

## Grassroots Effort to Conserve Gualala River Estuary takes a \$2.1 million step toward success

May 21, 2020

Sometimes it does take a small group of passionate locals to conserve a river estuary forever. In 2017, 113 acres of scenic and environmentally sensitive coastal wetlands and adjacent uplands surrounding the Gualala River went up for sale for the first time in over 70 years. The community came together, signaled their desire for open space with sensitive public access versus development. The movement began.

Today the Redwood Coast Land Conservancy (RCLC) announced that it has received three grants totaling over \$2.1 million for the Gualala River Mill Bend Conservation Project that they are stewarding for the community. The US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) awarded the project \$1 million through the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Program. An \$845,000 award came from the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) through the Environmental Enhancement & Mitigation Program. The third grant award of \$300,000 came from the California State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) and will allow for initial site assessment and a conservation master plan.

“RCLC feels fortunate to share conservation goals with our federal and state partners. The Mill Bend project will clean up a degraded area from a century of timber mill use and enable wildlife habitat restoration, estuary enhancement for steelhead and salmon and thoughtful public access including continuing the California Coastal Trail” reports Kathleen Chasey, the Project Manager for RCLC.

Founded in 1992, the Redwood Coast Land Conservancy is the local land trust for the Mendonoma coast. RCLC has taken the lead role to secure the funds for the Mill Bend acquisition, planning and stewardship and is conducting a **\$2.7 million Campaign to Preserve Mill Bend**. “We plan to raise enough funds through additional smaller foundation grants and community contributions to preserve and protect this vital property in perpetuity, says RCLC President Christina Batt.

In addition to the three grants awarded, RCLC must raise \$600,000 for stewardship since funders for the acquisition require substantial stewardship funds be in place to demonstrate adequate resources to manage and protect the property forever. RCLC has been quietly contacting key donors and has lined up \$300,000 in lead gifts. The official launch of the campaign to raise \$600,000 was to begin in March but was postponed to now because of the COVID-19 virus outbreak. Contributions toward the Mill Bend Campaign are welcomed.

More information about RCLC and the Campaign to Preserve Mill Bend can be found on the RCLC website at [www.rclc.org](http://www.rclc.org). Contributions to RCLC can be made via its website or by sending a check to P.O.Box 1511, Gualala, CA 95445

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Photo of Mill Bend at the Gualala River attached below. Additional photos available.

Thank you.

# Join the Campaign to Preserve Mill Bend

Help us reach our goal

\$2,700,000

\$2,400,000  
Raised  
by 5/22

Help RCLC protect and restore 113 acres of scenic land and wildlife habitat at the mouth of the Gualala River

\$2,000,000

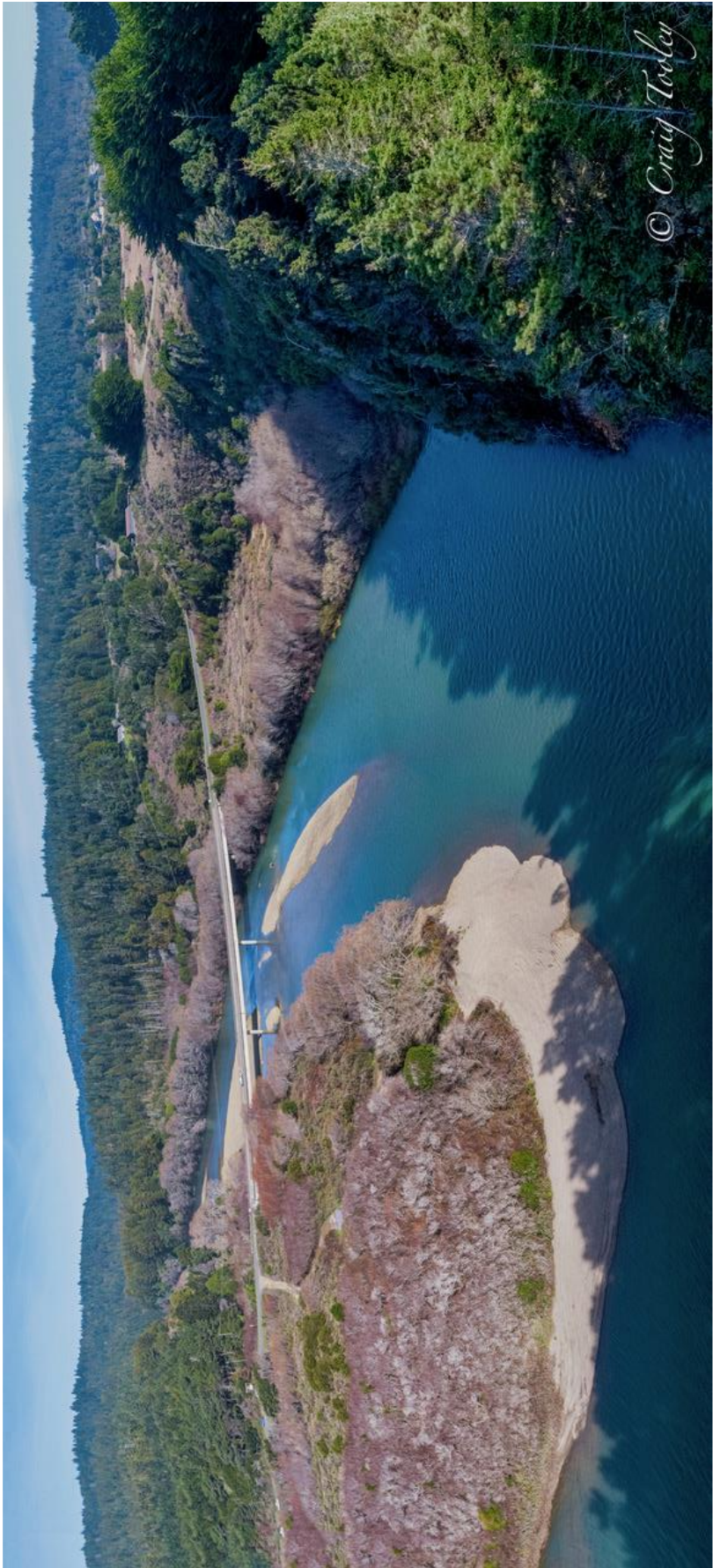
\$1,500,000

\$1,100,000  
Raised  
by 5/08

\$500,000

Learn more and donate at [rclc.org](http://rclc.org)  
**A Park is Forever**





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