



ELKHORN SLOUGH FOUNDATION

1% FOR THE PLANET PARTICIPATING NONPROFIT



The Elkhorn Slough Foundation (ESF) thanks you for your participation in 1% of the Planet. We applaud your commitment to environmental stewardship and congratulate you on setting a positive example for the business community. We'd like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves, the Elkhorn Slough Foundation, a participating nonprofit in 1% for the planet.

The Elkhorn Slough is located on California's Central Coast in the heart of Monterey Bay near Watsonville. The slough harbors the largest tract of tidal salt marsh in California outside of San Francisco Bay. This biologically rich wetland provides habitat for a diversity of plants, marine mammals (5% of all California Sea Otters live in the Elkhorn Slough), fish, and more than 340 species of resident and migratory birds. It's a popular spot for bird watching, kayaking, hiking, and other outdoor activities.



Unsustainable farming practices, development, and other environmental stressors had threatened the watershed's health and devastated native habitats. Since its inception in 1982, the Elkhorn Slough Foundation has been working with great success to negate and reverse the damage. We work in conjunction with and serve as the "friends group" for the Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve. In 1997, the Board of Directors saw the need to further protect this scarce and unique environment and expanded the Elkhorn Slough Foundation's role to a land trust with the **mission to conserve and restore the Elkhorn Slough and its watershed.**

To date, in our 27-year history, we have accomplished a great deal. Highlights include:

- Acquiring and managing more than 3,600 acres of conservation lands in the watershed;
- Partnering with several key organizations including, The Nature Conservancy, California Department of Fish and Game, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;
- Establishing a top notch educational program that brings more than 8,000 students and 50,000 public visitors to the Elkhorn Slough each year;
- Conducting important research on conservation topics ranging from the impacts of tidal erosion to expanding habitat for red-legged frogs and Santa Cruz long-toed salamanders, both endemic endangered species;
- Leasing existing farmland on our lands to local farmers for sustainable, organic farming;
- Receiving numerous environmental awards, including the 2009 EPA Northern California Environmental Hero award.

Our vision is to achieve a working landscape where people, farming, industry and nature mutually thrive in one of California's last great coastal wetlands. We see Elkhorn Slough and its watershed protected forever, a wellspring of life and a source of inspiration for generations to come.

If you would like to learn more about the Elkhorn Slough Foundation, please visit www.elkhornslough.org or give us a call. If you're interested in a tour of our properties, it would be a pleasure to show you these extraordinary lands and our efforts to conserve and restore them. We, of course, welcome your support as members of 1% for the Planet.

Thank you for your commitment in leading businesses to a better world,

Lorili Toth, Director of Development and Communications

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CONSERVING AND RESTORING THE ELKHORN SLOUGH AND ITS WATERSHED

Our goal is to enhance the overall health of the region for all living things by creating a healthy habitat for birds and wildlife and an outstanding environment for human exploration augmenting an interest in conservation.

LAND STEWARDSHIP & RESTORATION

“It’s incredibly rewarding to transition land from an eroded gully into healthy grassland.”

Kim Hayes, ESF Stewardship Director

Our Stewardship Program focuses on rehabilitating degraded lands through phased habitat restoration, which includes contouring and replanting steep-eroding fields; reducing the impact of non-native, invasive weeds; and planting of native plants. We reconfigure farm footprints to maximize protection while continuing economically viable farming and maintaining the natural resources of our lands. This reduces acreage of steep sandy slopes that drain into the waterways ultimately flowing to the slough and, finally, Monterey Bay. Our goal is to create a healthy habitat for wildlife, and an environment for human enjoyment and overall health of the region.

As the largest single landowner in the Elkhorn watershed, the Elkhorn Slough Foundation is charged with the management and care of extraordinary natural assets, from sensitive marshlands to species-rich maritime chaparral growing on rugged ridge tops. We have an active and dynamic program of habitat restoration across these habitats and engage the community at all levels from school groups to adults.



ESF property before and after restoration work

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

“I never knew that microorganisms were so interesting. Wildlife is important and sometimes you need to stop and experience it all”

Holly Kennedy – 4th Grade

Public education and outreach are a vital component of what we do. By sharing our vision and our work with the community, we inspire and engage new leaders in watershed and habitat conservation. The Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve features miles of hiking trails and an award winning Visitors Center. Through our teacher training program, school teachers are trained to serve as naturalist guides and bring their classes to the Reserve. Each year more than 8,000 school children and 50,000 public visitors enjoy the Reserve.





RESEARCH

“Our passion is to partner with the managers and coastal decision makers to make a real difference in this estuary”

Kerstin Wasson, Research Coordinator at ESNERR

Our research impacts conservation work here & around the world. Recent research being conducted on the Slough includes:

- how land acquisition and restoration has improved adjacent water quality,
- how tide gate management practices could reduce symptoms of eutrophication in ESF-managed wetlands,
- methods and options on enhancing the native oysters colonies in the Slough,
- how restoring a wetland habitat corridor can increase the long-toed salamanders and red-legged frogs populations, and
- the impact on native marsh plant diversity of the salt marsh-upland ecotone by tidal restriction and cattle grazing.

“Elkhorn Slough is preserving the richness and diversity that’s so important to the health of this coastal community.”

Dr. Jane Lubchenco, Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and NOAA Administrator,



The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit under the Internal Revenue Service code and is supported by individual and business donations, as well as foundation, state, and federal grants. Our Board of Directors is fully committed and unanimously supports ESF with membership contributions. Additionally, volunteers contribute 10,000 +hours/year toward slough activities. In our conservation land transactions, we have leveraged each funder’s contribution at least 5:1.

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