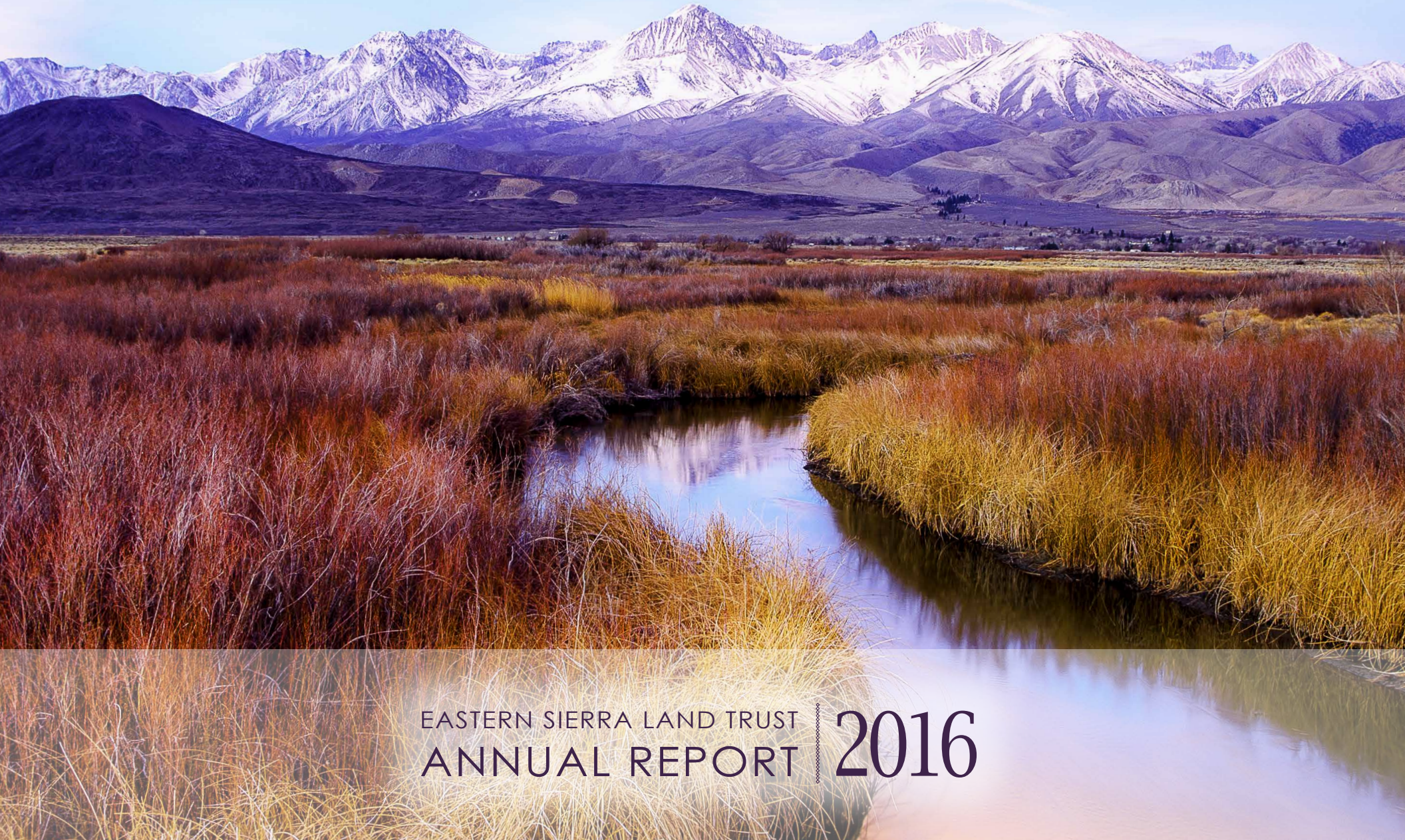




CONSERVATION HIGHLIGHTS



EASTERN SIERRA LAND TRUST
ANNUAL REPORT | 2016

15 YEARS OF CONSERVATION

Fifteen years ago began what has now become an amazing, growing effort to conserve the special places and way of life of the Eastern Sierra.

Since our early beginnings as a small, volunteer-led organization, supporters like you have helped conserve nearly 10,500 acres of critically-important wildlife habitat, scenic viewsheds, and agricultural resources.

You have provided people of all ages with the opportunity to explore and connect with the great outdoors, fostering a deep bond with the land and all that it offers.

You have brought volunteers of all ages together to work side-by-side to make the Eastern Sierra a healthier, cleaner, safer home for families and wildlife alike.

You have built havens for butterflies, bees, and other pollinators; protected generations-old family farms and ranches that hark back to our region’s roots; maintained critical migration corridors for wildlife. All this... and so much more.

Together, we have so much to be proud of and thankful for. And above all, we at ESLT are thankful for you. What leadership you have shown.

In 2016, we built upon many of the successes that you have made possible over the years.

With a strong, growing team of Board Members, advisors, and staff dedicated to carrying out your conservation vision, our organization is perfectly positioned to make sure that the Eastern Sierra’s wild and productive lands remain intact.

To demonstrate our commitment to upholding your trust and ensuring the permanence of our work, we completed the Land Trust Alliance's rigorous accreditation renewal process in 2016. This signifies that we are fiscally-accountable leaders in our conservation community. That when we protect a property forever, we will do it with integrity and ethics.

What's next? We are pleased to report that we have been working with you and landowners in the region to advance critical new land protection projects in at-risk places like the Bridgeport Valley. We still have a long road ahead of us, but we are well on our way to conserving thousands more acres in the years to come.

By working cooperatively with you and other members of our community, we are making great strides towards conserving the lands, waters, and wildlife you love.

With thanks,

Bob Gardner
Board President

Kay Ogden
Executive Director

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Bob Gardner, *President*
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Randy Keller, *Secretary*
Byng Hunt, *Treasurer*
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Bill Dunlap (May 2016 - present)
Jan Hunewill
Joanne Parsons
Brynn Pewtherer (March 2016 - present)
Will Richmond
Tony Taylor, *Board Member Emeritus*


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- | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
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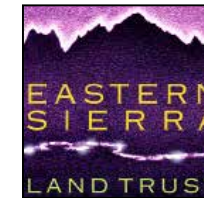
STAFF

- Kay Ogden, *Executive Director*
Susanna Danner, *Land Conservation Program Director*
Marguerite Merritt, *Communications Director*
Heather Freeman, *Philanthropy Manager* (Aug. 2016 - present)
Mini Mantzouranis, *Membership Development Coordinator* (through April 2016)
Lina Myers, *Administrative Assistant* (April - June 2016)
Beth Caddell, *Administrative Assistant* (June 2016 - present)
Sara Kokkelenberg, *Stewardship Coordinator*
Catherine Tao, *Education Coordinator and AmeriCorps Member* (Oct. 2015 - Sep. 2016)
Indigo Johnson, *Education Coordinator and AmeriCorps Member* (Oct. 2016 - Sep. 2017)





Together, protecting our wild and working lands for families and wildlife.



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

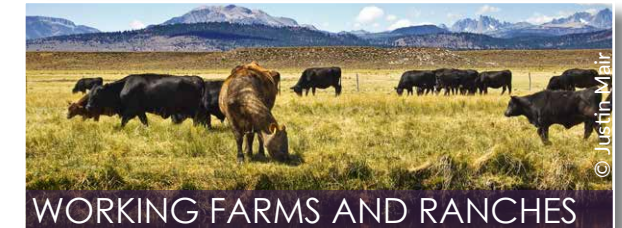
Rich in natural beauty and a strong agricultural tradition, the Eastern Sierra is steeped in the legacy of the Old West. Wildlife habitat is abundant and diverse, supporting fisheries, migrating deer herds, and important bird flyways. Historic working farms and ranches are scenic, historic, and an integral part of our local economy.

Yet today the Eastern Sierra faces a threat. Pressures to subdivide and develop are on the rise. Productive working lands and wildlife habitat are at risk of disappearing forever.

That's where you come in. By partnering with Eastern Sierra Land Trust (ESLT), you can conserve the Eastern Sierra's treasured lands and waters – for today, and for generations to come.

In our 15 years of service to our community, we have built a reputation for collaboration, dedication, and perseverance. And as a nationally-accredited land trust, we hold ourselves to rigorous standards of excellence: upholding your trust, and ensuring that our conservation efforts are permanent.

You are the power and voice behind local conservation. And by working side by side, we can conserve California's "Wild Side" forever.



WORKING FARMS AND RANCHES
You help local families protect their farms and ranchlands against rising pressures to subdivide.



CRITICAL HABITATS
You ensure that iconic animals, fish, reptiles, and birds always have a safe place to thrive.



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS
By connecting people to the land, you create an appreciation for our region and all that it offers.

BEFORE IT'S GONE FOREVER

Imagine driving north along Scenic Highway 395. Past Mono Lake, up and over Conway Summit, the rugged terrain suddenly opens before you – revealing a vast, verdant valley, surrounded by snowy Sierra peaks.

Welcome to Bridgeport Valley, once known as “Big Meadows.” Once you have seen it, you will understand why.

Bridgeport Valley is one of the largest mountain meadows in California. In the early 1800's, pioneering families began using these fertile pastures as critical summer range for cattle. Today, many of their descendants still work the same land their ancestors did – raising cattle and maintaining a way of life that has lasted for generations.

Wildlife, too, call this incredible place home. From mule deer to pronghorn to the rare Bi-state sage-grouse, species like these coexist in harmony alongside livestock and humans alike. They use the irrigated meadows as a safe space to roam and raise their young.

No doubt about it: there's something special about Bridgeport Valley. Those wide-open meadows draw you back, year after year, generation after generation.

A GROWING THREAT

But today, there's a challenge in the air.

With drought and extreme weather becoming more frequent, Bridgeport Valley now faces economic pressure. Ranchers following the traditions of their parents and grandparents are struggling to make ends meet. And now realtors are calling, interested in subdivisions that could slice apart the ranching fabric of the Valley.

“Sometimes we are lulled into a false sense of security that these ranches – along with all their beauty, history, and wildlife – will be here in the future,” reflects Jeff Hunewill, the fifth generation in his family to work Bridgeport Valley's Hunewill Ranch. *“But that's not the case. Only with the support of our community can we make that a reality.”*

FINDING SOLUTIONS IN CONSERVATION

Jeff Hunewill is one of several ranchers in Bridgeport Valley who want to make sure that their land will stay intact for many years to come. They have turned to Eastern Sierra Land Trust for our support.

With your help, we can provide ranchers like Jeff with the tools and resources they need. Together, we can conserve this special place: for the families that work it, the visitors that treasure it, and for the wildlife that call it home.

With your support, we can protect a way of life and a land we all love, and can continue to enjoy for generations to come.





A COMMUNITY COMING TOGETHER

Clustered together, we peered through binoculars – eagerly scanning the water’s edge.

One person pointed, whispering excitedly: *look, a grebe!* Another’s lens was trained on a fencepost, where a loggerhead shrike perched for a picture. Not far away, a separate group bent down to admire a cluster of rare Parish’s popcorn flowers.

In May 2016 our community came together to celebrate the protection of the Black Lake Preserve. Alongside Michelle Browner – whose generous donation of Black Lake in 2014 made conservation here possible – we took in the beauty and life that this special place offers, and will continue to provide for generations.

Conservation successes like the Black Lake Preserve are made possible thanks to you. It’s amazing what you can accomplish when you join hands to protect the places you love.

By bringing you together with conservation partners from near and far, our hope is that we can help you make a lasting difference in the lives and lands of our community.

EASTSIDE POLLINATOR GARDEN PROJECT

In the third year of our Eastside Pollinator Garden Project, 20 new gardeners joined with 55 other local participants to transform their yards into safe havens for pollinators. Events like our Pollinator Garden Workshop, Plant Sale, and Garden Tour provide ways

for gardeners to network with one another, as well as experts in our area, to bring their backyards to life.



GARDENFEST

When the snow begins to thaw and the birds start to sing, the time has come to celebrate spring! And what better way to do it than by coming together to share stories, swap gardening tips, meet local business owners, and enjoy a slice of pizza on the lawn?

BROWN BAG LUNCH SERIES

In honor of Inyo County’s 150th birthday, we invited local historians and experts to our backyard during the summer months to share stories about this remote and beautiful county we call home. Our Brown Bag Lunch Series gives people like you an opportunity to meet and mingle, while learning more about our region’s past – and future.

CONSERVATION IN ACTION

Our amazing team of volunteers knows how to get the job done, and they aren't afraid to get their hands dirty.

Whether they live in the Eastern Sierra or only visit on occasion, these "Sierra Stewards" are on the front lines of local conservation – creating safer homes for wildlife, removing trash from our rivers and roadways, and helping native species continue to thrive. Here are just a few of the many important projects that our volunteers make possible:

RESTORING SWALL WILDLIFE PRESERVE

In 2015, the Round Fire swept through the community of Swall Meadows. Countless wild creatures lost their homes – including the Round Valley mule deer that rely on our Swall Wildlife Preserve for refuge during their annual migration. ESLT volunteers helped replant the Preserve with native bitterbrush seedlings, which provide a key source of food and security for mule deer and other wildlife.

FLAGGING FENCES FOR SAGE-GROUSE

Sage-grouse numbers have been declining across the American West. To help our local population remain strong, volunteers have been working at Conway Ranch and the Black Lake Preserve, flagging fences with reflective markers to make them more visible to these low-flying birds.

CREATING A HOME FOR THE DACE

With the help of the California Department of Fish & Wildlife, staff and volunteers have been working to turn the Benton Ponds into a new home for a rare desert fish: the Owens Speckled Dace.

TEAMING UP TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

On National Public Lands Day, our volunteers joined with conservation partners at the Bureau of Land Management and other local organizations to restore some of the nearby public lands and trails that we all treasure.



2016: LAND STEWARDSHIP BY THE NUMBERS



39

volunteers lent a hand to protect and restore the lands you love



2,400

hours of work donated by volunteers in our community



11

unique restoration and stewardship projects advanced or completed



INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION

Do you remember the first time you experienced nature's magic?

For many, this comes at a young age. It's a moment you may never forget – one that shapes you for the rest of your life.

But even in our rural area, there are young boys and girls who never get the chance to get to know the wild world beyond their backyards. If they cannot ride their bike there, or learn it in the classroom, they'll never have the chance to experience it for themselves.

For conservation to last forever, this needs to change. And there's good news: by supporting local conservation, you're helping inspire kids

so that they grow up caring about our lands and waters – just like you.

On-the-land outings, such as our Migration Corridor Field Trip (left) and volunteer days with the whole family (bottom-left), get kids outside and away from their computer screens. In this way, you're helping them connect with the places and creatures that make the Eastern Sierra so special.

Another way you help inspire the next generation is through our annual Sunflower Garden Project (opposite page), when we team up with local teachers to give kids the chance to get creative outside of the classroom.

This year, Bishop Elementary School third graders joined us in our office backyard and Native Plant Demonstration Garden to learn about the life cycle of plants, the important role that pollinators play, and the magic of germination. They planted sunflower seeds and monitored their growth, and had lots of fun learning about nature through hands-on games and activities.

To protect the Eastern Sierra long after we're gone, we must build a culture of conservation that knows no age limit. It's never too early to discover your love of the natural world – and to understand that it's up to you to protect it.

By engaging people of all ages and inspiring lasting bonds with the land, you're helping to ensure that your conservation efforts today last long into the future.



PREPARING FOR TOMORROW

In 2016, Eastern Sierra Land Trust received the largest gift in our organization's history – one that will have a major effect on our capacity, and as a result, the future of the entire Eastern Sierra region.

The Tambour Foundation, a private charitable foundation focused on educational, environmental, and other advancement opportunities around the world, granted Eastern Sierra Land Trust \$1 million to seed a new Endowment Fund.

By bolstering ESLT's long-term financial security, this new Tambour Endowment will have a transformative effect: ensuring that ESLT can continue our work protecting Eastern Sierra wildlife, habitats, landscapes, and rural history long into the future.

The lands and waters that you have helped protect will be conserved forever. But planning for forever poses a challenge – particularly for a small, grassroots non-profit such as ours.

Fortunately, the Tambour Endowment Fund will help solve this problem by allowing us to plan for the challenges and opportunities that tomorrow will hold.

As the new destination for bequests and long-term gifts made by supporters like

you, we plan to grow this endowment over time, using the annual interest stream to support operational needs. This will allow ESLT to introduce cutting-edge program enhancements, purchase specialized equipment, and upgrade technology to help better engage our community in our mission.

Eastern Sierra Land Trust will always rely heavily on you, our members: the Tambour Fund could never replace your support. Without you, past successes would never have come to fruition – and future successes will never be possible. Your donations will always be our lifeblood: enabling us to pursue new land conservation opportunities, continue restoration and stewardship projects, and help inspire local kids to care about the natural world.

We are deeply grateful for the generosity provided by the Tambour Foundation, as well as ESLT members Ruth and Roger MacFarlane, who introduced our organization to the Foundation and made this gift possible.

2016 marks our 15th anniversary – and now, thanks to this momentous gift, we can plan on many more such celebrations. We are excited to take on new challenges, and can't wait to see what the future will bring.

The Tambour Foundation does not accept unsolicited proposals, and applications are permitted by invitation only.





YOU MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

It's people like you who make conservation possible – and we are so grateful for your support.

Eastern Sierra Land Trust is incredibly fortunate to be part of such a dedicated community of donors, volunteers, and friends.

Members like you are the force behind our success. Over the past 15 years, you have made a major difference in the lives and lands of our community. You conserve scenic vistas, homes for wildlife, and historic ranchlands that make our region extraordinary. Lands that otherwise would be lost – and we so appreciate your support.

We are especially grateful to eleven outstanding individuals who have made conservation a top priority in their lives. As members of our Board of Directors, they are leading the way. These committed supporters provide generous financial assistance and volunteer countless hours of their time to help steer our organization into the future. Many of them have been with ESLT since the very beginning, 15 years ago. Without them, we would not be here today.

Other ESLT members who volunteer on our Advisory Board and Committees are also making a remarkable impact. They bring unique expertise and fresh perspectives to the table, allowing us to better serve our conservation community.

And there are many more supporters who go the extra mile by using their talents to help engage and inspire. For example, in the fall of 2016, Bishop-based artist Joe Profita teamed up with local printing press owners Bruce and Karen Licher to host an art show to benefit Eastern Sierra Land Trust. Joe displayed his work at the Licher's gallery space, donating 30% of all sale proceeds to ESLT. What a great way to meet new friends and share your appreciation of this beautiful place.

Our annual fundraising celebration, Lands & Legacy, is an occasion for our members to get to know one another and toast to the conservation successes you make possible. This year's 8th annual "Party of the Year" brought our community together to stand side-by-side in support of our wild and working Eastern Sierra lands.

Members like you are the voice of local conservation. And at this year's Lands & Legacy, you made a statement that will continue to be heard for decades to come. In that one weekend, you helped raise over \$90,000 to protect the places you love – giving future generations the chance to love them, too.

We are deeply grateful for your commitment to the future of our region. With your generosity and foresight, you are protecting the Eastern Sierra's special places – for today, and forever.

EARNING YOUR TRUST

When you support Eastern Sierra Land Trust, you place your trust in us.

You trust that ESLT will always be around to look after the lands and waters you protect. And you trust that we will use your donations wisely – to uphold the conservation values that make the Eastern Sierra remarkable.

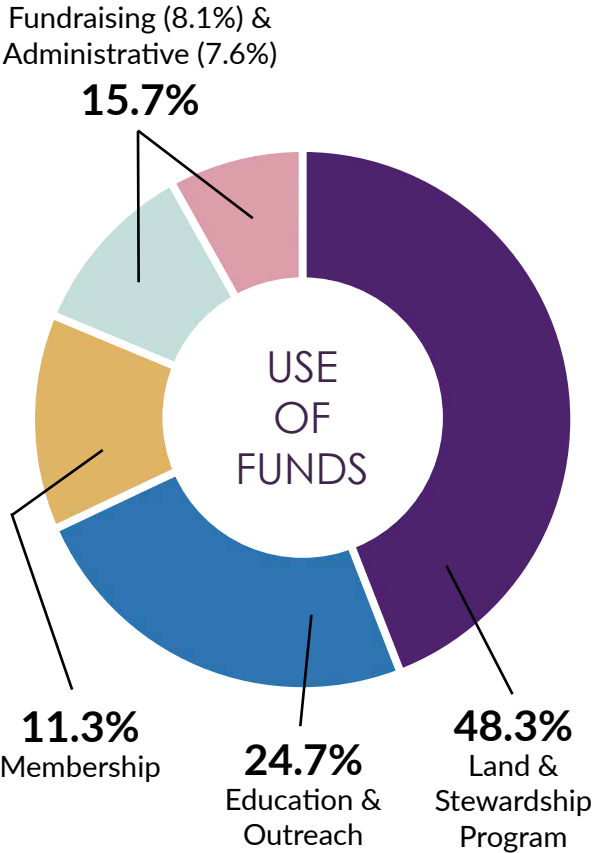
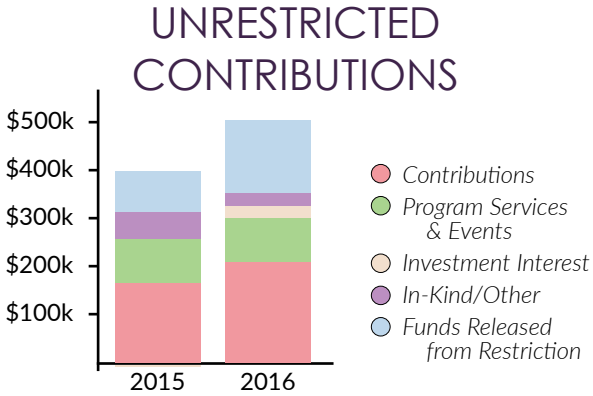
To earn your trust, we hold ourselves to the highest standards of excellence. And in 2016, this meant renewing our accreditation with the national Land Trust Accreditation Commission.

The seal at right is a mark of great distinction among land trusts nationwide. Completing this rigorous renewal process demonstrates that our work meets the highest standards for excellence and permanence.

"It is exciting to recognize Eastern Sierra Land Trust with this distinction," said Tammara Van Ryn, Executive Director of the Commission.

"Accredited land trusts stand together, united behind strong ethical standards ensuring the places people love will be conserved forever."

Thank you for your trust – with it, you make sure local conservation can last for generations.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Eastern Sierra Land Trust is proud to report another successful year. Significant support continues to come from our strong member base of individuals and family foundations. In our 2016 fiscal year:

- Total Unrestricted Contributions increased by **\$102,959** over 2015.
- ESLT was able to leverage **more than \$6 million** in federal, state, and private funding to help complete new conservation projects and protect more of the lands you love.
- **84%** of our expenditures were used to directly support programmatic expenses.

Unrestricted Revenue	2015	2016
Contributions <i>(Individual, corporate, and foundation)</i>	\$188,215	\$216,302
Program Services and Events	\$92,497	\$91,382
Investment Interest and Gains	-\$31	\$25,552
In-Kind and Other Donations	\$51,717	\$24,682
Funds Released from Restriction	\$68,642	\$146,081
UNRESTRICTED REVENUE TOTAL	\$401,040	\$503,999

Restricted Revenue <i>(not including land acquisition grants)</i>	\$725	\$964,371
Project Acquisition Revenue <i>(grant awards that go directly to landowners for conservation easement acquisition)</i>	\$3,821,250	\$6,473,984

Expenses	2015	2016
Education & Outreach	\$96,314	\$125,775
Land & Stewardship Program	\$175,809	\$245,812
Membership	\$42,742	\$57,578
Fundraising	\$51,005	\$41,332
Administrative	\$32,183	\$37,839
EXPENSE TOTAL	\$398,053	\$508,336

Independent Accountants: Healy and Associates

MEMBERS

Corporate & Foundation Supporters \$2500 and over:

Calfox, Inc.
Fenton Family Charitable Fund
The John Randolph Haynes
and Dora Haynes Foundation
*Mammoth Mountain Ski Area
TriCo Realty Salter Trust Mgmt.

Corporate & Foundation Supporters Under \$2,500:

Anonymous (2)
Adobe Valley, LLC
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Country Gardens
Hanford Family Trust
Haute Looks Salon
Independent Project Press
Industrial Metal Supply Co.
KW Botanicals
Rock Creek Lakes Resort
Rotary Club of Mammoth Lakes
The Samuel Goldwyn Foundation
Sorensen’s Resort
Wilderness Catering

Stewardship Circle \$2,500 and over:

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Douglas and Martha Duncan
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Cyd Jeneffsky and Ralph Wolff
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and Sally Gaines
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Peter and Patricia Morris
Sam Mudie and Patty Glaser
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Betsey Tyler
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Blue Skies \$1,000 - \$2,499:

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Barrett and Diana Bryan
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Lakes \$249 - \$499:

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Gretchen Whisenand
Don Whitebread
Whitney and Clarkia Wilson
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James Yurchenco
and Amy Lauterbach

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and Jeanne Falk Adams
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John and Lynette Armstrong
Joseph and Marjorie Bailey
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John and Paige Lapinski
Alvin and Susan Lapp
Alan Lawson
Jim Lee
Kenneth Lee
Donald E. Lewis
Chris Lizza
Kathleen Lucich and Walt Matell

"Bristlecone Grove" Recurring Donors

A special thank you goes to the members of our Bristlecone Grove. By supporting conservation year-round with their monthly gifts, they magnify their impact on the future of our treasured lands.

Anonymous (2)
John Billesdon, MD and Carole Newton Gordon
Brandon Byrd
Linda Chaloupsky
Christine Champe
Erica Chapin and Robin Roberts
Stephen and Sharon Commins
Linda and Larry Emerson
Frances Hunt and Ann Strohm
*Randy Keller and Mary Glenn
Theodore Mazzone and Randall Wittorp
Constance Millar and Jeffrey Wyneken
John and Marcia Moore
Sara Reeder Robinson
Margaret Songster and Terry Oden
*Tony and Sherryl Taylor
Janet Westbrook
Polly Wheaton
Rob and Jennie Winterburn

GRANTORS

Eastern Sierra Land Trust is grateful for the generous funding provided by conservation partners in these agencies and organizations:



Michael and Linda Lyon
Terry and Carol Manning
Barbara and Bert Marcum
Lawrence Marquart
Margaret Marshall
Charles Massieon
Nora Massieon
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Robert and Charlene Mattos
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Carrie and Dan Meyers
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Constance Millar
and Jeffrey Wyneken
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Steven E. and Janie B. Most
George and Frances Murakami
Leontine Nappe
Chris and Tess Nelson
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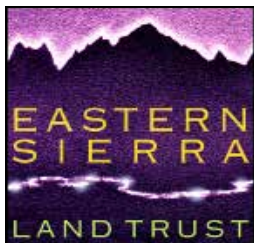
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