



Winter 2025

Vol. 21 No. 1

President's Message Winter 2025

The city of Pacifica is nationally recognized as an example of a coastal community impacted by climate change. Sea-level rise, increased intense precipitation events, and storm surges, all associated with the climate crisis, are expected to exacerbate the frequency of property loss and damage to the coastal environment. Many of Pacifica's neighborhoods along the coast were built in former wetlands and therefore experience flooding. The frequency and intensity of flooding is only expected to worsen with climate change. Other neighborhoods in Pacifica, or in some cases the very same neighborhoods, are also at risk from sea-level rise. Hardening of the coastline, including building sea-walls, provide only short-term protections from sea-level rise, while directly causing the loss of one of our most treasured natural assets, beaches.

As the climate crisis worsens there is a need to look at opportunities for nature-based solutions to sea-level rise and other climate hazards. Nature-based climate solutions often take the form of protecting and restoring estuaries, wetlands, coastal dune systems and other vulnerable coastal ecosystems. These natural systems can serve as buffers between homes or infrastructure and hazards. Nature based solutions are sustainable and lasting ways to protect communities from storm surges, flooding, and sea-level rise, while providing habitat for plants and wildlife. Over 90 percent of California's coastal wetlands have been lost to development. However, now, federal and state climate resiliency funding targeting nature-based projects present an opportunity to use environmental engineering to bring back some of these ecological resources while simultaneously benefiting our community. The Pacifica Land Trust would like to increase Pacifica's climate resilience while preserving and restoring our local ecosystems, and so we have been applying for grants to support this type of work in our community.

As a coastal community we should be taking a close look at sites that are currently undeveloped and evaluating their potential to be part of a nature-based long-term climate resilience strategy for Pacifica. Preserving or ecologically enhancing such sites could potentially protect our community from climate threats while also protecting the natural landscapes that are so integral to the essence of Pacifica's character.

Sincerely,
Sam Casillas, President, Pacifica Land Trust

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Highlights of Our Past Year

We are excited to share some of the highlights of our past year from our stewardship work where our volunteers played a major role in our success, helping us remove invasive plants, restore native plants, build and maintain water bars, clear vegetation along our favorite trails and contribute to erosion control at the Pedro Point Headlands.

Steve Diers, career park ranger and Stewardship Coordinator for the PLT, has led the stewardship team in the removal of 130 feet of vegetation from the Arroyo Trail. A culvert near the base of the Arroyo Trail was filled with 25 feet of mud and leaves, causing the ditch to overflow onto the trail. After removing much of the vegetation surrounding the culvert and crawling into the culvert pipe, all the sediment was removed and a path for stormwater was cleared. After the 2023-24 winter storm events, water was flowing freely through the culvert without creating a risk of further erosion or overflow! Our stewardship team and volunteers have been working hard to remove brush from the South Ridge Trail and Arroyo Trail to widen the passage.

To further protect our trails from stormwater, the stewardship team has done some digging and clearing

of vegetation to create and maintain water bars on the Arroyo Trail. For the less hydrologically inclined a water bar is usually a small ditch or raised surface diagonal to a trail's slope, which prevents erosion due to runoff that may otherwise flow directly downhill. If you ever happen to be hiking the headlands in the rain, pay attention to where the water is flowing and you will see the results of our volunteers' hard work!

We would also like to recognize our volunteers for helping us remove invasive plants from the headlands. Over 1,200 Tower of Jewels plants have been uprooted along with hundreds of thistles and French Broom. Even some pesky pampas grass has been removed. Our volunteers also assisted in a plant restoration project, planting native plants near the base of the South Ridge Trail. We hope to continue to support our ecosystem with our volunteers and would love to see you at our monthly stewardship volunteer projects in the upcoming year which occur every fourth Sunday from 10am-1pm.

Our most recent stewardship project is an effort to install some long overdue regulatory signage for visitor safety. Within the past few months, project manager Steve Diers and stewardship specialist Dean Meiman have made progress cutting back vegetation on the South Ridge Trail, assisted by volunteers during our October work day. The trail has been cleared and widened by two to three feet in areas of heavy vegetation so we can transport materials to the sign's future locations.

We also just learned that the National Park Service is intending to acquire the Pedro Point Headlands in the near future to make it part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA). This is great news as the GGNRA will plan to make the headlands more accessible and enhance protection for the hidden coastal gem. We will keep everyone informed as we learn more about the process. If you haven't already done so please sign up to receive our emails at: <https://www.pacifica-land-trust.org>

Next time you visit the headlands, be on the lookout for the Farallon Islands. On a clear day, they are visible in the distance along with Point Reyes which is visible from the headlands if you are able to follow the view of the coastline past the Golden Gate Bridge. Thank you for a great 2024!

Coyotes

by Board Member Ellen Natesan

Coyotes peacefully co-existed for thousands of years alongside humans. However, when Europeans arrived in the Americas, they considered coyotes and wolves (their close relatives), to be vermin that should be extinguished. Over the years, there have been numerous public campaigns to eradicate coyotes. Even today, approximately half a million are killed each year in the United States. Nevertheless, coyotes have not only persisted but are thriving among humans.

One reason coyotes are doing so well is that they do well in urban and suburban environments. Coyotes are opportunistic omnivores. They can cooperatively hunt large prey in packs, or live alone or in pairs and subsist on rodents, snakes, fruits, and berries. Unfortunately, they will also eat food waste found in trash cans and other human sourced food like pet food left outside. Large carnivores that prey on coyotes such as mountain lions tend to avoid humans (and are often promptly removed if they don't), which make human dominated landscapes even more appealing for coyotes.

Coyotes sleep and forage for food both day and night, so if you see one during the day that does not mean it is sick. Coyotes are usually afraid of humans so if one is standing their ground and it is springtime, you may have happened upon a den with pups. Coyotes can run up to 40 miles per hour, so don't try to outrun a coyote. If you encounter a coyote, make a lot of noise, try to look big (e.g. raise your arms over your head), and back up slowly and carefully.

Coyotes are strongly territorial, and an alpha pair uses vocalizations to establish their turf. If you've been getting along OK with your local coyotes, it may comfort you to know that those howls are keeping other coyotes out. Also, keep in mind that humans typically overestimate the number of coyotes howling by about double, so there probably are not quite as many coyotes in your backyard as you thought.

Coyotes can lose their fear of humans if they are repeatedly rewarded with food. Coyotes habituated to humans are more dangerous and more likely to get killed by animal control. Keep your trash and pet food secure and never leave small pets alone outside. A wild coyote is a safe coyote.

State Coastal Conservancy Awards

Over \$113 million for Restoration, Resilience, and Public Access on California Coast

In the fall of 2024 "the Board of the State Coastal Conservancy approved grants totaling over \$113 million for coastal restoration, protection, public access and climate resilience...

San Mateo County

- Pacifica Land Trust was awarded \$136,500 to augment a previously authorized Conservancy grant of \$103,270 for community-based habitat restoration and trail enhancement at Pedro Point Headlands in San Mateo County.

- Pacifica Land Trust was awarded \$120,000 to undertake the Pacifica Coastal Resilience Opportunity Study, consisting of preparing studies, surveys and other reports, and conducting community engagement to identify opportunities for nature-based sea level rise resiliency projects in the City of Pacifica, and potentially conducting additional planning tasks to move one to two of the priority projects towards implementation."

New Board Member

Angel Yin

Forever walking the talk of believing there is no “planet b,” I have been passionate about sustainability and seek to implement it in all my walks of life. With a master’s and bachelor’s degree in environmental science, I not only have an earth science background (including extensive research on California soil and water) but also worked with several non-profit and private companies to accelerate the future of sustainability, whether that is through grassroots advocacy, volunteering to help with land restoration, or even certifying sustainable businesses. As a Californian, it is a passion and a privileged obligation to give back to the land and community in order to preserve its beauty and robust biodiversity. Pacifica’s Land Trust closely aligns with my values and I hope to be able to contribute to the organization with my experience in non-profit work and operations, as well as with my knowledge of earth and oceans sciences plus familiarity with California’s botany and topography. I hope to use my interdisciplinary background to uplift the organization and be a part in conserving one of the Bay Area’s most beautiful lands and oceans.



Upcoming Events

Volunteer Stewardship Workdays

Our volunteer workdays continue at the Pedro Point Headlands. Please join us, generally on the fourth Sunday of the month from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Check our website at <https://www.pacifica-land-trust.org/projects/pedro-point-headlands/pph-volunteer/> for details, updates and cancellations.

Upcoming 2025 Workdays:

4th Sunday of the Month

January 26	July 27
February 23	August 24
March 23	September 28
April 25	October 26
May 25	November 23
June 22	December Happy Holidays! (No Stewardship Volunteer Project)



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@pacifica-land-trust.org. We will not share your email or bother you needlessly.

Donations

Our mission is to preserve, protect and enhance the natural, scenic, recreational, cultural, historic and open space environment including waterways and wildlife corridors of Pacifica and the surrounding community for present and future generations.

Please consider adding to or renewing your support today. 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.

Pacifica Land Trust Financial Report 2023-2024

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 2023 were related to the Pedro Point Headlands Stewardship Program, where ongoing work was supported with a grant from the California State Coastal Conservancy.

Pacifica Land Trust Statement of Activity July 2023 - June 2024

Revenue	
Grants and Contributions	\$ 12,530
Government Grants	\$ 27,707
Interest and Miscellaneous Income	\$ 1,289
Total Revenue	\$ 41,526
Expenditures	
Personnel*	\$ 18,157
Professional Services	\$ 2,990
Program Expenses	\$ 8,556
Office, Insurance, Fees	\$ 9,969
Total Expenditures	\$ 39,674
Net Surplus	\$ 1,852

Pacifica Land Trust Statement of Financial Position As of June 30, 2024

ASSETS	
Bank Accounts	\$ 113,056
Grants Receivable	\$ 11,023
Other Current Assets	\$ 3,327
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 127,406
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
Liabilities	
Total Payables	\$ 1,847
Net Assets	
Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	\$ 125,559
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 127,406

Accrual Basis - Unaudited

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Notes: *Part-time PLT staff for Point Pedro Headlands Improvements

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Pacifica Land Trust
P.O. Box 988
Pacifica, CA 94044

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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 PLT!

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 \$ _____

Name

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City

State

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Send check made payable to : Pacifica Land Trust P.O. Box 988, Pacifica, CA 94044 650-260-4772

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

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