

GOOD DIRT

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ANDERSON VALLEY LAND TRUST
Spring, 2023

AN AVLT PROJECT KICKS OFF

Philo-Greenwood Beach Public Access and Navarro River Restoration Concept Plan



From Left: Congressman Jared Huffman, Barbara Goodell (AVLT), Supervisor Ted Williams, and Supervisor Glen McGourty at a “kick-off” field trip about the Bridge Rehabilitation and Widening Project and Philo-Greenwood Beach public access and river restoration. Photo: Yoriko Kishimoto

Below the Philo-Greenwood Road bridge is the Philo-Greenwood Beach, or Philo Beach, or as once called many years ago, River’s Rest. For generations of Anderson Valley residents and visitors to Hendy Woods State Park, Philo-Greenwood Beach has been used for sunbathing, picnicking, water play, swimming, and access to boat down the Navarro River.



Painting by Malcolm West. Giclee prints (archival inks on watercolor paper) are available from Margaret Pickens 707.397.0424 or email margaret.westart@gmail.com.

The Anderson Valley Land Trust (AVLT) has taken the lead and garnered initial support to conduct a

community-based planning and design project for public access facilities and riparian restoration along the river’s edge from the following:

- Mendocino Redwood Company (property owner)
- Mendocino County Board of Supervisors
- Anderson Valley Community Services District
- California State Parks
- Hendy Woods Community (non-profit)
- Save the Redwoods League



Photo: K. Bailey

With representatives from these organizations and with the assistance of Congressman Jared Huffman’s office, a kick-off field trip to the bridge and beach happened in February. It was agreed that, at a minimum, the project will result in a conceptual site plan that identifies:

- A specific public access facilities program (off-street parking, restrooms, and beach access routes, etc.) to access the beach and river
- The precise property needed for those facilities
- Costs for environmental review, permitting, design, and construction

The project will also include discussions for how the property would be transferred to public ownership, operated, and maintained.

Based on funding availability, future aspects of the planning and design could include:

- Environmental baseline studies
- Engineered survey and site plan refinement
- Property appraisal



Photo: K. Bailey

Parking to access Philo-Greenwood Beach has historically occurred on an informal basis along the shoulders of the Philo-Greenwood Road and around the entrance to Hendy Woods State Park.

In 2012 the AVLT, in partnership with the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program and the Anderson Valley Community Services District through a grant from California State Parks, Division of Boating and Waterways, studied the feasibility of a water trail from Hendy Woods State Park to the mouth of the Navarro River at Navarro Beach in Navarro River Redwoods State Park.



Photo: K. Bailey

One aspect of that study was documenting the use levels and access conditions at various points along the river used by the general public including the beach. Field observations found that up to 175

people use the beach per day during the prime summer recreation season.



In 2013 Mendocino County determined the need to replace the Philo-Greenwood Road bridge across the Navarro River and preliminary designs were prepared that would keep the arched bridge architecture. The County has indicated that a portion of the Mendocino Redwood Company property near the bridge would serve as the construction staging area. In terms of future public access, the potential synergy between use as a construction staging area and post-construction use as a public access staging area is clear.

If you would like to be informed of upcoming meetings and receive ongoing information about the plans as they are developed, send us an e-mail at avlt@mcn.org using the subject **Philo-Greenwood Beach**.



Living with Wildfire in Anderson Valley

A successful community workshop was held in January thanks to the Anderson Valley Fire Department and a host of co-sponsors including the AVLT. Fire Chief Avila taught everyone with enticing graphics and photos how wildfire behavior is influenced by topography, fuel, and weather. Audience questions and subsequent discussions revolved around how to make informed decisions about property management and home safety to avoid catastrophe. These include vegetation management using mechanical means and through prescribed burning.

Future field visits were recommended to observe how controlled burning, if done properly, would benefit fire resiliency in the landscape.

President's Message

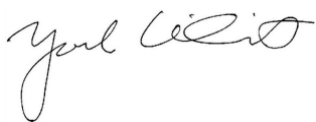
Anderson Valley is a special place with incredible natural beauty. But it is a spectacular place at a special moment in time because of its people.

The 130 enthusiastic and knowledgeable people who came out for the Anderson Valley Resilient Lands Symposium was a rousing confirmation of this. We had known about the natural resources of Anderson Valley - the river and watershed, the redwood and oak forests, the productive vineyards, the sheer biodiversity that comes from the collision of the sea with inland, the mountains with the riverbeds. But when all these people and organizations came out of the woodwork for the Symposium, people sat up and noticed.

- We are getting more and more enquiries about conservation easements as a way to protect land, resources and wildlife.
- Funding organizations see Anderson Valley as the perfect community with a balance of viable agriculture, forests, and natural creeks and rivers. It's worth saving.
- You'll read in this newsletter about what our incredible board of directors and volunteers are doing, working with the Resource Conservation District, Fire Department, County Transportation, private land owners and many other groups.

Just think what we can do if we can SUSTAIN leadership to make our forests, vineyards, orchards, small farms, and grazing lands both economically productive and environmentally sustainable for the coming decades. We can do this by taking even better care of our soils and watersheds, our trees and biodiversity. AVLT is playing a key community role in passing on knowledge so that we can effectively take better care of the land.

Please add yourself to the community of donors and supporters to the Anderson Valley Conservation Fund to help us grow our organization. Keep this momentum going - we can't do it without you!



Yoriko Kishimoto



What is the Anderson Valley Conservation Fund?

Late in 2022, the AVLT Board of Directors established a special Anderson Valley Conservation Fund “dedicated to the sustainability and growth of the AVLT”. The AVLT as an organization is at its own watershed moment. After a successful 32+ years, the number of easements the AVLT holds and manages continues to grow as has the AVLT's reputation of working with private property owners to conserve their land in perpetuity. As the one-of-a-kind conservation organization in Anderson Valley, the AVLT's programs focus the public's attention on the natural resources specific to the watershed. However, all of the AVLT's work to date (conservation easements, conservation monitoring, outreach programs, and fundraising) has essentially been conceived, organized, and conducted by a dedicated Board of Directors who all volunteer their time.

Along with the organization's traditional activities, the Anderson Valley Conservation Fund will allow AVLT staff to:

- Develop a strategic plan for targeting proactive conservation activities by the AVLT particularly as it relates to agriculture and open space.
- Develop and expand partnerships with resource agencies and other private organizations to fund the purchase of conservation easements.
- Take the lead to develop and manage publicly accessible park, open space lands, and trails in Anderson Valley.
- Play a more proactive role within the Anderson Valley community in fostering a conservation ethic through an expanded outreach program.
- Secure Land Trust Alliance accreditation.
- Be more involved with Mendocino County in its land use planning.

AVLT: A Team Member in Building a Climate Resilient Navarro River Watershed

Think back to the October, 2022 Anderson Valley Resilient Lands Symposium organized by the AVLT, the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District, and the Anderson Valley Winegrowers Association. One of the building blocks that could be thought of as “a next step” from the Symposium has been the award of a \$250,000 grant from the Environmental Defense Fund to the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District / Navarro River Resource Center. That grant is to take a humanistic and scientific look building climate resiliency in the Navarro River watershed.

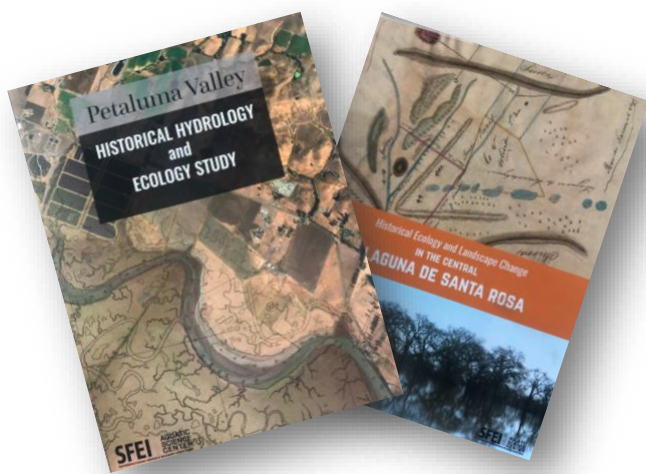


envision future conservation activities that could achieve the maximum resiliency (and maximum carbon credit) for the watershed.

An important component for the project is working with individual landowners to identify: (1) those willing to implement actions appropriate for that landowner’s landscape; and, (2) groups of landowners willing to collaborate to expand the benefits of the activities to meaningful scales. Since the implementation of management activities is ultimately an ongoing process that will not terminate with this project, the project goals are to identify a set of realistic pilot activities where the implementation, monitoring, and data tracking systems can be developed and tested over time. All of which will make our watershed more resilient to climate change and a beacon of conservation.

The stewardship of natural and working landscapes plays an important role in mitigating and adapting to the changing climate. Natural and working landscapes store and reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions in many ways. Targeted forest management and restoration activities including actions in oak, coniferous, and riparian forests, can result in protecting and increasing carbon stocks. Implementing climate-smart agricultural and grazing practices, both important economic drivers in the watershed, can increase soil carbon levels, help reduce soil loss, increase the soil water holding capacity, lower methane production, and provide other important climate benefits. Of course, the implementation of practices that conserve and restore natural and working landscapes provide a myriad of related benefits, including sustaining agriculture productivity, improving water quality, enhancing biodiversity, increasing ecosystem resilience, and improving human well-being.

Stay tuned for upcoming announcements for workshops and community meetings this year to build on and continue the resilient lands conversation and what climate resiliency means to us as a community.



So what does this mean? Without getting into a lot of technical detail, the project will overview the natural resources of the watershed and identify nature-based conservation opportunities that we as a community can implement and that will have climate benefits in terms of greenhouse gasses and overall watershed resiliency.

The AVLT is assisting in stakeholder involvement and identifying realistic pilot projects property owners can take to make their lands more resilient to climate change. One particularly exciting aspect of the work is that the AVLT and our partners at the San Francisco Estuary Institute, with its long history of evaluating watershed functions, will look at the “historical ecology” of the Navarro River watershed and Anderson Valley. What the land cover of the watershed looked like mid-19th century will be identified. Why? Analyzing historical ecology is not about recreating the past. It is to establish a vegetation / ecology baseline to understand the drivers of environmental change and to help

OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBER



If you've been to a Grange Pancake Breakfast, you've likely glimpsed Bill Meyer at the stove deftly flipping sourdough pancakes. He has always been expertly behind the scenes at the Variety Show and now we are very happy to report that Bill said, "I like to help out..." and joined the AVL T Board of Directors.

With his wife Gail, Bill has been an integral part of the Valley for 43 years. He started out in 1980 working for Norman Charles at the Christmas Tree Farm in Philo utilizing his expert fence building and farrier skills and then, "The phone never stopped ringing."

Bill grew up in the Bay Area and has always liked animals and outdoor activities; he is very happy that he has fulfilled a childhood fantasy of living on a beautiful homestead where he could have a garden, orchard, and horses. He feels like his two children had a great opportunity to grow up in AV because of our great community where you can enjoy cross-age friendships and know a great portion of the community. Welcome, Bill!

A Few Thoughts: For the "Not Full-Time Residents of Anderson Valley" who are now reading this issue of Good Dirt

We all know that Anderson Valley and the Navarro River watershed, that shelters Anderson Valley from the outside world, is a truly special place in all of California. Back in 2003 the New York Times published an article titled "The Anderson Valley: Behind the Redwoods, a California Dream." Of course, the Times added "The" to the title which is not the way we refer to our valley home . . . or our home away from home for that matter.

We know those of you where Anderson Valley is a home away from home, like full time residents, "fell in love" with Anderson Valley. We bet you realize that, among many other forces (like the fact there are no straight roads to Anderson Valley) it is the Navarro River, the naturalness of redwood and oak landscapes, a sense of open space, the rural character, the quirky culture, and the world-class wine, beer, and produce that drew you here.

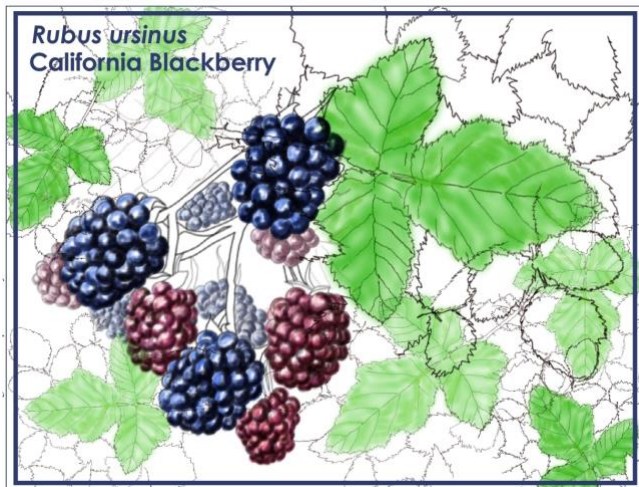
AVLT's mission statement is "Dedicated to the preservation and restoration of our unique rural landscape with its abundant natural resources for

the benefit of future generations." Your support, most importantly, helps the only land conservation organization in Anderson Valley move forward. We invite you to be a member of the community, through your generosity, as well as through the events and programs offered by AVL T. It is AVL T that indeed is helping keep Anderson Valley rural, natural, rich in wildlife, and "California's own Shangri-La" as the New York Times article also stated. Please take a look the 'donation options' page on our web site. An investment in AVL T is an investment in your home away from home.



"It is every man's obligation to put back into the world at least the equivalent of what he takes out of it."

Albert Einstein



Rubus ursinus
California Blackberry

Our featured plant for this issue is *Rubus ursinus*, commonly known as California or Pacific blackberry. It is a somewhat upright, rambling shrub comprising many tangled branches covered with curved prickles, as are the palmately compound leaves. They are dark green with toothed edges and typically sport 3 leaflets. This characteristic, although not foolproof, is a key way to distinguish this California native (and also other parts of the west) from its even more aggressive naturalized cousin, *Rubus armeniacus*, Himalayan blackberry, that typically has 5 leaflets per leaf. Both these species are vigorous plants that grow rapidly, can spread by branches rooting when they touch moist ground, and can help with erosion control, especially on stream banks.

California blackberry displays attractive white to pinkish flowers with a slight fragrance that are followed by the prize: sweet delicious blackberries (usually in late summer/fall) that, while usually smaller than their marketed counterparts, are quite tasty indeed. But due to the prickles, as one source states, harvesting them can be “unpleasant” - wear gloves! Long gloves!

The genus name, *Rubus* is derived from Latin meaning “bramble”, that is an apt description and also includes raspberries.

Blackberries are also a favorite snack of bears, a tidbit reflected in the species name of *ursinus*, derived from being related to bears (the Latin word for bear being “ursa”). Other wildlife relies on the fruit for its diets too, including deer and songbirds. Quail love to hang out in this shrub’s abundant cover.

Rubus ursinus is typically found in woods, open areas and disturbed sites, at low to mid elevations. Its sprawling stems are common alongside trails and can easily catch on the clothing of unsuspecting hikers.

California blackberry has been useful in the breeding of other types of similar berries, such as loganberries, boysenberries, and marionberries. There is even a cultivar ‘Wild Treasure’ that was released in 2010 that has no prickles, so easier to pick! Also easier to maintain in a cultivated garden, where the canes can be espaliered to save space. The plants prefer ample water to produce larger fruit, but according to some sources, the smaller wild berries are the most flavorful.

So stock up on ice cream, roll out the pie dough, and on your late summer and autumn hikes, keep an eye out for this tasty surprise snack!

This may be the Spring issue of Good Dirt, however we wanted everyone to remember “what a winter it was!”



Near Anderson Creek



Way above Boonville

THANK YOU! TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS

Anderson Valley Conservation Fund

We wish to thank everyone for your contributions over the last year as it is your support that keeps the AVLT going. We also want to specifically thank the many individuals who so generously contributed to our new Anderson Valley Conservation Fund. Meeting our goal of raising \$40,000 will help our organization grow and keep up with the times while helping Anderson Valley stay natural and rural with working lands. You know who you are and without your support we could not envision a bright future for the AVLT. **THANK YOU!**

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AVLT 2022 Financial Statement

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds*
Current Assets		
Operating Accounts	\$ 34,898.00	
Pioneer Stewardship Fund		\$ 29,508.00
Stewardship Endowment*		\$370,387.00
Conservation Fund	\$ 60,000.00	
Total	\$ 94,898.00	\$399,895.00
Total Support & Revenue	\$ 71,818.00	
Expenses		
Operating Expenses (including payroll)	\$ 55,862.00	
Easement Defense		\$ 17,034.00
Portfolio Value Decrease		\$ 81,909.00
Total Expenses	\$ 55,862.00	

* restricted funds for the protection of our easements.

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“Dedicated to the Preservation and Restoration of Our Unique Rural Landscape”

INSIDE DIRT

**PHILO -GREENWOOD BEACH PUBLIC
ACCESS AND RIVER RESTORATION
CONCEPT PLAN**

LIVING WITH WILDFIRE WORKSHOP

PRESIDENT’S LETTER

**WHAT IS THE ANDERSON VALLEY
CONSERVATION FUND?**

**EDF GRANT: BUILDING A CLIMATE
RESILIENT NAVARRO RIVER WATERSHED**

OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBER

FOR THOSE WHO READ GOOD DIRT

CALIFORNIA BLACKBERRY

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Kishimoto, Linda Macelwee, Bill Meyer,
Jane Miller, Patrick Miller



SAVE THE DATE

**A SPECIAL EVENT FOR THE
ANDERSON VALLEY CONSERVATION
FUND**

A late afternoon social
in the organic architecture of
internationally recognized architect
Aaron Green
an associate of Frank Lloyd Wright

July 29, 2023

Reservation information and further
details are coming. Sign up for
our programs / events email list
(if you are not already)
by contacting us at avlt@mcn.org

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