

THE  
**ANDERSON  
 VALLEY  
 LAND  
 TRUST**  
 INCORPORATED



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DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION AND  
 RESTORATION OF OUR UNIQUE RURAL  
 LANDSCAPE WITH ITS ABUNDANT  
 NATURAL RESOURCES FOR THE  
 BENEFIT OF FUTURE GENERATIONS.

# GOOD DIRT

The Newsletter of the Anderson Valley Land Trust  
 Fall-Winter 2007

## 1000 ACRE CELEBRATION

By Karen Altaras

On a beautiful evening in August the board of the Anderson Valley Land Trust celebrated our "First 1000 Acres" at the Goldeneye Winery. Celebrants included members of our advisory committee along with our conservation easement holders. The seventeen easements that make up the 1000 acres protect in perpetuity significant areas of the Navarro River Watershed. Each of these easements was tailored to the wishes of the individual landowner and the specific features of their property, and protects watershed and riparian habitats, forest ecologies, grassland ecologies, organic agriculture and scenic backdrops.



With the magnificent view of the confluence of the Navarro River as our backdrop, we all enjoyed good food, wine and conversation. We would like to thank Goldeneye Winery for providing such a lovely setting. All invited received a commemorative hat, as a thank you for a job well done.

What was also celebrated was the work now being done to protect an additional 700 plus acres with easements. We thank those individuals who cherish this beautiful valley and want to preserve the natural habitats and look forward to the coming years to rapidly increase the amount of land that is protected.



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**FOREVER WILD**  
**By Barbara Goodell**

Bill Chambers has lived in Anderson Valley on his land southwest of Boonville for over twenty years. With the recent signing of his conservation easement he now knows that his land will be forever protected according to his wishes. Almost ninety-five acres of rolling to steep grass and forestland will remain wild to allow the redwood, Douglas fir, madrone, California bay, buckeye, oak habitat and its accompanying wildlife to flourish. All the water flowing in the seasonal creek with its boulders and waterfall will remain as it flows into an unnamed tributary to Robinson Creek, itself a tributary to Anderson Creek, which flows into the Navarro River. The scenic viewshed it provides from Highway 128 will be preserved. No future subdivision or activation of Certificates of Compliance will be allowed. Bill has chosen to use the easement to further protect the conservation values of his property by limiting the extent and location of future development and building, as well as prohibiting timber harvests and vineyard development.

The two residential zones will be limited to no more than 5.5 acres in aggregate and now include two residences and a historic barn and shop building. Home Occupations and Cottage Industries will be allowed in the residential zones providing they do not negatively impact the conservation zone. The land was last logged in the 1950s and, according to Emil Rossi the shop building was a laundry for many years, operating until the 1960s. In the past, the grasslands supported domestic-level grazing.

The bed of the original coach road from Mountain House to the Mendocino coast, known at the time as the McDonald-to-the-Sea Highway, traverses the property close to the unnamed seasonal creek. It dates from the 1850s until its abandonment in the 1920s when State Highway 128 was built higher up the hillside, at its current location. Bill has an article of unknown origin and date (but before Highway 101 went north of Cloverdale and probably just after the McDonald-to-the-Sea Highway was constructed judging from the photos with automobiles) called "A Motorlogue over the McDonald-to-the-Sea Highway to Fort Bragg in the Redwood Empire". It begins, "Motor tourists into the Redwood Empire will never regret their decision to leave the Redwood Highway at the big sign at Mountain House, which is at the Junction of the McDonald-to-the-Sea Highway nine miles north of Cloverdale... and traverse the scenic wonderland adjacent to this newly developed route, along the Navarro River, over the famous Navarro Highway and on up Mendocino's picturesque Coast line to Fort Bragg: thence north over the route of the Shoreline Highway to the Redwood Highway again at Laytonville... to the complete delight of newcomers into this land of Virgin Redwoods, with its varied recreations of forest and stream."



*(continued on page 7)*

**Forever Wild – continued from page 2**

Bill says he feels relieved to have the easement in place, confident that future generations can live and work on this land while protecting its natural resources. His conservation easement is consistent with the Open Space and Conservation Element of the 1981 General Plan's goal not to fragment larger parcels of forestland and will add to the thousand acres already under protection by the Land Trust in Anderson Valley.



**More Protection – continued from page 3**

There is currently one residence on the property and that is located along with an orchard in a three-acre residential zone. There will be one other one-acre residential zone allowed. Alan and future landowners may use these two zones without restrictions provided their activities do not negatively impact the conservation values that are protected by the easement.

The Land Trust holds another conservation easement on a parcel that is located a bit further along the road from Alan's property. These two easements are both in the Russian River watershed, which like the Navarro River watershed is listed under section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act with the federal Environmental Protection Agency and the California State Water Resources Control Board as a water body with impaired beneficial uses due to high stream temperatures and sedimentation. The protection provided by these easements will help contribute to the efforts to improve the health of this important watershed.



## LICORICE FERN *Polypodium glycyrrhiza*

By Jane E. Miller



A California native mostly found in areas with coastal influence and ranging from the central part of the state up to Alaska, *Polypodium glycyrrhiza* is a lovely diminutive fern that only graces us with its visual presence during the winter and spring months when rains provide the moisture it needs to present its bright green upright fronds. It grows to about a foot tall and spreads indefinitely. The author suggests her own common name of ‘hat fern’ for this plant, as its habit is to appear atop rock outcrops and low-lying tree branches, resembling a sort of cap for whatever is sustaining it. It shows a remarkable ability to grow on virtually no

soil, subsisting on just the accumulated duff that covers these supports – and a beautiful lush green show it makes, rendering it a popular subject for glossy calendar photos published by nature societies.

Although it needs damp shade to thrive, one could make the argument that *Polypodium glycyrrhiza* is an extremely water-efficient plant in that it simply pulls a disappearing act during the dry summer months, only poking its emerald-colored leaves up again when rains commence. Thus it is truly subsisting on whatever natural precipitation is available. For those who wish to try this appealing little fern in their own gardens, *Sunset Western Garden Book* suggests providing leaf mold or other organic matter and some shade.

Since it is a true fern, *Polypodium glycyrrhiza* won’t display a pretty show of flowers, or any flowers at all for that matter, because ferns reproduce from spores, rather than seeds. You can see these tiny wonders by scrutinizing the underside of some fronds – the spores appear as small rusty-brown dots. You can even discern their presence from the upper surface of the frond, as these spores create small raised bumps that are readily visible upon close inspection.

Licorice Fern spreads widely by underground stems, called ‘rhizomes’, thus the derivation of its botanical name from the Greek ‘*polys*’ meaning ‘many’ and *pous* meaning ‘foot’. Look for this lovely little fern after the rains have begun in earnest when you’re taking a hike in the local woodlands. *Polypodium glycyrrhiza* is easily confused with another very similar-looking fern, *Polypodium californicum*, but there are subtle differences. The leaflet tips of the former are pointed, while those of the latter tend to be rounded – so examine closely! According to some sources, gently chewing on the fronds elicits a licorice-sweet taste, thus the common name. So, a potential adventure for some of you to undertake...

## MORE PROTECTION FOR THE RUSSIAN RIVER WATERSHED

By Susan Addison



Eighteen years ago Alan Porter bought forty acres of rolling grassland and forest in the hills to the west of Yorkville. This spring he decided that he wished to preserve the conservation values of the property by placing a conservation easement on the land with The Anderson Valley Land Trust. This easement protects the property from subdivision, limits the extent and location of future development and building; prohibits timber harvests and vineyard development; and dedicates water in the seasonal creek to in-stream flow. The property has healthy, relatively undisturbed mixed evergreen and hardwood forest and open grasslands that provide habitat for a wide variety of plants and animals. In the spring the grassy slopes are covered with colorful wildflowers and in the fall the deciduous oaks and maples herald the change of seasons with glowing reds and golds. There are also a couple of relatively undisturbed seasonal creeks that drain into a primary tributary of the Russian River.



(continued on page 7)

***A letter from the President:***

Dear Friends,

Wow, what a year this has been for AVLTL! We recently held a "First 1000 Acre" celebration and we are actively working on 6 new easements to add an additional 700 plus acres, which we hope to complete by the end of the year or shortly thereafter.

The amount of work the AVLTL Board has put into making this our best year ever is impressive. Alan Porter, with his vast experience in conservation easements, has been writing many of our easements, with help from Kathy Bailey, utilizing her extensive knowledge of forest ecology. Kathy, along with Barbara Goodell and Susan Addison have been working on baselines, with Susan also writing easements, collecting data, and coordinating our efforts. Patrick Miller has been invaluable with his mapping expertise and has again taken on all the mapping of our new easements. This has truly been a group effort with every board member putting in many hours, whether it is working on new easements or monitoring the 1000 acres.

In September, Ed Short resigned from the AVLTL Board and while we will miss his presence, he has generously agreed to be our "professional" volunteer. He will continue to help with our monitoring and as always, with his legal background, his advice will be appreciated. Susan Addison has returned to the board taking Ed's place. She has worked the past few years as our Executive Director managing the office, writing easements, and keeping our organization running. She is continuing with many of these tasks but we have recently hired an Administrative Assistant to decrease the amount of time Susan has to spend in the office.

The AVLTL was pleased when Shelly Englert accepted our part-time Administrative Assistant position in August. Shelly and her husband, Jay, have lived in Anderson Valley since 1998, and while she is extremely busy home schooling her two young children, she is eager to be involved with the AVLTL. She has a degree in Environmental Science, extensive computer skills and has been working as a cartographer since 1996. With these skills along with her organizational abilities and enthusiasm we are pleased she has joined our efforts to preserve the Navarro River watershed.

We appreciate your past support and hope you will use the enclosed envelope to renew your support or become a new donor.

Thank you,

Karen Altaras  
President



**WE SAY THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS**

We are able to continue our conservation work at home in Anderson Valley in 2007 thanks to donations from the following wonderful people:

|                             |                                  |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Michael and Susan Addison   | Philip and Sue Frame             |
| Ms. Mary Stuart Alvord      | George Gaines                    |
| Eric Anderson               | Cathy Garrett and Laurel Headley |
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| Dan Dodt & Linda Blacketer  | Clare Rolph Wheeler              |
| Kathy Down & Gregory Kelly  | John Wiley & Sons                |
| Elizabeth Dusenberry        | Toni & Dale Wise                 |
| Thom Elkjer                 |                                  |

**At Least 70 ½ Years Old ?**

Great news! If you are....

- At least 70 ½ years old,
- Taking mandatory distributions from your IRA, and
- Looking for a way to support AVLTL tax-free...

Legislation has come to our attention that allows a person 70 ½ years old or older, who takes mandatory distributions from a Roth or Traditional IRA, to make a donation to a non-profit without incurring income tax on withdrawals totaling \$100,000 this year. This provision is only effective for the 2007 tax year, so you must act by December 31, 2007 to take advantage of this opportunity.

