MORRISON

IN THIS ISSUE:

CONGRATULATIONS, YOU GOT THE GRANT. NOW WHAT?

Morrison's Grants Manager, Sarah DeForest, shares her insights on navigating Grant Administration.

LEARN ABOUT SANDRA FEINGOLD

Hear from Sandra who serves clients on our Grants team.

MORRISON SNAPSHOTS

Check out some of our highlights from this event-filled season!

CLIENT CORNER

Get caught up with our latest client news blurbs.

DAVIS RANCHES:
A LEGACY OF CONSERVATION

Nestled between the Sacramento River and the Colusa Wildlife refuge, just south of the town of Colusa, California, sits a nearly 200 year old family farming legacy. Founded in the late 1850s by Howell Davis and his wife Sibyl "Sebia" (Jeffreys) Davis, the Davis family farmed nearly 8,000 contiguous acres, producing wheat, corn, and cattle.

Serving the town of Sycamore, Davis Ranches was originally part of the Rancho Jimeno Mexican Land grant and sits on the headwaters of Sycamore Slough. An integral part of the town's development, the Davis family also owned and operated a successful mercantile, warehousing operation, and a ferry service along the Sacramento River. The ferry service provided Davis Ranches a significant advantage by transporting goods and food produced by the ranch south along the Sacramento River.

Today the ranch continues to thrive under the direction of the Davis family, having diversified their crops to include rice and a rotation of row crops. With a mission of responsible stewardship for their family land, Davis Ranches focuses on sustainable farm practices and has partnered with many organizations to conserve natural resources.

Davis Ranches' rice fields provide over 2,000 acres of winter habitat for over 230 species, including waterfowl and shorebirds. Davis Ranches has participated in post-harvest field treatment studies to improve the benefits of the seasonal floodplain habitat. To ensure minimal waste, the residual straw is baled, the ground is disked, and the fields flooded to provide habitat for more than 30 species of bird while the straw decomposes for the next season. To ensure their many conservation projects are successful, Davis Ranches partners with organizations such as The Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, Unilever, Audubon California, Wildlife Conservation Board, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services.

Davis Ranches has worked closely with Audubon California to restore riparian habitat throughout the ranch. Establishing hedgerows along the fields and slough banks, these plants provide refuge for many native and beneficial species in the area. Having restored over 50 acres with native habitat species, Davis Ranches provides a space for pollinators, beneficial insects, and other wildlife.

As a leader in sustainable farm practices, Davis Ranches provides educational workshops and events. By collaborating with Colusa County Master Gardeners, Colusa County Resource Conservation District, the University of California Extension, and the Center for Land-Based Learning, Davis Ranches provides a platform for students to learn about California agriculture, integrated pest management, home fruit orchards, hedgerow installation and benefits, and land restoration.

In 2007, the family owners formed the Sebia Duck Club, a space for the family to share their hunting traditions while also providing memberships, which help fund additional conservation efforts on the ranch. The club participates in the California waterfowl wood duck program, building wood duck boxes and placing them around the fields. Sebia Duck Club has helped hatch thousands

CONTINUED ON INSIDE RIGHT PANEL

of baby ducks over the years of participating in this program. Club activities such as this work hand in hand with the ranch, increasing their ability to provide waterfowl and shorebird habitat through sustainable agricultural practices during the migration season.

As a core member of the Colusa community, Davis Ranches strives to support the farming community and works with their neighbors and tenants to improve agricultural practices. With the guiding principle of "Farming for the 22nd Century," Davis Ranches keeps a progressive mindset on the agricultural frontier, not only incorporating conservation and sustainable practices into their farm but seeking state-of-the-art technology to improve efficiency. Davis Ranches' newest orchard blocks include micro-jet sprinkler systems to allow fertigation (the practice of applying fertilizer with irrigation water) and efficient water delivery.

In addition to farming, Davis Ranches provides their family home as an event venue. Fondly known as the Brick House, the family home was designed in 1882, completed in 1894, and built with over 300,000 bricks that were made onsite at the ranch. The unique stained glass windows and decorative glass and river rock speckled siding on the upper floors has made this a truly unique historical landmark in Colusa County. Sadly, Howell Davis passed before the home was completed, but Sebia saw to the completion of the home where she raised their five children. Olive Percy Davis, or Aunt Percy, was the last to live in the Brick House mansion.

When not providing a backdrop for elegant weddings and parties, the Brick House is where the family continues to stay when they come home for family meetings. With more than 30 family members, the operations of the ranch are run by a family trust, of whom Aunty Percy was the first official Chairwoman.

Morrison has been honored to provide Davis Ranches with ongoing bookkeeping and support services which include processing payroll, accounts payable, accounts receivable, bank reconciliations, financial reporting, trust-related tax filings, and general accounting and maintenance. It has been a delight working alongside the trustees and supporting a family farming legacy such as Davis Ranches.