

# News & Views

## Fall 2021



### Stewardship of Agricultural Land



Wente Vineyards (pictured) is just one of the many places TVC monitors to ensure proper care of the land.

## Welcome to Fall in the Tri-Valley!

Leaves aren't the only things changing this season. With a new Executive Director and a new permanently preserved property, we certainly have a lot to catch you up on!

Following the recent retirement of Laura Mercier, the Tri-Valley Conservancy (TVC) has appointed Laura Antrim as its new Executive Director.

Laura is eager to continue TVC's legacy of land preservation and stewardship and continue important projects that support the viability of agriculture in the area and programs such as Discovery: Youth in Nature, which provides outdoor education to local fourth graders in the Tri-Valley.



## What's Inside



### Inside UNCORKED 2021

Read about the top-ranked Livermore Valley wines at our 12th Annual Uncorked Wine Competition.

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### Springtown Preserve

Fourty acres of the North Livermore Springtown Alkali Sink are now protected forever!

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### Wildfires & Drought

The Tri-Valley is heating up, causing serious consequences for our open space and communities.

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# A Letter from Laura Antrim

## New Executive Director of the Tri-Valley Conservancy

Hello, my name is Laura Antrim, and I am excited to be coming on board as the Executive Director for the Tri-Valley Conservancy!

I was born and raised in the Bay Area and have lived here most of my life. I moved from Tracy to Livermore 4 years ago and living here has made me truly appreciate the hard work planners and community non-profits (such as TVC) have done to keep the area a wonderful place to live.

I look forward to continuing that legacy in my new role. A priority for me is to increase local awareness of the great work TVC does and how to get involved.

Working 13+ years with The Wine Group in various capacities, including 2 years at Concannon, gave me an insight to specific needs and community ties of the Livermore Valley vineyards and wineries.

I will now be applying my experience to supporting vineyards, olive orchards and other cultivated agriculture, land preservation, dedicated land stewardship, youth education, and community building.

In addition to my professional background, I have a passion for getting outside. I like to bike and hike in all the beautiful areas the Tri-Valley has to offer.

Some of my favorite local spots include Del Valle Regional Park, Holdener Park and Sycamore Grove Park. I also do Pilates at a local studio with my husband, Jeff.

The team and Board at TVC have been incredible at getting me up to speed and I am inspired by their passion and dedication to the organization and its' efforts.

I have been meeting with community leaders and groups and that will continue - so definitely reach out to say hello!



## FAST FACTS ABOUT TVC

The TVC has preserved almost 5,000 acres of agricultural and open space land.

Every year, we visit each one of the 110 protected properties (sometimes twice)!

In 2020, the Tri-Valley Conservancy successfully was re-accredited by the Land Trust Alliance.

In 5 years, TVC has educated nearly 3,000 local fourth-graders in our Youth in Nature Program.



Susan Lewis



# Inside UNCORKED 2021



Get the complete list of award-winning wines by visiting [trivalleyconservancy.org/wine-competition](http://trivalleyconservancy.org/wine-competition)



## Why do we celebrate Uncorked?

Uncorked offers a unique occasion to recognize the excellence of wine grown in the Livermore Valley AVA (American Viticultural Area).

Livermore Valley is known for its wine region and the events and press surrounding Uncorked helps everybody know that!

Additionally, this event assists in fundraising for projects like agricultural and habitat land preservation.

During this year's Uncorked Celebration, we recognized many talented winemakers of Livermore Valley.

Best of Show and Best White was Occasio Winery's 2020 Malvasia Bianca. It garnered an

impressive 96 Points and a unanimous Double Gold rating from our esteemed judges.

Best Rosé was awarded to Wood Family Vineyard's refreshing "Pink Pearl" and Best Red went to Nella Terra Cellars' 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon.



You may be surprised by how many sustainable wines are produced in our region!

### Petit Sirah

Petite Sirah is a red wine grape variety that makes dense, inky purple wines. This is a wine that Livermore Valley is known for because it is perfect for our warm, dry climate.

**Best in Class for this category** was Concannon Vineyard's 2018 Nina's Cuvée Petite Sirah, Reserve Collection grown using certified sustainable winemaking methods.

### Merlot

Merlot is one of the world's most popular red wines. It is a dark blue wine grape variety that is used for blending and for varietal wines. It is traditionally harvested early in the season.

**Best in Class for this category** was Page Mill Winery's 2018 Merlot - grown using environmentally sustainable methods.

### Cabernet Franc

Cab Franc is a black-skinned French wine grape variety. In warm areas, the wine takes on a sweeter flavor. As climate change progresses this grape is likely to be a more preferable option, as it ripens earlier in the season than other varietals.

**Best in Class for this category** was The Steven Kent Winery's 2018 L'autre Côte Cabernet Franc.

Save the Date for Next Year's UNCORKED - May 2022

<https://trivalleyconservancy.org/>

# Protected Forever

## Springtown Preserve

This sensitive alkali sink habitat land in North Livermore Springtown provides core habitat to some of California's rarest plants, animals, and birds!

Our conservation easement permanently protects the Springtown Preserve.

The Springtown Alkali Sink is located in the northeast portion of the Livermore Valley, and comprises an assemblage of biotic and abiotic features that support an ecosystem unique to the East Bay.

Sensitive species that call this area home include Burrowing Owls, White-tailed kites, Loggerhead shrikes, California Tiger Salamander, California Red-Legged Frog, and Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp.

This unique land in North Livermore is crucial to stopping the slow spread of development into the hills. We are working to protect more land and endangered species.

### "Ecological Diamond"

This area has some of the last remaining Alkali wetlands in California.

Go to our website to learn how you can make a difference today.

Visit <https://trivalleyconservancy.org/how-to-help/donate/>

## Critical Species Protected in the Springtown Preserve



Regina Brinker

### Livermore Tarplant

This annual plant only grows within 0.5 mile of the City of Livermore. It needs poorly-drained, seasonally-dry, alkaline meadows and solano fine sandy loam.



Marc Davis

### Western Burrowing Owl

This threatened species needs grassland habitat to nest and hunt in, and is an often unseen resident of North Livermore that deserves our protection!



### CA Tiger Salamander

The California tiger salamander's home is restricted to grasslands and low foothills with pools or ponds. They come out in November for breeding on stormy nights.



## Legacy of Preservation

We are always seeking out new ways to protect land and keep the Tri-Valley a beautiful place to live and work in.

**Did you know that we've added important properties in the last few years?**

## DOOLAN CANYON

A portion of Doolan Canyon was permanently preserved in 2018 after the defeat of Measure T. This crucial land provides habitat corridors for wildlife between Morgan Territory and Doolan Canyon Regional Preserves. This includes endangered species such as the western burrowing owl, California tiger salamander, and California red-legged frog.

The preservation of this 178 acre property also serves to protect riparian and wetland habitats that support a variety of special status species.

We hope to continue to preserve more land in the biologically rich Doolan Canyon area.





### In the future Lund Ranch will be open to the public!

When you visit, keep an eye out for the many raptors, squirrels, gophers, deer, coyotes, and badgers that call this land

## LUND RANCH - 75 ACRES

Located in the greater Diablo Mountain Range, the newly protected Lund Ranch was once a working cattle ranch operating within the rolling hills of Pleasanton.

The land is a mix of foothill grasslands, a complex of oak and riparian woodlands, and seasonal wetlands.

This site provides a permanent habitat for endangered California tiger salamanders that thrive in these seasonal wetlands.

South Pleasanton is a priority for preservation to build an active greenbelt surrounding the urban centers in the Tri-Valley.

This preservation is the first of many in this area that will help stop development on the Pleasanton Hills.

The active management of the land will also protect communities from fire danger by keeping brush levels low.

Just this year, a small brush fire came onto the property and was able to be successfully contained without harming the riparian woodland.

This idyllic landscape will eventually be opened to the public for hiking and recreation for all to enjoy.



## Land Trust Accreditation

Ted A Brownlee

## G3 - 350 ACRES

This rich habitat land is actively being restored. On this property you'll find unique Alkali grassland and meadows that cover the floodplain of Frisk Creek - crucial for salt-tolerant plants and the animals that depend on them.

Through the combined efforts of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Tri-Valley Conservancy, this land will be preserved for generations to come.



Scott Hein



### HOME TO ENDANGERED SAN JOAQUIN KIT FOX

This land is home to the endangered San Joaquin Kit Fox. The rehabilitated habitat will provide much-needed breeding and hunting grounds for these animals. The San Joaquin Kit Fox is also the smallest species of fox in the world!

The Tri-Valley Conservancy is proud to be a part of a strong network of land trusts that uphold the highest standards for excellence in conservation.

The standards and practices of Land Trust Accreditation are at the core of our work.

The Tri-Valley Conservancy has held accreditation since 2009, which allowed us to access the resources, tools, and expertise of other land trusts dedicated to the same values of open space and working lands conservation.

Accreditation makes it possible to preserve sensitive habitat lands and work with conservation agencies to ensure the most critical land in the Tri-Valley is protected.



- Sound Finances
- Ethical Conduct
- Responsible Governance
- Lasting Stewardship

Through our recent reaccreditation in 2020, we have reaffirmed our commitment to purposeful progress and consistency in land preservation.

By meeting the standards of fiscal accountability, strong organizational leadership, ethical conduct, and lasting stewardship, we can guarantee that open space and working land in the Tri-Valley is protected forever.

Visit [landtrustaccreditation.org](http://landtrustaccreditation.org) to learn more.



## You Can Help!

Help reduce wildfire risk and protect your community.

Clear brush and fire hazards from your property, establish an evacuation plan, and check on vulnerable members of your community. Wildfire management is an ongoing, collaborative effort.

# California Wildfires

Written by Anika Nicolas

Wildfires are becoming increasingly dangerous in California. As climate change, drought, and high winds become more extreme, wildfires have increased in severity and become harder to predict.

In 2020 alone, wildfires burned over 4.2 million acres, with six of the ten largest recorded fires in California’s history occurring within the year. The SCU Lightning Complex burned close to 400,000 acres in Alameda County and nearby counties.

Fire season this year has again been devastating and affects so many aspects of our life, especially our local air quality.

Fire management is already a part of our habitat land preservation management plans. These areas are most vulnerable to disturbance, and a high-severity fire can result in long-term or permanent loss of vegetation, expansion of nonnative species, an increase in invasive species, and long-term or permanent loss of essential habitat for wildlife.

As these wildfires threaten their natural habitat, wild animals flee into urban regions. As seen in the photo of preserved land in Pleasanton (left), no habitat is immune to fires, but quick action and proper long-term management was able to keep the fire low and non-destructive.

The Tri-Valley Conservancy is also working with local farmers to mitigate fire danger.

Tri-Valley Conservancy’s goal is to create a thriving greenbelt of agriculture around the City to protect open space and reduce fire threat. That includes ensuring that ag land near the City continues to be planted and maintained.

Vineyards have the potential to act as a natural firebreak, slowing down fires and saving homes and lives. By working with LPFD and other organizations, the Tri-Valley Conservancy is making a plan to help property owners better prepare for and prevent wildfires in our community.

**Eleven out of the twelve California reservoirs that agriculture relies on are below their historical average. If our crops dry, we may lose them for good.**



## Drought

Written by Chloe Brickwedel

California is in trouble. Ninety-five percent of the state is experiencing severe drought, and 47% are experiencing exceptional drought conditions, including Alameda County.

California reservoirs are at record low levels due to climate change causing smaller snowpacks and high temperatures in the Sierra Mountains. This leads to more melting snow and more water going into the dry ground rather than into the reservoirs.

During drought conditions, Californians rely heavily on groundwater. However, with persist drought, California has been over pumping its groundwater basins faster than it is being replaced, causing sinking land and poor water quality.

The Governor declared a drought emergency in 50 of the 58 counties in California—including Alameda County.

As summer progressed, Zone 7 Water Service has decided to adopt a mandatory 15% reduction in water usage. We are all asked to do our part to preserve our reservoirs and groundwater resources.

The sector hit hardest from ongoing drought conditions is farming. Many are having to make tough decisions, often choosing to switch to crops which need less water or allowing land to go temporarily fallow.

However, this may not be enough to save farms in the state. By 2040, California may lose around 535,000 acres of agricultural land due to lack of water.

The Tri-Valley Conservancy is looking ahead to ensure that our area can adapt to climate change and drought while still providing for

the needs of habitat, agriculture, and our community.

The wine community has already started to make necessary changes. Vineyards like Wente Vineyard and Page Mill Winery have committed to sustainable vineyards and winemaking practices.

Local winemakers, such as Steven Mirassou, are encouraging the planting of more Cabernet Franc, which will adapt better to increasing temperatures in the area.

There is also so much that can be done on an individual level to mitigate the worst effects of the drought. From collecting your cold shower water to installing drip irrigation, small changes can make a big difference in your usage and your water bill.

**Visit [trivalleyconservancy.org/drought](http://trivalleyconservancy.org/drought) for more ideas of how you can save water.**

# From the Eyes of a Farmer

## A Talk with Charles Crohare

The Tri-Valley has a rich agricultural and winemaking legacy in California. Since the first grapes were planted in 1760s by the Spanish, the land has always provided for the community around it. What better way to capture the incredible legacy of farming in the Livermore Valley than through a video series?

We are on a mission to make the story of Livermore – past, present and future – accessible to all. As a part of our Youth in Nature: Online Program, we will explore the resiliency, adaptations, and purpose of agriculture in a steadily developing area.

Our first stop was to the picturesque Crohare Olivina Ranch located within Sycamore Grove Park. These properties were some of the first to be settled in the region and one of the first to be preserved by the Tri-Valley Conservancy in 1998.

Charles Crohare Sr., the property owner, has been on the land for the past 80 years. The Crohare family purchased their portion of the property in 1939 for cattle ranching.

However, this land has a rich agricultural history stretching much longer. The original olive trees of The Olivina, planted in the 1880s, still line the Crohare's driveway and produce fruit for the Century Mission olive oil to this day.

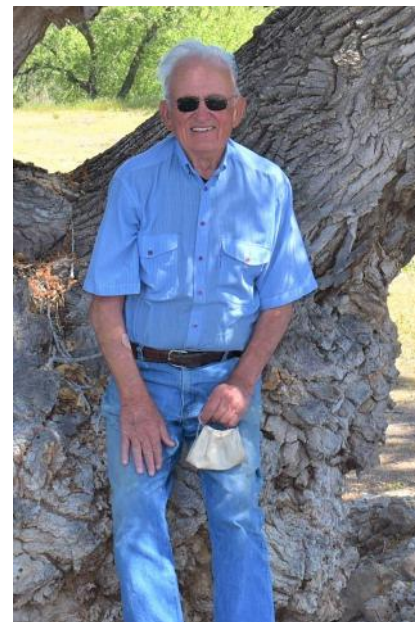
By the 1990s, agriculture in Livermore was in trouble. Prime land was being swept up in development projects and agriculture was at risk. Government entities, nonprofits, and dedicated individuals recognized the threats of urban sprawl and set out to protect agriculture through the South Livermore Valley Area Plan (SLVAP).

Charles would be the first to admit that when the SLVAP was first proposed, he did not think it was going to last. The plan set to preserve one acre of land for every acre developed, and an additional acre for each house built. It has now grown to preserve over 4,500 acres of agricultural land – including the Crohare Ranch and surrounding properties.

These properties create a greenbelt around the city, providing a buffer for open space and preventing further sprawl. For farmers, it offered a chance to continue farming without the threat of development.

Crohare now believes that without that document, farming in Livermore may not have continued. “Not only have we benefited, but the community has gained tremendously with open space, trails, and beautiful landscapes” said Crohare.

The Olivina farm has been producing olive oil for more than 20 years.



Growing 7 different varieties, Crohare has perfected a sustainable growing method that ensures that everything grown on the property is recycled and reused.

You can visit the beautiful Olivina farm every third Sunday and have the chance to meet Charles yourself.

You can also see his family story featured in our preview before the movies at the Vine Cinema!

## Big Win at Tesla Park!

The Save Tesla Park organization, lawmakers, and devoted community members has been working tirelessly to protect this land from being used by ATVs - which rip through the soil and damage important habitat land.

Now, about 3,100 acres of this open will be off limits to off-road vehicles and preserved as a state park.

This protection comes as part of a \$31 million deal between greater Bay Area lawmakers and Gov. Gavin Newsom.

We are proud to live in a community where there are different initiatives to save land and people advocate for causes they care about - leading to wonderful results!

## Building a More Sustainable Future

**Tri-Valley Conservancy is working with the University of California Agricultural Issues Center to research long term, sustainable winemaking.**

Over 2/3 of the land that the Tri-Valley Conservancy protects is for agricultural production. In our changing climate and economy, we want to ensure that the land in the Livermore Valley AVA remains healthy and productive for generations to come.

That is why, over the past 2 years, the TVC has partnered with one of the top-ranked universities in the field of agriculture and agricultural sciences, the University of California, Davis (UCD) to conduct research on Livermore Valley's Wine Region.

This study will identify and review opportunities for vineyard and winery growth considering current and future climate, water availability, land use zoning, and profitability of vineyards and winery operations.

From the results of the study, we can have a better idea of the projects and priorities the TVC should pursue in support of local agriculture for the benefit of all.

We are nearing the end of the study and we cannot wait to share the results with you and our agricultural community. Stay tuned!

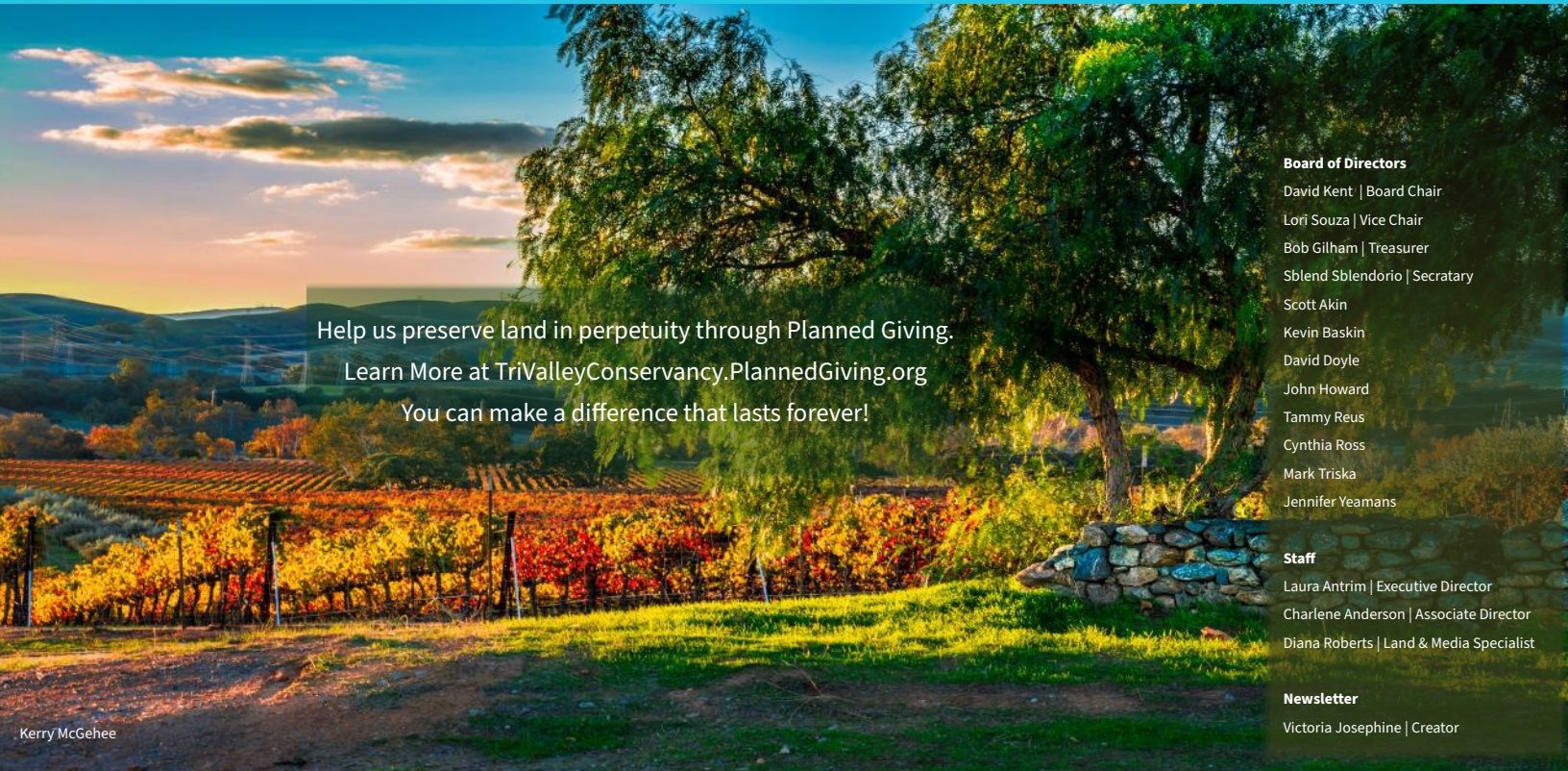


1457 First Street  
Livermore, CA 94550

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Tri-Valley Conservancy is an accredited land trust and tax-exempt nonprofit 501(c)3 organization working to preserve and advocate for agricultural and open space land in the California Bay Area.

Our Mission is to promote economically sustainable vineyards and orchards, and increase permanently protected, biologically diverse open spaces.



Help us preserve land in perpetuity through Planned Giving.  
Learn More at [TriValleyConservancy.PlannedGiving.org](http://TriValleyConservancy.PlannedGiving.org)  
You can make a difference that lasts forever!

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PROTECTING OPEN SPACE FOR YOU, WILDLIFE AND FUTURE GENERATIONS TO ENJOY!

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