



Conserving the natural and agricultural legacy of the southern Sierra Nevada and San Joaquin Valley



Sequoia Riverlands Trust's new 951-acre preserve features scenic views, unmatched beauty and a diversity of habitats. Gordon Berghthold © 2005

Springville's splendor

Located five miles north of Springville and nestled among substantial public lands, including Giant Sequoia National Monument and Sequoia National Park, Sequoia Riverlands Trust's new 951-acre preserve features rolling blue oak woodland, chaparral and portions of Sycamore Creek. Purchased in June 2005 with funding from the Preserving Wild California program of the Resources Legacy Fund Foundation, this yet to be named preserve brings the total of protected land along the North Fork of the Tule River to over 2,700 acres.

While much of the surrounding area remains intact, population increases and the popularity of our rural way of life drive a rapid rate of growth in the area. Currently, few large-scale connections remain in the Tule River area to allow wildlife to move between the high elevation forests protected as public lands and the valley floor below. This new preserve represents a crucial link in this travel corridor.

"We have the opportunity now to set aside ribbons of protected land for our children and grandchildren before they are lost forever," said Sopac McCarthy Mulholland, executive director for Sequoia Riverlands Trust. "With voluntary conservation agreements already in place at nearby Battle Mountain, Circle-J Norris and River Ridge ranches, the new preserve represents a critical piece of the conservation puzzle in this important area."

Working with neighbors and the local community, a long-term conservation plan will be developed to include livestock grazing as a management tool while providing for appropriate public access.

Partners provide places for wildlife

A recent 550-acre addition to the Pixley National Wildlife Refuge now provides permanent protection for a variety of special plants and animals. Located northwest of Pixley, in the northern end of the Tulare Lake Basin, the native grasslands, alkali sink and alkali scrub habitats on the 6,742-acre refuge provide homes for diverse animals. "The refuge safeguards important habitat for rare native wildlife dependent on this particular San Joaquin Valley environment," said Scott Frazer, biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "San Joaquin kit fox, burrowing owl, Tipton kangaroo rat and blunt-nosed leopard lizard all benefit from the additional conserved land."

Sequoia Riverlands Trust, in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy, Bureau of Reclamation's Central Valley Project Conservation Program, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Preserving Wild California Program of the Resources Legacy Fund Foundation, purchased this land, which has never been significantly altered. "We're pleased to work with such a broad range of partners to conserve key habitat for native species," said Sopac McCarthy Mulholland, executive director for Sequoia Riverlands Trust. "By adding this significant land to the refuge, we're protecting a critical part of our valley heritage." The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will continue to manage the refuge for wildlife protection and livestock grazing to maintain the open character of the land, encourage native plant growth and limit weeds.

If you would like to know more about these projects, please contact Hilary Dustin, land steward, at 559.738.0211.



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VISTAS

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Sequoia Riverlands Trust will greatly miss the skills, talent and humor of Nicole Spear, previous administrative assistant, who recently took a job with the Center for Creative Land Recycling in San Francisco. Good luck Nicole—thanks for all your hard work!

The Sequoia Riverlands Trust (SRT) is a local, community-based, 501 (c)(3) non-profit conserving the natural and agricultural legacy of the southern Sierra Nevada and San Joaquin Valley. A copy of the latest financial statement and registration filed with the Registry of Charitable Trusts may be obtained by contacting the SRT office. Contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

**Happy 5th Birthday
Sequoia Riverlands Trust!**

Pledge your commitment to the Sierra today

Created in 2004, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy aims to establish funding for conservation while providing support for economic sustainability across 25 million acres of the Sierra Nevada, from the Oregon border to Kern County. This important, non-regulatory agency endeavors to grant local governments and non-profit organizations money to conserve and restore the region's resources, protect water quality, provide recreational opportunities and encourage economic growth.

The license to protect the places you love.



Help preserve the Sierra by reserving your Sierra Nevada Conservancy license plate today.

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The above plate is only a sample. It does not represent the actual plate.

You can help the Sierra Nevada

By pre-registering to purchase a Sierra Nevada license plate today, you'll join thousands of visionary Californians in an effort to conserve this cherished place. Proceeds from the sales and renewal of Sierra Nevada license plates will directly fund the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's efforts to protect and restore our majestic Sierra Nevada. This includes the rivers, creeks, lakes and ponds; the meadows and forests, farms and ranches, and rural towns and villages—all the places you love. Visit www.sierralicenseplate.org to pre-register for your Sierra Nevada license plate today!

Ways you can help Sequoia Riverlands Trust

- ✓ Become a member or send an additional gift. We included a reply envelope for your use.
- ✓ Consider putting Sequoia Riverlands Trust in your will- your gift will leave a lasting legacy for your children and grandchildren. Please use tax ID #77-0347417.
- ✓ Shop at Office Depot, use ID #70208737 for your favorite school and Sequoia Riverlands Trust's Acorn Institute will get in-store credit for 5% of your purchase
- ✓ Print your personal items at Premier Color Graphics and select SRT as your PICA point recipient
- ✓ Provide a spotting scope for students to use while visiting Kaweah Oaks Preserve

Thank you for your support. Your gift may be tax deductible.

Your donations help Sequoia Riverlands Trust provide educational opportunities for youth, restore local preserves and conserve water and wildlife habitat. Please become a member or send an additional donation today!

Researcher Jessie Quinn introduces us to 'strangers beneath our feet'

When you think of California predators, which animals come to mind? Mountain lion? Coyote? Bobcat? Bear? While you can find these animals throughout the state, one small 15-30 pound carnivore, the American badger, is just as widespread but far more rarely seen.

Waddling about at night, the badger digs for small mammals to eat and upon conclusion of the night's work, digs a den to sleep in...a new one almost every night! Rather than skulking about in the brush, badgers prefer to set a determined path across open desert or grasslands, aggressively charging larger animals like bear, coyote and even humans. Yet, most people will never see one in their lifetime and many don't realize they live in California!

A key component in California's grassland and desert scrub habitats in the Sierra Nevada foothills, the badger shares its home with burrowing owls, snakes, kit foxes, coyotes and ground squirrels, who use the its abandoned burrows for their own shelter. Exactly how badgers use their California habitat remains a mystery and an important one as their range contracts across the state. Badgers can travel incredibly long distances, so given the fragmented nature of grasslands in California, one wonders how badgers could negotiate such distances here. Do they use other habitats like agricultural fields or forested lands as their preferred habitat changes?

During her 2004 survey, as part of the California Department of Fish and

Game's Resource Assessment Program, Jessie Quinn, UC Davis Ph.D. candidate, identified recent badger activity on both Sequoia Riverlands Trust's Homer Ranch and Lewis Hill Preserve. With Jessie's base line data complete, we can measure the frequency of future badger occurrences on these protected lands. So, we introduce you to the American badger, the elusive animal that's been living right under your feet all along.



Editor's note: If you would like to help Jessie with her research by reporting a badger sighting, log on to <http://ff19.formsite.com/Badger/form982873444/index.html>

Education endeavors

As one of the only land trusts nationwide focusing on educating our local youth about the value of conserving natural and agricultural resources, we present two exciting updates regarding this important part of our work.



Oaks to Sequoias: A Nature Fair

Join us for the first annual *Oaks To Sequoias* nature fair, 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., October 1-2, at Sundale Union Elementary School in Tulare. Meet up with local educators, administrators and parents on Saturday for education workshops about Tulare County outdoor resources; presentations from exhibitors and inspiring words from keynote speakers Robert Hansen, biology instructor at College of the Sequoias, and William C. Tweed, Ph.D., chief park naturalist for Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks. Sunday brings a chance to get outside with local experts for field trips to your neighborhood outdoor classrooms, like Kaweah

Oaks Preserve, Lake Kaweah, Circle-J Norris Ranch and more!

Sequoia Riverlands Trust offers this symposium for both formal and non-formal K-12 educators in partnership with the California Department of Fish & Game, National Park Service, Sequoia Natural History Association, Tulare County Office of Education and the US Army Corps of Engineers. Check www.sequoiariverlands.org for details or contact Jane Caputo at 559.738.0211 to learn how you can bring home standards-based lesson plans, reference materials, activities and tricks of the trade you can use with your students. A \$75 fee covers the cost of materials, sessions, field trips and food (\$50 for first 50 to register).

Acorn Institute for outdoor education

In Tulare and Kings counties, students score in the bottom percentages when tested for their proficiency in science. Students scoring poorly in science often don't attend institutions of higher learning, nor set goals to do so. Building on our education program already in place, Sequoia Riverlands Trust's new Acorn Institute will address this issue and help students

by increasing access to and learning opportunities on public preserves.

The goals of the Acorn Institute include demonstrating practical, hands-on science skills for students; providing standards-based resources for teachers; making science education fun, thereby increasing interest and proficiency; and encouraging an appreciation for and interest in natural sciences, agriculture and the outdoors.



Carly Caviglia visits Kaweah Oaks Preserve with St. Paul's School.

Save the Date

Explore your backyard

All ages invited for fun nature walks. Please dress appropriately, wear sturdy shoes and bring water and a friend. Field guides or binoculars optional. We welcome donations to support public programs such as these.

Sept. 17, 8:30 - 10:30 a.m.

Guided walk about oak galls at Kaweah Oaks Preserve

Oct. 29, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

"Bat Lady" Burleigh Lockwood, from the Chaffee Zoo, returns for a not-to-be missed demonstration at Kaweah Oaks Preserve. Bring a lawn chair/blanket and a jacket.

Volunteer opportunities

Sept. 24, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Public Lands Day at Kaweah Oaks Preserve and Lake Kaweah. Call Jane Caputo at 559.738.0211 to reserve your free lunch!

Oct. 15, Nov. 19 & Dec. 17
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Clean-up & volunteer training opportunity at Kaweah Oaks Preserve

Dec. 28, 7:00 a.m.

Christmas bird count at Kaweah Oaks Preserve

Jan. 2006

Trail guide training for volunteer docents at Kaweah Oaks Preserve

Teacher's corner

Sept. 6 - Dec. 16

Educational tours offered at Kaweah Oaks Preserve

Oct. 1 & 2, 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Oaks To Sequoias: A Nature Fair at Sundale Union Elementary School, Tulare

Please check www.sequoiariverlands.org for current information and additional programs or call Jane Caputo at 559.738.0211 for more details, to volunteer or to schedule a school group tour.



427 South Garden Street
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Dale Lincoln, Wayne Badovinus, Sarah Young and Sandy Greenamyre (left to right) visit the Badovinus's Battle Mountain Ranch during a donor appreciation tour.

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**"The world is full of
magic things waiting
patiently for our sense
to grow sharper."**

- John Keats

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