The Land Trust of Santa Cruz County is seeking a new Executive Director to replace Stephen Slade, who is retiring this summer after fifteen years at the Land Trust. "They are some big hiking boots to fill," said Donna Murphy, the Board's Chair. Murphy said a search is actively underway.

The new Executive Director will inherit "a strong dynamic organization," she said, citing the Land Trust’s track record of success, its array of conservation and access projects, and solid finances as appealing to potential candidates.

For the past five years, Slade has served as Executive Director. He began at the Land Trust in 2006 as Development and Communications Director, became Deputy Director in 2012, and Executive Director in 2016. Under his and former Executive Director Terry Corwin’s leadership, the Land Trust increased the amount of land it has protected from 1,500 acres to 16,500 acres. The Trust has raised more than $100 million to fund this work, half of it coming from individual donors.

Under their leadership, the Land Trust has worked to preserve the region’s natural landscapes and habitats, protect watersheds and wildlife corridors, and actively promote the protection of working lands. The Land Trust owns and leases farmland, harvests timber on its land and uses livestock grazing as part of its land stewardship program. It also has a deep commitment to public access. New trails at the Glenwood Preserve are open and the Trust is working with a variety of partners to develop over 50 miles of hiking and biking trails throughout the county.
This year will mark the completion of one of the Trust’s most ambitious projects: getting a wildlife tunnel built under Highway 17. Caltrans is expected to begin construction this year. The Land Trust has protected 270 acres of land on either side of the tunnel to provide habitat and safe passage of wildlife. This year, the Trust launched a campaign to protect Rocks Ranch in San Benito and Monterey counties – and to get another wildlife tunnel built, under Highway 101.

John Brissenden marvels at what’s been done and what’s underway. One of the Trust’s founders in 1978, Brissenden recently rejoined the Board. He said the Land Trust has "far exceeded the expectations" of its founders. "My head is still spinning from all that has been accomplished in the last 45 years and I am excited about what lies ahead!".

The mission of the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County is to protect, care for, and connect people to the extraordinary lands that make this area special. Information is available at www.LandTrustSantaCruz.org

Inquiries about the position should be directed to:
Nancy Painter
Nancy@painterexecutivesearch.com
(415) 202- 6240