

# Redwood Needles



Winter 2020

Sierra Club Redwood Chapter

Volume 62, No. 1



Upper Caribou Lake/Jeff Morris

**INSIDE: Protecting Urban Growth Boundaries • Mountains & Rivers Campaign  
Solano County Parks District • Balancing Tourism • Climate Action  
Local Coastal Progm Update • Walker Ridge Wind Farm • Pints for the Planet  
Become an Outings leader • AND MORE!**



# On the Path

a note from  
Chapter Director Jeff Morris

Thank you for your continued support of and interest in our Redwood Chapter. On behalf of our volunteers and two other staff members, we feel extremely fortunate to be working with all the committed community members who live in and work to protect, preserve and enjoy the wonderful landscapes and ecosystems of this amazing region.



In spite of the barrage of bad news and examples of hatred and destruction we are all exposed to on a daily (for some, hourly) basis, I'm surprisingly optimistic about this upcoming year. As I noted in the Fall edition of the *Redwood Needles*, we are continuing to hone our approach and processes within our organization.

Regionally, we are collaborating more with other talented conservation partners and other organizations. A wonderful example of this is Rep. Jared Huffman's public lands bill (HR 2250), which was developed with significant work by our Chapter Chair Victoria Brandon in collaboration with myriad other individuals and organizations, including North Coast Environmental Center (NEC), Safe Alternatives for our Forest Environment (SAFE), Environmental Information Protection Center (EPIC), Friends of Del Norte, Smith River Alliance, Bigfoot Trail Alliance, Trinity Trails Alliance, Friends of The Eel, Salmon Restoration Federation (SRF) plus a number of tribal voices and entities. This is a landmark piece of legislation, reflective of our great region.

Individuals across our chapter continue to inspire me, including Richard Sachen, a Petaluma activist who was a key voice in inspiring that city council to establish what might be the first moratorium in the nation that restricts approvals for future gas stations. Steve Birdleough, now in his 80s, was a key early voice in the City of Sacramento's development of light rail, and is a leader in finding solutions to the challenges that sea level rise will have on the Highway 37 corridor. Rue Furch, whose vast resumé in Sonoma County reflects a deep understanding of public policy, conservation and human behavior, continues to be an amazing coach and mentor for my work. The courage and tenacity of Richard, Steve, Rue and so many others in our region fills me with a fire to do more.

One of my personal mantras is "if it's not fun, it's a failure," and we are committed to incorporate some of that into 2020. We will host Pints for the Planet on Jan. 31 at Shady Oak Barrelhouse in Santa Rosa. Details are included on the back page of this issue. We would love to see you there.

Though we can get despondent about the state of our planet, we can turn despair into action with renewed vigor and have some fun in the process. It's my hope that levity and community will buoy the crucially important work of protecting this unique place we all call home.



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# The Greenbelt Squeeze



PHOTO: Taylor Hanigosky

## Local jurisdictions must protect Urban Growth Boundaries to ensure diverse and affordable communities while saving the planet from climate change

By Teri Shore  
*Sonoma Group*

The best way to ensure climate-healthy, wild-fire-safe, diverse and affordable communities is with voter-approved Urban Growth Boundaries (UGB). A UGB is simply a line around a city beyond, in which urban development is not allowed without approval of the voters.

As we decide how to face climate change, extreme weather and a housing crunch, we need to double down on climate-smart growth near jobs and transit and protection of natural land and water. The Urban Growth Boundary is a proven and critical tool for doing so.

Yet, pressure to sprawl is mounting from developers, some housing advocates and a few elected officials who say that we must choose between protecting natural lands and building housing. It is an outdated and false choice. We can and must do both in climate-smart ways.

The State of California is certainly on our side. The governor and legislature are pushing for climate-smart growth across the state with more funding for affordable homes and mandates to develop neighborhoods close to transit, jobs and schools. Sprawl into the greenbelts is nowhere in the policy mix, yet it many places it continues to spread. That's why local activists are gearing up to defend UGBs city-by-city and county-by-county and gathering signatures to put new UGBs before the voters.

### Climate Healthy UGBs

The climate and environmental benefits of UGBs are clear. By focusing growth inside existing towns and cities, a UGB reduces driving and greenhouse gas emissions; saves money on water, sewer, parks, and roads; protects the environment; reduces wildfire risk; and allows for many types of housing across the income spectrum. And it costs taxpayers nothing.

Cities and towns with distinct

boundaries and thriving downtowns, rather than sprawling development, tend to be less dependent on cars, which is good for the climate by reducing tailpipe emissions as well as the community's health. It's easier for residents to walk, bike, or take public transit, while also encouraging exercise and decreasing harmful air pollution. A well-planned city also uses less water and energy.

Sierra Club spells out these facts in detail in its recent report, *Sierra Club California Housing Policy: Meeting Our Housing Needs and Protecting the Environment*, available for download here: <https://bit.ly/SCC-Housing-Report>

### UGBs and Wildfire Safety

We've seen firsthand during recent wildfires that communities with defined urban boundaries surrounded by greenbelts and farmland are safer and easier to defend than those sprawled out into the forests and wildlands. Firefighters were able to hold back walls of flames on the well-defined edges of Windsor and Healdsburg

*Continued on Page 10*

Winter 2020 \* *Redwood Needles* 3







## CLIMATE CORNER

# Hope for our climate begins with you and me

By Randal MacDonald  
Chapter Climate & Energy  
Committee Chair

It can be rather daunting to realize the historic significance of the times we are living in.

You and I were born into an era in which the future of humankind—indeed the future of life on Earth itself—is being put at greater and greater risk by humanity's increasingly harmful impacts upon our precious planet.

As the United Nations reported in November, civilization is failing to meet the goals for reducing our fossil fuel pollution that we set in the 2016 Paris Climate Agreement. The consequences of our global warming can already be seen all around us, and things will only get worse, especially if we fail to act now by dramatically reducing our greenhouse gas emissions.

The climate clock is ticking.

Scientists tell us that our actions in this decade to address the climate crisis will determine Earth's livability for generations to come. Yet, as national governments like our own and too many others fall short of cutting carbon pollution sufficiently, many people say that they feel helpless, hopeless or too caught up in their own lives to be able to do anything about this alarming situation.

Perhaps for this very reason, a new prophet has emerged upon the world stage to remind us that our destiny is in our own hands and demand that we rise to face the challenge that these times present to us.

Her name is Greta Thunberg, a 16-year-old student from Sweden, who learned about the climate and environmental crises in school, then realized with shock as she looked around that the world's

governments are not doing what is needed to stop them.

So, while still keeping up with her studies, Thunberg began a



16-year-old Swedish student activist Greta Thunberg addresses the United Nations in September.

school strike, protesting outside the Swedish Parliament each Friday to demand that lawmakers take real action to protect the world she is growing up in.

At first, few paid any attention to Thunberg, but nevertheless, she persisted.

After a while, other students were inspired by her example and began school strikes in various parts of the world, including Northern California, and political leaders started to notice this nascent mass movement demanding a livable world.

Then, on Sept. 20, 2019, the SchoolStrike4Climate that Thunberg launched many months earlier culminated in the largest mass protest ever seen in the history of the world. More than 4 million people went on strike across the globe that day to demand real action to protect our

climate and the environment.

Thunberg has since made dramatic appeals to the United Nations and in many other venues,

and young people around the world are rising up, unwilling to accept a status quo that will doom their futures.

What we must learn from this is that each of us has more power than we realize. We can change the world when we take a stand, working together with others, to face the climate crisis head on.

Here in the Sierra Club's Redwood Chapter, we are developing the Climate Protectors program to do just that, and we invite you to get involved.

In the next printed issue (Spring 2020) of this *Redwood Needles*, we will formally launch Climate Protectors, but there's no need for you to wait until then.

Please join our climate conversation by signing up for our discussion group at:

<http://sierraclub.org/redwood/climate-committee-contact-form>

## VIEW FROM THE COAST

# The endless battle to save our Sonoma Coast

By Tom Roth  
Redwood Chapter Conservation Chair

Very few people are familiar with Rancho Del Mar, a place no longer found on Sonoma County maps. It was a sprawling sheep ranch—5,200 acres—running 10 miles along the northern Sonoma County coast. But when a development company purchased the land in 1963, and renamed it Sea Ranch, it sparked a battle not resolved until 1981 and resulted in the nation's strongest coastal protection law.

Sea Ranch was envisioned as residential development that blended in with the crashing waves, tall grasses and redwood-studded hills. Yet it engendered legal battles with consequences far beyond its vast ocean horizons. Thanks to the efforts of former County Supervisor Bill Kortum and a merry band of environmentalists calling themselves COAST, court victories locally increased public participation in planning processes, cut the size of the development in half and eventually secured public access to six Sea Ranch beaches. Statewide, COAST and an alliance of environmental groups scored even bigger, passing Proposition 20 in 1972, which created the first Coastal Commission.

Four years later, the state legislature passed the Coastal Act, making the Coastal Commission permanent and providing a framework for counties to create their own Local Coastal Programs (LCP) to ensure permanent protection of the coast's historic and biotic resources.

The Coastal Commission certified Sonoma County's first

LCP in 1980. Three times in the 90s and in 2001, the LCP was updated to reflect changes in the county's General Plan. The current LCP update process actually began in 2001 and may be completed this

### Local Coastal Program Update Public Meetings

Monte Rio  
Jan. 7 • 6 - 8 p.m.  
Monte Rio Community Center  
Redwood Room  
20488 Highway 116

Jenner  
Jan. 15 • 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.  
Timber Cove Inn  
21780 N. Coast Highway 1

Santa Rosa  
Jan. 30 • 1:15 p.m.  
Permit Sonoma Hearing Room  
2550 Ventura Ave.

summer. Now the public is invited to comment on a Public Review Draft prior to it going to the supervisors (see meeting dates above).

A cursory view of the coast will show little change since current process started. But a closer examination will reveal tremendous changes in the coast's physical and social environment.

First, there is the reality of climate change affecting everything from greater storm surges to water-borne diseases to increased risk of wildfires. Under the blue waters, a chain of disasters have devastated kelp forests, starfish have literally melted, and abalone are nearly extirpated.

On the plus side, coastal water

ecosystems now are protected by two National Marine Sanctuaries, and the establishment of 10 state Marine Protected Areas.

On the land, two large preservation areas now straddle the Russian River estuary: Willow Creek State Park and the Jenner Headlands.

Out-of-towners visit the coast in droves—around 2 million a year—while the coastal population is graying and has been in decline. Costs of the coast's limited and already expensive housing have soared, making coastal living out of reach for most people.

Against this background, Sonoma County planners are attempting to draft a document that will be acceptable to a public that is in love with their coast, but must be restrained from loving it to death with the encouragement of the development community. It's a tough job, and much in the LCP Public Review Draft is admirable. But given the enormous environmental challenges we face, this

work in progress, needs...well, more work.

This 400-plus page document is too big and complex for a complete dissection in this space, but let's look at a few places that could use improvement:

The LCP update has a section about the Sonoma County fishing industry and its problems, yet there is no mention of the 10 Marine Protected Areas, which appear to be making strides in bringing back fish stock.

The update supports to new aquaculture facilities, but fails to discern between land-based aquaculture and sea based, the latter

*Continued on Page 14*



# Coalition persists against new gas station proposals in Sonoma County

By Woody Hastings & Jenny Blaker  
Sonoma Group

There are now at least three active new gas station proposals in Sonoma County. The Coalition Opposing New Gas Stations is asking Sierra Club Sonoma Group members to help flag newly emerging proposals as the mission is to oppose any new gas stations in the face of the climate crisis. Here is the rundown:

## PETALUMA: Corner of Maria Drive & South McDowell Boulevard

The Petaluma Safeway gas station proposal is still in the courts. On Oct. 21 there was a final ruling in Sonoma County Superior Court that:

- Safeway must wait on all demolition and construction until the matter is fully settled by the court.
- Save Petaluma has a case and can move forward to hopefully get an Environmental Impact Report.

This is a favorable ruling and good news. The full ruling is available at: <https://www.opposepetalumasafewaygas.com/save-petaluma-lawsuit.html>

After this ruling, Safeway filed a writ of petition, claiming the judge's decision was wrong. Long story short, the judge gave Save Petaluma another month and set a date for Jan. 23 to go over the administrative items and set to a date for another hearing. Safeway continues to try and get the case thrown out.

For the latest check: <https://www.opposepetalumasafewaygas.com/>

## UNINCORPORATED SONOMA COUNTY: 5300 Sebastopol Road (Highway 12 & Llano Road)

This proposal for a 12-pump gas station, car wash, mini mart, RV storage yard, with three large, above-ground fuel storage tanks is still slated to be on the agenda at a future Board of Zoning Adjustments meeting. Regularly scheduled meetings are on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays at 1 p.m. every month. Special meetings may also be calendared, but we have been assured of receiving 30 days' prior notice regardless of the date, as there will be a CEQA hearing (which requires 30 days' notice) concurrent with the BZA meeting.

The main thing needed right now are letters to the *Press Democrat* and other local papers. For the PD, email letters of no more than 200 words to [letters@pressdemocrat.com](mailto:letters@pressdemocrat.com) Include your full name and home city for publication.

For other local papers—*Bohemian, Gazette, Sonoma West Times & News*, etc.—please visit their websites for instructions. Important note: we are purposely not providing a template letter. We have reason to believe that planning commissioners and others are discounting letters that appear to be from the same template. All you need to do is write a brief letter in your own words that says you are opposed to the gas station.

## SANTA ROSA: Elm Tree Station 874 N. Wright Rd.

The Coalition only recently learned of this proposal, thanks to Terri Moon. By the time this

edition of the *Needles* hits the street, a public hearing on the proposal will have taken place on Dec. 12. The notice for that meeting describes the project as a "minor subdivision to create a park site and retail parcel for gasoline, electric charging station, and a neighborhood market." The application was filed by Dhillon Mangal (File # - CC18-004).

Once again, we have a proposal for a new gas station in the Laguna, adjacent to the Joe Rodota Trail, in this case with a whopping 14 operational gas stations within five miles. This is due to the fact that the site is near the downtown core of Santa Rosa. Also of note in this case, the facility would be constructed on undisturbed land, increasing the urban footprint of the city for a purpose that runs counter to Santa Rosa's climate action commitments.

The contact person at the city of Santa Rosa is Adam Ross, city planner, 707-543-4705 or [aross@srcity.org](mailto:aross@srcity.org) Additional information can also be obtained at the Planning & Economic Development Department at Santa Rosa City Hall, 100 Santa Rosa Ave., Room 3 during the following times:

- Mon, Tues, Thur: 8-4:30pm
- Weds: 10:30-4:30pm
- Fri: 8-12pm

The staff report and attachments related to this project are available as of Dec. 12 at [srcity.org](http://srcity.org)

Please send comments and questions to [woodyhastings@gmail.com](mailto:woodyhastings@gmail.com)

The coalition will next meet on **Wednesday, Jan. 29 at the Sebastopol Grange from 6 to 8 p.m.**

# Sonoma County grapples with tourism's effect on economy and environment

By Suzanne Doyle & Mary Davison  
Sonoma Group

Tourism brings money into Sonoma County. It supports restaurants, the hotel and wine industries and regional parks and creates jobs and small businesses that benefit the whole county. But tourism also creates more traffic, strains on local emergency service budgets, pressure to develop wine tourism centers in undeveloped areas and conversion of housing to vacation rentals, which can slowly change the character of Sonoma County for the worse.

Last year, almost 11 million people visited Sonoma County, including nearly 5 million overnight stays. Those numbers are projected to increase if the economy remains stable. With this growth, the balance can tilt away from preserving our quality of life and protecting the environment from development throughout the county.

Gridlock on backroads from big events like barrel tasting weekends or the Ironman triathlon are becoming more frequent. The once-quiet downtowns of Healdsburg and Sonoma are now full of luxury retail stores and hotels that locals can't afford. Emergency response for tourists in hard-to-reach areas like the coast carry significant costs without needed funding being



Tourism can be viewed as a double-edged sword in Sonoma County. While the industry aids the economy, the environmental impacts can be significant if left unchecked.

provided.

Sonoma County has more than 400 wineries, which creates a lot of competition, and corporate takeover of smaller wineries squeezes out the mom-and-pop operations which tend to take better care of the land and make better neighbors. Wine events, including weddings, concerts and other private events that are not directly agricultural,

become essential income. Traffic from these events located on narrow rural roads create a public safety hazard.

Sonoma County is facing an affordable housing crunch, and increased purchases of second homes and conversion of housing to short-term rentals make our housing problems worse. A 2018 *Press Democrat* article pointed out that there were 2,100 known short-term rentals in the county's

jurisdiction. Lack of available affordable housing stock is leading to pressure on Urban Growth Boundaries, which are voter-approved greenbelt buffers to curtail urban sprawl, and pressure to increase building in rural areas and near the airport, where growth is unplanned and not supported by current infrastructure.

The Sonoma County Airport has lengthened runways and is expanding the terminal to welcome more and more visitors. The increase in greenhouse gas emissions caused by more air travel to the county is not accounted for in Sonoma County's climate action plan, which led to it being successfully challenged in court. The County's actions in encouraging air travel and tourism consumption are increasing noise, traffic and emissions. Is this what we want?

Tourism can be a fragile economic sector, relying on low-wage workers, and it is subject to boom and bust cycles. As tourism becomes a larger percentage of the economy, this cycle can be painful during downturns.

One cautionary tale is that of

*Continued on Page 14*



# UGBs bring diverse and affordable communities while saving the planet

*Continued from Page 3*

with UGBs by staging fire-response teams and equipment in the surrounding parks, open space and agriculture.

While there are certainly exceptions, such as Coffey Park in Santa Rosa, research shows that more compact communities are far more wildfire safe overall.

This may seem obvious, but we now have the science that confirms it. Researcher Alexandra Syphard of the Conservation Biology Institute has published extensive research on risk to life and property from wildfire. She found over and over again that the lowest wildfire risk is in the urban areas. The highest wildfire risk is in medium densities, which are often seen in the wildland-urban interface—areas where homes are built near or among lands prone to wildland fire. Upholding UGBs makes a difference. See <https://consbio.org/products/publications/housing-arrangement-and-location-determine-likelihood-housing-loss-due-wildfire>

## Diverse and Affordable Communities in the UGB

The UGB determines where we build, not what we build. UGBs have not caused the housing crunch. The rest of the Bay Area demonstrates that sprawl does not provide affordability.

The requirements for affordable housing are decided by local elected officials and city staff based on General Plans and zoning code requirements. The current housing crisis across the nation has resulted from multiple factors over decades, including loss of state and federal funding, stagnant wages for most workers and the high costs of labor and materials. There is no simple fix, but building inside the UGB

offers a climate-smart solution.

When it comes to the price of homes, even in small cities like Sonoma, a UGB does not inflate the cost.

Market research from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Association of Bay Area governments shows that home prices follow the real estate market and is not correlated with UGBs. Just look at the date of the UGB and a lack of any price escalation. Check your city's or county's housing prices against the Bay Area median over the past two decades here: <http://www.vitalsigns.mtc.ca.gov/home-prices>

The main reason that developers prefer to build single-family homes on greenfields is because it is more profitable. Single-family homes have been the model for development for many decades and what people wanted. General Plans and zoning codes have favored such development. However, we are now coming to grips with the result of sprawl development and its costs. Radical change is on the way to new, smaller, more sustainable homes. The UGB supports and enhances the way forward by requiring more efficient use of already developed land.

## Diversity and UGBs

Urban Growth Boundaries ensure that communities are inclusive and diverse by directing the placement of homes of various types and affordability levels close to shops, services and jobs. Pushing lower-income housing to the edge of town causes separation and more of a burden on families trying to get to work and school every day.

Research shows that cities with and without UGBs have roughly the same ethnic balance. UGB cities actually tend to have lower

per capita incomes, median home prices, and rates of ownership — meaning that renters are equally at home inside a UGB as homeowners. <http://closup.umich.edu/files/pr-2-growthmgmt.pdf>

## CITY & COUNTY BOUNDARIES IN THE

### • Alameda County:

Alameda County, Dublin, Fremont, Hayward, Livermore, Pleasanton

### • Contra Costa County:

Antioch, Contra Costa County, Danville, El Cerrito, Hercules, Martinez, Oakley, Orinda, Pinole, Pittsburg, Pleasant Hill, Richmond, San Pablo, San Ramon, Walnut Creek

### • Marin County:

Marin County, Novato

### • Napa County:

American Canyon, Napa, St. Helena, Yountville

## URBAN GROWTH BAY AREA

### • San Mateo County:

San Mateo County

### • Santa Clara County:

Cupertino, Gilroy, Los Gatos, Milpitas, Morgan Hill, Palo Alto, San Jose

### • Solano County:

Benicia, Fairfield, Rio Vista, Vallejo, Vacaville

### • Sonoma County:

Cloverdale, Cotati, Healdsburg, Petaluma, Rohnert Park, Santa Rosa, Sebastopol, Sonoma, Windsor

The UGBs were controversial and divisive the first time around, with environmentalists and communities collecting signatures and campaigning against developers and business who claimed that city-centered growth would kill the economy. Now more than

UGB is the right thing to do.

The County of Napa was one of the first entities to adopt a county-wide initiative, Measure J, to protect farms and vineyards from housing development that was renewed in 2008 until 2058. The City of Napa's UGB was passed by voters in 1973 and never expires. Only the voters can move the boundary with a ballot measure.

Marin County adopted stringent corridor zoning in the 1970s that are not voter approved, but established and enforced through the General Plan and Zoning Code. The City of Novato is the only city in Marin with a voter-approved UGB, which was renewed by the voters in 2017 for another 25 years with unanimous support from the city council, the Sierra Club and 73 percent of the voters.

In Solano County, elected officials and community leaders appear apathetic about renewing Fairfield's UGB, which expires at the end of 2020. That may be partly due to the success of the UGB as an accepted planning tool. However, if the UGB is not renewed by the voters, the city council will have the power to expand the boundary into the greenbelt for new development at any time—whether a subdivision or on a project-by-project basis—with a simple 3-2 majority vote. While voters may trust its current city council, they face increasing development pressure. The council will also change in the decades ahead.

## New UGBs Needed

As growth spreads across the state, the specter of holding back sprawl has taken on new urgency in places beyond the metropolitan centers.

For example, in the City of Solvang in Santa Barbara County, community activists are ready to begin gathering signatures for a UGB measure on the November

2020 ballot. While neighboring Buellton already has a voter-approved UGB, the county was considering allowing development to spread from Solvang east into the rich farmland of Santa Ynez Valley that seemed safe from urban sprawl not long ago.

On the edge of Silicon Valley in San Benito County, the towns of Hollister and San Juan Baptista have grown tremendously in recent years. Community members and environmentalists are contemplating whether voter-approved UGBs might be in order. Neighboring Gilroy passed Measure H several years ago to create an UGB around its city to prevent conversation of open space.

It is likely we will see the need for more UGBs around the state, and perhaps, ultimately, what we need is state legislation that requires urban growth boundaries in every jurisdiction as is the case in Washington and Oregon states.

## UGBs: Solution for Climate Resiliency, Wildfire Safety, Open Space, Health & Housing

While UGBs are no longer cutting edge or very controversial, they are essential to a climate resilient future and need our support. Renewing these long-standing growth measures with a vote of the people provides certainty to the community, city council, developers, and landowners for the next generation and beyond.

Renewing or adopting new UGBs to focus new growth inside the city is in line with every local, county, regional, and state climate and housing policy that calls for city-centered growth, affordable housing, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. There is no need to push housing out to the edge of town and sacrifice green fields to provide affordable housing. The UGB forces us to use more innovative ways to create housing for

## UGB Overview and History

The first urban growth boundary in the Bay Area was established in 1996 in Petaluma. Since then, voters have implemented UGBs in 38 cities across the Bay Area, with growth control measures approved by city councils (not voter approved) in 11 more.

Four of the Bay Area's nine counties have established urban growth boundaries or urban limit lines, and four others have growth regulations that serve a similar/equivalent purpose. The only county without any kind of geographic growth boundary is San Francisco—understandably.



# Mountains & Rivers bill, a boon for our region, moves forward in Congress

By Victoria Brandon  
Chair, Redwood Chapter

On Nov. 20, 2019 the House Natural Resources Committee, chaired by Arizona Congressman Raul Grijalva, gave the green light to HR 2250, Congressman Jared Huffman's Northwest California Wilderness, Recreation, and Working Forests Act, by a bipartisan 22-11 vote.

This landmark legislation, supported by the Sierra Club and virtually every regional conservation organization along with local business leaders, elected officials, veterans and mountain bikers, would create 260,000 acres of Wilderness and establish 379 miles of federally recognized Wild and Scenic Rivers, while promoting the restoration of 730,000 acres of forest in the Trinity River watershed to reduce wildfire danger risk, cleaning up trespass marijuana grows, and encouraging recreational use.

The affected federal lands are located in Mendocino, Humboldt, Del Norte and Trinity counties, and they all lie within the borders of Redwood Chapter.

Huffman, who has been working with a diverse coalition of stakeholders for several years to devise this legislation, calls it a "creative blend of old school wilderness protection with very innovative manage-



A large part of Redwood Chapter's region will be affected by HR 2250, the Mountains and Rivers bill. The bill would create hundreds of thousands of acres of Wilderness and forest restoration, plus add recreational opportunities.

ment strategies."

Since conception its wildfire mitigation strategies, which include creation of roadside shaded fuel breaks and projects to thin overcrowded second-growth plantations, have become more crucial to surrounding communities all the time.

HR 2250 now awaits a vote by the full House. Both that action and a hearing in the Senate for Senator Kamala Harris's companion bill, S.1110, are expected early in 2020.

In the meantime, North Group outings leaders are working to schedule trips into the proposed Wilderness areas.



## Save the Date

Jan. 31 • 5:30 - 8 p.m.

"Pints for the Planet"

Shady Oak Barrel House, Santa Rosa

# Love being outdoors? Meeting new people? Sierra Club Outings needs you!

Outings leaders can plan outdoor gatherings, such as hikes, paddles, birdwatching and backpacking. The most important quality of a leader is his or her love for the outdoors.

The following are Sierra Club's qualifications for outings leaders:

- Be over 18 years of age and a current Sierra Club member in good standing.
- Have successfully completed a First Aid/CPR class. Also, if you will be leading overnight trips into the wilds we require you complete a Wilderness First Aid Course.

- Complete the Outings Leader Training 101 Course on the Sierra Club website.

- Attend and co-lead a hike with Outings leaders and/or chairs.

- Fill out the online application and questionnaires we have streamlined for you all.

All of these requirements are listed on the Redwood Chapter website: [www.sierraclub.org/redwood/outings-leaderappandresources](http://www.sierraclub.org/redwood/outings-leaderappandresources)

Please reach out with any questions you may have about becoming an Outings Leader.

Contact Outings Chair Louis Vas at [lvas@sonic.net](mailto:lvas@sonic.net)

## Meetings

**Mon. Jan. 6 - Solano Group ExCom**  
Come join us for our monthly meetings, which rotate between Vallejo, Fairfield and Vacaville. We are making a positive impact on our county and need a few more people to help carry the load. Call Jane for information. (707)319-6398.

**Mon. Jan. 6 - Sonoma Group.**  
Conservation Committee 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm.  
**Sonoma Group Executive Committee** at 6:30 p.m. Info: Suzanne Doyle [carsort@gmail.com](mailto:carsort@gmail.com)

**Tues. Jan. 14 - North Group** is holding its monthly Executive Committee meeting. All are welcome to discuss local conservation issues between 7:45 and 8:45 p.m. or come for the business meeting starting at 6:45 p.m. Meet at the Adorni Center Conference Room on the Eureka Waterfront. For more information, contact Gregg at (707) 826-3740.

**Sat., Jan. 18 - Redwood Chapter ExCom. And ConsCom.**  
Location: Environmental Center, Santa Rosa. Conservation Committee meets at 10 a.m., ExCom meets 1-3 p.m. at the Environmental Center in Santa Rosa, 55A Ridgway. Info: Victoria [vbrandon@lakelive.info](mailto:vbrandon@lakelive.info)

**Wed. Jan. 22 — Lake Group**, 6PM general membership meeting at the Mendocino College Lake Center, 2565 Parallel Dr in Lakeport, featuring a presentation by Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument Manager Rebecca Wong, who will talk about the next stages of Monument planning, possible trail and signage improvements, and opportunities to volunteer.

**Mon. Feb. 3 - Sonoma Group.**  
**Conservation Committee** at 5:30 pm - 6:30 p.m.  
**Sonoma Group Executive Committee** at 6:30 p.m. Info: Suzanne Doyle [carsort@gmail.com](mailto:carsort@gmail.com)

**Mon. Feb. 3 - Solano Group ExCom.**  
Come join us for our monthly meetings which rotate between Vallejo, Fairfield and Vacaville. We are making a positive impact on our county and need a few more people to help carry the load. Call Jane for information. (707)319-6398.

**Tues. Feb. 11 - North Group** is holding its monthly Executive Committee meeting. All are welcome to discuss local conservation issues between 7:45 and 8:45 p.m. or come for the business meeting starting at 6:45 p.m. Meet at the Adorni Center Conference Room on the Eureka Waterfront. For more information, contact Gregg at (707) 826-3740.

**Wed Feb. 26 — Lake Group Executive Committee** 6 p.m., at locations which vary. All members are cordially invited to attend, but asked to contact Chair Denise Rushing, [productfrogger@gmail.com](mailto:productfrogger@gmail.com), to confirm time and location.

**Mon. March 2 - Solano Group ExCom.**  
Come join us for our monthly meetings which rotate between Vallejo, Fairfield and Vacaville. We are making a positive impact on our county and need a few more people to help carry the load. Call Jane for information. (707)319-6398.

**Mon. March 2 - Sonoma Group.**  
**Conservation Committee** 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm.  
**Sonoma Group Executive Committee** at 6:30 p.m. Info: Suzanne Doyle [carsort@gmail.com](mailto:carsort@gmail.com)

**Tues. March 10 - North Group** is holding its monthly Executive Committee meeting. All are welcome to discuss local conservation issues between 7:45 and 8:45 p.m. or come for the business meeting starting at 6:45 p.m. Meet at the Adorni Center Conference Room on the Eureka Waterfront. For more information, contact Gregg at (707) 826-3740.



## Local Coastal Plan draft update addresses much, still needs more input

*Continued From Page 7*

frequently damaging to migrating salmon.

The document's discussion of climate change is based almost entirely on generalized federal Environmental Protection Agency reporting. With the exception of a discussion of sea-level rise, there is nothing Sonoma Coast-specific, so no actions to protect native flora and fauna are proposed, though there is some discussion of climate change's effects on crops.

There is a call to limit new greenhouse gas emissions through permits, but no discussion about carbon sequestration through forest enhancement and preservation. And as long as we're on forestry, there's not a word about forest conversions, nor a mention of logging in a coastal floodplain, as proposed in the Dogwood Timber Harvest Plan.

Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas are listed in the update, but categorization of ESHAs have been

eliminated. There is no mention of areas of future potentially sensitive habitat.

There is no language that weakens the Agricultural Land Element to allow for large-scale wineries and event centers, but it doesn't take too much imagination to anticipate proposed advantageous ambiguous language. County planners have said that such development is unlikely and not preferred due to lack of appropriate sites, but the LCP update does not close the door to such development.

So why should you participate in this lengthy and complex planning process? You may be interested in sustainable development, housing, recreation and much more in the coastal zone.

Simply put, you can help ensure that the LCP truly reflects real life conditions, community values and the need to address the "climate emergency" that the Sonoma County's Supervisors have commendably declared.

## Striking a balance between healthy tourism & environmental conservation

*Continued From Page 9*

Venice, Italy. This famous city is overwhelmed by a tourism industry, which has displaced most of its traditional economy and residents. Cruise ships pollute the water and cram streets with visitors, while the tourism industry does nothing to address the city's existential threat from sea level rise.

Closer to home, we can look to our neighboring Napa County, which has been battling at the ballot box and in the courts over winery expansion and land conservation.

It's time to rein in the Sonoma County tourism industry to stop even further erosion of this beautiful piece of California. County leaders can install limits on vacation rentals and

**We live in a beautiful place. We can restore balance between a healthy tourism economy and adhering to safeguards to protect Sonoma County for future generations to live in and enjoy. Let's choose to help sustain it.**

second homes, work to improve and encourage public transit to curb event traffic and rethink expansion of the airport. More of the Transient Occupancy Tax could go to local emergency jurisdictions. Minimum wage throughout Sonoma County should be \$15 an hour.

Infrastructure upgrades, like a network of protected bike paths, would benefit locals and tourists. We could better support the eco-tourism sector, which has a lighter impact and needs a pristine and rural landscape to succeed.

We live in a beautiful place. We can restore balance between a healthy tourism economy and adhering to safeguards to

protect Sonoma County for future generations to live in and enjoy. Let's choose to help sustain it.

Show your love for the environment by becoming a Sierra Club volunteer!  
Check out [www.sierraclub.org/redwood/get-involved](http://www.sierraclub.org/redwood/get-involved)

To make a donation to Sierra Club Redwood Chapter,  
go online to:

[www.sierraclub.org/redwood/donate](http://www.sierraclub.org/redwood/donate)

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mail a check to:

P.O. Box 466  
Santa Rosa, CA 95402

All donations to Redwood Chapter stay local, and are used  
in our work with issues that affect your community.





# Redwood Needles

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## PINTS FOR THE PLANET



Jan. 31 • 5:30-8 pm  
Shady Oak  
Barrelhouse  
420 1st St. Santa Rosa

Mingle with elected leaders, discuss exciting environmental initiatives with chapter activists & raise a glass to the health of the planet that sustains us.



**SIERRA CLUB**  
REDWOOD CHAPTER

Join us for a night of mingling, speakers, music and good cheer as we raise awareness about Sierra Club and local environmental issues and initiatives.

A slate of speakers will include local elected leaders, and Redwood Chapter leaders will be on hand to talk about what's happening in our region and how you can help.

Show up for an hour or stay the whole time. We will provide snacks, and it will be a cash bar. Let's chat on how we work to strengthen our ties as an environmental community to protect, explore and enjoy this beautiful planet.

[www.sierraclub.org/redwood](http://www.sierraclub.org/redwood)

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