Jay Robert Halcomb, 1946-2012
Sierra Club Forest Champion Mourned

By Victoria Brandon

As 2012 drew to a close, the Redwood Chapter was mourning the loss of its long time Chair, who died on December 1, 2012 at his home in Guerneville, after a long struggle with cancer. He was 66.

Born in Santa Monica on September 25, 1946, Jay Halcomb received a BA from Sonoma State University in 1978 and an MA from Arizona State in 1987, both in philosophy. His major areas of study included mathematical logic, theoretical linguistics, philosophy of language, computer science, and the philosophy and foundations of mathematics; he subsequently taught logic at the university level and contributed technical articles to a number of journals and symposia on subjects related to formal logic, linguistics, and the interface of these subjects with computer science. From 2002 until his death he was a partner with Randall Schulz of Mountain View in H&S Information Systems, a consulting firm in logic and computer systems.

Jay was a strong individualist, passionate about literature, philosophy, music, and above all passionate about protecting the environment, especially the magnificent forests of the North Coast of California. As such he was a co-founder of the forestry watchdog group Russian River Residents Against Unsafe Logging and served on the Steering Committee of the Russian River Watershed Council. He was elected to the Executive Committee of the Sonoma Group in 2005 and also served on the Redwood Chapter Executive Committee since 2006. As Chair of the Chapter’s Forest Protection Committee, Jay led its efforts to preserve forests from unsustainable logging and from forest to vineyard conversion projects such as the proposed “Preservation Ranch” on the Sonoma Coast. Most recently, his ardent advocacy was instrumental in the Chapter’s negotiation of a successful settlement with the Bohemian Club that preserved the remaining stand of Bohemian Grove old growth redwoods from logging.

He also served the Club with great distinction as Redwood Chapter Chair from 2008 until his death, a role in which he demonstrated outstanding leadership qualities. Napa Group Chair and Chapter ExCom member Nancy Tamarisk speaks for us all in saying “to have the zeal and determination of the activist, coupled with a cool head, strategic thinking, and ability to work with a motley cast of characters—rare combination! We need more Jays!”

A respected colleague and cherished friend, Jay is going to be very badly missed by Chapter leaders who have depended on his guidance for these many years. We extend profound condolences to his wife Françoise and the rest of his family. For an extended pictorial reflection on his life and work that includes personal tributes by local environmentalists, visit http://sierrclub.typepad.com/scrapbook/2012/12/farewell-to-a-friend-of-the-forest.html.

By his request, no memorial services will be held, but a tribute is planned for the Environmental Awards dinner to be held in Santa Rosa on March 10.

Upcoming Meetings to Protect Sonoma and Mendocino Coastal Waters

You will soon have the opportunity to attend a meeting and comment on a plan to protect permanently our spectacular coastline between Bodega Bay and Pt. Arena.

Protecting the coast and regional coastal economy based on clean ocean waters and the rich marine foodweb has resulted previously in the designation of the present Gulf of the Farallones, Cordell Bank, and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries. In a December 2012 announcement, the Obama Administration is proposing a significant expansion of these Marine Sanctuaries by extending their collective northern boundary northward from Bodega Bay to Point Arena. This long-sought protection has been previously passed by the U.S. House of Representatives and remained in play during the 2012 session of the U.S. Senate. Protection for these coastal waters has been pursued for many years by local elected officials and our Congressional Representatives and Senators.

The National Marine Sanctuary designation will permanently prohibit offshore oil and gas drilling and establish rules for sewage dumping from cruise ships on the entire Sonoma coast and on the southern Mendocino coast.

In this marine sanctuary region, one of the four most productive ocean upwelling systems on the planet brings nutritious-rich waters from the depths. Seasonal surface currents and prevailing winds carry this rich foodsource southward to provide the base of the marine food chain for an abundance of aquatic and avian life extending at least as far south as the Monterey Canyon. More than half of California’s nesting seabirds around the Farallon Islands, a multitude of productive fisheries, prolific marine mammal populations, several species of endangered whales, and white sharks each ultimately rely on this ocean upwelling for survival.

The Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary (1981) and the Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary (1989) both contribute greatly to ocean and coastal management by engaging in public outreach and education to promote stewardship, conducting scientific and applied research initiatives, and developing and supporting programs that strengthen resource protection for the long-term health of the region. Your participation in extending this protection to key new coastal waters is vital at this time.

Three scoping meetings will be held for the public to learn more about this plan and submit comments:
• Bodega Bay Grange Hall, Bodega Bay, Thursday, Jan. 24, 6PM
• Point Arena High School, Point Arena, Tuesday, Feb. 12, 6PM
• Gualala Community Center, Gualala, Wednesday, Feb. 13 6PM

Written comments on the proposed boundary expansion plan may also be submitted “Coastal Protection Meetings” cont. on page 3

Club Lifetime Achievement Award for John Stephens

At the Sierra Club California Convention held in San Luis Obispo in November, Redwood Chapter representatives were delighted to have the opportunity to applaud ExCom member John Stephens as he received a special Lifetime Achievement Award. A resident of Napa and a Club member for nearly 30 years, John has ably represented the Chapter on the California-Nevada Regional Conservation Committee since 2003, and among many other leadership roles has served as Napa Group Chair and Membership Chair.

His passionate advocacy for our land, air, wildlife, and water has produced some notable triumphs and—perhaps even more important—has helped create the kind of robust dialogue that sorts out the trees from the forest. Above all, John always approaches contentious issues with civility and a touch of humor. His rare combination of zealosity and lightness has enriched the discussion of many environmental issues on both the Group and Chapter levels over the years, and has made his many letters to the editor on subjects ranging from bears to solar panels arguably the Napa County citizenry’s single most important source of environmental enlightenment. Congratulations John: you earned it!

Redwood Needles

February Deadline: Due March 8th
Submit Articles/Reports/Ad Copy via e-mail to: odavison@comcast.net
Send Outings to Carol Vellutini via e-mail: carolvsr@sonic.net
Send Meetings to Carl Inglint via e-mail: chinjlin@sonic.net
Big News for the California Coast
A few days before Christmas no less than two major coastal conservation headlines hit the news simultaneously. First, the creation of nineteen North Coast Marine Protected Areas from Index Marine Park to the Oregon line was announced, thus completing this network throughout California’s coastal waters—a first for the nation. With fishermen, tribes, and others, Chapter activists have been participating for several years in the dialog that led to this result, which we all hope will prove to be a significant step in protecting our diminishing coastal fisheries. Second, the White House retracted the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to protect the spectacular Sonoma and part of the Mendocino coastlines (to Pt. Arena) from oil and gas drilling by expanding the Farallones and Cordell Banks marine sanctuaries. As stated by retiring Representative Lynn Woolsey, "This isn’t just an environmental imperative, nor just about a nonrenewable resource, it’s about conservation and protecting precious natural resources (though I passionately believe in all that). For the part of the country I’ve represented for 20 years, this is a matter of economic common sense. Jobs and livelihoods hang in the balance. Our commercial fishing industry depends on a thriving marine ecosystem. And our tourism-based businesses have an enormous stake." For more details see the article on page one.

As the year drew to an end a number of us were hoping that President Obama would mark the season by permanently protecting the Point Arena-Stornetta Public Lands by adding it to the National Marine Monument. After decades of their intention to propose significant revisions to CEQA that would restrict the ability of public interest organizations such as the Sierra Club to litigate, and Governor Jerry Brown has repeatedly indicated his interest in streamlining the CEQA process and limiting CEQA lawsuits: “I have never seen any CEQA exemptions I didn’t like,” he declared last July.

Regulation to revise CEQA is expected to be introduced very soon. Sierra Club California expects to watch very closely, and to take an active part in the debate. As Executive Director Kathryn Phillips has already pointed out, only a tiny minority of projects that undergo full Environmental Impact Reports are challenged in court; “the rhetoric we hear about the lawsuit element is exaggerated.” Expect updates on this situation as it evolves throughout the year: support from our own state representatives may be key to a positive result for the Club and the environment, so local activists should be prepared for calls for action. Please stay tuned.

Beryessa Snow Mountain Update
Creation of the proposed Beryessa Snow Mountain National Conservation Area, which would permanently protect more than 300,000 acres of magnificent public lands in four Redwood Chapter Groups, has been a top priority for several years. It’s therefore a great pleasure to be able to announce that on January 4 National Sierra Club Executive Michael Brune and his family were able to enjoy a hike at Cold Canyon, in the southern portion of the proposed NCA. Several Club volunteer leaders and staff were able to participate in the outing; the group had a wonderful day and made it to the top of the West Ridge to enjoy the view across the central valley. For more information on the Beryessa Snow Mountain region and the campaign (with lots of spectacular photos) please visit www.beryessasnowmountain.org.

—VICTORIA BRANDON, REDWOOD CHAPTER CHAIR

Chapter Chair Report

"Coastal Protection Meetings" continued from page 1
by March 1, 2013:

By U.S. Mail: Ms. Maria Brown, Sanctuary Superintendent, Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, 991 Marine Dr., The Presidio, San Francisco, CA 94129

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 or 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.

Sat., Feb. 2 - King at the Knapp-Swett Ranches.

Come explore the hills between Fairfield, Benicia, and Vallejo! You’ll be led by Jim Walsh and/or James Chang, both expert Solano Land Trust guides. They’ll share insights about the birds and other wildlife that call this area home, and give you a great workout! The King-Swett Ranches are currently open to the public for staff- or docent-led activities only. This rigorous hike requires the ability to trek several miles off the trail, through high grasses and thistle, on uneven ground and up and down steep hills. 9am – 1pm. Meet the park-and-ride lot at 80 and Hiddenbrooks Parkway/American Canyon Road. Long pants, water, snacks, and good boots are recommended. Heavy rain cancels. Info: 707-432-0150 x200 or www.solanolandtrust.org.

Mon., Feb. 4 - Fly to apply for Jepson Prairie Preserve Docent Training.

5 PM. Solano Land Trust is recruiting new guides (docents), to help with Jepson Prairie Preserve in Dixon. Anyone age 18 or older is invited to apply. New docents will learn about the ecology and seasonality of grassland vegetation, including declining populations of rare aquatic animals, geology, and human influences. They will lead walks at Jepson Prairie each year, March through June. Apply: info: www.solanolandtrust.org/Volunteer.aspx.


To the legendary Donner Summit backcountry ski location of the Lodge provides quick and easy access to the legendary Donner Summit backcountry ski location of the Lodge provides quick and easy access to the legendary Donner Summit backcountry ski location of the Lodge provides quick and easy access to the legendary Donner Summit backcountry ski location of the Lodge provides quick and easy access to the legendary Donner Summit backcountry ski location of the Lodge provides quick and easy access.

Sun., Mar. 16 - Wildflowers and Aquatic Cotters Walk at Jepson Prairie.

10am – 2pm. Jepson Prairie Preserve is one of California’s best remaining examples of vernal pools and native grasslands. Enjoy an easy walk in a portion of the Preserve only accessible with a Jepson Prairie docent. The Preserve explodes into color during its spring migration season for birds of prey is coming to a close. Join Larry Broderick and the SolanoLandTrustRapTeam to celebrate the amazing birds we’ve seen this fall and winter in Solano County and beyond. Learn about bird identification and bird behavior and a book review. Following a brief social break, test your new identification skills on a short but steep hike up Jepson Prairie. Jepson Prairie is located at the intersection of Lynch Road & McGary Road, Vallejo. Info: www.solanolandtrust.org.

Sun., Mar. 17 - Eagles, Hawks & Other Birds of Prey Identification Workshop, Hike and Season Wrap-up.

11am – 2pm. The migration season for birds of prey is coming to a close. Join Larry Broderick and the SolanoLandTrustRapTeam to celebrate the amazing birds we’ve seen this fall and winter in Solano County and beyond. Learn about bird identification and bird behavior and a book review. Following a brief social break, test your new identification skills on a short but steep hike up Jepson Prairie. Jepson Prairie is located at the intersection of Highway 113 & Cook Lane, 10 miles south of Dixon. Info: www.solanolandtrust.org.

Sat. Mar. 23 - Eagles, Hawks & Other Birds of Prey Identification Workshop, Hike and Season Wrap-up.

11am – 2pm. The migration season for birds of prey is coming to a close. Join Larry Broderick and the SolanoLandTrustRapTeam to celebrate the amazing birds we’ve seen this fall and winter in Solano County and beyond. Learn about bird identification and bird behavior and a book review. Following a brief social break, test your new identification skills on a short but steep hike up Jepson Prairie. Jepson Prairie is located at the intersection of Highway 113 & Cook Lane, 10 miles south of Dixon. Info: www.solanolandtrust.org.

Sat. Apr. 27 - South Fork Trinity River Wildflower Hike.

This is a popular hike for wildflower viewing, and while there is little elevation gain, the trail is narrow and steep in places. Carpool Meet 9:00 A.M. Willow Creek in Creek Post Office parking lot. Trailhead end of South Fork Road, 11 miles from Hwy. 299. By reservation only. Jack Tepley 707-498-5524 x50 or mcbrittendon@comcast.net for painters and photographers or Emelia Berol, emelia.berol@yahoo.com

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.cti.sieracal.org or call (800) 679-6775.
Instructions for hikers

Ouings will not start 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 his cooperation to make the trip safe, pleasant and rewarding. Never charge ahead of the leader and keep within sight or exhausting distance of the person ahead of you so you do not miss an interesting 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 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. Cuts, 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. Carpoolers are not part of the outing but a means of conserving natural resources.

All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read the liability waiver please go to: http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/forms, or contact the Outings Department at (415) 977-5528 for a printed version.

Visitors are welcome

All Sierra Club outings 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.

To submit outings write-ups

Send all outings write-ups to: Carol Vellutini, Outings Chair, (carol@vellutini.com) by the 15th of the month. Leaders must coordinate their outings with their Group Outings Chair.

Outings

Fri.-Sun. Feb. 1 - 3 - Napa Group. Hutchinson Hike. Spend three days enjoying X-country skiing, snow shoeing, down hill skiing, or just playing in the snow. Hutchinson Lodge is located in Soda Springs, next to the Sierra Club’s Clare Tappan Lodge and between Sugar Bowl and Royal Gorge resorts. X-country skis & snow shoes are available for rental at CTI Lodge. Cost for the trip is $78 for 2 nights, including 2 dinners & 2 breakfasts. Leader: Nanette DeDonato-Dover (925) 930-1190. Leader Bob Collett 530-220-3212 Directions: From I-80 take Trestle St. exit west towards Mare Island. Continue on Mare Island to Azuur Dr. (at the end of G St.). Turn left. Follow Azuur to light at Flagship Dr. Turn right. Go to Nerus, along side east of Flagship Dr. From Marin, Sonoma and Napa Counties take the Mare Island exit off of Hwy 37; turn right onto Walnut Ave. to G St. Turn right. Turn left on Azuur Dr. Follow directions above. Carpool: 8:30 from Santa Rosa by reservation only Carol 546-6308 carolvsr@sonic.net

Sat.-Mon. Feb. 16-18 - Ludlow Hut Trip (Intermediate - Adv. Intermediate). Snowshoe/Ski 5.6 miles (1200’) to Ludlow Hut for Presidents weekend Sat. (Sun. overnight and back out on Mon. midday. $38 (540 Non Sierra Club members) by Jan 15th to Jim Gannon; PO Box 1038, Rohnert Park, CA 94927. Non-refundable reservations. Please include email address/phone#. Optional stay at Clair Tappan lodge Fri 15th. Make reservations early to avoid disappointment. Lodge reservations 530-426-3632 indicate you are with Ludlow trip-Redwood Camp. Central commissary is planned. Meeting time/locations provided with trip sign up. Contact leader Jim Gannon (707)-525-1052 jgannon99@scioglobal.net. Sun. Feb. 17. Lawndale Trail and Edinart Mines Loop hike. Come look for news as we hike up to Ledson Marsh at the far eastern edge of Annadel State Park. Start in the fireweed and white osteospermum to redwoods, pines and oaks, emerging at the top in an open clearing for views of Bennett Valley. Bring water and lunch. Class M-7-A. Carpool: meet 9:30am Sonoma County Fairgrounds Park & Ride south-west corner, (Leaderless) carpool leave shortly after or meet trailhead 10am. Hwy 12 to Lawndale Rd. in Kenwood. There is a parking fee at the trailhead. Leader Tiffany Machiel (707) 696-3387 asmtif@sonic.net. Feb. 18-20. Weekend Gold Butte, Nevada, Car Camp. Join Vicky Hoover in exploring this beautiful and remote area in SE Nevada (about 3 hours NE of Las Vegas). Bring camping gear & cooking gear. No hardy or gear needed. Emergencies are normally not a problem but please bring a bit of extra food, water and clothing. The cost is $55 per person. Contact your Group Outings Chair Peter Grubb hut trip. Leaders Jim Gannon and Dan Anderson

Box 1038, Rohnert Park, CA 94927. Checks are non-refundable in case of weather cancellation. Please include email address/phone#. Optional stay at Clair Tappan lodge Fri 15th. Make reservations early to avoid disappointment. Lodge reservations 530-426-3632 indicate you are with Bensentrip-Redwood Camp. Central commissary is planned. Meeting time/locations provided with trip sign up. Contact leader Jim Gannon (707)-525-1052 jgannon99@scioglobal.net. Sat & Sun. Mar 16 - Lake Group. Fiske Peak, BLM land on lower Cache Creek. Start at Low Water Bridge Hwy 16, hike to top of Fiske Peak. Views of Mt. Lassen, Sierra Nevadas, northern Sac Valley, Capay Valley, Mt. St. Helena, Cobb Mt., Mt. Konocti, Walker Ridge, Snow Mt. and half the world. 2200 ft elevation gain. Bring water & lunch. We will sign the peak diary, lunch on top of the world, and return to the world. Class: H-8-C. Carpools: 8:30am. Lower Lake Coffee Co., Main St. Lower Lake. By reservation only. Leader Tom McFarling 994-5490 tmcfarling@callatg.com. Sat. Mar. 16 - Lake Group. Fiske Peak, BLM land on lower Cache Creek. Start at Low Water Bridge Hwy 16, hike to top of Fiske Peak. Views of Mt. Lassen, Sierra Nevadas, northern Sac Valley, Capay Valley, Mt. St. Helena, Cobb Mt., Mt. Konocti, Walker Ridge, Snow Mt. and half the world. 2200 ft elevation gain. Bring water & lunch. We will sign the peak diary, lunch on top of the world, and return to the world. Class: H-8-C. Carpools: 8:30am. Lower Lake Coffee Co., Main St. Lower Lake. By reservation only. Leader Tom McFarling 994-5490 tmcfarling@callatg.com. Rain cancels. Sat.-Sun. Mar. 16 - 17 - Ghost Town Extravaganza. Spend St. Patrick's Day weekend in this beautiful desert landscape near Death Valley. Meet at the Visitors Center. Blue skies and leprechauns of California's colorful past. Camp at the historic ghost town of O'Ballarat (flush toilets). On Sundays we do a challenging hike to ghost town Lookout City with historian Hal O’Toole who will regale us with tales of this wild west town. Afterwards,
a special St. Patty’s Day Happy Hour and potluck, followed by a midnight visit to Ballard’s graveyard where we’ll hope we don’t get pinched by a fairy. On Sun, a quick visit to the infant burial plot in O’Reilly townsite before heading home. Group size strictly limited. Send $8 per person (Lygia Gerard, 2 large SASE, HW phone, email, rideshare info) to ldr-Lygia Gerard, P.O. Box 721039, Pinon Hills, CA 92372; 760-868-2179. CNRCC Desert Committee Wed-Sun, Mar. 20-24 - Death Valley National Park's Spring Springle Visit Death Valley National Park when temperatures are cooler and wild flowers may be blooming. We will explore areas both outside and inside the park with hikes to visit water falls and stunning desert canyons. We will also tour Scotty’s Castle. Hiking may be over rough ground and rocks. High clearance vehicles are recommended, but there will be car pooling options. Camping is in a developed private campground which includes flush toilets, showers, camp fire rings and picnic tables. Cost is $60 per person (for accommodations). Parking fee is $25 per vehicle. Group size limited to 14 people. Contact leader for reservation information. Leader: Rich Jurich, rj082806@pacbell.net, 916-492-2181. Delta Sierra Group/CNRCC Desert Committee Sat, Mar. 23 - Lake Group. Glen Eden Trail to newly opened Ridge Trail Hike. Fairly steep trail rewarded with great views including Clear Lake, Snow Mountain (5725 feet), Western Sierra exposure, the towering Lee Vining Area, and Spring recovery of the areas affected by the Summer 2012 fire. Bring water and lunch. Class: H-10-B. Meet: 10 am at the trailhead on Scott’s Valley Rd. (approx. 2 miles from Hwy 20 at Blue Lakes). By reservation only. Leader: Paul Farley. 263-9320. Heavy rain cancels (call). Sat-Mar. 29 - Fri-Sun. Wilderness Characteristics Inventory With Needles BLM. Join our annual Sierra Club service trip with the Needles BLM Field Office to help wilderness. This season’s task will be to document the wilderness characteristics of an area adjacent to wilderness that has not been recently studied—exact location still to be determined. We enjoyed similar work last spring just west of the Old Woman Mountains. Car camping with optional central commissary, usual exorbitant fee. Contact Vicki Hoover, vicky.hoover@sierraclub.org, or 415-977-5527. CNRCC Wilderness Committee Sat-Sun. Apr. 13-14 - (Fri. Option) Juniper Flats Area Tour (San Bernardino Mts). Come explore this beautiful area in the San Bernardino Mts. Camp at Rock Springs Ranch (private). On Friday (optional) there is a 3 mi r/t hike to the boulder gardens. Saturday, a driving and hiking tour of the area (4-WD or high clearance vehicle recommended), including springs, waterfalls, Cottonwood Spring ACEC and aonaglen area. Saturday evening campfire and dinner provided by the Friends of Juniper Flats. Sunday, a 6hr hike to Deep Creek, a proposed Wild & Scenic River. Contact Carol Wiley for reservations at: desertlily1@verizon.net or 760-245-8734. For more details of the area contact co-leader Jenny Wilder at: JensOasisk@aol.com or 760- 220-0730. Mojave Group/CNRCC Desert Committee Sat, April 20-Lake Group. Thompson Canyon Trail. Hike BLM Payne Ranch/Bear Creek Unit. This hike starts by fording Bear Creek and then winds up Thompson Canyon; have lunch at the Roadkill Cafe. Then onto old ranch ponds, high ridges and blue oak forests. We’ll descend back down to Thompson canyon and cross back over Bear Creek to our cars. Bring river shoes and the willingness to strip down to underwear to cross the creek. Bring river towel, water and lunch. Class: M-7-A. Carpools: 8:30 am Lower Lake Coffee Co., Main Street, Lower Lake. By reservation only. Leader Tom McFarling 994-5490 tmcfarling@cattag.com. Rain cancels. Fri-Thurs. June 21-27 - Coyote Gulch Backcountry. This trip heads into some of the best red rock in Utah, with sheer high-walled canyons and cathedral-like camping areas. Meet around noon at the Escalante visitor center where we will obtain our permits. Hike 4-5 miles a day, possible lay-over day. Most of hike is fairly easy, but requires waking back and forth across the creek. This is definitely the summer warm season, but I have generally found it quite pleasant in the canyon this time of year. Limit 12. David Hardy, 702 875-4826, hardyhikers@embarqmail.com. S. Nevada Group/CNRCC Desert Committee Outings Chair Report

I am saddened by the death of Jay Halcomb our wonderful Redwood Chapter Chair and leader. I would call Jay whenever I had a Sierra Club related problem. Jay leaves a tremendous hole in our leadership. Please attend the Environmental Dinner on March 10th as it will be a tribute to Jay.

Redwood Chapter has some new leaders, and we still need more. Call your Group outings chair for training. Some of our long time leaders are having problems with knees or other body ailments and can’t lead right now, but I am hoping that soon they will be back on the trail. Then there is leader Bill Arendaren who is hiking in Guatemala. So he missed our Needles deadline. Since his retirement he is having a bucket’s list of adventures from sky diving to zip lines to bagging high peaks of the world. We miss him, but I imagine our Regional Outings world seems tame now.

Please keep in mind that next year is the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act. Our leaders are fortunate to have many wild places to backpack or hike to and there are a tribute to those who made it possible. Redwood Chapter will have a huge celebration and will need volunteers to help make it happen. Call or email Victoria vbrandon@lakevillesierranevada.info or 994-1931 to volunteer. The celebration will be sometime in the spring of 2014.

Sierra Club winter huts and the Clair Tappan Lodge are a fantastic place to bring your family in the winter. The food is wonderful and the people are friendly. There are snowshoe or ski trails right out the back door of the lodge. If you don’t want to go to a hut by yourself, join our winter leaders and be guided to a backcountry hut. Another choice is right next door to Clair Tappan Lodge but you have to reserve the entire lodge. So join leader Nanette, who reserved Hutchinson Lodge just for you. Get outdoors!! Great exercise. So much better than taking pills for your problems.

See you on the trail!!

CAROL VELLUTINI, REDWOOD CHAPTER OUTINGS CHAIR
Lake Group Report

Endangered Species Act Petition for the Clear Lake Hitch

As reported in the previous issue of the Needles, last fall the Center for Biological Diversity petitioned to extend the protections of the state and federal Endangered Species Acts to the hitch (lavinia exilicauda chi), a fish endemic to Clear Lake. Preliminary findings from the US Fish & Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife are still pending, but in the meantime local understanding was greatly improved by an informative public workshop held in Lakeport on December 3. The meeting featured authoritative presentations on the hitch and their ecosystem, on preservation efforts to date, and on the federal listing process. Several points were made very clear. First, the ecology of the lake is extremely complex, and effects on the hitch (which are also impacted by conditions in the tributary streams where their annual spawning runs take place) are neither linear nor obvious. Second, the responsible agencies are overworked, understaffed, and under-funded, so nothing is going to happen quickly. Third, although the consequences of listing are impossible to predict at this point, opportunities exist to use this process not only to benefit a single species but also to create conditions that will encourage the recovery of the entire ecosystem of Clear Lake and its watershed. It’s up to the community: we have a chance to pull together to create a mutually beneficial opportunity. We are also discussing ways to assist the hitch and their ecosystem, on their annual spawning runs take place) on the Sierra Club Forestry Committee.

Information about the hitch and its listing process, visit www.lakelive.

Sonoma Group Report

Two new members have joined our Sonoma Group Executive Committee: Shirley Johnson, and Wendy Cromwell. Steve Birdishead and Annabel Ascher continue into new terms. We have scheduled an Executive Committee retreat for Feb. 9 at Friends House in Santa Rosa.

We greatly miss Jay Halcomb, our expert on Sierra Club policies and procedures, our lead forest protection advocate, and all-around guiding light. We are grateful to the contribution of time and dedication he gave to the Sonoma Group, and our life-giving woodlands.

The November Environmental Forum at the Environmental Center to discuss election results was very informative and provided a great networking opportunity. We held a New Members Forum in December and the January Environmental Forum was planned to educate the public about the SMART Train and Station-Oriented Development. We have another New Members Forum scheduled for February, and plan to hold them every other month.

The Environmental Forum in March will be on water issues.

Forestry Issues: We are discussing ways to assist in raising funds for the Artesa winery litigation, and to educate the public about “Chainsaw wine”: clearcutting forested hillside to replace them with vineyards. We are considering staging or partnering on an Earth Day event, to educate and gain support for the Artesa litigation. We hope to expand the membership on the Sierra Club Forestry Committee.

Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park, 2013

April 7-9; May 5-7; June 2-4; July 21-23; August 25-27; September 15-17

Join us for a 3-day, 3-island, live-aboard cruise to Channel Island National Park. All cruises depart from Santa Barbara aboard the Isla Madrones. For more information call e-mail or visit www.islandhopping.com.

Are you looking for Winter Lodging Away From The Madmaining Crowds of Lake Tahoe and Ski Resorts?

Come To Polar Bear Cottage. The Backcountry and Winter Lake view from your front door where you can play in the snow, cross-country ski or snowshoe. You are at the edge of the wilderness, isolated from the highway yet minutes away by road and of minutes away from South Lake Tahoe.

Polar Bear Cottage. Rustic elegance for up to 4 persons.

You can be a part of our 90th anniversary. Help the Sonoma Group Water Committee! Come to our meetings at 7:00 PM at the Environmental Center, held 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 wastewater. Help protect the quality of our water for people, wildlife, fish and other aquatic life, promote water conservation and intelligent use. Check for our meeting dates in the Needles. To get on our Water Committee e-mail list, ask Len Holt at lholt@sonic.net or call 360-658-0549 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 billknightemail@gmail.com.

Help the Sonoma Group Water Committee! Come to our meetings at 7:00 PM at the Environmental Center, held 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 wastewater. Help protect the quality of our water for people, wildlife, fish and other aquatic life, promote water conservation and intelligent use. Check for our meeting dates in the Needles. To get on our Water Committee e-mail list, ask Len Holt at lholt@sonic.net or call 360-658-0549 for info. People are requesting families with children, camping and easy hikes.

Climate and Energy Committee: We are also working to give the Climate and Energy Committee a stronger role.

Port Sonoma-Carneros Fill project: Located on Hwy. 37 near Petaluma, this project would bring millions of cubic yards of dredge fill into a 528-acre parcel. Berg Holdings applied for a use permit, and it was at first granted a “Mitigated Negative Declaration”. After public protest and pressure from the Sierra Club and other conservation and business entities, Sonoma County Supervisors voted to require an EIR. The comment period for that EIR is now closed; an Administrative Draft EIR is to be ready for review in February, with hearings in March and May 2013.

Water issues: Sonoma County Groundwater Committee is meeting in February, seeking consensus on a comprehensive model for monitoring underground water supplies for the Santa Rosa Plain and elsewhere.

Transportation: Efforts are being made to compensate for the possible loss of 5 million in redevelopment funds for transit oriented housing in Santa Rosa’s Railroad Square. Funding is also needed to improve bus service in Sonoma County, and it is possible that local sources of revenue will need to be developed.

SRJC Student Programs: SRJC Farm staff have met with Food Services staff to explore possibilities of a direct link between the farm and the SRJC Culinary program.

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 billknightemail@gmail.com.

Help the Sonoma Group Water Committee! Come to our meetings at 7:00 PM at the Environmental Center, held 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 wastewater. Help protect the quality of our water for people, wildlife, fish and other aquatic life, promote water conservation and intelligent use. Check for our meeting dates in the Needles. To get on our Water Committee e-mail list, ask Len Holt at lholt@sonic.net or call 360-658-0549 for info. People are requesting families with children, camping and easy hikes.

The Climater Space & Energy Committee is getting Amped up! Join us on the 1st Monday/Month at 4:30-5:30 p.m. at the Environmental Center in Santa Rosa, get Charged about community renewable energy programs. Contact Shirley Johnson-Feell Climate & Energy Committee Forum-Chair. Email: shrilgirl707@yahoo.com, home 206-1138, or call the office 544-7651.
San Francisco Bay Flyway Festival  
Feb 8-9, 10 on Mare Island in Vallejo.  
Check out www.cnbfayflywayfestival.com for information.  
Sponsors, volunteers and nonprofit environmental groups are  
invited to register for free space to put up a table and display.  
Contact: 707-557-9816 or 707-249-9633.

Sierra Club will have a table and needs volunteers to come  
out and staff the table as well as set up and takedown. Please  
call 707-319-6398 to help.

Our Volunteers:  
Thanks to Nancy McCoy, Brian Hoffman, Marc Hoffman,  
Ray Anderson and Jane Bogner for staffing the November and  
December paper shredding.

VALCORE Recycling and Confidential Paper  
Shredding 2013.  
Solano Group will be working every 3rd Saturday at 38  
Sheridan Street, Vallejo from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (Feb. 16,  
Mar. 16, April 20, May 18, June 15, July 20, 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

VISIT sierrasisters.net or call Yosemite, Pt. Reyes, Sequoia!

People:  
Steve Birdlebough – NANCY TAMARISK, NAPA GROUP CHAIR

WOMEN’S TRIPS  
Visit sierrasisters.net or call Janet at (707)874-2126

Redwood Chapter  
Group and Council Election Results

Redwood Chapter  
Daniel Myers  
Jay Halcomb  
Diane Fairchild Beck

Solano Group  
Ray Anderson  
Greg Peterson  
Kitty Powell  
Ellen Faws  
Napa Group  
Carol Kunze  
Linda Brown  
Phill Blake  
Nancy Tamarisk  
Mendocino Group  
Linda Perkins  
Lake Group  
Ed Robey  
North Group  
Joyce Yowell  
Richard Kreis  
Diane Fairchild Beck

Sonoma Group  
Shirley Johnson Foell  
Annabel Ascher  
Wendy Cromwell  
Steve Birdlebough

Napa Pipe Board of Supervisors Decision Time  
By the time you read this, the Napa BOS will have  
decided to accept or reject the Napa Pipe site developers’  
application to rezone the site for housing and big-box  
retail. It is our hope that the Board will have rejected the  
proposal, and instead committed the County to working  
with the City of Napa on creating a new vision for the site,  
one which meshes with our widely-shared city-centered and  
slow-growth vision for Napa.

The Napa Pipe has huge potential for serving our County.  
With 150+ acres there is room for multiple uses, including  
industrial, solar power generation, Napa Valley College  
training facility, and municipal maintenance yards. By  
placing these non-residential uses outside our urban cores, we  
dedicate space within the towns for residential development.  
Keeping housing, retail and urban amenities—volunteers and  
schools, libraries, restaurants—build the foundation for  
walkable, vibrant, close-knit neighborhoods with individual  
character. These are the types of communities increasingly  
sought after by young singles, families, and retirees. They  
are the places that tourists seek out for their warmth and  
liveliness. The urban sprawl of the late 20th century has  
failed us, environmentally and socially. It’s time in past.

Climate Action Plan: Back to the Drawing Board  
The Board of Supervisors, responding to cost-concerns of  
winery interests, has sent the Climate Action Plan back to  
the Planning Department for re-working. The CAP will  
require new or expanded projects (business and  
vineyards) to cut greenhouse gas (GHG) production by  
38% over “business as usual”. The biggest hurdle will be  
for venues such as tasting rooms, which, in attracting  
more tourists, would be accountable for the GHG produced  
by the visitors’ automobiles. This dilemma reflects Napa  
County’s increasing economic reliance on tourist spending  
vs. grape and wine production, a shift that affects almost  
all aspects of Napa County life.

Napa Executive Committee Welcomes New Member  
We welcome Phil Blake as our newest ExCom member.  
Phil’s experience as a conservationist for the Napa County  
Natural Resources Conservation District will bring welcome  
expertise to the group. He replaces John Stephens, who  
decided not to seek re-election for health reasons. John  
is well-known for decades of environmental and peace and  
and social justice activism in Napa County. In the Sierra Club,  
he has focused mainly on issues of vineyard ecological  
effects, and watershed health. John has been a mainstay of  
the Club, and though he’s felt the need to cut back on  
involvement, we hope and expect to continue with work  
with him to protect Napa’s precious environment.  

Send your e-mail address to nancy@aya.yale.edu to  
receive updates of local activities.

---NANCY TAMARISK, NAPA GROUP CHAIR

Mendocino Group Report

False Klamath Cove, Leader Melinda Groom.  
Melinda Groom, Allison Brondall, and Bill Knight. The photo shows participants in front  
of the roaring surf at False Klamath Cove during our most recent trip, led by Melinda Groom.  
There is always a need for more leaders, so  
if you would like to help people explore our beautiful North Coast, contact Bill at bill.  
knigt.email@gmail.com.

North Group Report

North Group to Sponsor Science Fair  
For the seventh year, North Group  
will be sponsoring an award at the annual Humboldt County Science Fair held in  
mid-March at Humboldt State. Fifty dollars  
will be given to the best project dealing with  
environmental issues.

The North Group is pleased to call  
your attention to an excellent profile of  
long-time North Group and Redwood  
Chapter Leader Lucille Vinyard which  
appeared in the December-January issue of  
ECONEWS. Lucille – who recently  
turned 94 – still regularly attends North  
Group Executive Committee meetings  
where she shares a wealth of knowledge  
and regularly provides historical context  
to the Group’s discussion of current  
issues. You can read the tribute on line  
at this link: http://www.nps.org/centers/kin-  
earth-lucille-vinyard-mother-redwood-

redwood-national-park  
The North Group meets on the second  
Tuesday of each month beginning at 6:45 PM at the Adorni Center on the  
Eureka Waterfront. Come by and get  
informed. You can view the current issue of  
North Group News as well as listings of  
upcoming outings and meetings on the  
Chapter website at www.redwood.  
sierrclub.org.

Outing Chair Bill Knight reports  
that during 2012, North Group Sierra  
Club members led 10 trips in Humboldt  
and Del Norte counties, involving 62  
participants. Three volunteers led hikes:

Mendocino Group Report

The Mendocino Group is reviewing the  
Mendocino Redwood Company  
Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural  
Communities Conservation Plan (MRCHCP/NCCP) which fenced  
with little fanfare or advance warning the  
week before Christmas, with an end to  
public comment happening on the last  
day of January. The thing is prodigious. It  
took several years (some say 12, some  
say 20) to put together. Mendocino  
Group asked for an extension of public  
comment as did several other interested  
parties. It was extended to February 21,  
2013. Comments can be sent to mrc.  
hcp@noaa.gov. Comments are subject to  
being routed to the various  
agencies. The plan can be found online  
at www.fws.gov/arcata. Hot copy is  
available at the libraries in Fort Bragg  
and Willits. It’s daunting. Lizzie Perkins is  
working on it. Andrew Orashke at EPIC  
is coordinating the response effort, www.  
wildcalfornia.org, 707-822-7711.

The Willits Bypass lawsuit is winding  
it’s way through the courts. We were denied  
the preliminary injunction. Next is a court-  
ordered mediation.

The reopening and expansion of a concrete  
batch plant and gravel processing facility  
on Outlet Creek has come to our attention. There  
has been a terrific salmon return in northern  
streams this year and this processing facility  
right on the banks of the creek threatens what  
gains have been made. Public comment has  
been extended on this one too due to the  
diligence of the neighbors who discovered  
a level of review that the County, in its haste  
to issue a negative declaration, had missed.  
The proposed facility is to be open Monday  
through Sunday from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. There  
are questions regarding noise and water and  
air pollution. The project relates to the  
Willits Bypass and the further development of the  
railroad. We will be following this  
very closely.

--MARY WALSH, MENDOCINO GROUP CHAIR

---NANCY TAMARISK, NAPA GROUP CHAIR

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

EXCOME: Come join us for our monthly meetings which  
rotate between Vallejo, Fairfield and Vacaville. We meet on  
the first Thursday of the month and make a positive impact  
on our country and need a few more members to help carry the  
load.  

Call Jane (707)319-6398 or Greg (707)864-8573  
for current meeting info.

Help for pay our LANDFILL SUIT.

(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  
and 2 pm to 4:30pm.  

OR Cash them in at your local recycle center and send us a  
load.  

Call Jane (707)319-6398 or Greg (707)864-8573 for  
current meeting info.
The year 2014 will mark the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, that was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson on September 3, 1964. This historic legislation established the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS), and initially protected 9.1 million acres of wildlands for the enjoyment of the American people. Over the years Congress has added more than 100 million additional acres to the NWPS system, in 757 separately named Wilderness Areas managed by four different federal agencies. These very special public lands provide many direct and indirect benefits—ecological, scientific, educational, recreational, economic, and spiritual.

The Sierra Club is taking a leading role in organizing a nationwide celebration of this remarkable achievement, with every Chapter taking part. Here on the North Coast an oral account of your special experience, call Victoria vbrandon@lakelive.info (preferred) or mail them to the Redwood Chapter office, P.O. Box 466, Santa Rosa CA 95402. For more information, and to arrange to submit photographs and personal stories of hikes and other wilderness adventures, and for that we’re appealing to you– our members– for help. Please send photos and written accounts to Victoria Brandon by email to vbrandon@lakelive.info (preferred) or mail them to the Redwood Chapter office, P.O. 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.

Sonoma Group New Members Forum
Monday, February 11, 6:30 p.m. Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway Avenue, Santa Rosa
Join us as members of the Sonoma Group ExCom and the Outdoor Committee, plus general club members, will attend this forum to offer a full picture of the activities that your membership supports, and the many ways that members can stretch your activism or outdoor enjoyment by jumping in and getting involved with Sierra Club Redwood Chapter and Sonoma Group.

Sonoma Group Environmental Forum
Monday, March 11, 6:30 p.m. Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway Avenue, Santa Rosa
Sonoma County Water: Issues and Solutions