

NURTURING FUTURES

in the outdoors

IMPACT REPORT
2023-2024



MISSION

To foster
a love of
the land
in Sonoma
County.



LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The preserves, community gardens, and main office stewarded by LandPaths are located on the ancestral territories of the Southern Pomo, Coast Miwok, Mishewal Wappo peoples, and the Dry Creek Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians, past, present, and future.

We recognize these tribes as the first people and stewards of these lands. We are on occupied territory and acknowledge the ongoing devastation of colonization.

This land acknowledgement is the first step in LandPaths' journey to repair our relationship with the original people of this land. And to respect, make space for, and honor the knowledge, culture, and connection to the natural world of the Indigenous peoples of Sonoma County.

Join us in this process by connecting with and uplifting Native-led organizations and resources, which is a way for all of us to start on a diligent course of reparative study and action. Read this list at landpaths.org/land-acknowledgement.



ROXY LAYDEN, A LANDPATHS' STEWARDSHIP FIELD SPECIALIST (LEFT), AND A VOLUNTEER (RIGHT) AT A LAND STEWARDSHIP DAY AT YA-KA-AMA INDIAN EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT, INC. IN FORESTVILLE. GUIDED BY THE NEEDS EXPRESSED BY THE YA-KA-AMA BOARD OF DIRECTORS, WE FOCUSED ON FORESTRY TASKS THAT REDUCE THE CHANCE OF CATASTROPHIC WILDFIRE WHILE ENCOURAGING NATIVE PLANTS AND ANIMALS TO THRIVE. PHOTOS BY MIRANDA CARREÑO.



Dear Friends of LandPaths,

In a climate where stability can feel challenging to come by, steady and consistent leadership allows LandPaths to be just that, steady and consistent, building enduring relationships with agencies, partners, participants, and you.

This year, we cheered for multiple long-term work anniversaries, spanning decades. We also celebrated 26 years of free public Outings discovering new places and visiting old favorites throughout the County, 25 years of In Our Own BackYard outdoor learning and stewardship for elementary school youth, and 15 years of Vamos Afuera, free Spanish language, Latinx-focused Outings.

Nurturing Lifelong Nature Connections

At LandPaths, being steady means showing up daily, in every season, to nurture nature-based curiosity and awe at every stage of life. For youth, it's In Our Own BackYard and Owl Camp, Inspired Forward, TeenTreks and Camp Apprentices, and Young Stewards.

For adults and families, it's growing food, preschoolers learning to read, and sharing first time experiences— from kayaking and camping to visiting a National Park. For our community its annual outdoor celebrations such as the Bayer Farm Harvest Festival and the Charlie Brown Tree Hunt that are now family traditions.

Over these decades, we've witnessed these experiences foster transformative

connections with nature. A new teacher, once an IOOBY student, calls us to bring environmental education into her classroom, and an Owl Camper grows into an awesome Owl Camp Counselor. In this report, you'll read about young people who are forging lifelong nature connections through LandPaths.

Looking Ahead: A Nature-Connected, Inclusive, Just Community

We look ahead with experienced eyes and see:

- Preserve planning that takes into account transportation and accessibility.
- Prioritizing safe spaces for community members most in need of positive nature connection.
- Bringing you outdoors for food, art, and joyful land stewardship.
- Respecting and making space for right relationships with Native communities.

And we see you. You as a partner, donor, and participant in our shared future. Thank you for your support and for helping to create the foundation for our constancy.

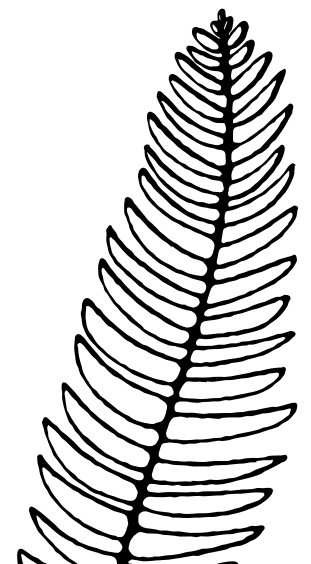
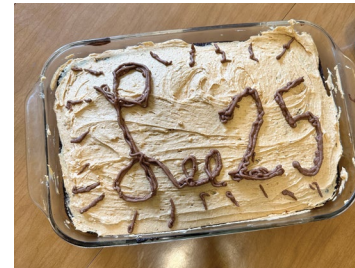
Sincerely,

Dr. Brenda Flyswithawks,
Board President

Lee Hackeling,
Executive Director of Operations

Craig Anderson,
Executive Director of External Affairs

DR. FLYSWITHAWKS (IN THE MIDDLE, IN THE RED SWEATER), BOARD PRESIDENT, WITH LEE HACKELING (LEFT CENTER OF PHOTO) AND CRAIG ANDERSON (RIGHT CENTER OF PHOTO) WITH MOST OF LANDPATHS' STAFF, PLUS FORMER BOARD MEMBERS SUSAN SHAW AND BETH WYATT, AND CURRENT BOARD MEMBER ADAM KAHN.



rooting youth in nature



VANESSA ZAVALA'S FIRST EXPERIENCE WITH LANDPATHS WAS AS A CHILD, ATTENDING OWL CAMP DURING THE summer. As she grew older, she became a camp apprentice, which gave her a foundational understanding of our mission and values. Eventually, she built upon that foundation as a teen volunteer, gaining leadership experience while working with young kids. She also participated in our Russian River Teen Trek. "That was my first experience camping," says Vanessa. "And those trips created lasting memories and sparked my love for outdoor adventure."

In 2024, on summer break from UC Davis where she is a student, Vanessa was hired at LandPaths as a seasonal staff member supporting Owl Camp.

She applied because she wanted to give back, and to become the kind of person she herself looked up to, and to help children develop a love of nature, like she had. Her journey is one that exemplifies LandPaths' consistent, impactful commitment to rooting youth and young adults in nature.

"My connection with the land has also connected me with a community of like-minded people and has helped me grow in confidence and develop important life skills," says Vanessa. "I have built meaningful relationships and networks with people who share my passion for conservation and outdoor education. Being involved with LandPaths has given me a deep sense of purpose."

"The Russian River Teen Trek was my first experience camping and those trips created lasting memories and sparked my love for outdoor adventure."

— Vanessa Zavala, former Owl Camper and seasonal staff member



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:

OWL CAMPERS ENJOY THE CREEK AT PRESTON FARM IN HEALDSBURG.

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS ON AN INSPIRED FORWARD FIELD TRIP CONNECT WITH NATURE AT BOHEMIA ECOLOGICAL PRESERVE.

FINDING JOY WITH NEW FRIENDS ON THE RUSSIAN RIVER TEEN TREK, FROM FORESTVILLE TO THE SEA. PHOTO BY MIRANDA CARREÑO.

SEASONAL STAFF MEMBER VANESSA ZAVALA, SEEN HERE FLASHING THE PEACE SIGN AT RANCHO MARK WEST, SAYS HER LOVE FOR OUTDOOR ADVENTURE WAS SPARKED BY LANDPATHS.



30,112

TOTAL HOURS SPENT IN NATURE BY YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

118

FIELD TRIPS AND CLASS VISITS WITH IOOBY AND INSPIRED FORWARD

2,242

TOTAL ADULT AND TEEN SUMMER CAMP VOLUNTEER HOURS

69

PERCENT OF CAMPERS RECEIVED A FULL OR PARTIAL SCHOLARSHIP



growing community with nature

WHEN MIKAEL MOVED FROM HAITI TO SANTA ROSA IN 2023, HE STRUGGLED TO FIND HIS PLACE. AFTER ENROLLING AT A LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL, he discovered LandPaths through an Inspired Forward field trip. That's how he learned about Young Stewards, our program for youth between the ages of 16 to 20 that offers workforce experience while fostering a love of the land.

Over the course of three sessions, all of which he's been paid for, Mikael has developed his forestry skills, honed his ability to identify native plants, pulled bushels of French broom, supported on erosion mitigation with jute netting, and even did creative face-painting for kids at our Harvest Festival!

While a desire to study agriculture is what originally drew Mikael to become a Young Steward, he recently told one of our staff members that he wants to study whatever will prepare him to work at LandPaths after college!

2,000

ESTIMATED HOURS CONTRIBUTED BY VOLUNTEERS CARING FOR THE LAND

23

YOUNG STEWARDS CONTRIBUTED 1353 HOURS TO CARING FOR THE LAND

1,273

SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN ENGAGED IN LAND STEWARDSHIP

60

DOUGLAS FIR TREES THINNED AND DISTRIBUTED AS HOLIDAY TREES FOR LOCAL FAMILIES





“When I came to the United States last year, I was pretty shy and I didn’t want to go outside. And then I started with LandPaths and I became open to many more new things. When you are outside, you feel more connected.”

— Mikael, Young Steward

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:

YOUNG STEWARD MIKAEL RESTS AFTER A DAY OF WATERING REDWOOD SAPPLINGS AT RANCHO MARK WEST. PHOTO BY LEILANI CLARK.

VOLUNTEERS AT OUR SLOW RESTORATION FORESTRY WORKSHOP LEARNED AND PRACTICED STEWARDSHIP TECHNIQUES FOR FOREST ECOSYSTEM HEALTH AND WILDFIRE RESILIENCY AT RIDDELL PRESERVE.

YOUNG STEWARD LEXI PRACTICES HOW TO SAFELY IMPLEMENT A PATCH BURN WITH LANDPATHS’ STAFF MILES (ON THE LEFT) AND LARA (ON THE RIGHT).

ONE OF THE MORE THAN 40 VOLUNTEERS FROM OUR WILDLIFE CAMERA PROGRAM, RUN BY BENJAMIN BRAVO, AT A FIELD TRAINING IN SPRING 2024.



branching out conservation

for everyone



AS AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT IN WINDSOR, NANCY HERNANDEZ ROCHA LOOKED FORWARD TO FIELD TRIPS with IOOBY, doing sit spots by the pond at a local regional park. The experience left an impression, one that she remembered in high school, when she visited Rancho Mark West preserve with a community partner.

Her senior year coincided with the Covid pandemic, which stripped away most options for community work. But as things opened again in 2021, she applied to be a Young Steward and was accepted. Nancy spent the summer caring for the land and developing a stewardship ethic at the preserves we care for across Sonoma County.

A few years later, as a senior at UC Santa Cruz looking to do a field study on community and belonging, Nancy

turned again to LandPaths, embarking on a six-month internship at Bayer Farm, mentored by Jonathan Bravo.

“The community at Bayer Farm and seeing the kids every Friday with their families for Let’s Read Outside made me want to become a staff member,” says Nancy. “I was inspired to do a job that would benefit the community.” More than a decade after that first field trip with IOOBY, upon graduation from college, Nancy applied and was hired for a full-time staff position with LandPaths.

With the confluence of so many stages of Nancy’s life with LandPaths, she brings an understanding of the power of connecting with nature and the impact of our work on historically marginalized communities, a testament to the enduring relationships LandPaths has built locally over the last 28 years.



1,464

QUESADILLAS MADE USING VEGETABLES FROM BAYER FARM AND EATEN BY STUDENTS, VOLUNTEERS, AND NEW PARTNERS.

15

YEARS OF VAMOS AFUERA CON LANDPATHS

494

CHILDREN READ TO DURING LET'S READ OUTSIDE AT OUR COMMUNITY GARDENS

52

FIRST-TIME CAMPERS THROUGH VAMOS AFUERA



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:

PARTICIPANTS IN OUR BRANCH OUT WITH BIRDING OUTING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SONOMA COUNTY FEMINIST BIRD CLUB AT CHANSLOR RANCH IN BODEGA BAY.

NANCY HERNANDEZ ROCHA AT JEFF BODWIN COMMUNITY GARDEN DURING HER FIRST MONTHS AS A BILINGUAL OUTINGS FIELD SPECIALIST AT LANDPATHS.

LEFT TO RIGHT: KELLY, WHO PRACTICALLY GREW UP AT BAYER FARM AND NOW VOLUNTEERS THERE WITH OUR LET'S READ OUTSIDE PROGRAM, WITH JONATHAN BRAVO AND NEW AUDIENCES MANAGER DANNY CHAPARRO.

"Participating with LandPaths has turned my whole life into thinking about the way I impact the land, the environment, and the world."

— Nancy Hernandez Rocha, Bilingual Outings Field Specialist

BOARD EQUITY STATEMENT

The Board of Directors will foster open communication among staff and board members about the importance and priority in centering, promoting, actively practicing, and cultivating an environment of belonging, diversity, equity, inclusion, access, and racial equality.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr. Brenda Flyswithawks,
Board President

Hilda Shum, *Board Vice President*

Craig Hazel, *Board Treasurer*

Catie Clune, *Board Secretary*

Brijida “Brigit” Alemán, *Director*

Evangelina Austin, *Director*

Janal Cruz, *Director*

Adam Kahn, *Director*

Kalyanee Mam, *Director*

Greg Skopp, *Director*

Brad Sunshine, *Director*

board of directors & staff

STAFF

Craig Anderson,
Executive Director of External Relations

Benjamin Bravo, *Senior Stewardship Field Specialist*

Jonathan Bravo, *Senior Bilingual Garden Specialist*

Lesly Caballero, *Bilingual Camps Lead*

Rebecca Carrillo Steinrueck, *Youth Initiative Manager*

Danny Chaparro, *New Audiences Manager*

Christie Clark, *Environmental Education Pathways Lead*

Leilani Clark, *Communications Manager*

Sabrina Ferreira-Clifton, *Stewardship Lead*

Lee Hackeling, *Executive Director of Operations*

Nancy Hernandez Rocha, *Bilingual Outings Field Specialist*

Jessica Holloway, *Education Programs Lead*

CJ Kow, *Senior Education Field Specialist*

Roxy Layden, *Stewardship Field Specialist*

Erin Mulligan, *Ocean Song Steward*

Lara O’Herlihy, *Stewardship Field Specialist*

Jackie Peña, *Bilingual Education Field Specialist*

Gilberto Ramirez, *Bilingual Outings Field Specialist*

Sheridan Rapolla, *Finance & Administration Director*

Laura Revilla, *Volunteer & Community Hub Lead*

Jojo Sanders, *Administrative & Development Specialist*

Miles Sarvis-Wilburn, *Senior Stewardship Field Specialist*

Eric Singer, *Development Manager*

Michael Swallow, *Facilities Lead*

Mich Swannucci, *Education Field Specialist*

Jeanne Wirka, *Community Stewardship Manager*

Many thanks to these amazing former staff members —
*Omar Gallardo, Mineaux Gray, Jessica Jones, Carlos Rivas,
Miranda Carreño, Steven La Gatta, Cynthia Beutelspacher*



Omar Gallardo

passed away on October 23, 2024. He was a beloved community leader, a loving and dedicated

husband and father, and a mentor and friend to many. He has left an indelible impact on LandPaths, helping the organization to evolve into what it is today, inviting everyone in the community to participate, all the while with deep-seated humility and respect.

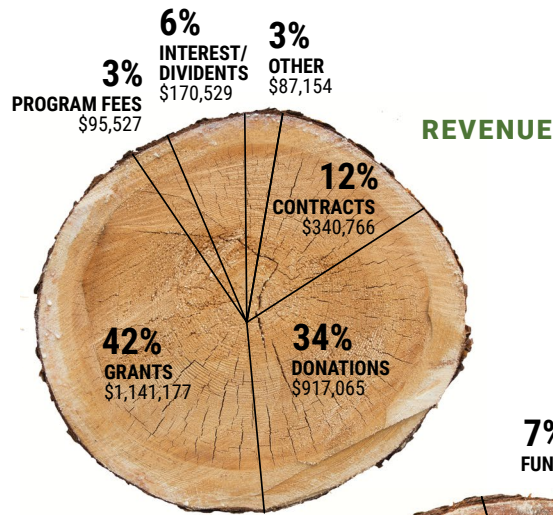
Our thoughts are with his wife, his two wonderful sons, his mother, and his sisters. As enormously as Omar showed up for LandPaths and its families, programs, and far-flung adventures, for those that knew him it was clear that he influenced so many people in our greater community, and we share our condolences with all of them. We will be honoring his life, memory, and courageous heart for the months, years, and decades to come.

financials

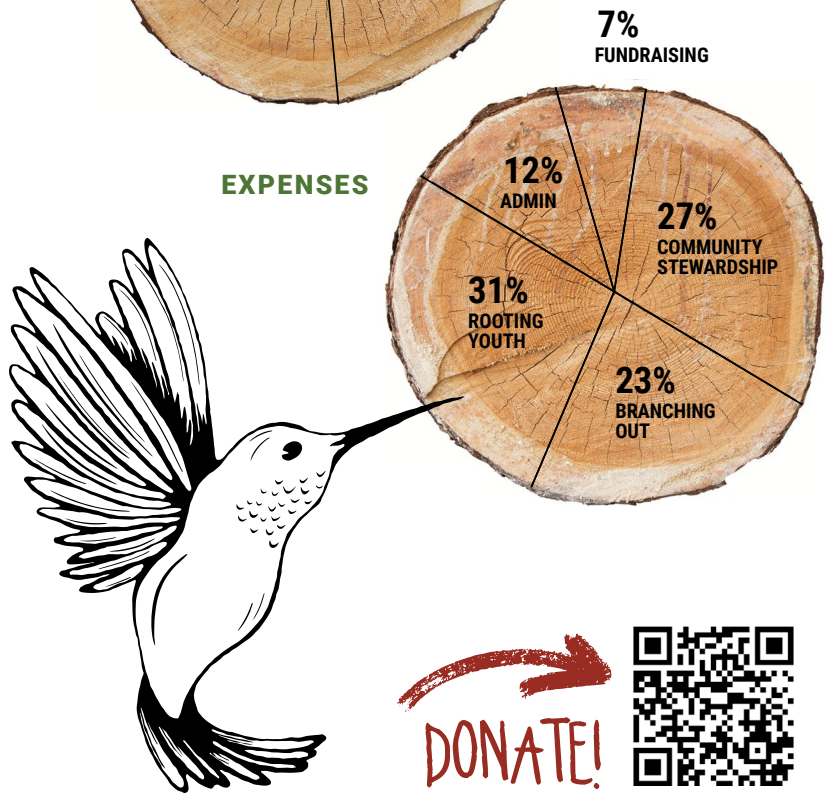
FY2023/24



LANDPATHS' DONOR SHAWN GUTSHALL ON A HIKE WITH HER DOG AT TAYLOR MOUNTAIN REGIONAL PARK.



EXPENSES



why i. give

An Interview with
Legacy Donor Shawn Gutshall

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO LEAVE YOUR HOME TO LANDPATHS IN YOUR LIVING TRUST?

I grew up in Santa Barbara and my backyard was an open space – it hadn't been developed yet. My dad built tree forts and we played in creeks. If I grew up in that exact neighborhood today, I wouldn't have those options.

LandPaths make such an effort to bring people to nature and that's important to me. I don't have family to leave the house and deep within me what I care about is nature. And so when I put my living trust together, I decided to look for an organization that was doing that work locally. LandPaths has such a diverse spread of activities. I like that diversity, especially the effort to reach out to the Spanish language speaking community.

What I care about is nature and education – and with LandPaths, those are the two places where my money will go. I feel good about making that choice to support work that is lasting and enduring, and that impacts a lot of different people and other living things.



DONATE!



BECOME A LEGACY DONOR!

Join Shawn and many dear friends and become a legacy donor. Legacy giving is a potent way to invest in what you most value. For Shawn, that is nature and education. Your giving can support all or any aspect of LandPaths' vital work including connecting children and families with the land, stewarding the land under our care and keeping it open and accessible. LandPaths is in it for the long haul, so let's make this journey together.

There are several effective ways to make a legacy gift: reach out to Development Manager Eric Singer at erics@landpaths.org or call 707-544-7284 ext. 106 to learn more.

ways to participate



GET OUTSIDE

Root your child in nature with a camp, teen trek, or school program.

Volunteer at our youth camps, teen river treks, IOOBY, or Inspired Forward.

Care for the land and connect with other people through our land stewardship programs like Good Fire, Wildlife Cameras, or Queer Forestry and Fire.

Help tend the gardens at Bayer Farm, Jeff's Community Garden, Rancho Mark West and Ocean Song.

Gain hands-on work experience as a Young Steward (ages 16–20).

Become a docent at Lafferty Ranch or Bohemia Ecological Preserve.

Sign up for an outing.

Explore more at landpaths.org.

GIVE



LandPaths' work and impact is made possible through your continued investment. To make a donation, scan the QR code, go to landpaths.org, or mail a check to LandPaths, 618 4th Street, #217, Santa Rosa, CA 95404.

CONNECT

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn & TikTok

Subscribe to our YouTube Channel @[@LandPathsOfficial](https://www.youtube.com/LandPathsOfficial)

Sign up to receive our bimonthly eblast at landpaths.org



@LandPaths

Our name stands for **Land Partners Through Stewardship** and the organizations, businesses, and governmental agencies listed here have been key to our capacity to make a positive impact in Sonoma County.



ADDITIONAL FUNDERS, FOUNDATIONS AND LAND PARTNERS

A to Z Impact Fund, Bancroft Family Foundation, California Coastal Conservancy, California Fire Foundation, California State Parks, City of Santa Rosa, Community Foundation of Sonoma County, Julia Rose Coughlan Foundation, City of Santa Rosa CHOICE grant, Santa Rosa Garden Club, Santa Rosa City Schools, Save the Redwoods League, Sonoma County Ag & Open Space, Sonoma County Library, Sonoma County Meat Company

Jim and Betty Doerksen, Duckworth Family Farm — Lori and Oscar Duckworth, Julie and Will Parish, the Riddell Family, Preston Farm and Winery — Susan and Lou Preston

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Audubon Canyon Ranch's Fire Forward, Becoming Independent, City of Healdsburg, City of Petaluma, Daily Acts, La Plaza, Los Cien, Migrant Education, North Bay Jobs with Justice, Positive Images, Santa Rosa Quilt Guild, Sutter Family Health Residents, Sonoma County Feminist Bird Club, Sonoma County Children's Museum, Sonoma County Regional Parks, Sonoma Water, Wild Earth Art