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Alliance for Felix Cove Founder Theresa Harlan Recognized for Outstanding Dedication to Re-Affirming Ancestral Relationships With Public Lands

Oakland, CA, 5/5/22: Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment announced **Founder and Executive Director of the Alliance for Felix Cove, Theresa Harlan, as the winner of the 2022 Anthony Grassroots Prize**, an annual \$1,000 award recognizing an outstanding example of inspirational grassroots environmental activism.

For many generations Coast Miwok, Tomalko people lived on Tamal-liwa (Tomales Bay). In 2021, Theresa launched the Alliance for Felix Cove to restore, protect and rematriate the ancestral home of her Felix Family, the last Tomalko family to live on the western shores of Tomales Bay.

Theresa's personal story as the adoptive daughter of the Felixes is a personal representation of the larger saga of the Coast Miwok at Point Reyes, a history that goes back thousands of years. Like so many narratives of Indigenous peoples in California and beyond, this essential part of Point Reyes and Tomales Bay culture and history has been virtually erased, and overwritten with narratives of Spanish missions and Euro-American dairy ranching. The Felix Family represents a 10,000-year tradition of resilient land stewardship, yet it is the 150-year history of settler cattle ranching that is recognized and celebrated at the Seashore. If Indigenous history is not valued, captured and shared, this selective erasure of our true history will continue.

Theresa's commitment to environmental restoration and justice has its foundations in Indigenous values of living within nature, not dominating it. She stands with Indigenous leaders who point to extractive land ownership practices of white colonists and their heirs as enormously contributing to our current climate and biodiversity crisis. Her immediate goal is to establish the cove as a Felix Family historical district at Point Reyes, with a living history center and ecological garden for Indigenous history and science. But she sees her work as part of a much broader movement. "All across the Americas, Native peoples are leading the shift toward

re-affirming ancestral relationships with public lands and honoring the sacred.” Theresa explains.

Theresa hopes her work at Point Reyes will affirm other Native Peoples in their work to honor their sacred relationship by rematriating public lands.. “The land is calling us, and I’m trying to bring Native people, relatives, children, and grandchildren back to this place to heal,” Theresa explains. “I am truly honored to be selected for this award dedicated to protecting and restoring our earth, our mother and all our relatives in nature. To be in the company of past recipients fortifies our work to honor our beloved ancestors and heal the separation from our family’s home. We do this work so that future generations will know the resilient legacy of past generations and continue the Indigenous cultural and ecological practices of Tamalko people, people of Tamal-liwa (Tomales Bay).”

By focusing on the resiliency that enabled her Coast Miwok Felix Family to survive colonization, forced servitude and expulsion from their ancestral home, Theresa is working to ensure that their story is accurately and fully represented at the Seashore. And by reconnecting her family to their place of origin, she advocates for everyone to recognize and honor that public land is Indigenous land. The re-indigenized Felix Cove promises to be a welcoming space for all Indigenous peoples, a place to share recovered and redeemed stories with the community that still calls Tomales Bay home, as well as with some of the 2.5 million visitors who travel to the Seashore each year.

To learn more about Theresa Harlan, Alliance for Felix Cove, please visit:

<https://www.alliance4felixcove.org/>

ABOUT the Anthony Grassroots Prize

The **Anthony Grassroots Prize** – this year celebrating 21 years of uplifting grassroots environmental leadership through an award, cash prize, and public recognition – was endowed by Juliette Anthony, a lifelong environmental activist who has been recognized for her work in protecting the Santa Monica Mountains, banning the toxic gasoline additive MTBE, promoting solar power, and publicizing the negative environmental impacts of ethanol. To learn more about the Anthony Grassroots Prize, please visit <http://rosefdn.org/anthony-grassroots-prize>. Anthony Prize founder, Juliette Anthony, explains this year’s award, “*As we all face the stark realities of climate change, we need to fundamentally change our relationship with the land. Teresa can show us how.*”

ABOUT Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment

Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment supports community-based advocacy to promote conservation, equity, and justice through grant-making and direct service programs. Rose Foundation’s focus includes grassroots activism, watershed protection, environmental justice, and consumer rights. Rose also administers New Voices Are Rising, a youth leadership development and environmental justice advocacy training program. To learn more about the Rose Foundation, please visit <http://rosefdn.org>.