

**What's
Happening
Here?**

Who are we?

We are a local family that cares. It has been a 20 year dream to be stewards of a forest based farm. We come from a background in forest management, sustainable agriculture, and academic/real world participation in applied ecology. We have two young boys and a small dog. We believe deeply in the benefit of hard physical labor in grinding toward big goals. We own a number of emerging local businesses. We believe there is a way to live in harmony with nature, guiding food production and invigorating the land without stripping its natural diversity and character.

What's the plan?

The land is in a state of need. We project that in the last 2 years more than 30% of our conifers have died. Longterm climate models are not suggesting that trees will get a break in the near future. This land has been logged for profit and benefit in the past, leaving a tricky and complex path back to healthy and functional. The soil has lost much of its nutrient load, tends to erode, and periodic ground fire has been excluded. This effects grass, forb, seedbank, and brush diversity. To get back to verdant, we are utilizing a multiphase plan.

Phase 1:

Phase 1 will take 1-2 years and focuses on improving the historic infrastructure, logging trails, creating utility spaces, and expanding opportunities for outreach and community involvement. During this phase we plan to address dead and dying trees on the property, gently thinning maladapted species, and creating snags for ecological benefit.

Phase 2:

Once inroads and access is improved the real and meaningful work can begin in earnest. Fruit and nut trees will be introduced on appropriate slopes. Beneficial, culinary, and medicinal mushrooms will be introduced, encouraged, and cropped to improve nutrient cycling and soil stability. Small scale truffle farming will be initiated at the bottom of the property, and a pilot program for the expansion of Mediterranean food crops will be created on the south facing aspects.

Phase 3:

Opportunities for farm stays and agritourism will be expanded, and workshops will be given to share stories, knowledge, and increase the size and breadth of existing projects. We are most excited about this phase as it represents our end goal, to create a space for teaching and learning natural building, farming, permaculture, and sustainability techniques for a rapidly drying and changing planet.

Why did we cut down the trees?

We needed the space. We could not park vehicles or machinery, receive loads of materials, or invite guests, consultants, or vendors given the state of the inroads and landing area. 70% of the conifers in the 1/4 acre that was cleared and graded were dead or dying and represented the highest observed tree mortality on the property. There were 17 live conifers, and 21 oak and madrone killed during this operation. NONE of the biomass was removed from the property as per our mission. We regret their removal, and are replanting at a 2:1 ratio below. We understand the difference between loss of large trees and the planting of smaller, but as managers before us have discovered, there are few better offsets to explore.

Is this sustainable?

Can this project continue and perpetuate over time? Is this project environmentally sensitive? These are important questions. Our pledge to our friends, family, community, and food web is transparency and truth. We are creating a verdant, productive, water sensitive space. When fully deployed, it will feed, entertain, and filter/cleanse those within, those consuming from, and those downstream from our space. In time this farm will seek organic accreditations, encourage seasonal foraging, and utilize native-modeled burning to perpetuate its continuity above Ashland.

What are our long term objectives?

Over time, as inroads and utility building are rehabilitated, the farm will seek to be placed in a conservation easement agreement to protect its lands from development and stand as a lighthouse of work and productivity in harmony with nature.

Why does it matter?

Over the 20 years that we have been involved in the green industry, federal land management, wildfire, and tree services there have been major changes. Trees are stressed out, the weather is getting drier, and food is becoming less nutritious. Humans need to engage with nature, take their place in it, foster its productivity and diversity, and be willing to try hard and accept mistakes of the past. The model of land stripping, row cropping, irrigating/nutrifying/spraying, and fallowing is failing this planet. We hope that by increasing soil water retention, increasing soil creature diversity through biomass redistribution, and by working with slope and aspect, we can create a climate friendly model. Additionally, we have a stepwise plan to reach net negative carbon within an abbreviated timeline to accept our place on this Earth as protectors, fixers, and stewards.

How can I help and get involved?

Stay tuned, reach out, and/or get dirty. To be open and honest, due to disappointments of the past we have been a closed unit, our little family stalwart against the odds and naysayers. We are trying to become more open to help, direction, and greater involvement. We are seeking mentors and contributors. We own and operate a local tree service that employs some the most learned, sensitive, and responsive arborists and tree preservationists around. When you have our company perform pruning of your trees, or remove unwanted, sick, diseased, or dead trees from your property, the biomass often ends up here, back in the woods. It fights erosion, feeds trees and soil microbes, and stabilizes our paths. In the simplest way, you may contribute by donating biomass. In the most complex, let's meet and dream together and strengthen our networks to pull toward mutual goals. Come learn, take classes, or stay and forage when that becomes available. We will post a link in months to come.

Are you building a house here?

Not presently. If our operation or site security requires 24-hour presence, that may change but there exists no plan to build a home in the cleared section you are presently observing now or in the future. There will be fence erected along the roadside to improve security of the farm, and to discourage vandalism and theft of roadside infrastructure. This property is zoned Woodland Resource, with a granted farm use. It does not accommodate residence easily within this designation, and is not our highest interest at this time.

Are we logging the forest?

That is the opposite of what this space represents. There will be felling, thinning, and burning at times, but no tree biomass will be harvested or sold from this property now or in the future unless in the form of coproduced farm commodities (nuts, fruits, mushrooms, herbs, and botanicals).

What sort of crops can we expect and where can we buy them?

Our present farm plan will produce walnuts and other tree nuts, PawPaw, heirloom variety apple, plum, pear, and peach, olives, grapes and tomatoes. The wood mass and forested acres will be engaged to produce oyster, reishi, morel, chanterelle, maitake, chicken/hen of the woods, cauliflower, and shiitake mushrooms seasonally. We hope to be available at local farmers markets over the coming years, and available sustainably-packaged at local co-ops when overage allows. Foraging will be a major feature of the farm, and u-pick commodities will be available year round at a by-weight basis for visitors.

How can we trust you when it looks so “raw and stripped” right now?

This is a process. Birth is never a calm or perfect process. We had two home births and a still birth to make our little family, we are very aware of this reality. There is noise, and disturbance, and need for patience. We have received both excitement/enthusiasm and deep resentment/aggression towards the beginning of our project on this hillside. Cheers and outright threats. It's our belief that most of the hostilities can be corrected by just meeting with us. We are present as much as possible, always truthful, friendly when treated so, and consistently open for a good conversation. We have a history in project management. This breaking ground phase is no-fun, looks arguably terrible, requires intense labor, and lays the bones for all the magic to come. It is going to “get worse before it gets better”. We are reseeding exposed soil with native grasses and plants as season allows, plan to cover the base rock with chipped biomass, and correct some construction scars in the coming months. Bear with us and please approach your apprehensive feelings with metered hope instead. A little bit of ugly, some time to heal, and some patience from our community will foster some amazing processes ahead.

Why all of the abrasive signage?

We are normal folks that don't come from money and have bled to the bone for what is being built. That leaves us fragile in this process. We have a dream, some know-how, and debt. During construction and Phase 1 we must ask that our community does not trespass as it is an active construction site, has inherent dangers, and we would like to allow animal species to rest while we are not working on site. By creating a large flat space, we acknowledge the reality of creating an attractive nuisance, a space for car campers, squatters, etc. These activities raise our level of risk, and cannot be tolerated at present. Wildfire risk. Risk of injury. Risk to property. Please be respectful of the project and space even if we are not onsite. We are actively moving towards fencing/gating the entrance. If you are interested, have questions, or wish to gain provisional access, **please call: 1 (541) 678-4845**. We want to meet you, we are excited to meet you, but we are safety oriented people that don't wish to meet you injured or uninvited. Thank you, respectfully.

The Goldey Family
Contre Jour Farm, LLC

