

SUTTER BUTTES REGIONAL LAND TRUST



From Thompson & West History of Sutter County 1879

FALL 2014

HONORING THE LANDOWNER LEGACY

by Michael Hubbart

As I write this, it is mid-August, 2014. It is a typical summer day in the heart of the Sacramento Valley: Blazing sun overhead, mid-nineties, with clear hazy skies. The Sutter Buttes loom silently over the countryside, just as they have for over a million years. I gaze upon the peaks through my window and reflect upon their serenity contrasted against the flurry of activity around me.

On the remote north side of the Buttes there are almond orchards in all directions, and my neighbors are harvesting their crops. The movement of their farm equipment stirs up columns of tan dust and generates distinctive sounds that create a reassuring ambience of country life.

The shaker looks like a monstrous yellow crab that seems angry. It prowls the rows of trees and makes a growling sound, a sort of vroom, vroom, vroom. It has one claw that grabs on to each diminutive tree and SHAKES IT! My house shudders.

The sweeper has thousand rubber finger tips that beat the dry ground and push the nuts into an elongated pile that runs the length of the tree rows. Then a harvester scoops it all up; blasts the hulls, twigs, and leaves aside; and conveys the nuts into a small trailer it tows. The whirl of this machine can be heard a mile away!

These are the families who own the farms and ranches around and within the Sutter Buttes. The majority of these families have worked this land for four, five, or even six generations. Whether its almonds, walnuts, rice, hay, or pasture

for grazing, it is this farming enterprise that has protected the Buttes from development and preserved the rural scenery around the mountain.

The Sutter Buttes Regional Land Trust respects and honors these families. In the past decade we have lost a generation of many of the family patriarchs.

They were friends who attended our Middle Mountain receptions where we shared our goals to protect their right to farm. For the past twenty five years, our mission has been to protect the land and natural resources of the Sutter Buttes and surrounding region for present and future generations. We know that that's what they worked for. We have expanded that goal to encompass Yuba and Colusa counties as well as Sutter County.

In the comfort of our homes or caught up in the hub-bub of school and work commitments, most of us don't think about the Buttes. But if you experience them with us, that will change.

Our newsletter brings to you our fall hike schedule in the Buttes. We invite you to join us for a walk to discover the serenity of the Buttes. Our modest hike fee is an investment that will change your life.

You'll learn a little of the family histories for the range land where we hike. Then we'll take you up one of the ridges or the peaks to view the patch-work quilt of farmlands that stretch out in all directions. You'll learn a little about the conservation tools that enable us to work with our neighboring landowners to protect their farming and ranching heritage. We invite you to be a part this legacy.



PHOTO BY T. SHAEFFER

An almond tree shaker at work.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE *by Coleen Morehead*

Things are changing at the Sutter Buttes Regional Land Trust. We are excited to announce the move to our new office at 750 Bridge Street right in the heart of Yuba City (west of Plumas, corner of Park). Feel free to come by for a visit anytime between 9am and 1pm M-F. This past summer we successfully closed a significant

350 acre agricultural easement in west Sutter County. We expanded our staff to include our new Outreach and Fund Development Coordinator, Henry Blackthorne.

It has been almost a year since our name change from the Middle Mountain Foundation to the Sutter Buttes Regional Land Trust. After 25 years of

history, the SBRLT Board of Directors realized that there were increasing opportunities for land trusts, hence the rationale behind the name change and our expanded mission, to represent Sutter, Yuba, and Colusa counties as a land trust.

On a national level, Congress made land conservation a priority this year with the signing of the 2014 Farm Bill. The U.S. is now poised to make a \$1 billion investment in conservation. What does that mean for our region? There will now be greater resources available to help keep working farms and ranches in family hands, helping to restore and maintain our way of life. SBRLT is working directly with regional land conservation partners to develop a Sacramento River Watershed Rangeland Conservation Project that will conserve, enhance, and restore the broad-spectrum of rangeland resources that benefit the Sacramento

River watershed's quality of life. Our role as a partner in this project will be to leverage the interest and support of both public and private parties to the greatest benefit.

As always your support makes it possible for us to do what we do. Either through our education program or guided hikes directly into the Sutter Buttes, or through your continued membership support, we have expanded resources to steward preserved properties and build capacity within the organization through both staff and volunteers.

We are always looking for volunteers who both share our mission and have expertise that can assist us in various roles: financial, environmental, farming, business, or land use. Feel free to contact Coleen Morehead at executivedirector@sutterbutteslandtrust.org.



MIDDLE MOUNTAIN EDUCATION PROGRAM

When you hike with 1600 students over the course of a hiking season, many of whom are 3rd or 4th graders, they are going to tell you some interesting things. The guides try to teach them the curriculum about plants, animals, geology, and the Maidu. We do get good answers to our questions, but sometimes we have to do our best to keep a straight face. One day one of our guides was explaining the geology of the Sutter Buttes and asked the students, "Do you know how old they are?" After explaining they are about 1.5 million years old, a student asked, "Were you alive then?"

Another part of the trail that really gets the students' attention is when we walk silently, spaced away from each other so that we can individually experience the sights and sounds of nature in the Buttes. Following the silent walk, students wait quietly in a circle seated on the ground and we'll ask them, "What did you hear or see?" Often it is "birds" or "a lizard." But sometimes the students' imaginations get the best



PHOTO BY G. PAYNE

Education Program outing in the Buttes

of them and we hear "ringtail" or "coyote" or "fox" or whatever animal we had been discussing earlier. (Twenty students, walking through the woods in the middle of the day, discourages the appearance of most animals.) One particular windy day we had three students say "a deer" or "two deer." "Hmm... wow – you were lucky!" We thought, "There's that imagination again." But about 5 minutes later we all saw the same black tailed doe walk out on a trail above us on the hillside. Due to the wind she didn't hear or sense our presence. All of us got to see her tentatively venture out into the open. Then later while we were eating lunch, she returned with her two yearling fawns, and we were able to watch them scamper across

the hillside above us while we munched on lunch. That is one of the "enchanting moments" we chance to experience when we take busloads of students on hikes during the fall and spring in our wonderful Sutter Buttes!

Contact: educationprogram@sutterbutteslandtrust.org

LAND TRUST CORNER

Last edition we discussed what a land trust is. SBRLT is a not-for-profit 501c(3) that actively works with landowners and the community to help conserve and preserve land.



local land trust representing the three county region, our focus is on facilitating a process by which landowners, farmers, and ranchers can leverage support to

Under the national association, land trusts seek to be accredited. Next year we will officially begin this process. We are excited to climb this new mountain.

Why Accreditation? Why Now?

Accreditation is a mark of distinction in land conservation. The accreditation seal provides the public with an assurance that the accredited organization meets national quality standards and has the systems in place to protect important natural places and working lands forever.

Accreditation recognizes the hard work that goes into consistently implementing Land Trust Standards and Practices. Reaching the point of being ready to apply for accreditation is a milestone for any land trust. (Source: *Land Trust Alliance*)

What is the benefit to you for having a local LTA accredited land trust?

Nationally there are only 254 accredited land trusts; of that total 26 are from California. As the only

preserve their land, their heritage, and their family legacy. California's north central valley (Sutter, Yuba, and Colusa counties) encompasses close to 1.4 million acres of prime agriculture lands with farming as the largest industry for the region. Total value of agriculture in the three county region is approximately \$1.5 billion. Leading commodities are rice, walnuts, plums, peaches, seeds, and milk.

Lands once placed in a land protection agreement or conservation easement are protected lands that will be cared for over time by a land trust. When land conservation is made a community priority, in the end, we all benefit by handing our children an intact and healthy landscape that can nourish and sustain all future generations to come. Feel free to contact us at 530-755-3568 or executivedirector@sutterbutteslandtrust.org to inquire about conservation easement opportunities.

INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM

The Middle Mountain Interpretive Program provides access to the privately owned Sutter Buttes' interior. Guides share its unique origins and history and explore with you the diversity of plant and animal life that helps to make this range so appealing to us in modern California.

A typical day in the Buttes begins by 8:00 am and ends around 3:30 pm (unless otherwise noted). Events are scheduled and will proceed in all but the most severe weather conditions. Participants of all events should be prepared for uneven footing, stepping over rocks and boulders, crossing streams, walking through thistles and brush, climbing hills, and poison oak. Mosquitoes are frequently present.

Some events are acceptable for smaller children, but many are not. All of our outings are educational experiences. We find that no outings or events are appropriate for toddlers. We suggest that hikes rated 3 or 4 Boots MAY be suitable for children 12 or older, but it depends on the child and the hike. Please inform the hike coordinator when making your reservations if you are considering bringing children to an event or hike.

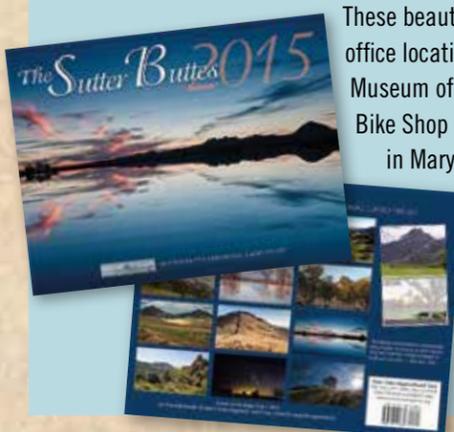
Open Events: Reserve a date for an open hike or event at mmhikes@sutterbutteslandtrust.org or call Karen at 530-671-6116. Cost for open events is \$35 per person unless otherwise stated. Pre-payment is expected. The fee is used to pay the guides; reimburse the landowners for the wear and tear on their roads, gates, and fences; and pay for liability insurance. Any remainder is used for our conservation and education work.

Charter Events: Organizations, groups, or individuals may schedule a charter by contacting Margit at mmcharters@sutterbutteslandtrust.org or 530-846-5142. The cost for charter hikes is \$300 minimum, which covers up to ten people. Each additional person costs \$30.

Note: Guides do not carry change. If you have made arrangements to pay the day of the outing, do so with a check or money order made out to the Sutter Buttes Regional Land Trust (or SBRLT).



SUTTER BUTTES 2015 CALENDARS



These beautiful full-color calendars are available at our new office location (750 Bridge Street), the Community Memorial Museum of Sutter County, Sunsweet Gift Shop, and Corner Bike Shop in Yuba City; The Brick and J&J Custom Framing in Marysville; Cordi Winery in the Buttes; Davison Drugs in Colusa; and Bidwell Bar Association in Oroville. And they are available on our website (www.sutterbutteslandtrust.org). Check the website for locations in Chico, Fair Oaks, Oroville, and Sacramento to be added throughout the fall.

COMMUNITY MEMORIAL MUSEUM OF SUTTER COUNTY EVENTS

1333 Butte House Rd, Yuba City, CA 95993 • Phone: (530) 822-7141

- September 12** New exhibit *Our Good Earth: Ag and Art in the Valley* opening reception 6 – 8 pm (exhibit thru Nov 16)
- September 28** English Cream Tea Fundraiser, 1:30 pm in Ettl Hall
- October 11** Sutter County Historical Society meeting, 11:30 at Ruthy's (speaker Cheryl Stapp, author of new book "The Stagecoach in Northern California")
- December 6** Trees & Traditions fundraiser, 5-8 pm
- December 14** Children's Program & Open House 1:00 – 3:00 pm
- January – February** (dates TBD) new exhibit *Postcards: Old-Time Tweets*

HIKE THE SUTTER BUTTES

INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM OPEN HIKE & EVENT INFORMATION

MEET TIME IS BY 8:00 AM, COST IS \$35 PER PERSON, AND LIMIT IS 20 PARTICIPANTS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

WORKSHOP EVENTS

These outings will concentrate on a specific topic or aspect as described. There may be an opportunity to stroll or hike during the outing, but that will not be the focus of the event. Detailed “meet and greet” information will be sent upon registration.

mmhikes@sutterbutteslandtrust.org or call (530) 671-6116

HIKE AND WORKSHOP RATINGS

These ratings are a guideline to help you to choose an outing that matches your fitness and ability. All outings take place on uneven ground.

👟 = **Easy:** One to three miles and less than 300 feet elevation gain/loss.

👟👟 = **Moderate:** Two to five miles and generally less than 600 feet elevation gain/loss.

👟👟👟 = **Challenging:** Four to six miles with the possibility of multiple elevation gains/losses of 600-900 feet.

👟👟👟👟 = **Difficult:** Four to seven miles and/or elevation gains/losses likely in excess of 1000 feet.

👟👟👟👟👟 = **Strenuous:** Six to 14 miles and/or multiple and significant elevation gains/losses.

Acorn Preparation: For thousands of years, Native peoples thrived in and around the Middle Mountain (Sutter Buttes). Grinding rocks and an occasional arrowhead are all that remain—a silent vestige of a culture rich in tradition, spirituality, and a connectedness to nature. Three generations of a Maidu family will show you how they prepare acorn meal. Stroll with us through a landscape where almost every plant or animal contributed to their culture. Bring food and water. 👟

Saturday, October 18

Art in the Buttes: Bring your journal, pencils, paints, sketch book, and musical instrument and enjoy a day of creativity in the Sutter Buttes. All levels welcome; beginners encouraged (sketching lessons available on request). Be prepared to sit for extended periods; bring an easily-carried chair/cushion. We will be exploring a myriad of subjects, both natural and man-made. Bring food and water. Be prepared to carry everything you need throughout the day. Rain will cancel. You may purchase a basic sketch kit for \$7 from the guide with prior request. 👟👟

Sunday, November 16

In a Sacred Manner: A walk with Stan Padilla focuses on the reverence for life and balances the mythology, botany, geology, mineralogy of the Buttes with active hiking and contemplative free time. 👟

Sunday, November 16

Bat Research Outing: A rare opportunity for a limited number of participants to witness mammal biologist David Wyatt conducting bat research in the Sutter Buttes. Meet at 2:30 pm. Bring food and water. 👟

Saturday, October 18



Nature Study—Shaeffer Ranch: Explore this ranch that has been in the same family since 1860. Your guide will help you to see the details and learn about the natural elements that exist here. Bring food and water. 👟👟

Saturday, November 29

Birds in the Buttes: Witness the winter migratory birds in and around the Sutter Buttes with the Christmas Bird Count organizer, Pete Sands. Bring food and water. Meet at 7:00 am. Limit is 12; not suited for younger children. 👟

Saturday, December 6

Photographer's Outing: This event is designed for photographers of all levels. We will caravan to a ranch on the north side of the Buttes. There will be several guides so that you may scout and choose different locations for your photos, from the level valley to the gently sloped ramparts. Bring food and water. Rain will cancel; occasional showers won't. Meet at 1:00 pm. 👟👟

Sunday, October 26

Geology Trek—Bragg Canyon: Discover the violent origins of this tiny mountain range with Volcanologist Brian Hausback. Brian reveals clues to 1.5 million years of geologic history, uniquely accessible here in the center of the Buttes. Bring food and water and wear sturdy hiking boots. Cost is \$45 👟👟👟

Saturday, November 8

Wild Nature in the Buttes: Learn about the exciting diversity of animals and plants in the Buttes, and the fascinating adaptations that allow them to survive here. Your leader will be Gene Trapp, Professor Emeritus of Biological Science at CSU, Sacramento. Bring food and water. 👟👟

Sunday, November 2

HIKE EVENTS

These outings will each cover a broad outline of information about the Sutter Buttes in general and a property in particular. Detailed “meet and greet” information will be sent upon registration. mmhikes@sutterbutteslandtrust.org or call (530) 671-6116

Buttes Transect Hike—Higher: Traverse the craggy central volcanic core of the Sutter Buttes. This is a very strenuous, “aggressive,” and physically demanding hike that requires strength, stamina, and good, solid boots. Our hiking route climbs steeply to a natural ridge that will provide expansive panoramas of the Buttes and beyond. Total will be 7-8 miles with about 1900 feet of elevation gain and 1200 feet of elevation loss. Only register if you are in top physical shape. Cost is \$60—we are accessing two properties. Bring food and water. Meet at 7:30 am. Limit is 15 hikers. 👟👟👟👟👟

Sunday, December 7
Saturday, February 7

Buttes Transect Hike—Lower: Traverse the craggy central volcanic core of the Sutter Buttes—mostly on old wagon/maintenance roads. This is not as strenuous and physically demanding as is the higher transect hike, but will involve significant climbing and will be a long day. You will need good, solid boots; a walking stick will be helpful. Total will be 6-7 miles. Only register if you are in very good physical shape. Cost is \$60—we are accessing two properties. Bring food and water. Meet at 7:30 am. 👟👟👟

Sunday, December 7
Saturday, February 7

Canyon Trek—Bragg Canyon: Travel to the center of the Buttes with steady climbing on uneven ground. There will be frequent stops to examine the natural elements providing an excellent view of the Sutter Buttes. Bring food and water. Cost is \$45. 👟👟👟

Saturday, December 13

Ridge Hike—West Shaeffer Ranch: The Shaeffer Family will host hikers on their ranch on the north side of the Buttes. Hikers will explore this ranch that has been in the same family since the 1860's. Hike will include possible views of North Butte, Peace Valley, and the old Titan Missile site. Bring food and water. 👟👟👟

Sunday, December 14

Nature Stroll: Join us for a leisurely stroll especially suited for casual walkers and nature lovers. Prepare for some moderate climbing and mostly uneven ground. The fall colors will likely be starting. Bring food and water. 👟

Saturday, October 25

Summit Ascent: One of our most challenging treks, this route is a steep, 1,000-foot push straight up North Butte, off trail with no easy switchbacks. Excellent tread on your boots is a must; one or two hiking sticks strongly recommended. Only register for this hike if you are in very good physical shape and don't suffer from vertigo. Bring food and water. Limit is 15 hikers. 👟👟👟👟👟

Sunday, October 19
Saturday, November 1
Sunday January 11

Ranch Exploration: Explore some new areas of this ranch that has been in the same family since 1860. Your guide will help you to see the details and learn about the natural elements that exist here. Long stretches of the rock walls will be explored. Bring food and water. 👟👟👟

Saturday, January 10

Ridge Trek—Dean Ranch: Steady climbing on uneven ground and frequent stops to examine the natural elements provide an excellent view of the Sutter Buttes. Bring food and water. 👟👟👟

Saturday, November 1

Ridge Ascent—Bragg Canyon: The Steidlmyer family hosts walks deep into the Sutter Buttes. This ascent will take you up the walls of the upper canyon; the route will vary. Only register for this hike if you are in top physical shape. Bring food and water. Limit is 15 hikers. Cost is \$45. 👟👟👟👟

Sunday, November 22
Saturday, January 17

Ridge Hike—East Shaeffer Ranch: The Shaeffer Family will host hikers on their ranch on the north side of the Buttes. Explore this ranch that has been in the same family since the 1860's. Hike will include possible views of North Butte and Peace Valley (weather dependent). Lassen can often be seen in the distance. Bring food and water. 👟👟

Saturday, November 15



Tres Picos: This hike is for those who want a rugged, challenging outing. It will include summiting North Butte, Old Man, and Pigeon Peak. Only register if you are in top physical shape. Bring food and water. A hiking stick can be helpful. Limit is 15 hikers. Meet by 7:00 am. 👟👟👟👟👟

Sunday, November 17

SUTTER BUTTES REGIONAL LAND TRUST

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Executive Director Coleen Morehead		Printing Printworx

INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM FALL OPEN DATES

Sat Oct 18 Acorn Preparation — Dean Ranch Bat Research — Dean Ranch	Sun Dec 14 Ridge Hike West — Shaeffer Ranch
Sun Oct 19 Summit Ascent — North Butte	Sat Jan 10 Ranch Exploration — Shaeffer Ranch
Sat Oct 25 Nature Stroll — Dean Ranch	Sun Jan 11 Summit Ascent — North Butte
Sun Oct 26 Photographers Outing — Shaeffer Ranch	Sat Jan 17 Ridge Ascent — Bragg Canyon*
Sat Nov 1 Ridge Trek — Dean Ranch Summit Ascent — North Butte	Sat Feb 7 Buttes Transect — High** Buttes Transect — Low**
Sun Nov 2 Wild Nature in Buttes — Dean Ranch	
Sat Nov 8 Geology Trek—Bragg Canyon*	
Sat Nov 15 Ridge Hike East — Shaeffer Ranch	
Sun Nov 16 Art in the Buttes — Dean Ranch In A Sacred Manner — Dean Ranch Tres Picos — Dean Ranch	
Sat Nov 22 Ridge Ascent — Bragg Canyon*	
Sat Nov 29 Nature Study — Shaeffer Ranch	
Sat Dec 6 Birds in the Buttes — Dean Ranch	
Sun Dec 7 Buttes Transect — High** Buttes Transect — Low**	
Sat Dec 13 Canyon Trek—Bragg Canyon*	

* The cost of this hike is \$45 per person.
 ** The cost of this hike is \$60 per person; we are accessing two properties.



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SUTTER BUTTES REGIONAL LAND TRUST

PO Box 3359, Yuba City, CA 95992-3359
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 Email: info@sutterbutteslandtrust.org
 Office Location: 750 Bridge Street,
 Yuba City, CA 95991
 Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am-1pm

JOIN & SUPPORT

"Together we can protect the land that defines our heritage."

Through education and conservation programs we build partnerships to balance conservation, economic growth, and natural resources.

Membership Levels With Benefits

\$25	Donor	Newsletters/Mailings
\$50	Friend	10% off a Hike
\$100	Associate	Complimentary Hike for 1 (\$35 value)
\$250	Sponsor	Complimentary Hike for 2 (\$70 value)
\$500	Conservator	Complimentary Hike for 4 (\$140 value)
\$1,000	Patron	Picnic in the Buttes (\$300 value)

info@sutterbutteslandtrust.org or call
 (530) 755-3568



Scan to visit
 our online
 membership
 page



THE MISSION OF THE SUTTER BUTTES REGIONAL LAND TRUST

Working to protect the land and natural resources of the Sutter Buttes and the surrounding region for present and future generations.

Goals

- Promote voluntary and public land conservation and a land appreciation ethic in the Sutter Buttes and the surrounding regions.
- Obtain, manage, and monitor easements and enforce restrictions.
- Maintain an efficient, effective, and sustainable organization.

Special Thank You

SBRLT acknowledges the following contributors and individuals: Shirley Sutton and Peter Moore, Cordi Winery, Eleanor Knox, Pete Sands, BlueRay Concepts, Gold Country Bank, Harkey House Bed & Breakfast, Community Memorial Museum of Sutter County, Wilke, Fleury Law Firm, Ultimate Building Maintenance, our members, our volunteers, and our hikers!

Web Store: The SBRLT web store is located at sutterbutteslandtrust.org. The Sutter Buttes calendars, books, postcards, and hike certificates are available. Purchasing these items is another way to support our efforts.

REMEMBERING JILL COUTS

Jill Coutts was a very dedicated Yuba City School District bus driver who tragically died in a vehicle accident in April 2014. Over the past five years, Jill drove many groups of Yuba City students to the Sutter Buttes for field trips with the Ed Program. She was a friend to many of us and her cheerful smile and love of all of her children will be greatly missed. In Jill's honor, the "Jill Coutts Memorial Scholarship" was established to allow children from one of our local schools to spend a day hiking in the Sutter Buttes. The first school honored with this scholarship is Lincoln School 3rd graders.

If you would like to make a donation to this scholarship, please indicate that it is for "Jill Coutts Scholarship" and send it to: SBRLT Office, PO Box 3359, Yuba City, CA 95992.

IN MEMORY

Anne Adams, Alma Lorenzetti Allison, Susan Huntley Burke, Elaine Carter, Jill Coutts, Helen Knox Dixon, Norene Heryford, Charles & Peggy Jackson, Robert Jenkins, Bob Matchett, Larry Matchett, David Meikle, Gayle Morrison, Don Schmoltdt, Wayne Sue, Dave Teja

IN HONOR

Mike Hubbartt, David Landeck,
 Siobhan O'Neil & Dan Barth, Joe & Julie Reusser