Redwood Needles

By Victoria Brandon, Redwood Chapter Chair

Early in July several Sierra Club entities including the Redwood Chapter joined representatives of other environmental organizations to express concern to the City of Benicia about the proposed Valero Crude-by-Rail Project. This proposed rail terminal could significantly impact the Suisun Marsh, reduce emergency response time, and increase traffic and noise. Most alarmingly, it might also lead to imports of very high-sulfur, low-quality crude oil from Canada’s tar sands winding up at Valero’s Benicia refinery—with predictably negative effects on Bay Area air quality!

The city intends to base project approvals on a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) that was issued on May 31. This level of review is totally inadequate for a project with such great potential to harm air quality, public health, public safety, and the ecology of the area, with risks not only to residents of Benicia but also to the entire region. At the very minimum, a full Environmental Impact Report must be undertaken before allowing this project to forward. For a detailed evaluation of the failings of the MND, see the comment letter available at our new blog, sierraclubredwoodchapter.wordpress.com.

At press time, we were encouraging Benicia residents to find out more by attending a community meeting where the Natural Resources Defense Council planned to present expert research findings on potential environmental impacts, including local air pollution. On July 11 the Benicia Planning Commission had scheduled a formal hearing on the Crude-by-Rail, where they were being asked to assess the project’s potential effects on the environment, without the information that only a full Environmental Impact Report can provide. Sierra Club representatives from throughout the region intended to present comments, and– especially! — to request that an EIR be conducted.

Benicia Faces Crude Awakening

As mentioned in previous issues of the Redwood Needles, the Sierra Club is participating in a nationwide celebration marking the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Wilderness Act, which was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964. Here on the North Coast we’re particularly fortunate to have no fewer than 15 federally-designated Wilderness Areas, located in four of the Chapter’s six local Groups. As our contribution to Wilderness 50, we are in the process of preparing a guidebook to these areas that will make basic information about each of our Wilderness Areas—where is it? why is it special? how to get there? what to do there?—readily available to Club members and the general public.

The basic information has been assembled and most of the volume has been written, but it still needs more photographs, and some personal stories about hikes and other wilderness adventures. To make this volume truly special, we need help from you, our members. Please send photos and written accounts to Victoria Brandon by email to vbrandon@lakelive.info (preferred) or mail them to the Chapter office, PO Box 466, Santa Rosa CA 95402. For more information, and to arrange to submit an oral account of your special experience, call Victoria at 707 994 1931.

Redwood Chapter Joins the Blogging Community!

The Redwood Chapter is continuing to expand its abilities to communicate with our members. Since the last issue of the Needles announced our entry to the Facebook community, we have created a Wordpress blog and made several postings on subjects as geographically and topically diverse as the Klamath River and Bay Area refineries. Please check it out — and leave your comments — at sierraclubredwoodchapter.wordpress.com.

By the way our Facebook page has gathered more than 150 followers in the few short weeks it has been in existence. Please check that out too (it’s open for public view at facebook.com/SierraClubRedwoodChapter) and click the “like” button to get up-to-the-minute news from all around the North Coast and beyond.

Volunteer Opportunity

Russian River Watershed Cleanup

Sept. 28th and 29th, 2013

Three locations depending on what section of river you will be working on. The first day we get in the river and clean it up. The second day we sort the trash. Come out and get your hands dirty (or at least wet) cleaning up Sonoma County’s largest watershed.

For more information contact Annabel Ascher 707-508-9645 annabelascher@yahoo.com

Wilderness 50: Calling for Your Photos and Stories

For more information contact Annabel Ascher 707-508-9645 annabelascher@yahoo.com
**Chapter Chair Report**

**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.

**September 28-29 Russian River Watershed Cleanup**

Join over 250 fellow volunteers on September 28-29, 2013 in this fun, inspiring community event. On Saturday we will remove plastic and other man-made materials from the river so this trash does not wash out to the ocean and wind up in bodies of birds, fish, whales, and dolphins or in the Pacific Garbage Patch. The clean-up will occur along 55 miles of river between Cloverdale and Duncan’s Mill by canoe and by foot. Trash is sorted on Sunday. For more information or to register, go to www.russianrivercleanup.org.

**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 Thursday of the project you can call 707-548-8424 for an update or if you got 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 driveway 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 Victoria@likusfield.com

**Join over 250 fellow volunteers on September 28-29, 2013 in this fun, inspiring community event. On Saturday we will remove plastic and other man-made materials from the river so this trash does not wash out to the ocean and wind up in bodies of birds, fish, whales, and dolphins or in the Pacific Garbage Patch. The clean-up will occur along 55 miles of river between Cloverdale and Duncan’s Mill by canoe and by foot. Trash is sorted on Sunday. For more information or to register, go to www.russianrivercleanup.org.**

**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 summer base camp for anyone who enjoys the wide variety of activities offered by the Tahoe area. Explore wildflower gardens and expansive views while hiking the nearby Pacific Crest Trail. Short hikes to secluded mountain lakes begin at the Lodge and are perfect for introducing the family to the mountains. Donner Lake offers great kayaking, swimming, 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 our special programs or to receive a full schedule and description of Clair Tappaan programs please visit our website at www.ctt.sierraclub.org or call (800) 679-6775.

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**Victoria Brandon, Sara Husby-Good, Congressman John Garamendi, Denise Rushing, and Diane Dillon in the corridor outside the House Chamber.**
Outings

Fri. Mon. July 26-29 - Eastern Nevada Wilderness Service Project. (Outing #25, with Jerry Hulser). We will hike - backpacking part of the Lost Man Trail with Las Vegas Wash to the top of the South Mountains of Nevada. The hikes are all on public land where we will be able to explore the wilderness. We will hike for 6 days with 5 nights camping. We will be hiking in the town of Ely, Nevada.

Sat. Aug. 27 - Diablo Canyon Service and Hike. (Outing #26, with Robert Jordan). We will hike along the Diablo Canyon, a beautiful stretch of coastline. We will hike 10 miles with 1,600 ft. in elevation gain. The hike will be an easy to moderate hike with some challenging parts. We will hike from the Diablo Canyon Beach to the Diablo Canyon Nature Reserve. The hike will take us through beautiful meadows and old growth redwoods and firs. The hike will be led by Bob Jordan from the Diablo Canyon Service.

Mendo Group’s Outings are Fantastic!

Leader Jonah Friedman has been leading awesome educational outings. I went on the outing to the UC’s Hopland Field Station. The Rod Shippey Building is a new green building for students, and most of the workshops were held there. The workshops are filled with educational specimens and posters. A huge conference room has the biggest ceiling fan I have ever seen. Students come from all over the U.S. to study. Our tour guide, wildlife biologist & HREC superintendennt Bob Keiffer, gave us tremendous amounts of information on the research projects in progress. (It was like a classroom lecture.) The tour of the property was on dirt roads through oak woodlands going up to the ridge tops affording us 360 degree views of the landscape. Some wildlife was abundant. Next I went on Jonah’s outing to The Angelo Coast Range Reserve. (5 1/2 hour round trip of driving) This property was The Nature Conservancy’s first preserve (1959) west of the Mississippi. In 1984, the property was transferred to the UC’s Natural Reserve System (a statewide system of biologically diverse natural areas dedicated to teaching & research). After driving all the way to Laytown and then turning west on Branscomb to a little road on the right I was hoping we would be there. However that road then turned to a narrow dirt road and I prayed that I would not meet anyone coming out as backing up would be interesting. I was lucky and found myself finally at the parking area. Our group was treated to a hike that went by so many beautiful meadows with old growth redwoods and firs circling the grassy areas. I thought that Elder Creek was the south fork of the Eel River. Elder creek was swiftly flowing and the Eel was barely moving. Crossing the Eel was interesting. No bridges, just wood plank foot bridges to cross the Eel, testing your balance skills. There are many trails in the reserve and each one is a delight. If the old homestead buildings could talk, a great story would be told. Old orchards were by our White house lunch stop. The white house had a green door. (Remember that song?) This trail was where I saw a firecracker flower for the first time. That made my day! The reserve has forested low mountains ranging in elevation from 1200 feet to the top of Calbo Peak at 4200 feet. Birds, wildlife abundant and I hear there are exotic orchids on the reserve. Thank you Jonah for the great Mendo hikes!

—CAROL VELLUTINI, REDWOOD CHAPTER OUTINGS CHAIR

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 the 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 means 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 receive 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 0 - Less than 1,000
M - Moderate Actual B - 1,000 to 2,000
H - Hard Actual C - 2,000 to 3,000
S - Strenuous Actual D - over 3,000

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 (carolv@sonic.net) by the 8th of the month. All leaders must coordinate their outings with their Group Outings Chair.

CST 2077846-48. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.

August 1, 2013 Redwood Needles
Outings

Prehistoric and geologic sites in the Monument. Leaders: Craig Deutsch and Nanette DeDonato. Phone: 707-668-4272 or nnmgroomster@gmail.com. Rain cancels.

Sat.-Sun. Oct. 12-13 - Explore and Serve in the Carrizo Plains. This weekend is part of a continuing project to rebuild the 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 camping, day-hiking, exploring, and service in a relatively unknown wilderness. Leaders: Craig Deutsch, craig.deutsche@gmail.com, 310-477-6670. CNRCC Desert Committee.

Sat. Oct. 26-MendoGroup 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 brush recommended along with a hiking pole and layered clothing 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 Rd, 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, 467-1877, 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 - Sat.-Sun., 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 Cave and hear tales of this wild west town from historian Hal Fowler. Return to camp for Happy Hour 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 38 person (check payable to Lygeia User Groups) Day-SAR, HOPs, email rideshare info to Ldr: Lygeia Gertler, P.O. Box 721039, Pinon Hills, CA 93272, 760-668-2179. CNRCC Desert Committee.

Outings Chair Report

Needed are more volunteers to help with the work parties at Benson Hut. Redwood Chapter is responsible for stocking the hut with wood, cleaning the hut, bringing up water, and readying it for the winter season. Volunteers receive a free Friday night’s stay at Clair Tappan Lodge with a delicious dinner and Sat. breakfast. The hike is in along scenic Pacific Crest Trail. What could be better than that! Next work party is in September. Support your chapter. Contact leader Jim Gannon to register early. See Sept. outings page.

I can’t wait to attend Craig Tappan’s fundraiser weekend of August 24th. If you haven’t stayed at our lodge in Trinity County out on Sierra Club history. Hope to see you there.
Sadly, horseback riders have been injured in Marin’s Indian Tree Preserve and on Folson’s Pioneer Express Trail (not open to mountain bikes) by speeding mountain bikers. These are terrible accidents. I wish the injured a speedy recovery. A similar situation exists with hikers and mountain bikers. Many have been injured. Equestrian riding and hiking are calm passive sports and mountain biking, in many cases, is an aggressive fast sport. On narrow trails with blind corners, and steep ravines it is difficult to maintain a safe environment for slow hikers, horseback riders and fast moving bikers. The demand for recreational use of the roads and trails grows every year, as do conflicts among user groups and impacts from use to the natural environment. If any of you or a family member has been injured while using public trails you know that in many cases recovery is a long process and in some cases changes your life forever. With an aging population who use public trails for recreation and passive exercise, I only hope that park managers will set aside parks for mountain biking only. In doing so, each user group will enjoy their recreational time in the manner that is meaningful to them. Those that choose to bring small children and groups to passively enjoy trails and want to enjoy conversations and look at the scenery without having to jump out of the way of mountain bikes will then have trails to do so safely.
—Carol Vellutini, Redwood Chapter Outings Chair

It’s Time to Protect Our Wild Places

What do the awe-inspiring wonder of the Grand Canyon, the ancient beauty of California’s Big Sequoia forests, and the smoldering giant Mount St. Helen’s all have in common?
These national treasures were all permanently protected as national monuments by a sitting President, and that’s why we are able to enjoy them without fear that they will be ruined by mining, drilling or clear-cutting.
America is blessed with a great diversity of natural wonders, some of the most amazing archeological, historical, and ecological treasures on Earth. Yet too many of these treasured lands lack the full protection they richly deserve. These are places like the Organ Mountains of New Mexico, the Canyonlands of Utah and the Grand Canyon Watershed of Arizona. These places are too special for us to allow them to be destroyed by mining, drilling or clear-cutting -- they should be protected as national monuments.
President Obama has already taken steps in the right direction by making Forts Monroe and Ord national monuments-- but there’s more to do.
The President can establish his own legacy by making some of our special places national monuments-- starting with a piece of the California Coast, Fort Ord. The site of a former army post, it’s one of the last wild places on the stunning Monterey Peninsula: home to mountain lions, golden eagles and red-tailed hawks and prized for hiking and cycling. Tell President Obama that now is the time for him to establish his Presidential legacy by naming some of our most special wild places as national monuments by visiting http://content.sierriclub.org/ourwildamerica/national-monuments-and-wilderness and clicking on the “Tell Obama: Protect wild lands!” button to send your message.
Two Scholarships Awarded

For the second year in a row Lake Group has granted a pair of $1000 scholarships to graduating seniors from local high schools. At the Middletown High School awards ceremony on May 23 Lake Group Executive Committee member Julie Kreis presented an award to Jacob Andrew Gills of Cobb Mountain, who will be attending the University of California at Berkeley as a Society and Environment major. Jacob told the Group, “No matter which college I choose to attend next fall, my education will continue with one goal in mind—to lead the charge on the path towards sustainable energy, safe and healthy communities, and secure wild places.” After the presentation ceremony, Julie reported, “Jacob is an energetic young man who has an impressive history of pursuing environmental interests since his middle school years . . . our group will be excited to follow his progress!” Then on May 30 former Executive Committee member Debi Sally gave a second award to Lower Lake High School senior Benjamin Illia. Ben, who has been active in scouting since he was six years old and is an avid hiker and camper, did a report on solar and wind power in his high school chemistry class that inspired him “to want to use these technologies . . . in a career in the construction or agricultural fields. In furthering my education I would like to learn more about incorporating clean energy into these fields.”

Lake Group congratulates all these fine young people, and wishes them every success on the next stage of their journey.

—VICTORIA BRANDON, LAKE GROUP

Long-time Humboldt Bay activist Melvin “Cappy” McKinney passed away in mid-June. He served for many years on the Executive Committee of North Group Sierra Club. (His photo appears on page 1 of this issue.) A celebration of his life was held on July 10 at the Elk River Wildlife Sanctuary in Eureka, an area he fought hard to protect. An article about Mel’s accomplishments will appear in the August/September issue of EcoNews, the bimonthly publication of the Northern Environmental Center, which can be found online at www.yournrc.org.

Over 50 people attended the 40th birthday celebration of the Patrick’s Point Native Plant Garden on June 1. The event was cosponsored by North Group Sierra Club and organized by Tom Leskiw. Some visitors came through a picnic walk led by Gary Lester (Redwood Region Audubon) and Bill Knight (Sierra Club), plus two tours were offered of the Stumeg Village (by Nancy Jo Martin and Skip Lowery). Volunteers from the North Coast Chapter of CNPS served as knowledgeable guides during the 5-hour event (Carol Ralph, Virginia Waters, Jenny Hanson, Sylvia White, Donna Wildearth, Bev Zeman, Tom Leskiw). Sue Leskiw staffed information tables near the path to the garden.

Volunteer Opportunities
North Group needs a few good volunteers. Please make plans to attend a North Group Executive Committee meeting on the second Tuesday of each month, 6:45 p.m. at the Adorni Center in Eureka. Contact Ned or Gregg for details.

Picnicking with Audubon Sept. 28
North Group (NG) members are invited to mix and mingle with members of the local Audubon chapter, Redwood Region Audubon, at a picnic organized by NG. The event will be held on Saturday, September 28, at Patrick’s Point State Park in Trinidad. It will kick off at 10 a.m. with a bird walk led by Tom Leskiw, followed by a potluck picnic at noon. Bring a dish to share; NG will provide place settings and drinks. There are facilities to grill. The site rental includes 25 day-use tickets to the park, so please ride-share to the event. Call Sue Leskiw at (707) 442-5444 to obtain the information needed to get in at no charge (otherwise, there is an $8 per car day-use fee).

—NED FORSYTH, NORTH GROUP VICE CHAIR
Thanks to Nancy McCoy, Brian Hoffman, Adam Mangosing, Aaron Kofer and Jane Bogner for staffing the May and June paper shredding.


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. (Aug 17, Sep. 21, Oct 19, Nov 16, 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

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 Marion Conning, John Kolarik, and others.

Vallejo Update:

Well there is good news and bad news. First the good tidings.

Winco has withdrawn their application to tear down the Elks lodge and replace it with a 70,000 sf q. ft. discount supermarket. With the addition of a 50,000 sq. ft. Wal-Mart neighborhood store, and the conversion of Lucky’s into a discount outlet, it seems that the market for discount grocers north of Redwood St. is saturated (a position that the Sierra Club has held for years). Winco had been sued and lost in court requiring it to revamp its EIR and correct the deficiencies that the court found.

The bad news is that the Solano Fairground redevelopment will go forward as envisioned by the Board of Supervisors. The ill-fated project has already lost its original developer and cost taxpayers over $4 million. The Board majority will now be able to issue millions of dollars in bonds over the next decade to fund the development. With no anchor tenant signed, and a very suspect revenue projection, it is questionable whether the fairgrounds will ever generate enough revenue to repay the bondholders. Both the city and the county have approved the project’s EIR, and there are no remaining roadblocks to the project. The only elected official to vote against the project was Skip Thomson. Many thanks to Skip.

–CONTRIBUTORS: JANE BOGNER, JOE FELLER
–EDITOR: GREG PETERSON

Napa Group Report

Members of the Napa Sierra executive committee are at the table as county staff develops two important environmental plans: Climate Action Plan and Groundwater Monitoring Plan.

Climate Action Plan

Napa County has restarted efforts to address greenhouse gas emissions in unincorporated areas. A Climate Action Plan presented in 2012 found favor with the Board of Supervisors. In July, the county called back previously active stakeholders like the Sierra Club and also initiated public roundtable discussions to “re-vision” the county’s Climate Action Plan. The new approach is expected to focus on incentives and voluntary actions.

Groundwater Monitoring Plan

Napa County Groundwater Monitoring Plan 2013 was released earlier this year. The Groundwater Resources Advisory Committee (GRAC) has been working since 2011 to develop a program that will provide data for improved evaluation of this resource. With the help of volunteer well owners, the county will develop an extensive database that tracks groundwater elevation and groundwater quality. Members of the advisory committee are now knocking on the doors of those whose wells have been identified to meet the criteria for an improved data monitoring system. For most of those living in the unincorporated area, groundwater is the sole source of water supply.

The GRAC also created an ad hoc committee to work on developing Groundwater Sustainability Objectives. This action as well as the monitoring program are guided by Conservation Goals of the county’s General Plan. Find more about GRAC at www.countyofnapa.org/planning/GRAC/.

–MARILLE TALLEY, NAPA GROUP CHAIR

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.

Angelo Coast Range Reserve Hike. Leader: Jonah Freedman. For more information about this hike, see article on page 4.

The Eco Kid by Bill Netzer

Dune Restoration Supported

Our group is reviewing a California State Parks project at the Inglebook Fen-Ten Mile Dunes Natural Preserve that aims to restore natural processes in the preserve by removing 2.7 miles of an old logging haul road that goes through the dunes and along the beach, and by hand removing invasive European Beach Grass from the dunes.

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’ latest 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 is now being appealed by the Westport Municipal Advisory Council to the Board of Supervisors. The BOS will meet on August 13th in Fort Bragg to consider the appeal.

The appeal is aimed in large part at the impacts that removal of segments of haul road will have on public access and recreation. Our group believes that the value of these few remaining natural dune areas, home to rare plants and nesting habitat for the endangered snowy plover, far outweighs the relatively low level of recreational use of this segment, limited as it is by having been partly covered by sand and by having a large chunk washed out by the ocean. In addition, the segment to be removed is separated by almost a mile from the popular hiking and biking haul road that runs through MacKerricher State Park from Ward Avenue to Pudding Creek and that will not be affected by the project.

We urge Sierra Club members to attend the August 13th BOS hearing– check your local papers for time and venue–and/or write letters of support to the Supervisors. Please reference CDP #12-2012 nr 10-Mile Dunes. Letters can be addressed to Board of Supervisors, County Administration Center, 501 Low Gap Road, Ukiah CA 95482 – or send via website email http://co.mendocino.ca.us/bos/.

For talking points, please read our comment letter online at http://www.redwood.sierrclub.org/mendocino.

–MARY WALSH AND LINDA PERKINS, MENDOCINO GROUP
Reduce Your Carbon Footprint in 2013!

Join over 400 of your local fellow Sierra Clubbers! To receive future copies of the Redwood Needles via email send a message to: RedwoodNeedles@gmail.com with your name and address, and “newsletter by email” in the subject line; or to receive notification that the current newsletter is available online and a link to it, please specify: “Notification newsletter is online”.

Check us out on Facebook!
www.facebook.com/SierraClubRedwoodChapter

Or at Our New Blog:
sierraclubredwoodchapter.wordpress.com
For more details, see article on page one.

Sierra Club Sonoma Group Environmental Forum

CEQA: Protecting the Law that’s Protecting Us!
August 29, 2013 at 7 p.m.
Speaker: Gary Patton
Location in Santa Rosa to be determined.

Please email Annabel Ascher at annabelascher@yahoo.com for more information, or visit the Sonoma Group website, www.redwood.sierriclub.org/sonoma/ for updates.

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 and plans, creeks and the Russian River, and water issues related to the 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: Shirgirl707@yahoo.com, home 206-1138, or call office 453-7651.