



Central Valley Farmland Trust

Legacy

Summer 2010

Easement Monitoring – What it Really Means



This issue of Legacy is produced in memory of Linda Macedo, Please see page 2.

Magneson Organic Dairy in Merced County

On a drizzly day in early March, volunteers and staff spent time monitoring easement properties. In spite of the rain, it was a wonderful opportunity to re-connect with landowners and enjoy the beauty of the valley we experience in late winter/early spring each year. The almond and peach trees were in full bloom and bees were beginning their work of polination.

Those who follow the work of CVFT know we've been busy working with landowners to place agricultural conservation easements on Central Valley farmland. These easement projects take a minimum of 12 months to complete and use the expertise of a team of people skilled in the areas of finance, appraisals, real estate law, taxes, science, and land and water management.

What you may not know is that our work on these projects does not end with the completion of

an easement. As an accredited land trust, we are required to monitor each easement on an annual basis. According to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, easement monitoring is defined as: an annual documented visual inspection of a conservation easement protected property to ensure that the terms of the easement are being upheld, with on-the-ground physical inspection as the site warrants.

Many conserved properties in the mid-west are very large, consisting of thousands of acres per easement, and very difficult to monitor effectively on the ground. Typically the land trusts that hold those easements monitor them from the air. In contrast, the majority of the easements held by CVFT are smaller farms that are easily viewed on the ground.

Our monitoring efforts are accomplished by a very capable team of volunteers who have the skills and expertise required to monitor farmland. Most recently,

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Bill Martin

Executive Director Message

Long ago I was working through a difficult situation and I asked my dad if he could share any wisdom. He said, "Yes, wet birds don't fly at night." What!?!? He went on to explain that wisdom when offered through someone else's perspective is usually worthless. I then realized he was simply telling me to dig deep and find my own wisdom to make the right decisions and don't rely on others to improperly impact my thinking. Since the "wet birds don't fly at night" revelation, I've prided myself in doing just that.

Fast forward to the current economic environment we are facing. There is plenty of doom and gloom to go around, but that is a point of view imparted by those who do not share my perspective. This is not a self admission of greatness, but an acknowledgement that I dig deep to find my own way to help make success happen. I can point to the things CVFT, with the help of its Board and many volunteers, has accomplished over the last five years as objective and quantifiable testimony to that fact. Even in this environment there are plenty of opportunities to do great things. Our Board and volunteers have worked tirelessly to help CVFT be what it can be and as a result our ultimate success continues to evolve.

I am truly excited to be the executive director of the Central Valley Farmland Trust in this challenging environment. I know that with all your help there will be substantive progress in farmland conservation in the Central Valley over the next six to nine months. This is not an empty promise nor am I running for political office. CVFT has identified and secured funding that will help acquire a potential of 1,300 acres of new agricultural conservation easements. We will need "all hands on deck". Your financial support as well as volunteerism is more important than ever. Please call us and I promise we will put you to work to help make success happen.

CENTRAL VALLEY FARMLAND TRUST

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Bill Martin,
Executive Director

Susan Hooper,
Associate Director



Linda Macedo – In Memoriam

THE CENTRAL VALLEY FARMLAND TRUST MOURNS THE PASSING OF LINDA MACEDO.

Linda's work in farmland conservation began in 1993 with the creation of the Merced County Farmland and Open Space Trust. As Chairperson for this organization, she oversaw the completion of six agricultural conservation easements.

In 2004, Linda became a founding director of the Central Valley Farmland Trust. She was still a board member when she succumbed to cancer on April 21, 2010.

Linda was one of the early visionaries who recognized the need for farmland trusts to help landowners who were interested in permanently protecting their lands for future generations. The Central Valley is a better place to live and farm because of her passion for farmland conservation and the many hours she devoted to working with landowners. Her efforts truly made a difference that will last for many generations.

The Trust grieves the loss of this terrifically talented and inspirational individual. In recognition of this loss, we dedicate this issue of Legacy to Linda Macedo.



Donations made in memory of Linda Macedo

Richard and Bunny Brown
Favier Farms
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The accreditation seal recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent.



MONITORING continued from page 1



Magneson Organic Dairy in Merced County

our Merced County Monitoring Team spent two days monitoring the properties and completing the documentation. The team is comprised of Mike Tanner, Lonnie Hendricks and Bill Weir.

specific easement being monitored; the date of the inspection; the printed name and signature of each monitor; and observations relative to the restrictions, reserved rights, and conservation values recorded during the inspection.



Monitoring Humboldt Ranch done by (left to right) Bill Weir and Lonnie Hendricks (monitoring team members) Darrell DiGiovanni (ranch manager) and Mike Tanner (monitoring team member)

“Our monitoring volunteers exude a profound love of the land and an unparalleled passion for farmland conservation,” commented Bill Martin, Executive Director of CVFT. “They truly enjoy the monitoring work and are a valuable asset to CVFT. I can’t thank them enough for the work they do.”

Prior to the monitoring inspection, CVFT provides the monitoring team with a Monitoring Workbook for each easement. This workbook contains a baseline report and all past monitoring reports. The baseline report includes maps, exhibits and photographs of the property and documents the status of the land at the time the easement was completed. During the monitoring visit photographs are taken at the same points as photographs that appear in the baseline report. These photographs, taken year after year, provide a visual history of the property and serve as a pictorial timeline.

“I strongly believe in what the CVFT stands for and its mission,” stated Mike Tanner. “In order to remain involved with the Trust and the extremely dedicated people involved with it, I lead the annual monitoring team for Merced County. I am joined by Lonnie Hendricks and Bill Weir, both of whom are retired Farm Advisors. It is a pleasure to visit and inspect the farms and ranches whose owners have voluntarily placed their lands into Agricultural Conservation Easements. I am proud of these owners for their decision and enjoy talking with them each year.”

During each easement inspection one monitor creates written documentation of the visit. This documentation must include identification of the



Bee boxes set at Humboldt Ranch



CVFT has First Annual Crab Feed in Stockton

On February 5, supporters of farmland conservation gathered to enjoy a feast of crab and shrimp, and imbibe on a rich selection of Northern California wines. The Central Valley Farmland Trust held its first Crab Feed at the Waterloo Gun and Bocci Club in Stockton. It was wonderful to see all the families who decided to spend an evening together supporting farmland conservation. The Club's chef pulled out all stops in presenting delicious pasta, sautéed vegetables, a salad of fresh greens and endless servings of local crab and shrimp.

Before dinner, guests checked out the silent auction tables and enjoyed the rich flavors of antipasti and a full bar in the club's lounge. The evening concluded with the announcement of the winners of the silent auction. A raffle was also held and included a wide variety of items including gift baskets, wine, boxed almonds and walnuts and certificates for sporting events.



Ken Oneto shows guests a wine gift basket while Monica Bianchi announces the winner

As the evening drew to a close, many guests expressed their appreciation. Their comments were summarized by Diana Westmoreland Pedrozo who stated, "Thank you CVFT board & staff for a wonderful evening. Great food & conversation while raising money to preserve our greatest assets – the men & women who manage our natural resources. As my favorite bumper sticker from American Farmland Trust says, It's not farmland without farmers!"

We hope that you will join us on Saturday, Feb. 6, 2011 for CVFT's second annual Crab Feed. It will again be held at the Waterloo Gun and Bocci Club in Stockton. If you would like to be placed on the invitation list please call Susan at (916) 687-3178 or e-mail her at shooper@valleyfarmland.org



Denny Jackman and Jeani Ferrari watch as winning raffle numbers are announced



Guests attending crab feed



Guests attending crab feed



Silent Auction and Raffle Donors

- Bass Pro Shops
- Monica and Ed Bianchi
- Markus and Liz Bokisch
- Burroughs Family Farms
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- Sacramento County Farm Bureau
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Crab Feed Sponsors

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- BH Construction Company
- Del Monte Foods
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- Fred Donald Vineyards
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- Ken and Florrie Oneto
- Stueve Certified Dairy

Donor Recognition

Gifts received through May 31, 2010

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American Ag Credit
Bokisch Vineyards/Markus and Elizabeth Bokisch
Community Foundation of Merced County
County Bank
John and Jeani Ferrari
E & J Gallo Winery
Kyle Herbold
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Nishka Yudnich

President's Message



Maxwell Norton

These tough times have been hard on non-profit organizations. However, I can assure you that CVFT is financially sound. We are pinching every penny and cutting costs wherever possible. Each year, the trust is audited and we work hard to maintain our national accreditation.

CVFT has several applications from land owners that have the potential to be excellent projects. The trust, as well as those landowners who want to protect their land, will have to be patient until more state, federal or private funding becomes available. Our Executive Director, Bill Martin, has done some amazing work piecing together funding from diverse sources to make some projects come together.

In terms of funding day to day operations, our recent crab feed was a success. Thanks to everyone who attended and those who donated raffle and auction items. Everyone had so much fun that we are going to have a crab feed again next year – stay tuned.

June will be the end of my two year tenure as President. I will be ably succeeded by Ken Oneto from Sacramento County. Ken has served as President of the Sacramento County Farm Bureau and has strong leadership credentials. The CVFT has a six year succession of leadership chairs. We are a very long-term organization and Board leadership is determined well in advance. I will be continuing on the Board as I am in this for the long haul.

I hope I can count on all of our supporters to be with us for the long haul so that CVFT can continue the work that is so important to our region and state.

Become a Technical Support Advisor

Do you have technical expertise you would be willing to share with CVFT? If so, we hope you will consider becoming a Technical Support Advisor.

Periodically we need the assistance of professional photographers and videographers willing to assist us with visually capturing the beauty of the land, easement celebrations and CVFT events.

To volunteer your services and find out when you might be able to help, please call Susan in the CVFT administrative office at (916) 687-3178. We look forward to hearing from you!

CENTRAL VALLEY FARMLAND TRUST

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Making a Difference – Strategically

By Susan Hooper

Did my donation make a difference? That's a question I'm sure we've all asked after making a donation to a charitable organization. For most of us the answer is probably "I don't know."

Certainly you meant well when you gave as a result of a phone call from a local organization, a request from a neighbor or friend asking you to support their cause or the youth group collecting donations in front of your grocery store. But these donations are generally given from the heart and not based on any giving strategy.

In contrast, strategic giving is well thought out and planned. Decisions about how much and where to donate are made well in advance donating. Compared with the spur of the moment giving which is largely based on emotion, strategic giving is based on logic and takes into account your giving capability. Studies show the typical family gives about 3 percent of their income to charity. Of course, the amount you choose to donate is a personal decision and takes into account the amount you can afford to donate with the impact you would like to have. As the amount you donate rises so should your expectations of the organization.

According to Charles Bronfman, co-author of *The Art of Giving*, "Charitable dollars are an investment in fixing a problem you have identified and feel strongly about. A strategic giver should be able to see measurable progress that's commensurate with the amount invested." The more you give, the more you have invested in the cause.

When we give we do so to accommodate a friend or relative, support an organization doing good work in our community or to support a cause. According to Bronfman, most of your giving should be concentrated

in that last category, but you should also be realistic enough to know that you are not going to turn away every friend or relatives request.

So how do you begin to put together a strategic giving plan? To start the process, create a budget that includes a specific amount for charitable giving. Then make a list of the topics or causes most important to you. Next, identify the organizations that meet your criteria. It is critically important you support and believe in the organizational mission of each group you are considering. Look over written materials, the organizational website and talk with employees. Ask yourself the following questions: What population does the organization serve? What is it trying to accomplish? How does it measure its results? Any organization that tells you its results cannot be measured should be avoided.

The mission of the Central Valley Farmland Trust is to work with landowners and conservation partners to preserve agricultural lands in the Central Valley for future generations. Our progress is measured in a number of ways. The most visible is completing agricultural conservation easement projects for local landowners. Since 2004 we have conserved 2,740 acres of farmland, bringing the total acres conserved to 11,222 acres within our four-county region. This year we expect to conserve an additional 1,000 acres in Merced, Stanislaus and San Joaquin Counties.

We do not want a future where our food supply comes from a foreign nation. Our passion for protecting farmland comes from the belief that a local food supply is a safe food supply for you and your family. We hope you will consider the Central Valley Farmland Trust as you develop your giving strategy.