

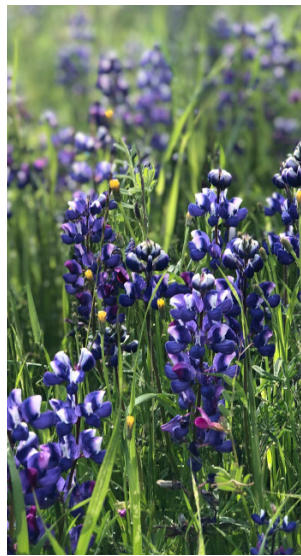
# Impact Report

**Fiscal Years 2022 & 2023**

July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023







## EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

Tom Gardali  
*CEO*

Julia Clothier  
*COO*

Gary Schick  
*CFO*

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Photos, clockwise from top: Wendy Coy (2),  
Paige Green, Yuval Helfman, Quinton Martins

## A RESPONSIBILITY TO OUR MISSION



We believe it is important to pause from time-to-time and remind ourselves of the responsibility that comes with being a 501(c)(3) nonprofit — the responsibility to mission. To that end we must also make decisions about how best to turn your generous donations into actions that improve outcomes for the diversity of life. What is the highest use of these funds?

In this Impact Report for fiscal years 2022 & 2023, you'll gain insight into some of the new ways we're answering that question. You'll learn how we are increasing the the region's ability to steward lands with beneficial fire, see how we are partnering with others to help youth find joy and discovery in nature, and learn why we are tracking long-distance fliers and local mountain lions. And so much more.

We take the responsibility to steward our mission, and the dollars that fund it, very seriously. *Thank you for investing in us.*

With gratitude and respect,

*Tom Gardali*  
CEO

*Sarah Allen, Ph.D.*  
Board President





Prescribed Fire Squad Lead Michael Garrett and a Good Fire Alliance volunteer apply fire to a coastal grassland in western Marin County. Photo: Adahlia Cole.



# INCREASING CAPACITY FOR GOOD FIRE

## Grants received to support professional training of local prescribed fire workforce

Prescribed fire is a connecting thread in California's bold initiatives to achieve environmental, public health and safety, and equity goals, yet policy makers have been slow to deliver on lasting jobs in the field.

Two grants awarded to Audubon Canyon Ranch in 2022 and 2023 aim to change that outcome.

### **CAL FIRE invests in multi-year apprenticeship**

In 2022, Audubon Canyon Ranch was awarded a \$2 million grant from CAL FIRE for a multi-year workforce development program that trains five full-time prescribed fire apprentices each year. Participants complete a range of formal wildland fire training courses and informal workshops, and gain leadership skills as prescribed fire practitioners with field experiences in planning, preparing, implementing, and monitoring prescribed fire and fuels reduction projects.

Graduates from the program are qualified for hire to existing crews, including in leadership positions, as well as qualified to launch new fuels and fire management worker-owned cooperatives or contract crews. By the end of their 11-month apprenticeship, the program participants also have the skills to plan and coordinate fuels reduction and ecosystem stewardship projects from start to finish following all standard regulations and procedures.

*We are thrilled to be able to offer, through these grants, additional pathways to professional fire and forest stewardship careers in communities threatened by the impacts of climate change.*

### **Expanding number of North Bay jobs in prescribed fire management**

In 2023, Audubon Canyon Ranch received a \$1.2 million gift from an anonymous philanthropic donor to expand career-track jobs in prescribed fire and increase the number of controlled burns conducted for community safety and improved environment throughout the San Francisco North Bay Area.

The grant has helped build an 11-person full-time, permanent prescribed fire module — a team of skilled personnel dedicated to prescribed fire management that can ignite, hold, and monitor prescribed fires.

We believe the module will serve as a scalable model for state and federal agencies that need to institutionalize jobs in prescribed fire to meet California's needs and goals.

Since launching Fire Forward in 2017, we have seen volunteer practitioners of fire spend many hours dedicated to professional development in this field only to commonly leave the field for other jobs, including jobs in fire sup-





Above: a crew comes together to train and burn at Martin Griffin Preserve, Stinson Beach. Photo: Erika Lutz; Right: Prescribed Fire Squad Lead Annie Madden monitors communications during a prescribed burn at Bouverie Preserve. Photo: Erika Lutz; A fire practitioner notes hourly weather conditions during a prescribed burn. Photos: Sashwa Burrous







pression or other vegetation management due to lack of access to meaningful careers in this field.

These two grants have allowed for the hiring, retention, and career-path mentorship of some of the very people who have been training with us as volunteers.

### **Number of prescribed fire projects have expanded**

The funding also has allowed for an increasing number of prescribed fire projects managed by us and others to get underway in the North Bay, aligning with California's 2021 Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan and California's 2022 Strategic Plan for Expanding the use of Beneficial Fire.

### **Partnerships have expanded, too**

In 2022, Audubon Canyon Ranch partnered with North Bay Jobs with Justice, The Watershed Research & Training Center, and Resilience Force, to host a four-day all-Spanish-language prescribed fire training course. Participants learned the foundations of wildland firefighting and prescribed burning, and completion of the series of certification courses resulted in qualification as a Basic Wildland Firefighter.

The training was funded by California Fire Safe Council.

Also in 2022, we hosted a second regional prescribed fire training exchange (North Bay TREX), drawing individuals, county and state agencies,

### **North Bay TREX by the numbers:**

- 93 participants
- 4,185 hours by all participants collectively
- 10 support volunteers
- 166 acres received good fire
- 626 piles burned
- 11 burn days
- 3 training days

### **Outcomes:**

- Wildfire resilience in oak woodland, redwoods, and grasslands
- Restoration of native plant and animal habitats
- Skill, confidence, and qualifications of over 100 prescribed fire practitioners
- Partnership and inter-agency engagement with prescribed fire

and conservation organizations for a two week collaborative training. Our overarching goal was to increase regional capacity in the North Bay to support and lead prescribed fires.

Sonoma Valley Wildlands Collaborative awarded a grant that provided essential support for this TREX.

# FINDING JOY, BUILDING SKILLS

Helping youth develop skills to study and care for  
natural systems and each other

*Children discover they are scientists every time they ask a question about nature and use their own observations to uncover the answer.*

Audubon Canyon Ranch has a long history of building networks with schools and teachers, which matters because the needs within education change over time.

While facing the challenges of connecting children to nature during the pandemic, we explored new ways of interacting with classes by developing virtual visits to Bouverie Preserve in Glen Ellen and Martin Griffin Preserve in Stinson Beach, focusing on the flora and fauna of oak woodlands and red wood forests.

We created standards-aligned lessons for teachers that support developing the skills to do science, not just learn content.

By fall 2022, when teachers were able to resume field trips, they had the resources on hand to prepare students for what they would find on the trail.

For some classrooms, an optional virtual visit gave them the opportunity to test out their observation skills, answering questions such as, “What living things rely on oak trees?”

## Expanding pathways through partnership

In 2023, Audubon Canyon Ranch was selected to join the **Environmental Education Pathways Initiative** headed by the Sonoma County Environmental Education Collaborative (SEEC) and the Community Foundation of Sonoma County.

The three-year initiative works with schools that receive federal funding to support low-income students and aims to help teachers with field trip logistics and invite participating non-profits to collaborate more effectively.

With this pilot program, K-6 students and teachers can benefit from more valuable, interconnected lessons at the outdoor learning programs they



Photo: Catie Clune







Photo: Renée Hawk

**Our three-hour, docent-led nature hike cultivates environmental literacy, connects what happens in the classroom to what happens on the trails of the preserves, and supports learning with a set of standards-based resources.**

visit, while nonprofit organizations can receive grant support to supplement transportation costs so they can reach historically underserved communities.

During the 2023 pilot year, 19 county schools that receive federal funding to support students and eight organizations were selected to participate.

Students and teachers participating in the Pathways Project receive guided nature experiences of Bouverie Preserve twice — once in the fall and once in the spring.

For over fifty years, we've been able to adapt and grow our programs by responding to how educational needs for students change over time. Now SEEC gives us a unique opportunity to learn from fellow nonprofits like LandPaths, Sonoma Ecology Center, and Sonoma Land Trust and work together, rather than work in isolation or risk offering repeated content.

# GAINING GROUND

## Why studying the movements of our wild neighbors matters

*The North Bay is a particularly interesting area to study mountain lions as it is effectively the “end of the road” for dispersal cats moving south from northern populations. Mountain lions are unlikely to cross into the South Bay from Marin, Sonoma, and most of Napa.*

A trio of tools — GPS collars, trail cameras, and radio towers — are helping to increase our understanding of when and where animals are moving through the area — and providing a critical link between research and conservation.

### North Bay Mountain Lions

Mountain lions are excellent indicators of whether there is sufficient natural connectivity for wildlife in an area. The movement data of our local lions fitted with GPS collars are collected by our partner True Wild and are combined with other studies to form a current understanding of the health of California’s mountain lion population.

By mid 2023, we had tagged 39 lions for our Living with Lions study, the most recent, a female with three

kittens in tow. Collared mother cats have provided a wealth of information about the risks facing young North Bay mountain lions.

Sonoma County residents also are providing data through a network of more than 100 trail cameras to monitor the population of the region’s big cats, as well as tally numbers of other wildlife as part of our Living with Lions trail camera project.

Additional data from a grid of cameras placed on our Modini Preserve contribute to Pepperwood Preserve’s effort to survey wildlife diversity in the Mayacamas mountains.

### Migratory Shorebirds

At the coast, we are tagging and following the movements of Dunlin, Western Sandpipers, and Short-billed Dowitchers, whose populations are declining. During fiscal years 2022 & 2023, we installed three Motus towers on our preserves (and helped others in Northern California install theirs), expanding the network that helps re-

Mountain lion P-39, pictured below with one of three kittens, is blind in one eye.







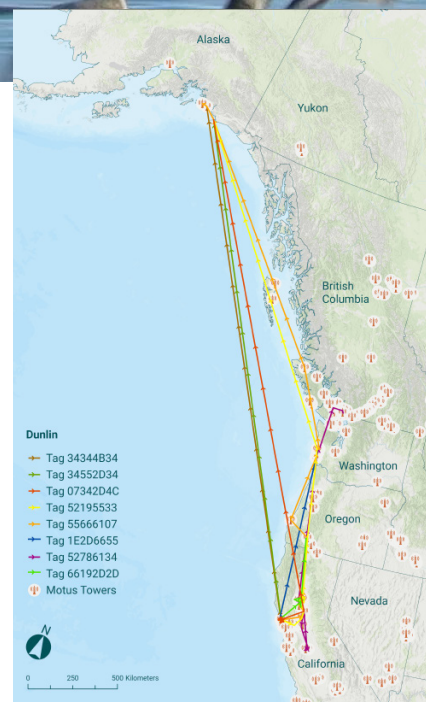
searchers track an array of wildlife — from dragonflies to Dunlin.

By partnering with Canadian Wildlife Service, Point Blue Conservation Science, The Nature Conservancy, and Audubon California we hope to learn more about where they go and the challenges they face along the way.

### Simply tracking and reporting is not enough

While the heroic journeys animals make stir our hearts and pique our curiosities, we must use the knowledge to catalyze action.

Along with publishing our findings, we are sharing what we learn with our community, from engaging classroom experiences that teach mountain lion research techniques and conservation to offering resource guides and one-on-one outreach to reduce wildlife/pet conflict.



Dunlin radio-tagged on Walker Creek, Tomales Bay in January 2022 headed to their Alaska breeding grounds soon after, as shown above. By October, their return to local waters was picked up again by Motus towers along the Bay. Photo: Nils Warnock; map: David Lumpkin



Director of Conservation Science Nils Warnock  
and Ecologist David Lumpkin attach a radio tag  
to a Dunlin near Walker Creek, Tomales Bay.  
Photo: Scott Jennings







# PARTNERING FOR IMPACT

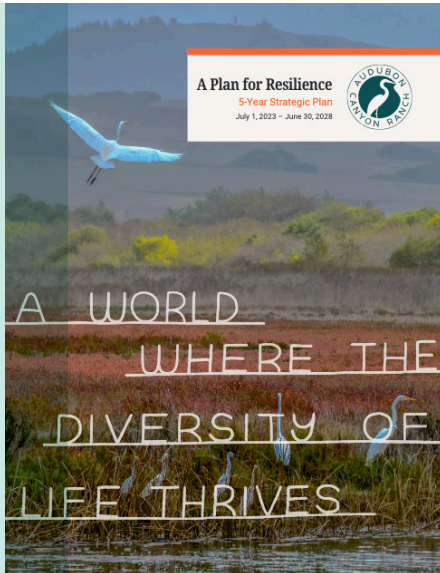
Healthy plant and animal populations are signs of a healthy world. We study them to strengthen conservation efforts, educate, and guide policy

During fiscal years 2022 & 2023, Audubon Canyon Ranch contributed to conservation documents at the local, regional, and national scales on topics that range from creating climate resilience in Sonoma County to the conservation of our nation's birds. We contributed our expertise on topics ranging from stewardship to conservation strategies and synergies.

- **Habitat use by breeding water birds in relation to tidal marsh restoration in the San Francisco Bay Estuary**
- **Priority Bird Conservation Areas in California's Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta**
- **Faster growth and larger size at crèche onset are associated with higher offspring survival in Adélie Penguins**
- **The ecology of human-caused mortality for a protected large carnivore**
- **Lessons learned from [...] 37 restored coastal grasslands in California**
- **Partial Migration by Great Egrets in Coastal California**
- **Integrating data types to estimate spatial patterns of avian migration across the Western Hemisphere**
- **Great egret habitat selection and foraging behavior in a temperate estuary**
- **Breeding waterbird populations have declined in San Francisco Bay: an assessment over two decades**
- **Seasonal Patterns in Daily Flight Distance and Space Use by Great Egrets**
- **CA Central Coast Joint Venture 2022 Implementation Plan**
- **Restoring the Estuary to Benefit Wildlife and People, 2022 Implementation Strategy**
- **2022 U.S. State of the Birds Report**
- **Sonoma County Climate Resilient Lands Strategy**

# 2023–2028: LOOKING AHEAD

New five-year strategic plan charts course for greater resilience



Read the detailed *Plan for Resilience* at [egret.org](https://egret.org)



In 2023, we developed a strategic plan to guide our work through 2028. To make a difference most effectively for nature and people, our 2023–2028 Plan for Resilience focuses on resilience at several scales and, specifically, across two strategic initiatives: **Resilient Lands and Waters** and **Empowered and Inclusive Communities**.

## Resilient lands and waters

Simply protecting natural areas and species is not enough to maintain biodiversity and the ecological functions that sustain us all.

Stewardship — assisting natural areas or species with positive human actions — is needed to arrest biodiversity loss and restore ecological functions.

The Resilient Lands and Waters initiative captures our investment in the ongoing stewardship of the lands we hold and beyond.

We will take the best care of the places we have direct responsibility for, and we will test, model, and share lessons learned with public and private land managers at the land-scape scale.

Our efforts within this initiative include **Good Fire, Science for Stewardship**, and **Impact Stewardship**.

## Empowered and inclusive communities

Most conservation work has excluded Black, Indigenous, and People of Color — the very people who contribute the least to environmental degradation yet are disproportionately impacted by it. Because of this exclusion, mainstream conservation efforts have not met the needs of all members of society and have not benefited from ideas generated from diverse worldviews and lived experiences.

We believe including more people in conservation efforts will build more durable outcomes, and that **living-wage careers in conservation** will empower local communities to make real and lasting change.

Our efforts within this initiative include **Equitable Access to the Land**, **Activated Youth**, and **Skill Building and Training**.

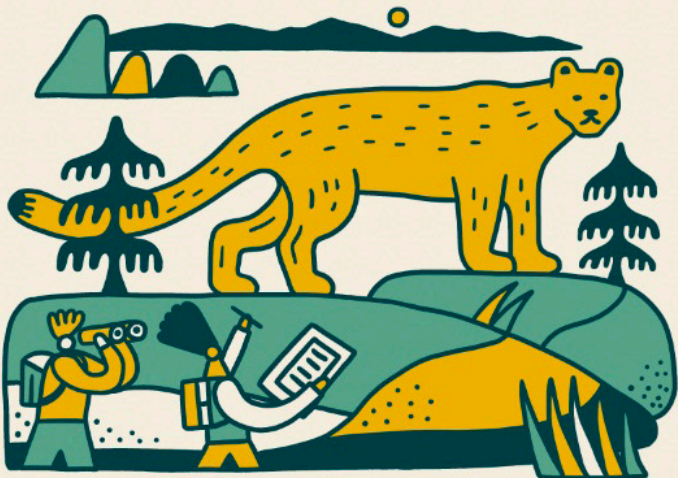




GOOD FIRE



SKILL BUILDING & TRAINING



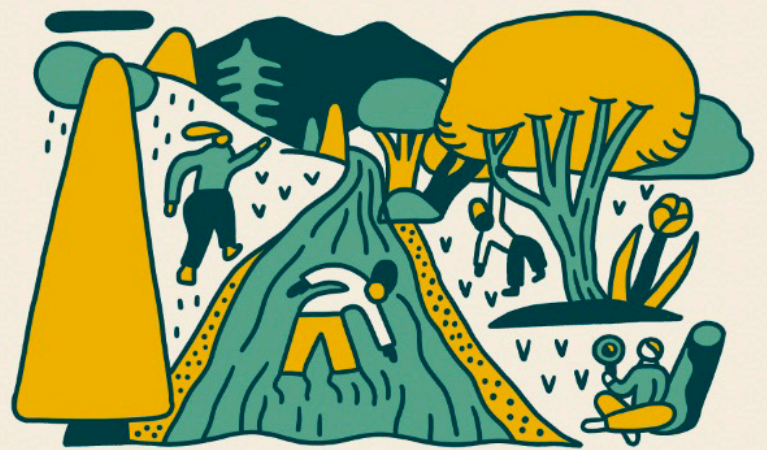
SCIENCE FOR STEWARDSHIP



EQUITABLE ACCESS TO THE LAND



IMPACT STEWARDSHIP



ACTIVATED YOUTH





A prescribed burn clears accumulated fuels in a mixed conifer forest in West Sonoma County. Photo: Sashwa Burrous

## FUNDING OUR MISSION

With generous support from our community

We are grateful to the over 1,000 individuals, businesses, foundations, and agencies that made financial gifts and grants from July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2023. Though Audubon Canyon Ranch is grateful for every gift — regardless of size — space considerations dictate that we list only significant gifts and grants.

Generosity from all our supporters makes it possible for Audubon Canyon Ranch to connect nature, people, and science for a more

resilient world. Support from our community is making a difference, and we are eternally grateful. We also wish to thank our Board of Directors, who each made personal financial gifts to Audubon Canyon Ranch, in addition to their gifts of time and leadership.

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



## FY 2023: July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

### **\$100,000+**

Anonymous  
CAL FIRE Wood Products and Bioenergy  
California Office of Emergency Services  
Disney Conservation Fund  
Farley Family Charitable Foundation  
George & Phyllis Ellman Estate  
Millie B. Tripp Estate  
Natsu Taylor Trust  
Sonoma Valley Wildlands Collaborative  
Thomas P. White Estate

### **\$50,000 - 99,999**

Anonymous  
California Fire Safe Council  
California State Coastal Conservancy

Coalitions & Collaboratives, Inc. (COCO)  
Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria  
Frank A. Campini Foundation

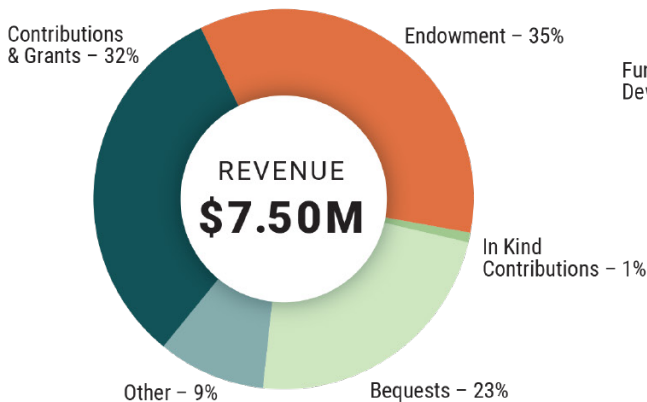
### **\$25,000 - 49,999**

Benson Family Trust  
Bothin Foundation  
Community Foundation Sonoma County  
Ellen Kipp Trust  
Kansha Foundation  
Mary A. Crocker Trust  
G. Paul Matthews & Maria Cardamone  
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation  
Kate Schaffner  
Bill & Linda Sullivan  
Will J. Reid Foundation

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

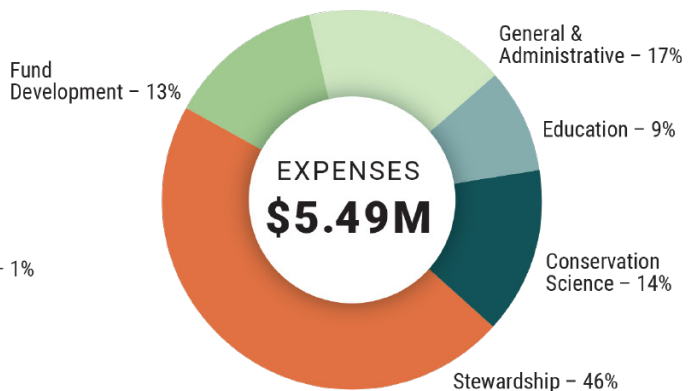
Anonymous (2)  
Deborah & Arthur Ablin Family Fund  
Julie & Tom Atwood  
William Bridges & Susan Strong  
California Fire Foundation  
Phillip & Kathy Carlsen  
Wobb Family Fund  
County of Marin  
The AMD Family Fund  
Environment and Climate Change Canada  
Fullerton Family Foundation  
The George L. Shields Foundation  
Anthony Gilbert & Laurel Wroten  
Diane Hichwa  
Impact100 Redwood Circle  
Joan Lamphier Estate

### Revenue as of June 30, 2023



	In 1,000s
Contributions & Grants	2,390
Endowment	2,629
In-Kind Contributions	106
Contract Income	0
Bequests	1,699
Other	680
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>7,504</b>

### Expenses as of June 30, 2023



	In 1,000s
Education	518
Conservation Science	776
Stewardship	2,530
Fund Development	725
General & Administrative	945
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>5,494</b>

Thomas & Mary Anne Jorde  
Richard & Sue Kavinoky  
Nancy & Tony Lilly  
Ron & Amanda Mallory  
Outrageous Foundation  
Harald K. Oyen

Robert and Shirley Harris  
Family Foundation  
The Schaffner Family  
Foundation  
Spencer Family Trust  
John Underhill

West Marin Fund  
White Family Revocable Trust  
Barbara & Mordechai Winter  
Kathryn & Jay Wright  
Kenneth & Anna Zankel

## FY 2022: July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

### \$100,000+

Benson Family Marital Trust  
Farley Family Charitable  
Foundation  
Margaret Saulsberry Estate

### \$50,000 - 99,999

Coalitions & Collaboratives,  
Inc. (COCO)  
Frank A. Campini Foundation  
Peggy Klens Revocable Trust  
Kate Schaffner  
Wallis Smith Trust

### \$25,000 - 49,999

CAL FIRE Fire Prevention  
Program

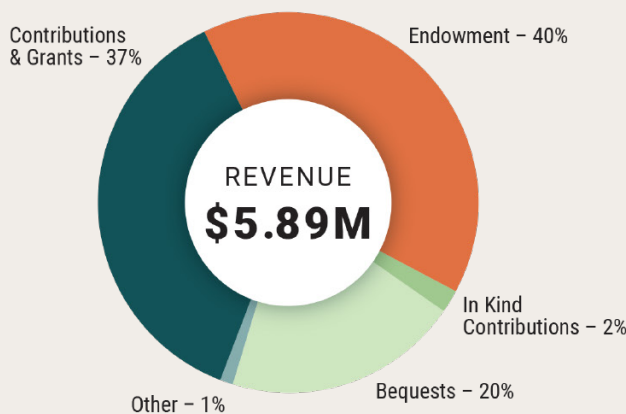
California State Coastal  
Conservancy  
Ellen Kipp Trust  
The Kimball Foundation  
Simpson PSB Fund  
Bill & Linda Sullivan

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

Anonymous (3)  
Deborah & Arthur Ablin Family  
Fund  
Julie & Tom Atwood  
The AMD Family Fund  
Fullerton Family Foundation  
The George L. Shields  
Foundation  
L. Martin & Joyce Griffin

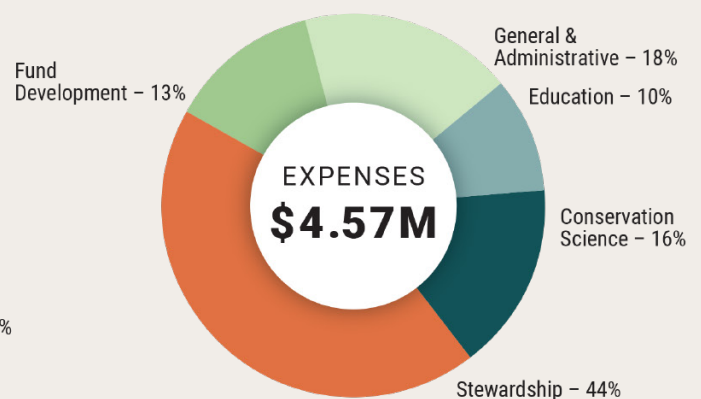
Marjorie & David Guggenheimer  
Bryant & Diane Hichwa  
Ann Iverson  
Thomas & Mary Anne Jorde  
Richard & Sue Kavinoky  
Nancy & Tony Lilly  
Ron & Amanda Mallory  
G. Paul Matthews &  
Maria Cardamone  
Outrageous Foundation  
Roland Pesch & Kathy  
Roskopf  
Purdom Family Fund of  
Community Foundation  
Sonoma County  
Mendel Rosenblum & Diane  
Greene

### Revenue as of June 30, 2022



	In 1,000s
Contributions & Grants	2,191
Endowment	2,357
In-Kind Contributions	122
Contract Income	0
Bequests	1,150
Other	72
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>5,892</b>

### Expenses as of June 30, 2022



	In 1,000s
Education	438
Conservation Science	725
Stewardship	2,011
Fund Development	589
General & Administrative	809
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>4,572</b>





Marjorie Sauer  
The Schaffner Family  
Foundation  
Sonoma County Vintners  
Foundation  
Maryann Toub

West Marin Fund  
Josiah Wilcox  
William and Flora Hewlett  
Foundation  
Kenneth & Anna Zankel

Wildflowers and pollinators  
thrive in a Bouverie Preserve  
meadow where thatchy annual  
grasses were reduced by  
prescribed fire. Photo: Di Fritz



Audubon Canyon Ranch is a land-based conservation organization founded in 1962 to protect sensitive wildlife habitat. Today we are guardians of a system of nature preserves spanning 5,000 acres across Marin and Sonoma counties. Through the integration of education, science, and stewardship, our 50+ staff work to ensure Northern California's biodiversity endures through research, land stewardship, and mentorship for new generations of conservationists.

The lands upon which Audubon Canyon Ranch operates are within the ancestral territories of the Coast Miwok, Southern Pomo and Wappo peoples. We recognize that Indigenous communities are very much alive today and striving to protect and maintain relationships with cultural and natural resources on lands that we hold; we fully acknowledge that Indigenous lands are still occupied by us and others.

Audubon Canyon Ranch commits to putting our words into action by developing programs that exemplify our commitment to cultural and Indigenous equity, inclusion, and justice.



## Impact Report: FY 22 & 23

July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023

Audubon Canyon Ranch  
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Audubon Canyon Ranch is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, tax-exempt charitable organization (tax identification number 94-6069140). Donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law.