

THE  
**ANDERSON  
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INCORPORATED



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# GOOD DIRT

The Newsletter of The Anderson Valley Land Trust  
Spring-Summer 1998

## NAVARRO WATERSHED RESTORATION PLAN COMPLETED: *On with the Work*

As this issue of *Good Dirt* goes to press, the draft Navarro Watershed Restoration Plan is entering its final edit after one last period of public comment that included a well-attended public meeting at the Grange in mid-May. When completed, the Plan will be submitted to the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors, California State Coastal Conservancy and State Water Resources Control Board. Copies of the Plan are available from the Anderson Valley Land Trust (an order form is on the next page), as well as through the AV Lending Library. All the members of the Advisory Group, including the state and local agencies, will have copies, too.

But this is hardly the end. In fact, the work of watershed restoration is only just beginning. The Plan contains scientifically-based recommendations for priority conservation and restoration treatments of fish habitat and water quality where concentrated efforts will have the greatest benefit. It also contains a comprehensive set of Recommended Land Management Practices that can assist every valley landowner in everyday activities, as well as descriptions of seven demonstration projects.

### Anderson Valley Land Trust Workshop: Current Navarro Restoration Projects

On Monday evening, July 20, there will be a workshop from 7 - 10 PM at the Apple Hall Dining Room in Boonville featuring a panel presentation and discussion of current Restoration Projects in the Navarro Watershed.

Panelists will include **Dan Sicular**, who coordinated the development of the Navarro Watershed Restoration Plan; **Tom Schott** of the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Mendocino Co. Resource Conservation District; and **Danny Hagan** of Pacific Watershed Associates. The Presentation will include the Demonstration Projects that are part of the Restoration Plan, as well as others funded by EQIP and the RCD.

*Please join us for a stimulating evening. Admission is free.  
Refreshments will be served.*

The Apple Hall is located at the Fairgrounds in the heart of Boonville.

The need for Valley landowners to take the initiative and implement the recommendations of this Plan has never been more urgent. With the coho salmon listed under the federal Endangered Species Act, and steelhead listing pending, all of us have a responsibility to assist in the protection and restoration of fish habitat. The State Water Board is assessing the valley's water appropriations and ponds, looking at impacts to fish habitat. The EPA will be including the Navarro in its Clean Water Act "TMDL" (total

maximum daily load of water-borne sediment) process next year. Some say that greater regulatory enforcement is the only answer to our problems. With or without increased regulation, we believe that an informed and motivated community is the key to accomplishing watershed restoration. The recommendations in the Navarro Watershed Restoration Plan will assist all of us in meeting these challenges.

The restoration work ahead won't stop at the streambanks, but needs to include addressing the impacts of road and home-building, vineyard development and on-going agricultural operations, timber harvest and general water use -- both domestic and agricultural. The Navarro Watershed Plan will provide a terrific reference tool for landowners as they continue to improve their land and homestead management.

More than three years of research, discussion and debate have gone into the drafting of this Plan -- including 20 public meetings of the Advisory Group and three other public meetings. The AVL, Coastal Conservancy and County Water Agency have tried to ensure that the plan provides landowners and regulators with feasible and appropriate recommendations for watershed conservation and restoration activities. Therefore, the planning process included representatives of a wide range of interests in Anderson Valley -- including cattle ranchers, grape and apple growers, timberland owners, environmentalists, and community groups -- as well as the participation in the process of many of the government agencies responsible for oversight and regulation of natural resources.

While the participation of all the different members of the Advisory Group were instrumental in making the Plan what it is, we are especially grateful to the long-time local Advisory Group members who stuck it out through a long and sometimes contentious process: Josh Bartone (and others from the AVUSD), Sylvia Bates (and other AV youth), Morgan Baynham, Marty and Peter Bradford, Jeff Burroughs, Don Gowan, Eva Johnson, Dick Jordan, Helen Libeu, Dan Myers (and others from Friends of the Navarro) and Steve Williams. Special thanks for long-time service is also due to Steve Hall, Chris Tebbutt, Linda Perkins, Larry Mailliard and Scott Butler.

It is impossible to adequately thank all the dedicated agency personnel, valley landowners who provided access and data, and others whose cooperation and engagement made the preparation of the Navarro Watershed Restoration Plan possible. The AVL and indeed the whole of Anderson Valley appreciates your many contributions.

### **Order Your Own Copy of the Navarro Watershed Restoration Plan**

Complete Plan (with technical appendices): \$30  
Complete Plan (without technical appendices): \$18  
Executive Summary: Free of charge

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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**E N T R I X**

Figure 5-2  
Recent Distribution of Coho Salmon  
1988-1996

Navarro Watershed Restoration Plan

Legend

— Recent Distribution of Coho Salmon  
Based on Surveys Conducted Between 1988-1996

Approximate scale: 1" = 16,250'  
1:195,000

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## *Watershed Restoration Heats Up This Summer*

As the Navarro Watershed Restoration Plan nears completion, many people interested in improving the Navarro's water quality and restoring the salmon and steelhead fishery are already taking actions to move restoration of the watershed from theory into practice.

This summer, implementation of the Plan -- including a number of its seven specific demonstration projects -- will begin on several fronts. Most notable among these are the summer Youth Ecology Program of the Mendocino Fisheries Program; comprehensive restoration of two crucial sub-watersheds being undertaken jointly by the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District and the California Department of Fish and Game; and the Natural Resource Conservation Service's Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). All of these projects are possible through the voluntary cooperation of interested landowners in the Navarro Watershed. *Thanks in large part to the fact that completion of the Plan has been anticipated, the Navarro watershed finds itself on the list of priority basins for scarce restoration project funding.*

**The Mendocino Fisheries Program of the Center for Education and Manpower Resources**, a non-profit organization in Ukiah, is conducting a **Youth Ecology Program** in the Navarro Watershed. Since September of last year, several Anderson Valley High School students have been attending a special science class, taught through the Regional Occupational Program and sponsored by the North Coast Rural Challenge Network. The class prepares youth for paid restoration employment. This summer, ten local teenagers will work for eight weeks, helping design and implement restoration projects in the Navarro watershed. Projects, which are supervised by highly trained and experienced restoration experts, will be undertaken in cooperation with interested local landowners. They will focus on erosion control and improvement of stream habitat. Grants from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District, the California State Coastal Conservancy, the Mendocino Private Industry Council, and the Lebeau Foundation are supporting the program.

The Youth Ecology Program is seeking appropriate work sites, as well as cash and in-kind contributions. The Program will provide supervised, subsidized youth crews to work with property owners on projects such as gully remediation, streambank stabilization, riparian fencing and revegetation, and in-stream habitat enhancement. Most projects will require some cost sharing by the landowner. **If you have a project on your property that you think would be appropriate for this Program, call Louisa Morris or Dick Jordan at (707) 468-0194.**

Last year the California Legislature passed Senate Bill 271, sponsored by Northcoast Senator Mike Thompson. This bill provides some \$40 million over the next five years for a grant program to improve and restore salmon and steelhead habitat in coastal streams. Last Fall, the **Mendocino County Resource Conservation District** applied for and received funding from this program to begin comprehensive restoration efforts in two basins identified in the Navarro Watershed Restoration Plan as crucial for salmon and steelhead recovery. These are Dago Creek, a tributary to lower Rancheria Creek, and Mill Creek, a tributary to the mainstem Navarro River. The first phase of the projects will involve assessments of the road networks in the two basins to identify and prioritize erosion problems, and to develop site-specific plans for remediating road-related erosion. Key landowners and road associations in the two basins are cooperating in the assessment. They will benefit from road improvements that not only protect water quality and fish habitat, but that also make the roads more stable and less expensive to maintain.

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In addition, the **Department of Fish and Game** will supervise **California Conservation Corps** crews, who will conduct "habitat typing" of the two creeks and their fish-bearing tributaries. The habitat typing will serve as a basis for in-stream and near-stream restoration work. The Resource Conservation District plans to continue the projects next year, by applying for funds to implement the highest priority treatments identified in the assessment. The results will serve as a model of a comprehensive restoration strategy that can be applied in other high-priority basins as identified in the Navarro Watershed Restoration Plan. **For further information on these projects, contact Dan Sicular at (707) 895-3173.**

The third restoration program in effect this summer is the **Environmental Quality Incentives Program**, run by the U.S.D.A. Natural Resource Conservation Service (formally the Soil Conservation Service). This program is administered through the Farm Services Agency. It provides financial, technical, and educational assistance to landowners engaged in farming, ranching, and timber production to address priority natural resource management concerns, such as erosion control, water conservation and protection and enhancement of fish-bearing streams. In the last six months, three Anderson Valley agricultural producers received a total of \$68,000 in cost-share funds for new conservation projects. The Farm Services Agency is seeking others in the Navarro Watershed for participation in this program. Information can be obtained from Tom Schott at (707) 468-9223.

The Navarro Watershed Restoration Plan will serve as a central source of information and ideas for landowners and groups interested in voluntary restoration of the Navarro. Over the next several years, momentum can be expected to grow, as our understanding of watershed processes increases, as interest in maintaining the health and productivity of the land broadens, and as individuals, agencies, and organizations focus efforts on restoring our magnificent Watershed.

by Dan Sicular  
Navarro Watershed Restoration Plan Project Coordinator

### **Demonstration Projects included in the Navarro Watershed Restoration Plan:**

#### *Revegetation Projects:*

**Segar Property** (Soda Creek in Bell Valley)

Stabilize stream channel, restore canopy, enhance habitat

**Bradford Ranch** (Robinson Creek near Hwy. 128)

Restore native riparian vegetation, stabilize streambanks

**Anderson Valley High School**

(confluence of Anderson and Robinson Creeks)

Plant willow in new rip-rap, riparian species on bank above

#### *Road Erosion Control and Prevention Projects:*

**David Butler Road** (lower Dago Creek)

Reconstruct stream crossings, improve drainage

**Nash Mill Road** (Mill Creek)

Improve grading and drainage, gullying

**Holmes Ranch Road** (Mill Creek)

Reduce road-related sedimentation, improve stream crossings

**Ashton Property** (Nash Ranch)

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## The Forest Legacy Program:

### *New Conservation Incentive for Anderson Valley Forestland Owners*

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Forest landowners -- including owners of oak woodlands -- in Anderson Valley and throughout Mendocino County now have a new incentive for conserving their lands thanks to the California Forest Legacy Program. Administered cooperatively between the California Dept. of Forestry and the USDA Forest Service, Forest Legacy is part of a national program to protect privately-owned forestland and forest resources, while enabling the land to remain in productive use.

The conservation objectives of the Mendocino County Forest Legacy Area include goals very similar to those of the Navarro Watershed Restoration Plan:

- Minimizing parcel fragmentation and non-forest development;
- Protecting and restoring coho and steelhead habitat and instream flows;
- Protecting and restoring water quality, reducing sedimentation.
- Protecting riparian habitats, oak woodlands, late seral redwood and Douglas fir stands, and the native mix of species and age classes across the landscape;

The California Forest Legacy program provides financial assistance to forest landowners who want to voluntarily protect their forestland through charitable gifts of conservation easements made to non-profit land trusts (or state agencies). In particular, the Program provides an incentive for forest landowners who are managing their land not only for timber, but for water quality and fish and wildlife habitat.

This could be very appealing to Anderson Valley landowners who are implementing the recommendations of the Navarro Watershed Restoration Plan. Conservation easements are suggested in the Plan as a means for landowners to protect existing or potential salmon habitat, intact or restored riparian areas, streambanks and reforested areas. Further, conservation easements can restrict future land uses so that harmful practices are less likely to occur in the future.

Participating landowners can receive funding for the costs of developing the conservation easement with their chosen land trust, performing forest and wildlife inventories, creating forest management plans (ranging from the relatively simple Stewardship Plan to a Non-Industrial Forest Management Plan), having surveys done or maps created, and similar expenses. Charitably donated conservation easements often generate considerable income and estate tax deductions, compensating landowners for some of their costs of protecting natural resources.

For more information, contact the Anderson Valley Land Trust or Jim Geiger, Stewardship Program Manager, California Dept. of Forestry, P.O. Box 944246, Sacramento, CA, 94244-2469; 916-653-8286.

**Join the Anderson Valley Land Trust**  
Work with your friends and neighbors to help preserve the abundant natural resources of this valley for the benefit of generations to come.  
*We can't do it without you!*

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## What will the Anderson Valley Land Trust Be Doing Now for Watershed Restoration?

The creation of the Navarro Watershed Restoration Plan was a big effort for a volunteer-run community group like the Anderson Valley Land Trust. We did it because fostering the voluntary protection of Anderson Valley's land and natural resources is our mission. The Plan and its recommendations point to the need for landowner education and cooperation in achieving real protection of fish habitat and water quality.

Therefore, with the completion of the Restoration Plan, the AVLT will be focusing its watershed restoration efforts on two initiatives:

1. Working with landowners to establish effective conservation easements to protect rare existing coho salmon habitat and to protect investments made in restoring habitat.
2. Producing useful public education workshops and field trips to share the work being done on watershed restoration and to provide access to skills and information needed for successful projects.

Conservation easements are specifically included as a Recommended Land Management Practice in the Plan -- and in fact can be used to support the implementation of a variety of other recommended practices.

- ✓ They can provide **immediate benefits in sub-basins and stream reaches with existing fish habitat and riparian forest cover** that are identified as priority areas in Chapter 5 for Coho Salmon and Steelhead Conservation and Restoration.
- ✓ **In-stream flows to benefit the fishery** can also be better maintained by landowners making their voluntary limitations on water diversions permanent through the terms of a conservation easement.
- ✓ Conservation easements are also very useful for restoration work that requires relatively long time periods to be most effective, such as **re-establishment of riparian vegetation, especially large mature conifers**, and the eventual recruitment of future large woody debris into streams.
- ✓ They are also an effective means to **permanently restrict especially harmful practices** so that future managers do not consider those options. This might include prohibiting or greatly limiting future timber harvest or **road building on steep inner gorges**. **Future sub-division and extensive residential building** that require new road systems, grading of unstable soils, water development and/or deforestation could also be prohibited through a conservation easement. (This might be especially desirable in the melange terrain and headwaters areas with steep and unstable slopes.)
- ✓ Further, a conservation easement can **protect the beneficial results of restoration activities that require considerable investment** to accomplish (such as riparian fencing, reforestation for habitat, road removal) against future loss, degradation or poor practices.

In general, conservation easements can be used to help achieve goals for conservation and restoration through site-specific, permanent land use restrictions. Whether funded through the charitable tax benefits possible through the gift of a conservation easement to the AVLT or through possible new funding from government sources, conservation easements can help defray the costs of restoration while ensuring permanent gains for fisheries and water quality.

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and its Abundant Natural Resources for the Benefit of Generations to Come"

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\_\_\_ **I want to volunteer** my time to work with the Anderson Valley Land Trust.

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**Thank you!**

Please mail this form and your tax-deductible contribution to:

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