

# Butters Land Trust

—preserving the headwaters of Peralta Creek

November 2001

**Butters Land Trust conserves wild landscapes in Butters Canyon and along Peralta Creek and promotes environmental awareness throughout the watershed, to preserve vital habitat for all Bay Area residents to enjoy.**

## Board of Directors

*Priscilla Stuckey, President  
Stuart Richardson, Vice President  
Judy Anderson, Secretary  
Carol Bernau, Treasurer  
Dolores Apton  
Ismael Pulido*

*I know of no movement as convincing, as effective, as compassionate as the land trust movement. It is like water, seeping into the most unexpected places; rising, falling, rising, falling, filling the basins of the human heart.  
—Terry Tempest Williams, author*

**Butters Land Trust**  
6114 LaSalle Avenue #168  
Oakland, CA 94611  
510. 482. 2496  
[www.butterslandtrust.org](http://www.butterslandtrust.org)  
[blt@butterslandtrust.org](mailto:blt@butterslandtrust.org)

## Land Trust Formed to Save the Canyon

On June 8, 2001, the Butters Land Trust was born, when incorporation papers were filed with California's secretary of state. The new land trust organized with a board of directors over the summer and adopted the mission of preserving Butters Canyon as well as other creekside properties along Peralta Creek. Board members have been educating them-selves on land trust operations, including how conservation easements work and how to receive lands through donations or purchase. The land trust is YOUR group, operating on the neighborhood's behalf to preserve the precious resource that is Butters Canyon.

### But We Already HAVE a Neighborhood Association!

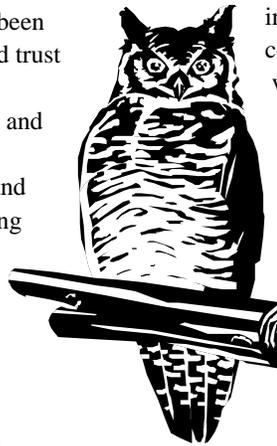
The Friends of the Last Wild Canyon paved the way for the land trust by raising the neighborhood's awareness about the threat of development to the creek and canyon. FOLWC also formed relationships with groups like the Trust for Public Land and the California Coastal Conservancy. Many advisers told us, "You need a land trust to do what you want to do."

So now we have one, and it builds on the experience of more than 1200 land trusts already operating in the U.S. While a neighborhood association addresses issues that affect the whole neighborhood, the land trust focuses specifically on preserving the creek and canyon. The land trust is a nonprofit group, and all donations to it are fully tax deductible.

### So What Does a Land Trust Do?

A land trust is a nonprofit group that holds title to lands or holds conservation easements. A conservation easement is a legally binding agreement that a landowner makes with a land trust to protect natural resources. The agreement might include some restrictions on land use, such as that certain parts of the property will not be developed, in return for certain benefits for the landowner, such as breaks in income or estate taxes. The conservation easement is written into the title of the land, and each easement is individually written to meet the needs of the particular landowner.

Because a land trust is a nonprofit group, all donations of easement or title to land are fully tax deductible.



## Successful Cleanup on Creek to Bay Day

On Saturday, Sept. 16, twenty neighbors gathered at the bridle path for the second annual creek cleanup. The mood was subdued in light of Sept. 11, but volunteers ranging in age from under 10 to over 70 scrambled up and down the canyon walls with ivy clippers and garbage bags. They filled several dozen bags in addition to hauling out an auto transmission and the front end of the car frame that came out last year. Volunteers received free T-shirts celebrating Creek to Bay Day, and everyone enjoyed Judy Anderson's melt-in-your-mouth chocolate chip cookies.

# What Has the Land Trust Accomplished So Far?

In the few short months that it has been operating, the land trust has accomplished an incredible amount.

To date, \$55,000 has been pledged toward the land trust's first project, purchase of a fifth-acre lot next to 3301 Butters. This is the first undeveloped parcel in the canyon to come up for sale, and preserving it will allow an unbroken stretch of green land lining the uphill side of Butters Drive through the canyon.

Negotiations are currently under way with landowners in the canyon to preserve several creekside parcels in the middle of the canyon, including two that are for sale near the top of the canyon. We will have more exciting news in the weeks to come!

A grant proposal for \$25,000 toward the purchase price of the first parcel has received favorable attention from the Skaggs Foundation in Oakland. The secretary of the foundation made a site visit in October and indicated serious interest on the part of this international foundation. Grants will be announced in November.

The land trust hosted a water break for members of the Grizzly Peak Cyclists Club in August. The cyclists use the "BBR" alternative to Joaquin Miller Drive, the Burdeck-Butters-Robinson scenic route up the hill. Twenty-six members of the club stopped by, and they were from 9 different Bay Area cities—from San Anselmo to Castro Valley, and from San Francisco to Walnut Creek.

Outreach to the cyclists paid off in September, when the Grizzly Peak Cyclists Club announced a \$500 grant to Butters Land Trust. We welcome this show of support from the cyclists.

The land trust hosted a public meeting in August to acquaint community members with the goals and strategies of land preservation. About 30 neighbors showed up, asking insightful questions and offering their interest and support. The meeting took place at the Naturfreunde lodge, which the German hiking and culture club generously made available to the neighborhood for the evening.



## Check Out Our New Web Site!

The land trust is happy to announce its new Web site:

**[www.butterslandtrust.org](http://www.butterslandtrust.org)**

Here you'll find photos of the canyon as well as the land trust's mission statement and strategic plan. There's an extensive FAQ sheet plus links to organizations that work in land and creek preservation.

## Native Plants Growing in Joaquin Miller Park

Our neighbors in the next watershed, Sausal Creek, have been successfully restoring their creek for several years. Their experience provides expertise for the land trust in the person of Stuart Richardson, vice president of the board, who also coordinates the Friends of Sausal Creek. Last month, in cooperation with the City of Oakland, concrete dams erected decades ago in the Sausal Creek streambed above Dimond Park were removed so the creek could resume its natural meander.

Now that the heavy labor is complete, streambanks will be replanted with 20,000 native plants. The plants have been growing at a native plant nursery designed and built by Sausal Creek friends in Joaquin Miller Park, just above the amphitheater. All plants are genetically local, grown from seeds and cuttings harvested from the Sausal Creek and Palo Seco areas.

Join other creek friends at the nursery every Saturday morning from 9 to 12 to propagate native plants. Your volunteer hours will help Peralta Creek when it's our turn to revegetate, as the nursery plans to trade plants to community groups in return for volunteer labor.

### *You Can Help Care for the Creek!*

**To report dumping in progress, call 911.**

**To report dumping that has already taken place:**

Call Alison Schwarz, 238-7074, in the Watershed Improvement Program in the City of Oakland's Public Works Department, who can arrange for someone to come collect it.

**When you wash your car:**

Go to a commercial car wash! In your driveway, the detergents from your freshly rinsed car run into the street, down the storm drain, and straight into the nearest creek. Commercial car washes are required to trap their runoff so it doesn't enter storm drains and pollute our creeks and bay.

# Butters Canyon Needs Your Nickels and Dimes!

It doesn't take thousands of dollars to support Butters Canyon! While large donors are always welcome, the land trust also needs to receive small donations from many households to meet its budget and to demonstrate to the IRS that the land trust enjoys widespread public support.

So please chip in your nickels and dimes! Every contribution counts!

*Local land protection is critical if we are to ensure the quality of life that we have come to enjoy in the Bay Area, and it is land trusts, like the Butters Land Trust, that can truly make the difference in this effort.*

*—Janet Curtis, Trust for Public Land, San Francisco*

## 1000 Steps / 1000 Supporters

**1000 steps will take you on a round trip through the canyon. Donate only a nickel or dime—or even a penny—for each step of canyon way that you enjoy, and you can be enrolled as a supporter of canyon preservation. The land trust would like to add 1000 names to its list of supporters in the next year.**

### A nickel per step . . .



amounts to only \$50. With this donation, the land trust can purchase about 4 square feet of canyon property.

### A dime per step . . .



is \$100, or 8 square feet of canyon property. A hundred dollars also represents a month of operating expenses for the nonprofit.

### A dollar per step . . .



adds up to \$1000, which purchases 80 square feet of creekside property. It also pays for a year's liability insurance on preserved canyon parcels.

But if you're really strapped for cash in these uncertain times,

### A penny per step . . .



or \$10, is all that we absolutely need from every one of you. Please give what you can so the land trust can preserve the canyon.

Make your check out to:

## Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation

Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation is the nonprofit arm of Oakland Parks and Rec. This organization acts as a bank for groups with charitable purposes who are just getting under way. Until the nonprofit status of the Butters Land Trust is finalized, FOPR acts as a fiscal agent, guaranteeing the tax-deductible status of every donation. So your gift is fully tax deductible when you address it to Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation.

**The canyon won't be preserved without your help.**

# Butters Land Trust

## 1000 Steps / 1000 Supporters

**A thousand steps takes you through Butters Canyon and back again.  
Please pledge or donate for each step of green space you enjoy.  
Add your name to the growing list of Butters Canyon Supporters.**

---

### PLEDGE FORM FOR LONG-TERM SUPPORT

\_\_\_\_ I can pledge \$30/month to the land trust for \_\_\_\_\_ years.  
    \$30/month for 30 years = \$10,800  
    \$30/month for 10 years = \$3600  
    \$30/month for 5 years = \$1800

\_\_\_\_ I can pledge \$10/month to the land trust for \_\_\_\_\_ years.  
    \$10/month for 30 years = \$3600  
    \$10/month for 10 years = \$1200  
    \$10/month for 5 years = \$600

\_\_\_\_ I can pledge \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per month to the land trust for \_\_\_\_\_ years.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this pledge form to: Butters Land Trust, 6114 LaSalle Avenue #168, Oakland, CA 94611.

---

### DONATION FOR THE WORK OF THE LAND TRUST

Yes! I recognize how important it is for people and animals to enjoy green space in Butters Canyon.  
Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation for land preservation.

\_\_\_\_ \$5 per step: \$5,000      \_\_\_\_ 50¢ per step: \$500      \_\_\_\_ A nickel per step: \$50  
\_\_\_\_ \$2 per step: \$2000      \_\_\_\_ A quarter per step: \$250      \_\_\_\_ A penny per step: \$10  
\_\_\_\_ \$1 per step: \$1,000      \_\_\_\_ A dime per step: \$100      \_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Make out your check to: FRIENDS OF OAKLAND PARKS AND RECREATION.  
Mail it with this form to: Butters Land Trust, 6114 LaSalle Avenue #168, Oakland, CA 94611.