**New Wilderness in Redwood Chapter?**

**By Victoria Brandon, Redwood Chapter Wilderness Chair**

At our January meeting, Chair Executive Committee members were fascinated to receive a presentation on a dramatic new proposal to create 16 new federal Wilderness areas and 15 Wild and Scenic Rivers in the northern part of the Chapter. All of the newly protected areas would be situated in Jared Huffman’s Congressional District 2, with the bulk in Trinity County, others in Mendocino, Humboldt & Del Norte counties--and far to the south, Olema Creek in Marin. 

This opportunity for permanent protection rises from deep historical roots. Ten years ago Congressman Mike Thompson represented most of the area, and with the ardent support of the Sierra Club authored legislation most of us called the “Wilderness Bill.” This legislation passed in 2006, protecting 275,000 spectacular acres in five Redwood Chapter counties from Del Norte to Napa. At the time some other tracts of land with equally staunch Wilderness attributes had to be excluded for various land-management reasons, and all the potential wilderness areas in Trinity County were left out because they were not part of Congressman Thompson’s district.

Fast forward to the 2010 census and subsequent Congressional redistricting. When the smoke cleared and the ink dried on the map, the handful of voters in Trinity County had been added to the new “coastal” Congressional District now held by Congressman Huffman, who like Congressman Thompson is renowned for his passion for public lands protection. At the same time some of the areas left out of the 2006 bill had become suitable for wilderness status, for example after completion of restoration projects requiring heavy equipment.

The opportunity for action was too good to pass up. A broadly based stakeholder group under the leadership of the Wilderness Society and California Wilderness Coalition has been working quietly for more than a year to define boundaries, identify outstanding natural features, and hold quiet discussions with neighboring private landowners and local tribes. The campaign, called Mountains and “New Wilderness?” cont. on page 3

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**Trains Returning to the North Bay**

By Steve Birdleighb, Sonoma Group ExCom

The opportunity in November of 2016: for details, see the newsletter.

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**Sierra Club Opposes Secession Efforts**

At the request of Redwood and Mother Lode Chapters, Sierra Club California recently adopted a formal resolution to “oppose the proposal to divide California in order to create a new “State of Jefferson.”

As discussed in the previous edition of the Redwood Needle, this bizarre idea would result in the formation of a sparsely populated, under-financed new governmental entity with very little infrastructure but abundant natural resources -- and without California’s strict environmental regulations to prevent their wholesale exploitation. It is reassuring to know that the Club’s substantial lobbying influence in Sacramento can now be used to prevent the disastrous consequences that would follow.

Most of the twenty counties being targeted by the secession efforts are in the northeastern quadrant of California, but five -- Del Norte, Humboldt, Trinity, Mendocino, and Lake -- along with the western half of Siskiyou are here in Redwood Chapter. Del Norte voters decisively defeated a resolution of support last year, and Lake expects to have a similar opportunity in November of 2016: for details, please check the Lake Group report on page six of this newsletter.
Redwood Needles
Newsletter of the Redwood Chapter, Sierra Club of California

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We are committed to helping ensure strong and just solutions to climate disruption that will save lives, speed up clean energy prosperity and help American families thrive.

The Sierra Club supports President Obama and EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy who, through the Clean Power Plan, have proposed standards to curb dangerous carbon pollution from existing power plants for the first time ever.

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The Trans-Pacific Partnership: What It Would Mean for the Environment

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is an expansive trade deal being negotiated between twelve countries in the Pacific Rim: Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Vietnam, and the United States. Because the TPP is intended as a “docking agreement,” other countries would be able to join over time.

The Pacific Rim is an area of great significance from an environmental perspective. It includes Australia’s Great Barrier Reef—the world’s largest coral reef system, home to more than 11,000 species—and Peru’s Amazon Rainforest—one of the most biologically diverse areas on Earth.

But the natural environment and rich biodiversity of the Pacific Rim are threatened by, among other things, illegal and/or unsustainable commercial exploitation. The Asia-Pacific region accounts for about one third of all the threatened species in the world. The numbers of several species of iconic sharks, including hammerheads, are declining rapidly. And illegal logging persists in a number of TPP countries, threatening not only natural forests, but the communities who live in and rely upon the forests.

Trade agreements must serve to strengthen environmental and climate protection. The Trans-Pacific Partnership, however, follows a flawed model of trade that puts corporate profits before communities and the environment.

Lack of Transparency

The TPP encroaches on a broad range of issues—the environment, labor and jobs, food, health, access to medicines, and more. Despite the huge impact that the TPP would have on our lives, trade negotiators are developing TPP texts, or chapters, behind closed doors with very little public input. None of the texts are public, though a few have leaked. Moreover, nearly the only people apart from select TPP government officials with access to texts are more than 600 corporate representatives who serve as “official U.S. trade advisors.” The text of the TPP must be released now so that we can have a real conversation about the effects of this pact on communities and the environment.

The TPP and the Environment

The chapters in trade deals devoted to the environment have a history of lacking meaningful enforcement. But they’ve been strengthened over the years, largely thanks to citizen-led advocacy by groups including the Sierra Club. This pressure led to the forgoing of a bipartisan consensus in May 2007 that set the minimum standards for environment, labor, and other provisions in our trade agreements.

It is essential that the environment chapter of the TPP build on this progress. At the minimum, the environment chapter of the TPP must:

• be binding and subject to the same dispute settlement provisions as commercial chapters;

• ensure that countries uphold and strengthen their domestic environmental laws and policies and their obligations under multilateral environmental agreements; and

• include binding provisions to address the core environment and conservation challenges of the Pacific Rim region, such as a prohibition on trade in illegally taken timber, wildlife, and fish and a ban on shark finning and associated trade.

The TPP and Corporate Rights

The TPP will follow the model of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and include provisions that allow foreign corporations to sue governments directly—for unlimited cash compensation—over almost any domestic environmental or other law that the corporation alleges is hurting its ability to profit. While typically disagreements over trade are handled between countries, the third-party dispute settlement cases are heard in private and unaccountable trade tribunals. This means that not only do investor-state cases threaten laws designed to protect our health and environment, they do so in a completely opaque manner. To date, corporations such as Exxon Mobil and Chevron have launched almost 600 cases against nearly 100 governments.

Injustice in La Oroya

In a case going on today, a U.S. corporation, Renco Group, invested in a metallic smelter in La Oroya, Peru, one of the most polluted sites in the world. Metallic smelters, which refine metals such as lead, zinc, silver, and gold are both an environmental and health hazard; it has been documented, for example, that people living near metallic smelters have dangerously high levels of lead in their blood.

Renco was supposed to clean up pollutants and contaminants in the area of their smelter, but they never did. After the Peruvian government decided not to grant Renco a third extension on its clean-up obligations, Renco filed an investor-state suit under the US-Peru free trade agreement and demanded $800 million in compensation. The case is still ongoing.

Increase in Dirty Fracking

The TPP would facilitate increased exports of liquefied natural gas by requiring the U.S. Department of Energy to automatically approve all natural gas exports to TPP countries. Increased exports would mean an increase in hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, the dirty and violent process that dislocates gas deposits from shale rock formations. Increased exports of natural gas would also cause an increase in electricity prices, burdening consumers, manufacturers, workers, and increasing the use of dirty coal power.

Fast-Track Authority

Fast track authority would allow the U.S. executive branch to finish negotiating and sign the TPP before ever sending the agreement to Congress. It would then limit the role of Congress to a straight up-or-down vote on the pact—with no room for amendments and limited floor debate.

Fast track is an outdated and inappropriate mechanism for trade pacts as expansive as the TPP. Congress should oppose any legislation that limits the ability of Congress to set the terms of trade and that expedites the passage of trade pacts without sufficient protections for communities and the environment.

For more information on Sierra Club’s Responsible Trade Program, please contact Courtney.Lewis@sierraclub.org


2. For more information on this case, see Public Citizen, Global Trade Watch. “Renco Group Uses Trade Pact Foreign Investor Provisions to Chill Peru’s Environmental and Health Policy, Undermine Justice.” March 2012.

Editor’s Note: For more information and ways to get involved, visit: http://www.sierraclub.org/trade/trans-pacific-partnership

This article appears on the Sierra Club website.

Maxwell Farms Regional Park Update

Sonoma County Regional Parks has initiated a public process to update the master plan for Maxwell Farms Regional Park. The park is located in the heart of Sonoma Valley at the corner of Highway 12 and Verano Avenue at the boundary of the City of Sonoma.

Sonoma Creek flows freely along the western edge of the park where people can walk down to the creek. Agua Caliente Creek joins the main creek at the park’s north boundary. The natural two-thirds of the regional park is protected by a Conservation Easement. Here rustic trails allow easy walking and ancient bay and oak trees offer shade.

The upper third of the park is developed for recreation including tennis courts, soccer fields, playground, picnic area, playing fields and the Valley of the Moon Boys and Girls Club.

The 85-acre park is named after George Maxwell who was known as the “father of conservation” and an early advocate of organic farming and “homecroft.” It is one of a few parks that serve the Springs area and serves as a defacto greenbelt between the city and county.

Take the Maxwell Farms Survey

Sonoma County is considering new development in the park including a BMX bike course, disc-golf, and more parking. Sierra Club supports protection of the Conservation Easement where small interpretative signs and natural walking paths may be appropriate. The Sonoma Group will be following the public process as project alternatives and an environmental review are prepared for the master plan in coming months.

Show your support for protection of the conservation easement in Maxwell Farms Regional by taking the online survey on the Sonoma County Parks Regional parks http://parks.sonomacounty.ca.gov/Get_Outdoors/Parks/Maxwell_Farms_Regional_Park.aspx and click on the survey on the right hand side of the page.

The Natural Environment and Communities of的儿子

Terr Shore, Sonoma Group

“Trains Returning” continued from page 1

and federal funding is currently being sought to modernize the tracks south to Larkspur, north to Corte Madera, and to complete the entire pathway.

Sierra Club members can help by letting members of the Sonoma and Marin county boards of supervisors and city council members in Santa Rosa and Petaluma know about the importance of convenient connections between buses and trains, the needs of cyclists, and support for shuttle services. It is also important for the cities to be served by the rail line to plan now for affordable housing near train stations together with pathways for pedestrians and bicyclists. For more information contact Steve Birdleburgh affirma@friendshouse.org.

“New Wilderness?” continued from page 1

Rivers, is currently engaged in canvassing the region to collect support letters in order to demonstrate the strong grassroots backing. Congressman Huffman needs to author legislation. Please visit their website, http://mountainsandrivers.org, to learn about these proposals in much greater detail, and consider offering a letter of support.

We’ll be bringing you additional information about this project as it moves forward, and with any luck will be able to offer Outings into some of the proposed Wilderness areas so you can see for yourself how special they are. Existing, isn’t it?
O uti ngs

Fri., evening-Sun., Apr. 3 - 5 - Lunar Eclipse in the Black Rock Desert. Enjoy the lunar eclipse in the spectacular Black Rock Desert about 100 miles N. of Reno. We'll camp at an undeveloped hot spring and watch the lunar eclipse. totality is early Sat. morning (about 5am). Potluck Saturday night. Sunday we'll probably visit a nearby art gallery or ??? Leader very familiar with the area. Primitive camping, bring all water and supplies, shovel for personal needs. Ham Radio Operators, bring your radios. 4WD not needed. Small RV's/trailers may be OK. Bad weather cancels. RSVP 3/20 - 3/31 for meeting time and place. Leader: David Book.

Sun. Apr. 12 - North Group. South Fork Trinity River (off Highway 299) Hike. Much to see and hear on this perennial favorite National Forest trail. Redbud, Baby Blue Eyes, Black-headed Grosbeak. Breathtaking views of the Trinity River below, and trekking poles will be a plus. A profusion of wildflowers, especially since the 2008 heavy rains. Bring lunch, snacks, two liters water, and river shoes or sandals for creek crossing. Experienced hikers only - 8 hour hike with 1300 ft total elevation gain. Class-G / D (Hard, 13 miles, elevation gain/loss 1,000-2,000 ft.). Carpools: Meet 8:15 am Lower Lake Trading Post Co-op. By reservation only. Leader Tom McFarling (707)994-5490 tom.mcfarling@gmail.com. Rain or Temp. over 85 degrees cancels.

Thu-Sat, Apr. 23-25 - Death Valley Wilderness Restoration. Help clean up a couple of non-historic military plane wrecks near Hunter Mountain. 4WD required possibility of camping. Meet Thursday afternoon at the junction of Hwy 190 and the South Saline Valley Road. Work Thur. afternoon and all day Friday. Getting to the work sites requires a very fit body, hike on Thursday, and a 2-mile moderately strenuous hike on Friday. On Sat, we most likely will be free to do a hike in the area. Camping is primitive, bring food, water and a trowel or shovel for personal use. Leader: Kate Allen, kj.aller69@gmail.com, 661-944-4056. CNRC Desert Committee

Sat. Apr. 25 - North Group. Smith River NRA-Jedediah Smith State Park Hike. We will hike Lake Little Bald Hills Trail. From the trailhead off South Fork Road, a succession of botanic communities and stunning views reward our 1,800' climb. The afternoon's steady descent finally enters old growth redwood forest as the trail nears Howland Hill Rd., where our shuttled cars await. Bring lunch, food, water and a trowel or shovel for personal use. Leader: Craig Deutsche, craig.deutsche@gmail.com, 310-477-6670. CNRC Desert Committee

Sun., May 3 - 13 - Manzanar/Lone Pine Lake Trip. Join us at our beautiful creekside camp in the High Desert near Lone Pine Lake, at elevation gain/loss 1500 ft gain (Co-led with Mother Lode Chapter. Carpools: Meet 9 am parking at the Orchard Shopping Center off Perkins St. in Ukiah. By reservation only. Leader Yvonne Kramer 463 0342, kramer@saber.net. Heavy rain cancels.

Sat.-Sun. Apr. 25-26 - Service In the Carrizo Plains National Monument. Visit the Carrizo Plains National Monument in the wildflower season, and we pray that rains have produced a wonderful and long-lasting display. Our service on Saturday will be held at the trading post to the northeast of the monument. A stellar opportunity to combine carcamping, day-hiking, exploring, and service in a relatively unknown wilderness. Contact leader for details: Craig Deutsche, craig.deutsche@gmail.com, 310-477-6670. CNRC Desert Committee

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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 how 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 have the right to allow low 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 this rating.

Slower pace: Allison Bronkall

Moderate pace with few stops: Don Anderson  Carl Inglin  David Book  Tom McFarling  Nanette DeDonato  Steve Devoto  Julie Kreis  Ned Forsyth

Fast pace with few or no stops: Paul Bozzo  Carol McGill

Varies, see hike description for details: Isabelle Saint-Guyl

Jim Gannon

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.

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.sierrioclub.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 welcome 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.

From the Redwood Needles archive: Snow Mountain, Mendocino County, by Clark Nattkepper

Send all outings write-ups to Carol Vellutini, Outings Chair, (carolvellutini.net) by the 8th of the month. All leaders must coordinate their outings with their Group Outings Chair.

O u t i n g s

April 1, 2015 Redwood Needles
Outings Chair Report

The weather has been unpredictable. Wildflowers have bloomed early in some areas. The desert had more rainfall than parts of Sonoma County. The Sierra Club has great outings. I am told that the hills bordering the San Joaquin Valley (central Calif.) are having the best bloom since 2010.

Our chapter is blessed with some of the best trails and scenery in the state. Visit the Sinkyone Wilderness and the King Range for backpacking, hiking, birding, wild flowers, fantastic beaches, tide pooling, great views along the coast and hidden ocean beaches.

The last Redwood Needles featured an article about environmental heroes passing on. In Sonoma County most of our long time movers and shakers also passed on. All are worth mentioning but I will thank one for his help saving 5,000 special acres next to an urban center. Oak woodlands, cobblestone and meadows, rare wildflowers, all would be a subdivision if it were not for the more than one million dollars Henry Trione donated in a complex deal to save the park. Thank you Henry.

In Napa, Sonoma, and Lake county many acres of special natural features are being turned into mega winery/event centers bringing with them unsustainable water use, traffic, noise, destruction of neighbors' peace and quiet, destruction of biologically diverse wild lands and wildlife habitat, etc. Luckily citizens are jumping into action. The vision 2050 coalition (Napa) and Preserve Rural Sonoma County (Sebastopol area) are just two of the many groups fighting the disheartening development pressure $$$$ from outside of their county or the USA. Please write your supervisor asking for a moratorium on rural mega winery permits. Be the change you want to see.

Some outings leaders have stopped leading outings due to mountain biking incidents. One leader was hurt by a downhill speeding bike and another doesn't want to take the responsibility of bringing bikers on trails where they have the risk of being injured. Leaders please report any incidents with mountain bikes to me with a cc to your group outings chair. Most mountain bikers are responsible, do not go off trail, do not speed downhill, but it only takes one accident to change your life as you know it forever.

Thank you to all leaders in training who are finishing up their requirements. I hope to see your outing in the June newsletter.

—CAROL VELLUTINI, REDWOOD CHAPTER OUTINGS CHAIR

Outings


Backpack. 30miles through some of the best of Utah's red rock, with shear, high-walled canyons and cathedral-like campites. Trips start with obtaining permits at the Escalante visitor center. 4-5 miles of travel each day. Most of the hiking is moderate, but requires wading back and forth across the creek. One steep trail to bypass waterfalls. There are side trips so bring a small day pack. This is the warm season, but usually quite pleasant. Trip details and agenda available on sign-up.

Limit: 12.
Leader: David Hardy, email preferred. hardyhikers@embarqmail.com, 707-875-4826. S. Nevada Group/CNRC Desert Committee

Let's go out for a 6 night out and back, backpacking 5-7 miles eat, day and base camping for 2 nights in the middle of the trip. We'll see the beautiful Marble Mountains, several lovely lakes appropriate for swimming, and some of the most gorgeous scenery in California. We will put in about 30 miles total. There is the possibility of staying out longer if the group chooses.

This is a backpacking trip and participants must have backpacked within the last 5 years and be familiar with and own their own backpacking equipment. Need to carry your own gear and food for 6 nights. There will be no group meals. Bear canisters will be discussed before leaving. Class: M-30-B. Limit 10 people. By reservation only. Leader Val Nordeman, 707-477-4199, nordemanw@willitsonline.com

This will be a really busy weekend on the Playa as many Burning Man attendees attempt to use it as a shakedown for Burning Man. No specific plans but we'll probably meet in Reno-Thu.

evening and head up to the Black Rock and camp on the edge of the Playa. We'll probably visit area hot springs and the Emigrant Trail. Primitive camping, bring all supplies and a shovel for personal needs. Possible Ham Radio License Class. 7/3 is a legal holiday, can't waste a long weekend. Leader is very familiar with the area! Sign-up after 6/15. David book 775/843-6443.

Please join me as we hike into my favorite wilderness area, where I've been going every year for 30 years. We will backpack into a beautiful spring, taking 2 1/2 days to get there, base camping for 2 nights, then returning home the same way. There are good day hikes from our base camp and a good spring. But be aware that water is scarce as we hike in and you must carry a minimum of 2 liters of water at all times, preferably 3 liters. This is a strenuous backpacking trip. You must have backpacked within the last 5 years and be capable of carrying your own food and gear for 6 days. We do not need bear canisters here. Class: M-30-C. If it's an easier hike than this indicates, then that will be good. But I have found the Yolla Bolly Wilderness to be very wild, very dry, and the trails packed at best. Limit 10 people. By reservation only. Leader Val Nordeman, 707-477-4199 

nordemanw@willitsonline.com

Outings

Redwood Needles archive: Tangle Blue Creek, April 1976, northeast corner of the then Trinity Alps wilderness proposal, by Dave Van deMark

Redwood Needles • April 1, 2015

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Lake Group Report

Secessionist campaign targets Lake County

Several Lake Group leaders have recently had to turn from their usual exuions on behalf of our land, water, and wildlife in order to combat proposals to secede from California and form a new “State of Jefferson.”

Although this idea offers no visible advantages to the residents of Lake County, out of county proponents were nonetheless invited to give a presentation to the Board of Supervisors in early February. The presentation was dismaying to see some BOS members taking it seriously, making wisecracks, playing to the gallery of imported green t-shirted supporters, and taking cheap shots at state government. At that time I was the only person to voice public opposition (speaking as an individual since the Club had not yet had an opportunity to take a position), pointing out that rather than wasting time in this irresponsible manner, the Board should work with our newly elected state representatives to obtain concrete benefits for the community, starting with protecting Clear Lake.

When the proposal came back to the BOS for a vote on February 17, the activist opposition was thorough, but the majority of Supervisors was evenly split and phone calls to the supervisors running strongly in opposition. Nonetheless, after two hours of debate (but no comprehensive financial analysis), the board took a series of extremely confusing votes that appeared to support the county’s secession from California, with Supervisors Farrington and Steele in dissent.

But not so fast! When county counsel pointed out that the language adopted at the chaotic February 17 meeting was subject to conflicting interpretations, the issue was re-agendized on March 3. Again, the chamber was packed, with half the room waving Bear flags, while the other half of the room confronted, which had been closed. The Board began by clarifying their previous actions, first deciding that their votes should be considered merely as a kind of straw poll, and not as an official expression of the will of the county. They then all made clear that the board had to make a momentous decision, and that a momentous decision be made by the citizens and not by the Supervisors presuming to speak in our names. After evaluating three possible alternative resolutions, they voted 3/2 to put an advisory vote on the ballot at the November 2016 general election.

Lake Group expects to take an active role in opposing this proposal when the time comes—and in the meantime rejoices in an outcome that has deflated the secessionist membership movement and that allows us to return to the time being to issues directly concerned with our land, water, and wildlife.

Russian River - All Rivers screening March 25.

At press time Lake Group was eagerly making plans for our March general membership meeting, consisting of a screening of the exciting new documentary “The Russian River: All Rivers - the Value of an American Waterhed,” which discusses biological, political and economic issues that are applicable to Clear Lake and its watershed as well as to rivers everywhere.

– VICTORIA BRANDON, LAKE GROUP CONSERVATION CHAIR

North Group Report

The New Year brought several different transportation and resource questions for public discussion, some new and some ongoing, and our annual retreat.

Caltrans conducted local public workshops in January on proposed alternatives for solving the recurrent problems on Highway 101 at Last Chance Grade, in Del Norte County. North Group favors the alternatives that would result in the least disturbance to redwood forests, after looking at maps and other materials provided by the agency at the workshops.

Forsyth and Steele in dissent.

The Humboldt County Board of Supervisors hosted a discussion of the ongoing Richardson Grove realignment project, and court case, at its regular March 3 meeting, attended by Ned Forsyth and about ten other citizens. Caltrans officials expect to have a revised work plan released in Fall 2015. The revised plan follows a California Appeals Court ruling that a more thorough and deliberate treatment of the roots of 116 old-growth redwood trees is required, arising from lawsuits by EPIC and other plaintiffs starting in 2010.

State Senator Mike McGuire held a town hall meeting in Eureka February 7. Among a vast array of topics, including his statement of support for a ban on fracking, he reported that the multinational Red Flint Nickel Corporation had withdrawn its application to draw water for its Cleopatra Mine project from an unprotected stretch of the Smith River watershed in Oregon. After months of sustained widespread opposition to the project from Del Norte County citizens and elected officials, Senator McGuire introduced SB 8 in January, calling on Congress and the President to “permanently safeguard...the Smith River watershed from any mining activities.”

– NED FORSYTH, NORTH GROUP VICE CHAIR

Mendocino Group Report

There’s a lot on our plate presently. A countywide coalition against herbicides, which includes the Hack and Squirt on the industrial timberlands and the Caltrans proposed spraying on the Willits Bypass mitigation lands in the Little Lake Valley, is meeting across the county. It is hoped that persons concerned with vineyard spraying will join. It’s been a long time since toxic spray activists were so brutally shut down by Willie Brown. Local fire departments are involved in this effort in an attempt to try and keep our vineyards and forests safe.

The 850 plus acre THP in Albion’s Railroad Gulch is briefly on hold purportedly because of rule change updating. The community responded to this planned wholesome pillage of Railroad Gulch with one hundred letters and a petition. The acreage includes some of the last older second growth redwood in the county. Mendocino Group is following this one very closely.

The DEIR on the proposed Central Coast Solid Waste Transfer Station project is now available to the public. Mendocino Group is opposed to the siting of this facility on 17 acres of pristine pygmy forest. More appropriately described as Mendocino Pygmy Cypress and Northern Bishop Pine Forests, both onsite as well as offsite pygmy forested areas would be affected and effectively destroyed by the soil disturbance and hydrological alterations due to the project, according to Linda Perkins. It seems counterproductive to start by selecting a site that includes a habitat type unique to Mendocino County. This rare vegetation type deserves the utmost protection yet is fast being degraded and destroyed by (mostly) industrial development. It would be unwise for the county itself to choose to degrade what should be seen as an invaluable and irreplaceable biological asset of the county, a treasure to be guarded. There is a serious CEQA issue with this project as well as more than twice as many times than which is needed to handle current waste. The DEIR may be read on the City of Fort Bragg’s website.

Fort Bragg has infuriated locals with a Mitigated Negative Declaration on a proposed shopping mall on the south side of the city and to the west of Highway 1. Referred to as the Hare Creek Center, the project will consist, as a keystone retail, a grocery Outlet. The area is presently open space and the project will not front on Highway 1. The access will be from an interior street. Its rear wall will be visible from Highway 1. There is a $1000 fee to appeal a Planning Commission decision in Fort Bragg. The fee was collected by means of small donations from many local residents in very short order. We support this appeal and Sue Boecker is following the project for us.

– MARY WALSHE, MENDOCINO GROUP CHAIR

Napa Group Report

Exceeding Expectations!

400 people turned out in Napa on March 10 for Sierra Club’s Fort Ross development meetings. After hearing reports on development trends, traffic, and tourism, speaker after speaker rose to express concern about commercialization of the agricultural lands, with wineries becoming “event centers” selling “tickets instead of wine.” Of the dozens of speakers, only two seemed happy with the current direction. Amazingly, environmental groups, neighborhood groups, and the agricultural community all seemed virtually to be speaking from the same script, stating that Napa’s traditional rural-based values are being eroded by a new economy that is negating our agricultural base.

Sierra Club was there to speak out, of course, and our special focus – shared by several other speakers – was protection of watersheds and open space, as well as finishing up our long-delayed Climate Action Plan.

Napa Sierra Club is proud to be a founding member of the just-launched Vision 2050 Coalition, which deserves a lot of credit for the massive turnout. In this Coalition, Sierra Club joins with other environmental and neighborhood groups working together to advocate for a planning process which will safeguard our Napa’s finite resources.

Truly, this is the most inspirational time I have experienced in local environmental activism.

Come help Napa Sierra Club meet the challenge.

– NANCY TAMARISK, NAPA GROUP CHAIR

Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park in 2015

This is a tour of a precious area of our state not seen by many. This spring and summer, you can experience the Channel Islands, including hiking and kayaking, with Sierra Club members and a national park.

This is a gift that gives twice because your tour benefits the political work of Sierra Club California, though we don’t discuss it at the table. While you are floating about the islands, you will be helping to protect them and other natural resources found only in California.

E xtensively within view of Ventura and Santa Barbara, one of California’s (and the country’s) most unique environments is part of Channel Islands National Park and National Marine Sanctuary. It is also one of the least visited national parks in the U.S. The Channel Islands are only accessible by boat or plane.

The trips are organized by Sierra Club member Joan Holtz. Trip tickets cost $615 and include meals and lodging, with the tour boat that leaves from Santa Barbara.

Please contact the trip leader, Joan Jones Holtz, for more information at jholtz@sierriclub.org. Or 626-443-0706.

April 1, 2015

Redwood Needles
Welcome to our new and returning ExCom Members!

From Vallejo: Erin Tatot, Doug Darling, Joe Feller, Amy Noël Coughlin, and Jane Bogner.

From Fairfield: Quinton Crawford, Kathy Pettrie, Jim Dekloe and Greg Peterson.

Next meeting, Wednesday, April 8 at Denny’s in Cordelia @ 6:00 pm.

Join us—We review local issues and come up with plans to protect our local environment. For more information, email sierrachoboolsonogroup@gmail.com or leave a message at 707-319-6398.

Earth Day

Join us for Earth Day events on April 18 in Vallejo at the Farmers Market, or at Fairfield’s event behind city hall on April 25, 9 am to noon. Help needed at both locations.

Sonoma Group Report

Earth Day

Climate & Energy Committee: The Sonoma Group will have a table at the April 26 Earth Day ‘Day on the Green’ event at Montgomery Village. There will be art, music, dance and drinks benefitting Land Paths.

Following the Fate of Sonoma Compost

The Conservation Committee is following the fate of the Sonoma Compost facility at the central landfill. It has temporarily solved the problem that it was having with leachate water running off the site and into streams, but will need to move to a new location by 2017. Sonoma Compost does a good job at providing local composting of our food and yard waste—its compost is in great demand and is usually sold out.

Maxwell Farms Regional Park Master Plan

The Master Plan for Maxwell Farms Regional Park in Sonoma is being updated, and there are concerns about how well some of the proposed new activities, a BMX park, a dog park, and a disc golf course will impact the 2/3 of the park which has a conservation easement requiring it to be left in a natural state. (For more details, see the article on page 3.) Go to the following page to take a survey or submit comments on the Master Plan update: http://parks.sonomacounty.ca.gov/Get_Outdoors/Parks/Maxwell_Farms_Regional_Park.aspx.

Drought

Water Committee: It looks as though 2015 will be an even worse year for drought than 2014. Santa Rosa is at the Stage 1; Mandatory Prohibitions level. Automatic shut-offs are forbidden. We continue to fix our shed and truck bed. Please go to http://www.gofundme.com/VACOLERECycling to help with donations. Thank you.

Garden Volunteers Welcome

We continually work at Lori’s Native Plant Garden located at 225 Amador St, Vallejo. NEXT WORK DAY IS May 2nd, 9 TO 2 pm. We also weed, plant, prune and mulch your yard— or if you have an hour, call Jane and she’ll work with you to get you started, 707-319-6398.

Contributor: Jane Bogner
Editor: Greg Peterson

Solano Breeze Corner

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

sierrachoboolsonogroup@gmail.com 707-319-6398

Thanks!

Thanks to Nancy McCoy, Errol Dempsey, Jane and community for staffing the February VALCORE Recycling and Confidential Paper Shredding event.

VALCORE Recycling and Paper Shredding updates:

Solano Group will be helping out every 3rd Saturday of the month at 38 Sheridan Street, Vallejo from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. March 21 and April 18. There is a charge of $10 (CASH or CHECK ONLY) 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.

NEW WEEKDAY SHREDDING from 10 am to 4 pm – closed 1 pm to 2 pm for lunch, CREDIT or DEBIT ONLY.

Valcore is now recycling clothes/linens, and ink cartridges. Check www.valcorecycling.org for more recycling information.

We need to fix our shed and truck bed. Please go to http://www.gofundme.com/VACOLERECycling to help with donations. Thank you.

Non-Sierra Club Outings

The following activities and events are not sponsored or 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 Saunders for Santa Rosa Area.

Every Saturday Saunters 9am and usually ends around 11:30. These walks are moderate. Fun way to exercise with friends. For info contact Bob Martin 707-530-6128.

Sat. Apr. 25 - Hike 4 Healing, Wright Peak Summit Trail, Mount Konocti, Lake County

Support maternal and newborn health missions lead around the globe by Dr. Dhanda. Hike rolling chamois hills, oak woodlands and pines to Konocti peak and magnificent views. Class M-6-B. Carpool if possible. From Hwy 29 on south side of Clear Lake take the Kelseyville exit, Main Street. Go north .35 mile. Turn right on Koncoi road 1 mile until it turns into a dirt road. Continue up the mountain 2 miles to parking lots (2 or 3). Walk up the road and proceed to check in on station on side of road. Entrance fee for Hike 4 HEALING: $25.00; Children under 12 yrs. old free. Meet 8:00 am registration, 9:00 am hike. For info: Julie 707-987-9409.

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 707-565-3336. ParkVolunteer@sonomacounty.org.

Volunteer Days Riverkeeper Stewardship Park in Guerneville, Every Wednesday.

9 a.m. - Noon, 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 "RussianRiverkeeper Stewardship Park" sign. Bring drinking water & wear sturdy footwear.

Light refreshments provided. Info Victoria Wikle 865-2474 Victoria Wikle@usa.net.

Sierra Club Volunteer/Activist Opportunities

Group Hike Leaders: Many Redwood Chapter Groups need Outings Chairs. This volunteer position is working with leaders, coordinating with the Chapter Outings Chair, training leaders, keeping records, encouraging new leaders and community outreach. There is an Outings Chair training available. Contact Carol 546-6308 or carolvsr@sonic.net for information.

Work with the Sonoma Group Water Committee! NOTE: The Water Committee is now meeting at 5:30 PM on the first Mondays of most months in conjunction with the Conservation and Energy Committee meetings. The Water Committee develops and promotes measures to conserve, save, and reuse our water resources. Our goal is to preserve and improve the natural water environment, by promoting the responsible use of water and the safe reuse or disposal of our wastewaters. Help protect the quality of our water for people, wildlife, fish and other aquatic life. Check for our meeting dates in the publication.

Get CHARGED by attending the Climate & Energy Committee. Join us on the 1st of the month at 5:00-3:00 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 Chair Shirley Johnson-Foell: Email: Shirlgirl707@yahoo.com, home 206-1138, or call office 433-7651.

Redwood Needles

June Deadline: Due May 8

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

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

Send Meetings to Carl Inglis: chinglin@sonic.net

Redwood Needles

April 1, 2015
Great Breaking News for the Coast:
Marine Sanctuaries Set to Expand

As this edition of the Redwood Needles was going to press, we were thrilled to learn that a plan to extend the Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank national marine sanctuaries northward to protect the Sonoma and Mendocino coasts is approaching final approval.

Activists have been working for nearly 40 years to establish permanent protection against oil drilling in the area, a breathtakingly beautiful stretch of coastline that provides rich habitat for fish and other marine life. Sanctuary designation will achieve the goal of forbidding any energy or mineral exploration or production from Bodega Head north to Manchester Beach near Point Arena.

Now the protected area, which was first given special status in 1981, will more than double in size to more than 4500 square miles, to include a crucial segment of the northernmost section of the expanded sanctuary area to the south.

Protection of the Sonoma and Mendocino coasts was a top priority for former Rep. Lynn Woolsey, who collaborated with Senator Barbara Boxer to achieve special designation legislatively; no avail. On Woolsey’s retirement, Rep. Nancy Pelosi asked President Obama to take administrative action to achieve the same objective. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration then held seven local public hearings and collected more than 1300 comments, most of them strongly supportive of permanent protection. A Final Environmental Impact Statement was published in December, and a final rule on March 12; the agency action will be effective after Congress is in session for another 45 days.

For an extra celebratory touch, this wonderful news arrives just a year after we were rejoicing in the addition of the Point Arena-Stornetta Public Lands in the northernmost section of the expanded sanctuary area to the California Coastal National Monument. In the words of Ocean Foundation senior fellow Richard Charley, this is “just a miracle.”

—VICTORIA BRANDON, REDWOOD CHAPTER CHAIR