



COASTVIEW

NORTH COAST LAND CONSERVANCY

SUMMER 2025



FEATHERED FRIENDS AND CREEKSIDE TRENDS: RESTORING PASTURE TO A THRIVING WETLAND

In the late spring, NCLC's stewardship team was contacted by its longtime partner, Tillamook Estuaries Partnership. At the end of the main planting season, TEP had a surplus of roughly 2,500 shrubs at their Native Plant Nursery in Tillamook that needed a home or they would be composted. With the help of numerous volunteers, Circle Creek Habitat Reserve became that home.

The project of salvaging the shrubs, transporting them to the reserve near Seaside, and planting them across roughly

two to three acres became known as Feathered Friends and Creekside Trends.

"We wanted to do a restoration project that was specifically targeting enhancing habitat for birds," Stewardship Director Melissa Reich says. That includes adding beneficial native shrubs—such as cascara, twinberry, and Pacific ninebark—in an area of Circle Creek that is currently dominated by reed canary grass, which doesn't make for good habitat.

Shrub habitat is also important for
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Board member Tammi Lesh helps haul shrubs in her horse trailer.

BOARD EXPANSION BRINGS NEW PERSPECTIVES & IDEAS

Over the past several months, NCLC has implemented a deliberate and conscientious plan to expand its board of directors, adding five new members who bring a diversity of professional

and personal backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives.

According to Executive Director Katie Voelke, the land conservancy has benefited from a strong and stable board for many years. Some of the

current members have served for more than a decade.

"With deep engagement and wisdom from board members, along with the support of our community members, we've achieved

great things for local conservation, together," she says. That wisdom, she adds, guided NCLC's decision to implement term limits and expand board membership.

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INSIDE Tidepool Ambassador Program Returns for 5th Season



Volunteer Scott Rekate led the building of a cedar fence at the entrance to Circle Creek Habitat Reserve.

VOLUNTEERING SKILLS TO BUILD CAPACITY

Scott Rekate has called the Oregon North Coast home for about five decades.

Even before moving to the area in 1975, his family would visit Cannon Beach while he was growing up in Portland, Oregon. When his aunt moved to Cannon Beach after retiring from social work, taking up real estate on the coast, her home “was always a place for the family to come for years,” he says.

After high school, Scott spent about three and a half years serving in the Navy. He then attended Lane Community College to obtain a degree in construction technology.

Moving to the North Coast as a young man, he put his training to use, picking up odd jobs in construction and eventually

forming a five-person partnership with friends. Together, they designed and built homes, from Falcon Cove to the Seaside Cove. And when Legendary Builders dissolved after a few years, Scott kept the vision alive in his own way, establishing

Scott Rekate Builder and spending the next 30-plus years creating high-end homes in the community. These skills

influenced his volunteer work with NCLC when he started volunteering in 2015.

“I really appreciated what the conservancy was doing on the local level,” he says. He recalls his friend John Mersereau, a longtime NCLC board member, asking for help with the boardwalk located along the Wetland Walk trail at Circle Creek Habitat Reserve. After that initial project, Scott became more

involved, contributing his knowledge and talents to benefit the organization.

“There was always something going on,” he says. Volunteering facilitated the use of his background helping out the community and “giving the conservancy the capacity to do what they needed to do.”

Over the years, he’s helped with a variety of projects, particularly around Circle Creek, from building bridges to fixing up the Creek House and stewardship barn. He served on the Circle Creek Conservation Center and Trails Committee, which morphed into the Building Committee during construction of the new Circle Creek Conservation Center. Recently, he built the cedar fence at the reserve’s entrance with the help of carpenter Knox Swanson.

While Scott’s countless volunteer hours have supported NCLC, he’s also enjoyed being at Circle Creek, traversing the sprawling reserve and getting to know the land intimately. Being in nature is a love passed down by his parents during his childhood. Living on the edge of a metropolitan area, in the west hills of Portland, they were surrounded by trees.

“It was a wonderful upbringing and opportunity to be in the outdoors,” he says. Whether they were camping or hiking or doing other activities, it gave him a chance to deepen his understanding of nature and all it entails. “I’ve always been heavily connected to that.”

NCLC BOARD

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“The board knew that an infusion of new and diverse perspectives, now and ongoing, would ultimately lead to great relevancy and resiliency for NCLC,” she says.

NCLC welcomed any and all members of the North Coast communities and beyond to apply, sharing far and wide about the vision for expanding the board.



A mix of board members, seasoned and new.

After a rigorous open application and selection process, the organization

brought on five individuals who bring “a wonderful infusion of diverse perspectives to our critical work of local conservation,” Katie says.

The new board members, who attended their first board meeting in April, include Harout Akdedian, Narayan Elasmr, Lisa Heigh, Ryan James, and Hugh Morrison.

Get to know more about these incredible additions to our board at NCLCtrust.org/news/board-expansion.

DID SOMEONE SAY PARTY?!

The year 2026 is a very important one for NCLC. We’ll be celebrating our 40th anniversary as an organization, as well as the 10th anniversary of Cape Falcon Marine Reserve!

We’re planning several fun ways to commemorate these milestones with our community. Stay tuned for more details!



This year, TAP is tabling at the entrance to Short Sand Beach on a few days when the tides are too high to be at the tidepools.

TIDEPOOL AMBASSADORS ENGAGE BEACH VISITORS

The fifth season of TAP started June 1, and it is following a similar format to years past: About a dozen volunteers take turns being at the tidepools at Short Sand Beach during the lowest tides of the summer.

There, they interact with visitors, educating them on marine wildlife, and encouraging proper etiquette when engaging with these—and other—sensitive rocky intertidal habitats. Generally, volunteer shifts are two to three hours, and a few people handle the shifts together.

Not only are Michelle Schwegmann and Mylasia Miklas back in their former

leadership roles as TAP Coordinator and TAP Guide, respectively, but many volunteers from previous years have also returned to support the program. With these pieces in place, NCLC Marine Program Manager Angela Whitlock is confident and enthusiastic about the season.

“My intention is always just to keep the momentum going, because I feel like it’s been such a positive thing,” she says. “It’s been received so positively by visitors; it’s been received so

positively by the kids that come out. Let’s just keep doing what we’re doing.”

With that being said, the group looks forward to integrating new tools, messaging and resources to connect more effectively with individuals. Additionally, there will be a few days this summer when the tides aren’t low enough to have volunteer interpreters down on the beach, so instead, they will be tabling near the picnic area at the beach entrance, just down the trail through Oswald West State Park.



Read More!

TIDY WILD TUESDAYS SUPPORT CIRCLE CREEK

In March, NCLC kicked off Tidy Wild Tuesdays, a new program where volunteers gather weekly to complete projects like gentle gardening and landscaping around the Circle Creek Conservation Center campus.

Weekly projects include things like weeding, watering, mowing, (re)potting plants, pruning shrubs, mulching paths, native plant propagation, and other light work. Already, over the past three months, their efforts have yielded significant and noticeable effects around the campus and trail system at Circle Creek.

Spearheading the program are Pat Wollner and Liz Newhouse, with Jeff Roehm

contributing as a native plant specialist.

As the TWT coordinators work with staff to set goals for Circle Creek, they are adamant that it’s not just about deciding “what we’re going to do,” Liz says. It’s equally important to get to know the property’s varying landscape, and they fully embrace that it will take time, patience and experimentation to fully form—and implement—the plan. Their approach involves meticulously building a strong understanding of “what the land wants and what actually works,” paying close attention and making adjustments as needed, Liz adds. Read more at [NCLCtrust.org/news/tidy-wild-tuesdays-support-circle-creek](https://nclctrust.org/news/tidy-wild-tuesdays-support-circle-creek).



Carly Tester volunteers at a TWT at Circle Creek. She also worked several weeks this summer as a seasonal stewardship assistant.



*Helping to
conserve Oregon's
coastal lands and
waters, forever.*

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HONORING A LEGACY OF CONSERVATION

NCLC's annual Coast Legacy Circle Brunch will be held Tuesday, Sept. 16. This brunch is a way for us to honor and show gratitude to a special group of individuals who have chosen to make coastal conservation a part of their legacy.

If you have included NCLC in your estate plans, please connect with us so we can send you an invitation! Email nclc@NCLCtrust.org or call 503-738-9126.



**Learn more about
NCLC's Coast
Legacy Circle**



Mel Allen (from left), Kyle Elliott, and Caroline Haslach joined NCLC's team this past spring. Mel is serving as stewardship assistant through December, while Kyle is NCLC's new facilities manager and Caroline is the new development coordinator.

PLANTING PROJECT

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nesting and perching.

For most of May and into early June, NCLC's various stewardship efforts, including Tidy Wild Tuesdays and Weed Warrior Wednesdays, became focused on getting the shrubs into the ground to capitalize on the remaining spring moisture.

"We were trying to get them in the ground before it got too hot and dry," Melissa says. "And at the same time, the canary grass is growing aggressively."

It took several trips to Tillamook to haul the thousands of shrubs to Circle Creek. NCLC board member Tammi Lesh even volunteered her horse trailer to transport more at one time.

Using a small grant from the Oregon Wildlife Foundation, the team fenced in the planting area to limit elk browsing. Then, they started to tuck the plants into their new home along the Wetland Walk trail at Circle Creek.

In addition to Tidy Wild Tuesdays, Weed

Warrior Wednesdays, and other spontaneous activities, Land Steward Nick Broman organized Restoration Rendezvous get-togethers on several Fridays in May and early June to supplement the planting efforts. In all, 165 volunteer hours were spent on the project—not including the transportation time.

"It was awesome to have such high interest and support from our volunteers, without whom we couldn't have completed this project," Nick says.

The restoration project also highlights the importance of NCLC's partnership with TEP, as one of their North Oregon Restoration Partners (NORP). NCLC has been part of NORP for several decades.

"It's a really wonderful program that grows native plants with coastal genetics; they have good root stock to compete with pasture grass and reed canary grass," Melissa says. "They grow most of the plant material we use for restoration projects."

Read more at NCLCtrust.org/news/circle-creek-planting-project-2025.

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