

311-Acre Easement Preserves Timber Lands

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The Nevada County Land Trust acquired a 311-acre easement of working forest land, the largest property acquisition in the group's history.

The land, located east of North San Juan near Graniteville, will continue to be owned by Scott Roth, a Southern California resident who plans to sustainably manage the property for timber production according to a state-approved timber management plan. The site can never be developed or subdivided once an easement is granted.

"Protections will exist in perpetuity," said the Land Trust's Executive Director Dan Macon of the conservation easement that will be recorded with the existing property deed. The easement has been the primary project of the Land Trust this year, Macon said.

Conservation easements preserve land from development but do not allow public access. With this recent acquisition, the Land Trust now holds 6,000 acres.

Conservation and agricultural easements make up the majority of Land Trust projects designed for cultural, historical and agricultural preservation. The nonprofit corporation also is known for its trail-building and fall and spring hikes.

The Land Trust and Roth will be organizing a tour of the property in the future.

The 311 acres is at an elevation of 3,400 feet. It is covered with mixed coniferous forest land, including pines, firs and some hardwoods, such as oak.

"We were interested in it primarily for the wildlife and environmental values," said Macon. Within the property there are creek drainages and riparian areas.

Besides selective timber harvesting, the land may be used for agriculture, such as orchards historically grown at similar elevations throughout Nevada County, and livestock grazing, such as goats. The land has been logged off and on for 75 to 100 years.

Roth currently lives in Southern California where he imports handcrafted rugs from Mexico. He plans to move to the property in the future.

Macon said the Land Trust has several more easements in the works that should be finalized within the next six months.