



EASTERN SIERRA LAND TRUST ANNUAL REPORT, 08-09



Preserving our Rural Lands

Dear Friends,

We're happy to share in this report that, despite the recent economic challenges we've all faced, ESLT continues to thrive and grow. First and most important, our efforts to preserve this unique and cherished region are progressing well, with promising new partnerships and projects on the horizon. New alliances with visionary landowners are allowing us to expand and deepen our conservation programs. Also important, your support of Eastern Sierra Land Trust was up 23% this year at a time of great economic pressure on each of you. Thank you again and again for your commitment to our work.

So you can fairly ask, what have we been doing to honor your continuing commitment to our mission? I will highlight a few items here that you can read more about in the following pages.

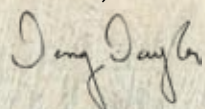
Even with state funding sources severely restricted, we completed an important project to preserve wildlife migration habitat on a 33-acre parcel we have named Crowley Hilltop Preserve. This preserve has already been the site of several fun events that many of you have attended.

In recognition of the importance of community involvement in our conservation work, we adopted "Community Connections" as a primary program of ESLT. This program focuses on events that 1) engage and educate the public on lands we have helped preserve; 2) celebrate our land protection successes; 3) enhance the appreciation of the Eastern Sierra's unique resources in our young people; and 4) express our appreciation to our volunteers and supporters. Nearly 2,000 friends joined us at 26 Community Connections events this year!

Finally, to assure that we are fulfilling our responsibilities as a public benefit corporation utilizing best practices in our ongoing work, we began the demanding process of accreditation with the national Land Trust Alliance in Washington DC. A committee of 5 staff and volunteer members is working toward a mid-2010 completion of this important process.

Read more about these items and much more on the following pages. And thank you again for your continued faith in and support of ESLT!

In Trust,



Tony Taylor, President
ESLT Board of Director

Eastern Sierra Land Trust

works with willing landowners to preserve vital lands in the Eastern Sierra region for their scenic, agricultural, natural, recreational, historical, and watershed values.

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2008-2009 Conservation Success

Crowley Hilltop Preserve

Working with the California Wildlife Conservation Board, ESLT purchased a 33 - acre parcel near Crowley Lake that was slated for development



Migrating mule deer, sleek and elusive mountain lions, and a myriad of birds, butterflies, and dragonflies need safe access to their summer habitats in the high Sierra. The pinyon pine-covered hills with scattered Jeffrey pines and mountain mahogany thickets perch above the town of Crowley Lake. Thanks to the grant from the Wildlife Conservation Board, an important section of this local migration corridor has been preserved. Additionally, the scenic vista for travelers in beautiful Long Valley or fishermen on the lake will be maintained.

Migrating wildlife will always find safe passage here. We're grateful to our supportive members, the California Deer Association, and the California Department of Fish and Game for helping ESLT secure this important wildlife habitat.



Left: A San Diego Girl Scout crew hike to the top of Crowley Hilltop Preserve to catch the view after picking up trash as a service project in the morning. Right: Local photographer and ESLT board member, Rick Kattelmann, catches the beauty of the recently preserved property on camera.

ESLT Stewardship Program

Ensuring the values preserved are maintained in perpetuity - using modern monitoring methods

The cornerstone of our stewardship activities is our monitoring program. In cooperation with the landowners, ESLT staff and volunteers visit each property annually to document changes to the conservation values that are protected by the easement or agreement, including changes resulting from both natural and human caused effects. Monitoring methods utilize a standardized checklist and report, Global Positioning Device (GPS), repeat digital photography of designated photo-points, as well as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) map making technologies. The results of these monitoring visits are then carefully recorded and stored safely in our off-site and digital records files.



Serena Dennis, 2009 AmeriCorps Volunteer, assists the Stewardship Coordinator in the first monitoring of Crowley Hilltop Preserve.

Community Connections



Above: Eastern Sierra Wildlife Care educated local youth about reptiles at the 2nd Annual Living with Wildlife Festival in Mammoth Lakes.



Above: Local Bishop students plant a sunflower garden at the ESLT office as part of the Community Connections program.

Below: Pastel by Oak Group Artist Chris Chapman, participant in the 2009 Art for Conservation Sale and Show, titled Pleasant Valley.

Offering You the Opportunity to Connect with Your Treasured Lands

New Program for ESLT

In 2009, ESLT began a new program area, Community Connections, which strives to ensure preservation of Eastern Sierra lands forever by connecting people to the land. ESLT believes effective land conservation goes beyond protecting land with legal tools, it includes the whole community working together to keep our region healthy and thriving, for now, and for the future.

Educational Events in the Community

ESLT is dedicated to having an active role in our communities – educating people of all ages about the value of preserving rural lands in the Eastern Sierra. In the fall, ESLT hosted its second annual Living With Wildlife festival in Mammoth Lakes. This local wildlife education event brings together other wildlife organizations to speak to the community about how to live with and love our local wildlife. In the spring, ESLT's AmeriCorps member developed a sunflower garden project with Bishop elementary students that offered students the opportunity to learn biology and math while experiencing growing a “crop” from seed and the importance of healthy soils and plants in our community.

Art for Conservation

ESLT is pleased to announce its exciting new partnership with the highly acclaimed Oak Group. The Oak Group, based in Santa Barbara, has worked successfully for over 20 years with numerous land trust and conservation organizations to preserve working landscapes. The Oak Group and other talented Eastern Sierra artists will be creating an Eastern Sierra collection which will portray the natural beauty of our cherished region and raise awareness to protect our cherished lands. Fifty percent of the sale will go to benefit the conservation work of ESLT.

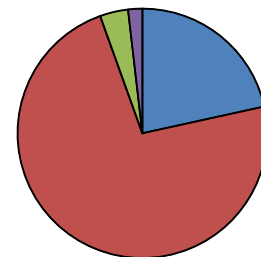
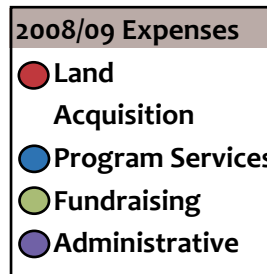
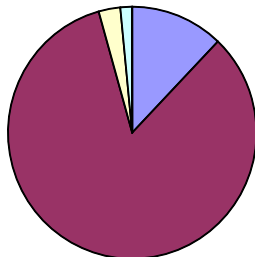
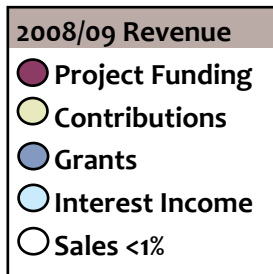


Financial Summary

Revenue & Support	2007/2008	2008/2009
Contributions (individual, business, and other organizations)	\$98,033	\$120,589
Land Project Funding	\$2,279,130	\$831,645
Grants	\$549,505	\$28,102
Interest Income	\$22,894	\$15,112
Sales	\$263	\$180
Revenue Total	\$2,949,825	\$995,628

Expenses	2007/2008	2008/2009
Program Services	\$206,738	\$245,678
Land & Easement Acquisition*	\$2,279,130	\$831,645
Fundraising	\$37,853	\$41,600
Administration	\$21,572	\$20,956
Expense Total	\$2,564,679	\$1,139,879

*Refers to land or conservation easement purchases, but not donations of conservation easements.



Independent Accountants: Gilbert Associates, Inc., David Ljung, Shareholder

Special Thanks to our Conservation Partners





Our Members July 08 to June 09

Eastern Sierra Land Trust's success in preserving rural lands in the Eastern Sierra is being made possible due to the inspiration of our founders, the dedication of our board, staff, and volunteers, and the generous support of individuals, businesses and foundations. We gratefully acknowledge our supporters who have made gifts from July 2008 to June 2009.

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