide some modest annual support to organizations that you like – organizations like the McKinleyville Land Trust. However, your eventual estate might enable you to give substantially more than you ever considered giving to MLT while you were alive, while still providing for your descendents, other loved ones, and other worthy causes. When I first brought this subject up with some friends a few years ago, many hadn't even considered such a gift, but really liked the idea. That is, it hadn't crossed their minds. Charitable contributions from supporters are the lifeblood of our land trust. We have grown from a group of concerned citizens who formed a land trust in order to accept an out-of-court settlement of property to an organization that manages 85 acres and has several conservation easements (private lands on which the owners voluntarily placed restrictions, resulting in conservation values). Our Mad River Bluffs property receives hundreds of visitors each week, and provides a tremendous benefit to our community – and does not cost taxpayers anything to operate. MLT's ability to facilitate voluntary

land conservation and manage the properties that we own is directly related to the support we receive from you, the local community.

Each year we receive cash donations from dozens of local citizens, and those in the three-figure range often result in a quick e-mail flurry among board members (owing to our tremendous gratitude of your generosity). We have, on a few occasions received donations in the four-figure range, and once a five-figure donation (that was the “goose-bump” donation). These acts of kindness and giving are incredibly humbling for us board members. We also know that there are many worthy organizations that are in a boat similar to ours. The purpose of this article is simply to ask “have you considered placing the McKinleyville Land Trust in your will or family trust. If not, will you?”



MLT Board Members: from left to right, front row - Kristin Schmidt, Gina Rimson, Darci Short, and Dorthy Klein; back row - Jeff Dunk, Mark Williams and Allen Bird

New Work Being Done At the Mad River Bluffs

By Karla Spreen, MLT Volunteer Coordinator

Editor's Note: Karla, an HSU student, helped coordinate and focus the work of many volunteers throughout the past year. We asked her to give us a summary of the projects the volunteers have worked on.

Many individuals, clubs, and organizations contributed to the success of the projects I coordinated as a volunteer for the McKinleyville Land Trust. In the process of concentrating my efforts on the Mad River Bluffs, I helped strengthen the relationship between Humboldt State University and the MLT.

The Humboldt State University Natural Resources Club (NR Club) began monthly work-day events with MLT during the fall of 2004. Two workdays took place during the fall semester and four events during spring semester; at both Mad River Bluffs and Chah-GAH-Cho. The NR club always has a phenomenal turn out. Volunteers removed an impressive amount of both English Ivy and Cape Ivy, both nonnative invasive plants that are a nuisance to Humboldt County lands. The Natural Resources Club and McKinleyville Land Trust's relationship will continue in the future, with the NR Club hoping to continue its work at MLT properties.

Lindsay Walker (recent HSU graduate) wrote a grant proposal for the Chah-GAH-Cho property with goals of eliminating illegal dumping activities and to raise awareness of importance of Chah-GAH-Cho, including how visitors can properly use it while they are visiting the area. The NR club has enabled the MLT to write strong grant proposals because MLT's "in-kind" contributions reflects community involvement and support, which is the cornerstone of many successful grant proposals.

The McKinleyville Land Trust has also worked with the Redwood Chapter of Interpreters during the fall 2004 and spring 2005 semesters (see related article in this issue). The Chapter

is designing site identification signs as well as a new kiosk sign for the Mad River Bluffs. Their expertise is very valuable and we are thankful they have allowed us to utilize their volunteer work. Without the Redwood Chapter of Interpreters our grants might be much more involved and a struggle to secure

I collaborated with Khi Lia, and Rebecca Holzman on a grant to secure funding for the signs designed by the interpreters so that their hard work can be seen at the Mad River Bluffs. The grant proposal also requests funding for benches and dogi pots. Our overall goals are to provide the McKinleyville community with an open area equipped for public use and to provide the McKinleyville community with open space adequately labeled for coastal access and recreational areas.

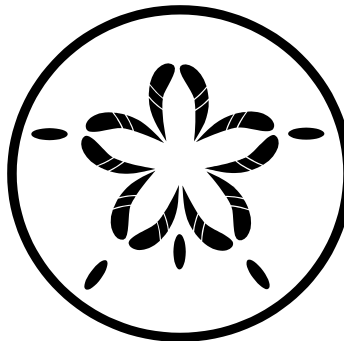
I am amazed how many young adults in the area are motivated, forward thinking, and active within the community. Seeing so many people contribute their own time and hard work was very refreshing. Members of the HSU Natural Resources Club and Redwood Chapter of Interpreters, accomplished a lot during their many hours spent pulling exotic plants and clearing areas for the McKinleyville Land Trust.

Volunteer efforts last year also included local residents who helped remove trash that was dumped illegally on Cha-GAH-Cho. In addition, many people donated their time to help MLT fundraise at its pancake breakfast last November, the Annual Dinner in April, as well as the food booth at the North Country Fair in September.

If you are interested in volunteering to help on our next workday, please phone 839-LAND. Thanks to donations from local businesses, we can provide some tools on workdays, but sturdy shoes, long-sleeves and gloves should be worn.

McKinleyville Land Trust Board of Directors 2003

Jeff Dunk – President
Dorothy Klein – Secretary
Gina M. Rimson – Treasurer
Allen Bird
Mark Williams
Kristin Schmidt
Darci Short



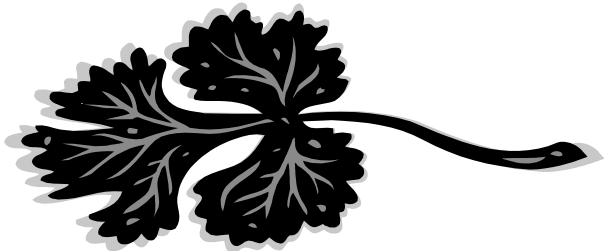
Meet Mark Williams – MLT’s Newest Board Member

I recently graduated from Humboldt State University with a bachelor’s degree in Natural Resources Planning and Interpretation with an emphasis on Recreation Management. My relationship with the McKinleyville Land Trust started out as an internship through HSU and blossomed into a personal desire to give something back to the residents of McKinleyville in the form of improvements at the MLT Chah-GAH-Cho site.



I transferred to McKinleyville in 1994 from Folsom as a manager with Kmart. I soon found myself enjoying many of the abundant outdoor activities that the North Coast has to offer. After living here for several years, I realized that retail management was not the career I truly felt passionate about, so I opted to step-down as a manager and pursue an education in Natural Resources. Having managed Kmart, I learned that Chah-GAH-Cho, located west and south of the Mill Creek Shopping Center, was owned by the Land Trust. This beautiful and historic area was acquired after it was donated in a settlement involving construction of the adjacent shopping center. When I decided to apply for an internship with the MLT, it seemed natural to focus my attention on Chah-GAH-Cho.

I truly enjoy the idea of community involvement, especially in a small community like McKinleyville. Before joining the MLT board, I was involved for several years with the Pony Express Parade, and continue to serve as the liaison between the Northern California Community Blood Bank and the McKinleyville Kmart. I also worked for the first Humboldt Bay Paddlefest, which is sponsored by the Humboldt State Alumni Association. I look forward to working with the MLT on many of the projects that are active or in the works.



A Big Thank You to McKinleyville Ace Hardware and K-Mart

The McKinleyville Land Trust Board of Directors would like to extend our gratitude to the McKinleyville Ace Hardware and McKinleyville K-Mart for their generous donations of gardening supplies. The hand tools and other donated items are the beginnings of a cache that will allow us to supply proper equipment to volunteers involved in our exotic plant management and trail maintenance activities. Businesses like these help keep communities strong and facilitate community involvement with local issues and efforts.

In addition, K-Mart donated several items used in our fundraising booth at this year’s North Country Fair. Many thanks to Ace Hardware and K-Mart!

MLT Newsletter Staff

TallChief A. Comet – Desktop Publisher

Gina M. Rimson – Coordinator

And the directors of the MLT for their comments and suggestions.

MLT Makes Ends Meet

By Gina Rimson, Treasurer

Thanks to a supportive community and energetic volunteers, the McKinleyville Land Trust kept its expenses down in 2005, while raising enough funds to cover its budget.

Individual donations and fundraising, such as our food booth at the North Country Fair, have brought in about \$2,500 in donations so far this year and \$1,600 net from the fair. Our annual dinner, held in the Spring, netted \$300. Our other fundraising activity, a pancake breakfast, has not been held yet this year.

Many volunteer hours are spent clearing vegetation and maintaining trails at either Mad River Bluffs or Chah-GAH-Cho. Although we have not calculated the full value of these in-kind donations, the MLT has been able to keep its maintenance and operating costs to a minimum because of these volunteer services. Likewise, our fundraising events are only profitable because of the many volunteer hours spent making these events possible. In addition, local businesses have donated some materials used in our clean-up days and other projects.

Liability insurance continues to be our biggest expense, costing \$1,775 in 2005, about \$200 more than in 2004. Rates have risen dramatically over the past four years, from \$695 in 2001. We have a telephone, but no office or paid staff, so our administrative costs are small. The MLT phone and storage unit costs are \$600 a year. County planning fees and other costs associated with the Dow's Prairie Educational Wetland project were \$635 in 2005. (The parcel is still being subdivided and we continue to hold the funds for purchase in an escrow account.) Printing and mailing this newsletter will be about \$350 or more. Thankfully, the mailing of our newsletter usually results in several donations being made by our readers.

If you have not recently made a donation to the McKinleyville Land Trust this year, please take a moment and send us a check in the envelope provided in this newsletter. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 2723 McKinleyville, CA 95519. All donations are tax-deductible and are greatly appreciated!

MLT Connects with RCI

Since the spring of 2000, the Redwood Chapter of Interpreters (RCI) has been a nationally recognized student chapter of the National Association of Interpretation at Humboldt State University (HSU). RCI is a student organization dedicated to promoting creative, effective interpretation and to provide students with an opportunity to enhance their interpretive skills. We accomplish our mission through written, graphic, and oral thematic interpretation. Thematic interpretation is the art of connecting people with nature.

Currently, RCI members are working with the McKinleyville Land Trust to design interpretive signs to welcome users to the trails of Mad River Bluffs. These signs will promote and encourage stewardship of these lands.

Over the years, RCI has been involved in many projects that work toward a better environment by contributing to various community efforts such as the annual California Coastal Clean-up Day, and creating graphic signs for the Sustainable Living Arts and Music Festival at HSU. Many members past and present have actively worked to promote and coordinate March for Parks, a local effort to connect the children of Humboldt County to the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary.



Upcoming Events

January 14, 2006 - Pancake Breakfast at Azalea Hall, 8-11 am

March 25, 2006 - Annual Dinner at Azalea Hall, 6-8 pm, featuring guest speaker Jerry Rohde

Forests of Mad River Bluffs

Excerpts taken from the Mad River Bluffs Management Plan written for MLT by Sabra Steinberg. Please contact MLT if you would like an electronic copy of the entire plan.

The beach pine and Sitka spruce forest at MRB is a habitat type usually “associated with coastal dunes near river mouths, bays, or on broad sea-cut terraces” (Green 1999). On the coast in northern California, intact stands are located near the mouth of the Smith River, and between Humboldt Bay and the Mad River, but beach pine/spruce forest, as a vegetation type, does not occur south of Humboldt Bay (Pickart and Sawyer 1998). Beach pine/Sitka spruce forests are considered rare and declining in California (Calif. Natural Diversity Data Base 1997). Much of this forest type has been lost to coastal development, and the increasing rarity and fragmentation of this habitat was one reason for community and state-level interest in protecting this property.



To exist, forests in coastal dunes must be able to tolerate harsh environmental conditions, including a “low-nutrient substrate [generally mostly sand], air-borne salt spray, desiccating summer winds, and gale force winter gusts, fluctuating water tables, and episodic disturbance by sand inundation and fire” (Wiedemann 1984). While the upland pine/spruce forest at MRB is not faced with inundation by sand or the same level of nutrient-deficient soils, it does face some of the same difficult conditions as those in nearby coastal dunes: salt spray, gale force winds in winter and drying winds in summer, and the possibility of occasional fires.

One reason for the dominance of beach pine and Sitka spruce in narrow coastal strips, is that both are quite tolerant of salt spray, with spruce being slightly more tolerant (Green, pers. comm.); in fact Sitka spruce was ranked as the British Columbian tree species most tolerant of ocean spray (Krajina 1969). Sitka spruce is relatively susceptible to stress from lack of moisture, but its



“natural occurrence on floodplains of river valleys in British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest is an indication of a relatively high tolerance to flooding.” (Peterson et al. 1997). It is tolerant of extended periods of standing water as well as of shallow water tables.

Beach pine is slow-growing, with a mature height of 10-20 m (Sugihara 1980). In Alaskan peat bogs, 300-year old beach pines have been found (Wheeler and Critchfield 1985), but in coastal dunes of Oregon, Washington and northern California, the maximum life span of the subspecies appears to be between 100 years (Egler 1934) and 150 years (Green 1999, Wiedemann 1966). “Whether the upper age-limit is determined by life-history traits or reflects canopy turnover rates as a result of disturbance remains unclear” (Green 1999).

Mission Statement

The McKinleyville Land Trust is a non-profit, public benefit corporation. The McKinleyville Land Trust promotes voluntary conservation of land for nature, timber, agriculture, education, recreation, history, and scenery. The Trust is a way for people to donate land or conservation easements in perpetuity as a means of accomplishing their personal conservation goals. Often these donations have a tax saving advantage as well.



MLT COFFEE MUGS designed by Dorothy Klein are available! Tastefully done in cobalt blue or green glass with silver trilliums, they are \$8.00 (including tax) and would make a great gift. Call Javan @ 839-1202, or purchase at Blake's Books in McKinleyville.

Help!!!

The MLT needs **fundraising** help. If you have any experience or some good ideas please call us at 839-LAND.



The McKinleyville Land Trust accepts bequests. For information on making bequests to MLT, simply fill in your name, address, and phone number on the enclosed donation slip, and write "bequest information" and send it in.

Email

The email address for the MLT is: mlt@asis.com

The McKinleyville Land Trust

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*The McKinleyville Land Trust
For Everyone Forever*

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