

A Mountain of Rutherford Dust



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The Rutherford Dust Society's groundbreaking environmental restoration project for the Napa River has created a mountain of soil from this world-famous wine region. "This must be the most valuable dirt in America," says Gretchen Hayes, project coordinator. "The greatest wines in America are grown in this coveted red soil." Landowners have had this soil removed from steeply eroding river banks in order to provide fish habitat and restore the natural flow of the Napa River through the Rutherford AVA.

For the past seven years, a river restoration team headed by Davie Pina, John Williams, and Andy Beckstoffer of the Rutherford Dust Society has

worked with a wide range of stakeholders to develop a long-range sustainability program for the Napa River as it passes through the Rutherford AVA. Twenty-three local growers have volunteered to sacrifice nearly 20 acres of top-quality vineyards in the heart of Napa Valley's finest AVA to restore the river to a more natural condition. "Our mission is to work collaboratively with neighbors and agencies to stabilize river banks, reduce the impacts of flooding, protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat, reduce Pierce's disease pressure on vineyards and provide ongoing education about the river and its watershed," says Beckstoffer. "Our goal is a living river." ■■