

Redwood Needles



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Volume 60 Number 1

Newsletter of the Redwood Chapter of the Sierra Club

February/March 2019

State Slams Orcem/VMT Project Report

Before Thanksgiving the California Department of Justice (DOJ) sent a 13 page letter to the City of Vallejo criticizing the Draft Environmental Impact Report on the deep water port called Vallejo Marine Terminal and the proposed cement factory tenant called Orcem (Orcem/VMT or applicant). As unpublished updates have been circulated among some of the interested parties by the applicant, the DOJ apparently has included some of those updates in their critique and therefore have referred to the application as a Draft Final Environmental Impact Report (DFEIR).

Deputy Attorney General, Erin Ganahl wrote; "The DFEIR fails to adequately disclose, analyze, and mitigate the significant environmental impacts of the project; the EJA [Environmental Justice Analysis] improperly concludes that the project would not disproportionately impact low-income communities of color, and thus misleads decision makers and the public by minimizing

the projects significant environmental justice concerns."

In fact, the DOJ concludes that the DFEIR is so deficient that it violates the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The DOJ wrote "The DFEIR Fails to Adequately Consider the Project's Environmental Setting and Cumulative Impacts"; "The Revised Air Quality Analysis is Flawed and Underestimates the Project's Air Quality Impacts"; "The DFEIR's Mitigation Measures for Other Project Impacts are Inadequate, Unlawfully Deferred, and Unenforceable"; and "The EJA's Demographic Analysis is Misleading".

Most importantly, the DOJ verified the Sierra Club's concerns regarding coal shipments. "The DFEIR fails to consider the potentially significant impacts that would occur if coal or petcoke were transported through the Terminal. The DFEIR states that the Terminal would not handle coal or any other petroleum-based products. But, the DFEIR does not point to

any enforceable condition that would prevent the handling or transport of coal through the Terminal or guarantee that no coal could be transported through the Terminal." Basically, the applicant is asking Vallejoans to trust them on a no coal through the terminal. This is very similar to the proposed terminal in Oakland where the developer promised no coal in recorded documents and as soon as the project was approved sold half of the development to coal interests in Utah.

The various groups within the Sierra Club including the Beyond Coal project; the National Clean Air Team; the Redwood Chapter and the Solano Group have all applauded the DOJ report. As Sierra Club members, we should all be proud of the efforts these members (and others) have done to protect the Bay from this project and protect the citizens of Vallejo.

—JOE FELLER, SOLANO GROUP CHAIR

Meet our New Executive Director

Meet Jeff Morris, Redwood Chapter's new executive director. We are excited to have his energy and leadership skills work for us to build a better and more engaged community within our region.

Morris was born and raised in Weaverville, a rural hamlet in the mountainous Trinity County.

He left when he was 18 years old and returned 20 years ago. His family has resided in Trinity County since the late 1940s.

Sierra Club has been a part of Morris' life since childhood as his parents were members, and conservation has been a part of his family's legacy. Both sets of grandparents were fans of Teddy Roosevelt and John

Muir, and his parents and grandparents were "intimately involved" in the development and passage of the 1984 Wilderness Act, which placed more than 3 million acres of land in California into the National Wilderness Preservation System.

Morris wanted to tackle the executive director position to be able to expand the chapter's capacity and efficacy throughout the region. "There is already a great deal of talent at work in our existing volunteer corps and membership, and I'm excited to...build additional capacity to ensure the iconic landscapes, essential ecological systems and natural environment are protected for future generations."

Through his skill set of marketing, sales, understanding of local government and policy and his "if it's not fun, it's a failure" work ethic, plus a "near religious fervor" for John Coltrane, Morris intends to work with the existing

leadership to reach new members and form new partnerships.

Morris believes the region's biggest environmental challenge isn't directly environmental but rather resides in the engagement with community members and finding new ways to motivate people to become active and involved. "Staying relevant and meaningful to our existing and future members to effectively meet the dramatic environmental changes ahead, which are all being accelerated by climate change, is the work that's in front of us."

Here are some fun facts about Morris:

Favorite places to go outdoors:

Beaches in San Diego, Humboldt and Nehalem Oregon. Anywhere in the Trinity Alps Wilderness, the South Fork Trinity River. I also have a recent new love for the Dip Sea Trail in Marin.

Memorable outdoor experience:

August of 2017 my cousin Cedric and I were caught in a lightning storm near the top of the Trinity Alps (Smith Lake). We hid in the fetal position behind a boulder as lightning pounded within 100 feet of us on and off for about an hour. I think we both still have a little PTSD.

Favorite quotes:

"Most people don't recognize opportunity because it shows up in overalls and looks like hard work." — Thomas Edison

"A man who procrastinates in his choosing

"New Executive Director"

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2018 Redwood Chapter Year in Review

January

In response to the horrific wildfires of October 2017, Sierra Club joined a coalition to raise and disperse funds to some of the most vulnerable people affected by the fires and initiatives to aid conservation and future fire protection. The Just and Resilient Future Fund began with a \$50,000 grant to the Farmer's Alliance, and by the end of the year had raised more than \$300,000.

February

Sierra Club members and environmentalists from around California met in Sacramento to call attention to the Trump administration's assault on the nation's coastline by proposing to open offshore oil and gas drilling. Redwood Chapter chartered a bus to take members to the rally and public hearing Feb. 8.

March

Conservationists, business leaders and Sierra Club members join forces in Napa to place a local measure on the June ballot to protect oak woodlands and watersheds from vineyard development. The coalition raised awareness among Napa County voters about the dire need to protect the land, while an opposition comprised of deep pockets

from the wine industry launched a smear campaign to defeat the measure.

April

Earth Day festivities were held across the world and in our own region. Sierra Club members participated in events in Vallejo, Lake County and Humboldt, among other celebrations.

May

Sonoma County enters bidding process for a compost facility in Santa Rosa. The prospect is exciting for zero waste advocates, of which there is a growing population in the region, because compostables have been trucked out of county, adding to greenhouse gas emissions. Sonoma Group members have been participating in Sonoma County Zero Waste events for the last few years.

June

Our local state Sen. Mike McGuire sends a bill through the Senate to build a 300-mile recreational trail through the region. The Great Redwood Trail would stretch from the San Francisco Bay to Humboldt. The bill was signed into law by Gov. Jerry Brown Sept. 30.

"2018 Year in Review" cont. on page 3

Protect North Coast Water from Winter Logging: Your Comments Needed

North Coast Water Board rules for private and public land logging are not adequately protecting water quality; logging and hauling in wet weather cannot be done without unacceptable risks to water quality. Suggest that the renewed permit prohibit log hauling between October 30 and April 1 and only allow logging operations when there is a truly extended dry period lasting at least a week. Please email comments to Northcoast@waterboards.ca.gov by the deadline of February 4, 2019.

For more information, see the full article on page 7

For more Redwood Chapter information:

<http://www.sierraclub.org/redwood>

Message from the Chair

Predicting the future is always risky, but I'm willing to look into my murky crystal ball and take a chance on a couple of forecasts.

First, with Jeff Morris at the helm as Redwood Chapter's first ever executive director, we expect to significantly expand our capacity for forceful conservation action in 2019 and also to improve our ability to initiate and maintain an active dialog with you, our grassroots members and supporters, who will be our greatest source of strength in the future as you have always been in the past.

In 2019 we expect to defeat the destructive Orcem cement plant and deep-water terminal looming over a disadvantaged

Vallejo neighborhood along with any scheme to ship coal from that location. (See article in this issue on page one.)

In 2019 we expect the reintroduction of Rep. Jared Huffman's "Mountains and Rivers" legislation establishing new wilderness areas and promoting conservation measures on public lands in the northern part of the chapter.

In 2019 we expect active engagement in efforts to reconstruct the Highway 37 corridor in a manner that protects this vital roadway from sea level rise, restores wetland habitat and incorporates public transit.

In 2019 we expect to participate in marches, rallies and demonstrations against ongoing assaults by the Trump

administration on our land, water and wildlife.

In 2019 we expect continuing momentum to increase renewable energy, electrify the transportation sector, and achieve Zero Waste.

In 2019 we expect to continue efforts to help our communities recover from wildfire, and to rebuild in ways that will reduce risks to homes and businesses in the future.

And in 2019 we expect to head outdoors as often as possible, where the wonders of nature can work their magic on our minds and spirits and nurture renewed hope for the future.

Happy New Year!

—VICTORIA BRANDON, REDWOOD CHAPTER CHAIR

"2018 Year in Review"

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July

Mountain and Rivers legislation is introduced by Rep. Jared Huffman to protect hundreds of thousands of acres in Mendocino, Humboldt, Del Norte and Trinity counties. HR 6595 would create new trails and public access into the wilderness as well as coordinate the cleanup of illegal marijuana grows on public land. The bill would also work to bolster defense against wildfires.

August

SMART train celebrates its first anniversary, noting higher than expected ridership and looking toward expansion. Redwood Chapter's Transportation Chair Steve Birdlebough has worked on the planning of the 43-mile train route, and Sierra Club members are excited about the future station at the Larkspur ferry terminal (set to open at the end of this year), and future expansion north to Windsor, Healdsburg and Cloverdale. Birdlebough says he's optimistic about SMART's future. "I think the service has proved itself and the more of it we can get on line the better."

September

People concerned about climate change rallied Sept. 8 across the world for the Rise for Climate march. Local marches were held in Ukiah and San Francisco and were attended by Redwood Chapter members.

October

No Coal in Vallejo forms to organize for a coal ban ordinance in the city of Vallejo. The group, spearheaded by Solano Group Chair Joe Feller, gets support from No Coal in Oakland and Sierra Club's Beyond Coal campaign. Anniversary of the Tubbs, Nuns and Atlas fires marked even as the state continues to face record-breaking wildfires.

The Dogwood Timber Harvest Plan in the Gualala River watershed was finally rejected by a judge on Oct. 16. The misdirected plan was fought for three years and Redwood Chapter provided some financial support in the litigation against CalFIRE.

November

A general election on Nov. 6 brought mostly positive results for the environment nationwide, while many of Sierra Club-endorsed candidates

and ballot measures in California won at the polls. The Democratic takeover of the U.S. House of Representatives and some progressives calling for a Green New Deal are hopeful signs to a more environmentally aware and climate-action-oriented leadership. Among other wins, Measure M in Sonoma County passed, providing a 1/8-cent sales tax increase to support regional parks. The Regional Measure 3, which would have provided more money for transportation projects, did not receive the two-thirds support it needed, but advocates are hoping to get some of that funding earmarked for transit improvements anyway, including work along Highway 37 and SMART train.

December

Redwood Chapter hires Jeff Morris as its Executive Director. Jeff, who lives in Trinity County, brings a new energy and enthusiasm to the chapter and will provide oversight and direction to the chapter and its six local groups so we can all better achieve our goals. (Read more about Jeff on page one of this issue.)

Looking at the year in full, it was one of continued vigilance on the growing effects of climate change on our region. From ever-intensifying wildfires to shrinking watersheds and fish-spawning streams, from abalone population collapse to record-setting heat waves, there remains a stalwart commitment from our volunteer leaders and members to work with Sierra Club on protecting our natural world and getting out and enjoying it. Our local elected leaders are by and large huge supporters of the environment, presenting a good foil for the Trump administration, which aims to pollute and destroy as much land, air and water as possible. Redwood Chapter is heartened by the outpouring of support through active voting, donations and calls to action. We are continually looking for more volunteers and donations at the local levels. A few local groups are seeking members for their executive committees, including Napa, North and Mendocino, and the chapter is looking for a new newsletter editorial assistant (see ad on page 8), among other key positions. Please contact us at vrbrandon@lakelive.info with interest or leads. Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our natural world.

"New Executive Director"

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will inevitably have his choice made for him by circumstance." — Hunter S. Thompson

Pet: I have a 2.5 year old basenji mix dog named Ruby. She loves being out on the trail.

If he could be a mountain range...: The Andes because they have such a diverse set of environments (volcanos, glaciers, grasslands, Patagonia), the historic brilliance of the Inca and other civilizations, the headwaters of the Amazon, the range spans the length of almost the entire South American continent and so much more. I floated the Amazon from Manaus to Belem when I was 18 but never got to the Andes, which have always held a spot of mystery in my mind.



View of Santa Rosa from Taylor Mountain. Photo by Bill Furney.



You don't need a resolution to make a big change.

This year, say goodbye to old habits and hello to new beginnings. **Join Sierra Club now!**

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone (_____) _____
 Email _____

YES! I would like to give a New Year's gift membership to
Gift Recipient _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Join today and receive a **FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!**



Check enclosed. Please make payable to Sierra Club.
 Please charge my: Visa Mastercard AMEX
 Cardholder Name _____
 Card Number _____ Exp. Date ____/____/____
 Signature _____

Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
Special Offer	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$49
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35

Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to Sierra magazine and \$1 for your Chapter newsletters.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 421041, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041 or visit our website www.sierraclub.org

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Redwood Needles

April 2019 Deadline: Due March 8th

Submit Articles/Reports/Ad Copy via e-mail to:

odavison@sonic.net

Send Outings to Louis Vas: lvas75@sonic.net and Meetings to Carl Inglin: chinglin@sonic.net

Outings

2019 SCHEDULE!!

Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park

April 7-9, May 5-7, June 9-11, July 14-16,
August 18-20, September 22-24, October 20-22



Sat. Feb. 9 - North Group. Dry Lagoon-Stone Lagoon Hike.

We will hike north along the beach, then turn inland past a variety of dense vegetation to the Stone Lagoon boat-in State Park campground, and return. Bring lunch. No dogs. Class M-5-A. Carpools: Meet 9 AM Ray's shopping center in Valley West, trailhead 10 AM Dry Lagoon Day Use Area on Highway 101. Leader Ned, nedforsyth48@gmail.com, 825-3652. Heavy rain cancels.

Sat. Mar. 9 - North Group. Arcata Community Forest Fickle Hill-Diamond Dr. Hike.

Join us for a spring stroll through the redwoods. Thrushes, trilliums, milkmaids and more. No dogs. Class E-5-A. Meet 9 AM at Arcata Safeway parking lot, or Fickle Hill parking area 9:20. Leader Ned, nedforsyth48@gmail.com, 825-3652.

Join us for a 3-day, 3-island, live-aboard tour of the enchanting Channel Islands. Hike wild, windswept trails bordered with blazing wildflowers. Kayak rugged coastlines, Marvel at pristine waters teeming with frolicking seals and sea lions. Train your binoculars on unusual sea and land birds—and an occasional whale. Watch for the endangered island fox. Look for reminders of the Chumash people who lived on these islands for thousands of years. Or, just relax at sea. This cruise departs from Santa Barbara. The cost, \$730, includes an assigned bunk and all

meals, snacks, and beverages. Kayaking will be overseen by our concessionaire; all hikes will be on trails, class 1 terrain. This trip is a fundraiser to support the Sierra Club political program in California. To reserve space send a \$200 check, written to California Sierra Club PAC to Joan Jones Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732. For more information contact leaders:

Joan Jones Holtz: jholtzhln@aol.com; 626-443-0706

Wayne Vollaire: avollaire1@gmail.com; 909-327-6825

Instructions to Hikers

Outings will start not later than 15 minutes after scheduled meeting time. The leader is in charge of the trip and is responsible for your welfare and the good name of the Club. He/she must have your cooperation to make the trip safe, pleasant and rewarding. Never charge ahead of the leader and keep within sight or shouting distance of the person ahead of you so you do not miss an intersecting trail. Do not lag behind rear leader: if you need help, the rear leader will remain to assist you. Do not leave the group without the leader's permission. Be adequately equipped and prepared. You should carry lunch and liquids. Wear footwear appropriate for the outing. In most cases that would be hiking boots.

Guard against fire. Do not smoke on Sierra Club outings. Build fires only with the leader's permission, and extinguish them completely. Guns or radios are not to be brought on hikes.

The Sierra Club does not have insurance for carpooling arrangements and assumes no liability for them. Participants assume the risks associated with travel. Reimburse the carpool driver. Carpools are not part of the outing but a means of conserving natural resources. All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read the liability waiver please go to: <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/>, or contact the Outings Department at (415) 977-5528 for a printed version.

Visitors are welcome

All Sierra Club trips are open to the public unless otherwise announced. You are free to bring all members of your family and guests. Children are usually welcome, but please call the leader to make sure it is an appropriate hike.

DIFFICULTY	MILEAGE	ELEVATION GAIN
E - Easy	Actual	A - Less than 1,000
M - Moderate	Mileage	B - 1,000 to 2,000
H - Hard		C - 2,000 to 3,000
S - Strenuous		D - over 3,000
V - Very Strenuous		

The actual mileage will be listed for each trip. Elevation gain will reflect the gain from the start of the hike to the highest point. If you need to know the cumulative gain, please contact the leader.

To submit outings write-ups

Send all outings write-ups to: Louis Vas, Outings Chair, (lvas75@sonic.net) by the 8th of the month. All leaders must coordinate their outings with their Group Outings Chair.

CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.



Ratings for Outings Leaders: How fast or slow do you go?

Wonder if an outing leader walks fast or slow? Keep in mind that the leader's speed is but one part of hiking. How high up a mountain the hike starts, the total mileage and elevation gain (up hill) and loss (down hill) greatly affect the difficulty of a hike, regardless of how fast or slow you walk. If you have any doubts about being able to do a hike or have other questions, please call the leader to discuss your concerns. These ratings only serve as a guide and are not a substitute for you being in appropriate physical condition before participating in an outing.

Leaders are grouped according to how fast they normally hike. Please keep in mind that this info is to help you decide if a hike is right for you. The outing rating instructions to hikers is also important for participants to read. Look at the difficulty of the hike. If the rating is moderate with few or more frequent stops a fast pace hiker must hike slower to accommodate that rating.

Varies, see hike description for details: Jim Gannon Phil Kohlmetz
Doug Tracey

Moderate-pace with few stops: Lorrie Lagasse Julie Kreis Paul Farley

Moderate-pace with more frequent stops: Carol Vellutini Yvonne Kramer Brian Collett Pete McGee Jonah Freedman Steve Devoto Ned Forsyth

Slower-pace: Allison Bronkall Carl Inglin

Toxic Tragedy: Andrew Wheeler Has Betrayed Congress and Shamelessly Cooked the Books to Help Coal Barons

Andrew Wheeler, acting Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), has proposed that the EPA ignore the public health benefits provided by the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards (MATS). Wheeler arbitrarily decreed the harms posed by mercury and other neurotoxins to be insignificant, and turns a deliberately blind eye to the dangers of particulate pollution (microscopic particles which cause asthma and cardiovascular disease).

This proposal is a shameful betrayal of the Clean Air Act that will put the health of tens of thousands of people in danger. Wheeler's decision sacrifices public health, and the interests of dozens of utilities nationwide who have already invested in the pollution controls needed for MATS, to benefit only a handful of coal industry interests—even as virtually every economic indicator suggests that coal cannot compete with cleaner, cheaper energy technologies like solar and wind.

Congress was clear in the 1990 amendments to the Clean Air Act that it, like the American public, placed high value on addressing the dangerous health consequences of mercury and other highly toxic air pollutants - it specifically listed mercury, arsenic, cadmium, hydrochloric



acid, and hydrogen cyanide among the over 180 chemicals it deemed "highly toxic." After congressionally-required National Academy of Sciences research on the toxicological effects of methylmercury, EPA concluded in 2000, and confirmed in 2012 and 2016, that regulation of hazardous air pollution from coal- and oil-fired power plants "is appropriate and necessary."

Now comes Andrew Wheeler, who decides that the control of mercury is not "appropriate or necessary." Tell that to the nursing mother whose infant's neurological system has been compromised by mercury poisoning (according to Mr. Wheeler, that poisoning is worth just a few thousand dollars). Wheeler proposes to reverse course on air toxics by cooking the books in favor of this Administration's small

cabal of coal industry cronies. Instead of acknowledging the full benefits of the MATS rule through rigorous analyses and accurate data, Wheeler's proposal intentionally excludes the benefits of reducing all of the pollutants controlled by the MATS rule, and assigns no value whatsoever to many of the tragic health consequences associated with air toxics.

Acting Administrator Wheeler does not dispute that the MATS rule, in fact, produces massive reductions in toxic particulate pollution, nor does he dispute that the rule is currently saving up to 11,000 lives per year (and approximately 130,000 asthma attacks per year). Instead, he simply asserts that under the Clean Air Act -- enacted precisely to address these sorts of harms -- these lives, and asthma attacks, do not matter. And so EPA proposes to ignore them.

The MATS Rule has yielded deep reductions in nationwide emissions of many of the toxics Congress targeted in the Clean Air Act.

According to EPA's calculations, the rule reduces power plant mercury emissions by 75 percent and eliminates more than one-third of total national mercury emissions. It reduces all emissions of hydrochloric acid gas by 49 percent and other hazardous air pollutants such as arsenic, chromium, and nickel by 38 percent. Yet Wheeler has concluded that EPA should assign all of these benefits a dollar value of just \$6 million, based solely on an estimate of the lost salary that might result from suffering brain damage as an infant (an estimate that EPA itself has acknowledged is insufficient to measure the true impact of mercury poisoning). On that basis, Mr. Wheeler would conclude that it is not worthwhile to ask industry to bear the MATS rule's expense, even though EPA has found, and does not now dispute, that the utility industry can control toxic air pollution at a reasonable cost.

If you find this math confusing, you're not alone; fraudulent accounting maneuvers are typically impenetrable, and this is no exception. This isn't economics, science, or public policy--this is just politics of the most corrupt sort, doling out favors to the Administration's friends at the expense of nearly everyone else. Utilities, who bear the cost of complying with the MATS rule, have asked Wheeler to not weaken or impede the policy because they've already paid for the pollution control equipment and have no way of recouping their costs. Medical scientists, who are at the forefront of studying the effects of mercury on human health, have repeatedly told the EPA how important the standards are for protecting America's most vulnerable populations, including pregnant women, children, and seniors. And elected leaders have routinely assailed any effort to attack the MATS rule, since the majority of the public

supports its health benefits.

Why did Wheeler make the proposal then?

We can't know--but we can follow the money. Only a handful of coal industry executives, who are coincidentally major supporters of the Trump Administration, have asked for MATS to be repealed - one of whom is a former employer of Wheeler. With the costs of the MATS to utilities being far lower than original estimates (another fact that EPA chooses to ignore), Wheeler's proposal only helps his former boss and a small group of coal-reliant Trump Administration

supporters. They would risk the health of tens of thousands to prop up their declining industry.

This is an affront to Congress' intent, EPA's mission, and the rule of law. The Trump administration has violated the law yet again, and we will challenge their action in the courts of law and public opinion.

— PAT GALLAGHER, SIERRA CLUB ENVIRONMENTAL LAW PROGRAM DIRECTOR

This article originally appeared in the Sierra Club Insider and website.

If you wish your bequest to be used locally, be sure to specify "Sierra Club Redwood Chapter" or the name of your local Group in your bequest.

Non-Sierra Club Outings & Events

The following activities and events are not sponsored nor administered by the Sierra Club. The Sierra Club has no information about the planning of these activities and makes no representations or warranties about the quality, safety, supervision or management of such activities. They are published because they may be of interest to the readers of this publication.

Sonoma County Regional Parks trail work days.

On the day of the project you can call 707-548-4424 for an update or if you get lost coming to the park. Your support and dedication to our County's trails really makes a big difference. To RSVP for any of these projects please call John at 707-565-3356. ParksVolunteer@sonoma-county.org

Garden Volunteer Days: First Friday of the Month, 9am – noon. Laguna Environmental Center, 900 Sanford Road, Santa Rosa. Enjoy our native plant garden! Volunteers are essential in beautifying our site. Share your expertise or learn new skills by getting involved today! http://lagunafoundation.org/volunteer_garden.html

Laguna Stewardship Days: Once a month on a Saturday from 9am - noon.

Details of the site location announced 2 weeks in advance of the workday (various sites along the Laguna) Help care for the Laguna and restore critical wildlife habitat! Joining the Laguna Stewards is a fun and meaningful way to volunteer while enjoying the outdoors.

http://lagunafoundation.org/volunteer_lagunastewards.html



Lake Group Report

Next Steps for the Blue Ribbon Committee

Lake Group continues to engage with the "Blue Ribbon Committee for the Restoration of Clear Lake" established legislatively in 2017. The Committee held its second meeting in Upper Lake on December 20, with the morning devoted to a tour of the Middle Creek Wetland Restoration Project site and presentations by local tribes about their ongoing water quality monitoring work. The afternoon business meeting began with fire recovery presentations from the Mendocino National Forest and Ukiah BLM, with a special focus on erosion control. Nearly 100,000 acres of the Clear Lake basin burned in the Ranch and River Fires and the threat of dramatically increased sedimentation is a major concern, both to Clear Lake and to Lake Pillsbury. Roads and trails are a priority since they can be primary erosion vectors. It is extremely unfortunate that the federal government shutdown (which began the next day) has brought urgent remedial work to a screeching halt just as the rainy season was beginning in earnest.

The remaining discussion focused on the creation of a Technical Advisory Subcommittee which would be charged with bringing recommendations back to the whole committee at its quarterly meetings. Legal compliance considerations mean that only two actual committee members can serve on any given subcommittee, with the remaining members drawn from experts in the community. It was decided that the TAS should be co-chaired by the county representative and a tribal representative, with additional appointments to be made when the committee reconvenes on March 13.

Dollar General opens another front

As previously reported, a group of

Middletown residents have organized to oppose the Dollar General outlet that has been proposed on the edge of downtown. At that time it was expected that the proposal would come before the Planning Commission before the end of 2018, but as of this writing the developer's application was still incomplete, and the timeline very uncertain.

In the meantime a separate application is being prepared for another Dollar General outlet on the North Shore, which like the other stores would be in a prominent Highway 20 location. The building has been sized to qualify for a Minor Use Permit, which theoretically could be granted by the Community Development Department without a Planning Committee hearing or indeed any public hearing at all— though such an eventuality is most unlikely in this case. To provide an opportunity for public involvement and also to center the discussion around facts rather than wild rumors, the Upper Lake Town Hall has scheduled a community discussion on January 16, where Lake Group chair Denise Rushing, who lives in Upper Lake, plans to represent the Sierra Club.

Unfortunately the truly ancient Upper Lake Area plan does not contain the specific design guidelines that are such a strong point in Middletown, but one argument applies across the board: since the developers intended from the beginning to seek multiple locations in Lake County (it's part of Dollar General's fundamental business plan), why are all these applications being considered singly, with no attention either to cumulative impacts or to CEQA piecemealing?

—VICTORIA BRANDON,

LAKE GROUP CONSERVATION CHAIR

Redwood Chapter and all local Groups have a variety of volunteer opportunities. Visit www.sierraclub.org/redwood/get-involved for details or contact vbrandon@lakelive.info



Solano Breeze Corner

Covering Benicia, Fairfield, Rio Vista, Suisun, Vacaville and Vallejo

sierraclubsolanogroup@gmail.com

707-319-6398

Please attend the Solano Group meetings, usually on the first Monday of each month. Our next dates are Feb 4, March 4, 2019, at 6.30pm. To confirm location, call/text Jane at 707-319- 6398

VALCORE Recycling and Paper Shredding updates:

Solano Group helps out with paper shredding every 3rd Saturday each month at 38 Sheridan Street, Vallejo from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. There is a charge of \$.50 per pound (CASH or CHECK ONLY) of paper shredded. (Maximum: 100 pounds)

WEEKDAY SHREDDING from 10 am to 4 pm, closed 1 pm to 2 pm for lunch (CREDIT OR DEBIT ONLY).

Sierra Club volunteers help tend the money and direct traffic. Once a year is all we ask, and you only need work an hour or so. Volunteers get FREE shredding!

Annual Flyway Festival

The 23rd annual Flyway Festival is on Feb 8, 9, 10, 2019, from 9am-4pm. Building 221, 880 Walnut Ave, Mare Island, Vallejo. More information at www.visitvallejo.com.

—JANE BOGNER, CONTRIBUTOR

GREG PETERSON, EDITOR

Napa Group Report

2019 looks to be another eventful year in Napa's environmental history.

The Walt Ranch trial is finally scheduled. Its outcome holds consequences not just for the Walt property itself, but for the County's methods of protecting woodlands and endangered species.

Measure C, the failed initiative to protect woodlands and watersheds continues to generate aftershocks. Neither the agricultural interests, nor the political establishment want to see a second initiative, and they are reaching out to environmentalists to find mutually agreeable ways to move ahead on environmental protections.

The County Climate Action plan will soon be unveiled. Will it demonstrate a sincere effort to come to grip with climate change, or will it represent just more "business as usual"? The Napa Sierra Club will continue to coordinate with our sister organization, "Napa Climate Now" on strategies to reign-in greenhouse gases in Napa County.

County residents continue to balk at the traffic congestion and other fallout from seemingly unstoppable winery event-center growth.

Meanwhile, restaurants and other employers of low-wage workers are hurting due to the lack of available work-force housing. The county has promised to crack down on wineries which abuse their use permits. Will we find a way to balance the needs of workers and the wine industry?

Napa County may reach a deal with the Bureau of Reclamation to manage the Lake Berryessa Resorts. If so, it will be important to make sure that lake development includes plentiful options for low-impact "back to nature" activities, such as hiking, swimming, fishing, and paddling.

Taking on these— and more— challenges to the Napa environment will be a new member of the Napa Sierra Club Executive Committee. Xulio Soriano has been locally active for years for Hispanic and Indigenous rights, and environmental causes.

As always, our success will depend in large part on YOU, our members, to stay engaged with local politics.

Here's to a Green and Happy 2019!

—NANCY TAMARISK, NAPA GROUP VICE CHAIR

Redwood Chapter and Group Election Results

Redwood Chapter:

Rue Furch

Tom Roth

Lake Group:

Ed Robey

Cheri Kessner

Carolyn Ruttan

Solano Group:

Greg Peterson

Amy Hartman

Joe Feller

Sonoma Group:

Shirley Johnson

Theresa Ryan

Richard Sachen

North Group:

Richard Kreis

Mendocino

Group:

Randal MacDonald

Robin LeIer

Napa Group:

Annette Krammer

Xulio Soriano

North Group Report

Logging in Winter: Can Water Quality be Protected?

When I first began paying attention to logging in Northern California back in the late 1970s, operations (often called “shows” by the loggers) invariably were completely shut down during winter. That was true whether the land in question was public land or privately controlled. In those days loggers put away their chainsaws, parked their logging trucks, went on unemployment and spent the winter fishing for salmon and steelhead. Virtually all logging back then occurred during what was known as “the normal operating period” which extended from April 1st until October 30th. Logging during the wet time of year was prohibited in order to protect water quality.

Things began to change with the Great California Drought of 1977; the year the rains simply did not come. Seeing that the land stayed dry, timber interests began arguing that they should be allowed to log during the “extended dry periods” that sometimes occur at the beginning of the normal rainy season. Forest Service managers and Water Board regulators agreed and began approving logging during “extended dry periods” that occurred in winter. Conservationists and clean water advocates did not object; after all, those periods were truly dry.

But the timber industry was not satisfied. They had a foot in the door and their representatives have continued to chip away ever since at rules which prevent them from logging during wet weather. Little by little, these timber industry lobbyists convinced the water boards to further loosen logging rules. As a result, logging now stops only when there are successive days with an inch of more of precipitation; and logging resumes soon after big rainstorms end.

Because conditions on the North Coast can and do change quickly from dry to wet, the current North Coast Water Board



Green Diamond Resources (formerly Simpson Timber) logging along the Bald Hills. Conditions quickly change from dry to wet along the North Coast & Klamath; loggers do not end operations as quickly.

logging rules sometimes result in logging and log hauling taking place during wet weather. Photos on this page show the results. According to the scientists who have studied North Coast logging for decades, hauling logs in wet weather results in significant amounts of fine sediment being delivered to streams where it smothers salmon and steelhead eggs, preventing many eggs from hatching.

As early as the 1980s, empirical studies by Leslie Reid and Tom Dunne found that hauling logs during wet weather conditions delivers significant amounts of fine sediment to streamcourse even when those roads have been covered with gravel. You can find the research at this link: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/treesearch/pubs/38967>. The Reid and Dunne road studies are part of long-term research by Forest Service scientists and others examining logging and its impacts within the North Coast's Caspar Creek Watersheds. You can view research titles and access many of the research reports at this link: <https://www.fs.fed.us/psw/topics/water/caspar/caspubs.shtml>.

Logging in the mud

As I write this report it is raining across the region with wet snow at higher elevations. Nevertheless, post-fire salvage logging continues in the Horse and Seiad Creek tributaries of the Klamath National Forest. These watersheds have experienced forest fires in recent years but those impacts have not stopped Forest Service managers from proposing, and North Coast Clean Water regulators from approving, logging and road reconstruction during the winter wet season. North Coast Water Board approval of winter logging and wet-season road work for the Low Gap and Copper Timber Sales is based on a Forest Service proposals to upgrade what it calls “legacy

sediment sites” along logging roads within the timber sale area. Ironically, these road improvements do not heal sediment sites. Instead they upgrade sites that might fail in a future storm by installing larger culverts and rolling dips. The idea is that future risk of sediment delivery from the site is reduced. However, treating these so-called “legacy sites” also make it feasible for logging and log hauling to proceed during wet weather. And that, as clearly indicated by the Reid and Dunn road studies, will result in fine, salmon-killing sediment being delivered to Klamath River salmon streams.

But even as mud logging proceeds, there is an opportunity to tell North Coast Water Board officials that the logging rules they have approved are much too lenient when it comes to logging and log hauling during the wet season. The opportunity comes because the permit for private land logging along the North Coast and within the California portion of the Klamath River Basin is up for renewal and public comment is being accepted until 5:00 p.m. on February 4, 2019.

—FELICE PACE, NORTH GROUP WATER CHAIR



Logging this winter in the Seiad and Horse Creek watersheds of the Klamath National Forest (photo by George Sexton, K-S Wild)

What you Can Do:

Please consider sending a message to North Coast Water Board commenting on the proposed “Short-Term Renewal of Categorical Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges Related to Timber Harvest Activities on Non-Federal Lands in the North Coast Region.” Tell the Board that current North Coast Water Board rules for private and public land logging are not adequately protecting water quality; that logging and hauling in wet weather cannot be done without unacceptable risks to water quality. Suggest that the renewed permit prohibit log hauling between October 30 and April 1 and only allow logging operations when there is a truly extended dry period lasting at least a week. Please email comments to Northcoast@waterboards.ca.gov by the deadline of 5:00pm on February 4, 2019.

Oral comments will be heard at the hearing to take place 8:30 A.M., Thursday, April 17, 2019, or Friday, April 18, 2019, at 5550 Skylane Blvd. Suite A, Santa Rosa, CA.

Please send a copy of your email to me at unofelice@gmail.com as well.

The Public Notice for this comment opportunity can be found at this link: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/public_notices/public_hearings/pdf/2019/190104_DCJ_er_Timber%20Cat%20Waiver%20PN-web.pdf

The “Categorical Waiver” for private land timber operations which is proposed for renewal is at this link: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/public_notices/public_hearings/pdf/2019/19_0008_Timber%20Categorical%20Waiver%20Renewal_WDR.pdf



From the Redwood Needles archive: Mount St. Helena by Clark Nattkemper.

Volunteer Job Description: Editorial Assistant

Time required:

3-5 hours every other month.

Purpose of Position:

Assist the Communications Coordinator in producing the bimonthly print newsletter.

Tasks:

- Update mailing list as subscribe and unsubscribe requests are received.
- Coordinate with the printer to submit newsletter in timely manner to reach members by the publication date.
- Download mailing label list from the Sierra Club database and send to printer.
- Coordinate with advertisers, send invoices and record payments.
- Mark up each issue to determine the proportion eligible for Foundation funding and send information to Chapter Treasurer.
- Other tasks as needed.



Meetings

Send all Meeting events by the 8th of the month to Carl Inglin: chinglin@sonic.net Sierra Club meetings are open to all members. You are welcome to participate or observe as often as you wish. Visitors should call the committee chair to verify time and place. The Sonoma County Environmental Center is located at 55A Ridgway Avenue in Santa Rosa (West of Hwy 101, two blocks North of College and 1 1/2 blocks West off of Cleveland Ave, South of Coddington).

Sat. Jan. 26 - Redwood Chapter ExCom. And ConsCom.

Location: Santa Rosa, Sonoma County Environmental Center. 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

Mon. Feb. 4 - 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. Feb. 4 - Sonoma Group.

Conservation Committee 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm. Info: Suzanne Doyle carsort@gmail.com

Sonoma Group Executive Committee at 6:30 p.m. Info: Suzanne Doyle carsort@gmail.com

Tues. Feb 12 - North Group ExCom.

North Group Sierra Club 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.

Mon. Mar. 4 - Sonoma Group.

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Tues. Mar. 19 - Napa Group ExCom.

7 p.m. Our location varies; it is generally at a member's home. Anyone wishing to attend the meeting should contact the chair, Nancy Tamarisk at napaquail@gmail.com



Looking toward Bodega Head from Doran Beach. Photo by Bill Furney.

Redwood Needles
Sierra Club
Redwood Chapter
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 \$450 first annual installment is enclosed.

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Please charge my: Visa Mastercard AMEX

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Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____ / _____

Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to Sierra magazine and \$1 for your chapter newsletters.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 421941, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1941 or visit our website www.sierraclub.org

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