As climate change, catastrophic wildfire, pervasive drought, and human development continue to alter and shrink Northern California’s natural habitats, Pepperwood’s Linking Landscapes for Wildlife initiative promotes landscape habitability and resiliency in our region and beyond. This initiative recognizes the importance of strengthening and developing linkages called “habitat corridors” that allow animals and plants to migrate from one habitat to another. These corridors provide pathways for wildlife to access breeding grounds, seek food, or even escape wildfire. These corridors will become increasingly important as climate change alters the vegetation and habitability of current natural areas and wildlife seek more viable habitats. Over the next five years, Linking Landscapes for Wildlife will implement wildlife monitoring, landscape modeling, and landowner training and partnerships to increase the pace and scale of conservation actions to sustain wildlife populations and improve habitat corridors throughout Northern California.

**WHY IS LANDSCAPE CONNECTIVITY ESSENTIAL?**

Over the last decade, natural areas in the West—including forests, wetlands, deserts, and grasslands—have been lost to development at the rate of one football field every two and a half minutes. These habitats are growing smaller and becoming increasingly fragmented, making it more difficult or impossible for wildlife to access necessary resources. The diminished availability of suitable habitat has placed more than 300 California animal species at or near the brink of extinction, with many other western wildlife species also in severe decline. For example, Sonoma County—located north of San Francisco—is known for its lush landscapes, yet it is accruing habitat loss 20% faster than other California counties and 80% faster than elsewhere in the US. This habitat loss is not just an aesthetic problem, it presents barriers to wildlife movement and population health, and leads to profound social, environmental, and economic consequences for California and beyond.
## NEED

Natural areas in the West have been lost to development at the rate of one football field every two minutes.

More than 300 animal species in California are at or near the brink of extinction due to inadequate habitat protection. But habitat loss in Sonoma County has accrued 20% faster than in other California counties and 80% faster than elsewhere in the US.

There are currently no standardized monitoring systems for wildlife health across California.

## APPROACH

Work with communities to understand the importance of expanding and improving habitat corridors from California’s Coast Ranges to the Pacific.

Map habitat changes and extend our wildlife camera network to monitor trends in wildlife diversity, behavior, abundance, and movement.

Train and convene landowners and residents to develop and implement wildlife-friendly practices.

Share models for regeneration of healthy wildlife corridors that integrate watershed protection and fire resilience among regional, national, and global partners.

## OUTCOMES

We reverse habitat loss trends to enable all wildlife to move freely throughout their natural ranges.

California’s threatened and endangered wildlife populations stabilize or increase.

A critical mass of landowners and managers commit to wildlife-friendly practices.

High-resolution wildlife data informs statewide decision-making.

## WORKING TOGETHER TO LINK LANDSCAPES

**Mayacamas to Berryessa Landscape Connectivity Network**

A Pepperwood-led coalition of private land trusts and public open space districts spanning Sonoma, Napa, Lake, Solano, and Mendocino Counties.

Other partners include OneTam, Golden Gate Parks Conservancy, Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, National Parks Service, UNESCO Golden Gate Biosphere, agricultural, rangeland, and vineyard property managers, and local tribes.