

October 28, 2023
Remarks of the Honorable Mike Thompson
Honoring the 30th Anniversary of the Lake County Land Trust

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Lake County Land Trust, which is celebrating thirty years of protecting Lake County's natural resources including wildlife habitat, wetlands, streams, shorelines, and forests.

Thirty years ago, the Lake County Land Trust was formed by a group of concerned residents, including Susanne Scholz, Roberta Lyons, John Graham, Glenn Dishman, Mary Tulanian-Benson, Michael Friel, Judy Cox, Kim Clymire, and Sibyl Day who saw the need for expanded conservation efforts in Lake County. The original officers worked to set up guidelines for the type of property that the Trust would work to preserve and educate themselves about the various funding sources available for land conservation and preservation purposes.

Shortly after its founding, the Trust began work to acquire the Rodman Ranch and Slough, which was well known for its valuable wildlife habitat, including the largest Great Blue Heron rookery in Northern California. This important property also contained nesting sites for Osprey and Western Grebes. The Rodman Ranch and Preserve remained unprotected and was being touted as an excellent site for housing developments, a golf course, and a marina. In order to protect this critical habitat, the Trust negotiated an option to purchase the property and with a successful "Adopt-A-Nest" campaign, they brought in nearly \$40,000 toward the \$1.2 million purchase price of the land. The Trust was able to preserve the natural habitat of the Rodman Ranch and facilitate the continued health and existence of the many nesting, breeding, and feeding areas for wildlife.

In September 2004, the Lake County Land Trust worked with the Bureau of Land Management and the State Wildlife Conservation Board to secure funding for an acquisition of the Black Forest, a 255-acre forest on the slopes of Mt. Konocti. The bureau of Land Management now holds title to the land, which is dedicated to open space and wildlife habitat.

The Lake County Land Trust has also worked to conserve land and water resources of important environmental, cultural, and historic integrity on behalf of present and future generations. This includes protecting Rabbit Hill and Chaparral Preserve, Melo Wetland Preserve in 2016, and most recently the Wright Wetland Preserve in 2020. They have successfully done this by working cooperatively with landowners, private groups, and governmental agencies.

Mr. Speaker, the Lake County Land Trust is deeply appreciated for their work preserving Lake County's natural resources through education, cooperation, and conservation. I am proud to have represented this outstanding organization since its inception 30 years ago. Because of the Trust's outstanding work in our Lake County community, it is therefore fitting and proper that we honor them here today.

Mike Thompson
Member of Congress

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