



SOUTHERN
OREGON
LAND
CONSERVANCY

Terra Firma Times

Summer 2014

A Landowner's Dream

Pat Gordon has had a dream for 42 years. Ever since purchasing her 82-acre woodland property near Ruch in 1971, conservation has been a priority. Protecting the land from subdivision and poor management has been a goal. In August, that goal and dream will be satisfied when she signs an agreement with the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy ensuring her wishes will be upheld in perpetuity. Her conservation journey has taken some turns along the way, but Pat, whose life has been about service and giving back, never gave up.

Pat was born and raised in Pennsylvania, began her teaching career in California, and later earned a Master's Degree in Library Science from UC Berkeley. She was a community organizer and first librarian for



the Ruch Community Library and subsequently worked for the Jackson County Library system for 16 years. She came to the Applegate Valley from Berkeley, moving onto her woodland property on the vernal equinox in 1972. Even though she considered herself an urbanite, she assumed a land stewardship role with passion. The health of the land was her first priority, and for years she sought the advice of experienced foresters, agen-

cies and managers. But, as Pat says, "life happened" and management activities got put on the back burner when her son, Luke, was born and she and her former husband opened the first La Burrita restaurant in Phoenix.

The 1980s, however, brought years of drought and conifer mortality. This motivated Pat to increase management using a plan that small woodlands consultant Marty Main developed with her to reduce fire risk, enhance wildlife habitat, and restore forest health and resiliency. Pat started thinning the forest, using horses for

logging at first. For her stewardship efforts since then she was named the 1996-97 Jackson County Tree Farmer of the Year and the Applegate Valley Fire Department presented her their 2001 Fuel Reduction Award. She additionally has been recognized as a Watershed Friendly Steward.

Pat's property is remarkably diverse and contains a mix of evergreen forest, oak woodland, meadow, and chaparral that provides habitat for a wide variety of wildlife and plants. The land is surrounded on 3½ sides by BLM, making her property an important wildlife corridor because of its location, length and connection. It's a natural thoroughfare for deer, cougar, bear, gray fox and coyote.

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Forester Pat circa 2000

Director's

Message

Diane Garcia, Executive Director



Dear Friends,

This July marked my 11th anniversary with the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy. In some ways it feels like a lifetime, and in other ways it feels like yesterday. The years have brought tremendous growth, both personally and professionally, and while I still hold dear the same values I had in 2003, I have learned that without the hard work, passion and persistence of many good people to create change, what I cherish about my home may be greatly altered in the years to come.

I am in awe of the people I have gotten to know over this time who are truly making life better here. People like Kristi Mergenthaler, who holds in her head and heart everything special about plants and critters, Dan Kellogg, who devoted years to training and supporting me along with Alex Liston Dykema our attorney, Bill Morrish who has been the clos-

est thing to a co-director as a board member could be, Pat Acklin, Su Rolle, Donna Rhee, Nancy Tait, Al Buck, the list goes on. To name all the people who have inspired me and made me proud to be part of this organization would take the entire newsletter. All the members, trustees, funders, partners, volunteers and staff, who give their time, money, and expertise to pursue our mission and create our success. And thanks to my husband Dave, who helped start this organization in 1978. My gratitude to all of you.

From all these folks, I have learned how important it is to work hard to preserve what's so special here. What we just can't lose.

When I started, I didn't know much about the natural world other than how I felt in it. (Science wasn't my thing as a kid; I was a math girl.) But over the years I have learned about native plants, invasive species, why

we need a diverse forest, how protecting land is so important to prevent species loss, how a day in nature can change a child forever, and what riparian means. I've also learned it's important to know how to read a profit and loss statement and create play time with your staff.

Now it's time to work even harder because it seems that time is passing by even faster (part of aging I'm told).

My goals include building our capacity as we get closer to reaching 20,000 acres of protected land by finding the people and resources to ensure protection in perpetuity. I also want that flagship piece of land that we can own and manage and use to engage our community. We need larger office space to handle our growing organization, and I'd like to see more of you be involved in some way or another. That's how we're going to make the changes needed to keep this place as special as it is today. I think that's what we all want. A place where people, plants, wildlife, trees, birds, fish, all life, can live together in harmony and peace.

Thanks for 11 great years!

For the Land,

Printing for Conservation

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Conservation Area Update

Little Butte Creek

The Little Butte Creek area is one of the most outstanding conservation areas in the Rogue River Basin. It is the stronghold of coho salmon spawning and rearing in the upper Rogue, and contains some of the largest and most productive ranches in southwest Oregon.

This area, located in Jackson County near Eagle Point east of the Rogue River, also contains important wildlife habitat. Black tailed deer, elk and California quail love the open space ranch lands, and western meadowlarks (Oregon's state bird, which is in decline) are commonly found singing in the fields, and Peregrine

falcons nest in the rocky Wasson Canyon off Highway 140.

The area also contains much of the region's irreplaceable pine-oak woodlands and oak savannas. Recognizing these and other extraordinary attributes, the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy selected this area as one of its highest priority focus areas for conservation in the Rogue River region.

Much of the upper Little Butte Creek watershed is managed by the U.S. Forest Service and BLM, but most of the western part of the area is privately-owned and is the area that we can help preserve. We

currently protect 2,220 acres in the Little Butte area, including several valuable riparian holdings, 1,660 acres of the C2 Ranch and the Woolfolk Reservoir Property with a year-round 33-acre reservoir.

Our goal in the Little Butte area is to protect working farms and ranches from development and to improve habitat for people and wildlife.

We're collaborating with the Little Butte Creek Watershed Council, and Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District in order to identify the highest priority lands and private landowners interested in conservation.

(continued from front page)

Now in her seventies and needing "to find the next stewards," Pat hopes younger folks will be interested in the property so it can be cared for as it has been for the past 42 years. Most important to her is that the property never be subdivided or clear-cut in the future, both of which are restricted in the conservation agreement we've created with her. A parcel below her that was once 40 acres is now divided into 8 parcels, something she's committed to prevent. "I hope that is part of my legacy here".

Thanks to Pat and her desire to see wise stewardship continue on her land, that is a wish we are honored to help make possible.



A gray fox poses on Pat's porch

Beautiful Bumble Bees in Decline...

You Can Help Bring Them Back! by Kristi Mergenthaler

She was last seen foraging on lupine and Siskiyou mint in a wet meadow on Mt. Ashland in 2006. She was exquisitely garbed in furry black, yellow, and white and observed carrying orange pollen baskets. The Franklin's bumble bee was once common in northwest California and southwest Oregon, but now may be extinct. The rapid decline of honeybees and monarch butterflies is widely reported by the media, but populations of many other pollinators are also declining, including native bees. Sadly, about one-third of bumble bee species may be threatened or critically endangered.

Why should we care about bumble bees? If you love mountain wildflowers and the birds that eat their seeds, you should care. If you like to eat tomatoes, peppers and blueberries, you should care. Eight percent of the world's flowering plants depend solely on buzz pollination – a technique only bumbles use to obtain pollen from partially closed flowers, like a monkshood flower; they buzz in the note of C against the petals to release pollen. Imagine bumble music in the frequency of an electric toothbrush, and then, a rain of pollen.

Male bumble bees don't live in the all-female colonies and often sleep alone in flowers. Imagine never having the chance to peer into a flower and be delighted by a sleeping bumble.

The threats to bumble bees are overwhelming and include the usual suspects: habitat destruction and degradation, overuse of pesticides, conventional monoculture agriculture,

the loss of hedgerows and un-mowed places, over-grazing, and even pathogens originating from the commercial bumble bee industry.

Well "Hope" is the thing with feathers as Emily Dickinson wrote in a poem, and, hope is also small furry buzzing bodies. We all can help the bumble bee; here's how:

♡ *Continue to support land conservation and restoration and promote smart development that reduces further habitat fragmentation.*

♡ *Support organic farms, farms that use integrated pest management, and farmers that plant or retain pollinator habitat. Thank your local farmer for promoting pollinator health.*

♡ *Control noxious invasive weeds. They threaten natural areas and reduce flowering plant biodiversity.*

♡ *Reduce or halt the use of insecticides, especially for aesthetic purposes.*

♡ *Be a citizen scientist and participate in Bumble Bee Watch: <http://bumblebeewatch.org/>.*

♡ *Ask plant nurseries and retailers to not sell plants treated with neonicotinoids, a persistent insecticide especially toxic to pollinators. Buy insecticide-free flowers from local nurseries.*

♡ *And lastly, plant lots of flowers, preferably native plants arranged in clumps of individual species.*

Choose flowers that bloom from early spring to late summer, such as early flowering shrubs like Oregon-grape, white-leaf manzanita, and flowering current. Add late-flowering plants like aster, sagebrush, rabbitbrush and

goldenrod. Include some bunch-grasses which provide overwintering sites for solo queens. And if possible, leave bare patches, brush piles and unmaintained areas for overwintering and nesting sites. Try to be tolerant of lawn weeds like dandelion and clover (or consider removing your lawn and plant flowers). If you can, plant milkweed for monarchs and bees. And join us in hoping for a report of a Franklin's bumble bee sighting in the near future.



Franklin's Bumble Bee photo by Peter C. Schroeder

“Hope” is the thing with feathers

Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul,
And sings the tune without the words,
And never stops at all.

And sweetest in the gale is heard;
And sore must be the storm
That could abash the little bird
That kept so many warm.

I've heard it in the chillest land,
And on the strangest sea;
Yet, never, in extremity,
It asked a crumb of me.

~ Emily Dickenson

And the Award Goes to.....Marty Main

At our 36th Member Appreciation Day and Annual Meeting in June, Marty Main was presented with the 2014 Conservation Award for his lifetime commitment to stewarding the forests of Southern Oregon.

For nearly 30 years, Marty has operated Small Woodland Services, Inc. (SWS), a small scale forestry company in southwest Oregon that provides full spectrum services, from planting and restoration, to planning, fuels reduction and harvest. He has also served as the consulting forester for the City of Ashland and has been active in community outreach and education projects in collaboration with the USDA Forest Service, The Nature Conservancy, Southern Oregon University and Southern Oregon Land Conservancy. But whoever the audience and wherever the forest, Main's approach has been the same, "I've always wanted to let the land do the talking. That's what's been missing."

Marty helps small woodlot owners gain a better understanding of their forests and accomplish their

goals, whether they are managing for economic return, fire hazard reduction, forest diversification or the development of an aesthetically pleasing home site. Over the years SWS, with a core group of one to six employees, has worked with hundreds of landowners, and numerous municipalities and agencies across southwest Oregon.

Marty has produced many management plans for SOLC conserved lands and has been a member of our Lands Advisory Board for over a decade as well as a former board member.

Tom Atzet, who presented Marty with his award, used three words to describe Marty: kind, thoughtful and respectful. For all those who have worked with Marty know that he is a humble man, gentle in spirit, thoughtful to the natural and human world, and respectful of all life on the earth. Those qualities may

seem contradictory to the image of a forester, but that is exactly what makes Marty so unique, and that is why he was honored. He joins a long list of individuals that have made lasting contributions to conservation in our region. Congratulations Marty!



Portland Students Volunteer, and You Can, Too!

Seventy-five students and teachers from the Portland Episcopal School volunteered in Southern Oregon for work and play (as in Shakespeare) and helped pull invasive weeds at the Sky King Cole property so that native species can thrive on this conserved land.

If your group (Church, Synagogue, Garden Club, Knitting Circle, Dinner Club, Hiking Group, etc.) would like to do some conservation work, learn a little about plants, trees and critters, and improve our precious landscape, give us a call. Thanks PES Volunteers!



Welcome New Board Members

Keith Emerson



Keith and his wife Charlene and their grandson, Samuel

Like many residents of the Rogue Valley area, I grew up somewhere else and had the good fortune to relocate here. I entered the agricultural field early on, starting in my family's southern California orange groves, and eventually to Harry and David where I worked as Orchard Production Manager for 15 years. I helped transform 1,000 acres into new orchards and saw the land come alive again with promising new pear trees. I have since moved to the fulfillment side of the company, but preserving farmland is still near and dear to my heart, especially after seeing the orange groves that my grandfather farmed long ago transition to housing developments.

Today, I live outside Talent in the Anderson Creek drainage with my wife, Charlene. We love gardening and spending time with our kids and grandkids. We're also avid hikers and outdoor enthusiasts. I'm excited to join the Board of Directors of the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy, especially because we can provide tools to legacy landowners and their families who have owned and nurtured their property, often over several generations, and who wish to see it remain for future generations to learn from and enjoy.

Eric Poole

I first discovered the Rogue Valley in the spring of 1992. I was driving to Canada to start a bike trip that would take me back down to the Bay Area. We stopped in Ashland for the evening and within 15 minutes of being in town, I knew that I wanted to live here.

I was drawn to the area because of the wonderful access to the outdoors. So in 1999, my wife Stacy and I moved here permanently, and we have put down strong roots in the community, which now include our two daughters (Allie who is 11 and Aimee who is 9).

I have a small real estate company, Full Circle Real Estate, which has been based in Ashland since 2006. Full Circle Real Estate is a very proud member of 1% For The Planet (onepercentfortheplanet.org) where we donate 1% of our gross revenues to local environmental causes, including Southern Oregon Land Conservancy.

I realize that a lot of residents in this area are similar to myself and have been drawn to the Rogue Valley because of the nice balance between the vibrant communities and the great access to the outdoors. This balance is one of



Eric with Stacy, Aimee and Allie

the main reasons why I feel strongly about being on the board of the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy. This balance is worth pursuing and, to the extent that we can, keeping in place for future generations.

Tom Johnston & Fran Aversa

Member Profile



Tom and Fran have been members since 2007. They started the Acre a Month Club, donating generously to land protection each month, and making it possible for us to complete important conservation projects.

What brought you to this area?

Fran: We moved here from Nebraska because of the progressive attitudes here. Tom was in administration at the community college and I was the director of research and evaluation for a distance learning program. We were looking for a place where we could put down roots, and this was it.

What do you love most about our area?

Fran: What I love is the variety. It reminds me of Nebraska, and it also reminds me of Massachusetts, where I'm from. It has a little of everything.

Tom: I grew up in California. When you cross the border, it's more than just a different state, it's a different environment, and we

saw so much of the natural beauty there lost.

Fran: as a child, I remember so many beautiful places that I thought would always stay that way. But we know that's not the way it is, unless people do something to take care of them.

Tom: When you realize you can lose something, it becomes so much more important to you.

What influenced your love of the natural world?

Tom: My grandparents lived in Big

Pine, California, population 300. He and his three brothers shared one bank account. My grandfather was a sheep rancher and I'd get on the Greyhound bus and go visit him as a kid. They eventually had to sell their land, but that experience gave me a sense of what's important in life, and what can be lost.

What inspired you to become involved with SOLC?

Fran: It's such a gorgeous area, so much natural beauty, and we want to be part of it continuing to stay that way. We like how you work.

Tom: I would hope that this little pocket here, this gem, will stay as "Oretopia", where the newcomers and the old timers can work together to ensure it remains as it is. If we can preserve this, we can be an example for other small communities to create their own "Oretopia", and who knows, maybe even save the whole world.

We love that idea. Thanks so much Tom and Fran!

Leave a Legacy

The Southern Oregon Land Conservancy accepts gifts of stock, real estate, land and other assets.

These gifts make it possible for our land protection work to last more than a lifetime.

If you'd like to explore making a tax-deductible gift now or in the future, please contact us.



Hikers enjoy learning about butterflies on the Sky King Cole property



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Founded in 1978, the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy works to protect and enhance precious land in the Rogue River region to benefit our natural and human communities.



Save the Date

2014 Conservation Celebration

Saturday, October 18, 2014

Join us at the Ashland Springs Hotel to celebrate our conservation successes and help us reach our goal of protecting 20,000 acres!

*Invitations mailed in September
RSVP at landconserve.org*

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