

Redwood Forest Foundation
2022 Annual Update
Reconnect • Restore • Respond
www.rffi.org

Remembering Henry...

It was the vision of a small stalwart group of community leaders in Mendocino County that the community could own and manage timberland for the long-term economic, environmental and social benefits it could provide. They sought to establish local control over the protection, restoration and use of natural resources, principally in the coast redwood ecosystem. They wanted to ensure local ownership, eschewing the loss of local control that accompanies absentee industry or government ownership.

Success was contingent on finding agreement among a diversity of perspectives and ideals. Henry Gundling was a person that had connections with environmentalists, the timber industry, finance and academia. He was able to see the bigger picture of what was possible and this allowed him to articulate the vision in a way that helped make the divergent constituencies that constituted RFFI coalesce around a common vision.

For more than 25 years, RFFI was a big part of Henry's life. As a member of RFFI's board of directors, Henry generously volunteered 15 years of devoted service. During his tenure, RFFI acquired its first timberland, Usal Redwood Forest - 50,000 acres in northern Mendocino County. Henry passed away on September 12, 2022 at the age of 90. We continue to honor his memory through the realization of the full potential of RFFI and Usal Redwood Forest - returning control and benefit of local timberlands back to the community.



Henry Gundling



Usal Forest - Photo by Jeff Becker

Usal Redwood Forest Company



From Left:
Travis Munoz - Forester
Jeff Houser - Forest Operations Manager
Linwood Gill - Forest Manager
Karen Youngblood - Forest Conservation Specialist

RFFI Board of Directors



From Left:
Jeff Romm, Mike Balok, Candace Skarlatos,
Richard Glenger, Bill Snyder

RFFI Administration



From Left:
Patrice Mascolo - Business Manager
Patrick Fitzgerald - Admin Assistant
Kathleen Moxon - Interim President & CEO

RFFI Consultants:

Jennifer Fry - Plant a Redwood Now Program
Karen Marvel - Marketing Communications
Tom Tuchman - Carbon Registration and Sales
Roger Sternberg - Reist Ranch Acquisition
Elias Henderson - Event Production

Portraits by Jeff Becker

Support RFFI
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www.rffi.org



Thank You to all of our donors, program sponsors, and those of you who planted redwoods this year. Your support makes it possible for RFFI to create opportunities to reconnect communities and the land, restore forest and biodiversity health and respond to climate disruption through carbon sequestration and innovative management. We hope you find our 2022 Annual Update informative and inspiring. If you are a newcomer to the RFFI community, welcome aboard! We look forward to sharing success stories with you for many years to come.

Our shared commitment to responsible community ownership of forestland is making a positive impact on local economy and the environment. Your contributions keep our working community forest - working. Thank you for your ongoing support - **please give generously today!**

Reconnect: Over time, distant corporate ownership has changed the relationship between communities and the forests that surround them. RFFI's unique model of ownership and governance provides local control of forestland protection, restoration and use. Since its inception, the community, including our indigenous neighbors have been working together to realize this vision. We are committed to connecting our communities to the landscape and building strong partnerships for management and traditional use.

Restore: After decades of extractive logging practices, the Usal Redwood Forest, once a complex mature Redwood/Douglas-fir forest, is now dominated by small diameter, dense, even-aged trees. Scars of these earlier activities are still visible as old stream crossings and legacy roads running along watercourses. Our ongoing processes of selective harvest, thinning dense tree stands, removal of unnecessary roads and crossings, reforestation and replacement of instream woody structures are regenerating the health of our forest and aquatic ecosystems.



REDWOOD
FOREST
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INC.

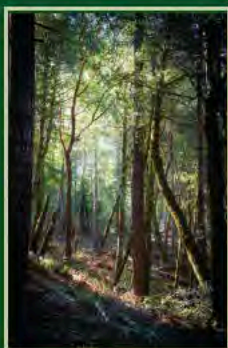
Respond: Climate change is making California hotter and drier. Forests are a critical part of the response as trees pull carbon out of the air holding it in their woody structures. Well-managed forests are essential to meeting state climate goals for 2045. RFFI's commitment to growing larger, older trees, thereby sequestering more carbon on our forest, combined with efforts to increase the resiliency to fires, are part of that solution.

Cover Photo: California has witnessed a dramatic increase in catastrophic forest fires over the last decade. Shaded fuel breaks are a first step to improve fire resiliency, return traditional burning to the landscape and give fire fighters an anchor point for controlling wildfires.

One key to fire resilience is reducing the opportunity for fire to move from the ground, where most fires start, to the tops of the trees, where fire can spread rapidly. By reducing ladder fuels that carry flames into the tree canopy and increasing the distance between trees by thinning, shaded fuel breaks help the forest become more resilient to fire.

It has been over 40 years since a major wildfire burned on Usal Forest. It is only a matter of time before we experience a significant wildfire. By strategically locating shaded fuel breaks along major ridges with good road access, we provide anchor points to help prevent fire from jumping from one watershed to the next. Long term plans include additional shaded fuel breaks throughout the forest to help control wildfires when they occur.

For centuries, local tribes used fire to keep the forest floor open and accessible. Frequent, periodic burns encouraged the regrowth of native plants and access for gathering of native foods and medicines. In addition to shaded fuel breaks, we will conduct the first prescribed burn in Usal, along the Yokohama Road fuel break, bringing fire back as a management tool for maintaining a healthy, resilient forest.



Usal Forest shaded fuelbreak along Hwy 101
Photo by Jeff Becker

Thank You RFFI Volunteers!

Photographer/musician Jeff Becker has been a RFFI volunteer for several years. We thank Jeff for staffing our info table at multiple events, particularly the CaliRoots Festival where he composed a RFFI theme song and sang it to people passing by - above and beyond! Jeff also worked with us to capture this year's cover photo and team portraits.



Photographer:
Jeff Becker

Thanks Jeff - RFFI appreciates you!

To everyone who volunteers time in support of RFFI, be it on the Board, a council or committee, hosting or representing RFFI at

an event, or introducing others to our work, we share a big 'THANK YOU' from the entire RFFI-URFC team. Our staff is limited, and your commitment makes so much more possible.

If you would like to become a RFFI volunteer, especially if you are in the Fort Bragg area or have a skill you would like to share remotely, please email patric@rffi.org. We are working to expand volunteer opportunities in the future.



The Forest Mural Project

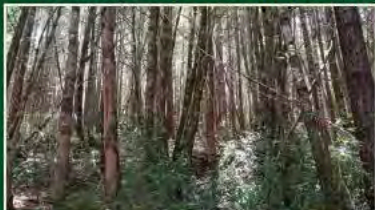
Redwood Forest Foundation and Usal Redwood Forest seem to be two of the best kept secrets in Fort Bragg, which is one of the reasons we were excited to join the Arts Council of Mendocino County's Alleyway Art Project. Artist Ryan Grossman's stunning Sunlit Redwood Forest is certain to inspire passersby to reflect upon and perhaps renew their personal connection with the forests of Northern California. The mural is located on the Forrester Building at the corner of E. Redwood Ave. and N. McPherson St. in Fort Bragg.



Restoration Planning - Watershed by Watershed

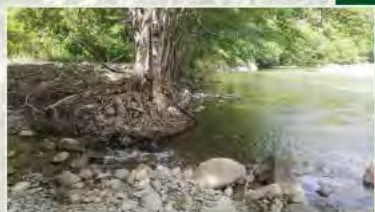
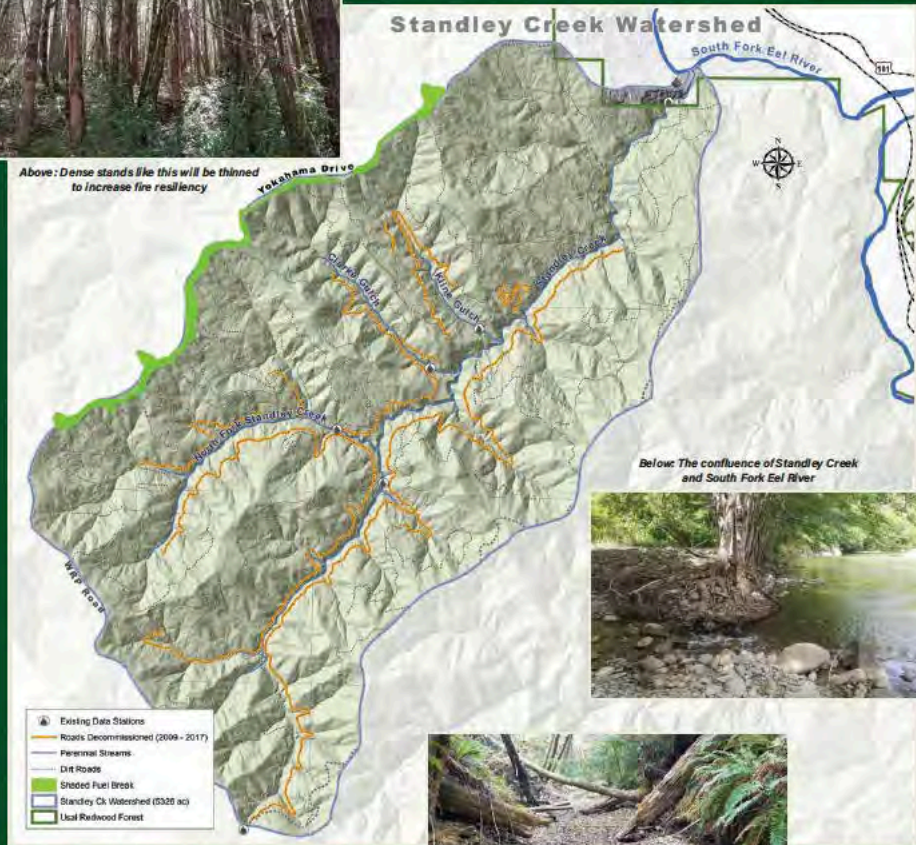
We are creating a restoration and implementation plan for the Standley Creek Watershed with our long-time community partners, Pacific Watershed Associates and Trout Unlimited, that integrates both forest and stream restoration needs. Standley Creek flows into the South Fork Eel River near the small town of Piercy and has been ranked as one of the highest priority salmon streams in the South Fork Eel basin. The South Fork Eel River is one of California's most important spawning streams for Coho, Chinook and Steelhead and flows along most of the eastern boundary of RFFI's Usal Redwood Forest.

Given the challenges brought on by historic land use and climate change, there is no single restoration prescription that will have a big enough impact on its own, but we believe by investing in a number of restoration projects and techniques at a watershed level, we can improve forest and stream conditions. Our restoration plan for the Standley Creek Watershed will result in a



Above: Dense stands like this will be thinned to increase fire resiliency

Standley Creek Watershed



Left: Restoration techniques will strive to improve stream flow and salmonid rearing habitat

minimum of five shovel-ready projects which will include treatments like forest thinning of young, fire-prone stands, slash-packing ephemeral drainages, large wood installation in streams, and reconnecting hillslope drainages, all with the intention of improving watershed health and resiliency. A large component of the planning process will include collecting baseline stream flow and forest data so that we can monitor our treatment effectiveness once our prioritized restoration projects have been implemented. Once complete, this restoration plan (and process) will become a template for adaptive restoration planning in other key watersheds across the forest.

Reconnection

Hosting local K-12 schools and the CA High School Forestry Challenge

Partnering with the Mendocino Community College Krenov School of Fine Furniture, including donations of Tanoak, Madrone, Chinquapin and Douglas-fir logs

Establishing Chinquapin Springs Acorn Grove in Usal Forest for Native American use

Engaging the 35 person Redwood Forest Council; community members weighing in on forest management practices and priorities

Leading Usal Forest tours to increase local understanding of current conditions and possible projects



Usal Forest - Photo by Jeff Becker

Restoration

Leveraged \$7.5 million in restoration funding

Completed 22 major watershed restoration projects

Involved in 6 additional watershed restoration projects

Installed 365 in-stream large wood structures

Removed or upgraded 37 miles of road preventing 150,000 cubic yards (11,000 truckloads) of sediment from washing into salmon-bearing streams

Response

Sequestered 5.9 million tonnes of carbon as part of the California Cap and Trade program

Created and applied to the soil 150 cubic yards of biochar increasing moisture retention and sequestering 38 tonnes of CO₂ in Usal Forest's soil

Built 6.5 miles of shaded fuel break

Planted 212,000 Redwood trees in the region

There is an old New Yorker cartoon on my wall that shows a man walking through the forest with his son, the caption reads: "It's good to know about trees. Just remember nobody ever made any big money knowing about trees."

When the Redwood Forest Foundation (RFFI) was formed nearly 25 years ago, making "big money" was not the mission. The goals have always been to restore the ecological and social benefits of the forest; to reconnect the local community to the forest that surrounds them; to bring depleted forestlands back to the diverse and resilient forests they once were. It is the RFFI mission that still motivates us to be part of the solutions.

It helps that we know about trees: **Redwood** trees that will grow larger and older to sequester more carbon, **Douglas-fir** trees that will one day be the backbone of sustainable timber harvests for local jobs and building materials, **Tanoak** trees that will provide opportunities for locals to reconnect to their traditions and ancestors, **Madrone**s that will provide berries for wildlife and materials for local wood workers, **Alders** that will provide shade and insects for the salmon that return to the creeks.

For generations, the forest we have today has been shaped by human activity. With your help we can make sure the forest we envision for the future becomes a reality; inspiring future generations to tell their kids, "It's good to know about trees."

Linwood Gill
Forest Manager



We are celebrating important milestones this year...

• **Fifteen years of Usal Redwood Forest Ownership:** RFFI was created at a time when logging was driven by short-term returns to corporate shareholders. Communities had to choose between jobs and the environment and the profits were leaving the region. Doubters said communities had no business owning timberland, community leaders said we not only could, but also should - those leaders were right.

• **Bank debt retirement:** We paid off two of the three loans from Bank of America used to purchase Usal in 2007. We are negotiating a repayment plan for the final debt. We can pay off the Usal debt within my lifetime - I can see the light at the end of the tunnel!

• **Second timberland purchase:** We will be closing our second acquisition, Reist Ranch; 95 acres of mixed conifer forest and a homestead-a separate parcel contained within Usal's boundaries. Both the forest and the homestead need restoration. We envision Reist Ranch as an anchor for future forest research, demonstration and educational partnerships.

We continue to look for a new CEO, someone who shares the RFFI vision, has passion for the mission and experience to lead us forward. If you know of anyone fitting that description, let me know. In the meantime, I will keep the chair warm and the organization moving steadily forward.

Reconnect, Restore and Respond - RFFI is in a unique position to deliver on those goals. You, our supporters and partners, are integral to RFFI's continued success. Please include RFFI in your year-end giving and watch for ways to participate in our work during the coming year.

Kathleen Moxon
Interim President and CEO

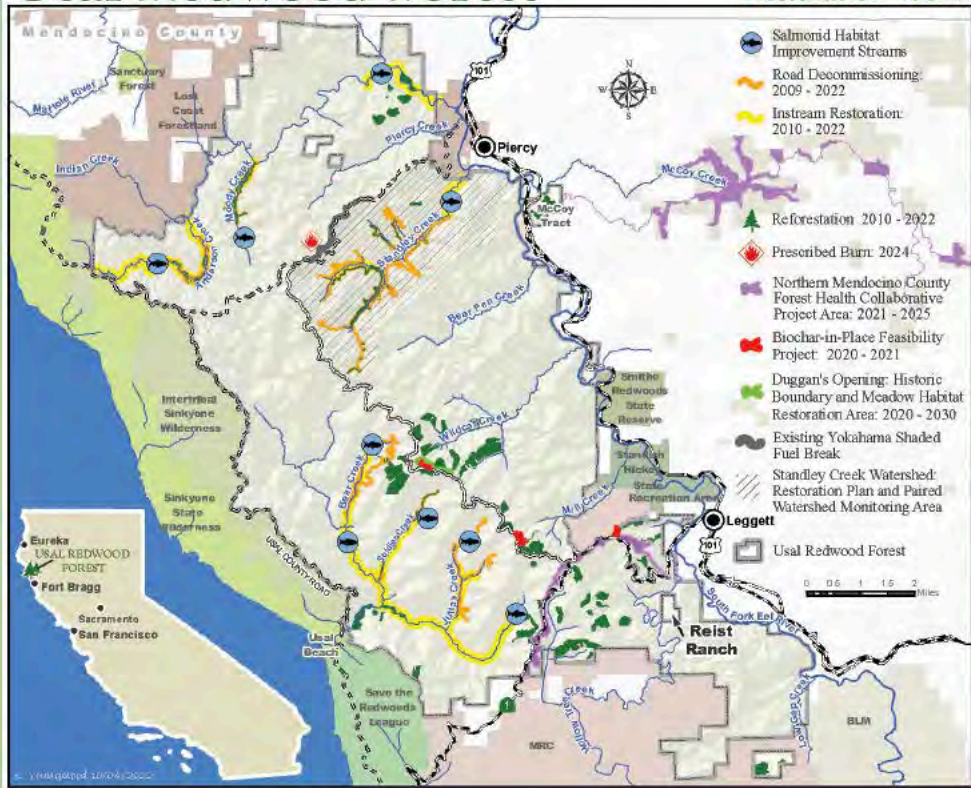


Plant a Redwood
Now!

←
www.rffi.org

Usal Redwood Forest

Restoration Work



We, at Redwood Forest Foundation, acknowledge that the land we refer to as Usal Redwood Forest is located on ancestral and unceded lands of the Sinkiyone, Cahto, Wailaki and Yuki peoples. We are committed to the ideal that the voices of community are integral in the management, governance and utilization of Usal Redwood Forest. We acknowledge that creating meaningful relationships with Native peoples will take work and commitment on our part. The dedication of the Chinquapin Acom Grove was a first step in that reconnection.