Remembering a Trio of Environmental Heroes

Three long-time Sierra Club members have passed away since early October 2014. We salute their visions for a greener Sonoma County and the work they accomplished while with us. The Sonoma County Conservation Council (of which Sonoma Group is a member) honored each of them with its top award. Initiated in 1975, this award recognizes people who have recently made outstanding efforts to protect regional resources, directly or indirectly, or advanced their better stewardship.

Sonoma County Environmentalist of the Year Award Winners:

Len Swenson - 1985
Dr. Leonard Swenson passed away on Saturday, October 4, 2014. Within the Sierra Club, Swenson held several positions at both the Sonoma Group and Redwood Chapter levels, including chairing each, as well as holding the offices of Conservation Chair, Political Chair, and Transportation Chair at various times in the 1980’s - 2000’s. While holding these offices he was a consistently regular contributor to the Redwood Needles, keeping our membership abreast of the environmental challenges the local Sierra Club faced and often leading the way to rectify them. He worked tirelessly to protect open space and the California coast, as well as protecting access to the coast, attending countless meetings in the

Bill Kortum - 1986
Bill Kortum, a Sierra Club member for more than forty-five years, passed away December 20, 2014. Kortum was instrumental in preserving open space in Sonoma County, protecting the California coast and ensuring coastal access for everyone. A Peninsula native, his environmental activism began in the successful fight to stop the PG&E nuclear power plant at Bodega Head. He helped form Californians Organized to Acquire Property to State Tidelands (COPAST) and worked to maintain coastal access at Sea Ranch. This effort led directly to Proposition 20 which created the California Coastal Commission and guaranteed the public's right to access state tidelands.

Kortum helped establish Sonoma County Conservation Action (SCCA) in 1991 to educate and mobilize voters: he was a consistent spade, a spade. It was always great entertainment, but also an invaluable tool for further environmental action, especially during this time of drought.

“Remembering EnvironmentalHeroes” continued on page 3

Helen Libeu - 1988
Helen Libeu passed away on October 31, 2014, aged 95 years old. Libeu was a local Sierra Club member for almost thirty years. She served as Redwood Chapter Legal Chair for a number of years in the late 1980’s - 1990’s. Libeu was a champion of forest protection, and mentored others in the Sierra Club. Libeu’s wit and knowledge are fondly remembered by local environmental activists.

Brenda Adelman, Russian River Watershed Protection Committee, and former Redwood Chapter Chair, writes: “I knew her many years ago and was always extremely impressed with her knowledge and her willingness to call a spade a spade. It was always great entertainment, but also great information when she got up to speak. She got many cheers over the years. She skewed many a politician (in her raspy and authoritative voice) to her, deservedly, for some of their stupid decisions. Oh, where have those days gone? She was always smarter than everyone in the room.”

Dave Bannister, Executive Director Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation adds: “She was a force to reckon with

Proposals to carve up California along various lines have been around for a long time, as has the “State of Jefferson” idea, which in its original formulation (dating back to the 1940s) would combine portions of southern Oregon with a dozen or so northern California counties. As an expression of regional identity this idea has seemed harmless (the Klamath Falls NPR station calls itself “Jefferson Public Radio”) but recently a group of well-funded far-right extremists has started actively promoting a split.

Formation of this new state would be disastrous for its residents, who receive far more in state services than they pay in taxes. It would instantly become the most impoverished state in the United States. Bankrupt at birth, they pay in taxes. It would instantly become the most impoverished state in the United States. Bankrupt at birth, it would continue to be geographically isolated, sparsely populated and economically disadvantaged, lacking the resources to fund public education, highways, parks, or law enforcement to anything approaching an acceptable modern standard.

Without the protections provided by California’s strict environmental regulations, the region’s abundant natural resources would be ripe for the plucking. Although proponents claim to favor environment protection, they explicitly oppose existing environmental laws such as carbon reduction rules, cap and trade, the Endangered Species Act and pesticide regulations.

The primary motivation for this campaign is obvious: two US Senate seats and three Electoral College votes that would reliably fall to the most reactionary wing of American politics.

As stated in Article 4 of the Constitution, requirements for the formation of a new state are simple, consisting merely of simple majority approval by the legislature of the existing state and by Congress. Neither a popular vote nor Presidential concurrence is needed. Proponents have begun approaching Boards of Supervisors in the region, arguing that California is dominated by urban majorities that do not share their values and railing against environmental rules that they claim stifle economic growth. They then intend to tell legislators from the rest of California that “The northern counties want to govern themselves, and their departure will save the rest of California’s taxpayers a great deal of money, so please let them depart in peace.” This argument could have considerable traction with many legislators of both parties. In the meantime, few opponents have been paying much attention, on the dangerous assumption that the idea is too ridiculous to take seriously.

The success of this cynical campaign would bring catastrophic consequences ranging from the abolition of CEQA to the selloff of state parks. The Sierras Club needs to speak out strongly in opposition to political restructuring that would create a regional environmental disaster of major proportions and weaken our influence on the federal level. Redwood Chapter intends to propose that Sierra Club California take an official position in opposition to the creation of a “State of Jefferson,” and use our substantial Sacramento lobbying clout to keep it from gaining any more traction.

—Victoria Brandon, Redwood Chapter Chair

“Remembering Environmental Heroes”

Len Swenson

“Remembering Environmental Heroes”

Helen Libeu

process. He was, more recently, focused on transportation issues and represented the Sonoma County Conservation Council (SCCC) on the Citizen’s Advisory Council to the Sonoma County Transportation Authority. Swenson was a Sierra Club member for over forty-five years. Swenson was also active in many other local organizations, including the SCCC. Swenson won the SCCC’s Erminette (“Ernie”) L. Smith Award in 1997, which recognizes an individual for his or her long-term commitment to environmental protection and enhancement. Swenson was one of the first men to become a member of League of Women Voters of Sonoma County.

Current Redwood Chapter ExCom member Keith Kaulum remembers Len Swenson fondly: “My best memory of Len occurred when I went to my first large public meeting on Santa Rosa city water issues shortly after I arrived in Sonoma County. Len sat in the front row patiently until the public comment period, and then immediately jumped up to read a lengthy statement for the Sierra Club Group. He then sat back down and resumed reading his book, which I now noticed was a thick novel. It struck me that this was a guy who had been at this sort of thing for a long time.”

Current Sonoma Group ExCom member Steve Bridell reiterates: “When I arrived in Sonoma County (in 2003) Len was an important Sierra Club voice on the Citizens Advisory Committee to the Sonoma County Transportation Authority. I regularly attended the committee’s meetings as an observer, and once I joined the Sonoma Group Executive Committee Len retired so that I could succeed to his seat.

“His and his wife Adrienne regularly brought conservation leaders together to socialize at the Friendly House gazebos. Those gatherings often led to strategic partnerships on environmental issues.”

Environmental Activist Bill Kortum (who passed away later in 2014) recalled Swenson’s activism, which he believed began locally in the 1960’s: “Len and Adrienne (his late wife) joined COAAST (Californians Organized to Acquire Access to State Tidelands) almost at the very beginning. Later Len was president of COAAST for several years. He was on the early organizing committee for Coastwalk, and Len and Adrienne brought their granddaughter on several COAAST hikes.

“Len helped Virginia Hechtman organize a successful protest group over the dredging of the Russian River at Jenner for gravel and a 1500 home subdivision at Jenner.

“He organized a Tahoe trip of about twelve environmentalists to see me (Bill Kortum) receive the Golden Bear Award from the State Park Commission in recognition of the effort to pass Prop 20 that led to the formation of the California Coastal Commission.

“He headed a committee to ask State Parks to okay the site of the Kortum coastal trail.”

Carol Vellutini reports that despite being gravely ill at the time, “Bill Kortum spoke and paid tribute to another great environmentalist,” at Len’s memorial service.

Carole captures Len’s humorous side with this memory:

“Len always teased me about the Sierra Singles. I told him it was for potlucks and socializing and that it was not a pick up venue.”

We warmly remember Len Swenson, dedicated environmental activist, and we are grateful for the legacy he leaves Sonoma County and the Redwood Chapter.

Bill Kortum

Redwood Chapter Outings Leader Carol Vellutini remembers Bill Kortum: “I was fortunate to be on the COAAST board and hosted many dinners. I will never forget the dinner one year as I was sitting at the greeting table. I was trying to get new members to join COAAST. I was not familiar with the movers and shakers. I signed up Michael Fischer. Bill came over to me after as I was bragging to him how many people I had signed up for membership. He reads the list. He said you signed up Michael Fischer? I said yes. He said did you know who he is? I said no. Bill said he was the head of the California Coastal Commission and famous throughout California for coastal protection. (This was before Michael was executive director of the Sierra Club.) Of course, now I know who all these people are and Bill was my mentor.”

Kortum won the Sonoma County Conservation Council’s Erminette (“Ernie”) L. Smith Award in 1999, recognizing his long-term commitment to environmental protection and enhancement. Many consider Kortum to be the dean of environmental activism in Sonoma County and his unparalleled contributions to preserving the local environment shall long be treasured.

—Len Swenson

continued from page 1
Outings

Sun. Feb. 8 - Mendo Group. Valley View Trail Hike. Join us on one of the Sierra Club’s most scenic and easily accessed trails in the Cow Mt. BLM Recreation Area. The trail also provides fantastic views of parking area on Mill Creek Road just at the eastern end of the last of the Mill Creek ponds. Within a few minutes, the views of the Ukiah Valley begin and only improve as the hike proceeds toward the bench at the top for a sweeping panorama and then descends along Mayacama Creek to the waterfall, if which if there has been recent rain, could be running at full capacity. We will lunch here, rest, and then return on the same route.

Fri.-Sat. Feb. 13-14 - Southern Nevada Valentine’s Day Service Trip. Give our public lands a valentine by helping on a Feb 14 service project with the CA/NV Wilderness Committee. We will be working together with the BLM Las Vegas office and Friends of Nevada Wilderness to enhance wilderness characteristics in one of the southern Nevada’s few wildernesses. Social campout Friday night. More details & sign up: Vicky Hoover, 415-977-5527 or vickyhoover@sierraclub.org CA/NV Wilderness Committee

Sat. Feb. 14 - Lake Group. Pope to Putah trail Hike. A new hike still in the making. The PTP trail connects the two upper arms of Lake Berryessa. Tuleyome (see tuleyome.org) is pioneering a new connector trail between these two arms of the lake. We will be able to overlook the seclusion Putah Creek trail, then hike back, getting wonderful views of Pope Valley and Pope Canyon. Class: M-9-A. Carpool: 8:30 am. Store 24, north end of Middletown across Hwy 99 from high school. Leader Tim Bartice (707) 988-5490. Rain cancels.

Sat.-Sun. Feb. 14-15 - Napa Group. Snowshoe/Ski Trip. 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 change 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 footware 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 in campgrounds. Stoves are not allowed in the field. The actual mileage will be listed for each trip. The actual mileage will be listed for each trip. The actual mileage will be listed for each trip. The actual mileage will be listed for each trip.

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 change 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.

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Outings

locations require short sections of rock scrambling and minor exposure to heights. The hikes range from five to ten miles, with elevation gains up to 500 feet. Cost is $60 per person and includes 4 nights of camping and tour of Scotty’s Castle. Group size limited to 15 people. Email or call leader for reservation information. Leader: Rich Jureich, rich.sieru2@gmail.com, 907-412-2181. Sahale Arm Group.

Fri.-Sun. Apr. 10-12 – Mojavé National Preserve, Campground. Meet on Friday April 10 at 6:30 am at Amboy Inn at night and hike up the crater for lunch. Primitive camping. Friday night at Kelso Dunes. Saturday night at Kelso Dunes and then the lava tube with camping at Midhills Campground. Monday night we can hike to Cima Dome on the way out. Experience required (easy to some). Saturday night we will have a potluck (optional). There are no services in the preserve. Contact leader Carol Wiley at 760-345-8734. Mojave Group/CNRCC Desert Committee.

Sat. Apr. 25 - Mendocino Group, Seal Rockery and Sand Dunes. Come early to reserve, count, and enjoy the new seal pups at Mackerricher State Park. We will walk along the old Haul Road to the wildflower season, and we pray that rains have produced a wonderful and long-lasting display. Our service will be Saturday. Don’t miss this movie. Contact leader for details: Craig Deutsch, craig.deutsch@verizon.net. 707-477-6670. CNRCC Desert Committee.

Fri.-Wed. June 19-24 – Coyote Gulch Backpack. Backpack 30 miles through some of the best of Utah’s red rock, with sheer high-walled canyons and cathedral-like campsites. Trip starts with obtaining permits at the Estalante visitor center. 4-5 miles of travel each day. Most of the hiking is moderate, but requires wading back and forth across the creek. One steep trail to bypass waterfalls. There are side trips so bring a small day pack. This is the warm season, but usually quite pleasant. Trip details and agenda available on sign-up. Limit 12. Leader: David Hardy: email preferred. 707-671-5947.

Outings Chair Report

The year 2014 was a pivotal year. Many leaders in environmental activism, conservation, and preservation of open space have passed on. See this Redwood Needles for articles. I am hoping to have Memorial hikes and walks to honor outtng leaders who have passed on. These will be held in the North Group, Mendo Group and Sonoma Group.

Many of you are backpackers and have backpacked at least one of the sections of the Pacific Crest trail. If you haven’t seen the movie Wild, it is a must see. You will re-live trying to pack your backpack for the first time, although I know none of you had a pack like Reese Witherspoon. I am sure that all of you would have the correct fuel for cooking, I cringed when I saw her toenails – she was wearing boots that were too small. Trying to put up a tent, crossing a stream, going across the hot desert and the deep snow are all situations you might identify with. Wild was primarily filmed in Oregon — and only two scenes were actually on the Pacific Crest Trail as the movie crew couldn’t film in inaccessible places. The crew needed locations that were accessible, and could serve several purposes so the crew didn’t have to pack up and move each day.

Some of you might be interested in two backpacking classes at Sugarloaf Ridge State Park in Sonoma County. One is a two-hour class that will be offered on a Saturday, in April or May. Introductory information will be for the first hour and the second hour participants will look at some examples of backpacking gear. The instructors will bring a fully packed backpack, then unpack it so you can see what’s in it. ($10 fee) Separately, the next class will be overnight. More details will be available as the warm season will lead a small group into a backcountry camp

at Sugarloaf on a weekend. The mileage will be less than five miles but it will be a wilderness experience designed to give you the skills you need to start backpacking on your own. You may bring your own gear or rent. One instructor is Inga Aksamit. Go to her website to view her trips and suggestions. Inga is an outdoor enthusiast and California State Park volunteer who is passionate about exploring backcountry trails safely. She’s done the John Muir Trail, High Sierra Trail, Chilkoot Trail (Alaska), many trails in the Tahoe Sierra and has paddled 450 miles of the Yukon River (Canada) in a canoe. She discovered backpacking in middle-age. For info call her 415-470-1812 or John Rooney 707-833-5712.

This has been an excellent mushroom season. Hikers have photographed so many beautiful mushrooms. Those who know how to select edible mushrooms have also been delighted at the amount. The wildflower season should be interesting. Plants and trees are confused because of the strange weather. Congratulations are in order for Kevin Jorgenson (from Santa Rosa) and Tommy Caldwell as they achieved the unprecedented accomplishment of free climbing the world’s largest granite monolith El Capitan. Wow!!!!!!! A world record. The Dawn Wall climb will go down in history. A big thanks to all the Sierra Club leaders in our chapter. Solano Group will have a new leader this year. See you on the trail.

—Carol Vellutini, REDWOOD CHAPTER OUTINGS CHAIR

Redwood Needles

April Deadline: Due March 8

Submit Articles/Reports/Ad Copy via e-mail to: odavison@sonic.net
Send Outings to Carol Vellutini via email: carolvsr@sonic.net
Send Meetings to Carl Inglis: chinling@sonic.net

Redwood Needles

O u t i n g s

Carol Vellutini (bottom right) joins other volunteers to put up the Kortum Trail sign in the 1990’s. Bill Kortum is in the middle of the back row.

With your help we can clean our water.
Sierra Club Waterfront is the sentinel of America’s defense of water.
The water on the planet. However, water is a finite resource with only about 1% of the world’s water actually available for human use. Water pollution can be very harmful to our waterways and communities. Keep our water clean. Join Sierra Club.

Sorensen's Resort in beautiful Hope Valley.
1-800-431-9949.

Redwood Needles

February 1, 2015
Lake Group Report

Berrysa Snow Mountain Town Hall
Lake Group was thrilled to be able to send a substantial delegation led by Chair Ed Robey to the Town Hall meeting on the proposed Berrysa Snow Mountain national monument held in Napa on December 19. (See the article on page one in this edition of the Redwood Needles for details.)

By far the largest portion of the 350+ acre proponent for permanent protection is in Lake County, and during the five or more years that the campaign has been a top Lake Group priority the Group has hosted a series of informational meetings on the proposal, led numerous hikes into the region, and done a great deal to encourage support in the community. Three executive committee members and at least a dozen other local residents attended the forum with Interior Secretary Sally Jewell, and two were fortunate enough to have an opportunity to speak, as Supervisor Denise Rushing – a Sierra Club life member who served on the executive committee before taking office – represented local government on the panel.

All About Development
At press time, Lake Group was planning our first general membership meeting of 2015, to be held on January 21 in Lower Lake. We have invited our county Community Development Director Rick Coel to talk about how the development application process works: what are the steps needed to get grading, building or use permits, or subdivisions, rezones, and general plan amendments? How long does it take, and what does it cost? What kinds of conditions must developers meet, what levels of environmental review are required and how can the public get involved? These are very important topics with profound implications for the future of the community, that don’t appear to be very well understood, so we are delighted to be able to provide this rare opportunity to spread the word about how the system really works.

A Party and a Movie
Lake Group held our tenth (or was it the eleventh?) annual holiday party on December 12. This free semi-potluck event always provides a great opportunity to discuss the environmental issues affecting the community in a convivial informal atmosphere and this year was no exception. We also sell a lot of calendars. Now that the holiday is over, we’re looking forward to hosting a screening of The Russian River: All Rivers; it will be shown at 7PM on Wednesday March 25, in the Board of Supervisors Chamber in the courthouse, 255 N. Forbes in Lakeport.

VICTORIA BRANDON, LAKE GROUP CONSERVATION CHAIR

Napa Group Report

Napa Group was both busy and successful on many fronts this past year, 2014. Thanks to the dynamic efforts of Napa’s Chair Isabelle Saint-Guily, the group’s general membership has been re-vitalized and engaged in many club activities. Regularly scheduled public talks ranging from Climate Change to hikes on the Pacific Crest Trail have been very well attended. In addition, a regular monthly Constant Contact e-newsletter to a mailing list of nearly 1000 has become a rich resource for staying connected with our community and members. The past year also saw our participation in many of the regular community events, such as Earth Day and county-wide trail maintenance. In addition, our group and many Napa members contributed to the regional 50 year anniversary of the Wilderness Act, sponsored by the Forest Service and held in July.

I want to thank all members and non-members in Napa for their generous and continuing support in our advocacy role to protect the environment. Our efforts to raise funds to battle the extensive Walt Ranch Vineyard proposal have been very successful. This campaign is not finished, but along with the campaign of opposition which are a part, we will continue to be vigilant on this and other environmental abuses.

As we start the New Year, the ExCom is saying good bye to Phill Blake and long-time ExCom member, Karol Kunze. We thank them for their dedicated service to the Club and its goals. We will miss their regular participation, but know that they are just a speed-dial away from a consult. In their place we now welcome new ExCom members Bill Dyer and Lisa Gorton. We look forward to further contacts and outreach to the Napa Community as many issues of land use and development continue to ferment.

Issues including the Climate Action Plan and Wine Definition Ordinance are significant ones which we will continue to track. Lastly, continued outreach to engage a more diverse Napa Community, which will include youth members, will be a priority of the upcoming year.

–MICAH PANDINE, NAPA GROUP CHAIR

Sonoma Group Report

WallMart Decision Looms
Sonoma Group members attended the Rohnert Park City Council meeting in January, to once again voice our opposition to the massive expansion of operations recently called “WallMart.” As it stands, WallMart already operates over 100,000 sq ft of Rohnert Park’s commercial space and wants to add a 40,000 sq ft section to their empire in that city – which also hosts a WalMart grocery store on the other side of the freeway. The Council had moved its decision forward to January 13. This is the last step in a grass-roots process that has spanned nearly a decade. We are advocating for the city to reject the fossil fuel mentality of the Super Store, and encourage walkable local commerce we need in the 21st century. As of press time we’ve met with most members of the City Council and are unsure what action they will take.

Riparian Protection
Sonoma County Supervisors unanimously passed a Riparian Ordinance, with terms recommended by a mixed stakeholder’s group. In most respects, the ordinance is a major improvement over the previous lack of protections for our watersheds. However we will seek to amend weaknesses in the new law such as its permission for unlimited grazing (corralled) as close as 25 feet from streams. It grandfathered in all currently cultivated areas, even those which have endured illegal “taking” of public riparian zone land by farmers. An upcoming Groundwater Management Plan later this year is expected to deal with well drilled in the protected areas.

Clean Energy Powering Sonoma County
Climate Chair Woody Hastings’ tireless advocacy of Sonoma Clean Power paid off in December, when the city councils of both Rohnert Park and Petaluma came onboard. With the program, Community choice cultivation, propagation, raising, and in the protected areas.

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North Group Report

Amid a season of high river flows and nine-foot king tides, North Group and Humboldt Bay were treated to at least two public events on the topic of sea-level rise and climate change. Richardson Grove was in the news again in December.

On November 12 there was a public presentation of the ongoing Humboldt Bay Sea Level Rise Adaptation Planning Project. The major players in this effort, termed “a collaborative,” are the County of Humboldt, the State Coastal Conservancy, and the Humboldt Bay and Harbor District, the cities of Arcata and Eureka, and others. Well over 100 citizens attended.

Most or all of the material presented is on the Bay District’s site. See http://humboldtbay.org/humboldt-bay-sea-level-rise-adaptation-planning-project.

Included was a CalTrans District One presentation of a wide-ranging report focusing on additional sites, as well as Humboldt Bay: Del Norte’s Last Chance Creek, Mendocino’s mouth of the Garcia River, and Lake County’s Rodman Slough/Middle Creek. Scenarios of drought and wildfire as well as increased precipitation were presented. See elements of the “D1CPS” report at http://www.northcoastclimatechange.com/

Humboldt Bay’s net sea-level rise is among the state’s highest, when the regional Cascadia tectonic deformation and the oxidation and subsidence of bay mud are added to the ocean-level change. Locally there is an exceptional level of collaboration and interest to make for a very viable and successful pilot project for State Coastal Conservancy.

North Group held a member meeting December 9 featuring Steven Hackett, HSU professor of economics, drawing about 35 attendees to his lecture on economic aspects of climate change. CalTrans and EPIC announced on December 5 that the plaintiffs in the Richardson Grove federal court lawsuit were dropping their case, after CalTrans announced its intention to withdraw its original FONSI and re-do the environmental study, specifically of the potential impact to redwood tree roots of the project, as mandated by a state appeals court ruling in October.

–NEIO FOSNITI, NORTH GROUP VICE CHAIR

Redwood Chapter and Group Election Results

Redwood Chapter
Rue Furch
Diane Fairchild Beck
North Group
Diane Fairchild Beck
Joyce Yowell
Richard Kreis
Napa Group
Lisa Godfrey
Bill Dyer
Nancy Tamarsik
Lake Group
Ed Robey
Win Stiles
Julie Kreis
Mendocino Group
Linda Perkins
Sue Boeker
Solano Group
Erin Tator
Doug Darling
Quinton Crawford
Kathy Pettibone
Sonoma Group
Shirley Johnson
Richard Sachen

Sonoma Group Members

 supervisors and numerous others who can see that giving consumers a choice is the new way of doing electrical power.

No GMOs
We contacted the Supervisors to request a ordinance to prohibit the cultivation, propagation, raising, and growing of genetically engineered organisms in our county. Action was recommended by Supervisor Susan Cotin, but at this time there is not enough support.

Supervisors have taken no action to date toward passing a Living Wage Ordinance for Sonoma County. Please see our previous (Oct/Nov 2014) Group Report to find a review of the issues involved.

Environmental Book Featured on Local Radio
KBBF-FM 89.1 has broadcast a speech recorded during Naomi Klein’s October visit to Santa Rosa to discuss her new book This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate. The speech and book signing were co-sponsored by the Sonoma Group and North Bay Organizing Project. Group Chair Dan Kerbein recorded Ms. Klein’s speech.

Website Update
Conservation Chair Suzanne Doyle has nearly completed the process of developing a new Sonoma Group web page. We will be using that website, plus Facebook, Twitter and Mail Chimp to distribute alerts.

Water Committee Changes Time
The Water Committee is now meeting at 5:30 PM on the first Mondays of most months in conjunction with the Conservation and Energy Committee meetings. However, in February our Water Chair, Len Holt, will also be at the Environmental Center to preside over the previously scheduled meeting at 7:00 PM on February 18, 2015.

–DAN KERBEIN, SONOMA GROUP CHAIR
Join us for first meeting of 2015, where we review local issues and come up with plans to protect our local environment. It will be on February 5 at 6 pm at Round Table Pizza in CotEdale at 5085 Business Center Dr. #102, near Costa, our treat. All current Sierra Club Members invited! For more information, email sierracalbsolanogroup@gmail.com or leave a message at 707 319-6398.

Recycle, solanoounty.com has been updated. This downloadable recycle guide has 21 pages of local recycling information. Book mark it or put on your desktop.

Jane can also get you a zip file with individual pages so you won’t have to send the whole guide out.

Volunteer Opportunities!

Thanks to Adam Mangosing, Justin Ratliff and Alicia Ashorn, Camelo, and Jane for staffing the December, and January paper shredding events.

Water Board Begins National Forest Clean Water Review

Most Redwood Needle’s readers are aware that Northwest California contains an abundance of national forest land. In Humboldt County 34% of the land base is public land, with most being national forest administered by the US Forest Service. For Mendocino County the figure is 20%; it is 64% for Siskiyou County. Over seventy-five percent of Trinity and Del Norte County land is public. On the North Coast national forests occupy the headwaters of our rivers; this makes them critical to maintaining the high quality cool water on which salmon and steelhead, as well as our river and tribal economies, depend.

The presence of public lands, much of it protected as wilderness, at our rivers’ headwaters should provide a guarantee of high water quality. Unfortunately, that is not the case. Water quality tests of headwaters wilderness streams conducted in recent years by the Quartz Valley Tribe have documented high levels of fecal coliform bacteria in streams flowing from wilderness lands which are grazed by cattle. At times water quality standards have been violated; unnaturally high levels of nutrient pollution have also been documented.

The pollution of wilderness headwater streams by grazing livestock is one reason a review of North Coast national forests Clean Water Act permit just getting underway is important. The Clean Water Act should prevent the fouling of wilderness springs as shown in the photo to the right.

The Clean Water Act should also prevent the Forest Service from logging and hauling logging during wet weather. Logging - and especially hauling log on dirt or gravel roads - delivers fine sediment to stream courses which are already filled with sediment to streams and rivers. (Photo by Kimberly Baker.

is responsible for assuring that Forest Service management of national forest lands does not result in violation of established water quality standards. The permit governing clean water oversight by the state must be renewed every five years. The latest renewal process is just getting under way.

Along with tribal and environmental allies, the North Group of the Redwood Chapter Sierra Club will be closely monitoring the permit renewal process and working to strengthen permit provisions so that the high quality water which should be flowing into our rivers from national forest streams is not polluted before it leaves the forest. We’ll keep Redwood Needle’s readers informed along the way and provide you with opportunities to ‘weigh in’ for clean water when the appropriate times come.

Those who want to learn more now can begin by reading the current CWA permit (supremely termed a “waiver”) on the North Coast Water Board’s web site at : http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/timber_operations/timber_waiver/timber_operations/timber_waiver/120809/120809_USFS_Waiver_QUESTIONS_and_Answers.pdf.

What You Can Do: Please also take a few moments to tell North Coast Water Board officials you want them to adopt a national forest permit that will restore the high quality water you expect to flow from public lands. Contact Fred Blatt, the official responsible for assuring that the Forest Service complies with the Clean Water Act, via e-mail to fred.blatt@waterboards.ca.gov or by phone: (707) 576-2800.

—FELICE PACE, NORTH GROUP WATER CHAIR

VALCORE Recycling and Confidential Paper Shredding 2015:

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. (Jan 17, Feb 21) There is a charge of $10 (CASH or CHECK ONLY) per twenty pounds of paper shredded. (Maximum: 100 pounds)

Sierra Club volunteers help keep the money and direct traffic. Once a year is all we ask and you only need work an hour or so. Volunteers get free shredding.

NEW WEEKDAY SHREDDING From 10am to 4 pm — closed

If you wish your request to be used locally, be sure to specify “Sierra Club Redwood Chapter” or the name of your local Group in your request.

Non-Sierra Club Outings

The following activities and events are not sponsored nor administered by the Sierra Club. The Sierra Club has no information about the planning of these activities and makes no representations or warranties about the quality, safety, supervision or management of such activities. They are published because they may be of interest to the readers of this publication.

Saturday Saunters for Santa Rosa Area. Every Saturday Meet Fusion and usually ends around 11:30. These walks are moderate. Fun way to exercise with friends. For info call Bob Martin 707-539-6300.

Sonoma County Regional Parks trail work days.

On the day of the project you can call 707-548-4424 for an update if you get lost coming to the park. Your support and dedication to our County’s trails really makes a big difference. To RSVP for any of these projects please call John at 707-565-3336. ParksVolunteer@sonoma-county.org

Volunteer Days Riverkeeper Stewardship Park in Guerneville, Every Wednesday. 9 a.m. - Noon, for all or part of the time. Park is located on the north bank of Russian River directly upstream Guerneville pedestrian bridge. Access entrance from the driveway in front of Sonoma Necting Co. (1013 Main Street, just east of Armstrong Woods Rd.) At bottom of driveway look for blue & white “Russian Riverkeeper Stewardship Park” sign. Bring drinking water & wear sturdy footwear. Light refreshments provided. Info: Victoria Wiks 865-2474 victoria@wiks.us.net.

Shredding 2015:

VALCORE Recycling and Confidential Paper Shredding 2015:

Volunteer Opportunities!

Please also take a few moments to tell North Coast Water Board officials you want them to adopt a national forest permit that will restore the high quality water you expect to flow from public lands. Contact Fred Blatt, the official responsible for assuring that the Forest Service complies with the Clean Water Act, via e-mail to fred.blatt@waterboards.ca.gov or by phone: (707) 576-2800.

—FELICE PACE, NORTH GROUP WATER CHAIR

A cattle-trashed spring in the Marble Mountain Wilderness. Virtually every spring and wetland grazed by livestock within Northwest California wilderness areas is trampled and polluted. (Photo by Felice Pace.)
Wilderness:
The Beat Goes On

Although the special 50th anniversary year is over, Sierra Club efforts to protect and celebrate wild lands here on the North Coast and elsewhere will continue. Specifically, we’re expecting to roll out some exciting new proposals for wilderness and wild and scenic river preservation very soon, probably in the next issue of the Redwood Needles. Please stay tuned for more!

National Sierra Club Elections Coming Soon

The annual election for the Club’s Board of Directors is coming soon. Those eligible to vote in the national Sierra Club election will receive in the mail (or by Internet if you chose the electronic delivery option) your national Sierra Club ballot. This will include information on the candidates and where you can find additional information on the Club’s web site.

The Sierra Club is a democratically structured organization at all levels. The Club requires the regular flow of views on policy and priorities from its grassroots membership in order to function well. Yearly participation in elections at all Club levels is a major membership obligation.

If you want to request an electronic ballot, which will save the Club money and paper, please sign up at https://secure.sierraclub.org/site/SPageNavigator/Membership/EBallot_Information.html

You should use your own judgment by taking several minutes to read the ballot statement of each candidate. Then make your choice and cast your vote. Even if you receive your election materials in the mail, please go to the user-friendly Internet voting site to save time and postage. If necessary, you vote. Even if you receive your election materials in the mail, please go to the user-friendly Internet voting site to save time and postage. If necessary, you vote. If necessary, you vote. If necessary, you vote.

You are welcome to participate or observe as often as you wish. Meetings are located in Sonoma County unless otherwise noted. Visitors should call the committee chair to verify time and place. The Sonoma County Environmental Center is located at 55A Ridgway Avenue in Santa Rosa (West of Hwy 101, two blocks North of College and 1 1/2 blocks West off of Cleveland Ave, South of Coddingtown).

Meetings

Mon. Feb. 2 - Sonoma Group. Santa Rosa Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway is the site of related meetings:

Conservation Consortium (3 Committees) meets 5:00-6:30 p.m.
- The Climate & Energy Committee will meet at 5:30 PM. Contact Len Holt: 707-527-7516 or lholt@sonic.net
- The Sonoma Group Conservation Committee will meet at 6:00 p.m. Info: Suzanne Doyle: csarort@gmail.com
- Sonoma Group Executive Committee at 6:30 p.m. Info: Info: Dan Kerbein, dkerbein@sonic.net

Thurs. Feb. 5 - Solano Group ExCom

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. Feb. 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.

Feb. 17 – Napa Group ExCom, 7 p.m. Our location varies; it is generally at member's home. Anyone wishing to attend the meeting should contact the chair, Nancy Tamanski at nancy@aya.yale.edu

Wed. Feb. 18 - The Sonoma Group Water Committee.
7:00 PM at the Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway, Santa Rosa. Contact Len Holt: 707-527-7516 or lholt@sonic.net

Please Note: this is the last Wednesday meeting of the Water Committee, future meetings will take place at 5:30 on the first Monday of the month.

Mon. March 2 - Sonoma Group, Santa Rosa Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway is the site of related meetings:

Conservation Consortium (3 Committees) meets 5:00–6:30 p.m.
- The Climate & Energy Committee meets at 5:00 p.m. Info: contact Shirley, shirgilj707@yahoo.com, 707-206-1138.
- The Sonoma Group Conservation Committee at 6:00 p.m. Info: Suzanne Doyle: csarort@gmail.com
- Sonoma Group Executive Committee at 6:30 p.m. Info: Info: Dan Kerbein, dkerbein@sonic.net

Tues. March 10 – North Group ExCom.

See Feb. 10.

Sat. March 14 - Redwood Chapter ExCom and ConsCom.

Location: Willits Environmental Center. Conservation Committee meets at 10 a.m., ExCom meets 1–3 p.m. Info: Victoria vbrendon@lakelive.info

Thurs. March 19 - Solano Group ExCom.

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

Mon. April 6, Mon. May 4 - The Sonoma Group Water Committee.
5:30 PM in conjunction with the Conservation & Energy Committees at the Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway, Santa Rosa. Contact Len Holt: 707-527-7516 or lholt@sonic.net

Sierra Club 2015 Events

Sonoma County Environmental Awards Dinner 2015

Restoration: Helping Nature Heal

Experience a virtual tour of the student-run hatchery and water quality improvement efforts by the student members of United Anglers of Calaveras High School Grand Island.

MC: Supervisor Susan Gorin

Sunday, March 15, 2015
5:00 to 8:30 p.m.
Sebastopol Community Center
390 Morris St, Sebastopol

Tickets:
$50, after 2/14: $60
Students with ID: $52

Purchase online at www.envirosafescro.org

Volunteers Needed: contact Wendy at 707-452-3826 or wendy@enviroSafeCro.org

Volunteers Needed:

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