



ANNUAL REPORT Fiscal Year 2015-2016

The Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to restore and conserve the Laguna de Santa Rosa and to inspire public appreciation for Sonoma County's Wetland of International Importance.



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**Board and Staff list reflects the 2015-2016 FY roster*

Photo: Moira Hill



Dear Friends of the Laguna,

The Laguna is amazing. It is many things to many people. It is home to more than 400,000 people and the heart of Sonoma County Wine and Farming Country. It is the Watershed where most of Sonoma County residents live, work, and play. It is rich with wildlife and native plants and provides safe haven to more than 200 species of birds. It is a winter wonderland and essential floodplain, a mecca for artisanal food, and a recreational resource full of hiking, biking and walking trails.

The Laguna Foundation was created to solve problems: water pollution, habitat loss, endangered species and a culture losing touch with nature. We have come a long way, but there is still more to do. This report summarizes the Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation's current and future restoration, conservation and education programs. It also acknowledges the many partnerships and collaborations we have with residents, landowners, the agricultural and business community, native peoples and other diverse communities, government agencies and non-profits. Thank you to everyone whose name is listed in this report. You make all the work possible and we believe it is important to acknowledge everyone who sustains our ongoing efforts. Donations of every size enable us to work at a scale large enough to address the urgent issues facing the Laguna Watershed.

Highlights of the year include the development of a multi-year, multi-partner and multi-million dollar project in the Lower Laguna Restoration Plan, new restoration sites with several thousand native plants installed, programs with 1,500 school children, dozens of new walks, talk and workshops, and several generous gifts that will help fund the goals and dreams of our first Strategic Plan.

As we approach 2017, we rededicate ourselves to:

- Collaborate with diverse partners and celebrate shared successes
- Build from a strong scientific base and create measurable results
- Promote and inspire local stewardship
- Conserve and restore native biodiversity
- Use a watershed scale approach to ecological challenges

Looking at the last 26 years of stewardship with you, we are amazed and proud of all we've achieved together. Despite the remaining challenges, we can now truly imagine a restored, conserved and fully valued Laguna ecosystem, for us and our children. We look forward to bringing our efforts home and getting to the finish line with you.

For the Laguna,

Raini Sugg
President, Board of Directors

Kevin Munroe
Executive Director

Year at a Glance: Restoration and Conservation Science Program



2015 Laguna de Santa Rosa Trash Cleanup Partners, L-R: Kevin Munroe (Laguna Foundation), James Gore (Sonoma County Board of Supervisors), Mike Thompson (Sonoma County Water Agency), Karen Fies (Sonoma County Human Services), Matt Martin (Social Advocates for Youth), and David Kuszmar (North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board).

The Laguna de Santa Rosa watershed faces multiple ecological challenges from impaired water quality to invasive species. The Restoration and Conservation Department worked on nine existing projects to address these challenges and secured funding for five more.

Water Quality

- Wetlands act as important filters buffering the water quality of the Laguna. This spring we started planting a new 9.6 acre site on the City of Santa Rosa's Brown Farm, opened a new trail at our southern Laguna site, and continued maintenance at seven other sites.
- We secured funding from the California Environmental Protection Agency and the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board to remove trash from the lower Laguna and removed a mountain of trash, including tires, televisions, batteries, and hundreds of plastic water bottles from the Laguna channel downstream of Santa Rosa Creek.

Invasive Species

- We removed invasive species and planted more than 15,000 grass and sedge plugs in their place at three of our sites, creating dense beds of native species that resist invasion in the future. With new funding from the Sonoma Wine Country Weekend we will continue this work in Meadowlark Field.
- Our long-term goal is to collaborate with the major land owners in the middle reach to create a collaborative plan for invasive species management including grazing,

the restoration of native grasses and an integrated pest management strategy to reduce the impact of invasive species in this reach.

Endangered Species

- We completed our 10th year of the Adopt a Vernal Pool Program and secured funding for the next. As the longest running, most comprehensive native plant assessment program in Sonoma County, the AVP program collects data to monitor and protect three endangered plant species in the Laguna Watershed.
- We received additional funding to continue our management work on Sonoma County Regional Parks property in the middle reach. This property has some of the last remaining populations of Sebastopol meadowfoam which had been in decline but is now recovering thanks to a combination of mowing and careful treatment of invasive pepperweed.

Water Quantity

- As part of the groundwater management Technical Advisory Committee, we are working on monitoring and sustainably managing our groundwater.

Collaboration

The Laguna Foundation is also involved in a number of other collaborative management initiatives.

- NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant – The Laguna Foundation is one of 15 partners that were awarded an \$8 million grant to conserve agricultural lands and ecosystems for climates and drought resiliency.
- Proposition 1 stormwater planning grant – The Russian River Regional Stormwater Resource Management and Monitoring Plan will provide the watershed with a long-term, strategic investment that will guide stormwater efforts over the next decade.
- In partnership with the North Coast Water Quality Control Board and the Sonoma County Water Agency, the Laguna Foundation is working to create a coalition of public and private land owners in the lower Laguna to create a restoration plan for this critical reach of collaborative management initiatives.

Education: Inspiring Appreciation and Stewardship



Enjoying the Southern Laguna Discovery Trail with a walk led by Laguna Foundation Executive Director, Kevin Munroe.

This fiscal year was indeed productive and rewarding for our education volunteers, staff, and participants!

Learning Laguna

In the 2015-16 school year, Learning Laguna docents visited 57 classrooms throughout the watershed and led those 1,520 students on field trips so the children could experience the wonders of the Laguna for themselves. Each of those 2nd-4th graders spent 4.5 hours with the docents learning about plants, animals and the importance of the Laguna through specially designed interactive activities.

We increased our service to the schools by 12% this year over last. Additionally, staff and docents worked together to learn more about the Next Generation Science Standards and incorporate some updated teaching practices into our program.

We gratefully acknowledge and praise the work of the 64 Learning Laguna docents who skillfully and heartfully contributed more than 1,375 hours of teaching time to the program this year.

Restoration Ambassadors

With a grant from the California Coastal Conservancy, our education and restoration staff worked together to present a series of four classes to educate our Board of Directors, the Laguna Docents and Guides on restoration ecology, our specific restoration projects, and how to convey restoration practices and benefits to the community at large. The teachings from the course have been incorporated into our Laguna Docent and Guides training programs. Additionally, we increased our offerings of guided walks to visit more of our restoration project sites.

Southern Laguna Discovery Trail

Foundation staff, the education advisory committee, and interpretive artist Faith Rumm worked together to create six beautiful, educational signs that can now be enjoyed along the recently opened Southern Laguna Discovery Trail. This educational project was one component of a restoration project partnership between the Laguna Foundation, Sonoma County Water Agency and the River Parkways initiative. A 2 mile walk provides beautiful vistas and a chance to see an enhanced floodplain and expanded riparian forest that is already improving water quality and wildlife habitat.

Public Education

Our year-round selection of educational offerings for the community are an important avenue for connecting people to their home environment. We find that for each event approximately half of the participants are new to the Laguna or the work of the Foundation. Many of the events are offered collaboratively with our non-profit and agency partners. In this fiscal year we conducted 45 public education events. More than 1,350 people participated in: an Open House at the Laguna Environmental Center, including Dia del Ninos, a county-wide family event in April; birding adventures; guided trail walks; photography, basket-making and colored pencil art classes; Laguna botany and wildlife talks and field outings.

Laguna Guides

These friendly, responsible, knowledgeable volunteers are essential to the smooth functioning of all our public education programs. Fourteen people stepped up this year to participate in our 32-hour Laguna Guides training course. They graduated in June and got to work right away, increasing the Guides circle to 35 active volunteers. We venerate and thank the Laguna Guides for contributing more than 650 hours of volunteer service this year.



Learning Laguna Docents at Laguna Foundation's Spring Back-to-School event.

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The Laguna Foundation is grateful to the individuals and organizations who made a contribution from July 1, 2015 to September 26, 2016. Thank you!

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 Kim and Joe Santone
 Michelina Saracino
 Emily Sawyer
 Gladys and John Sawyer
 Marilyn Scott
 Ute Scott-Smith
 Susan Shadi
 Joshua and Diane Shaw
 Teri Shore
 Peggy Sloan
 Julie Smith and Karen Gaffney
 Sue Snodgrass
 Susan Snow
 Ginny Spencer
 Carolyne Stayton
 Chandra Stephens
 Glenn Stocki
 Jeff Stucker



Thomas Reynolds

Thank You Volunteers!

During the 2015-2016 fiscal year, **260 volunteers contributed 5,830 hours** in our restoration, education, administrative and development departments. To all our Learning Laguna Docents, Interns, Guides, Tree Planters, Debris and Weed Removers, Plant Monitors, Landscapers, Special Event and Office Support, Laguna Stewards, Bird Monitors, and Team Prunus...

we are grateful for your support!

Gail and Michael Sullivan
 Jennie Tasheff
 Linda Thornburg
 Connie Tomlin
 Toni Traina
 Carol Tremmel
 Michael Trulson and Susan Thollaug
 Jennifer Una
 Anna Urrea
 Jan Vail
 Linda Vaughn
 Jules Volper
 Sandra Wald
 Shari Walker
 Jane Walter
 Eric Walters
 Rodney Weathers
 Alexandria Weishaar
 Catherine Winters
 Sandie Wislicenus
 Anja Woltman
 Janice Wosser
 Laura Wunderlich
 Wayne and Debra Yamagishi
 Howard and Joanna Young
 Danielle and Jon Zuckerman

In-Kind Donors

Barnee and Gary Alexander
 Andy's Produce Market
 Balletto Vineyards
 Beauty Oasis Photography
 Peter Beaman
 Biologic Systems
 Kate Cesaretti
 Don's Olives

Peter and Deeanne Edwards
 Fog Crest Vineyard
 Walt Frazer
 Hartford Family Winery
 Moira Hill
 Hopmonk Tavern
 Suzanne Knecht
 Lagunitas Brewing Company
 LaTortilla Factory
 Tony McGuigan
 Mombo Pizza
 Moonlight Brewing Co.
 Nightengale Bakery
 Patti Stack Personal Chef Services
 Richard and Trish Power
 The Press Democrat
 Rawson Painting
 Redwood Hill Farm & Creamery
 Safeway
 Shady Oak Barrell House
 Soiland Management Co. Inc.
 Sonoma County Gazette
 Brenda Tharp and Jed Manwaring
 Dana Vallarino
 Whole Foods Market
 Woodenhead Vintners

Legacy Society

Christine Engel
 William and Florence Dodson
 Barbara Gay
 Linda and David Hanes
 Sharon Hawthorne
 Carroll and John Hirsch
 Ellen and Wayne Krebs
 Carolyn Johnson
 Tina and Ken Marinello
 Barrie Mason
 Bev Scotland
 Mike and Barbara Shepherd
 Dianne Smith, Ph.D.
 Ellen Storz
 Raini Sugg and Steve Vallarino
 Arlene Ulmer
 Melinda Walker and John Van Sinden

Statement of Activities
For the Year Ended June 30, 2016

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
REVENUES AND SUPPORT				
Grants & Contracts	\$565,921			\$565,921
Contributions	504,849	\$1,500		506,349
Program & miscellaneous income	119,324			119,324
Net assets released from restrictions	6,306	(-6,306)		0
Total revenues and support	\$1,196,400	(\$-4,806)	\$0	\$1,191,594
EXPENSES				
Program services				
Restoration & Conservation Science	\$523,590			\$523,590
Education	284,812			284,812
Total program services	\$808,402	\$0	\$0	\$808,402
Supporting services				
Administration	\$199,331			199,331
Fund Raising and Outreach	160,965			160,965
Total supporting services	360,296			360,296
Depreciation	62,188			62,188
Total expenses	\$1,230,886	\$0	\$0	\$1,230,886
Change in net assets	(-\$34,486)	(\$-4,806)	\$0	(-\$39,292)
Net assets, beginning of period	2,339,377	14,659	10,000	2,364,036
NET ASSETS, END OF PERIOD	<u>\$2,304,891</u>	<u>\$9,853</u>	<u>\$10,000</u>	<u>\$2,324,744</u>

These statements are unaudited and for internal use only.

Statement of Financial Position As of June 30, 2016

ASSETS

Current assets

Cash and equivalents	\$75,003
Accounts receivable	140,801
Pledges and other receivables	14,719
Prepays	<u>15,688</u>
Total current assets	246,211

Fixed assets

Land ¹	150,000
Building and property improvements	1,999,386
Furniture & equipment	109,992
Vehicles	14,093
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(-322,416)</u>
Total fixed assets	1,951,054

Other assets

Lease gift in kind less value discount	174,962
Endowment fund	<u>8,577</u>
Total other assets	<u>183,539</u>

Total assets **2,380,805**

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current liabilities

Accounts payable	\$8,823
Accrued vacation	19,114
Accrued wages	27,104
Payroll liabilities	392
Other payables	<u>628</u>

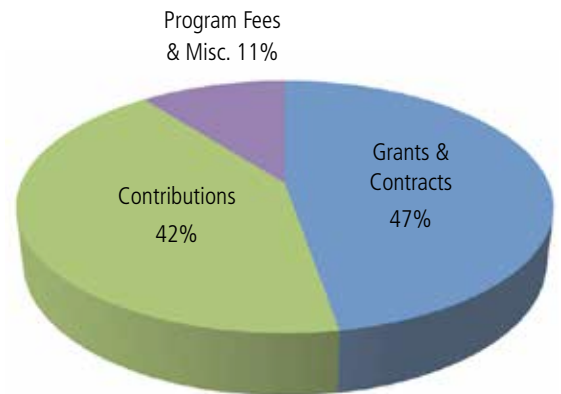
Total current liabilities **56,061**

Net assets

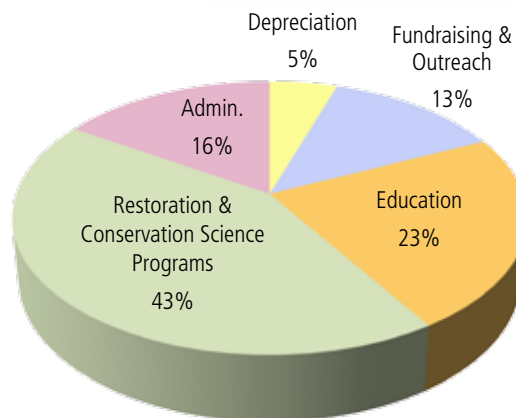
Unrestricted	2,280,391
Temporarily restricted	34,353
Permanently restricted	<u>10,000</u>
Total net assets	<u>2,324,744</u>

Total liabilities and net assets **\$2,380,805**

Income by Source



Expense by Activity



Contract Partners

City of Santa Rosa
 City of Sebastopol
 Prunuske Chatham, Inc.
 San Francisco Estuary Institute
 Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation
 and Open Space District
 Sonoma County Regional Parks
 Sonoma County Water Agency
 Sonoma County Airport
 California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery
 Sonoma County Health Services Department
 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend
 Fledgling Fund



Michael Leahy

THE LAGUNA DE SANTA ROSA FOUNDATION

Restore, Conserve & Inspire: Nurturing A Healthy Laguna

For 27 years, the Laguna Foundation has been the voice for Sonoma County's most spectacular land and water asset - The Laguna de Santa Rosa. Working closely with our partners on conservation, restoration and education programs, we focus our efforts to:

- Collaborate with landowners, government agencies, businesses and the agricultural community to improve water quality and groundwater resources for all.
- Remove invasive species including water primrose, pepperweed, Harding grass and pennyroyal.
- Bring together technical experts, land managers and policymakers to create effective climate adaptation strategies that preserve natural resources, biodiversity, and ecosystem services.
- Attract ground-breaking scientific research to the Laguna wetland and surrounding watershed areas.
- Educate and inspire people of all ages to appreciate the Laguna through workshops, volunteer opportunities, and our landmark school program, *Learning Laguna*.
- Protect threatened and endangered plants and animals by restoring habitat.



Find us on social media and stay connected with daily photos and announcements!

900 Sanford Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95401 | Ph. (707) 527-9277 | Fx. (707) 527-5075 | www.LagunaFoundation.org