

THE FOOTHILL ADVOCATE

April 2016

Vol. 19 No. 2



HIGHLIGHTS



Annual Finance Report

2015 Annual List of Donors



Sierra Newts at the McKenzie Preserve

Acquisition News—Todisco Ranch



Spadefoot Toad Tadpoles Swim SFC Pond!

Annual Fundraising Dinner

Celebrating 20 years -1996 to 2016

As Sierra Foothill Conservancy approaches our 20th anniversary there are many milestones we reflect upon and many individuals whom have made our success possible. From founding board members to the landowners who completed some of the first conservation easements, to our dedicated donors and partners there are many people to acknowledge in the making of our land trust. In recent months two major contributors to our work have passed on.

Jerry Kemp was a champion of SFC's work. He was a donor who gave significantly to the organization and was a member of SFC's Foothill Heritage Circle, including SFC in his will. Jerry and I spent a lot of time together in my early years with SFC while he and his wife Edith lived in Mariposa. I loved his sense of humor, commitment to health and spirit of adventure. I enjoyed visiting Jerry's apple orchard and seeing his care and pride for his trees. We took many hikes together on SFC protected lands and I would love listening to his stories about his boys camp where he first became connected with the outdoors. He used to tell me a story about the chant they would say to inspire themselves at the end of a long hike- SATF! Strong At The finish! Even in his 80's Jerry was always SATF on our hikes.

He also told me about watching his previously rural home town, San Jose, become developed and before his very eyes transform from a pastoral agricultural community to a sprawling metropolis. He told me this was a big motivation for him to move to the foothills and support SFC's work so strongly. We have greatly appreciated Jerry's dedication to the preservation of open space and he will be deeply missed, but his legacy will live on through our work.

Continued on Page 2



Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it's the only thing that ever has." - Margaret Mead

Frank Lee Long Jr. and his third generation family operated ranch is a cornerstone of the Mariposa Community. As a child I would walk to the Long's corrals and feed their horses carrots. The Long's provided space for schools, fire stations, firing ranges and trail riding on their vast property. Frank also became an important figure in SFC's history and left his mark through his work in land conservation. Frank was instrumental in bringing Mariposa County on board with the Williamson Act as an early adopter in 1977. To this day it is a critical tool for land conservation in Mariposa County. In 2003 Frank and his family completed a conservation easement with SFC to conserve the family's prime oak woodland ranch. He became a vocal proponent for conservation easements. Many landowners would come to SFC by way of referral saying Frank had encouraged them to pursue a conservation easement with us. It is a personal delight of mine to know that Frank's legacy to the land will continue to be honored through the permanent conservation of his working ranch.

The achievement of more than 26,000 acres of protected lands is an accomplishment shared by many. We invite you to join us for SFC's 20th Anniversary Celebration, May 7th at D&D Ranch to reflect on and celebrate the tremendous accomplishments we have achieved together and envision what is to come in our next chapters.

Bridget Fithian, Executive Director



Photo of the Long Ranch Conservation Easement by Gary Miltimore

LEGACY GIFTS—SIERRA HERITAGE CIRCLE

Because so much of our land conservation work is about ensuring that the places we save today will be protected forever, legacy gifts (also known as “planned gifts”) are indispensable to Sierra Foothill Conservancy. There is no better way to continue to make a difference for land conservation many years from now.

Your will or living trust is an important way to provide for family and friends, plan the management and disposition of your estate and ensure a lasting legacy for the causes that have special meaning for you.

Gifts made through wills and living trusts are easy to arrange and can be changed at any time you choose, giving you maximum flexibility in your planning. You will also enjoy peace of mind knowing that your property will be put to good use when you no longer need it, but your cash flow will not be affected today.

You may choose to specify that the SFC receives a specific dollar amount or asset, a percentage of your estate, a contingent bequest in case you outlive other heirs or a portion of the residue (remainder) of your estate after provisions for friends and family are paid. A residual gift is only made if there is anything that remains in your estate.

Creating or updating your estate plans calls for careful planning with the help of an estate-planning attorney. Bequest language can vary from state to state, and country to country. Thus, it is always best to use an attorney that understands local estate laws. Joining the Sierra Heritage Circle is an excellent way to Leave a Legacy. Contact us today about these opportunities at sfc@sierrafoothill.org.

Sierra Foothill Conservancy...savings lands, now and forever.



Jerrold "Jerry" Kemp, 94, passed away November 26, 2015, at Paradise Valley Estates in Fairfield, California.

Jerry was a WWII veteran, a USAF retired Lieutenant Colonel, a professor at San Jose State University, and a leader in the field of instructional design. He was extraordinarily fit, hiking and maintaining an apple orchard until he was 89 years old. Jerry was a devoted husband to his wife of 17 years, Edith Ankersmit. In his early years, Jerry spent summers at Camp Mooween in Lebanon, Connecticut. It remained one of his fondest memories and fostered his love of the outdoors.

Jerry was a pioneer in the field of educational media and technology, and consulted at schools, universities, agencies in foreign countries and UNESCO. He is a coauthor of "Designing Effective Instruction," which was based on a textbook Jerry published in 1971 and is now in its 7th edition (2014). Considered one of the world's best textbooks in instructional design, it includes "The Kemp Model of Design Instruction" which Jerry developed in 1985, and which remains an important educational design model. In the words of Dr. Phillip Harris, Executive Director of AECT, "His legacy as a scholar, researcher, and teacher will impact future generations of learners and scholars. His contributions to the field are unique and timeless."

Jerry married Dorothy Gallow in 1949 in Florida and their marriage lasted until her death in 1995. Upon retirement, Jerry moved to Mariposa, California.

In 1997 Jerry gave his friends a wish list for his ideal woman, and was introduced to Edith Ankersmit, a widow from Berkeley, California. They fell in love, were married in 1998, and were inspired to coauthor and publish the well-received book "Older Couples - New Romances" (2003). Jerry and Edith traveled extensively and were active with the Mariposa Senior Hikers, Mariposa Democratic Club, Mountain Jewish Community, and Sierra Foothill Conservancy.

At age 89 Jerry published the book "Live Healthy At Any Age," about nutrition and exercise, and he continued hiking in the mountains until he and Edith moved to Fairfield in 2011.

Frank Lee Long, Jr., a third-generation Californian, cattle rancher and former member of the board of supervisors, passed away from natural causes Dec. 19, 2015 at his ranch in the Buckeye District of the Guadalupe Valley of Mariposa County. He was 89.

He operated a commercial cow/calf business on the family ranch and, in conjunction with his sons, raised registered Polled Hereford cattle and grain hay. He pastured the riding and pack horses and mules from Yosemite for many years.

He was a man of vision for the growth and prosperity of Mariposa County and a conservator of the land and water.

While serving on the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors from 1968 to 1980, he was instrumental in persuading the board to implement the Williamson Act (Land Conservation Act), bringing economic relief and stability to the agricultural industry.

His counsel was sought out by many individuals and he often offered monetary assistance without expecting compensation.

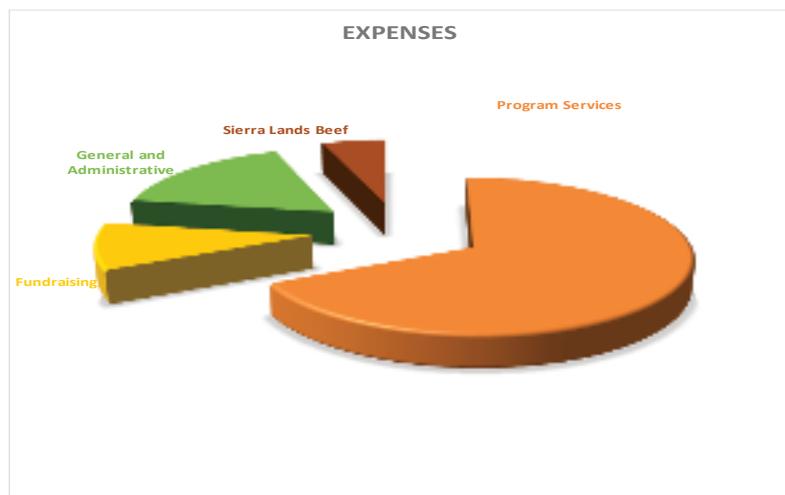
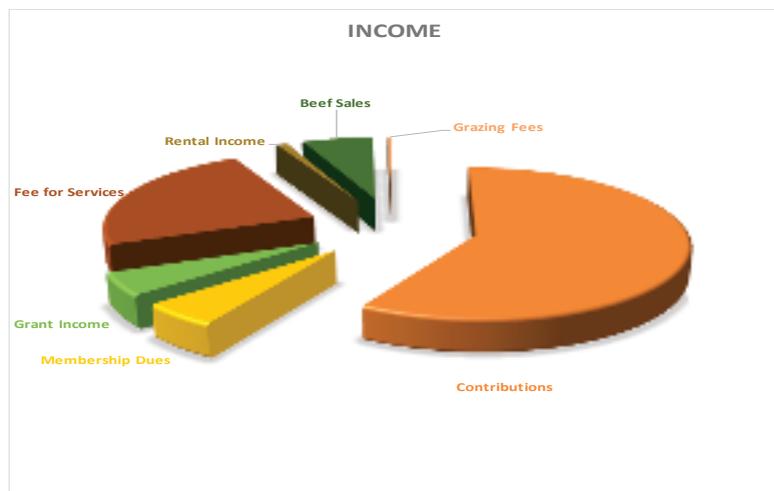


SIERRA FOOTHILL CONSERVANCY
 ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT
 JULY 1, 2014—JUNE 30, 2015

This Statement of Financial Activities and accompanying charts represent the Conservancy's 2014-2015 fiscal year as stated by the financial statements as audited by Price, Paige & Company CPAs.

June 30 2015 Balance Sheet

<u>Assets</u>	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 494,769
Investments	\$ 2,804,430
Grants	\$ 75,081
Prepaid Expenses	\$ 13,285
Inventories	\$ 3,904
Property and Equipment	\$ 536,224
Conserved Land	\$ 7,304,344
Total Assets	\$ 11,232,037
<u>Liabilities and Net Assets</u>	
Accounts Payable	\$ 10,446
Accrued Expenses	\$ 60,434
Deferred Revenue	\$ 149,959
Agency and Trust Fund	\$ 70,491
	\$ 291,330
Undesignated	\$ 595,772
Board Designated	\$ 486,601
	\$ 1,082,373
Temporarily Restricted	\$ 2,107,208
Permanently Restricted	\$ 7,751,126
Total Net Assets	\$ 9,858,334
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$ 11,232,037



On December 31, 2015, Price, Paige & Company issued an Unqualified Opinion of Sierra Foothill Conservancy's financial statements. An Unqualified Opinion means there are no reservations concerning the financial statements. Sierra Foothill Conservancy is proud to be able to provide this information to our Members and Supporters.

*Supporting services include program and project management costs that increase our capacity to protect more land and are important for long-term sustainability.

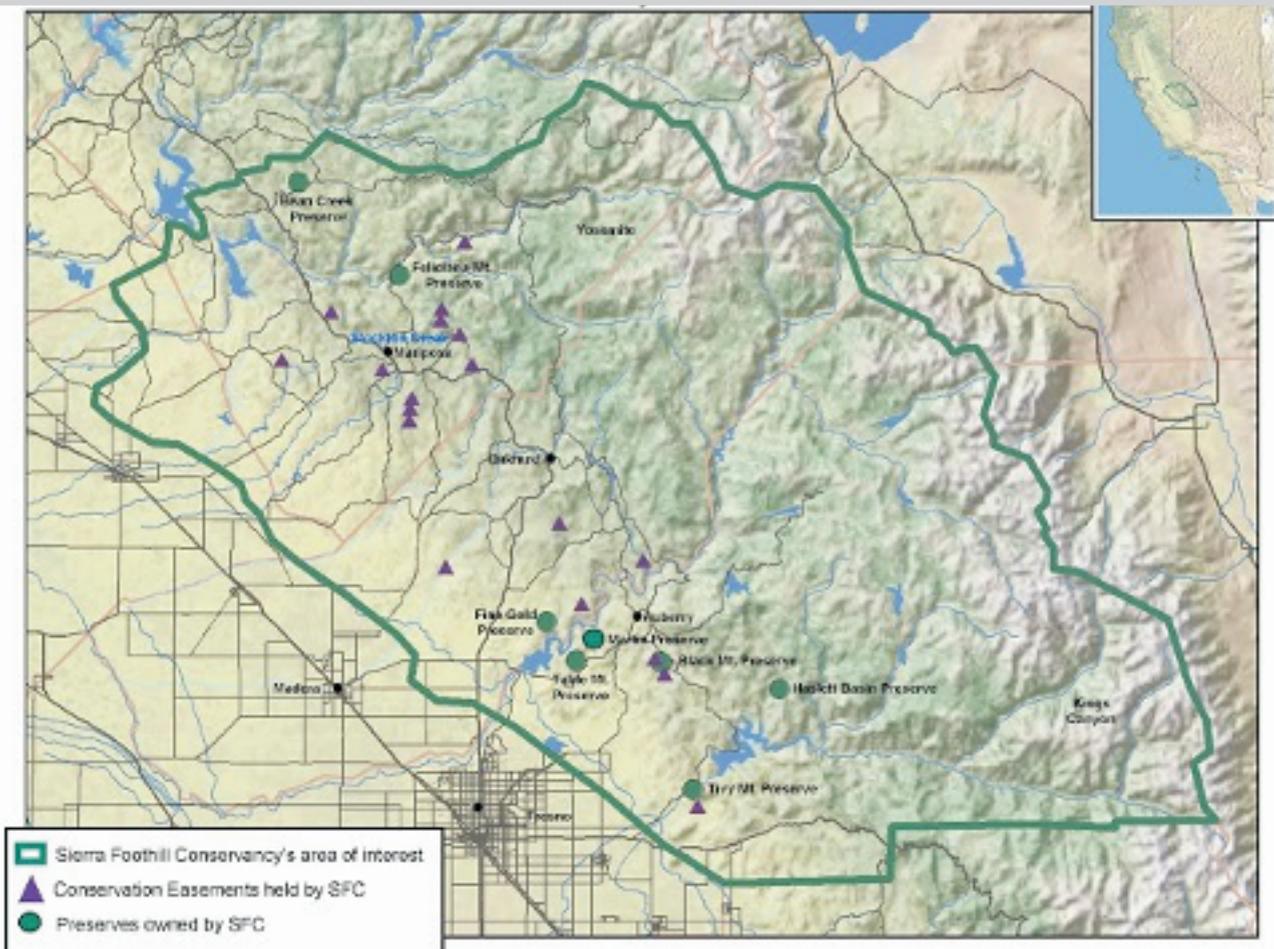
- ◆ McKenzie Table Mountain Preserve (2,960 acres)
- ◆ Mary Elizabeth Miller Preserve at Black Mountain (1,450 acres)
- ◆ Tivy Mountain Preserve (826 acres)
- ◆ Ewell Fine Gold Creek (719 acres)
- ◆ Haslett Basin Preserve (125 acres)
- ◆ Feliciana Mountain (40 acres)
- ◆ Bean Creek (81 acres)
- ◆ Ted K. Martin Wildlife Preserve (280 acres)

WITH 17,073 ACRES IN CONSERVATION EASEMENTS SFC NOW PROTECTS OVER 26,000 ACRES!



Photo by Lauren Hubert

SIERRA FOOTHILL CONSERVANCY AREA OF INTEREST



Blue Oak Circle (\$25,000+)

The Gaia Foundation

Live Oak Circle (\$10,000+)

Mark and Jane Balcom

Land Trust Alliance Excellence Program

Manzanita Circle (\$5,000+)

Al and Carliene Anderson

Steve and Toni Kellenberg

David and Caryn Coss

Charles and Becky Morales

Southern California Edison Foundation

Vulcan Materials Company

California Buckeye Circle (\$2,000+)

Bertha & John Garabedian Charitable Foundation

Stefan and Mary Biskup

Ralph and Kebi Brown

Margot Cegielski

Donn Furman

Nathaniel Gildersleeve

Pete Gustafson and Heidi Riedle

PG&E Foundation

Harlow Foundation, Inc.

James F. Kemp

Jean Linder and Paul Rempel

Robert and Holly Longatti

Bea and Kevin Olsen

Regency Investment Advisors

Carolyn Sanders Mike Spiess and Pat Witt

Thelma Valdez and Nye Morton

California Poppy Circle (\$1,000+)

Baker, Manock & Jensen

Paul Beare and Colleen Torgerson

CSUF Foundation

Josie and Geoff Fox

Jeffrey and Sandra Gabe

Don and Jennifer Gaede

Ray and Lynn Gorman

Granville Homes

Lance-Kasian & Co

Kathie Kendle

David K. Hill and Dee Lacy

Deb and Greg Lapp

Autumn Lencioni

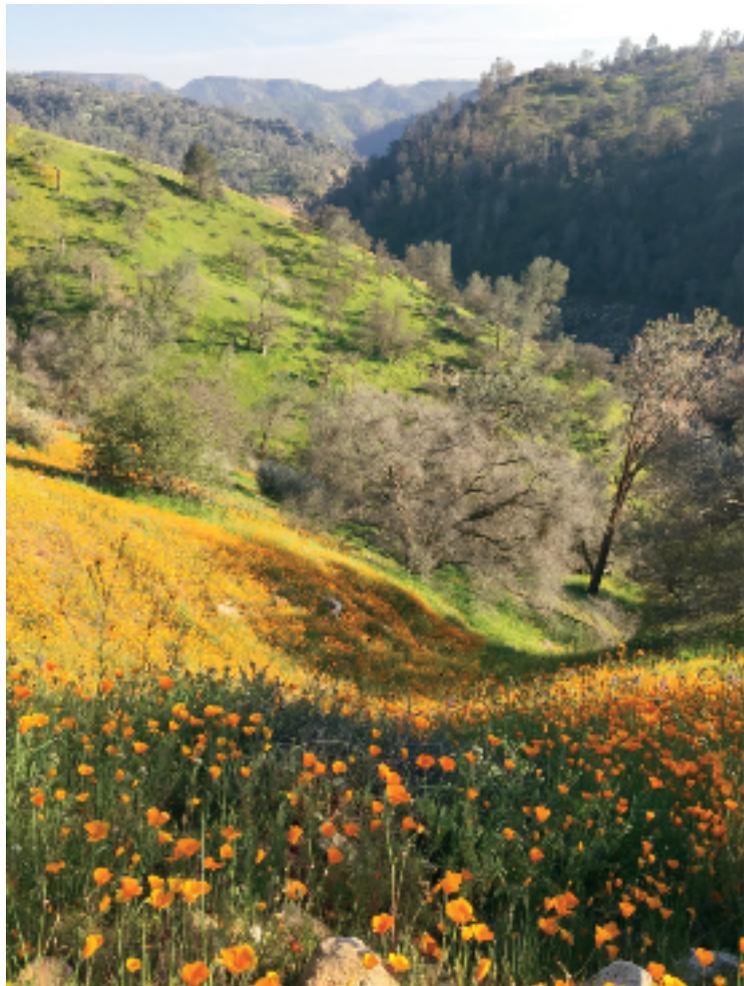
Ted K. Martin

James A and Sandra G McHenry

McPheeters & Associates

Norcross Wildlife Foundation

Katrina Olsen



Fine Gold Creek Photo by Mary Kate McKenna

Sue and Les Overstreet

Point Millerton Ranch, LLC

Craig and Lisa Poole

Ponderosa Telephone Co

Dori J Rothweiler

Jazmin Serrano

John Scholefield and Kristine Petrucci Scholefield

Linda and George Sward

Table Mountain Rancheria Tribal Govt Office

Joe and Bonnie Tanski

Bart and Cindy Topping

Stacey Torigian

Veater Financial

Dee Wilkins

Lane and Christine Wipff

Tom Zimoski

Lupine Circle (\$500+)

Philip F Beach
Effie Beeman
Barbara B Bigelow
Barbara and Frank Bigelow
Lori Bono
Walt and Susan Buster
Eric and Kristen Cole
Cal Crane
Clay and Dusty Daulton
Jeff and Laura Davis
Jon and Susan Edwards
Kimberly Ellis
Bill and Kelli Esmay
Anne Fadenrecht
Bridget Fithian and Ben Goger
Vern and Liliane Gersh
Rich Gilman
Louise Hastrup
Fausto Hinojosa
H.T. Harvey & Associates
Carol A Johnson
Chris Johnson
Ed Johnson and Kathy Boudinot-Johnson
Jerry and Edith Kemp
Kennedy/Jenks Consultants

James Kus and Ananda Aspen
LQMD Medical Group
Sean Maguire
Michael Martin
Norma Mastin
Abhas Misraraj
Elise and Alex Moir
Kay Mulholland
Sharon Powers and Mike Smith
Premier Valley Bank
Price, Paige & Company
Provost & Pritchard
Quady Winery, Inc.
Jerry Radinoff and Paula Siegel
San Joaquin Valley Chapter of The Wildlife Society
Joe and Johnanna Soghomonian
Robert Snow
Eve Sproule and Doug Broten
John and Elaine Stebbins
Steven and Cheryl Stegmaier
Steve Travers
Jeannette and Jamie Tuitele-Lewis
Sheila Van der Smissen and Jim Ransom

Volunteers are the lifeblood of the organization.

We want to thank the numerous **Volunteers** who continue to make our Organization strong. It's volunteers who lead research, provide photos, help with mailings and special projects, lead hikes, conduct classes, manage Open Preserve days, and guide elementary school field trips. Our largest fundraiser of the year is run by Volunteers!

We sincerely appreciate your time, energy and talents.

DONORS OF LAND AND CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

Al and Charline Anderson
Gary Bachtold
Cindy Bohna and family
Mike Carter
Ben Ewell family
Jerry Fisher
Duane Furman
Edward Grootendorst
Christopher and Anna Hecker
Bill and Judy Hedrick
Steve and Toni Kellenberg

Mareka Lodge and family
Ted Martin
Bill Miller
Teri and Ken Pulvino
Art Staebler and family
Rita Vanderburgh
Jim Wells
Todd Wells III



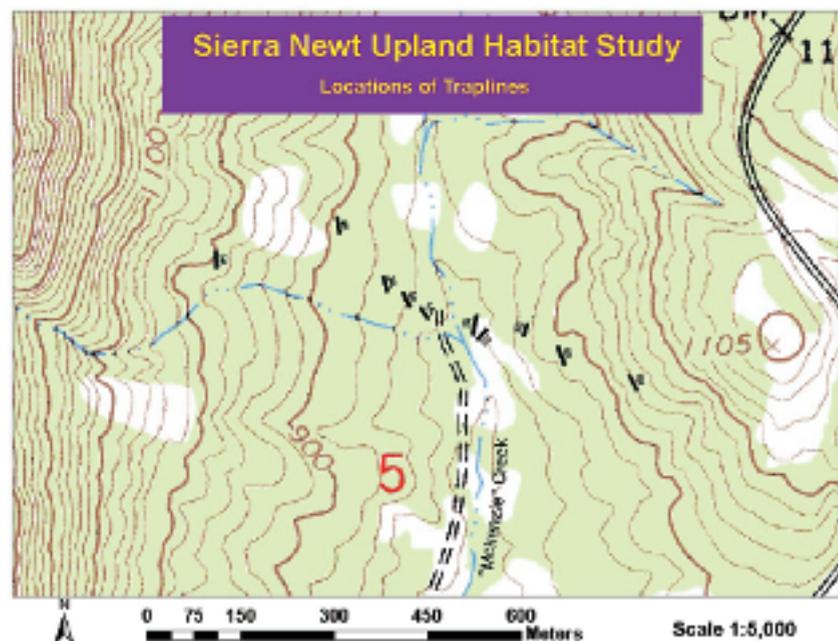
Since 1998, the Sierra newt (*Taricha sierrae*) has been studied on SFC's McKenzie Preserve in an intermittent stream (south fork of Little Dry Creek). Initially, the study was part my Master's thesis through CSU Fresno.

The goal of my thesis study was to learn about the instream ecology of the species; in other words, how they utilize the stream and why. At the time the thesis work was conducted on the very new McKenzie Preserve (acquired by SFC in 1996), very little was known about the ecology of the Sierra newt, a species that is distributed throughout the western slope of the Sierra Nevada. Previous studies on *Taricha torosa torosa*, a subspecies that occurs throughout the western slope of the Coast Range, indicate that this species exhibits high site fidelity (returns to the same spot over and over) while in the breeding environment (streams). During 1998-1999, the extent that the Sierra newt engages in movement within the stream during the breeding season, as well as the factors that affect where they occur was investigated. The stream was subdivided into 21 sections and characterized as runs, riffles, or pools. Newts were captured, weighed, measured, identified as male or female, and marked as individuals with a dot tattoo on

their belly while they were anesthetized. Newts were returned to their original stream section after being revived. Following the marking effort, surveys were conducted to determine where marked individuals occurred throughout the remainder of the breeding season. Factors such as substrate type, substrate embeddedness, water depth, water velocity, and behavior were recorded, and characteristics such as overhead cover, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, and pH were collected. This study found that Sierra newts do exhibit high site fidelity, with some individuals remaining in the same stream section for the duration of the breeding season. However, there were some notable exceptions, indicating that newts are capable of moving great distances during the breeding season when so prompted (both upstream and downstream), often after rainfall induced increases in stream velocity. Newts were most associated with stream pools, though they used riffles and runs more than other similar species, even sometimes depositing their eggs under cobbles in fast moving portions of the stream.

In 2003, a CSU Fresno instructor, another California Department of Fish and Wildlife (then Fish and Game) employee and I decided to further study newts at the McKenzie preserve in the same stream segment as my thesis study. This new study intended to evaluate newt habitat usage of the upland portion of the preserve as well as in the stream. Newts aggregate in streams to breed from approximately December through March (varies on rainfall and temperatures), but they spend the majority of the time on land in burrows. The objectives of the study were to determine migration patterns of Sierra newts to breeding areas, use of specific upland habitat features, and instream and upland habitat requirements. This was done by installing drift fencing and pitfall traps at various distances from the stream (see Figure at right).

Drift fences are a standard method that biologists use to catch terrestrial salamanders. They are basically vertical fences, in this case made of sheet metal, that were installed vertically along the ground surface and buried a little so that salamanders can't squeeze underneath.



Twenty pitfall traps (in this case, clean 1-gallon paint cans) were installed at regular intervals along each 100 foot drift fence (10 on each side). Five 100 foot drift fence segments were installed on each side of the stream at varying distances from the stream. When a newt encounters a drift fence, they walk along the fence until they are captured in one of the traps; which side of the fence a newt is captured on indicates which direction the newt was traveling. From 2004-2008, newts captured in the pitfall traps and during concurrent stream surveys were anesthetized and fitted with passive integrated transponder (PIT) tags, which were injected in their belly area. PIT tags are the technology that many people's dogs and cats are marked with as well that comes in handy if they get lost. The PIT tags gives each newt a unique name (number), which allows them to be recognized as "individuals" in different locations and years when recaptured. From 2004-2008, 555 newts were marked with PIT tags. From the drift fence/pitfall trap study, we have learned that newts use almost the entirety of the preserve; nearly up to the railroad grade on the table mountain side of the stream and almost to Auberry Road on the other side. Newts likely use areas beyond where the furthest drift fences were installed. This demonstrates how important large contiguous patches of habitat are for what many people would consider a stream species; they need a lot more habitat than the stream itself! Not surprisingly, we also confirmed that newts primarily migrate during rain events. We also learned that they seem to be associated with large bedrock formations. We stopped opening the pit fall traps in 2009 and are finishing up with removal of all of the fencing materials from the preserve.

Because newts are long lived animals (some biologists guess 30 years for similar species!) having so many individually marked animals presents a great opportunity for collection of really interesting long term data. So, every winter, once the rains come and the stream begins to run, I have continued to conduct weekly newt surveys in the same segment of stream. A large number of marked newts continue to be captured even in 2016! It will be very interesting to evaluate the capture data (ongoing) to look at which individuals breed in which years and where. Because of the recent drought, the past 4 years have not been good newt breeding years. In some of those years the stream didn't even run and just a few newts would appear in isolated pools. Happily, the 2015/2016 breeding year has been a great newt year, with a few hundred newts being captured in the same stream segment. Many of the captured newts this year are marked newts, meaning that the newts were able to weather the drought, though little to no breeding occurred between 2012 and 2015. This will likely ultimately impact the population in a delayed way; it is estimated that newts don't breed until around 5 years of age. This means that there will likely be a dip in young adults starting in 2017 and continuing to 2020.

I look forward to sharing more newt stories and information with SFC members in the future, and hopefully I will have the opportunity to give an impromptu newt talk with many of you when your McKenzie hikes occur at the same time as my newt surveys. Thank you for your support of SFC, which helps protect important habitats like the McKenzie Preserve, and which has allowed me to conduct a long term study on one of California's native amphibians.

Photo of Newt and Map by Julie Vance

REMAINING OPEN PRESERVE DAYS!

Gates will be open 9:00 am-4:00 pm

Apr 2 ... McKenzie Open Preserve Day

Apr 10 ... Veteran's Open Preserve Day On the McKenzie

Apr 30 ... Black Mtn Open Preserve Day



We have some great news to share: our grant application for the Todisco Ranch Conservation Easement was awarded!

The \$480,000 grant was awarded by the Central Valley Project Improvement Act Program- administered jointly by Bureau Of Reclamation (BOR) and US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS). This is a rigorous and highly competitive grant program.

The property boasts vernal pools with habitat for endangered species including California tiger salamander & Vernal pool fairy shrimp. Jeanie Todisco will be a great landowner to hold a CE with on this 480 acre working cattle ranch in Madera County. Special thanks go to Melissa O'dell for volunteering her professional services to help evaluate the biological resources, Bea Olsen for the introduction to program managers, the Land Committee, and Lauren Hubert, Land Conservation Program Manager for SFC for all of her hard work on this grant application and project.

Photo by Lauren Hubert



Sierra Lands Beef is currently taking pre-orders with product available in mid-June. Orders can be placed for Whole, Half, or Quarter Beef .

This beef is raised on the preserves, has never been fed antibiotics or hormones, and is finished on grass pasture during the peak of the growing season. Best of all, 100% of the proceeds support Sierra Foothill Conservancy's Land Conservation Program!

SLB sold out last year so be sure to get your order in early!

To order your grass fed beef, please email Rangeland Specialist Billy Freeman at billy@sierrafoothill.org



In a mud-rimmed pond perched on the north slope of Table Mountain, the shallow water pulses with wriggling life: masses of nickel-sized tadpoles squirm and flip, dimpling the surface with their voracious feeding activity. These tadpoles of the Western Spadefoot Toad (*Spea hammondi*) are in a big hurry to grow, because they are adapted to breed in ponds, pools and streams that may dry up by late Spring. On March 1 this year, as swaths of Popcornflowers (*Plagiobothrys nothofulus*) splashed white patches on the vivid green hillsides of the McKenzie Table Mountain Preserve, up to 100 tadpoles packed into every square foot of the shallows, while about 4 individuals per square foot patrolled the interior waters. That means this little pond was home to at least 8,000 Western Spadefoot Toad tadpoles!

After El Nino rains filled the pond to its brim in January, it shrank by over three vertical feet during our dry February. Early March storms replenished their home, but these tadpoles will need to develop quickly if they will be able to move out into the grasslands as adult toads. Luckily, the Western Spadefoot Toad can transform from egg to tadpole to adult amazingly quickly, in as little as four weeks.

This particular toad-incubating pond is a man-made impoundment. It formed when construction of the San Joaquin and Eastern Railroad grade dammed a cleft in the hillside in 1912. Fed by a rivulet that flows only after heavy rains, the pond is also home to Sierra Newts (*Taricha torosa sierrae*) and Sierran Tree Frogs (*Pseudacris sierra*). The newts reveal themselves with flashes of their orange bellies in the murky water, while the frogs announce themselves with loud “*wreck-ecks*.”

According to SFC rangeland manager Billy Freeman, in most years this pond contains water until April or May. What happens to the newly adult toads when their birth waters turn into a cracked mud pit during our long, hot summers? The inch-and-a-half long, greenish adults with brown spots disperse into foothill grasslands, seeking shelter in burrows dug by California Ground Squirrels (*Spermophilis beecheyi*). Also, and more impressively, they can dig their own burrows using their namesake “spades.” The spades are sharp, black, wedge-shaped structures on their hind feet. They burrow by using their spades to push dirt aside while lowering themselves into the ground. The adult toads are active mostly at night into early summer, feeding on insects and earthworms. Then they estivate in their burrows during the hottest part of the year.

When and if heavy winter rains return, the toads will emerge from their summer shelters, the males calling out for mates with hoarse, snore-like voices. Soon the little pond in the McKenzie Table Mountain Preserve will again be flush with water and the next generation of Western Spadefoot Toad tadpoles, delighting visitors who pause to take in this amphibian spectacle.

David K. Hill is a SFC member and writer who completed the California Naturalist training sponsored by SFC in 2015. He is studying the aquatic biology of the SFC preserves as a volunteer citizen scientist.



Photos by David K. Hill.

SIERRA FOOTHILL CONSERVANCY
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THIS is the land **YOUR** support of **Sierra Foothill Conservancy** protects.
26,000+ acres, with plans to preserve an additional 11,000 acres.
For over 20 years, together we are *Saving Natural Lands, Now and Forever.*

Sierra Foothill Conservancy is a non-profit public benefit corporation under Internal Revenue Service Code Section 501(c)(3) and CA Revenue and Taxation Code Section 3701d. Contributions are deductible for federal income tax purposes.

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Jean Linder, Vice President
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