

Redwood Needles



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

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Newsletter of the Redwood Chapter of the Sierra Club

October/Nov. 2013

Sierra Club Sues for Better Bay Area Regional Transportation Plan

Current plan doesn't deliver on public-transit, city-planning, or climate-change goals

By STEVE BIRDLEBOUGH, SONOMA GROUP EXCOM

The Sierra Club has sued the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Association of Bay Area Governments alleging that their recently adopted Plan Bay Area Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is legally deficient. The Plan fails to implement sufficient transportation reforms to meet key greenhouse gas reductions goals, and fails to protect vulnerable communities from diesel exhaust, and the EIR is deficient for failing to report the true environmental effects of the Plan.

Over the past several years, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Association of Bay Area Governments have drafted a multi-decade \$292 billion spending plan to make transportation and land use in the Bay Area more sustainable. Transit funding and climate protection measures in the Bay Area are directly affected by the Plan. The Plan will also affect the region's ability to cope with rising sea levels and the other environmental effects of climate disruption.

As the plan has evolved, various environmental organizations have pointed out that contrary to the Plan's admirable goals, it would actually result in more polluting traffic, including many more trucks on the highways. The Sierra Club alleges that the Plan/EIR is environmentally unacceptable in the following respects:

- Only 7% of the Plan's total budget is dedicated to expanding public transportation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Instead, the Plan calls for constructing hundreds of miles of new toll lanes for more polluting single-occupant autos to use during rush hour.
- Housing developments are proposed without committing funds for public transportation to serve them.
- Little is proposed to address the rising housing costs that encourage people to move from urban areas to suburban areas with inadequate public transportation. The plan would

drive more people to rely on cars for their daily commutes, worsening air pollution, quality of life, and traffic.

As a result, people would spend more time in greenhouse-gas-emitting private automobiles and more time on the roads. By 2040 the number of daily vehicle trips is expected to increase by 22%, and the number of vehicle miles travelled during peak travel times is expected to increase by 51%.

There is no mitigation plan for increased goods movement by rail or other means that would protect communities like West Oakland. These places face increased toxic air pollution as more trucks are used to move freight.

The Sierra Club is represented in the lawsuit by Earthjustice, and a co-petitioner is Communities for a Better Environment, a non-profit health and environmental justice organization, with offices in Oakland, CA.

Interestingly, two other groups that are less-concerned about the environmental failings of the Plan/EIR have also filed suit: The Pacific Legal Foundation alleges that the Plan/EIR violates the California Environmental Quality Act because it does not justify high-density developments, and fails to analyze the feasibility of less-compact alternatives. The Bay Area Building Industry Association claims the Plan/EIR lacks sufficient housing for the expected population and does not have a realistic development pattern as required by state law.

You can read the Sierra Club complaint at: [http://earthjustice.org/sites/default/files/files/PlanBayAreaPetition\(8-19-13\).pdf](http://earthjustice.org/sites/default/files/files/PlanBayAreaPetition(8-19-13).pdf).

The Sierra Club has also challenged the regional plan/EIR process for the San Diego region, and obtained a favorable decision. That case is now on appeal. See: http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/press_releases/2012/transportation-plan-12-04-2012.html

Action Alert:

Ask Senator Dianne Feinstein to support the proposed Berryessa Snow Mountain National Conservation Area

This important landscape-level conservation proposal has been a top Redwood Chapter priority for several years. It would permanently protect 350,000 acres of federal public lands with outstanding conservation values, set up a structure to improve collaborative management among affected agencies, enhance recreational potential, and benefit the visitor-based economy. It took a giant step closer to becoming reality in July, when the House Public Lands and Environmental Regulation subcommittee held a hearing on implementing legislation (H.R. 1025) co-sponsored by all three members of Redwood Chapter's Congressional delegation and covering land managed by three federal agencies in five counties, including three Wilderness areas and a state Wild and Scenic River.

There's no predicting when a vote on the floor of the House of Representatives may occur, but in the meantime we need your help to push the proposal along in the Senate. Senator Barbara Boxer has introduced companion legislation, S. 483, but unfortunately Senator Dianne Feinstein has still not become a co-sponsor, and without her support the bill has little chance of moving forward.

Won't you please take a moment to send Senator Feinstein a letter telling her what you love about the region and the reasons it merits protection? Letters should be sent to:

Honorable Dianne Feinstein
331 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

Your own words are always strongest, but you are welcome to get started by copying and pasting the sample letter posted to the Redwood Chapter blog, sierraclubredwoodchapter.wordpress.com. After you send your letter, please send a copy via email to vbrandon@lakelive.info.

Additional information about the proposed NCA is available at berryessasnowmountain.org.

And thanks so much for your help!

Dunes Restoration: Stalled by Unfeasible Bike Trail Appeal?

By LINDA PERKINS, MENDOCINO GROUP CONSERVATION CHAIR

The Mendocino Group is reviewing a California State Parks project at the Inglenook Fen-Ten Mile Dunes Natural Preserve that aims to restore natural processes in the Preserve by removing 2.7 miles of an old logging road that goes through the dunes and by hand removing invasive European Beach Grass. The Preserve is part of the larger MacKerricher State Park.

The project continues to move through a lengthy review process. Having completed and gotten approval for a Mitigated Negative Declaration, the CEQA part of the process, Parks' next step was to apply to the county for a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) needed to satisfy coastal regulations. This permit was approved by the planning department but appealed by the Westport Municipal Advisory Council (WMAC) to the Board of Supervisors. The BOS, on August 26th, denied the appeal, added some further conditions and approved the permit.

The project's current status is that it may still be on hold. According to the WMAC's website, "A group of concerned local citizens are appealing this permit to the Coastal

Commission." We haven't gotten official notice of the appeal as yet or seen what its substance is. However, based on WMAC's appeal to the BOS their primary purpose appears to be the desire to build a bike trail through the sensitive dune habitat.

Here's what's at stake:

First of all, Parks is operating in a Natural Preserve with the goal of restoring the Dunes natural processes. A Natural Preserve is the most protective designation given to any State Park system unit. Protection of features such as rare and listed species is the paramount purpose of such a designation.

The Dunes, a rare feature in California, hosts its own specialized communities of plants and animals, wildlife that is precisely attuned to the ever-shifting, wind-blown sands. Because the Dunes support numerous rare and endangered wildlife species, it is considered an Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area, (ESHA) and is afforded special protections under our Local Coastal Plan.

Among those rare inhabitants, to name only two, is a tiny, imperiled shorebird, the Western

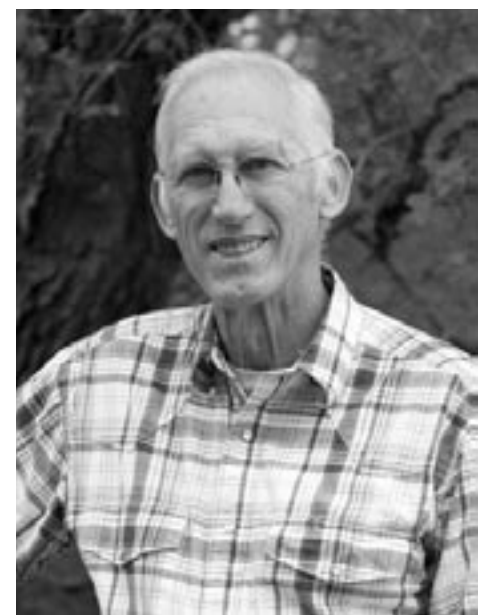
"Dune Restoration Stalled?"
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Sierra Club Loses Activist Stephens

It is with great regret that we announce that long time Sierra Club activist John Stephens died on August 25, 2013, at the age of 70. A Napa resident and a Club member for nearly 30 years, John ably represented the Chapter on the California-Nevada Regional Conservation Committee from 2003 through 2012, and received Sierra Club California's special Lifetime Achievement Award last year. His other leadership roles in the Club included service as Napa Group Chair and Membership Chair.

John's passionate advocacy for our land, air, wildlife, and water led to some notable victories and—perhaps even more important—helped create the kind of robust dialog that lights the path to workable solutions. Above all, John always approached contentious issues with civility and a touch of humor. His rare combination of zealotry and lightheartedness enriched the discussion of many environmental issues on both the Group and Chapter levels over the years, and made his many letters to the editor on subjects ranging from bears to solar panels arguably the Napa County citizenry's single most important source of environmental enlightenment.

We will miss him badly, and extend our deep condolences to his wife Sarah and other members of his extended family. No formal services will be held, but memorial donations may be made to the War Resisters League's Endowment Fund, or a charitable organization of your choice.



Long-time Napa County activist John Stephens passed away in August.

Who We Are

Over the past few years a Club-wide annual midsummer ritual called the State of the Chapters Survey has consumed considerable time and attention of Group and Chapter leaders. The Survey asks for responses to diverse questions ranging from conservation objectives to political activities to the composition of executive committees, and since so much of Redwood Chapter's conservation and outreach activities take place on the Group rather than the Chapter level, each of our six Groups, the Outing program, and Sequoia Paddlers had to contribute to the effort.

Thanks to the diligence of Club leaders throughout the Chapter we were able to submit the completed Survey on time— and as a reward, to learn quite a bit of interesting and mostly encouraging information about who we are and what we do. First of all, every Group is different. We all collaborate with a broad spectrum of other environmental organizations, but some Groups reach out much farther afield, with diverse partnerships that include the Occupy movement, labor unions, Resource Conservation Districts, political parties, and the Farm Bureau. We also engage in many different kinds of activities: besides things like leading hikes, holding public meetings, tabling at events, and actively supporting political candidates and ballot measures, Solano conducts a recycling program, North sends kids to environmental camp, and Lake presents scholarships. Some of our activities also involve a surprising number of individuals, not all of them Club members. Sonoma Group's Environmental Awards Dinner came out on top in the head count, but the Chapter-sponsored Forest Forum, Mendocino's Coastal Commission reception, and Lake Group's two potluck parties all attracted well over fifty people. It's also encouraging to note that we're starting to take advantage of 21st century communications tools, with the Chapter and half the Groups having Facebook pages and all maintaining email lists of one sort or another.

The survey also helped pinpoint the areas where we need to improve. Our connections with the business and faith communities are tenuous, and no entity anywhere in the Chapter held an event "specifically to attract young adult participants" during the past year. Most dismaying of all, it is obvious that

Chapter Chair Report

every Group and the Chapter itself needs to do a much better job recruiting new activists and increasing the diversity of our executive committees. With Club elections coming up, now is the chance to do just that! An article elsewhere in the *Needles* details the election process, and provides instructions for contacting Nominating Committees in each Group and the Chapter itself. Please consider giving a little of your time to work for the environment on the North Coast by putting your name forward as a candidate.

Great News on Stornetta

A truly notable event occurred on the evening of Monday July 22, when Congressman Jared Huffman's first piece of federal legislation received an affirmative vote on the floor of the House of Representatives.

HR 1411, co-sponsored by Congressman Mike Thompson, would add the 1,255-acre BLM-managed Stornetta Public Lands on the Mendocino coast to the Coastal National Monument and tap into mitigation funding from the Gulf Coast oil spill to acquire an additional keystone parcel that will allow creation of a 10-mile coastal trail from the town of Point Arena to Manchester Beach. This spectacularly beautiful land includes

many dramatic coastal features, is an important seal pupping location, and provides habitat for several endangered species. The bill maintains current recreational, ranching and research uses and will boost the regional economy with an increase in tourism, the area's largest employer. With so many benefits and no known opposition, passage would not ordinarily be remarkable, but these are not ordinary times: this bill is the very first public lands preservation legislation to pass the Republican-controlled House of Representatives in more than three years, so the result can be seen as a tribute to the adept political skills of our freshman Congressman.

A group of Chapter leaders had the pleasure of meeting with Congressman Huffman in Santa Rosa on August 28, where we discussed a variety of subjects including Stornetta. He expressed considerable pleasure at the bipartisan support received by the bill, and went on to say "This is a spectacular stretch of coastline, and it deserves the highest level of protection we can provide. By bringing this land into the National Monument system, we will provide an accessible way for visitors to see all that the Mendocino coast has to offer. Now that my bill has passed the House, it's up to the Senate to act, and I'm hopeful that we will be able to protect this jewel of the North Coast for future generations."

Easy passage is expected in the Senate, followed by Presidential signature, so we're hoping to have cause for celebration soon, perhaps in time for an announcement in the next edition of the *Redwood Needles*.

—VICTORIA BRANDON, REDWOOD CHAPTER CHAIR



Chapter leaders meeting with Congressman Jared Huffman at the Environmental Center in Santa Rosa on August 28. From left, Suzanne Doyle, Keith Kaulum, Victoria Brandon, Congressman Huffman, Steve Birdleough, Len Holt, Lynn McGarvey.

Non-Sierra Club Outings

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.

Saturday Saunters for Santa Rosa Area.

Every Saturday. Meets 9 am and usually ends around 11:30. These walks are moderate. Fun way to exercise with friends. For info call Bob Martin 707-539-6300.

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

Volunteer Days Riverkeeper Stewardship Park in Guerneville, Every Wednesday.

8:30 - 11:30 am, for all or part of the time. Park is located on the north bank of Russian River directly upstream Guerneville pedestrian bridge. Access entrance from the driveway in front of Sonoma Nesting Co. (16132 Main Street, just east of Armstrong Woods Rd. At bottom of driveway look for blue & white "Russian Riverkeeper Stewardship Park" sign. Bring drinking water & wear sturdy footwear. Light refreshments provided. Info Victoria Wikle 865-2474 VictoriaWikle@usa.net.

Classified Ads

WOMEN'S TRIPS - Yosemite, Kings Canyon, Sequoia! Visit sierrasisters.net or call Janet at (707)874-2126.

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.

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Create an Environmental Legacy.

Bequests have played a key role in Sierra Club's environmental mission over the years.

Planning now may make your gift more meaningful and reduce taxes on your estate. We have many gift options available. We can even help you plan a gift for your local Chapter.

For more info, or confidential services, contact:
Sierra Club
Gift Planning Program
85 Second Street, Second Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105
gift.planning@sierraclub.org • (800) 932-4279

It Pays To Go Solar In October

Going solar is one of the best ways to shrink your home's carbon footprint and move toward a clean energy future. Even better is going solar with the Sierra Club and Sungevity. When you go solar with Sungevity before October 31st, you will receive \$1,000 cash and Sungevity will

send \$1,000 to your local Redwood Sierra Club Chapter. Join over 900 Sierra Club supporters and go solar today! Getting started with solar is quick and easy. It takes less than three minutes. Visit sierraclub.org/solarhomes to request your iQuote and get started today!



Built by Sierra Club members in 1934, this rustic, hostel-style lodge stands atop historic Donner Pass, just an hour and a half from Sacramento.

Clair Tappaan Lodge is the perfect autumn base camp for anyone who enjoys the wide variety of activities offered by the Tahoe area. Autumn is the secret season in the Sierra when the summer crowds go home, temperatures cool off, and the fall colors come out. Short hikes to secluded mountain lakes are perfect for introducing the family to the mountains. The nearby Pacific Crest Trail offers expansive views for both novice and advanced hikers. Donner Lake offers great kayaking and fishing while Donner Summit has long been a destination for rock climbers and mountain bikers.

Guests enjoy excellent family style meals, a friendly staff and a casual and communal atmosphere.

See you on Donner Summit...



For more information about the Lodge or to receive a full schedule and description of Clair Tappaan programs please visit our website at www.ctl.sierraclub.org or call (800) 679-6775.



Cabins•Restaurant•Health Spa•Hostel•Group Facilities
See YosemiteBug.com & Facebook - Call 866.826.7108
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Outings

Sat.-Sun. Oct. 5-6 - Hot Springs Tour in the Black Rock Desert.

We will be visiting hot springs in the Black Rock Desert, about 100 miles N. of Reno. No set itinerary at this writing but we normally camp at a spring near Gerlach (pop. 150) Friday night and then relocate to a prettier spring on the Emigrant Trail on Saturday. Remote country but a great time to visit the Black Rock as it's starting to cool off and most of the crowds are gone. 2WD high clearance. Primitive camping, sorry, no RV's or Trailers. Leader is very familiar with the area. For info: David Book 775/843-6443. Great Basin Group.

Sun. Oct. 6 - Sonoma Group. Chanslor Ranch Ocean View and Miwok Village Hike/Optional camping.

Join us at this beautiful 378-acre ranch to hike up the Blacktail Trail to open ocean vistas. Lunch break along Salmon Creek, then to the site of an ancient Miwok village. Hiking poles available by reservation. Class M-6-B. Bring water, lunch, snacks and dress in layers. Carpools: 9 am Santa Rosa call leader for location or 10am Chanslor Ranch red barn, 2660 N. Hwy 1, Bodega Bay. Also available Sierra Club members receive a 50% discount on camping for Sat. and/or Sun. night.

By reservation only. Leader Tiffany MacNeil (707) 696-3387 asmtif@sonic.net

Sat. Oct 12 - Mare Island Shoreline Heritage Preserve in Vallejo.

Our walk takes us along a historic road to the highest point at the south end of Mare Island with spectacular views towards the Carquinez Strait, San Pablo and San Francisco Bays. Viewable wildlife include great blue herons and various raptors including kestrels, kites, red tail and red shouldered hawks along the way. There are also various historical features and native plants to be seen. This walk is a fairly easy 3.5 mile r/t walk mostly along a gradually inclined paved road from 9:30-11:00. Class E-4-A. Take U.S. 101, I-80 or Hwy 29 to Highway 37 and take the Mare Island exit just west of Vallejo. Follow Walnut Ave. south to 'G' St. (1st stop sign) and turn left. Take the 2nd right at Nimitz and go to 15th S. stop sign and turn right. Go to Railroad Ave. and turn left. Follow Railroad through the South Gate to the Park kiosk where there is ample parking space. Contact Myrna Hayes: 707-249-9633 Participants can bring lunch and eat at the Preserve and then explore other trails on Mare Island. There are also nearby museums.

Sat.-Sun. Oct. 12-13 - Explore and Serve in the Carrizo Plains.

This weekend is part of a continuing project to aid the mobility of pronghorn antelope in the Carrizo Plain National Monument. Our service on Saturday will either remove or modify several sections of fence for the benefit of these ungulates. Sunday will be, at the choice of the group, either a hike in the

Caliente Range or else a tour of popular viewing areas in the plains. This is an opportunity to combine carcamping, day-hiking, exploring, and service in a relatively unknown wilderness. Leader: Craig Deutsche, craig.deutsche@gmail.com, 310-477-6670. CNRCC Desert Committee

Sun. Oct. 13 - Lake Group. Highland Springs Hike.

Trail to be decided later. Bring water and snacks. Neutered and spayed dogs permitted only if on leash. Class: E-4-A. Meet: 9:00 am by picnic area Reserve with leader Steve Devoto sdevoto@mchsi.com

Thu.-Sat. Oct. 24-26 - Death Valley Wilderness Restoration.

Come join us as we restore wilderness values in this beautiful and remote national park. We will meet early Thursday afternoon. That afternoon we will work on the Darwin Falls trail, then drive to our primitive camping area and set up camp. Work Friday picking up debris from an airplane crash. If needed, we will continue work on Saturday; otherwise, participants will be free to enjoy the park. Leader: Kate Allen, kj.allen96@gmail.com, 661-944-4056. CNRCC Desert Committee

Sat. Oct. 26 - Sonoma Group. Colliss Ranch Exploratory Hike.

In the spirit of adventure, come hike from Chanslor Ranch, across Salmon Creek (dry crossing), and up the hills of the Colliss Ranch through gorgeous canyons. Come see why views from Coleman Valley Road, and this part of

Sonoma County, are world-renowned for their beauty. Bring water, lunch, snacks, hiking boots and dress in layers.



Hauling wood to Benson Hut from a long way downhill. Photo by Jim Gannon.

Hiking poles available by reservation. Class M-8-B. Carpools: 9 am Santa Rosa call leader for location or 10am Chanslor Ranch red barn, 2660 N. Hwy 1, Bodega Bay. By reservation only. Leader Tiffany MacNeil (707) 696-3387 asmtif@sonic.net

Sat. Oct. 26 - Lake Group. Payne Ranch Hike.

Hike the multi-thousand acre ranch acquired in the past decade by BLM, aka Bear Creek Unit. We will hike past the Road Kill Cafe and head south towards old ranch ponds, then ascend up to Cache Creek Ridge. We'll look down into Cache Creek Wilderness, hike the ridge and loop back to the Road Kill Cafe. Beautiful oak woodlands. Class: M-8-A. Meet: 8:30 am Lower Lake Coffee Company on Main Street. Please reserve, leader Tom McFarling, (707) 994-5490 tmcfarling@callatg.com Rain cancels.

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.

Fast-pace with few or no stops: Jim Gannon Paul Bozzo Carol Magill

Moderate-pace with few stops:

Penny Proteau Don Anderson Steve Devoto Tiffany MacNeil
Isabelle Saint-Guily Lorrie Lagasse Boone Lodge Chip Bouril
Paul Farley

Moderate-pace with more frequent stops:

Pete McGee Tim Bartice Bill Knight Melinda Groom Val Nordeman
Carol Vellutini Yvonne Kramer Martin Farber Brian Collett
Jean Crossley Carl Inglin Tom McFarling Nanette DeDonato
Jonah Freedman

Slower-pace: Allison Bronkall

Dune Restoration Stalled?

cont. from page 1

Snowy Plover, which over-winters, and sometimes nests, on these beaches. The beaches and dunes are officially designated as critical habitat for the bird. A second special inhabitant is the federally listed Howell's spineflower, found only in MacKerricher State Park.



Threatened Western Snowy Plover from Save Our Shorebirds photo by Becky Bowen

State Parks' focus is to remove the unnatural features that are impacting the rare habitats.

The first of these, as mentioned, is the remnants of an old logging road - and its associated culverts - built in 1949 to replace the early-1900s railroad grade and to haul logs from the Ten Mile River forests to the Fort Bragg mill. However, a storm in 1983 washed away part of the road; the ocean has continued that destruction, and it will continue as sea levels rise. Currently, the road is disconnected by almost a mile from other portions of the road. The remnant road can't be reached from either end except by a hearty 20-minute slog through the sand.

The problem with having the road in the Dunes is that it interferes with the natural dunes processes of the Preserve by forming a barrier to wind-blown sand movement. On the west side of the road sand piles up

into steep fore dunes (those dunes nearest the beach) throwing up a wall of sand rather than, when unimpeded, creating the wider, low-gradient beach that the western snowy plover needs to move easily between the beach and the dunes vegetation. (Importantly, visitors also need a level escape route from unexpectedly high waves.) The benefits of removing the culverts is to help recover the hydrologic processes, including the naturally meandering forms, through the dunes and across the beach, of Fen and Inglenook Creeks.

Invasive European beach grass is another unnatural feature impacting the Dunes. Besides displacing native plants, European beach grass also alters natural dune processes, just as the road does, by trapping windblown sand and creating overly steep dunes. Sixty acres of beach grass will be hand removed. After the road and grass are removed Parks will re-seed and transplant native plants, and implement a monitoring program to help assure their recovery.

The result of all these efforts will be the restoration of ecosystem functioning, the recovery of over 200 acres of western snowy plover habitat and of 60 acres of habitat for native dune plants.

About 15 years ago - at the public's request - Parks considered rebuilding/reconnecting the parts of the road that the ocean had destroyed. However, it was soon discovered that the impacts would have been too great to endangered species, making the project not legal, aside from the fact that maintaining such a trail through shifting sands would have been economically impossible. Thus, an appeal based on the desire for a bike trail through this sensitive dune habitat seems unlikely at best.

After having carefully reviewed the issues, taking note that the Parks permit has been conditioned to add recreational opportunities, considering that Parks has plans to upgrade and maintain the popular hiking and biking sections of haul road within MacKerricher Park south of the Preserve, and that Parks is helping facilitate development of a bike path along Highway 1, Sierra Club believes that the restoration of these rare natural dune areas is a priority project of statewide significance that deserves our full support.

Stay tuned. We expect an appeal to the Coastal Commission to be filed. Check our website for updates and action items. <http://www.redwood.sierraclub.org/mendocino>

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, pets, 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: Carol Vellutini, Outings Chair, (carolvsvr@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.

Outings

Sat. Oct. 26 - Mendo Group Abhayagiri Buddhist Monastery, 1 PM.

Set in the northern reaches of Redwood Valley on Tomki Rd, the monastery is sited on a quiet and peaceful south facing hillside. Taking a total of 2 hours or so, we will be given a tour by one of the monks that will include a 1.5 mile hike on the hillside above the monastery. This loop trail, though short, has significant elevation changes as we reach the top where we can enjoy great views looking south into Redwood Valley. Ankle high boots recommended along with a hiking pole and layered clothing per the weather and season. Directions: Hwy 101 north through Ukiah and take Exit 557, West Road toward Redwood Valley. Right on West Rd, drive 3.5 miles to Tomki Road, then left on Tomki for about 3.8 miles. Then right into monastery parking lot and walk on up to buildings where we will meet our guide. Meet to carpool at 12:15 pm at the Raley's parking lot in front of O'Reilly Auto Parts or at the monastery at 1 pm. Class M-2-A. Space limited so please RSVP. Leader Jonah Freedman, 4671877, jonahfreedman@sbcglobal.net. Rain cancels. Carpools from Santa Rosa RSVP Carol 546-6308 carolvsr@sonic.net will leave Park & Ride Fulton Rd. 10 am to stop in Ukiah at Schats bakery first & then meet carpool at 12:15.

Sat.-Sun. Oct. 26-27 -Ghost Town Extravaganza.

Spend Halloween weekend with the ghosts of California's colorful past. Primitive camp at the historic ghost town of Ballarat in the eerie desert landscape near Death Valley. On Sat, do a challenging hike to ghost town Lookout City and hear tales of this Wild West town from historian Hal Fowler. Return to camp for Happy Hour and a potluck feast, followed by a midnight visit to Ballarat's graveyard. On Sun, a quick visit to the infamous Riley townsite before heading home. Group size strictly limited. Send \$8 per person (check payable to Lygeia Gerard), 2 large SASE, H&W phones, email, rideshare info to Ldr: Lygeia Gerard, P.O. Box 721039, Pinon Hills, CA 92372, 760-868-2179. CNRCC Desert Com

Sat.-Sun. Nov. 2-3 - Late Autumn in the Carrizo Plains: Service & Exploration.

This weekend is part of a continuing project to benefit pronghorn antelope in the Carrizo Plain National Monument. Our service on Saturday will modify several sections of fence to increase mobility for the benefit of these animals. Sunday will be, at the choice of the group, either a hike in the Caliente Range or else a tour of popular viewing areas in the plains. This is an opportunity to combine carcamping, day-hiking, exploring, and service in a relatively unknown part of central California. Leader: Craig Deutsche, craig.deutsche@gmail.com, (310-477-6670). CNRCC Desert Committee

Sun. Nov. 3 - Mendo Group. Little Darby BLM Land Hike, Willits.

Hike in an enchanted autumn world of berries and mushrooms. Little Darby is a newly improved BLM trail a few miles east of Willits in a grove of magnificent old growth Douglas fir trees. After the walk we will picnic at the trail head and perhaps explore a new trail developed by the Willit's Trail Group which follows the creek by Howard Hospital. Class E-2-A. Carpools: Meet 10 am North end of Raley's

parking lot, Ukiah or 10:40 Little Darby trail head. Leader: Yvonne Kramer. By reservation only: (707) 463-0342, kramer@saber.net. Rain cancels.

Sat. Nov. 9 - Mendocino Group Sand Dunes Exploration.

Take a hike through the Ten Mile Dunes. Discover the well adapted plants and animals that live there. Explore the edge of the unique Inglenook Fen. Visit Native American sites. Bring water and lunch. The hike is off trail in the sand. Class M-6-A Meet 10 a.m. at the end of Ward Ave. first road north of Cleone. Reservations required. Leader Lorrie 964-3011 or lorrielas@yahoo.com Rain cancels.

Sat. Nov. 9 - Mare Island Shoreline Heritage Preserve in Vallejo.

Our walk takes us along a historic road to the highest point at the south end of Mare Island with spectacular views towards the Carquinez Strait, San Pablo and San Francisco Bays. Viewable wildlife include great blue herons and various raptors including kestrels, kites, red tail and red shouldered hawks along the way. There are also various historical features and native plants to be seen. This walk is a fairly easy 3.5 mile r/t walk mostly along a gradually inclined paved road from 9:30-11:00. Class E-4-A. Take U.S. 101, I-80 or Hwy 29 to Highway 37 and take the Mare Island exit just west of Vallejo. Follow Walnut Ave. south to 'G' St. (1st stop sign) and turn left. Take the 2nd right at Nimitz and go to 15th S. stop sign and turn right. Go to Railroad Ave. and turn left. Follow Railroad through the South Gate to the Park kiosk where there is ample parking space. Contact Myrna Hayes @707-249-9633. Participants are free to bring lunch and eat at the Preserve and then explore other trails on Mare Island. There are also nearby museums.

Sat.-Mon. Nov. 9-12 - Western Utah Exploration Experience.

Join the countdown to the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act with national Utah Wilderness Task Force and Utah Chapter in a visit to western Utah's Mountain Home Range and San Francisco Peaks—under consideration as new wilderness in a new BLM resource plan. Help document wild values in these remote ranges and enjoy car camping with central commissary over Veterans Day weekend. Experience desert solitude, darkest night skies, and the beauty of pinyon pine-covered desert peaks. Can meet Fri evening. Contact Vicky Hoover, (415)977-5527, vicky.hoover@sierraclub.org. CNRCC Wilderness Com

Sun. Nov. 24 - Lake Group. Boggs Lake Hike.

Hike around Boggs Lake, a vernal pool in a volcanic caldera. If it has rained, there should be lovely flowers. Class: E-1-2-A Meet: 9:00 a.m. Harrington Flat Road parking area. located 1 mile east from Bottle Rock Road. Follow Bottle Road 4.5 miles from its intersection with Hwy 29 to Harrington Flat Road. Reserve with leader Pete McGee 942 -1373 Montesol@hughes.net

Outings Chair Report

The fundraiser at Clair Tappaan was a huge success thanks to Diane Boyer and her lodge committee (Olivia Diaz and Ernie Malamud have been active for a long time.) The committee is always looking for new volunteers. I was asked, but I am trying to downsize volunteer commitments. If you are interested email Diane. Manager Peter Lehmkuhl with his never-ending smile always makes the stay at the lodge personal and is very accommodating to guests. Peter's brother is the cook and the food was fantastic. I hadn't been to the lodge since the 75th anniversary in 2009. By coincidence, when I registered on Friday I noticed that Peter & I were wearing our T-Shirts from 4 years ago. My friend Josie took a picture of us. In the evening Rev. Don Baldwin, accomplished photographer, presented a computerized show (complete with narration by "John Muir" and music) of scenes of the mountains. Clair Tappaan has a professional sound system and a huge screen, so slides and sound were more than exceptional. Later "John Muir" (Don Baldwin) met us at the campfire and told stories. Don is a very talented impersonator, musician and photographer. I felt privileged to talk with him. On Saturday staff from SF was there to talk about conservation & outings. Many of us asked questions about the way Chapters are required to manage local outings, especially funding issues. Music was provided by a guitar player with Latin American ties. There was so much more & I don't have space to share all of it. Go to the Clair Tappaan web site for info.

Saturday was full of events. Napa Group leaders Chip Bouril & Penny Proteau led hikes. Some hikes needed to be scaled back due to the smoke. I was sad the smoke from the fire by Foresthill, and then when the wind changed on Sunday, the smoke from the Yosemite fire, made it impossible to see the mountain tops. Ashes were everywhere and on Saturday morning the smoke was to the ground. The positive of that is for the first time I went on outings close by the lodge. I attended

an educational walk to the meadow led by a volunteer from the Land Trust. I had never stopped by Summit Valley. This is part of the acquisition of 3000 acres of Donner Summit led by the Truckee Donner Land Trust in 2012. This was an extraordinary effort by local groups to raise \$11.25 million

dollars in just a few months. I picked up maps of the area later at the museum and intend to do all of Old Hwy 40, and the Heritage Trail. I saw cupules, which I'd never heard of, for the first time in my life. They are by the gossip rocks and the mortars. Cupules are small depressions in the granite thought to be used for mystical activities by the Shamans. I put my fingertips in the cupules (as it is thought that the Shamans did that) and it was a perfect fit. That was the highlight of my weekend! The history of the area is overwhelming. The old emigrant route, Yuba River, Soda Springs, Old Lincoln Highway, 20 mile museum signs & I could go on & on. For 30+ years I only went to the lodge on a Friday, so as to work on Benson Hut the next day or to go backpacking into the huts by snowshoe in the winter. How delightful to discover the "valley". The museum is kept open by a gentleman who prides himself in knowing the history and claims to be the oldest resident; it's a step back in time, and a must visit.

Jim Gannon led the last Benson Hut work party of the year. Thank you Jim for being a great Leader. Mendo Group Outings Leader Val



Peter Lehmkuhl, Claire Tappaan Lodge manager & Carol Vellutini at annual fundraiser.

Nordeman went for the very 1st time. (see photo on page 7) Yea Val! She had heard stories of Benson. Val had never been to any of the huts. Anyone who goes on a Benson Hut work party comes back with stories. One never forgets the 1st time hiking in with all the supplies, and then you are told to go for water. What do you mean I have to empty my pack out and carry 3 plastic gallons in it?? Well, the spring is where! Val had never seen a 2 story outhouse with the appropriate ladder up and down in. I loved listening to her. It reminded me of my first time in. We have a clever way of hauling split heavy logs up the hill. It reminds me of ants bringing in the winter food supply (see photo on page 4.) Old timers invented the system & Jim had a seamstress do a new version as the old ones were worn. Redwood Chapter remains the only Chapter to maintain a high Sierra Hut with volunteer labor, building 2 story outhouses, putting on a new roof, carrying in windows, etc. The hut looks wonderful with the fresh coat of stain. Please volunteer next year.

-CAROL VELLUTINI, REDWOOD CHAPTER OUTING CHAIR

Sun.-Thu. Dec. 29-Jan. 2 - Holiday Service in Carrizo Plain.

Once again, we return to the Carrizo Plain to celebrate the end of the year and to offer service to the pronghorn antelope in this National Monument. Lying between Bakersfield and San Luis Obispo, this vast grassland is home to pronghorn antelope, tule elk, kit fox, and a wide variety of birds. A welcome hike Dec. 29, two and a half days of service modifying barbed wire fencing, and a full day for hiking and exploring are planned. Use of accommodations at one of the old ranch houses is included. Limited to 12 participants, \$30 covers four dinners and breakfast on New Year's morning. For more information, contact leader: Craig Deutsche, craig.deutsche@gmail.com, (310-477-6670). CNRCC Desert Com.



Don't Get Left Out In The Cold... Join Us!

Sierra Club Outings are a terrific way to meet new people and enjoy the great outdoors. Whatever your interests - hiking, canoeing or birdwatching - there is an outing for everyone. If you are new to the area, let your local Chapter or Group show you around. Join today and become part of America's largest environmental organization with the most enjoyable outings.



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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 newsletter.

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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Lake Group Report

Middle Creek Update

For a number of years now it has been generally agreed that implementation of the Middle Creek wetland restoration project would be the single most important action available to reduce excessive nutrient loading on Clear Lake and to improve the health of the whole ecosystem. This proposal, which has been in the works for close to two decades now, would restore some 1650 acres of "reclaimed" land to its natural condition and remove the imminent threat to health and safety posed by miles of antiquated, crumbling levees. So it was with great interest that Lake Group representatives attended a Department of Water Resources update given to the Board of Supervisors on August 6.

The board heard a lot of encouraging news: land acquisition is moving forward, with 12 properties (including nearly all residential properties at risk) having been bought out, appraisals completed or in progress on another 24, and an additional 12 "willing sellers" identified. The county has nearly enough funding available to complete all these purchases. Furthermore the Army Corps, which will be the eventual responsible agency, has indicated willingness to accept conservation easements on some parcels instead of requiring fee title. Ongoing discussions with Robinson Rancheria are exploring alternatives to the construction of the ring levee around tribal property specified in the baseline design, but the project will proceed whether or not a better solution has been found. The US Fish & Wildlife Service has determined that the project is "not likely to have an

adverse effect on the Red-Legged Frog" and a signed Record of Decision from the Army Corps is expected within the next 6-12 months. Representatives Thompson and Garamendi have accordingly written to the Assistant Secretary of the Army requesting that funding for the project be included in the 2014 budget.

Remaining obstacles include an estimated \$2.7 million shortfall in non-federal funds and the need to deal with any remaining "non-willing" sellers as the acquisition phase draws to a conclusion. Lake County has always been reluctant to exercise its powers of eminent domain but will almost certainly have to make an exception in this case. Stay tuned!

Fall Hikes on Mt. Konocti

The county has scheduled a series of six docent-led hikes to Wright Peak this fall, with a stop at the historic Downen Cabin, and for participants over the age of 18 who sign a liability waiver, an opportunity to enjoy the spectacular views from the fire tower. All hikes begin at 8 a.m. from the main parking lot, and last about four hours. There's a significant elevation gain, so participants should be in good physical shape, wear appropriate footwear and clothing, and carry food and water.

Barring unforeseen circumstances such as heavy rain, hikes will be held on September 29, October 13, October 19, October 27, November 3, and November 9. Each hike is limited to 20 people and reservations are required: for details and to RSVP, call the county parks office at 707 262-1618.

—VICTORIA BRANDON, LAKE GROUP



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Sonoma Group Report

CEQA Forum Informs

Gary Patton, an Environmental attorney, former Santa Cruz County Supervisor, and member of the Executive Committee of Sierra Club California, was the main speaker at our August 29, 2013 Environmental Forum on the subject of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

He told us that one purpose of CEQA is to force government to respond to public comment. In many instances, an EIR is the only process that will ever allow the public to have its say.

Another major purpose for CEQA is, it allows the public and the proponents of a project to stop and think— it slows down the decision, forcing a look at impacts before taking action. For this reason, CEQA is attacked for delaying good projects.

Some in state government are trying to "tweak" (and in many ways, weaken) the law so that the citizen expert has to have credentials in order to simply document impacts. Average citizens or even leaders of citizen groups will no longer be part of the input. One motivation at the Governor's level for weakening CEQA is to fast-track projects such as the Delta/Twin Tunnel, High Speed Rail, and several sports arenas. For more info on proposed legislation, go to www.leginfo.ca.gov, or www.ceqaworks.com

Carneros-Port Sonoma Withdrawn

On the subject of EIRs, the Carneros-Port Sonoma dredging project was withdrawn shortly after the Sonoma County Supervisors, after protests from the Sonoma Group and various Marin County interests, voted to require an EIR.

Sonoma Group Lobbies the County

Shirley Johnson represented the Group at a meeting with Sonoma County Supervisor Shirlee Zane, who also represents the County on the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). 350 Bay Area organized the meeting. They have submitted a strong Resolution to BAAQMD calling for a regional Climate Action Plan. Shirley reports that Sup. Zane is very agreeable to pursuing this.

National Plug-in Day

Co-sponsored by the Sierra Club Sonoma Group, drew a crowd in Petaluma on Sept. 29. Electric vehicles (EVs) are the most rapidly growing part of the 21st century's oil-free electrified transportation network, and the

Sonoma Group has taken this on in its mission to educate the public.

PRMD

Dan Kerbein, our Chair, served on the first round interview panel for the appointment of a new Director for Sonoma County's Permit and Resource Management Department (PRMD). Two-concurrent interview panels met six candidates. One interview panel consisted of subject matter experts and other county department heads, and the other panel consisted of representatives from the community, including the Sierra Club. After meeting the candidates, the panels provided feedback to the County Administrator. This discussion determined the finalists who met the Board of Supervisors. On Sept. 10, Supervisors appointed Deputy Director of Engineering and Construction, Dewayne Starnes, as PRMD Interim Director. As the *Redwood Needles* goes to print, the selection of a new permanent director has not been made.

Forest Protection

Forest Unlimited members Larry Hansen and Kimberly Burr and others met at the Conservation Committee meeting to discuss the need for updating the county forestry requirements. They share our interest in keeping the Group Forestry Committee active. ExCom member Suzanne Doyle will send a letter to the Board of Supervisors requesting a study session on the current forestry ordinances. She is also following the county's riparian zoning update.

SRJC Programs

Jessica reported that the JC has started a composting program with the kitchen after 4 years of effort. And the JC Farm is also now supplying the salad bar. SRJC is also webcasting meetings of BAAQMD.

Santa Rosa Creeks

We signed on to SCWC Comment letters concurring with land use changes to improve watershed function, recommended by the Southeast Greenway Campaign. Among these are tree planting and restoration of oak woodlands in the headwaters of city creeks to slow the movement of storm water downstream and attenuate peak flows in creeks; and that stream maintenance and recovery actions be considered in the context of pollutant control to meet Water Quality Standards, since Santa Rosa Creek and its tributaries are listed as impaired by various pollutants.

—DAN KERBEIN, SONOMA GROUP CHAIR

Protect our Communities: Close Fracking Loopholes for Oil and Gas Polluters!

Our nation is under a frack attack! Dirty oil and gas drilling and fracking are expanding—polluting the air, water, and nearby landscapes of communities across the country. Fracking—the process of injecting chemicals, water, and sand at high pressure into the ground to extract natural gas or oil— is dangerous and controversial. Yet the fracking industry doesn't even have to follow the same environmental rules or laws that other industries do!

Five bills just introduced in Congress, however, would force oil and gas companies to obey environmental laws and would help better protect our clean air and clean water from toxic

drilling pollution.

Tell your representative to sponsor these important bills to better protect our landscapes, air, water, and public health from fracking pollution: <https://secure.sierraclub.org/site/Advocacy/cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=11769>

The Associated Press recently reported on fracking occurring off the California coast, where oil companies are supposedly dumping untreated fracking fluids into the ocean, with unknown consequences to the marine environment. The California Coastal Commission is currently gathering information before deciding how to address the issues surrounding offshore fracking.

Redwood Needles

Dec. Deadline:

Due November 4

Submit Articles/Reports/Ad Copy via e-mail to: odavison@comcast.net

Send Outings to Carol Vellutini via e-mail: carolvsr@sonic.net

Send Meetings to Carl Inglin via e-mail: chinglin@sonic.net

Thanks, Maureen!

Thanks to Maureen Strain for her many years of dedicated service as Advertising Manager for the *Redwood Needles*.

We welcome Holly Oppenheimer as the new Advertising Manager. Please contact her at hollyoppen@gmail.com if you are interested in advertising in the *Redwood Needles*.

EXCOM Members Needed

The Solano Group is in need of people who want to make a difference in Solano County. Put on your Sierra Club Hat and join us for monthly meetings where we review local issues and come up with plans to protect our local environment. For more information, email sierraclubsolanogroup@gmail.com or leave a message at 707 319-6398.

Who should you vote for in the Vallejo City Council race?

Solano Group is endorsing candidates for the Vallejo City Council Race. For the current list, contact us at sierraclubsolanogroup@gmail.com or 707 319-6398.

Thanks to:

Nancy McCoy, Matt Hoffman, Adam Mangosing, Aaron Kofer, Jenn Perez, and Jane for staffing the July and August paper shredding.

VALCORE Recycling and Confidential Paper

Solano Breeze Corner

Covering Benicia, Fairfield, Rio Vista, Suisun,
Vacaville and Vallejo
sierraclubsolanogroup@gmail.com 707-319-6398

Shredding 2013.

Solano Group will be working every 3rd Saturday of the month at 38 Sheridan Street, Vallejo from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (Oct 19, Nov 16, and Dec 21). There is a charge of \$10 per twenty pounds of paper shredded. (maximum: 100 pounds). 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.

Lori's Native Plant Garden

We continually work at Lori's Native Plant Garden located at 225 Amador St, Vallejo. We weed, plant, prune and mulch year-round. If you have an hour, call Jane and she'll work with

you to get you started. 707-319-6398

Help Wanted:

VALCORE Recycling Board Alternate: You may need to attend one meeting per year.

EXCOM: Come join us for our monthly meetings which rotate between Vallejo, Fairfield and Vacaville. We meet on the first Thursday of the month and are making a positive impact on our county and need a few more members to help carry the load. Call Jane (707) 319-6398 or Greg (707) 386-6411 for current meeting info.

Help pay for our LANDFILL LAWSUIT.

(Our attorney's fees are 3000 cans per hour)

Please bring your CRV – CA Cash Refund containers down to VALCORE (38 Sheridan St. Vallejo, Mon - Sat, 10am to 1 pm and 2 pm to 4:30pm. OR Cash them in at your local recycle center and send us a check for the refund amount. We recently received donations from John Kolarik and others.

—CONTRIBUTOR: JANE BOGNER

—EDITOR: GREG PETERSON

Napa Group Report

Loss of an Activist

The environmental advocacy community lost an active and diligent supporter in August with the passing of John Stephens. John rejoined the Napa Group executive committee in 2010, but was forced to step down at the end of the term because of illness. In November of 2012, John was awarded a special Lifetime Achievement Award by Sierra Club California. A Sierra Club member for nearly 30 years, John represented the Redwood Chapter on the California-Nevada Regional Conservation Committee for 10 years. John's activism and righteous passions for the ethical treatment of people and the environment alike will be remembered. See the article on page one for more about John's work.

Winery Definition Ordinance

The Napa Group is at the roundtable

of public discussion regarding intent and application of the 1990 Winery Definition Ordinance. The ordinance was visionary when it was approved by the County Board of Supervisors. At the core of public debate were the potential impacts of winery and wine production expansion on the land, our natural resources, traffic, and a host of quality of life and environmental concerns. More than 20 years later, the Sierra Club asks that the community deliberate the potential impacts of winery and wine production expansion under differing applications of this important ordinance.

Facebook

We've reinvigorated our Facebook page! Find us at Sierra Club Napa Group. "Like" us and help get the word out. And contact us at our new e-mail: napavalleyclub@gmail.com.

—MARILEE TALLEY, NAPA GROUP CHAIR

Mendocino Group Report

Along with amazing work done on the Mackerricher / Ten Mile Dune Restoration / Road Removal Project, reported on elsewhere in this issue, Linda Perkins worked with CA Fish and Wildlife to call for a set aside of critical habitat for the Marbled Murrelet on a Mendocino Redwood Company (MRC) logging plan on the lower Albion River.

Mendocino Group Coast Committee Chair Rixanne Wehren wrote to Coastal Commission staff regarding a CalTrans plan to widen Highway 1 after it crosses the Navarro River and in response to public concern CCC staff prevailed upon CalTrans to alter the project as follows, "To protect sensitive visual resources, Caltrans has revised the project design to eliminate the addition of a guard rail along a low-lying stretch of the highway next to the river in response to public concerns about the potential visual prominence of a guard rail along

the highly scenic flat " (Staff Report). This guard rail would have blocked the view of the estuary and the ocean.

ExCom member Carrie Durkee returned full of enthusiasm from a trip to the Democracy Convention in Madison, Wisconsin. Her report will be in the next *Redwood Needles* issue.

In Willits, regarding the Willits Bypass, there's been another injunction sought against CalTrans for failing to comply with conditions required by the Army Corps of Engineers for its Wetlands fill Permit. Legal action was brought by the Willits Environmental Center. A decision has not yet been rendered in the legal action brought against CalTrans by Sierra Club et al. That decision is due by the end of September.

—MARY WALSH, MENDOCINO GROUP CHAIR

North Group Report

McKinney Honored

Long-time Humboldt Bay activist and North Group ExCom member Melvin "Cappy" McKinney, who passed away in June, worked for 15 years to establish a designated trail along the Elk River estuary in Eureka. In August the City of Eureka was easily persuaded to name a trail loop within the area after him.

The Hikshari Trail— the first designated trail along Humboldt Bay in Eureka— has been much used and appreciated by walkers and bicyclists since its dedication ceremony in March.

Would YOU Like to Join Our ExCom?

Sierra Club Group elections are just around the corner. If you are interested in serving as a member of the North Group Executive Committee, which meets every second Tuesday evening from 6:45-8:45 p.m. at the Adorni Center in Eureka, contact Diane at dfbeck@northcoast.com or 707-445-2690. An ExCom member serves a two-year term, beginning in January.

Camper Essays

This summer, due to the generosity of our members, the North Group's Environmental Education Fund was able to support three local children to attend overnight camps operated by the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry at the Wolf Creek Environmental Center in Redwood National and State Parks. (Four scholarships had been awarded, but one boy cancelled at the last minute.) Campers were required to submit an essay about their experiences. Here are excerpts from those essays: "I learned that banana slugs moved all over and they produce slime and poop out dirt like worms do." "We dissected a squid and I found out they have no backbone, breathe from their gills, and can grow up to 46 feet long." "My favorite gory game was 'Venomous Frogs,' in which the frogs stick out their tongue at you and you die, dramatically." "We caught salamanders in nets but couldn't pull them out of the creek or touch them, because the oil on our skin would burn them." "Some people licked the venom on the underside of a banana slug."

—SUE LESKI, NORTH GROUP TREASURER



Benson Hut Work Party. Leader Jim Gannon top row second on right & Val Nordeman, Mendo Outings Leader fifth from top right on last trip before winter.

Lead the Adventure! Interested in Becoming an Outings Leader?

Contact your Group Outings Chair (see page 2)
or Carol Vellutini at 546-6308 or
carolvsr@sonic.net for information.

Sierra Club Volunteer/ Activist Opportunities

Sonoma Group Hike Leaders: Sonoma Group outings leaders training. Always a need for more leaders for outings. If you would like a training, please email Carol carolvsr@sonic.net or call 546-6308 for info. People are requesting families with children, camping and easy hikes.

North Group Hike Leaders: North Group is desperately seeking hike leaders. Please contact Bill Knight, the Outings Chair, at bill.knight.email@gmail.com.

Meet with the Sonoma Group Water Committee! Your chance to make a difference. Come to our meetings at the Environmental Center at 7:00 PM on the third Wednesday of most months. The Water Committee is working on issues related to measures to conserve, save, and reuse this valuable resource. Our goal is to preserve and improve the natural water environment, the responsible use of water by people, and the safe reuse or disposal of our wastewaters. Help protect the quality of our water for people, wildlife, fish and other aquatic life, promote water conservation and intelligent reuse. Recent activities include discussions concerning wells and groundwater studies including Santa Rosa's Draft Ground Water Master Plan. We have also been reviewing the Santa Rosa Laguna TMDL, the Santa Rosa NPDES, and the Highway 12 SE Greenway Campaign. Check for our meeting dates in the Needles. To get on our Water Committee e-mail list, e-mail Len Holt at lholt@sonic.net. If you are not able to attend our meetings, you may e-mail Len Holt with your concerns and ideas.

Get CHARGED by attending the Climate & Energy Committee. Join us on the 1st of the month at 5:00-5:45 p.m. at the Environmental Center in Santa Rosa, learn about what is going on in our community to fight climate change through renewable energy programs. Contact Shirley Johnson-Foell Climate & Energy Committee Forum-Chair. Email: Shirlgirl707@Yahoo.com, home 206-1138, or call office 433-7651.

2013 Redwood Chapter and Group Elections Schedule

Nominating Committee Chair contact information:

- Lake Group - Julie Kreis - 987-9040
- Napa Group - Nancy Tamarisk - 257-2131
- Solano Group- Jane Bogner - 644-9183
- Mendocino Group - Mary Walsh - 937-0572
- North Group - Diane Beck - 445-2690
- Sonoma Group - 823-4293
- Redwood Chapter - Diana Nasser - 823-4293

August 8, 2013: Appointment of Chapter Nominating and Elections Committee.

September 3, 2013 Appointment of Nominating Committee by Groups.

October 3, 2013: Receipt of all candidates' applications (statement of intent to run) with contact information, for consideration by Group Nominating Committees.

October 10, 2013: Group Nominating Committees inform all potential candidates of their status and submit lists of candidates, with contact information, to their respective ExComs and Chapter Election Committees.

October 24, 2013: Nominating Candidates submit ballot statements to Election Committee.

October 24, 2013: Statements are sent for December Needles.

November 4, 2013: Receipt of ballot petitions and Petition Candidate ballot statements by Election Committee. Approved statements sent for December Redwood Needles.

December 30, 2013: Ballots due in office.

January 3, 2014: Ballots counted. Notify all candidates, Chapter ExCom and Redwood Needles Editor of results.

2014 Sierra Club Calendars on sale now! See page 2 for details.

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. Meetings are located in Sonoma County unless otherwise noted. 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).**

Thurs. Oct. 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.

Mon. Oct. 7 - Sonoma Group.

Santa Rosa Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway is the site of three related meetings:

- The Climate & Energy Committee meets at 5:00 p.m. Info: contact Shirley, shirgirl707@yahoo.com, 707-206-1138.
- Sonoma Group Conservation Committee at 5:30 p.m. Info: Dan Kerbein, dkerbein@sonic.net
- Sonoma Group Executive Committee at 6:30 p.m. Info: Info: Dan Kerbein, dkerbein@sonic.net

Tues., Oct. 8 - North Group ExCom.

The public is invited to attend the monthly meeting of the North Group Sierra Club's governing committee. Join us for a discussion of local conservation issues between 7:45 and 8:45 p.m., following the Executive Committee business meeting from 6:45-7:45 p.m. Meet at Adorni Center Conference

Room on Eureka Waterfront. For more information, call Gregg at 707-826-3740.

Tues. Oct. 15 - 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 nancy@aya.yale.edu

Wed. Oct. 16 - Sonoma Group Water Committee.

7:00 PM at the Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway, Santa Rosa. Contact Len Holt: 707-527-7516 or lholt@sonic.net

Mon. Nov. 4 - Sonoma Group.

Santa Rosa Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway is the site of three related meetings:

- The Climate & Energy Committee No Meeting. Info: contact Shirley, shirgirl707@yahoo.com, 707-206-1138.
- Sonoma Group Conservation Committee at 5:30 p.m. Info: Info: Dan Kerbein, dkerbein@sonic.net
- Sonoma Group Executive Committee at 6:30 p.m. Info: Info: Dan Kerbein, dkerbein@sonic.net

Sat., Nov. 9 - Redwood Chapter ExCom.

Location: Willits Environmental Center.

Conservation Committee meets at 10 a.m., ExCom meets 1-3 p.m. Info: Victoria.vbrandon@lakelive.info

Tues. Nov. 12 - North Group ExCom.

Monthly North Group Sierra Club Executive Committee meeting. See Oct. 8 for details.

Thurs. Nov. 14 - 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.

Wed., Nov. 20 - Sonoma Group Water Committee.

7:00 PM at the Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway, Santa Rosa. Contact Len Holt: 707-527-7516 or lholt@sonic.net

No December meeting.

Wed. Jan. 15 and Feb. 19, 2014 - Sonoma Group Water Committee.

7:00 PM at the Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway, Santa Rosa. Contact Len Holt: 707-527-7516 or lholt@sonic.net

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The Time is Now to Protect Our Trees in Sonoma County

"Exporting Wine to China" was the title of a recent conference in Napa, one of many promoting sales of California wine to virtually unlimited markets. This is an indication that the making of local wines is being overtaken by big business with its characteristic disregard for the web of life. The wine industry is a growth sector that brings with it destruction of habitat and increasing demands on very limited water resources.

The environmental costs of grape growing threaten to overwhelm its economic benefit to the county. Local nonprofit groups compete for millions of dollars of public and private money to restore our watersheds and salmon habitat. At the same time, restoration efforts are swamped by business interests that are exploiting weak rules that allow the wine industry to be treated as if it consists of benign and diverse producers of healthy food. Small local winemakers that care more for the land will not benefit from the mega-expansion of industrial vineyards. It will mean less water, more competition, and the ruin of this bucolic region.

Updating the Tree Protection Policy is Necessary

Now that more than 75% of Sonoma County valley cropland is used for growing grapes, the wine industry is turning its attention to forested land, which is poorly protected in the county code by the outdated Tree Protection Ordinance. The term protection is currently used very loosely in the ordinance. That is to say, certain types of trees are 'protected' unless someone wants to cut them down. This applies to even very large vineyard proposals which will require leveling of fields of oaks that have provided ground water benefits, habitat, cooling effects, and beauty for centuries. The county's tree

protection ordinance allows developers to either replace trees with small trees or to pay a fee. This was the best the County could do in 1985. These mitigations did not and do not apply to agriculture since agricultural projects (such as replacing a forest with a vineyard) do not have to mitigate at all.

Given the above facts, there must be a swift, full court press to update Sonoma County's tree protection ordinance. This update must be based on science including the recognition of the important role trees play in the climate, water, and habitat. Sonoma County will always be a desirable place to live and do business. It does not need to rush to convert forest, woodlands, and watersheds in the service of an unrestrained industry.

Reasonable Review of Highly Destructive Projects

Faced with the above realities, the public is attempting to mount an effort to protect more of the County's trees and natural areas. Currently, large vineyard developments are not subject to the same environmental rules that apply to other large developments. Possible changes in public policy should include instituting environmental thresholds that will be triggered by larger developments and determine whether or not environmental review is necessary. Environmental review informs decision-makers and the public so that we can all understand potential impacts and properly avoid or mitigate them.

In the spirit of keeping up with development pressures, we are asking everyone to contact their Sonoma County Supervisor and urge them to update the Tree Protection Ordinance.

—KIMBERLY BURR, ENVIRONMENTAL LAWYER

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