

# A community focused on resilience and connection



AUDUBON CANYON RANCH  
Report to our Community  
July 1, 2018–June 30, 2021



# Dear Friends,

The period of July 2018 through June 2021 was a time of great upheaval in the North San Francisco Bay Area region and beyond. During this time Audubon Canyon Ranch, with amazing community support of donors and volunteers like you, rose to meet challenges on multiple fronts:

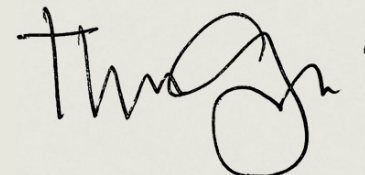
- While the Nuns Fire catalyzed how essential ‘good fire’ is to maintain healthy ecosystems, subsequent years saw ACR put this idea into practice across our region on a greater scale. The ACR community deepened its commitment to sharing expertise and resources to get more prescribed fire on the ground—both at our preserves and on the lands of neighbors.
- Tracking collars and volunteer-placed cameras made it possible for ACR to understand how wildlife responds to wild fire and changes in human movement, even during the pandemic lockdown.
- Volunteer- and staff-collected data sets allowed ACR to add local context to global decline of bird populations and identify key areas for further investigation.
- Finally, with the pandemic making in-person learning difficult, ACR staff and volunteers quickly adapted our standards-based curricula to produce top-notch remote learning resources for families and children.

The ACR community’s expertise, combined with a deep commitment to and love for our natural world, has motivated us to respond nimbly to crises, and focus on building resilience. All of which has served to make us stronger, both individually and as a whole. **Thank you** for your important piece in making this happen. We invite you to read on to share in these successes and know how much we appreciate you.

Yours in service,



Carol Lynn Wood  
President, ACR Board of Directors



Tom Gardali  
Chief Executive Officer

**5,000**  
acres under  
our care

**430**  
volunteers help  
deliver our  
programs

**1,250**  
members moti-  
vated to improve  
North Bay  
habitats

# Embracing fire on the road to resiliency

Community-based vegetation management ramps up as we face earlier and more intense fire seasons.

Cooperative, community-based burns are how we grow a culture of good fire. It's also a very effective way to achieve ecological objectives while increasing the scale of safely treated acres in the region.

Since 2018, ACR's Fire Forward program has led the region in this effort by offering a range of fireline courses and prescribed burn workshops, co-founded Sonoma County's community-based prescribed burn association, the Good Fire Alliance (currently a 520-person group), organized a first ever regional Prescribed Fire Training Exchange using the CalTRES model, and treated more than 2,000 acres of critical habitat with prescribed burns.

By the end of the FY21 period, the program welcomed ten skilled fire practitioners to the Fellowship program to develop their fire-line leadership skills and another four Santa Rosa Junior College students to take part in a year-long internship.

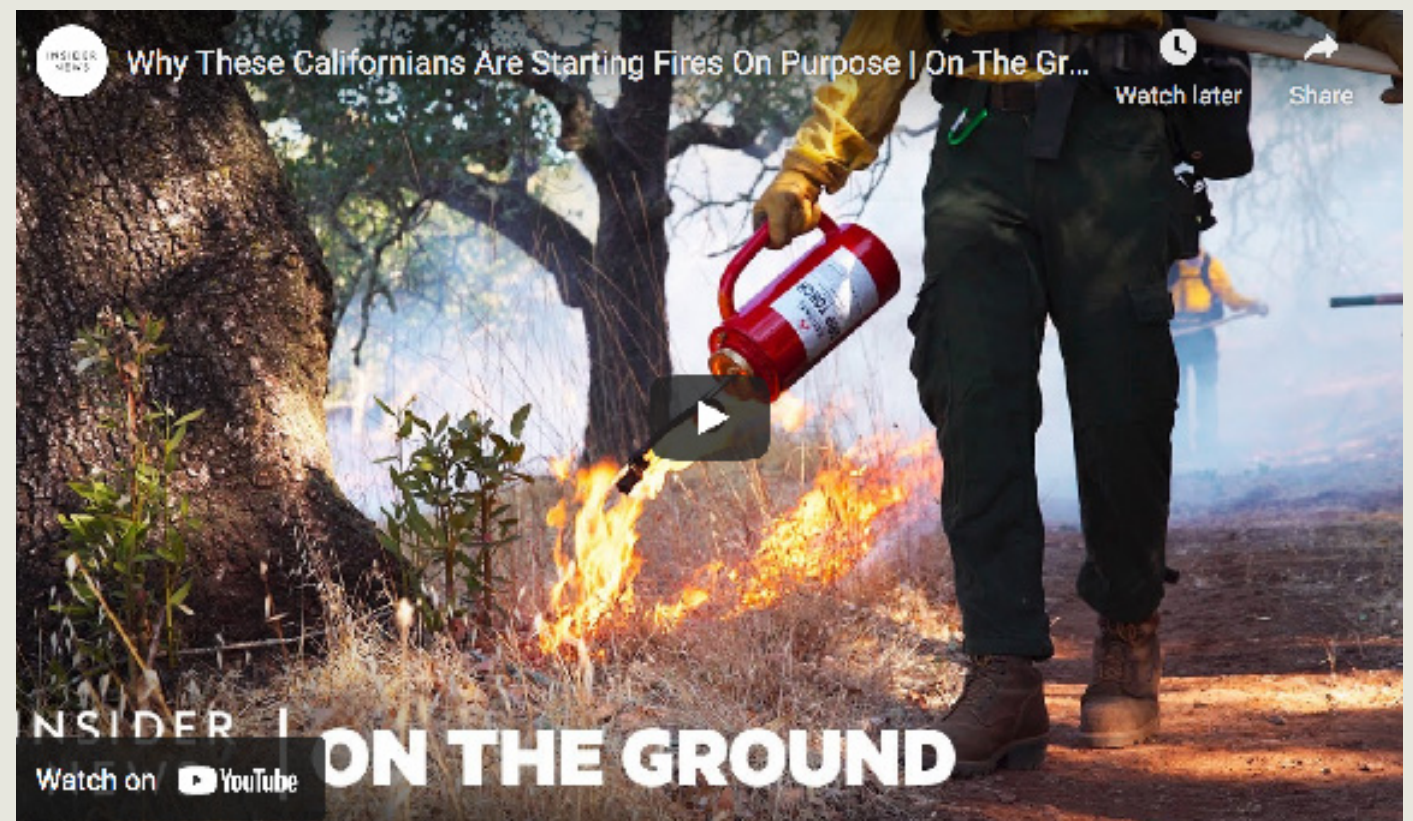
*"The power we have when we work together is palpable. The number of workers trained in prescribed burning is increasing, capacity is improving, and this is only the start."*

—Sasha Berleman, Director, Fire Forward

**26**  
Fireline Courses  
and Workshops  
Offered

**89**  
Controlled Burns  
Conducted

**350**  
People Received  
Fireline Training



**LEARN MORE** | Insider News covered the region's increased use of prescribed burns in [this story from November 2020](#) >



# Nearly \$2 million awarded to support fuels reduction and enhance ecological health

## Our Partners

California State Parks  
Sonoma County Ag + Open Space  
Sonoma County Regional Parks  
Sonoma Land Trust  
Sonoma Mountain Ranch Preservation Foundation

ACR joins collaborative effort to steward 18,000 acres in the Sonoma Valley.

Audubon Canyon Ranch and its five partners in the Sonoma Valley Wildlands Collaborative have been awarded nearly \$2 million in two rounds of grants from CAL FIRE to support fuels reduction and vegetation management, including the use of prescribed fire, to enhance ecological health, reduce the risk of wildfire, and protect our communities.

On ACR's Bouerie Preserve, the funding will support ongoing vegetation thinning and fuels reduction on 90 acres of mixed evergreen forest, including 45 newly-targeted acres along the Wildland Urban Interface.



# Fire is a connecting thread on our preserves

ACR has been centering the role of fire since 2012, when its Board of Directors adopted a resolution acknowledging the importance of restoring fire as an ecosystem process and unanimously approving the use of prescribed burning on ACR preserves.

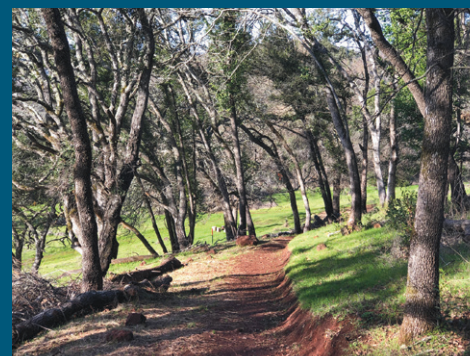
*"One of the most memorable and profound days of my life."*

—L. Martin Griffin, ACR's Founder about lighting the test fire for a 9.5-acre prescribed burn of understory vegetation on Martin Griffin Preserve.

Stewarding ACR preserves for resiliency and adding to the knowledge base of post-wildfire academic research

Highlights in this fiscal period:

- A \$50,000 grant from Rotary District 5130's Fire Recovery Fund supported work on a key connector trail badly burned during the 2017 Nuns Fire.
- Prescribed burning for restoration of coastal prairie habitat was reintroduced on Martin Griffin Preserve
- The 2019 Kincadee Fire prompted academic research on ACR's Modini Preserve about fire retardants and wildfire ash in the watershed (USGS/Sonoma Water) and how post-fire changes in serpentine soils may pose ecological and human health risks (Stanford University).



# Game changing ideas take hold

Living with Lions is winning the hearts of North Bay residents and improving wildlife outcomes.

North Bay Biz magazine named Dr. Quinton Martins and Living with Lions its 2019 Conservation Game Changer. It's no surprise they found Quinton's optimism for community-driven conservation a compelling story but along the way they also discovered how the project is winning the hearts of school children, land-owners, volunteers and research partners.

From the beginning, we set out to build a program that would conduct rigorous science while at the same time broaden community engagement in conservation and encourage sincere dialog around the issues hindering our ability to coexist with California's iconic top carnivore. Together we have forged a lasting community partnership.

*"Well, that didn't take long! [Our vineyard trail camera has picked up] not one but two vineyard cats! P5 and P13, both collared by @auduboncanyonranch as part of their conservation project."*

—@SnobbyOwl, Wine Snob\* Winery

**2,000**  
Presentation  
Attendees

**70**  
Lion  
Depredations  
Averted

**100**  
Backyard  
Trail Camera  
Partners



**LEARN MORE** | Watch ["Mountain Lions: Northern California's wild neighbors"](#)



## Do mountain lions travel through your backyard?

Sonoma County residents are tracking mountain lions and other wildlife on backyard trail cameras.

The Living with Lions trail camera project uses cameras placed on private properties to collect visual data on mountain lions in Sonoma and Napa counties, as well as add to our region's understanding of overall wildlife diversity. Since 2018, more than 200,000 images of wildlife have been collected, with multiple sightings of collared and uncollared lions among them.



## Wildlife/livestock conflict a top concern

The killing of two collared mountain lions is a stark call-to-action for practical solutions to reduce livestock/lion conflict.

When a 'take' permit allowed landowners to cull two of our study animals within a nine-month period, supporters of the Living with Lions study responded to the news with a mix of sadness, outrage and action. Then they got to work on a solution.

Watch as neighbors build a puma proof pen!





# Meeting students where they are

Exploring nature nearer to home became all the more important as teachers and families scrambled to adapt to distanced learning.

Within months of the COVID-19 public health shutdown, ACR educators developed a virtual visit program for remote classrooms that allowed children to virtually explore coastal and inland ecosystems, interact with naturalists via the chat function and round out the experience with science-based nature activities.

Since then we have welcomed more than 4,600 students from 56 Bay Area schools on virtual visits at Bouverie Preserve in Glen Ellen and Martin Griffin Preserve in Stinson Beach.

In addition to the field session, teachers have access to a pre-visit lesson and a range of post-visit elementary school curriculum created by ACR science and education staff, including units on animal senses, seeds and dispersal, and observation in nature as well as an expansive Our Wild Neighbors curriculum developed in tandem with our mountain lion research study.

*“This is such a hard time to be a teacher—seeing organizations like yours model learning in such a positive and creative way was refreshing. Thanks for the boost!”*

—Beth Sheppard, teacher

**4,600**  
3rd–5th Graders  
Engaged on  
Virtual Visits

**9**  
Remote Learning  
Modules  
Developed

**32**  
High School Girls  
Mentored in  
Conservation  
Science



**LEARN MORE** | Come along on a [Virtual Visit](#)

## Environmental Careers: CSI Centers Women in Science

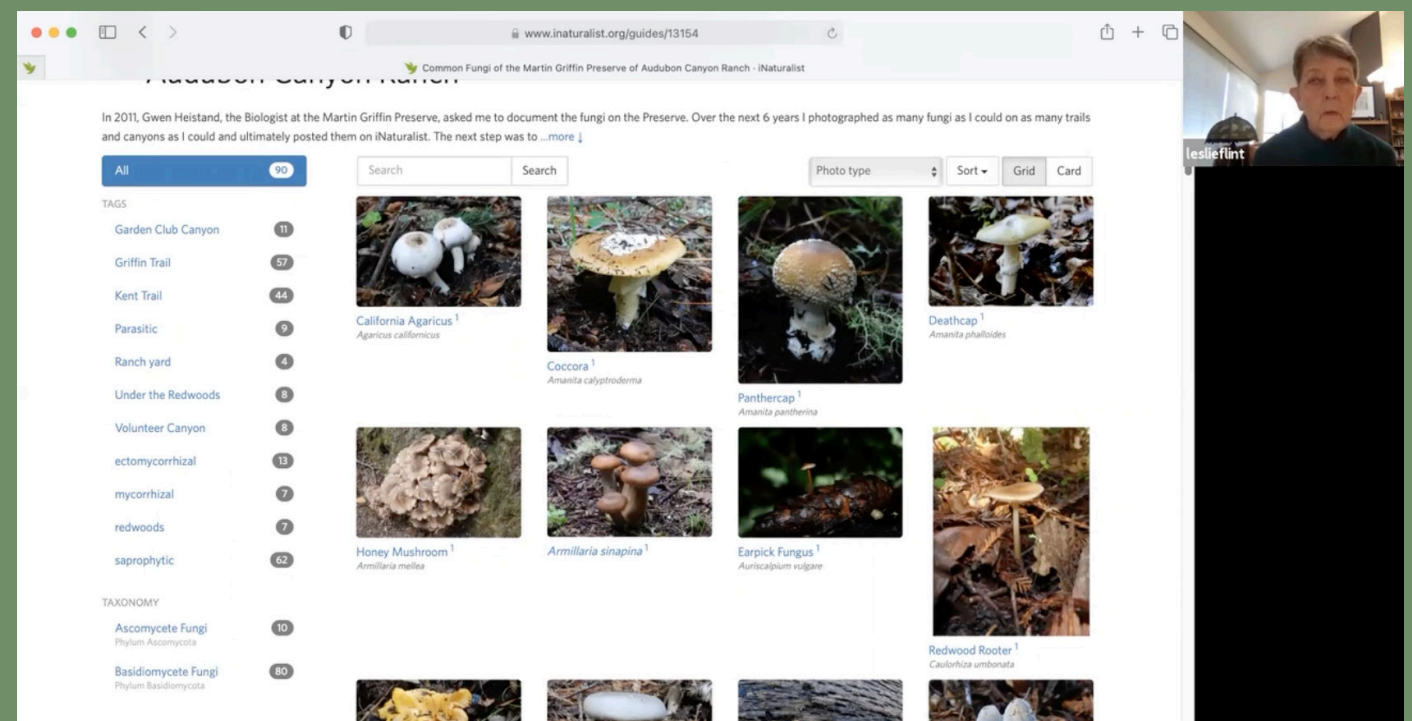
In the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, ACR's annual Conservation Science Intensive (CSI) continued to mentor high school seniors from across the country.

Participants from Mississippi, Puerto Rico, New York City, San Francisco, Napa, L.A. and more spent five days exploring the multi-dimensional relationships that are present in conservation science and in the lives of those that practice it.



## CalNat training connects ACR volunteers to statewide community

By 2020, all new docents trained for ACR's school program earned a California Naturalist certification, aligning ACR with other organizations in the state.



**LEARN MORE** | Check out [CalNat project](#) by longtime ACR volunteer [Leslie Flint](#)



# Filling a data gap: Tracking local Long- billed Curlews to their intermountain nesting grounds

A Species of High Concern by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, some curlew populations have declined dramatically in recent decades.

Over the last 15 years researchers have been using lightweight satellite transmitters to track curlews from a variety of breeding and wintering areas. However, a large knowledge gap remained along the coast of California.

ACR is helping to fill this gap in a collaborative study with the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center, the Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program, and Boise State University's Intermountain Bird Observatory.

*"Long-billed Curlews at Bolinas Lagoon have increased over the past 50 years, so conditions appear favorable there."*

—Nils Warnock, Director of Conservation Science

**32**  
Years Surveying  
Wintering  
Shorebirds

**7**  
Articles in Peer-  
Reviewed  
Journals

**20**  
years of stewardship  
to remove invasive  
cordgrass on  
Tomales Bay



**LEARN MORE** | Read ["Casting a wide net on Migration Patterns of Long-billed Curlews"](#)



## Expanding the reach of Motus technology on the West Coast

Thanks to generous grants from the Marin Wildlife Commission and an ACR donor, we have installed two telemetry receiving stations on Tomales Bay.

The Motus Wildlife Tracking System pairs VHF technology with a network of receiving stations and is a community science effort organized by an international network of researchers who often track very small organisms that cannot handle larger satellite tags.



**LEARN MORE** | Read [“ACR enters the Motus era”](#)

## Cormorant population recovers from significant declines

ACR co-authored a report on the changes in abundance and distribution of nesting Double-crested Cormorants in the SF Bay Area from 1975-2017.

Published in *Marine Ornithology*, the report was spurred by severe nesting disruptions observed during the construction of the new Bay Bridge. A colony at Hog Island on Tomales Bay, formed in 2001, has become the largest in the study area since 2011.



**LEARN MORE** | Read [the article abstract in Marine Ornithology](#)



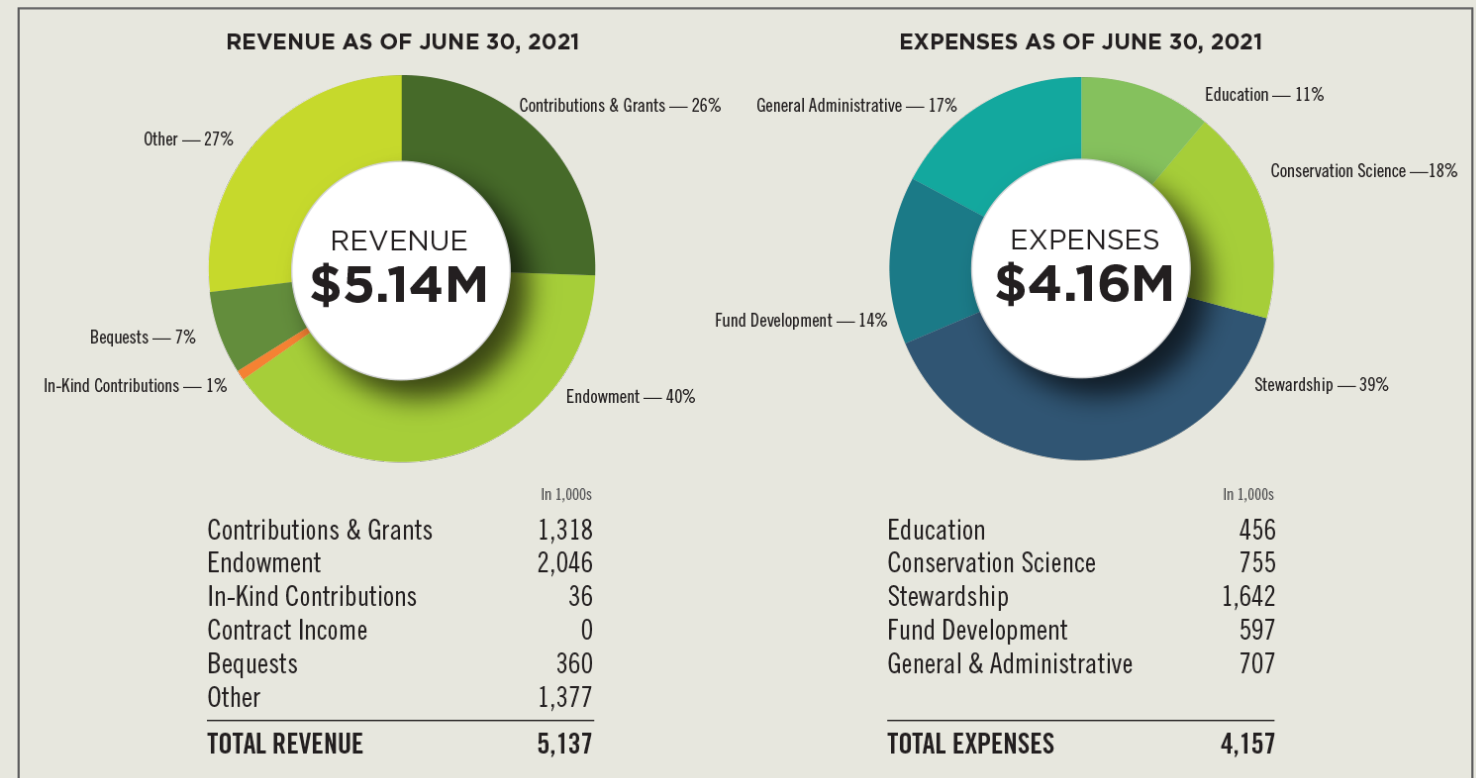
# With generous support from our community

We are grateful to the over 1,000 individuals, businesses, foundations, and agencies that made financial and in-kind gifts and grants from July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2021. Though ACR is grateful for every gift—regardless of size—significant funding was received from the below supporters. Your generosity makes it possible for ACR to connect nature, people, and science in a rapidly changing world. Your support is making a difference, and we can't thank you enough.

We also wish to thank the ACR Board of Directors, who each made personal financial gifts to ACR, in addition to their gifts of time and leadership.

For information on how you can support the ACR mission, contact ACR Director of Philanthropy Jen Newman at 415-868-9244 ext. 119 or [jen.newman@egret.org](mailto:jen.newman@egret.org).

The following is a summary of ACR's fiscal year spanning July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021. The [complete audited financial statement](#) was prepared by Doran & Associates.



## FY 2021 — July 1, 2020–June 30, 2021

### \$100,000+

Charles P. Gresham Living Trust  
Dorothy Hines Revocable Trust  
White Family Revocable Trust

### 50,000 - 99,999

Anonymous  
California State Coastal Conservancy  
Coalitions & Collaboratives, Inc. (COCO)  
Disney Conservation Fund  
Frank A. Campini Foundation  
Livinia Fischer Estate  
Marin Community Foundation  
Robert and Shirley Harris Family Foundation  
Kate Schaffner  
Bill & Linda Sullivan

### 25,000 - 49,999

Anonymous  
Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria  
Marilyn and Don Sanders Trust

The Nature Conservancy  
The Schaffner Foundation  
Simpson PSB Fund

### \$5,000 - 24,999

Anonymous (2)  
Deborah & Arthur Ablin Family Fund  
The AMD Family Fund  
Julie & Tom Atwood  
William Bridges & Susan Strong  
Phillip & Kathy Carlsen  
Cooley LLP \*  
Elizabeth E. Bettelheim Family Foundation  
Dennis & Susan Fujita  
Fullerton Family Foundation  
The George L. Shields Foundation  
Anthony Gilbert & Laurel Wroten  
Sally Glaser & David Bower  
Marjorie & David Guggenheimer  
Hanford ARC Fund of Community Foundation Sonoma County  
Bryant & Diane Hichwa  
Thomas & Mary Anne Jorde

Richard & Sue Kavinoky  
The Kimball Foundation  
Leah Crane Estate  
Paul & Barbara Licht  
Nancy & Tony Lilly  
Marin County Fish & Wildlife Commission  
Mary A. Crocker Trust  
G. Paul Matthews & Maria Cardamone  
Anne & Skip Montgomery  
Napa County Wildlife Conservation Commission  
Outrageous Foundation  
Purdum Family Fund of Community Foundation Sonoma County  
Quigley/Hiltner Fund  
Mendel Rosenblum & Diane Greene  
Sonoma County Vintners Foundation  
Marlene & Martin Stein  
Susan Strong & William Bridges  
Maryann Toub  
Kathleen Van Boven  
West Marin Fund  
Will J. Reid Foundation  
Barbara & Mordechai Winter

\* Gift in Kind



**FY 2020— July 1, 2019–June 30, 2020****\$100,000+**

Charles P. Gresham Living Trust  
Farley Family Charitable Foundation  
Marilyn and Don Sanders Trust  
White Family Revocable Trust

**50,000 - 99,999**

Anonymous  
Frank A. Campini Foundation

**25,000 - 49,999**

Anonymous  
California Deer Association  
Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria  
The George L. Shields Foundation  
Georgiana De Ropp Ducas Estate  
The Kimball Foundation  
Maribelle & Stephen Leavitt  
Richard and Barbara Tracy Charitable Remainder Trust  
Simpson PSB Fund

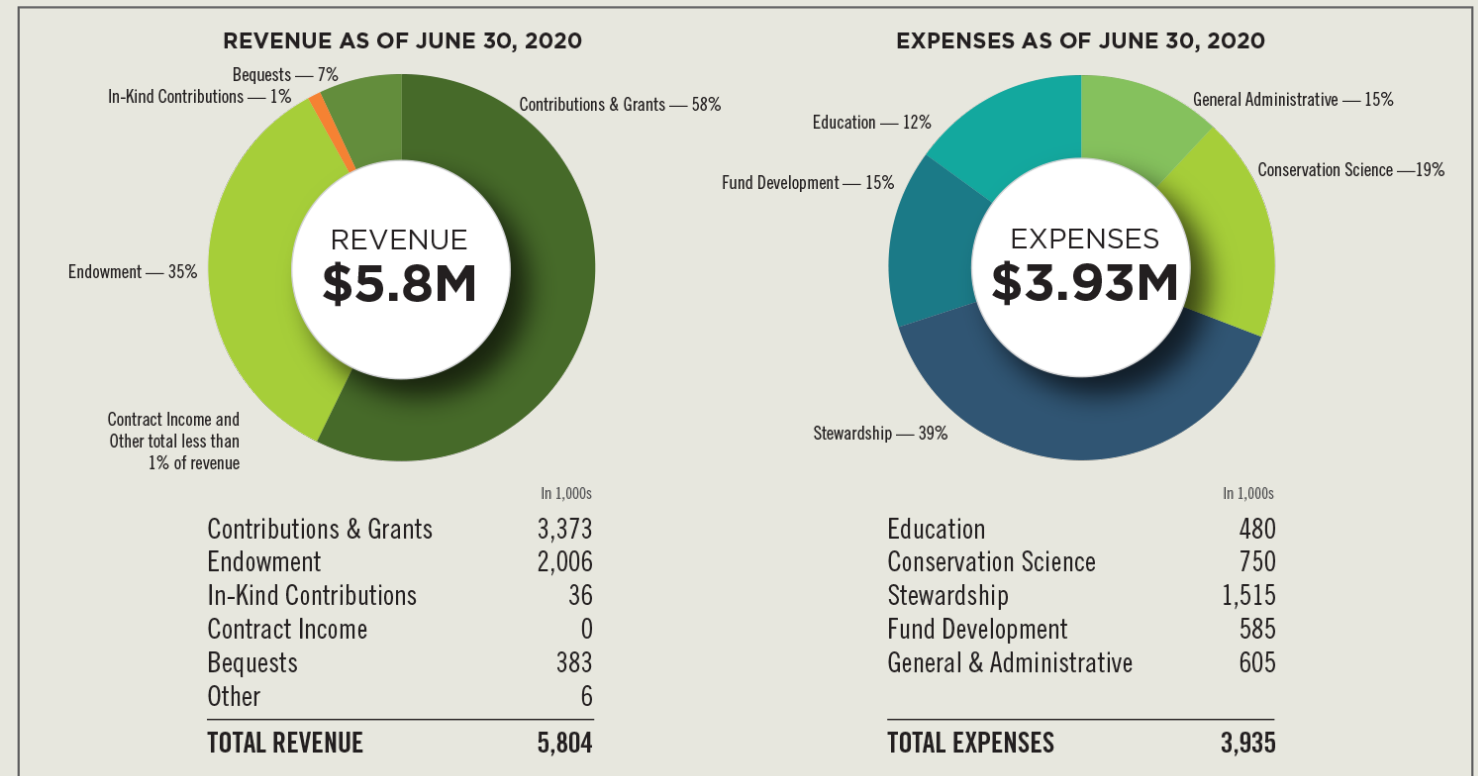
**\$5,000 - 24,999**

Anonymous (4)  
Deborah & Arthur Ablin Family Fund  
The AMD Family Fund  
Barbara L. Martinelli Trust  
Patricia Blanton  
Lawrence Brooke  
Phillip & Kathy Carlsen  
Cooley LLP \*  
Robert & Judy Coyne  
Elizabeth (Betty) BurrIDGE Estate  
Fullerton Family Foundation  
Sally Glaser & David Bower  
Grow West

Hanford ARC Fund of Community Foundation Sonoma County  
Barbara & Gwen Heistand  
Bryant & Diane Hichwa  
Impact100 Sonoma  
Josephine Lawrence Hopkins Foundation  
Keysight Technologies Foundation  
Lane Norton Estate  
Nancy & Tony Lilly  
Ron & Amanda Mallory  
Mary A. Crocker Trust  
G. Paul Matthews & Maria Cardamone  
Anne & Skip Montgomery

Mystery Ranch  
Napa County Wildlife Conservation Commission  
Patagonia  
Quigley/Hiltner Fund  
Robert and Shirley Harris Family Foundation  
Kenneth & Marjorie Sauer  
Jean Schulz  
Sonoma County Vintners Foundation  
Marlene & Martin Stein  
Bill & Linda Sullivan  
Maryann Toub  
Barbara & Mordechai Winter  
Kenneth & Anna Zankel

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**FY 2019— July 1, 2018–June 30, 2019**

**\$100,000+**

Barbara L. Martinelli Trust  
CAL FIRE  
Dorothy Hines Revocable Trust  
Farley Family Charitable Foundation  
White Family Revocable Trust

**50,000 - 99,999**

Cooley LLP \*  
Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria  
Frank A. Campini Foundation  
Rotary District 5130  
Shirley Lee Poo Estate

**25,000 - 49,999**

Kristen Doherty  
Georgiana De Ropp Ducas Estate  
The Kimball Foundation  
Phyllis Schmitt Estate  
Kate Schaffner  
Dorothy Weicker

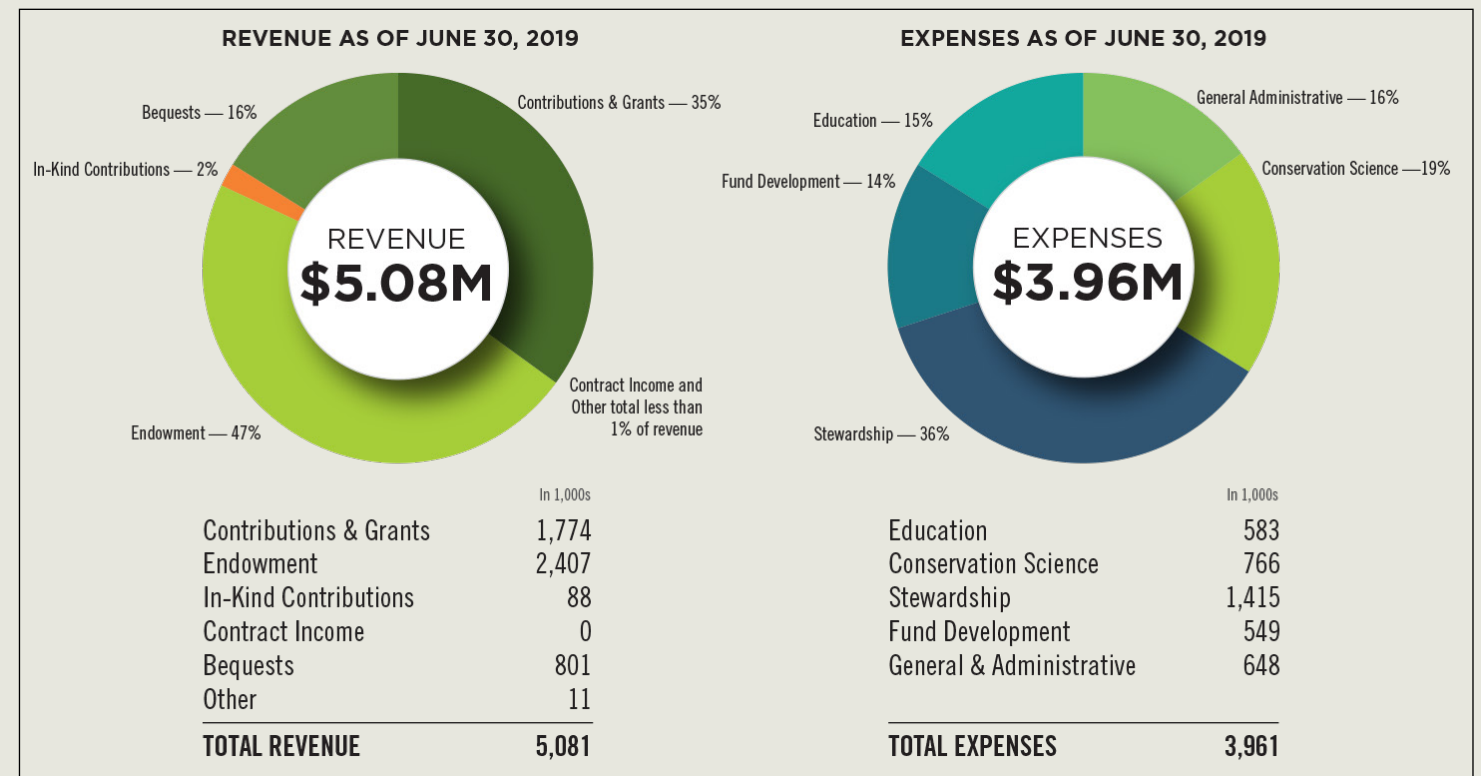
**\$5,000 - 24,999**

Anonymous (5)  
The AMD Family Fund  
Deborah & Arthur Ablin Family Fund  
Bennett Valley Guild \*  
William Bridges & Susan Strong  
Robert & Judy Coyne  
Forest Soil and Water, Inc. \*  
Fullerton Family Foundation  
The George L. Shields Foundation  
Sally Glaser & David Bower  
Bryant & Diane Hichwa

Josephine Lawrence Hopkins Foundation  
Richard & Sue Kavinoky  
Kyle & Nancy Kirwan  
Nancy & Tony Lilly  
Marin Audubon Society  
G. Paul Matthews & Maria Cardamone  
Anne & Skip Montgomery  
Ivan Obolensky  
Patagonia  
Robert and Shirley Harris Family Foundation  
The Schaffner Foundation

Jan Gerrett Snedaker  
Summit State Bank  
John Topham  
Maryann Toub  
True North Gear Inc. \*  
Verna & Arthur White  
Barbara & Mordechai Winter  
Kenneth & Anna Zankel

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## Board of Directors

### Officers

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Vice President

Joan Turner  
Secretary

William Bridges  
Treasurer

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Phillip Carlsen

Rebecca 'Beki'  
Simon

Jane Wicklund

Cy Wilcox



Chief Executive Officer Tom Gardali and Board President Carol Lynn Wood

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Chief Operating Officer

Gary Schick  
Chief Financial Officer

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Wendy Coy  
Director of Communications

Erika Obedzinski  
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Allie Rigby  
Communications Specialist

Sarah Warnock  
Grants Manager

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Preserve Manager

Amanda Botsford  
Land Steward

Susie Allen  
Last House Program Manager

Kurt Heffernon  
Land Steward

Jacqueline Levy  
Education Program Manager

Jennifer Potts  
Resource Ecologist

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Director of Conservation Science

Barbara Wechsburg  
Preserve Manager

Emiko Condeso  
Ecologist / GIS Specialist

Scott Jennings  
Avian Ecologist

Jim Jensen  
Land Steward

David Lumpkin  
Avian Ecologist

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Ph.D.  
Director

Garrett Gradillas  
Prescribed Fire Projects  
Coordinator

Hanna Lopez  
Logistics Manager

Claire McMurtry  
Administrative Logistics Manager

Brian Peterson  
Fire Ecologist



### Living with Lions

Quinton Martins

Consulting Principal Investigator

Liz Martins

Education Coordinator

Kate Remsen

Trail Camera Project Coordinator

### Martin Griffin Preserve

Gwen Heistand

Preserve Manager/Resident

Biologist

Catie Clune

Education Program Manager

Henry Inman

Resource Ecologist

Steve Trivelpiece

Land Steward

### Modini Preserve

Michelle Cooper

Preserve Manager/Resident

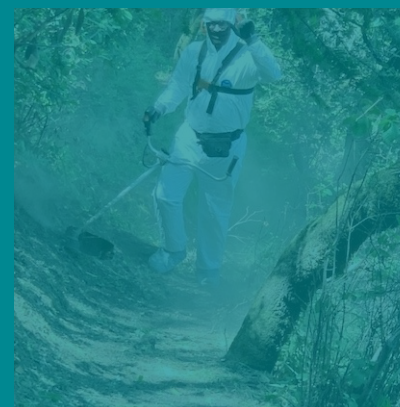
Biologist

Kyle Doron

Resource Ecologist

Tomas Ruiz

Land Steward



Audubon Canyon Ranch

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