

THE AG LAND TRUST

M A G A Z I N E

SUMMER
2025



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PRESERVING FARMLAND SINCE 1984

Our Mission Statement

It is the purpose of the Ag Land Trust to assist in the preservation and protection of all productive and important agricultural, open space and historical lands in Monterey County (and adjacent areas). Such action will contribute directly to the social, cultural, environmental and economic well being of the County while enhancing its unique character as a desirable place to live and work.



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Meet our Dedicated Board of Directors and Staff

OVER 40 YEARS OF MAKING GOOD



Marc Del Piero,
CEO & MANAGING DIRECTOR,
AG LAND TRUST

As part of our ongoing efforts at the Ag Land Trust (ALT), we've been actively addressing a wide range of issues for our landowner clients and supporters in Central California's agribusiness community.

First, a sincere and heartfelt thank you, to the 100+ attendees who joined us at our Annual Appreciation Dinner, held this year at the Stanton Center Museum in Monterey. This scenic, art-filled venue set the stage for a meaningful evening honoring our landowners, their families, consultants, attorneys, public officials, and professionals who support our mission of ongoing programs of preserving the prime and productive farmlands of our area from the ever-growing threats of municipal urban sprawl and massive subdivision developments. Attendees visited the spectacular artworks of Monterey County artists Jo Mora, Emile Norman, Armin Hansen, and Paul Whitman.

ALT has been working hard to **"make good"** on our continuing promises to help our Monterey County landowners to protect their ranches and farms and to preserve their estates for their heirs. We've recently completed Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation (SALC) easement acquisitions on over 500 acres, including the Franscioni Ranch east of Chualar and the Wimer Ranch north of Gonzales. Meanwhile, our conserved Azevedo Ranch near Elkhorn Slough and other Salinas Valley properties are being photographed for an upcoming National Geographic Magazine feature on soil conservation innovations. We are proud to announce the recent fee

acquisition of the 1,302 acre Marguerite Nunn Ranch on Indian Valley Road in southern Monterey County. Marguerite was a steadfast supporter of ALT's mission and her legacy will live on through our continued stewardship of this land and its contribution to preserving the cattle ranching heritage of southern Monterey County.

ALT is very lucky to have an on-going partnership with the U.S. Department of Defense (National Guard Bureau) through its Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) program. The REPI program provides grant funding to DoD's non-profit partners (like ALT) for the purchase of farmlands (like the Nunn Ranch) and ranchland conservation easements that have been identified by DoD near military reservations. These easements serve the dual purpose of preserving agriculture and shielding essential military training areas from the encroachment of development.

The REPI program is one of the few stable federal grant programs that has not had its funding substantially reduced. Our partnership with DoD reflects the continuing federal commitment to working with ALT for the protection of both American farmers and American agriculture and the protection of our homeland through the use of **innovative national defense strategies.**

DID YOU KNOW?

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OVER 40 YEARS OF APPRECIATION APPRECIATION DINNER

This year, the Ag Land Trust's Annual Appreciation Dinner was held at the Stanton Center museum in Monterey. The ALT Annual Dinner highlights our successes of the past year and invites our friends to different venues throughout the Central Coast. The Stanton Center is owned by the non-profit Monterey History and Art Association which preserves exhibitions of paintings and sculptures by members of Monterey County's legendary arts community. Over 100 of ALT's most enthusiastic supporters gathered for a great meal prepared by

celebrity Chef Tene Shake and his hard-working crew. Additionally, the ALT guests all got to see the historic exhibitions in the museum which have memorialized the agricultural legacies of the Salinas Valley and the Central Coast. Rarely seen and spectacular works by artists Jo Mora, Armin Hansen, and Paul Whitman dazzled the crowd. And the most talked about piece was the display of the newly restored 26 foot long endomosaic mural by artist Emile Norman that features historic Monterey County agricultural scenes. It was a GREAT experience for everyone who attended.



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Photo 1: Ag Commissioner Juan Hildago **Photo 2:** Austin Walter and Geno Boggiatto **Photo 3:** Cathy Alameda, Tom AmRhein, and Marilyn Vierra **Photo 4:** Dennis Mar **Photo 5:** Heather Golden Jensen **Photo 6:** Jacqueline Nicora, Melanie Nicora, David Gill, and Al Nicora **Photo 7:** Kate McKenna, Monterey County LAFCO **Photo 8:** Manny Acosta, William and Monica Tovar **Photo 9:** Marc and Tina Del Piero, Camille and Marty Polson



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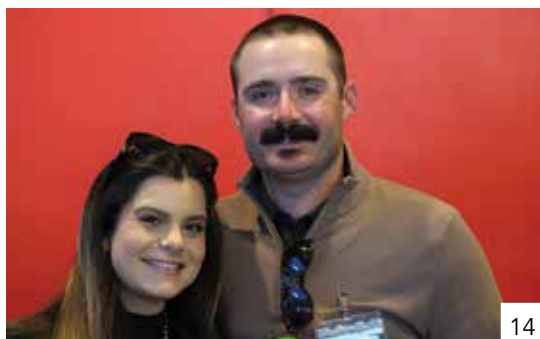
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Photo 10: Matt and Teresa Gourley, Kori Violini and CJ Given **Photo 11:** Matt Simonin **Photo 12:** Maureen Wruck and Joel Panzer
Photo 13: Morgan Faylor, Laurence and Diana London **Photo 14:** Nicolette and Zach Panziera **Photo 15:** Patricia Shiffman and Louis Frizzell
Photo 16: Randy Pura and Mo. Co. Supervisor Chris Lopez **Photo 17:** Richard Nutter, Stephanie Lee, Marc Del Piero, Kelli Morgantini
Photo 18: Tom and Terry Pettitt with Roxanne and Steve Storm



ALT COMPLETES NEW EASEMENTS

By the time that you receive this edition of the Ag Land Trust Magazine, we anticipate completing agricultural conservation easements on the following three ranches:

1 The Franscioni Ranch

2 The Wimer Ranch

3 The Boggiatto Ranch



1

The Franscioni Ranch consists of 200 acres of prime farmlands just east of Chualar. The owner is a great supporter of the protection of the agricultural industry in the Salinas Valley and has been very supportive of limiting the loss of farmlands to development.



2

The Wimer Ranch is jointly owned by the Gill and Hitchcock Families of southern Monterey County. It encompasses 135 acres of prime vegetable ground. The Gill and Hitchcock Families have partnered with the Ag Land Trust on many farmland conservation projects.



3

The Boggiatto Ranch, consisting of 260 acres located near Castroville, has been owned and protected by the Boggiatto Family for decades. Currently, Mike and his son Geno are the owners whose sincere commitment to the permanent preservation of their farm and the "Salad Bowl of the World" from urban sprawl is well known.



HOW ALT SUPPORTS OUR COMMUNITY

The Ag Land Trust's board of directors believes in preserving the agricultural lands and heritage of Monterey County.

We actively support other local charitable organizations which preserve our quality of life and protect our natural resources on the central coast.



- (l to r) • Grower Shipper Association • Monterey County Farm Bureau • California Salinas Rodeo • KSBW Channel 8 Television - Share Your Holiday (Salvation Army) • Slavic American Cultural Organization • Deputy Sheriffs Association • Bradley Union School • Salinas High School • Salinas Regional Sports Authority • Salinas Valley Fair • Monterey County Fair • Monterey County Film Commission • First Tee • California International Airshow • Legal Services for Seniors • Resource Conservation District



HOW TO CONTACT THE AG LAND TRUST – WE ARE LOCAL

The Ag Land Trust is over 40 years old. Founded by Monterey County private farmers, agri-business professionals, CPA's, attorneys, and retired governmental officials, ALT was created to help landowners and farmers to preserve their farms and the way of life for which Monterey County is known. We are working to keep the Salinas Valley in agriculture for future generations to come.

The Ag Land Trust is located in our brick building at the corner of Blanco Road and Padre Drive in South Salinas (1263 Padre Drive). Our phone number is **831-422-5868**. Or you can visit our website at **www.AgLandTrust.org**.

We have been "Saving Farmlands and Serving Farmers" since 1984.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

HEATHER GOLDEN JENSEN



Ag Land Trust, in its beginning, realized the importance of protecting our most valuable resources in the Salinas Valley and all of California. It is a mission that has not slowed down in over 40 years!

I became an advocate for agriculture once I worked on a leafy greens and vegetable ranch after following a career as a personal trainer and sports nutrition. I have always eaten “healthy” but really had no idea how fresh broccoli or lettuce could get to the grocery store every day of the year. I soon found out that it takes diverse “villages” and overcoming plenty of obstacles to feed the world!

Farmers and ranchers work tirelessly to produce enough food to feed the masses. The land by itself cannot do this. It is hugely a generational endeavor with a fair share of trial and error! To be sure, for this industry to thrive and remain sustainable for generations to come, there must be a collective effort between growers/producers, biologists, conservationists, environmentalists, law makers, laborers, and consumers!

With over 50,000 acres already protected, we at the Ag Land Trust are moving forward to protect thousands more. It is a strategic undertaking. Controlled and directed development is a necessary part of the puzzle. A team of professionals are

required, including consultants, attorneys, real estate professionals, local, state and federal government officials and our incredible qualified staff and board members. And all of us are striving to put the pieces together that have continued our success.

There are currently hundreds of thousands of acres of prime farmland in California at risk of being permanently lost to urban sprawl. That land cannot be recovered once it is covered in concrete. We know there must be a balance, and agriculture is at the top of the order. **Agriculture feeds us, provides jobs and tax revenues much needed for the adjacent communities.**

Ag Land Trust is working toward **national accreditation** to better our knowledge, strategies, and compliance when protecting these precious lands. The national Land Trust Accreditation Commission is a nonprofit independent program of the Land Trust Alliance. They award accreditation to land trusts that meet the highest national standards for excellence and conservation permanence. The Ag Land Trust board members and staff have begun the endeavor and are committed to completing the rigorous review process and joining the network of land trust organizations that are united by the strongest ethical practices. ALT’s diverse board of directors and staff will continue to work hard reaching out to our local partners to make sure this precious commodity is protected and productive for generations to come..

Thank you to all who support Ag Land Trust!

“

For over 40 years, Ag Land Trust has worked to Make Good on our Promise to Preserve lands that **feed the world.**

Heather Golden Jensen
PRESIDENT, AG LAND TRUST



MEET OUR DIRECTORS & STAFF



Marc Del Piero, CEO & Managing Director

Our CEO/Managing Director was our Founding President in 1984. A former county Supervisor, an attorney, and a past member of the State Water Resources Control Board, his family has farmed in Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties for four generations.



David Gill, Vice-President

Our Vice-President is the co-owner of Rio Farms. A South County resident, he oversees farming on over 14,500 acres in the Salinas Valley.



Anker Fanoë

Director Fanoë, a native of Monterey County, is the President and CEO of Pacific Valley Bank. He regularly provides detailed financial assistance and business banking services to the largest agri-business firms in Central California.



Heather Golden Jensen, President

Our Board President is the principal owner of Golden Ag Assistance, LLC. She holds a California Real Estate license and has provide detailed technical consulting to hundreds of ag clients in Central California.



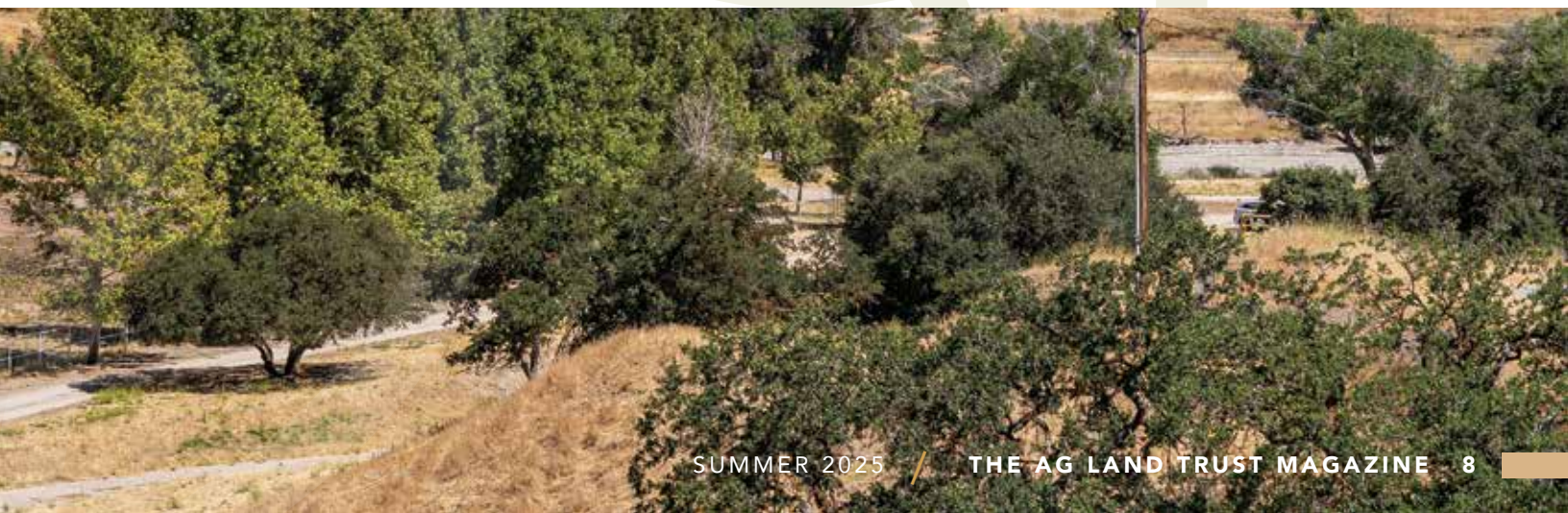
Louis Frizzell, Treasurer

Our Board Treasurer has been a licensed CPA for over four decades and provides financial planning services to numerous major farming concerns and landowners.



Aaron Johnson

Our Past Board President is the Senior Attorney and Shareholder at Aaron Johnson and Associates, Attorneys-at-Law. He specializes in land use, agricultural business law, complex real property transactions, and family law.





MEET OUR DIRECTORS & STAFF



Laurence London, Secretary

Our Board Secretary is an independent ag consultant and the owner of Fitotec Consulting, LLC.

He has been licensed as a Pest Control Advisor, a Certified Crop Advisor, and served as an adjunct Professor of Ag Innovation at Hartnell College.



Robert Roach

Director Roach served county farmers for 31 years. He was the Assistant Agricultural Commissioner for Monterey County. He holds a Bachelor's and a Master's degree, and is an expert in pesticide and plant quarantine issues and farmland protection.



Mike Novo

Director Novo holds a degree in Geography and served as the Director of Planning for Monterey County for over a decade. He was responsible for ALL land use decisions within the 3,771 square miles of the unincorporated area of Monterey County.



Tom AmRhein

A lifetime resident of the Pajaro Valley, Mr. AmRhein spent 40 years in the strawberry industry and was President of the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau. He retired as Vice-President of Naturipe Berry Growers, Inc., the oldest Strawberry marketing organization in California.



Richard Nutter

Our Past Board President, is famous throughout California after his 27-year tenure as Monterey County's Agricultural Commissioner. He is recognized as an expert on farmland protection issues, pesticide/fertilizer regulations, and statewide ag policies.



Camille Polson, Director of Finance and Property Management

Director of Finance and a native to the Salinas Valley, she has worked for Ag Land Trust since 2017 and sits on the Board of Directors for the Monterey County Film Commission and is an active member of CA Women for Agriculture.



Madison Creech

Our newest employee, Madison Creech is our Administrative Analyst. A recent CSUMB grad, Madison was our student intern and now brings remarkable map making skills to ALT.





MEET OUR BOARD MEMBER

The Ag Land Trust Board of Directors has long-time members whose professional careers have been dedicated to helping the landowners, farmers, and agri-business professionals of the Central Coast.

Aaron Johnson

Aaron Johnson has been a stalwart member and Past President of the Ag Land Trust Board of Directors since 2011.

The son of a Salinas Valley grape and wine producing family, Aaron's commitment to thoughtful, directed development has been a driving force behind our efforts to protect the irreplaceable farmlands of Central California from urban sprawl. Aaron's professional experience is rooted in agricultural businesses that have undergone significant consolidation from family farms to large corporate entities. He is well known for his expertise in complex real property transactions, estate planning, and facilitating mergers and acquisitions that have protected and grown our Salinas Valley landowner family fortunes for over two decades. Mr. Johnson holds both a law degree and an advanced LL.M degree in Taxation Law and is a lifetime resident of the Salinas Valley.



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www.AgLandTrust.org

-PUBLIC NOTICE-

STAKEHOLDER NOTIFICATION

The land trust accreditation program recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. Ag Land Trust is pleased to announce it is applying for accreditation. A public comment period is now open.

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, conducts an extensive review of each applicant's policies and programs. After 40 years of successful farmland conservation projects protecting over 50,000 acres, the Ag Land Trust's continuing pursuit of professional excellence now includes our goal of accreditation by the Land Trust Alliance Commission.

The Commission invites public input and accepts signed, written comments on pending applications. Comments must relate to how Ag Land Trust complies with national quality standards. These standards address the ethical and technical operation of a land trust. For the full list of standards see **www.landtrustaccreditation.org**.

To learn more about the accreditation program and to submit a comment, visit www.landtrustaccreditation.org, or email your comment to info@landtrustaccreditation.org. Comments may also be mailed to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, Attn: Public Comments, 36 Phila Street, Suite 2, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866.



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