



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

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Mendocino Pygmy Forest Protection Project

Mendocino Land Trust has received funding from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to acquire a 93-acre conservation easement off of Gordon Lane, just south of Mendocino, with the purpose of conserving 49 acres of rare pygmy forest.

Residents of California's North Coast have long admired these enchanting tiny forests, but their rarity and sensitivity have not always been well understood. A recently completed, four-year study, conducted by CDFW and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS), examined the unusual qualities of the soil and plant associations that have, over centuries, created the dynamic habitat of the Mendocino pygmy forests. Their study indicates that certain combinations of plants are particularly rare. The 49 acres of forest covered by this conservation easement contains some of the rarest associations of pygmy-type vegetation.

The Mendocino cypress pygmy forest has a very narrow range, running from Fort Bragg to Salt Point State Park in Sonoma County. This unique, geographically limited habitat is particularly vulnerable to habitat destruction and fragmentation from housing development in the highly desirable coastal zones of Mendocino and Sonoma counties. This new easement creates a contiguous corridor of protection for the pygmy forest directly to the south of Mendocino Headlands State Park, over 7,000 acres of which was acquired and permanently protected by Mendocino Land Trust before being turned over to California State Parks in 2002.

"The natural resources on this site are of cultural and ecological value to the North Coast, and this project has multiple benefits to the community, including conserving open space, carbon sequestration, protecting rare and endangered species, and improving spawning habitat of the endangered coho salmon and steelhead in Big River," explains Mendocino Land Trust's Executive Director Ann Cole. "The current property owners are excellent stewards of the land, having purchased the property with the intent of protecting the delicate pygmy ecosystem found there. We are grateful that they reached out and worked closely with us to make this happen."

Mendocino Land Trust has been a leader in land conservation, stewardship and habitat restoration in Mendocino County for more than 40 years. Well known for its extensive network of coastal beaches and public access trails, Mendocino Land Trust also engages in conservation projects countywide. Since 1976, Mendocino Land Trust has worked with willing landowners to protect more than 14,000 acres of forests, wildlife habitat and agricultural lands in Mendocino County. For more information, visit its website at MendocinoLandTrust.org