Redwood Needles


Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Redwood Chapter Defends

Redwood Forest from Vineyard Conversion

The on-going battle to protect north coast forestland from conversion to vineyards went to court on October 18. The Redwood Chapter, along with co-plaintiff Center for Biological Diversity and Friends of the Gualala River, challenged the environmental impact report (EIR) prepared by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal-Fire) for the “Fairfax” conversion project proposed by Spanish-owned winery Codorniu Napa, which does business as Artesa Vineyards and Winery. We filed suit because we think the highest and best use of coastal forests is to remain in their natural condition so they can protect our coastal rivers, support fish and wildlife, and combat climate change by sequestering carbon.

Codorniu received a 154-acre timberland conversion permit from Cal-Fiire. They plan to cut more than a million board-feet of redwood and Douglas fir, bulldoze the land and plant a vineyard on a property in northwestern Sonoma County, near the community of Annapolis. Cal-Fire spent more than seven years preparing the EIR, which states, implausibly, that the project would cause no significant or cumulative adverse environmental impacts.

Protecting forestland

The importance of this case goes far beyond the 154 acres proposed for destruction by Artesa Winery’s project. As the first forestland-to-vineyard conversion project in the State of California ever to complete, and receive approval based on a full environmental impact report, this case will set a precedent.

If Artesa’s project goes forward, other projects will follow. If, on the other hand, Artesa’s project is stopped, that will send a message to developers that the Redwood Chapter and our allies insist on strict enforcement of California environmental laws. We will not allow regulatory agencies to rubber-stamp projects without the thorough environmental review required by law.

The Redwood Chapter campaign to protect forestland from conversion to vineyards was launched more than a decade ago by the late Jay Halcomb, who chaired the campaign, and later became chair of the Redwood Chapter, until his death last year. Jay led the ultimately successful effort to stop the misleadingly named “Preservation Ranch” proposal.

As demonstrated by Preservation Ranch, there are many thousands of acres of north coast forest that developers would like to chop down in order to grow grapes. But the most profitable use of land in today’s economy may not be the most beneficial use of that land for the long-term health of the environment.

By the time you read this, the judge is likely to have issued his decision in the case. Visit redwood.sierraclub.org to find out the latest information.

Legal case

In his written briefs and oral argument at the hearing in Sonoma County Superior Court on October 18, attorney Paul Carroll, representing plaintiffs Redwood Chapter and Friends of the Gualala River, enumerated some of the many serious deficiencies of the EIR. The EIR fails to discuss the conflicts between the project and the Sonoma County General Plan and California Board of Forestry policy, fails to consider a range of less damaging alternatives, fails to mitigate the effects of pesticides and the effects of noise, and fails to mitigate impacts to cultural resources.

“Chapter Defends Redwood Forest” cont. on page 3

Stornetta Protection on Horizon

On November 8 the California coast put on a tremendous show to welcome Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell: the sun was shining, surf pounding, blowholes spouting, and humpback whales breaching.

Secretary Jewell came to Point Arena to hold a town hall meeting to discuss the community’s vision for the permanent protection of this outstandingly scenic area, and specifically to get their reactions to the proposal to add the Stornetta Public Lands to the California Coastal National Monument, a proposal that the Sierra Club strongly supports, and that has been discussed previously in the Redwood Needles. In July the House of Representatives unanimously passed H.R. 1411, Representative Jared Huffman’s bill enabling the Monument to “Expand onto the Land,” and S. 61, a companion bill sponsored by Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein.

“Stornetta Protection on Horizon” cont. on page 8

Brandon Receives Hattoy Award

At the 2013 Sierra Club California Convention in San Luis Obispo Redwood Chapter Chair Victoria Brandon was honored to receive the Bob Hattoy Award, established in 2011 to recognize “an individual who has made a significant contribution to Sierra Club political activities in California.” Bob Hattoy, a witty and outspoken advocate for the environment and for AIDS research, was the Sierra Club Southern California Regional Representative from 1981 to 1992, and subsequently served in the U.S. Department of the Interior from 1993 to 1999, and the California Fish & Game Commission Board from 2002 until his death in 2007.

Brandon has been the Redwood Chapter political chair and a member of the California political committee since 2006, and is also a long-standing member of the Northern California Candidate Review Committee. She currently sits as one of the three volunteer members of the Club’s National Political Team.

Sierra Club California Executive Committee Chair Vicki Lee presenting the Bob Hattoy award to Victoria Brandon (left).
Redwood Chapter 
The Redwood Chapter is governed by an executive committee, with one (1) member delegated by each of six (6) regional groups and six (6) members elected at large. Each group elects its own executive committee.

Chair - At Large - Political Chair - RCC Delegate - Wilderness Chair Victoria Brandon* 994-1511 vBrandon@lakeview.info Vice Chair - Sonoma County Delegate to Chapter - Regional Conservation Delegate Alternate Steve Bledsoebough* 576-6632 jaf@friendshiphouse.org Secretary Jill Hunter redwood@dcjrcast.net Treasurer Tom Davis 963-4466 tmptnapavallygpcas.com At Large - Legal Chair - Council of Club Leaders Delegate Keith Kasum* 536-5569 kkasum@sonic.net At Large - Conservation Committee Chair - Public Land - North Group Delegate Alternate Diane Beck* 445-2690 dbeck@northsorca.com At Large - CC, Alternate Melanie Matway odavison@comcast.net Lake Group Delegate to Chapter Ed Foley* 994-8034 edbrey@wildblue.net Vice Chair Cheryl Hartner* 263-5787 cchrisecracby@gmail.com Secretary - Chapter Delegate Alternate Win Staples 262-1242 win@w-s.com Treasurer John Koer tjkayak@yahoo.com Outings Chair Steve DeVeto sidewoto@mdhsci.com Conservation Chair - Newsletter Editor - Webmaster Victoria Brandon vBrandon@lakeview.info Mendocino County Group P.O. Box 522 937-0903 Mendocino County Chair - Regional Chair - Membership Chair - Chapter Delegate Mary Walsh* 937-0532 bwal@mc.org Vice Chair - Coastal Trails - Coastal Committee Chair Rosanne Wehrf* 937-2709 rwehrf.mnc.org Secretary - Conservation Chair - State Forests Linda Perkins* 937-0903 lkperkins@mc.org Environmental Education - Endangered Species - Wilds - Chapter Delegate Lorraine Lagasse* 964-3011 lorraineay@yahoo.com Secretary - Accountability - Global Energy -Warm - Trees Chair Bernie Macoulcatl* bernie@onn.org Outings Chair Vacant Webmaster Don Jordan 884-3436 scwendmool@comcast.net Napa County Group Box 644, Napa 94559 Chair Marcy Letter* 252-6854 marlet@comcast.net Vice Chair - Delegate Alternate Mark Pavone* 966-1902 mpavone@att.net Conservation Chair Roger Hartner* 257-3121 roger.hartnell@hotmail.com Chapter Delegate Nancy Tamarkin* 963-4466 ntmrakins@earthlink.net Treasurer Tom Davis 963-4466 tmptnapavallygpcas.com Membership Chair - Secretary Linda Gail Brown* fingle@brownlauralee.net Web Master Nancy Tracy ntracy@dcjrcast.net Redwood Chapter Sierra Club Directory Mailing Address: P.O. Box 466, Santa Rosa, CA 95402, Phone 544-7651, Fax 544-9861 Office Address: Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway Avenue, Santa Rosa (West of off Cleveland Ave., to the west of Hwy 101)

Lead the Adventure! Interested in Becoming an Outings Leader? Contact your Group Outings Chair (see page 2) or Carol Vellutini at 562-6308 or carolvs@sonic.net for information.

Redwood Chapter & Sonoma County Group Office Location: Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway Ave., Santa Rosa
The Office is staffed most weekday mornings. Afternoon call can confirm, 544-7651. The Office is also open during evening meetings (see listings on last page) and at other times when volunteers are present.

Redwood Chapter Online Redwood Chapter Website: http://www.redwood.sierrachurch.org for Group Websites, ad etc: /napa, /north, /sonoma, /lake, /mendocino, or /solano

Check us out on Facebook!

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On the afternoon of September 14 a diverse group of North Coast Sierra Club leaders gathered at the Santa Rosa Environmental Center to take a long term strategic look at the past, present, and future of our organization. Almost all the Chapter Executive Committee members were present (at large members Keith Kaulum, Diane Beck, Len Holt, and myself, and Group representatives Steve Birdlebough, Nancy Tamarisk, Ed Robey, Duane Kromm, and Joyce Yowell) along with Chapter Secretary Jill Hunter, Assistant Treasurer Jana Selph, Sonoma Group Chair Dan Kerbein, Outings Chair Carol Vellutini, newsletter Editor Mary Davison, and Sonoma County activists Rue Furch, Diana Nasser, Suzanne Doyle and Tom Devlin (who very helpfully took detailed notes).

We started with a convivial potluck lunch, then eased into the business of the afternoon with a report on the Outings program. Carol Vellutini gave a brief history, including the little-known information that Redwood has long assumed full responsibility for maintenance of the Benson Hut near Clair Tappaan Lodge in the Sierra. She described some of the adventures associated with the regular maintenance outings organized by volunteer Jim Gannon, which among other considerations (such as blizzards and bears) include coping with a two-story outhouse, a feature surely unique to this establishment.

Closer to home, a regular program of hikes is conducted in every one of the chapter’s six Groups, although Solano, Mendocino and Napa Groups do not currently have an outings chair. This doesn’t stop them from getting outdoors, though it does make more work for Carol. Although our outings program is one of the chapter’s strong points, participation has unfortunately declined in recent years, and we have fewer hike leaders, too. We discussed the desirability of encouraging conservation activists to attend hikes and (as a corollary) using this happen–stay tuned.

This subject led naturally to the next item on the agenda, heritage (the project site was inhabited by the Pomo people for thousands of years).

Attorney Justin Augustine, representing plaintiff Center for Biological Diversity, focused his attention on the issue of greenhouse gases (GHGs) and carbon sequestration. He argued that Cal-Fire had used an improper baseline against which to measure the GHG impacts of the project. Under California law, the baseline must be “existing conditions,” which Augustine argued is a standing forest. Cal-Fire instead compared the project to a hypothetical condition, which it called “business as usual.”

When is a forest not a forest?

The EIR says, “Vegetative cover on the timberland conversion portion of the site consists of second growth coast redwood and Douglas-fir intermixed with madrone, tanoak, coast live oak, California bay, and bigleaf maple.... Timber on the project site is located in even aged stands that are approximately 50 to 75 years old.”

Despite this description, the defendants’ attorneys argued that, “the project site is not a ‘redwood forest’” and that “conifer timber is now just beginning to recapature the site.”

Considering that these trees have been growing for more than fifty years and that the developers expect to harvest “approximately 1.25 million board-feet” of redwood and Douglas fir timber, this argument seems dubious to say the least. And since almost all of the forest on the north coast has been logged at least once, the argument that second growth forest isn’t really forest at all, and does not deserve protection, is extremely dangerous.

Send a message that “business-as-usual” is unacceptable.

Please sign the online petition opposing the Artsia conversion from redwoods to vineyards: https://www.change.org/petitions/artsia-vineyards-winery-dont-destroy-redwood-forest-for-vineyards

Chapter Chair Report

“Chapter Defends Redwoods Forest” continued from page 1

4 Chapter Chair Calendars on sale now! See page C for details.

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

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.

The Lodge grooms its own cross country ski and snowshoe trails, rents equipment for these activities and offers cross country ski lessons. The unbeatable location of the Lodge provides quick and easy access to the legendary Donner Summit backcountry ski terrain or any of its downhill or cross country ski resorts.

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.ctsi.sierraclub.org or call (800) 679-6775.
Sat. Dec. 7 – Napa Group Tilden Regional Park Day Hike

Co-led with Mother Lode Chapter in the hills west of Berkeley, hike follows a ridge trail to Vollmer and Wildcat Peaks, with sweeping panoramic views of the Bay to the north and west, Brownes and San Pablo Reservoirs to the east, and Mt. Diablo and the valley below to the south. The pace will be just a bit slow on the side of Moderate, mostly flat or downhill, with a car shuttle. Lunch stop at a favorite hilltop with a great view. Towards the end, we’ll drop down to San Pablo Reservoir, past the dam to a peaceful green park named Doerr. 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 assimf@sonic.net

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 this 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 are responsible for themselves and assume the risks associated with travel. Reimburse the carpool driver. Carpools are not part of the outing but are 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, carolvsr@sonic.net by the 8th of the month. All leaders must coordinate their outings with their Group Outings Chair.

OST 2007/06/06 - Registration as a roller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California
Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park

3-Day, 3-Island, Live-Aboard Cruises

2014 Schedule:
- April 12-14
- June 8-10
- August 24-26

Join us as we explore these enchanting islands! Hike wild, windswept trails bordered by blazing wildflowers. Kayak rugged coastlines. Marvel at pristine waters teeming with frolicking seals and sea lions. Train your binoculars on unusual sea and land birds. Watch for the highly endangered island fox. Look for reminders of the Chumash people who fished the shores. Treetop canopies of monster corporate mini-mansions were a breath of fresh air. Nojo Harbor seemed the same as the last time I visited. I traveled almost 300 miles. Redwood Channel has so many mountains and valleys to cross and no easy way to go from valley to ocean. We are blessed to live in such beauty.

Please consider becoming a winter backpacking leader or co-leader as our Sierra huts are very special with spectacular scenery snowshoeing or skiing in.

Thanks to all outings leaders. I must say that the Mendo Group has been leading interesting outings. Jonah arranged a tour of the Buddhist monastery off Tomki Road. Our trail on the nature walk went by some of the tallest oak trees I have seen in quite some time.

See you on the trail.

CAROL VELLUTINI, REDWOOD CHAPTER OUTINGS CHAIR

Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park

Outings Chair Report

The Redwood Chapter outings leaders who attended the training at JugHandle Farm on the coast by Casper had a great time meeting each other and talking about their experiences. A big thank you to Tony Loftin from Mother Lode Chapter for doing the 101 update training (I did not know that leaders can’t do key exchanges on Sierra Club hikes anymore) Tony drove all the way from Sacramento and had to set up the computer, screen, etc. He does a fantastic job explaining how to lead outings. Isabelle gave a presentation about Meetup. Our Chapter Chair Victoria Brandon drove all the way from Lake County to participate on Sunday. North Group’s Bill Knight was working in Billings, Montana but sent his report to me. Thank you, Bill. Solano Group leader Brian Collett also sent me his report as he is off to Kuwait for a year to do an exciting restoration project. See you next year, Brian. Mare Island won’t be the same without you. A total surprise for me was the presentation of a huge, heavy 432 page book “Art of the National Parks” Historic Connections/Contemporary Interpretations by the outings leaders (Isabelle’s idea) with signatures of those present. I will treasure it forever.

The coast was cold and foggy during our retreat, while a few miles inland was hot. The drive for me was a step back in time. I hadn’t been on those roads for at least 5 years. The fall color driving through Branscomb, Boonville, 253 and 128 was spectacular. I forgot how beautiful the Anderson Valley and Navarro are. All the small wineries with picket fences and farm houses instead of monster corporate mini-mansions was a breath of fresh air. Nojo Harbor seemed the same as the last time I visited. I traveled almost 300 miles. Redwood Channel has so many mountains and valleys to cross and no easy way to go from valley to ocean. We are blessed to live in such beauty.

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CAROL VELLUTINI, REDWOOD CHAPTER OUTINGS CHAIR

Outings Chair Report

2013 Outings Leaders training at JugHandle Farm.
Sierra Club Napa Group Connects with Local Members, Friends

We are energizing the Sierra Club Napa Group and providing friendly forums where we all can meet like-minded Napa people, or Napkins as some like to call themselves. Our members continue to keep a watchful eye on key environmental actions by local and regional political bodies, and to speak out when we need to. The policies are in line with a healthy watershed, open space, and a rural life-style.

But Sierra Club Napa Group also is looking for and creating opportunities to renew old friendships and start new ones. We’re hosting and planning many fun events– indoors, outdoors, and into the wilderness. Membership chair Isabelle Saint-Guily is helping us to socialize in our Facebook pages and create a computer-friendly way of creating a social network and community forum. We’re saving trees!

Are you receiving the Napa Sierra Club Group’s e-newsletter? It should be dropping into your e-mail box. We encourage you to read it and in the meantime—still a necessary mode of communication, but also a responsible way of creating a social network and community forum. We’re saving trees!

Napa Group Report

Lake Group Report

A Second Chance for the Healthy Lake Tax?

Last year the Sierra Club strongly supported Lake County Measure E, a countywide sales tax benefiting Clear Lake; although getting a very healthy majority of the votes cast in November 2012, it barely failed to reach the required two-thirds majority. Recently a group of stakeholders (including a Lake Group representative) has rewritten the proposal with the objective of giving it another chance in June 2014: like Measure E, it would impose a half cent sales tax with the proceeds going entirely to improve water quality, prevent aquatic invasive species, and alleviate nuisance weeds and algae, but many details have been changed. For example, the new measure would remove set percentages from the spending priorities and substitute a requirement that the Department of Water Resources submit an annual detailed expenditure plan to the BOS and a separate oversight committee; change the composition of the oversight committee to include few if any elected officials and more citizens; and establish a clear emphasis on measures benefiting the long-term health of the lake.

The enabling ordinance must be adopted by the Board of Supervisors to be placed on the ballot, but before taking the proposal up in formal session the BOS held “workshops” on October 22 and November 5, first to get citizen input and then to review a tentative first-year expenditure plan that includes measures significantly strengthening defenses against aquatic invasive species. Lake Group will be keeping a close eye on this proposal as it moves ahead.

Lake Group Forum in November

At the November 20 Lake Group general meeting county Trails Coordinator Gigi Stahl gave an overview of the 2014 Konocot Regional Trails Plan, which will include at least one project located in each of the six KRT Study Areas. We also learned about other local trails-related matters, including a report on the recent “Way, Walk, Write” event at Boggs Mountain, where equestrians, mountain bikers, and hikers came together to discuss ways to create a collaborative, inclusive trail culture here in Lake County, and saw photos and video from a recent California State Parks trails management training week at Samuel Taylor State Park in Marin County, where techniques in multiuse trails design were discussed.

Annual holiday party December 13

Lake Group’s ninth annual holiday festivity will be held on Friday, December 13, at the home of Outings Chair Steve Devoto—we’ll enjoy great food, fine wines and other refreshments, a spectacular view of Clear Lake, an open fire, and lots of convivial conversation. The Group will provide the main dish, but asks guests to bring a side dish or dessert to share as well as their own re-useable plates, beverage glasses, and eating utensils. Our host is again very generously providing wine for all.

This celebration is entirely free and all Sierra Club members are most cordially invited, along with visiting friends and relations. To RSVP, call Ed at 994 8304 or send an email to edrobey@wildblue.net.

—VICTORIA BRANDON, LAKE GROUP

Sonoma Group Report

Sonoma Group and providing friendly forums where we can meet like-minded Sonoma people, or to develop a plan to achieve a goal. The Hal point was included in the amended Resolution (amended from a staff Resolution that undercut our aims). The Resolution with that and other good amendments was passed unanimously.

Teresa Barrett of the Petaluma City Council was there as well. I spoke to her on Saturday about the issues. She is also a strong supporter of our cause.

Here is a portion of the resolution:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Directors seeks to build on local, regional and state climate protection planning efforts by leading a regional climate protection planning process to include:

- Setting a goal for the Bay Area region of reducing GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.
- Developing specific performance objectives to track progress in achieving the goal; and
- Developing a Regional Climate Action Strategy to guide and document the Air District’s work to achieve the 2050 goal, and required an EIR. The project’s backers withdrew the plan—but two new events occurred during the past few months: TJ Wick was named Director of PRMD, and a new Carneros–Port Sonoma project has been proposed, much larger in scope.

A new Director has been named to the PRMD (Planning Dept.), who turns out to have backed a project that our group opposed and planned efforts in their site plan reviews. Kimberly is urging the county to pass a comprehensive tree ordinance that protects native oaks, maples etc., as well as redwoods, or our inhabited areas will become paved and treeless.

According to Climate Committee member Woody Hattings, the next two months will be critical to let the Public Utilities Commission know our views about the future of solar energy—particularly, how solar users will get paid for extra power their systems put out to the electrical grid. The solar power project and required an EIR. The project’s backers withdrew the plan—but two new events occurred during the past few months: TJ Wick was named Director of PRMD, and a new Carneros–Port Sonoma project has been proposed, much larger in scope.

The Sonoma Group is keeping an eye on this project, and strategies to bring an effective voice to our county government.

In other news of planning, the county’s General Plan is up for renewal, and the Riparian Ordinance Study (to protect streamside habitat and watersheds) scheduled for adoption this year has been delayed and meanwhile a stakeholder group is being recruited. The Sonoma Group is drafting a letter to the county supervisors, demanding a place at the table for the experts who did the analysis for the General Plan, along with other environmental groups that were part of drafting the original Study which has been successful in protecting our watersheds.

We sent out a letter (drafted with Sonoma County Conservation Action) to Santa Rosa’s daily paper, the Press Democrat, endorsing a ban on disposable plastic shopping bags. ExCom member Jessica Jones also appeared at City Council meetings to request that they also join in the bag ban, so it becomes the rule all over the county.

Collaboration Sensation!

On November 6th, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District unanimously passed the climate protection resolution, which sets a greenhouse reduction goal at 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.

The climate and energy committee has some more work to do, if the ABAQMD Board of Directors does not “achieve” the goal. Her voice to our county government.

- Setting a goal for the Bay Area region of reducing GHG emissions to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.
Mendocino Group Report

Good News on the 10-Mile Dunes – Coastal Commission Rules “No Substantial Issue”

Our report on the 10-Mile Dunes last month left you with the news that the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors voted 3-2 to approve Parks’ Coastal Development Permit and to deny the appeal brought to it by the Sierra Club. Good news!

After that appeal, as expected, three individual appellants carried their opposition to the next level by filing an appeal with the Coastal Commission. The primary claim of the appeal is that Parks’ proposed removal of old, high road remnants will deny them access to the ocean and to the dunes systems.

Our position is that the minor recreational use made of the continually disintegrating haul road through the dunes pales in comparison to the benefits that will accrue to protected wildlife species as a result of the planned restoration project. All access points into the Preserve remain open, as do the dunes. And most people continue to use the preferred Coastal Trail along the hard-packed sand at the shoreline – within sight of the ocean. Of course!

Both the Mendocino Group and the Redwood Chapter studied the project and submitted comments to the Coastal Commission in support. State Parks’ focus on ecosystem restoration – that includes hand removal of invasive beach grass and ice plants and re-planting of native species – will create an additional 250 acres of critical wintering and nesting habitat for the Western Snowy Plover, restore rare native plants and dune vegetation, and, with the haul road gone, free two streams from the construction of obstructive culverts. What’s not to like?

The Coastal Commission staff reviewed the appeal and issued a 500-page report, 40 pages of which were their “Findings and Declarations”, including their analysis of the appellants’ contentions.

Their conclusion: “Therefore, Commission staff recommends that the Commission find the appeal raises no substantial issue with respect to the grounds on which it was filed.” That’s more good news!

If the Commission agrees with Staff’s findings, the permit is approved and Parks can go forward with restoration of this rare and precious piece of California’s natural heritage.

And finally, breaking good news just as the Redwood Needles go to press: the CC heard the appeal this morning, November 13th. The CC voted unanimously to deny the appeal and uphold the Parks project. This means that the funding is secure and we can all look forward to watching a recovering Dunes ecosystem. For more details, visit our website: http://www.redwood.sierrclub.org

–Linda Perkins, Mendocino Group Conservation Chair

North Group Report

Amid Humboldt State’s Centennial celebration and record warm temperatures in the 70s and 80s, the HSU Chapter of the Society for Conservation Biology held its Biodiversity Conference October 4, 5 and 6.

North Group members took part in tabling at an expo of local conservation groups, and in at least one panel discussion.

A sampling of presentations:

Tyrone Hayes, the keynote speaker, described his extensive work on endocrine-disrupting toxins, Atrazine in particular, and their dierective effects on amphibians and most other vertebrates at concentrations well below legal limits. Dr. Hayes, in deconstructing, and celebrating, the word “activist,” closed by invoking Albert Einstein: “Those who have the privilege to know, have a duty to act.”

Klamath Basin Water Rights and Dam Removal Forum: Humboldt County Supervisor Mark Lovelace introduced the discussion with a history of the science and politics of the four dams on the Klamath, the disastrous fish kill of 2002, and the emerging Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement and Klamath Hydro Settlement Agreement from talks with Secretary Gale Norton’s Interior Department in 2004. Felice Norton is the HSU chapter’s contact Boby Shearer, president, at b6511@humboldt.edu. For BioConf 2013 materials, including presentation videos, visit www.humboldt.edu/biodiversity.

–Ned Forshay, North Group Vice Chair

EXCOM Members needed.

The Solano Group is in need of people who want to make a difference in Solano County. Put 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 sierracholsolangroup@gmail.com or leave a message at 707-319-6398.


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. (Dec 21 & Jan 18, Feb 15, Mar 15). 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.

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

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.

–Contributor: Jane Bogner

–Editor: Greg Peterson

Holiday Networking Party and Environmental Awards

Dinner News

Wednesday December 4, 2013, 5-8 pm, will be the annual Sierra Club/SCCC Holiday Networking Party. But we will no longer be at Omelette Express!

Thanks to Don Taylor for hosting this delightful gathering for many years.

Luckily, the Sebastopol Grange, conveniently located on Hwy. 12, in between Santa Rosa and Sebastopol, (6000 Sebastopol Ave; the recent host site for the state Grange Conference), has offered to sponsor our party!

Love to cook? Help make the feast! We need a few people to prepare a dish for 18-20 people in exchange for admission and our gratitude! Please contact Wendy, 544-4582; wflake@sonic.net.

Save the date: Sunday March 16, 2014, 5-9 pm, will be the 38th Annual Environmental Awards Dinner, at the Sebastopol Community Center.

Joseph McIntyre, President of Ag Innovations Network, will speak on Building a Stronger Coalition for the Environment: Some Practical Thoughts for 2014, and Supervisor Susan Gorin will MC.

Nominations for Environmental Awards are open Nov. 18 – Jan 17; envirocentersoco.org/awards.

Quality Auction Items Needed! If you have art pieces, environmental memorabilia, unused gifts or other interesting objects at home, you may want to donate them to the silent auction at the dinner. Your tax deductible donation of goods or services benefits the Environmental Center. Contact Diana Nasser, 823-4293; diannaas@es

See page 8 for more details.

Redwood Needles

Feb. Deadline: Due January 8

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

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

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

Picnicking with Audubon

Approximately 20 members of North Group Sierra Club and Redwood Region Audubon attended a picnic on September 28 at Patrick’s Point State Park in Trinidad. The day began with a 10 a.m. bird walk led by Tom Leskiw, followed by a potluck picnic at noon. The weather was passable, the试题enticing, and the conversation stimulating. Thanks to Sue Leskiw for organizing the event.

Birdwalk participants scan the ocean. Photo by Sue Leskiw.

Chowing down at the picnic. Photo by Sue Leskiw.

Redwood Needles December 1, 2013
by both of California’s Senators is under consideration in the other chamber.

Public enthusiasm for this idea was demonstrated by a standing-room-only crowd of at least 300 people who crammed into the diminutive Point Arena city hall to welcome the secretary, Congressman Huffman, and BLM Deputy Director Neil Kornze, and countless other federal, state, and local dignitaries. Members of the Point Arena/Manchester Band of Pomo Indians opened the gathering with a prayer and a dance, followed by students from Pacific Community Charter reading their own poetry and singing “This Land Is Your Land.” In response, Secretary Jewell thanked the Stornetta family for their stewardship and vision, and went on to recognize that “communities know lands that are special, lands that have nurtured people for thousands of years.” When she asked for a show of hands on recommending that the President use his powers under the Antiquities Act to add Stornetta to the Monument should Congress fail to act, the expression of support was instantaneous and unanimous—including that of the secretary herself, whose hand reached towards the sky.

Despite the remote location, several dozen Sierra Club representatives attended this inspiring event, including Redwood Chapter Conservation Chair Diane Beck, Mendocino coastal activist Linda Perkins, Deputy Program Director Michael Boose, and national Wildlands Committee member Angel Martinez. I had the privilege of appearing at the podium on behalf of the Chapter to thank Secretary Jewell for visiting the North Coast, express the Club’s enthusiastic support for the permanent protection of the Point Arena-Stornetta area by including it in the monument, and present her with 1800 signatures on a support petition that the Club had circulated in an online campaign.

Next step: we’re all looking forward to making another journey to the Mendocino coast for the dedication ceremonies.

Mon. Dec. 2 - Sonoma Group. Santa Rosa Environmental Center, 55A Ridgeway is the site of three related meetings:
- The Climate & Energy Committee meets at 5:00 p.m. Info: contact Shirley, shirlgirl707@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: Dan Kerbein, dkerbein@sonic.net

Thurs. Dec. 5 - Solano Group ExCom. Come join us for our monthly meetings which rotate between Vallejo, Fairfield and Vacaville. We are making a positive impact on our county and need a few more people to help carry the load. Call Jane for information. (707)319-6398.

Tues. Dec. 10 – North Group ExCom. The public is invited to attend the monthly meeting of our governing committee. Join us for a discussion of local conservation issues between 7:45 and 8:45 p.m., following the ExCom business meeting from 6:45-7:45 p.m. Meet at Adorni Center Conference Room on Eureka Waterfront. For more info, call Gregg at 707-826-3740.

Tue. Dec. 17 – 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 Tamashik at HYPERLINK “mailto:nancy@aya.yale.edu” nancy@aya.yale.edu

There will be no meeting of the Sonoma Group Water Committee in December.

Mon. Jan. 6 - Sonoma Group. Santa Rosa Environmental Center, 55A Ridgeway is the site of three related meetings:
- The Climate & Energy Committee meets at 5:00 p.m. Info: contact Shirley, shirlgirl707@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: Dan Kerbein, dkerbein@sonic.net

Tues. Jan. 14 – North Group ExCom. Join us for a discussion of local conservation issues between 7:45 and 8:45 p.m., following the ExCom business meeting from 6:45-7:45 p.m. Meet at Adorni Center Conference Room on Eureka Waterfront. For more info, call Gregg at 707-826-3740.

The Climate & Energy Committee meets at 5:00 p.m. Info: contact Shirley, shirlgirl707@yahoo.com, 707-206-1138.

Mon. Jan. 11 – Sonoma Group. Santa Rosa Environmental Center, 55A Ridgeway is the site of three related meetings:
- The Climate & Energy Committee meets at 5:00 p.m. Info: contact Shirley, shirlgirl707@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: Dan Kerbein, dkerbein@sonic.net


Wed., Jan. 16 – 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.

Sat., Jan. 18 - Redwood Chapter ExCom.
Location: Willits Environmental Conservation Committee meeting at 10 a.m., ExCom meets 1–3 p.m. Info: Victoria vbrandon@lakelive.info

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

Wed. March 19 and Wed. April 16 - The Sonoma Group Water Committee. 7:00 PM at the Environmental Center, 55A Ridgeway, Santa Rosa. Contact Len Holt: 707-527-7516 or lholt@sonic.net

Santa Rosa Environmental Center is located at 55A Ridgeway Avenue in Santa Rosa (West of Hwy 101, two blocks North of College and 1 1/2 blocks West of Cleveland Ave, South of Coddingtown).