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**Friends of the River to Present
Fish Friendly Farming Awards for Wineries**
August 10 ceremony marks 10 years for certification program

Friends of the River, California's statewide river conservation group, is proud to be a presenter for the Fish Friendly Farming Environmental Certification Program, which celebrates ten years in a ceremony at Clos du Bois Winery in Geyserville August 10 at 5:00 p.m. Speakers will include Congressman Mike Thompson.

Fish Friendly Farming is the most comprehensive certification program in the state. Soil conservation, water conservation, low chemical use, repair of erosion sites, revegetation of creeks and other actions are required. Three regulatory agencies – the National Marine Fisheries Services, the Regional Water Quality Control Board and county agricultural commissions – certify each agricultural site.

Four environmental groups – Friends of the River, California Trout, Trout Unlimited and the California Sportfishing Protection Alliance – will present awards recognizing individual wineries and grape growers for excellence in water quality protection and improvement, stream and aquatic habitat restoration and dedication to environmental conservation on a broad scale.

FOR will present the awards for wineries that have enrolled and will take the actions needed to certify all of their properties or growers in the Fish Friendly Farming Program. These wineries include Mendocino Wine Company, Ferrari-Carrano Winery, Beringer Vineyards and its parent company Foster's Wine Estates Americas, Clos du Bois Winery and its parent company Beam Wine Estates, Diageo Chateau and Estate Wines, parent company of Sterling Vineyards and Beaulieu Vineyard.

“These wineries deserve high praise for paying attention to their watersheds as well as their bottom lines,” said Peter Ferenbach, Executive Director of Friends of the River. “They set a great example for all of agriculture to follow, benefiting both their business and their land.”

Other award recipients include Ridge Vineyards, Roederer Estate, Saintsbury Vineyard, Silverado Vineyards and Robert Sinskey Vineyards for water quality improvements and protection and Hall Wines, Beringer Vineyards, Heitz Wine Cellars, Peter Michael Winery, Simi Winery, Capp Vineyards, James Vineyards, La Ribera Vineyards, Haiku Ranch and Hansen Orchard and Vineyard for stream habitat restoration.

Congressman Mike Thompson, keynote speaker at the event, stated, “During the past 10 years, the Fish Friendly Farming program has demonstrated that good land management practices can dramatically improve water quality and habitat. The nearly 100 growers, managers and vintners who have participated in this program are the vanguard of what agriculture will be in this area for years to come.”

Over 65,000 acres of agricultural and ranch lands in Sonoma, Mendocino, Solano and Napa Counties are enrolled in the Fish Friendly Farming program. The California Land Stewardship Institute of Napa operates the program and completed the assessments and farm conservation plans for these properties. As part of these plans 250 miles of dirt roads have been improved, 90 miles of streams have been revegetated and 25 miles of river corridor have been assessed.

Press representatives are requested to RSVP but are invited to the reception. Tours of Fish Friendly Farming sites can also be arranged.

ABOUT FRIENDS OF THE RIVER

Friends of the River, California's statewide river conservation group, works to preserve and restore California's rivers, streams, and watersheds and advocates for sustainable water management. FOR accomplishes its mission through public education, citizen activist training and organizing, and expert advocacy to influence public policy decisions on land, water, and energy management issues. Visit www.friendsoftheriver.org.