

Autumn 2019

Vol. 16 No. 1

President's Message 2019

Kathy Kellerman

Greetings!

As the new Pacifica Land Trust Board President, I would first like to thank the outgoing president, Sam Casillas, for his decade-long leadership of the Pacifica Land Trust. During his tenure the PLT has matured into a better organized and stronger group, eager to meet the challenges of the future.

Now is a good time to take stock of the Land Trust: what have we done, and where are we going?

Pacificans love our beautiful coastlines, ridgelines and ocean views. Created at the recommendation of the Open Space Advisory Committee to the Pacifica City Council, the PLT was formed in 1992. Since then, the PLT has played a pivotal role in preserving such treasures as Mori Point, Pacifica State Beach and Pedro Point Headlands.

Looking ahead, we plan to build our capacity by forming more partnerships and encouraging public involvement. Our partnerships include:

PLT members serve on the advisory committee to the State Coastal Conservancy for planning the California Coastal Trail segment that will join Pacifica and Devils Slide Trail.

The PLT is partnering with the San Pedro Creek Watershed Coalition to enhance the health of San Pedro Creek, home to threatened Steelhead and CA Red-legged Frogs.

The Pedro Point Headlands Stewardship Program, funded by the Coastal Conservancy, continues to restore and maintain Pedro Point Headlands.

We will continue to encourage the public to enjoy Pacifica's open spaces through:

- Nature hikes, led by knowledgeable birders, lichenologists, botanists and geologists.
- Volunteer workdays, including school, scout and corporate groups.
- Native plant propagation, to revegetate and diversify damaged habitat.
- Friend-raising events designed to educate and engage the public in open space issues.

Recent city planning meetings have shown again and again that Pacificans love the wild beauty of their open spaces. In the face of changing fire regimes, sea-level rise, and the pressures of urban development, the PLT has a unique role advocating for wildlife and open space.

I want to send a big Thank You to the many people who have supported us in the past, and to those who will help us grow in the future. Check out our website for information on hikes, workdays and other events: <https://www.pacifica-land-trust.org/> Please join us in this endeavor!

kathy@pacifica-land-trust.org

Contents

History and Transformation of the Pedro Point Headlands

San Pedro Creek Water Quality

Events at the Headlands:

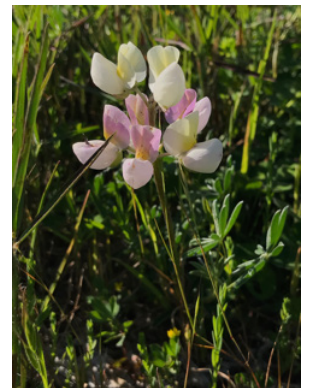
New Board Member

Pacifica Land Trust Financial Report

New Pedro Point Map

PLT Featured Photograph

Donations



The History and Transformation of the Pedro Point Headlands

Over the centuries the valley that is now Linda Mar included settlements for a number of native peoples. These inhabitants utilized the surrounding hills and mountains for a variety of purposes. Some of the earliest inhabitants were the Ohlone Indians who utilized the beaches for seafood, the shells for jewelry, the valley for growing crops and the hills for their hunting grounds. The Pedro Point Headlands during this era would have been a place to forage and hunt deer and quail, with the open landscape maintained by periodic burning.

When the Spanish colonized northern California, Mission Dolores would have had jurisdiction over Pacifica where the Sanchez Adobe was settled as part of a sprawling ranch.

With the push of the Gold Rush in the 1800's, Pacifica and the Pedro Point Headlands served as an important connection to the valleys of Half Moon Bay, where cattle were raised to feed the growing metropolis of San Francisco. During this time blue gum eucalyptus and later Monterey pines were introduced with the intention of providing lumber for the growing bay area population. Although the eucalyptus proved a poor source of lumber, it quickly spread along the coast.

The Ocean Shore Railroad (OSRR) ran from 1905-1920, and marked a colorful era in Pacifica's history. But with the constant rockslides along the cliffside tracks, eventually the OSRR was discontinued. If you peer down from the ocean cliffs you will see the remnants of where the OSRR was carved into the hillside. On the northern end of the cliffs was a tunnel that at one point was used by bootleggers to stash their whiskey before bringing it up to the thirsty crowds north of Pacifica. The tunnel was eventually dynamited at either end to ward off curious adventure seekers who would hike down from the Headlands -- often finding trouble on the slippery and steep cliff sides.

In the 1940's and 50's the valley below the Headlands had a more mundane history as artichoke fields. During this period before the incorporation of the City of Pacifica, the Headlands were untouched because it was too difficult to farm the steep hillsides.

The 1970's and 80's saw a much different type of activity with the advent of a Motorcycle Club that quickly degraded a unique coastal ecosystem. The Headlands were also threatened with major development.

Fortunately, in the early 1990's the City of Pacifica and the California Coastal Conservancy along with the PLT saw an opportunity to preserve and manage the fragile 250-acre ecosystem, and thus began a decades long endeavor to return the Headlands to its natural state. The PLT has stewarded the property for over 25 years, and received multiple grants totaling nearly \$2,000,000 for restoration projects that took many years. Through the generosity of the California Department of Parks



New Pedro Point Headlands Map from the PLT Website.



Coast Railroad Line, now barely visible, on cliff side parallel to rocky shoreline. Pedro Point Headlands. from PLT Drone Map.

and Recreation Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division, the California Coastal Conservancy and the County of San Mateo, along with the support of the City of Pacifica, the PLT has restored the Headlands by removing many invasive plant species, planting native plant species grown on-site, repairing scarred landscape and building a sustainable trail system for all to enjoy the beauty of this great open space.

With the persistence and vision of the PLT and its many partners and volunteers, the wonderful natural and recreational values of the Pedro Point Headlands are now preserved forever under the stewardship of the PLT. We welcome everyone to come see the transformation of this gem on the coast and witness the continued evolution of this healing wilderness!

Explore Pedro Point Virtually

A visit to the Pedro Point Headlands offers a deeper sense of educational engagement, interaction and appreciation with the new mobile friendly website, *Virtual Pedro Point*.

This interpretative website enriches the experience of those walking the trails along the headlands as they encounter Learning Stations sites, explained by a visitor's cell phone serving as a mobile educational unit.

Users are able to access text, videos, photographs, maps and graphics that will interpret the diverse communities, flora, fauna, geologic and cultural history of the headlands.

www.vppt.org



San Pedro Creek Water Quality

PLT's mission includes preserving, protecting and enhancing the natural, scenic, recreational, cultural, historic and open space environment including waterways and wildlife corridors. We played a key role in the City's restoration of Linda Mar Beach and San Pedro Creek, and continue to be concerned about the health of the creek. PLT supports the San Pedro Creek Watershed Coalition's efforts to clean up the creek.

Water quality in San Pedro Creek affects the resident steelhead population, as well as beach goers and surfers. Surface runoff flows through storm drains from streets into the creek untreated, which functions as a storm sewer. A second system, the sanitary sewer system, drains waste from homes into a network of underground pipes which runs to the lowest point, the Linda Mar pump station, where the sewage is then pumped to the treatment plant.

Linda Mar Beach has been identified as one of the dirtiest in the state, and it's almost certainly due to San Pedro Creek. If we can clean up the creek, it would benefit the steelhead and other creek life, and also beach goers and surfers.

What are the possible sources of contamination? One source is leakage from the sanitary system, both in the laterals coming from individual houses, and the mains running down the streets. This results in leakage out of the system in dry weather. In heavy rain events, leakage of storm water into the system may result in more volume of sewage than the treatment plant can handle. This has caused overflows of diluted sewage onto streets in lower Linda Mar, which in turn wash down storm drains and into the creek and ocean.

The City of Pacifica is replacing leaky mains and has programs to incentivize homeowners to replace laterals, but it will take years to complete. In the meantime, the equalization basin under construction behind the community center is designed for short-term storage of excess volume of sewage during storms.

Illegal dumping of human waste may also contribute to contamination of the creek, whether from an RV dumping waste down a storm sewer, or folks living illegally on land not served by a sanitary sewage hook-up.

Another source of contamination is pet waste. Pet owners pick up most waste and dispose of it into the garbage, but the waste that escapes pick-up may find its way into the creek, especially during the rainy season. Horse stables and wild animals may also contribute to the problem.

So far we've talked about human or animal waste that contain E. coli or Enterococcus, indicator organisms that are tested in water quality sampling. However, there are other, chemical contaminants that probably are washed into the creek through the storm drains, but are not tested for.

One contaminant that may seem innocuous is soap from washing cars. Soap interferes directly with the ability of steelhead to breathe through their gills. Even biodegradable soap when washed directly into the creek has this effect. Folks are encouraged to wash their cars on their lawns, to give the soap a chance to soak into the soil instead of washing into the creek.

Other contaminants include pesticides and herbicides, washed off gardens and lawns into the creek. They affect the insects and other creatures that the steelhead eat as they are growing and putting on weight before venturing out into the ocean. Chlorine from swimming pools kills nearly everything when it is dumped into the creek. Cement washed from trucks turns the creek turbid and makes it more difficult for the steelhead to breathe.

So, be aware of what is being washed down the storm drains. It can affect the life of the steelhead in the creek, and the health of beachgoers and surfers.



San Pedro Creek, 2019. Photo by Stephen Johnson.



Volunteers from Genentech and PLT board pose for photo after long morning brushing trails and removing invasive echium.

Headlands Work 2019

The PLT would like to extend a huge thanks to all of the volunteers whose dedicated service over the past decade has steadily improved Pedro Point Headlands and maintained our trails. On the fourth Sunday of each month from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., The Pedro Point Headlands Stewards are hard at work on a number of projects in the Headlands. These volunteers plant natives in recently restored areas, work in the native plant nursery watering plants and potting up seedlings. Volunteers also collect native grass seeds, control invasive weeds and maintain the headland's trail network.

Thus far in 2019, 200+ volunteers have planted over 50 plants, removed over 2000 invasive plants and maintained nearly two miles of trails! In the coming months we will be planting native plants in the grassland area above the nursery as well as along the bluffs, redoubling our efforts to remove invasive pampas grass and broom plants and repairing the trails from any damage caused by winter storms. Volunteer projects are open to people of all ages and are a great way to spend time outside while giving back to this amazing place. To join us for an upcoming volunteer project or to schedule a special volunteer program for a group contact us at volunteer@pacificaland-trust.org! Programs are sometimes cancelled due to rain or high winds so please sign up for our emails, check the website or visit our Facebook page prior to coming out.



April 28, 2019. Work Day. Pedro Point Headlands. Emilio Merino, Karl Kindall, Rafael Velazquez and Naftali Moed. Photo by Kathy Kellerman.

Events on the Headlands:

The Pedro Point Headlands stewardship program continues to bring volunteers up to the Headlands for trail maintenance and vegetation projects every fourth Sunday. Please visit our website for more information.

The Escape to the Headlands event will be replaced this year by a Fall hike through the Headlands. A date for the hike will be posted on our website at pacificaland-trust.org.



Genentech volunteer removes echium plant from bluffs along southwestern edge of Pedro Point Headlands.



Volunteers Maryrose Kulick and Colleen Herr use auger to drill holes for plants as part of ongoing meadow revegetation efforts.



PLT Featured Photograph

Anna's Hummingbird was taken by Patrick Kobernus.

PLT Featured Photograph is displayed on the PLT website and Newsletter. These photographs highlight Pacifica's natural environment on Pacifica Land Trust Project sites.



Pacifica Land Trust Board. 2019.

Michael Crabtree, Dinah Verby,
Andrew Meiman, John Keener,
Samuel Casillas, Celeste Langille,
Kathy Kellerman, Stephen Johnson.

New Board Member

John Keener

John has a PhD in Microbiology, did research in biochemistry and genetics, and was also a medical writer.

He was recently a city council member and mayor of Pacifica.

John and his wife were attracted to Pacifica by its numerous hiking trails and beaches. He hopes to preserve and add to the open space around town.

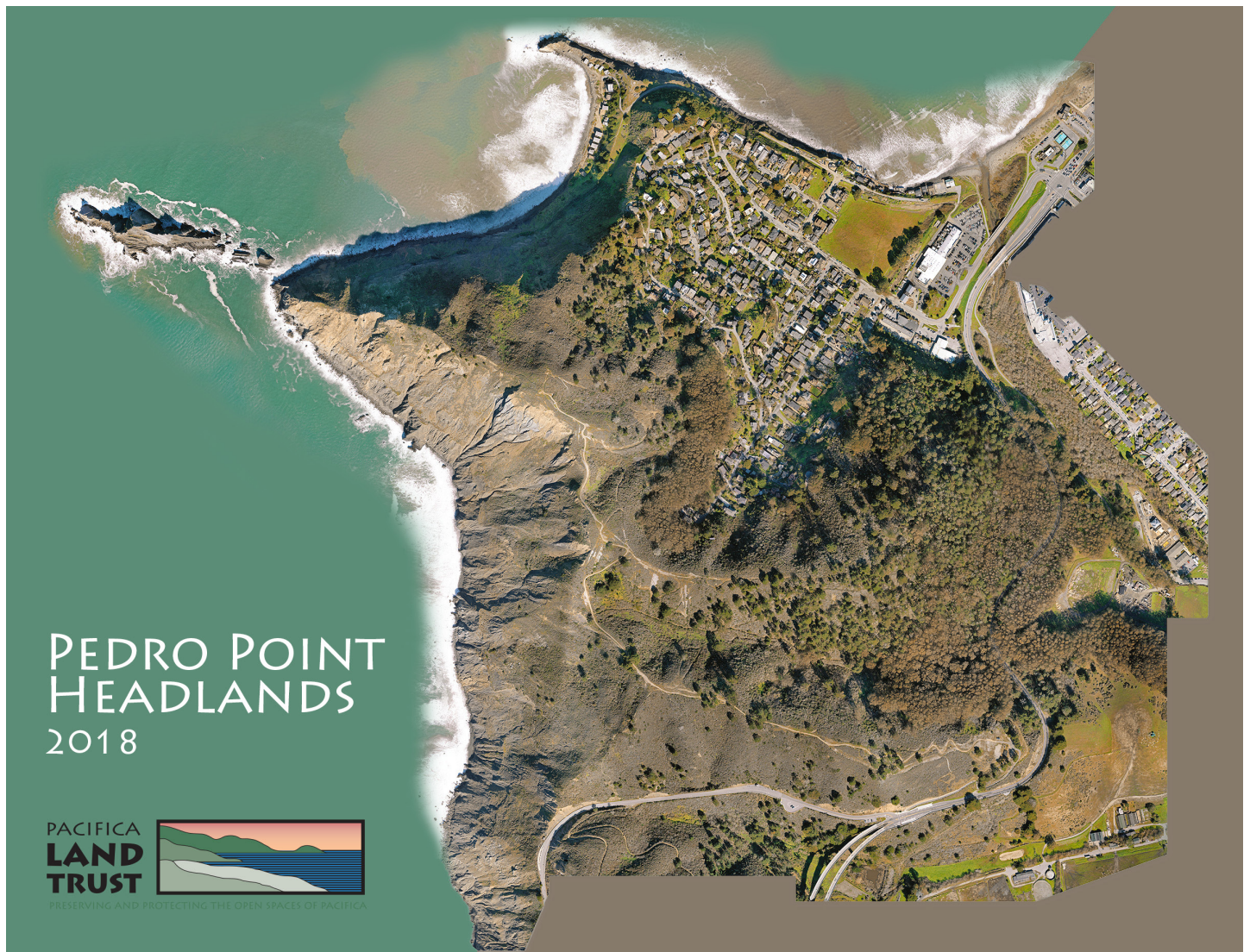


New Pedro Point Headlands Drone Map

Last year we commissioned a aerial survey of the work we were completing on Pedro Point Headlands.

The drone map was made from 2,000 individual photographs taken over a multiple day period. The project resolution is down to ~5 cm (compare to Google Maps, at ~15 cm).

Here is an initial look at the results.



Pacifica Land Trust Financial Report

2018-2019

The PLT is a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation under the IRS code. The main program activities of the Land Trust in Fiscal Year 2019 were related to the Pedro Point Headlands project, where ongoing work was supported with two grants, one from San Mateo County ("Measure A") and one from the California State Coastal Commission. We expect to continue limited stewardship work in the Pedro Point Headlands under both grants in FY2020.

Pacifica Land Trust Statement of Activity

July 2018 - June 2019

Revenue		
Grants and Contributions	\$	11,134
Government Grants	\$	62,234
Total Revenue	\$	73,368
Expenditures		
Personnel	\$	824
Professional Services *	\$	49,648
Program Expenses *	\$	18,138
Office, Insurance, Fees	\$	11,254
Total Expenditures	\$	79,864
Net Surplus	\$	(6,496)

Accrual Basis - Unaudited

Notes: * Mostly Point Pedro Headlands improvements

Pacifica Land Trust Statement of Financial Position

As of June 30, 2019

ASSETS		
Total Bank Accounts	\$	124,348
Total Receivables	\$	0
Total Current Assets	\$	124,348
TOTAL ASSETS	\$	124,348
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Liabilities		
Total Payables	\$	2,536
Net Assets		
Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	\$	121,812
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$	124,348

Accrual Basis - Unaudited

PLT Board Changes

Welcome to John Keener, our newest board member! John brings many strengths, including political connections, understanding of land issues, and great personal integrity. A champion of clean energy and climate change preparation, his leadership will keep the PLT moving forward.

This year the PLT has seen several board members move on to new challenges. Bill Schwegler has given up his commute to Pacifica from San Jose in order to devote his energies to remodeling his Arts and Crafts bungalow and supporting his family. He blazed like a meteor across the PLT organization, spurring us on to greater ambitions. Naftali Moed has taken a job with California State Parks, operating out of Petaluma. His new position as Environmental Scientist Resource Ecologist has necessitated his resigning the PLT board, but he will remain as Volunteer Coordinator for the Pedro Point Headlands. He and his friends have brought a wealth of new land management expertise to the PLT. Alison Sanders has accepted a position at UC San Diego as Assistant to the Vice Chancellor, while also pursuing a Doctorate in Education from UC Davis. She served as PLT Secretary for five years, and was known for her amazing efficiency and wise counsel.

Donations

The Pacifica Land Trust is a non-profit corporation. Donations to the Land Trust are therefore tax-deductible. The PLT is pursuing new projects to preserve open space and vulnerable waterways and we appreciate any support you can contribute.

We accept checks sent to the address on the back of this Newsletter or donations may be made online through our PayPal account linked from our home page on the net.

Got Email?

We'll keep you up-to-date, electronically!

From time to time issues arise that require a speedy response. Public hearings, land development proposals, and restoration projects (to name a few) are often up for review with relatively short notice. A growing list of concerned Pacificans' emails will help us keep you informed, and enable you to respond if you are inclined.

Interested? Email us at info@pacific-land-trust.org. We will not share your email or bother you needlessly.

PACIFICA
**LAND
TRUST**



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'Like' us on Facebook. Follow the link from:

www.pacifica-land-trust.org

Your generous donations allow us to continue working to preserve our open spaces and protect our lands for generations to come. Please be as generous as your budget allows so the Pacifica Land Trust can keep serving our community.

I support PLTi
Keep up the good work!

Please use my donation below to continue the work of protecting our precious Pacifica resources.

☐ \$10 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$100 ☐ Other \$ _____

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Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Daytime Phone _____

Email _____

Send check made payable to : Pacifica Land Trust P.O. Box 988, Pacifica, CA 94044 (650) 359-3275

A PayPal link can be found on our website: www.pacifica-land-trust.org

Pacifica Land Trust

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Dinah F. Verby

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Samuel Casillas

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Celeste Langille

Romany Hall Siefertman
Administrative Assistant