

Wilderness

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within REACH



Sequoia Riverlands Trust
Conserving California's Heartland

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



Birds, birds, and more BIRDS!

The James K. Herbert Wetland Prairie Preserve is now supporting 152 bird species. Incredibly, this is a 100% increase in the number of bird species using the preserve since our restoration efforts began!



Photo: S & H Artis

SEQUOIA RIVERLANDS TRUST TEAMS WITH STATE, FEDERAL AGENCIES TO PROTECT A TREASURED NATIONAL RESOURCE: FOOD PRODUCTION

After serving one term in the White House, Herbert Hoover decided to farm. He hired experts to find the best agricultural land available. They selected two spots, near Wasco and Pasadena.

“Hoover told them to find the best combination of soil, water and climate, and they didn’t let him down,” Keith Gardiner said. “We’re on some of the best ground in the world. If you can’t make it as a farmer here, you can’t make it anywhere.”

Gardiner, Holly King and members of their extended families formed a partnership that two years ago created the first agricultural conservation easement in Kern County, permanently shielding the 472-acre Wasco I farm from development. Today, the partnership and Sequoia Riverlands Trust announced that the adjoining 571-acre Wasco II property likewise has been set aside for agriculture. President Hoover would be proud. “I don’t have a lot of history on this particular property – we

only bought it four years ago – but my history has been to try to find this kind of land,” Gardiner said. “I’ve been farming for 40 years, and this is exactly what I’ve always wanted. We want to keep it in farming, with no outside pressure for

development. There’s no better calling for this kind of land than what we’re doing with it.”

“We’re on some of the best ground in the world.”

Funding for the creation of the Wasco II easement was provided by the California Department of Conservation’s California Farmland Conservancy Program (CFCP) and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP).

“The state and national significance of this property was recognized so many years ago by President Hoover and his team of experts, says Scott Spear, Board President of Sequoia Riverlands Trust. “Crops and food-needs change over time but this easement will ensure

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VOLUNTEER



PLANTING DAYS

SEQUOIA RIVERLANDS.ORG

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National Treasure
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this property will remain in food production in perpetuity”.

Wasco II is primarily planted in almond orchards that will come into production next year; Wasco I is in almonds. While the nearest concentrated urban development is approximately 2½ miles to the south in Shafter and five miles northwest in Wasco, the property could have been split into 20-acre “ranchettes” for folks working in Bakersfield but desiring a rural homestead. Numerous estate-size lots, 10 to 20 acres in size, are evident south of Wasco’s sphere of influence boundary and north of Shafter’s sphere boundary.

“It’s hard to overstate just how good this land is for growing things, and it’s ideally situated to help ensure the continuity of agriculture in the area,” said Brian Leahy, chief of the Department of Conservation’s Division of Land Resource Protection, which administers the CFCP. “We congratulate the landowners and Sequoia Riverlands Trust on the creation of this conservation easement and encourage other Kern County landowners to explore the easement option for their property.”



President Herbert Hoover and his dog King Tut (Photograph by Herbert E. French)



SRT's Wasco II Agricultural Easement

The Preserves in Pictures



Blue Oak



Dry Creek



Homer Ranch



Kaweah Oaks



Herbert Wetland



Lewis Hill

MOVING IN AND FORWARD AT DRY CREEK

As the first half of their new home arrived on a hill at Dry Creek Preserve, the Gomez family started getting excited. Jeff Miller of Mobile Home Set-up maneuvered the double wide into position one half at a time, setting up the Gomez family's spectacular view. When Bobby Gomez, wife Julie and daughters, Breeze and Kaley move in, SRT will move forward opening Dry Creek Preserve to the public on a regular basis. Vandals had kept the Preserve from public access on a regular basis but with the Gomez family as care-



takers the Preserve will soon be open to hikers, bird watchers and even weddings!

Back in 2004, California Portland Cement Company donated the 152-acre quarry north of Lemon Cove and SRT began a large scale restoration project. Natural stream flows were restored, disturbed areas were re-contoured, native grasses were planted as well as oak and sycamore trees. This project provides the first example of an ecologically-based aggregate mine reclamation in Tulare County. It now offers a place to enjoy natural river environments while seeing how a retired gravel mine provides wildlife habitat and scenic beauty. Check SRT's website for updates as SRT plans Dry Creek Preserves new schedule. Thanks to your membership, donations and volunteer efforts, Sequoia Riverlands Trust was able to accomplish the ongoing restoration of Dry Creek.

Photos: Scott Spear & Kelly Ryan



The Gomez Family and their new home

From gravel quarry to lush natural landscape:

How Sequoia Riverlands Trust brought back to life a natural beauty

In February, 2004, The California Portland Cement Company donated 152-acres of the Dry Creek Quarry to Sequoia Riverlands Trust (SRT). That quarry looked quite a bit different then from the lush natural landscape it is today. The property is west of the entrance to Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks and cuts across the lower reach of Dry Creek. SRT restored the site and is looking forward to providing a



Photos: Scott & Heather Artis



In the Spring Dry Creek explodes with wildflower shows and is home to one of the largest remaining sycamore alluvial woodland communities in the world. The wildlife provides another show with native species including the great blue heron, bald eagle and herds of mule deer.

Gravel mining operations along Dry Creek began under a previous owner in 1992 and expanded in 1997. A great number of stately sycamores and valley oaks were removed. Years of mining also significantly altered the Dry Creek streambed. The

restoration project has re-established the natural stream patterns and SRT staff and volunteers have planted thousands of local plants. The restoration of Dry Creek is the first example of an ecologically-based aggregate mine reclamation in Tulare County.

What have you seen at KOP?



Photos: John Greening

We want to see those photos and hear your stories!

Send your nature preserve photos & stories to:

info@sequoiariverlands.org

SRT announces addition of new board members

Emmy Cattani is a fourth generation member of her family's agricultural business and Vice President of Cattani Farming and Ranching. Her family business operations include farming, cattle ranching, oil production, real estate and almond processing, as well as conservation through a partnership in Greenbridges. Emmy is also a Director on the boards of the Tejon Ranch Conservancy, Famoso Nut Company and C&M Oil Company and a former Director of the Sunkist Growers Cooperative. She received her MBA from the Stanford Graduate School of Business and her Bachelors of Arts from Harvard University.

Jack Sahl, Ph.D. - As Director of Environment & Resource Sustainability for Southern California Edison, Jack D. Sahl is responsible for coordination of SCE's sustainability programs for internal operations. A former research scientist, Jack has 35 published scientific reports and has worked in Canada, Europe, Australia and Japan. He earned a bachelor's in biochemistry from the University of La Verne and holds master's in epidemiology and environmental health from UCLA, and the University of Minnesota, respectively. He earned a doctorate in epidemiology from UCLA.

Tommy Elliott is Chairman of the Elliott Group, vertically integrated citrus operation and custom corrugated converting facilities. Alternate board member for the Citrus Research Board. Chairman of the Board, Visalia Community Bank. Director of the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Sequoias. Graduated from Dominican University in Accounting and Finance. Married to Emilie Kate Elliott JD, RN.

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Get Connected with SRT!

Kaweah Oaks Preserve

Hours of Operation: Daily, one hour after sunrise to one hour before sunset.

Visitor Amenities: Four loop trails, interpretive signage, trail guide, picnic area, restrooms, parking area.

Location: 7 miles east of Visalia

Entrance Fee/Donation: None, but your donations help SRT maintain the Preserve.

SRT gets a new look!

Sequoia Riverlands Trust received a web site makeover.

Check out the links to our Facebook and Twitter pages as well as our blog.

It's easy to navigate and full of information on upcoming events

including, plantings, a fun-run, photography workshops and guided hikes.

Go to sequoiariverlands.org today for a new and improved SRT Website!

For expanded information, updates, driving directions and more, please visit www.sequoiariverlands.org.



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