

State of the Bay 2010

A Conference about Tomales Bay and its Watershed



Photograph: © KathleenGoodwin.net 2010

Friday, October 22 and Saturday October 23, 2010

presented by the Tomales Bay Watershed Council



Conference web-page - <http://www.tomalesbaywatershed.org/stateofthebay2010.shtml>

Abstract:

Thirty Years of Preserving Agricultural Land in West Marin

By Robert Berner, Executive Director, Marin Agricultural Land Trust

The Marin Agricultural Land Trust (MALT) has been committed to the preservation of agricultural land in West Marin for more than thirty years. More than 62% of all agricultural land in Marin County is located within the Tomales Bay watershed. MALT has protected 36,400 acres of land within the watershed (or 47% of all of the agricultural land in the watershed). A major tool by which MALT achieves preservation is the use of Agricultural Conservation Easements which 1) prohibit subdivision & non-agricultural development, 2) permit “additional improvements and facilities reasonable and necessary to the ag uses of the property, and 3) Prohibit any uses that “result in significant soil degradation or significant pollution or degradation of any surface or subsurface waters.” Other tools include Creek Conservation Areas, which are integrated into Management Plans and aim “to protect the water quality, soil and bank stability, and the vegetative cover adjacent to water courses.” MALT also has an active Monitoring and Stewardship program to verify compliance with easement agreements, and a Stewardship Assistance Program which provides assistance to land-owners to implement conservation measures on their land.

See video of this presentation at: <http://vimeo.com/18335414>

Complete proceedings, individual presentations, and links to video from the 2010 State of the Bay Conference are available on the Tomales Bay Watershed Council's website:

<http://www.tomalesbaywatershed.org/stateofthebay2010.shtml>

Speaker Biography:

Bob Berner has led Marin Agricultural Land Trust as its Executive Director since 1984. He is a founding member and current co-chair of the California Council of Land Trusts and a member of the steering committee of the Bay Area Open Space Council. Before joining MALT, Bob was Executive Director of The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage and prior to that, he was Vice-President, Finance, of The Nature Conservancy. He holds degrees from Duke University (L.L.B., 1965) and Wharton Graduate Division, University of Pennsylvania (M.B.A., 1971).

MARIN AGRICULTURAL LAND TRUST

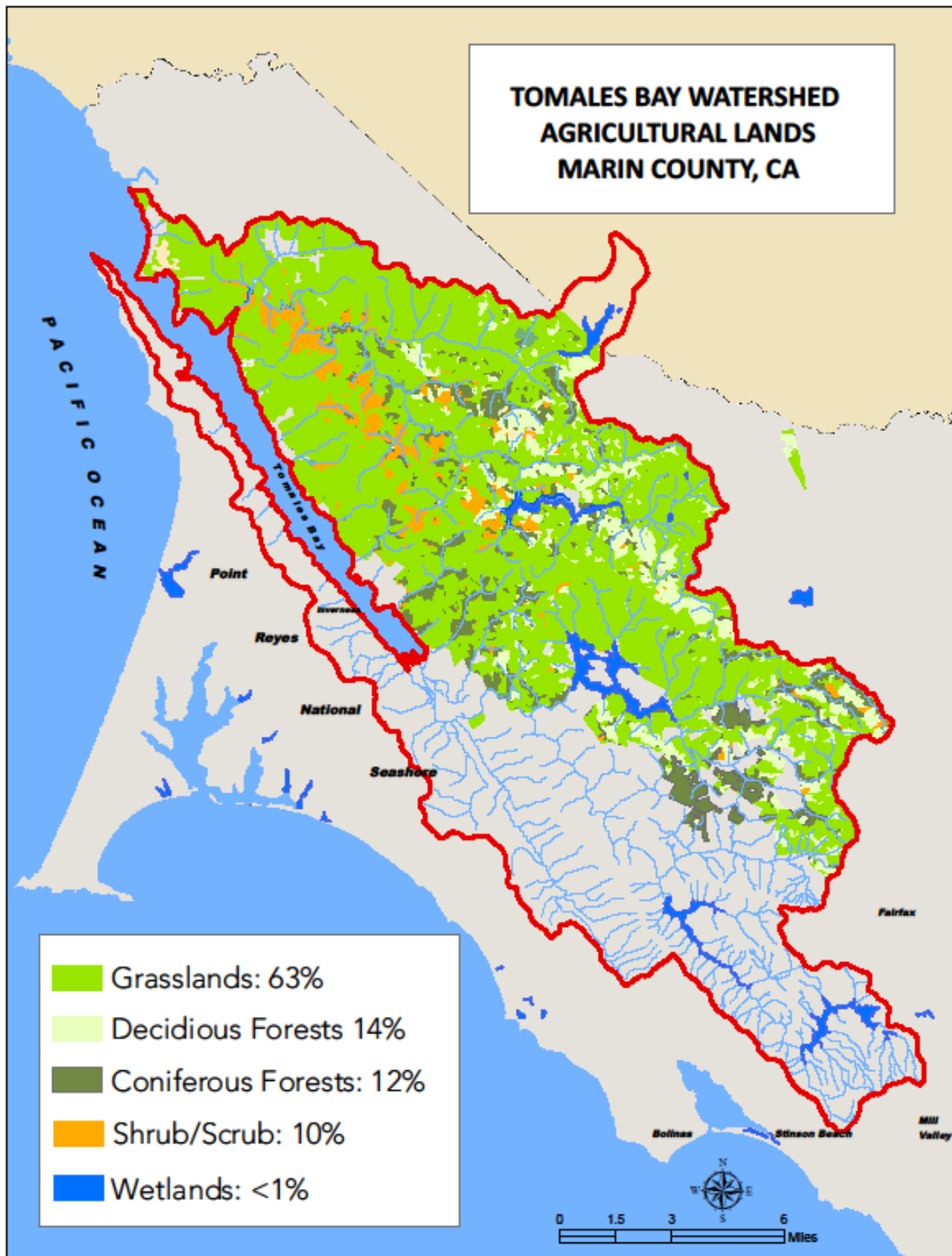
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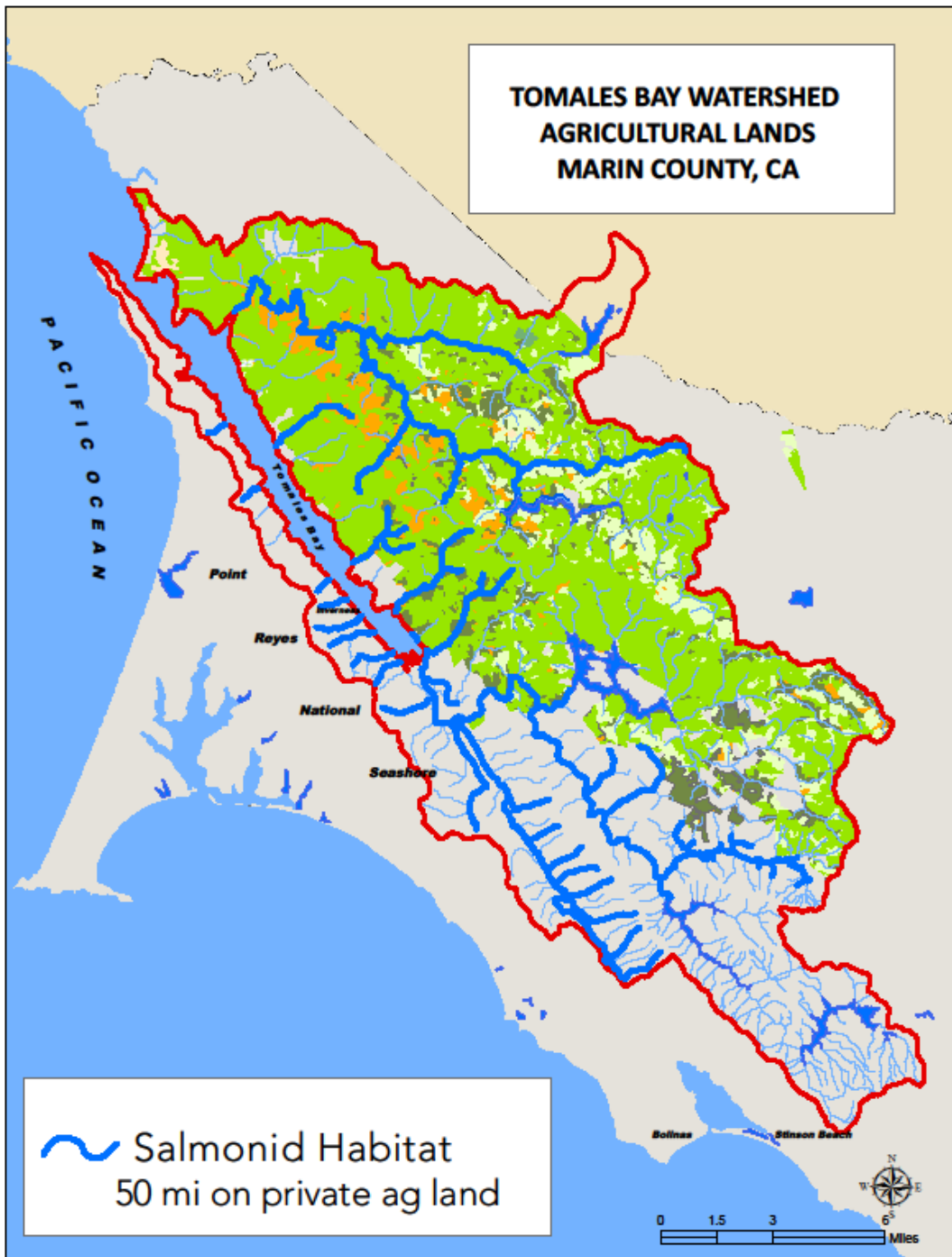
TOMALES BAY WATERSHED AGRICULTURAL LANDS MARIN COUNTY, CA



**TOMALES BAY WATERSHED
AGRICULTURAL LANDS
MARIN COUNTY, CA**



**TOMALES BAY WATERSHED
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~ Salmonid Habitat
50 mi on private ag land

0 1.5 3 6 Miles

Conservation Easements



Marin County Farmland Protected by MARIN AGRICULTURAL LAND TRUST

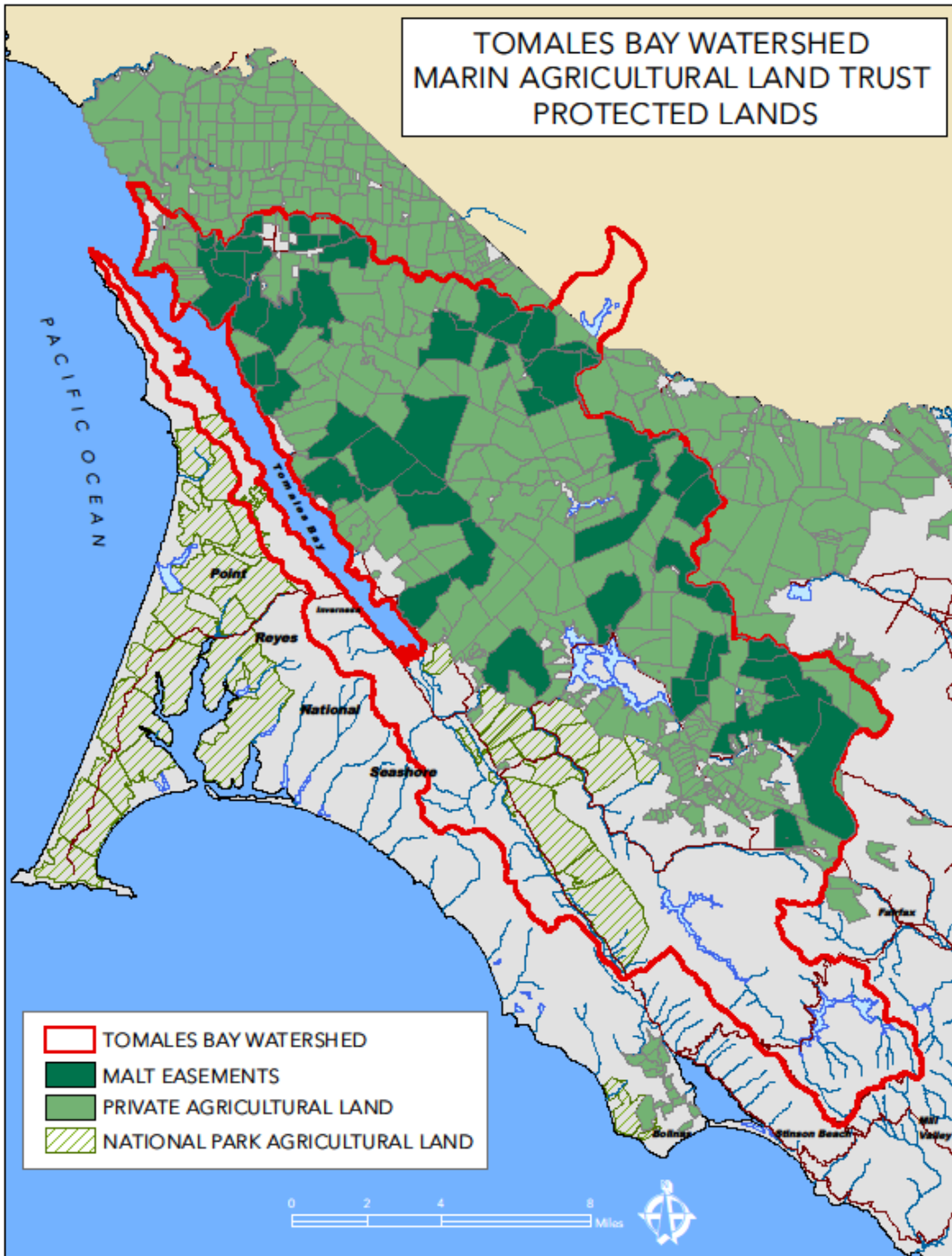


www.malt.org



San Francisco County

TOMALES BAY WATERSHED
MARIN AGRICULTURAL LAND TRUST
PROTECTED LANDS



MALT Agricultural Conservation Easements

- Prohibit subdivision & non-agricultural development
- Permit “additional improvements and facilities...reasonably necessary to the agricultural uses of the Property”
- Prohibit any uses that “result in significant soil degradation or significant pollution or degradation of any surface or subsurface waters”

Creek Conservation Areas

- Blue line streams identified in the easement (map)
- “to protect the water quality, soil and bank stability, and the vegetative cover adjacent to water courses”
- Requires Management Plan which must be approved by MALT
- Updated every 10 years (sooner if change in ownership or significant change to Plan)

Monitoring & Stewardship

- Two full-time staff: Patricia Hickey & Roana Tirado.
- Visit every property once per year.
- Meet with owner, tour property to ensure compliance with easement terms.
- Provide technical and/or research assistance on a range of land management issues.

Stewardship Assistance Program

- Technical and/or research assistance
- Small (\$10-25K) cost-share grants
 - Conservation planning
 - Reduce livestock impacts to wetland habitat and water quality
 - Improve forage productivity and soil quality
 - Improve livestock distribution and movement
 - Restore or mitigate erosion sites

Agriculture in Marin

Threats and Challenges



- High land values
- Loss of critical mass & conversion to non-ag uses
- Generational transfer
- Increasing regulations
- Increased Competition
 - Regional producers
 - Global market place

Why preserve farmland and support local farms?

Fresh high-quality local food & food security

Scenic beauty & wildlife habitat

Natural resources protection

Enhance local economy

Makes Marin a unique and extraordinary place to live, work & visit

Legacy to pass on to future generations

Ecosystem services

**Local food production -
reducing GHG emissions**

**Habitats for mammals, birds,
amphibians, and fish**

Water filtration & quality

Carbon sequestration



Bay Area kitchen garden



- Artisan & farmstead cheeses: Cowgirl Creamery, Point Reyes Blue, Nicasio Valley Farms
- Straus Family Creamery
- Clover-Stornetta milk & dairy products
- McEvoy olive oil
- Marin Sun Farms beef, lamb, pork
- Gale ranch grass fed beef
- Organic farms: Star Route, Paradise Valley, Fresh Run, Gospel Flat County Line, Marin Roots
- Wines: Stubbs, Corda, Mt. Tamalpais, Point Reyes Vineyard, Thackery, Pacheco, Ross Valley
- Oysters: Hog Island, Tomales Bay, Drakes Bay

