

Finding the Lost Coast



Summer 2015



Working with you to conserve the land, while there's still time

A New Pathway into the Wild...

If you have ever braved the rugged Usal Road down to Sinkyone Wilderness State Park, you know that you have arrived in very special place. The "Lost Coast" is Mendocino's most remote wilderness, thick with forests and craggy coastlines that are difficult to access.

The deeper you explore the Lost Coast, the more the trappings of modern life fall away. Here there is no cell phone service and no traffic noise- just a dirt road and a wild expanse that stretches for miles north along an untamed coastline. While inaccessibility helps preserve this wilderness, it can also prevent people from connecting with these humbling vistas and appreciating why they need to be conserved.

Nearly 1,000 acres of these wild lands, known as Shady Dell, have been protected by Save the Redwoods League, and the Mendocino Land Trust is working with them and many other partners to build 2.3 miles of new California Coastal Trail this summer.

An AmeriCorps team of eight young adults, ages 18-24 from around the country, are camping out with MLT for five weeks this summer to help us build the trail.



Under construction: a rough cut of the new trail

That team is also joined by the California Conservation Corps to help with some of the more challenging sections. The primary goals of these crews are to remove brush and low hanging branches, create the "tread" or actual walking surface of the trail, and to begin the construction of hundreds of dirt steps that are needed to navigate the steep hillsides.



The CCC crew digging into a steep hillside for the trail

This new trail will invite visitors to discover dramatic views of the rugged Lost Coast, take them through the unique and mysterious candelabra tree forest, and share the wild beauty that is so quintessentially what we love about Mendocino.

Cultivating a love of wild places is essential to the survival and preservation of open space, in addition to our well-being as humans. Creating well-designed trails in these otherwise remote locations not only invites public exploration, but also allows for a wilderness experience while protecting land around the trail- forever.





Our Staff

- Ann Cole
Executive Director
- Louisa Morris
Associate Director
- Doug Kern
Director of Watershed Restoration
- Nicolet Houtz
Stewardship Coordinator
- Megan Smithyman
Operations Manager
- Garrett Linck
Paul Siegel Salmon Restoration Intern
- Cornelia Wagner
Shady Dell Trail Building Intern

Board of Trustees

- Announcing our new officers to be installed July 17th:*
- Barbara Weiss
President
- Bob Neale
Vice President
- Chet Anderson
Treasurer
- Terry Gross
Co-Secretary
- Richard Strom
Co-Secretary
- David Troxel



Making a Better Place for Salmon

Imagine for a moment what it must be like for generations of salmon attempting to survive on the Mendocino Coast since 1850, when logging began.

It's tough being a fish with a life cycle beginning at the furthest reaches of the smallest coastal streams, extending to the ocean and then back again, eventually spawning and dying in the same small streams. Salmon need cool water with deep pools to hide in on either side of their migration back and forth to the sea, as well as streams without barriers and seasonal pollution from run-off and sediment.



Old Nelson Gulch culvert: 3' wide

Beginning in the mid-1800's, European settlers were ramping up logging. Massive trees fell and streams filled with mud and soil that settled in the pockets and pools that salmon needed to survive. The murky waters smothered eggs and young fish. Without the large and majestic old-growth redwood trees, the deep shade over the streams was gone resulting in rising water temperatures and lower oxygen levels for the fish.

In short, without the shade and protection of the large trees, fish had to survive both a "hot water problem" and a "dirt problem"—but the problems didn't stop there.

Dams were created to divert water for various uses, and roads were built to access the deep rich woods. Fish had an additional challenge: dams, "Humboldt crossings", and road culverts spoiled any chance for the many adult fish returning from the

ocean to move upstream to their spawning grounds. The eggs that survived the "dirt problem" and the "hot water problem" to become baby fish, now couldn't make it out to sea due to the "barrier problem." Once numbering in the tens of thousands on many rivers, these coho salmon are now on the brink of extinction.

Creating a better life

But things are changing. Thanks to our members and supporters, the Mendocino Land Trust is working to restore streams in the Noyo and Big River watersheds to provide high-quality habitat for salmon. Our partners in this effort include: California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California Department of Water Resources, Jackson Demonstration State Forest and California State Parks.

Timing is everything. Additional stresses caused by climate change make our restoration efforts even more urgent. We need to repair these streams to withstand potentially extreme weather and to provide quality habitat. This isn't a job for shovels and clippers; it requires large, expensive, heavy equipment to fix the old logging roads that have been chronically leaking sediment into streams and burying fish eggs. This heavy equipment is also critical to removing barrier structures such as old water diversion dams and undersized road culverts, many of which prevent fish from moving up and downstream.

Over the course of this summer and fall, we'll also be moving large logs into streams to create deep pools which will help to lower water temperatures, creating better habitat for fish to spawn, thrive, and begin their epic journey once again.



New Nelson Gulch culvert: 15' wide

Summer Helpers - Our New Interns

Garrett Linck - Paul Siegel Salmon Restoration Intern

An Environmental Studies major at Reed College in Portland, Oregon, Garrett will be working closely with the Director of Watershed Restoration Doug Kern on a variety of projects throughout the summer including Salmon habitat monitoring, road decommissioning, and habitat restoration.

Cornelia Wagner - Shady Dell Trail Building Intern

While serving in Americorps NCCC last year in Mendocino, Cornelia got the opportunity to work alongside Louisa and Nicolet from MLT. Impressed with their leadership and artful trail design, the history major from Georgia Tech was excited to volunteer with MLT for this summer's new trail project.



This is a journey to a healthier and more abundant future, a future that will allow fish and a wide variety of wildlife to experience clean water and safe travels to and from the ocean. And it's a journey that involves you. This effort is on-going. It's a multi-year project to transform these streams into something we can all be proud of: clean water for fish, wildlife and those of us that live and play in our community.

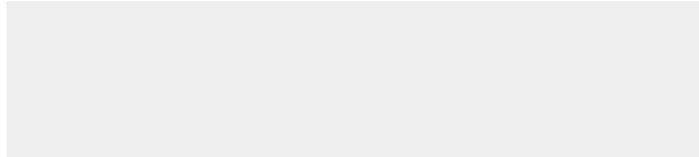
This work is made possible through the support of:





PO Box 1094
Mendocino, CA 95460
Phone: (707) 962-0470
www.mendocinolandtrust.org

PRST STD
NON-PROFIT
POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT #3
FORT BRAGG, CA



You're Invited to Celebrate and Help Steward the Land...



Want to help us build the new Lost Coast Trail?

Saturday, July 18th and Sunday, August 16th from 9:30am-5pm

Join our intrepid trail building crew for an afternoon out on the Lost Coast! We will be meeting at the MLT office at 9:30am before carpooling out to the Usal campground. Dress for a day of working outside. Bring gloves, water and a lunch. Tools will be provided. If you would like to join us, or if you have any questions about our trail building work, please give Louisa or Nicolet a call at (707) 962-0470.



Join us for a Stewardship Day!

Big River

Every 4th Saturday from 10am-12pm
7/25, 8/22, 9/26, 10/24, 11/28

All ages welcome, dress to get dirty and bring work gloves. Tools and water provided. Meet in the Big River parking lot on the east side of the bridge.

Seaside Beach

Every 3rd Tuesday from 10am-12pm
7/21, 8/18, 9/15, 10/20, 11/17, 12/15

Join us for a morning on the beach! All ages welcome, dress to get dirty and bring work gloves. Meet in the Seaside Beach parking lot.

If you would like to join us, please give Nikki a call at (707) 962-0470.