



## County of Sonoma State of California

Date: October 13, 2020

Item Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Resolution Number: \_\_\_\_\_



4/5 Vote Required

### **Resolution of the Board of Supervisors, County of Sonoma, State of California, Congratulating Wendy Eliot on her retirement from the Sonoma Land Trust**

**WHEREAS**, Wendy's career at Sonoma Land Trust from 1999 to 2020 includes two decades of conservation leadership for the San Francisco Bay Area and Sonoma County during which the organization protected close to 40,000 acres of land for parks, open space, wildlife habitat, and agriculture; and

**WHEREAS**, Wendy is massively competent, principled, a visionary, a coach and mentor, cultured, stylish, and has a great sense of humor; she is universally trusted, respected by elected officials, government agency directors and staff, farmers and ranchers, major foundations, non-profit partners, donors and all of her colleagues; and

**WHEREAS**, Wendy's education, professional skills and experience include the fields of science, public policy, land use planning, natural resource conservation, fundraising, and complex real estate transactions, and prior to joining Sonoma Land Trust in 1999, Wendy worked for the California Coastal Conservancy and the State of Washington's Department of Ecology; and

**WHEREAS**, during her entire tenure at Sonoma Land Trust she led the effort to acquire, protect, and restore thousands of acres of tidal marsh and wetlands habitat along the Petaluma River, Sonoma Creek, and the San Pablo Bay and Wendy's most exceptional accomplishment at Sonoma Land Trust was her leadership of the Sonoma Baylands Project; and

**WHEREAS**, Working with state and federal partners Wendy raised millions of dollars to acquire properties like the Dickson Ranch, Haire Ranch, and Sears Point Ranch and these lands expanded state and federal wildlife refuges along the Bay as well as Tolay Lake Regional Park and Sonoma Land Trust-owned properties along Highway 37 managed as wildlife habitat and grazing lands; and

**WHEREAS**, Wendy's successes in land conservation are critical to the survival of threatened and endangered species, and to the entire San Francisco Bay area as we struggle to adapt and mitigate the effects of sea level rise and climate change and there could be no clearer recognition of her leadership in this region than the naming of the "Eliot Trail" as a segment of the San Francisco Bay Trail at Sears Point when it was added to the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge in 2017; and

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**WHEREAS**, her vision and strategic direction will guide Sonoma Land Trust's work for future decades as tidal marsh restoration is linked to the re-design and rebuild of Highway 37 for a restored, healthy, and resilient San Pablo Bay and ensured that Sonoma Land Trust has a seat at the table with Caltrans and local government agencies who are grappling with the future of this major transportation artery for the Bay Area; and

**WHEREAS**, Wendy established a culture at Sonoma Land Trust built upon respect and very high standards, which resulted in regional programs focused on preserving wildlife corridors in the Sonoma Valley, redwood forests on the coast, adding new lands and public trails on Sonoma Mountain and in the Mayacamas, and launching a comprehensive effort to protect the salmon and steelhead species of the Russian River; and

**WHEREAS**, As Conservation Director, Wendy ensured Sonoma Land Trust's long-term credibility and professional standards as a land trust and non-profit organization, secured accreditation for Sonoma Land Trust through the Land Trust Alliance; a rigorous process that institutionalizes best practices for financial, real estate, land ownership, and administrative procedures and this accreditation and continued compliance ensures that public and private funders, regulatory agencies, members and supporters trust Sonoma Land Trust's practices and commitments; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Sonoma do hereby Congratulate Wendy Eliot on her retirement to the Sonoma Land Trust.

**Supervisors:**

**Rabbitt:**

**Zane:**

**Gore:**

**Hopkins:**

**Gorin:**

**Aye:**

**Noes:**

**Absent:**

**Abstain:**

**So Ordered.**