



MILLERTON CREEK RANCH



THACHER RANCH



PONCIA RANCH



PARADISE VALLEY RANCH

Photos: Jeff Stump (Millerton Creek) and Michael Woolsey

Meet MALT's Newest Farms

A farmer tends row crops, and sheep, cattle and—soon—water buffalo graze on three ranches newly protected by MALT at the tail end of 2014.

The owners of two additional farms—one supporting sheep and a small dairy, the other sheep and an artisanal sheep milk cheese business—strengthened their older MALT easements at the end of last year, assuring that the land will not only remain free of development but will also be actively farmed.

We're proud to introduce you to the diverse land, families and food that you helped protect in 2014, with more to come in 2015.

Thacher Ranch

Protected September 2014 | 623 acres, southeast of Tomales

Tucked away off Chileno Valley Road, Thacher Ranch is home to cattle and sheep, primarily raised for meat. Will Thacher manages the ranch, which was originally purchased by his parents, James and Gladys, in 1964. It was his late father's

great wish to keep the ranch whole with a MALT easement.

Thacher Ranch is now part of a 9,800-acre MALT-protected agricultural greenbelt around the town of Tomales. This new MALT easement not only protects the land from development and for agriculture, it also safeguards the restored section of Chileno Creek that runs through the ranch.

Will Thacher plans to launch a small-scale milking and artisanal sheep cheese-making operation, and hopes that his children may someday take over the ranch.

Marin County voters played a major role in protecting Thacher Ranch. It was the first farm protected with money from a quarter-cent sales tax measure approved by Marin County voters in 2012, formerly known as Measure A and now codified as the Marin Parks, Open Space, and Farmland Preservation Transactions and Use Tax Ordinance.

Continued on page 2

Message from the Executive Director



In 2014, MALT protected a family-run sheep and cattle ranch, a ranch once slated for development, and an organic farm that's also home to threatened and endangered species. We also strengthened the agricultural and

environmental protections on two existing MALT ranches.

These five family farms on 2,800 acres are sources of livelihood, beauty, wildlife habitat, clean water and open land that benefit us all. You can read more about all of these projects in our cover story.

The foundation of MALT's work is permanence. MALT creates land and agricultural permanence for family farms and ranches like these five, securing their futures, our foodshed, natural resources and the local agricultural economy.

In turn, our easements are backed by the promise that MALT will be here as new generations rise, continuing to support farmers and ranchers in the stewardship of these lands. It's one of the many ways in which MALT remains true to the promises we've made to landowners, donors and the community to protect Marin farmland forever.

Five years ago, MALT earned accreditation, demonstrating to our community and the public that we follow industry best practices and run a responsible, ethical, and economically viable operation that should last as long as our easements—forever. Accreditation comes with more tangible benefits as well, including making it easier to get grants to fund our work.

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance with a mission to build and recognize strong land trusts, awarded MALT accreditation on our first try, in just the second year it was offered. This year we set our sights on renewing our accreditation (see page 7 to learn how you can participate in the process).

As a supporter, you can feel proud that MALT has met the high standards of LTA accreditation. I look forward to announcing our renewed accreditation—our renewed promise to Marin farmland—later this year. And with it, news of more farms we've protected together, forever.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Watts'.

Jamison Watts

Meet MALT's Newest Farms *...continued from page 1*

Millerton Creek Ranch

Protected October 2014 | 864 acres, north of Point Reyes Station

Formerly known as Borello Ranch, MALT bought this spectacular property on Highway 1 from a developer who intended to subdivide. Now owned by MALT, this land will provide pasture for beef cattle and water buffalo, not large lots for estates.

Two local ranchers, Mike Giammona and Andrew Zlot, are now leasing the land from MALT and will purchase the ranch within four years. Mike owns a grass-fed beef operation and Andrew owns Double 8 Dairy, a water buffalo dairy and producer of water buffalo gelato.

Unlike most farms and ranches under MALT's protection, Millerton Creek Ranch was protected via a purchase rather than an easement. The ranch will be under temporary protection until MALT sells it to Mike and Andrew—subject to the permanent protection of an agricultural conservation easement. MALT was able to move quickly on the purchase thanks to a loan from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

Paradise Valley Ranch

Protected November 2014 | 239 acres, Bolinas

Home to Fresh Run Farm, one of the West Coast's earliest certified organic farms, the Martinelli family's Paradise Valley Ranch is now secured from development, thanks to MALT and our generous supporters.

Fresh Run Farm is operated by third-generation owner Peter Martinelli, who grows organic produce for some of the Bay Area's iconic restaurants, including Quince and Chez Panisse. Beyond the row crops, northern spotted owls nest in stands of mature Douglas fir and redwood, and coho salmon and steelhead trout take refuge in Pine Gulch Creek.

Of the seven parcels of land Peter's grandfather purchased here in the 1940s and '50s, only two remain in the family's hands. The Martinelli family approached MALT for help protecting Paradise Valley Ranch amid skyrocketing land values. We were able to do so, in part, because of the family's commitment to protecting fish habitat on their land, which led to a \$1.5 million grant from the California State Wildlife Conservation Board. (See our Fall 2014 newsletter for details about the Martinellis' work to protect coho and steelhead in Pine Gulch Creek.)

With support from MALT donors, the Bolinas community and a donation from the Martinelli family of more than half the easement value, the ranch's diverse inhabitants have been granted a secure future.



Marcia Barinaga and Corey Goodman, Barinaga Ranch. Photo: Paolo Vescia

Poncia Ranch and Barinaga Ranch

Protection strengthened by Mandatory Agricultural Use amendments | October and December 2014

When Al and Cathie Poncia protected their Tomales ranch with a MALT conservation easement in 1992, it was the highest security they could get that the ranch Al's grandfather bought in 1933 would be safe from development. But as the threats to Marin farmland have evolved from sprawling subdivisions to estate development, so too have MALT's tools for protection. Today new easements include Mandatory Agricultural Use provisions, which require active farming, alongside the traditional development restrictions.

Last year, when MALT invited the owners of ranches protected by older easements to add MAU amendments, the Poncias jumped at the opportunity. In October, Poncia Ranch became the first MALT family farm protected by a Mandatory Agricultural Use amendment, and MALT became the first land trust in the country to offer a comprehensive MAU program, including both new and retroactive protections.

Shortly after, Barinaga Ranch in Marshall became the second MALT ranch protected by a retroactive MAU amendment. Marcia Barinaga and Corey Goodman decided to donate the value of the amendment for Barinaga Ranch, home to Marcia's artisanal cheese-making operation as well as grazing sheep.

With the agricultural security of these two ranches strengthened, MALT will focus on expanding the new retroactive MAU program in 2015.

More Information and Visiting Opportunities

Thacher Ranch

Visit: Join MALT on June 20 for a free hike on Thacher Ranch, an opportunity for MALT to thank you for supporting Measure A. See page 6.

More: www.malt.org/thacherranch

Millerton Creek Ranch

Visit: Members giving \$100 or more are invited to explore Millerton Creek Ranch on June 6 for MALT's annual Member Hike. See page 6.

More: www.malt.org/millerton-creek

Paradise Valley Ranch

More: www.malt.org/paradisevalley

Poncia Ranch and Barinaga Ranch

More: www.malt.org/MAUannouncement



Courtesy Mike Mooney

Mike and Elizabeth Mooney

Farmland Forever Circle Monthly Donors

The Mooney family—Mike, Elizabeth and sons Ian and Michael—are

well rooted in their Marin landscape. Mike, a former park ranger with the East Bay Regional Park District, restored the creek habitat behind the family's Mill Valley home and encourages the boys to take advantage of nature, literally in their own backyard.

"Part of MALT's objective is to preserve the character of West Marin, and it still feels really rural there, not built up. It's nice to have real agricultural activity going on here, so near to San Francisco, to prevent endless sprawl and preserve that way of life."

"My oldest boy is a budding entomologist," says Mike proudly.

Farther afield, they hike, mountain bike and camp in Marin, and Mike speaks excitedly about camping trips to Coast Camp in Point Reyes National Seashore. "I've been coming to Marin and hiking and backpacking for 30 years, especially in

Point Reyes, because I've always loved the area," Mike explains.

Before he became a ranger, Mike worked for the Trust for Public Land, learning about land trusts and, by extension, agricultural land trusts.

Passion for the outdoors and the environment, coupled with a move to Marin County 10 years ago, led the Mooneys to MALT. They have been members since 2005 and in 2013 joined our Farmland Forever Circle of monthly donors, a program inspired by the vision and achievements of MALT co-founders Phyllis Faber and Ellen Straus.

Fittingly, Mike is inspired by the story of rancher Ellen and how she and biologist Phyllis started MALT. He values the organization's work to protect not just the land, but also Marin's farming community.

"Part of MALT's objective is to preserve the character of West Marin, and it still feels really rural there, not built up. It's nice to have real agricultural activity going on here, so near to San Francisco, to prevent endless sprawl and preserve that way of life," says Mike.

Interested in monthly giving? See the back cover of this issue for more information.

Sign up and win!

Enter our raffle to win an organic cotton MALT T-shirt, plus a \$50 gift certificate toward any of our 2015 Hikes, Tours & Tastings.

Submit your entry at:
www.malt.org/raffle

DONATE YOUR CAR, SAVE FARMLAND

MALT has partnered with CARS, a car donation management program used by nonprofits across the United States, to allow you to turn your old vehicles into cash to protect farmland.

To find out more, go to
www.malt-cardonations.org
or call (415) 663-1158.



Wildflower Walks

*Saturday, April 11 and
Saturday, April 25*

Historic Leiss Ranch, protected by MALT since 2003, bursts with more than 45 varieties of wildflowers in the spring. Bring a picnic lunch and the family on this wildflower walk guided by MALT staff, guest botanists and ranch owner Nancy Chaffin. This event is so popular we added an extra date this year.

Time: 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

Place: Leiss Ranch, Petaluma

Cost: \$5 MALT members/\$10 nonmembers/kids 12 and under free

What to Bring: Lunch and water to carry on hike, walking shoes, hat, sunscreen

Hike Distance: 1.5 miles round-trip, easy stroll on uneven trails

Age Appropriate: 6 years and up



Ranches & Rolling Hills Landscape Art Show and Sale

*Saturday, May 16 and
Sunday, May 17*

Celebrate Marin's beauty at MALT's 18th annual art show. This year 36 acclaimed artists will show new work capturing the farms, ranches, livestock, hills and waterways that compose West Marin's pastoral landscape.

A preview farm-to-table lunch offers guests the first opportunity to purchase art.

PREVIEW LUNCH

Date: Saturday, May 16

Time: 11 a.m.–2 p.m.

Place: Nicasio Druids Hall

Cost: \$150; limited seating, preregistration required

PUBLIC SHOW

Date: Saturday, May 16 & Sunday, May 17

Time: 2–5 p.m. (Saturday), 10 a.m.–4 p.m. (Sunday)

Place: Nicasio Druids Hall

Cost: Free



Carbon Farming 101

Saturday, May 30

Carbon farms are changing the picture for climate change and agriculture—right here in Marin. Get out on the land with John Wick, founder of the Marin Carbon Project, on his ranch in Nicasio and see how innovative practices are altering ranching and how we think about the dirt under our feet.

Time: 10 a.m.–noon

Place: Nicasio Native Grass Ranch

Cost: \$15 MALT members/\$20 nonmembers/kids 12–15 free

What to Bring: Water, closed-toe walking shoes or boots, hat

Hike Distance: Easy farm walk

Age Appropriate: 12 years and up



Preregistration is required for all events.

Register online at www.malt.org/events or call (415) 663-1158.

Additional spring and summer events to be announced! Sign up for MALT emails at www.malt.org/enews to get the details.



MALT Member Hike

Saturday, June 6

MALT members, get your first peek at MALT's newest ranch, Millerton Creek. We'll first take a short hike to rolling upper pastures, where we'll picnic, take in spectacular views of Tomales Bay and beyond, and hear how MALT finally protected this vulnerable piece of land. Those wanting a longer hike can continue after lunch.

Time: Members, check website

Place: Millerton Creek Ranch, Point Reyes Station

Cost: Free; benefit for members at the \$100 level and above

What to Bring: Lunch and water to carry on hike, hiking shoes, hat, sunscreen

Hike Distances: Short (2.5-mile) and long (5-mile) options

Age Appropriate: 12 years and up



Measure A Thank-You Hike

Saturday, June 20

Thacher Ranch was the first ranch preserved with funds from Measure A, a sales tax approved by Marin voters in 2012. We can't think of a better way to thank you for supporting Measure A than to invite you to hike the beautiful working lands you helped protect. The hike begins and ends at neighboring Thornton Ranch.

Time: 10 a.m.

Place: Thornton and Thacher ranches, Tomales

Cost: Free

What to Bring: Lunch, water, hiking shoes, hat, sunscreen

Hike Distance: Challenging; check website for details

Age Appropriate: 12 years and up



Bioblitz on Working Lands with California Academy of Sciences

Saturday, June 27

Spend a day as a citizen scientist, collecting plant and wildlife data that will help MALT conserve resource-rich Millerton Creek Ranch. Experts from the California Academy of Sciences and the iNaturalist smartphone app will make it easy and fun—no experience required! After our field work, we'll gather nearby to share findings.

Time: 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Place: Millerton Creek Ranch, Point Reyes Station

Cost: Free

What to Bring: Lunch, water, hiking shoes, hat, sunscreen, smartphone pre-loaded with iNaturalist (not required)

Hike Distance: Various routes to choose from. Steep climbs on uneven trails in some areas.

Age Appropriate: 8 years and up



Tour de MALT

Saturday, July 11

Tour de MALT is a truly spectacular bike ride through the West Marin countryside, much of it protected as farmland forever by MALT. Both the 40-mile and 60-mile rides begin at the MALT-protected Nicasio Valley Farms. Farms and ranches along the routes will host stops. The ride ends in MALT style, with a delicious farm-to-table lunch.

Time: 8 a.m.–3 p.m.

Place: Nicasio Valley Farms

Cost: \$85 MALT members/
\$125 nonmembers

What to Bring: Bike, helmet (required), water

Ride Distance: 40-mile and 60-mile options

Age Appropriate: 15 years and up



Preregistration is required for all events. Register online at www.malt.org/events or call (415) 663-1158.



LTA Accreditation Earning Your Trust

MALT is proud to be accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission (LTAC), an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance with a mission to build and recognize strong land trusts, foster public confidence in our work and help ensure the long-term protection of the land.

MALT first earned accreditation in 2009, demonstrating that we are a responsible, ethical and fiscally viable organization that will last as long as our easements. The five-year accreditation term ends this summer, and our staff is currently in the process of renewing our accreditation.

During the renewal process, the commission will re-examine our stewardship, finances, ethics, fundraising, board accountability, project selection and more.

LTA accreditation is an important way to earn the faith and trust of our community. MALT and the LTA believe that your input should be an integral part of the process. You can submit comments regarding MALT's compliance with national quality standards now through April 9, 2015.

To learn more about the standards and the accreditation program, and to submit a comment to LTA, visit www.malt.org/accreditation.



Clif Bar Riding for Family Farms

Clif Bar Family Foundation grew from Clif Bar founders Gary Erickson and Kit Crawford's

desire to foster grassroots groups doing innovative things. The Foundation's mission reflects the company's values: strengthen our food system and communities, enhance public health, and safeguard our environment and natural resources.

MALT is proud to include Clif Bar Family Foundation among our Corporate Circle members. In addition to its Foundation contribution, Clif Bar & Company supports Tour de MALT with a Clif Bar employee rider team and Clif Bars at our SAG stops.

"One of our foundation's priorities is to support grassroots organizations that create a robust, healthy food system. MALT is a shining example of that, and we're honored to help further its work," said Carrie Walle from Clif Bar Family Foundation. "MALT ensures that West Marin retains its family farms, which are essential to the area's diverse bounty of local food and to preserving the natural environment for years to come."

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For as little as \$5 a month, you can play a major role in protecting local farmland from development. Gifts through MALT's Farmland Forever Circle monthly giving program provide predictable funding and save time, paper and postage—so your gift has more impact on farmland.

Join the Farmland Forever Circle by May 25 and get one free ticket to our Carbon Farming 101 event at Nicasio Native Grass Ranch on May 30. Join online at www.malt.org/monthly-giving or call Noelle Moss, Development Manager, at (415) 663-1158 ext. 312.



Michael Woolsey

Marin Agricultural Land Trust is a member-supported, nonprofit organization created in 1980 to protect Marin County farmland. Some of the Bay Area's most highly acclaimed dairy products and organic crops are produced on farmland protected by MALT totaling more than 47,000 acres on 75 family farms and ranches.

To learn about Marin's working farms and ranches and the food they produce, visit:
www.malt.org