



*Taking Flight*



Annual Report  
2005

# Mission Statement

*“To preserve, restore and enhance the Laguna de Santa Rosa, and to inspire greater public understanding and appreciation for this magnificent natural area.”*

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Catherine Cumberland, Education Program Assistant  
Mark Green, Resource Development Director  
Maggie Hart, Administrative Director  
Joe Honton, Laguna Restoration Plan Project Manager  
Amber Manfree, Project Technician  
Julian Meisler, Restoration Projects Manager  
Anna Warwick Sears, Research Director

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## *Committee Volunteers*

### EDUCATION

Carolyn Johnson  
Raini Vallarino

### RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Lee Van Giesen  
Susan Gorin  
Patty Stack

### FINANCE

Glenn Minervini-Zick

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Raini Vallarino

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Mary Black  
Pauline Fisher  
Barbara Harris  
Greta Larsen  
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Don Jackson  
Joseph McIntyre  
Rob Sanville  
Robert Thille

## *Leadership Message*

This has been an extraordinary year for the Laguna Foundation. With growing support from throughout the community, public attention to the Laguna is truly “taking flight”. This growth in public concern is reflected by great leaps in the Foundation’s visibility, in the scope of our projects, our partnerships and relationships with individuals and institutions, and in the strength and numbers of our board, staff, volunteers and donors. Our activities have received widespread attention in the local press, with strong editorial support for our vision of a restored, thriving Laguna for our region’s future.

In the past year, the Foundation’s base of supporters, the “Friends of the Laguna”, has swelled to more than 1,000 households. Growing ranks of Laguna docents, LagunaKeepers and other volunteers have selflessly devoted thousands of hours to educating children in the wonders of the Laguna, leading hikes for young and old, performing restoration and clean-up work, and providing specialized services that have helped us to keep the momentum going. We’ve reached out to the Laguna’s many stakeholders to develop a rigorous Laguna Ecosystem Restoration and Management Plan, implemented the first year of an ambitious effort to control the invasive water plant *Ludwigia*, kicked off the capital campaign to restore the historic Stone Farm as the Laguna Learning Center, and planned and organized a major habitat restoration initiative which will begin in 2006.

The process of creating this kind of momentum is breathtaking, and we know it will require effort and diligence to maintain. But we believe that the hardest part is behind us. We learn from the waterfowl of the Laguna that after the laborious work to muscle up into the air, a grace arrives. We’re confident that the Foundation—and the restoration and celebration of the Laguna—will continue to rise. To soar.



Susan Churchill  
President



Dan Schurman  
Executive Director



## *Achievements: Education*

Education is a core element of the Foundation's work. Each new person who comes to understand the unique complexity, aliveness and beneficial function of the Laguna becomes another advocate for restoring and preserving it.

Founded in 1999, our flagship docent-led education program, Learning Laguna, provides a fun, activity-based wetland science course in the classroom and a memorable hands-on experience in the Laguna for hundreds of Sonoma County 2nd-5th grade children each year. The program fulfills California State Science Standard requirements for grades served, and for some students, it is their very first chance to experience Sonoma County's wild outdoor environment.

Created and managed for many years by volunteers, Learning Laguna is now capably staffed by our dynamic Education Coordinator, and the ranks of trained volunteers who teach our curriculum in classrooms and lead field trips have swelled to 50 active docents. In 2005, teams of Laguna docents provided the Learning Laguna program to 731 students in 11 school districts surrounding the Laguna.

This year the program made important advances. We developed a popular program of ongoing continuing education activities for our trained docents, which has markedly increased volunteer retention and the enthusiasm and cohesiveness of this essential group of Laguna volunteers. We have begun to focus on serving economically disadvantaged schools, have started to address issues of language diversity, and initiated a transportation scholarship fund to allow financially strapped school districts to participate in the Learning Laguna program, even if they can't afford to pay for a bus to transport their students to the Laguna field trip.



"As a professional educator, I've attended many classes and workshops over a 35-year career, few of which were as interesting, informative or well taught as the Laguna Foundation's ten-week docent training."

—Jim Dempsey, docent



## *Achievements: Education*

Currently, the Foundation's other primary educational program is Laguna Walks and Talks, a series of docent-led interpretive walks held primarily on Laguna properties that are publicly owned, but generally not open to hikers. Launched in 2004, Laguna Walks and Talks is extremely popular; docents have led hundreds on these interpreted Laguna adventures.

Looking ahead, we see our education programs expanding to provide teacher training and to serve middle school students, and anticipate the opening of the Laguna Learning Center, which will give us a facility where our education programs can truly showcase the Laguna's complex biology and long human history.

### DOCENTS

Mary Abbott  
Barnee Alexander  
Nemea Arborvitae  
Dana Blake  
Sandra Bodley  
Sharon Bouton  
Veronica Bowers  
Barbara Briggs-Letson  
Bev Buswell  
Denise Cadman  
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Lana Koboloff  
Jan Lochner  
Sharon Mansfield  
Franny Minervini-Zick  
Pam Moskovitz  
Nancy Presson  
Joan Przekop

"The docents were great teachers—so knowledgeable and patient... Once we were in the field, the children came alive with the knowledge learned in the classroom presentations. I will look forward to returning next year."  
— Nancy Cartan, teacher,  
Proctor Terrace Elementary School.

Jymmey Purtill  
Lynn Renn  
Lilith Rogers  
Elizabeth Sanville  
Susan Shea  
Erin Healy Sheffield  
Anne Stephens  
Calvin Stroble  
Virginia Strom-Martin  
Robert Thille  
Terriann Tomlin  
Raini Vallarino  
Patrick Woodworth

## *Achievements: Restoration*

As magnificent and filled with life as the Laguna is today, it was once a true wildlife paradise, where flocks of waterfowl darkened the skies for hours at a stretch, pronghorn antelope and tule elk browsed, salmon leapt by the thousands, and interpenetrated habitats of rare and unique plants turned through their annual cycles in abundance.

We understand that time cannot be reversed. But much can be done to restore the Laguna's ability to support wildlife, to filter and cleanse its waters, and to hold and slow floodwaters. The Foundation is spearheading the movement to address problems as they arise and to build broad public consensus for restoring the Laguna's biological well-being.

This year, we implemented three major Restoration initiatives. Each is an exciting step forward for the long term health of the Laguna.

**The Laguna Ecosystem Restoration and Management Plan** is a two-year planning initiative begun in 2004. The "RMP," planned for publication in spring of 2006, is a "blueprint" for restoring the Laguna's biological health and coordinating land use practices among participating landowners to benefit the Laguna's natural systems. Created in consultation with landowners, scientific experts, regulatory agencies, public jurisdictions, and outdoor recreation advocates, the Plan will serve as a broadly adopted framework for restoration and management of the Laguna for many years to come.

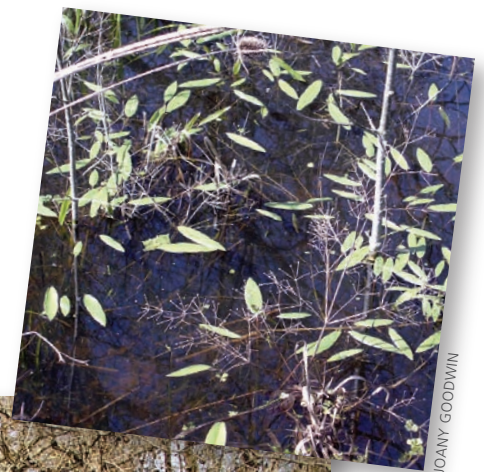


## *Achievements: Restoration*

**The Ludwigia Control Project** is an effort to beat back an invasive South American water weed which has choked some areas of the Laguna, impairing water quality, displacing native vegetation and creating a perfect breeding habitat for “foul water” species of mosquitoes which are known to be carriers of West Nile Virus. The Foundation launched this control effort in 2005 after convening and consulting with public agencies and Laguna stakeholders for 18 months to identify an effective and mutually agreeable control strategy. Using a combination of herbicide spraying and mechanical removal, the first year of the Ludwigia Control Project treated 115 acres of Ludwigia and removed 5330 tons of plant biomass from the floodplain. This multi-year project involves research on long term control and restoration strategies for these areas, and we are collaborating with the US Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Research Service and researchers from Sonoma State University as a part of the overall effort. It has been very visible in the local press as concerns about West Nile Virus drew long-overdue attention to the condition of the Laguna.

**Restoration Projects** On the ground, the Foundation accomplished several other achievements in 2005. Our volunteer restoration corps, the LagunaKeepers, has regular work days on public lands in the Laguna to clean up trash and plant native trees and shrubs. We developed a partnership with the local watershed group Cotati Creek Critters to submit a successful grant application, which will allow the Critters to stabilize banks, clear invasive blackberries, and plant native riparian plants in the upper reaches of the Laguna. And we developed the plan and began to secure funding for the Laguna Middle Reach Restoration Project, an extensive program of streamside, seasonal wetland and oak woodland restoration along a two-mile stretch of the Laguna.

It's been an extraordinary restoration year. We're excited as we look to 2006, when we will publish the Restoration and Management Plan, implement Year Two of the Ludwigia Control Project, and begin work on the Middle Reach Restoration effort.



JOANY GOODWIN

JOANY GOODWIN

# *Laguna Learning Center*

Most exciting of all the Laguna Foundation's many strides in 2005, the capital campaign to build the Laguna Learning Center kicked off in the late spring and has been steadily growing. This project will rehabilitate Civil War-era farm buildings on Stone Farm, a property owned by the City of Santa Rosa and believed to be Sonoma County's oldest farmstead still surviving in a rural setting. Stone Farm has been designated as City of Santa Rosa Cultural Landmark #1.



In 2005, the City generously leased the farmhouse and barns on Stone Farm to the Foundation for a nominal fee. We will rehabilitate these buildings and add a new interpretive center in the style of the historic structures to create a world-class facility celebrating the Laguna's natural, Native American, and agricultural history. The Center will house the Foundation's education programs, an exhibit hall, research facilities and offices, creating a focal point for public attention on the Laguna. We are working with members of the Federated Indians of the Graton Rancheria and with local agricultural leaders to ensure the accuracy of the Native American and agricultural history elements of education programs at the Center. The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District is planning a system of Laguna trails nearby, so the Learning Center will also be a perfect place for visitors to learn about the unique value of the Laguna before jumping out on the trail.





## *Laguna Learning Center*

As of the end of 2005, pledges to the capital campaign to build the Laguna Learning Center exceeded 25% of the \$5 million estimated project budget. Outreach to prospective donors and grant programs is in full swing. We are also reaching out to the local construction industry to seek in-kind contributions to the project—the project is a true “barn raising,” and the Foundation hopes to enlist support from all the many communities which will benefit from the Learning Center.

With hard work and a little luck, we believe that construction of the Laguna Learning Center can be completed within three years, transforming the Foundation’s capacity to communicate the importance of the Laguna to young and old.



DON JACKSON



# Partnerships and Support

**Education Program Supporters:** Dean Witter Foundation, Coddling Foundation, Community Foundation Sonoma County, Wells Fargo Bank, Summit State Bank, Firemans Fund Foundation, Agilent Technologies, City of Santa Rosa, Performance Design Group, Helen Heal, Raini and Steve Vallarino, REI, Don Jackson, Whole Foods Market Sebastopol.

**Restoration Program Supporters:** California State Coastal Conservancy, California Wildlife Conservation Board, Sonoma County Water Agency, Santa Rosa Subregional Sanitation District, City of Santa Rosa, Community Foundation Sonoma County, Marin-Sonoma Mosquito and Vector Control District, ESRI.

**Laguna Learning Center Capital Campaign Supporters:** Dan Smith and Joan Marler, Schulz Fund of the Community Foundation Sonoma County, Coddling Foundation, Gallo Family, Federated Indians of the Graton Rancheria, Carolyn Johnson and Rick Theis (Fledgling Fund), Kirk and Pat Veale, Clay and Kim Clement, Mary Frances Laier in memory of James Laier, MaryLee Carli, Nancy Peter and Jeffery Orth, Clayton and Anne Stephens, Raini and Steve Vallarino, Susan and Ken Churchill, Gladys Sawyer, Sam and Mary Dakin, City of Santa Rosa, Glen Lippard, B&B Dual Roofing, Inc., EmCee Group, Bill and Cindy Gallaher, Susan Gorin, Brian and Jymmy Purtill, Les Perry, Larry Moskowitz and Eric Koenigshofer (Perry, Johnson, Anderson, Miller, Moskowitz LLP), Jack and Judy DeMeo in memory of Betty Ann Rivard Ohlinger, Tom and Sally Lambert, Tom and Anne McGinley in memory of Helen McGinley Adams, Joany Goodwin.

**General Support Donors:** The Foundation also wishes to thank our generous general support donors, including members of our Preservation Circle and all the fine people and businesses listed below who have given funds or in-kind contributions to advance the Foundation's work (partial list):

Valerie and Curtis Abbott	Jan and Gregg Dobbin	Marc Kahn and Kim Kabot	Maxine and Patrick Reagh
Barnee and Gary Alexander	Dr. Michael Dolan	Linda Kammer	Mike and Judy Reilly
The Winifred and Harry B. Allen Foundation	Tamsen Donner	Alan and Nancy Kay	Lynn Renn
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DeLoach Vineyards	Carolyn Johnson and Rick Theis		Greg Young
Brad and Rosalie DeMeo	Jack and Marilyn Jones		Kathleen Youngquist

# Statement of Condition

	December 31, 2005
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	\$281,279
Accounts Receivable	<u>144,022</u>
Total Current Assets	425,301
Fixed Assets	
Laguna Learning Center Improvements	58,890
Laguna Uplands Real Property	<u>337,200</u>
Total Fixed Assets	<u>396,090</u>
Other Assets	
Leased equipment	5,236
Office & Computer Equipment	10,525
Office furniture	1,238
Accumulated Depreciation	(3,306)
Pre-paid Bulk Mail Postage	11
Workers Comp Policy Deposit	<u>1,510</u>
Total Other Assets	<u>15,213</u>
Total Assets	<u><u>\$836,604</u></u>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	\$107,171
Payroll Liabilities	<u>10</u>
Total Current Liabilities	107,181
Long Term Liabilities	
Equipment Lease	3,345
Note Payable	<u>11,000</u>
Total Long Term Liabilities	<u>14,345</u>
Total Liabilities	121,526
Equity	
Opening Bal Equity	344,629
Temporarily Restricted Funds	130,582
Fund Balance	151,047
Net Income	<u>88,821</u>
Total Equity	<u>\$715,078</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<u><u>\$836,604</u></u>

	Dec. 31, 2005
<b>INCOME</b>	
Contributions	\$ 243,677
Grants	674,072
Special events	38,900
Fees for Service	576,280
In-Kind Donations	24,989
Miscellaneous	<u>2,882</u>
Total Income	<u><u>\$1,560,800</u></u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Personnel	\$422,039
Professional Services	122,162
Other Contracted Services	695,456
Direct Project Costs	73,175
Rent	24,478
Postage & Mailing	\$6,951
Printing	20,890
Insurance	3,142
Telephone	5,502
Other Administrative Costs	29,856
Transportation, Conferences & Trainings	10,899
Volunteer Recognition	1,507
Special Events Expense	13,149
Merchandise Production	4,602
Depreciation	1,978
Miscellaneous	<u>1,057</u>
Total Expenses	<u><u>\$1,436,843</u></u>



## The Laguna Foundation

The Laguna Foundation is a nonprofit corporation founded in 1989. Our mission is “To preserve, restore and enhance the Laguna de Santa Rosa, and to inspire greater public understanding and appreciation of this magnificent natural area.”

The Foundation implements restoration projects, works with land-owners and public agencies to protect and improve Laguna resources, conducts educational programs for children and adults, and creates opportunities for walking, riding and paddling in the Laguna.

Our board includes recognized leaders from throughout our community who share the vision of the Laguna as a thriving natural, educational and recreational amenity for Sonoma County’s future.



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[www.lagunafoundation.org](http://www.lagunafoundation.org)  
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