



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Executive Directors Lee Hackeling and Craig Anderson are Sonoma County Conservation Council's 2024 Environmentalists of the Year**

SANTA ROSA – Sonoma County Conservation Council (SCCC) has announced that Lee Hackeling, LandPaths' Executive Director of Operations and Craig Anderson, LandPaths' Executive Director of External Affairs will be presented with the *Ernestine I. Smith Environmentalist of the Year* award. In addition, Sonoma County Environmental Education Collaborative (SEEC), of which LandPaths is a participating organization and one of the original founders, is being recognized with the *Outstanding Environmental Program* for their Environmental Education Pathways initiative.

SCCC says about this year's focus, "Given that the generation that began this mission of protecting our beautiful region from rampant development is aging out, we feel that the work being done to 'foster a love of the land' for children and youth is essential to carrying on this legacy of protection and stewardship."

About the decision to award Hackeling and Anderson as environmentalists of the year, SCCC specifically mentions LandPaths' Rooting Youth in Nature initiative, calling it "vibrant environmental education programming focusing on youth and historically underserved communities."

"With vision, commitment, and amazing effectiveness, and by recognizing the importance of bringing diversity into the environmental arena, Craig and Lee have grown LandPaths into a significant force in Sonoma County," the quote continues.

The public is invited to attend the awards presentation online at Zoom on Wednesday, December 4 from 7pm – 8:30pm and in person on Friday, December 6 from 5pm – 8pm at the Sebastopol Grange. More information can be found at <https://www.scccenviro.org/awards-announcement/>

*To schedule interviews with Lee Hackeling, Craig Anderson, or Christie Clark, SEEC's Environmental Education Pathways Lead, please contact Leilani Clark at [leilani@landpaths.org](mailto:leilani@landpaths.org) or (707) 544-7284 x 108.*

#### **About [LandPaths](https://www.landpaths.org)**

LandPaths is an environmental education and conservation leader with the mission is to foster a love of the land in Sonoma County. We believe everyone should have access to the awe and inspiration of nature. Annually, we engage thousands of participants like you in joyful, caring, and transformative relationship with the land. We do this through creative outings led in both English and Spanish, environmental education, nature camps, and people-powered land stewardship of local open spaces. [landpaths.org](https://www.landpaths.org).

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