Vinyard’s Legacy Lives On

BY VICTORIA BRANDON, REDWOOD CHAPTER CHAIR

The North Coast lost a legendary conservation giant on December 30, with the death of Humboldt County resident Lucille Vinyard, known to many as “the mother of Redwood National Park.” North Group Chair Gregg Gold remembers: “Lucille was a force for good in so many ways, and she touched the hearts of everyone whose path was privileged to know her. I doubt I will ever meet another person like her in my lifetime.”

As a newly recruited Sierra Club activist, Lucille was instrumental in the formation of the Redwood Chapter’s North Group in 1964, the year the Club began a campaign to preserve the remaining ancient redwood forests in the region. For the next four years she led the battle to establish a national redwood park, an effort that included leading hikes and float trips, taking still photographs and movies, promoting the park proposal both inside and outside the Club, and testifying at government hearings in Eureka, Sacramento, and Washington, DC. In 1965, she was appointed by the State Senator and recommendation of the Senate Natural Resources Committee in Sacramento to receive a rare standing ovation from the audience of 300.

In 1971, Lucille began working for passage of the California Coastal Zone Protection Act, then spent the next nine years monitoring coastal development permits in Mendocino, Humboldt, and Del Norte counties. As Sierra Club watchdog at regional Coastal Commission meetings from 1973 to 1981, she attended every meeting but three; from 1985 to 1990, she coordinated the annual Coastal Clean-up Day for Humboldt and Del Norte Counties.

Starting in 1974, she became actively involved in the formulation of management plans for the BLMA’s King Range National Conservation Area, serving on the agency’s Ukiah District Resource Advisory Council for two years. She worked successfully—both the Wild and Scenic Smith River and the passage of the California Wilderness Act, a founding member of the North Coast Environmental Center and the Redwood Natural History Association. Last summer despite serious illness she eagerly signed a letter to Congressman Jared Huffman urging him to introduce legislation protecting new Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers. Besides serving as a North Group executive committee member almost continuously from the Group’s founding in 1964 until 2012, Lucille chaired the Group from 1970-1978, chaired the Redwood Chapter from 1976-1978, and spent more than ten years as the secretary of one or both. Awards included a Special Service Award from the national Sierra Club in 1999, a Resolution of Appreciation from Assembly member Virginia Snow-Martin the same year, Woman of the Year award from Assemblymember Patty Berg in 2003, and a Certificate of Recognition from State Senator Pat Wiggins in 2008, “celebrating 50 years of life and insatiable efforts to keep the planet safe for future generations.” That’s the kind of insatiable the planet needs more of, so do we all.

At press time no memorial services had been planned, but a celebration of Lucille’s life is expected in the spring, probably at an appropriate location such as Lady Bird Johnson Grove. In the meantime donations may be made in her honor to the North Group’s Lucille Vinyard/Susie Van Kirk Environmental Education Fund (which has been providing camping experiences for children for the past 20 years) by sending a check payable to “North Group Environmental Education Fund” to North Group at PO Box 238, Arcata CA 95518.

Keep Dangerous Crude-by-Rail Out of Benicia

BY ANDRE SOTO, STEERING COMMITTEE, BENICIANS FOR A SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Just as Lac Megantic, Quebec was destroyed by a derailed train hauling dangerously explosive Bakken crude oil, we in Benicia realized that Valero Benicia refinery to bring in both Bakken crude and refinery to bring in both Bakken crude and oil, we in Benicia learned that Valero Benicia is considering applying for a conditional use permit to transport both Bakken crude and disastrous fracked Bakken crude to be destroyed by a derailed train hauling Bakken crude.

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Marching for Action on Climate Change

BY SHIRLEY JOHNSON-FOELL, SONOMA GROUP CLIMATE AND ENERGY CHAIR AND TOM ROTH, REDWOOD CHAPTER EXCOM

When our planet’s diplomats at the 21st U.N. Conference of the Parties in Paris put the final touches on an agreement to combat climate change on December 11th, some in Sonoma County proudly recalled the small part they played to bring us to that historic point. Symbolically as well as in actual fact, they “got on the bus” to demand strong, significant climate policies.

On Saturday, November 21st, three charter buses pulled up to the green shoreline of Oakland’s Lake Merritt to unload those county residents who had come to march in the NoCal Climate Mobilization March. This strong showing from Sonoma County demonstrated our sense of urgency to get the governments to act before we were overwhelmed with one catastrophe after another.

The buses were a collaborative effort of three organizations, the Redwood Chapter of the Sierra Club, Sonoma County Conservation Action and Sonoma County 350.org. Once bus was paid for by the Redwood Chapter, along with a special offer for Santa Rosa Junior College Students and Sonoma County 350.org. One bus was paid for by the Redwood Chapter, along with a special offer for Santa Rosa Junior College Students and Sonoma County 350.org. One bus was paid for by the Redwood Chapter, along with a special offer for Santa Rosa Junior College Students and Sonoma County 350.org. One bus was paid for by the Redwood Chapter, along with a special offer for Santa Rosa Junior College Students and Sonoma County 350.org. One bus was paid for by the Redwood Chapter, along with a special offer for Santa Rosa Junior College Students and Sonoma County 350.org. One bus was paid for by the Redwood Chapter, along with a special offer for Santa Rosa Junior College Students and Sonoma County 350.org. One bus was paid for by the Redwood Chapter, along with a special offer for Santa Rosa Junior College Students and Sonoma County 350.org. One bus was paid for by the Redwood Chapter, along with a special offer for Santa Rosa Junior College Students and Sonoma County 350.org. One bus was paid for by the Redwood Chapter, along with a special offer for Santa Rosa Junior College Students and Sonoma County 350.org. One bus was paid for by the Redwood Chapter, along with a special offer for Santa Rosa Junior College Students and Sonoma County 350.org. One bus was paid for by the Redwood Chapter, along with a special offer for Santa Rosa Junior College Students and Sonoma County 350.org. One bus was paid for by the Redwood Chapter, along with a special offer for Santa Rosa Junior College Students and Sonoma County 350.org. One bus was paid for by the Redwood Chapter, along with a special offer for Santa Rosa Junior College Students and Sonoma County 350.org. One bus was paid for by the Redwood Chapter, along with a special offer for Santa Rosa Junior College Students and Sonoma County 350.org. One bus was paid for by the Redwood Chapter, along with a special offer for Santa Rosa Junior College Students and Sonoma County 350.org. One bus was paid for by the Redwood Chapter, along with a special offer for Santa Rosa Junior College Students and Sonoma County 350.org. One bus was paid for by the Redwood Chapter, along with a special offer for Santa Rosa Junior College Students and Sonoma County 350.org. One bus was paid for by the Redwood Chapter, along with a special offer for Santa Rosa Junior College Students and Sonoma County 350.org. One bus was paid for by the Redwood Chapter, along with a special offer for Sonoma County 350.org.

Save the Date:

TPP Rally in Santa Rosa January 27

BY VICTORIA BRANDON, REDWOOD CHAPTER CHAIR

As has been discussed in previous editions of the Redwood Needles, the Sierra Club thinks the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) mega-trade deal risks unacceptable environmental impacts both in this country and abroad. The more we learn about the details of this treaty, the graver those concerns become.

A very recent development has ratcheted up the anxiety level still higher. TransCanada, the notorious fossil fuel corporation behind the dirty and dangerous Keystone XL tar pipeline, and other fossil fuel companies are reportedly planning to build the controversial Keystone XL pipeline through California, through Sonoma County, with the aim of exporting the ~450 million barrels of oil it will transport each year back to Canada. With Wild and Scenic Smith River and Russian River, of course.

The SMART Train and its Neighbors

BY STEVE BIDDLEBOUGH, SONOMA GROUP TRANSPORTATION CHAIR

Can the SMART Train be a good neighbor? The residents of a working-class neighborhood in Santa Rosa are about to find out. Many of them are Spanish speaking and living in low income or senior housing close to the tracks near the proposed Jennings Avenue Bicycle Boulevard and the Coddington Mall. For decades they have used an “informal” crossing of the tracks at Jennings Avenue to go shopping, board a bus, or visit friends on the other side of the tracks.

Recently this neighborhood witnessed their crossing being fenced-off. Signs were posted, and notices were published stating that the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) had ordered the city and SMART to close the crossing due to increased train activity that posed a risk to pedestrians.

The importance of this crossing was recognized in Santa Rosa’s General Plan, and the Station Area Plan for lands within half mile of the Guerneville Rd. Station. The city had conducted an environmental study and held a lengthy public hearing that concluded with a unanimous decision that the level crossing would be convenient, safe, and preferable to either a tunnel under, or a bridge over the tracks. SMART agreed that a level crossing would be appropriate.

During discussions with city staff members the “SMART Train & Neighbors” cont. on page 3

For more Redwood Chapter information: http://www.sierraclub.org/redwood
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Editorial Board:
Mary Walsh, Becky Frank, Sue Levinick, Diane Bell, Victoria Brandon

Editor:
Mary Davison (707) 874-3704 miredav@sonic.net

Advertising Manager:
Kelly O’Keeffe (707) 544-7651 kokeeffe@sonic.net

Classifieds: 55/10 words, Send check and copy by the 8th of the month.

Oudings Chair:
Carol Veltulli (707) 546-6308 carol@sonic.net

Redwood Needles Editor
Mary Davison 874-3704 odavison@sonic.net

Chapter / Webmaster
Melanie Maxonis admama@hotmail.com

Requests: Redwood Needles Subscriptions, P.O. Box 466, Santa Rosa, CA 95402

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April/May June/July
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Redwood Chapter
The Redwood Chapter is governed by an executive committee, with one (1) member delegated by each of six (6) regional groups and six (6) members elected at large. Each group elects its own executive committee.

Chair – At Large – Political Chair – RCC Delegate – Wilderness Chair
Victoria Brandon*

Vice Chair – Group Delegate to Chapter Ed Robey*
994-8534 edrobey@wildblue.net

Secretary
All Hunter

Treasurer
Tom Davis 963-4466 tom@mpawildflowers.com

At Large – Legal Chair
Keith Kaufman 538-5569 keithkaufman@sonic.net

At Large – Conservation Committee – Public Land – Diane Back* 450-2261 dback@me.com

At Large – CCC Delegate
Raf Puch 823-3555 raf@sonic.net

At Large – Council of Leaders Alternate Tom Davis 632-5873 tronoth@sonic.net

Transportation Chair
Stone Brattholm 576-6832 attполнить@mindfulhouseowners.com

Economic and Climate Chair
Woodie Hastings 829-3460 woodiehastings@sonic.net

Graving Chair
Felicia Pace 954-6588 unfqoll@sonic.net

Lake County Group
P.O. Box 522 937-0903

Pendocino County Group
P.O. Box 522 937-0903

Redwood Needles
P.O. Box 5331, Napa 94518

Napa County Group
P.O. Box 5331, Napa 94518

Solano County Group
P.O. Box 4771, Vallejo 94590

Santa Clara/Santa Cruz Group
P.O. Box 859, Santa Cruz 95060

San Francisco Bay Area Group
P.O. Box 260, Berkeley 94702

Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-9684
e-mail: address.changes@sierraclub.org

Outings Chair
June/July May 8

Chair • Outings Chair • Outings Leadership Training
Joyce转贴@\n(707) 544-7651

Chapter Delegate Alternate – Water Chair
Linda Perkins 837-0572
lindaperkins@sonic.net

Chapter Delegate Alternate – Water Chair
Lynn Ryan 837-0937
lynnr8@gmail.com

Outings Chair
Vacant

Napa County Group Delegate to Chapter – Water Chair
Jim Dekloe 836-3213 jmdkeloe@sonoco.com

Solano County Group Delegate to Chapter – Vacant
Jim Dekloe 836-3213 jmdkeloe@sonoco.com

Chapter Delegate
Tricia Carmichael

Napa County Group Delegate to Chapter – Vacant
Tina Chang 829-5356

tshore@greenbelt.org

Vacant

Legal Chair
Nancy Tracy 829-5356
ntracy@sbcglobal.net

Outings Chair – Outgoing Leadership Training
Carol Veltulli 546-6308 carol@sonic.net

Redwood Needles Office
Location: Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway Avenue, Santa Rosa (West off of Cleveland Ave., to the west of Hwy 101)

The Office is staffed most weekday afternoons. Call ahead to confirm, 544-7651

Redwood Chapter Website: www.sierraclub.org/redwood

For Group Websites, see www.redwoodclub.org and add: /napa, /north, /sonoma, /fake, /mendocino, or /solan0

Redwood Chapter Facebook: www.facebook.com/SierraClub.RedwoodChapter

Redwood Needles

The annual election for the Club’s Board of Directors is now underway. 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 website.

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 grass-roots membership in order to function well. Yearly participation in elections at all levels is a major membership obligation. Your Board of Directors is required to stand for election by the membership. This Board sets Club policy and budgets at the national level and works closely with the Executive Director and staff to operate the Club. Members who express their views on the Club should grow and change is both a privilege and responsibility of membership.

Members frequently state that they don’t know the candidates and find it difficult to vote without learning more. You can learn more by asking questions of your group and chapter leadership and other experienced members you know. Visit the Club’s election website: http://www.sierraclub.org/board/election. This site provides links to additional information about candidates, and their views on a variety of issues facing the Club and the environment.

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 by mail, please go to the user-friendly Internet voting site to save time and postage. If necessary, you will find the ballot is quite straightforward and easy to mark and mail.
Southeast Greenway 2016– The Time is Now!

To realize the vision of a Greenway to Spring Lake, the future Southeast Greenway. This process will launch in 2016 and there will be many opportunities for the community to participate and provide comments and ideas.

One of these opportunities will be on Saturday, February 20, 2016, when everyone is invited to attend a free two-hour public meeting at Montgomery High School to find out how to participate in the City’s General Plan amendment process.

At the meeting, there will be a chance to meet the members of the Southeast Greenway Community Partnership, which includes the City of Santa Rosa, Sonoma County Water Agency, Sonoma County Regional Parks, LandPaths, the Sonoma Land Trust and the Southeast Greenway Campaign. You will hear from:

Dave Kocher, Sonoma Land Trust’s new Executive Director and keynote speaker, who will describe his role in the creation of the San Joaquin River Parkway. His colleagues will explain how the Sonoma Land Trust is playing a leadership role in our negotiations with Caltrans, and coordinating fund-raising to purchase the property from Caltrans. City staff will explain the steps in the City’s process which includes engineering consultants to develop a land use concept plan, preparing a General Plan amendment, zoning designation and an Environmental Impact Report for the Greenway. City staff will also describe the many opportunities for public input and comments.

Based on this meeting and a series of public meetings to be held in 2016, the Southeast Greenway will become what is described as planning stages of the Greenway project.

The meeting will be held in the Montgomery High School cafeteria, 1250 Haham Drive, Santa Rosa, on Saturday, February 20, from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm.

West side of the Jennings fenced-off Crossing 1/10/16

“SMART Train & Neighbors” continued from page 1

CPUC staff did not suggest that the level crossing would be unsafe, but they pointed out that unless the Commissioners made an exception to the rules, some nearby crossings of the SMART tracks would need to be closed before a crossing at Jennings could be opened. The CPUC staff are now asserting that a level crossing shouldn’t be used by school-age children! Yet there are numerous other crossings along the SMART line that are closer to a school than Jennings.

From its inception, the restoration of train service in the North Bay—both passenger and freight—has been illegal. The CPUC staff is now asserting that a level crossing shouldn’t be used by school-age children! Yet there are numerous other crossings along the SMART line that are closer to a school than Jennings.

However, there are thousands of violations of the SMART crossing rules in Sonoma County. These violations are being forced to walk an extra half mile to cross the tracks at Jennings Avenue.

People are being delayed, and the Jeremy Needleson neighborhood by letting the California Public Utilities Commission know of the importance of keeping this neighborhood intact, and of the burden that the order to close the crossing has placed on neighbors.

What You Can Do: Join us at the California Public Utilities Commission public hearing:

Monday, February 1, at 7:00 pm

Helen Lehman School in Santa Rosa, 1700 Jennings Avenue (between Guerneville Rd. & College Ave. west of Dutton Ave) or

Send an email to:

public.advisor@cpuca.gov

or post a letter to:

CPUC Public Advisor

505 Van Ness Avenue,

Room 2103

San Francisco, CA 94102

Indicate that your message supports Application 15-05-014 by the City of Santa Rosa for an At-Grade Crossing of the SMART Tracks at Jennings Ave.

For more information contact Steve Biedenhoch: affirmative@friendshouse.org 707-576-6632

Commission hearings, The Draft Environmental Impact Report and the Revised Environmental Impact Report also generated thousands of comments. Our partners at Forest Ethics, the Center for Biological Diversity and CREDO assisted by creating online petitions.

BSHC continued by collecting signatures at the weekly Benica farmers market obtaining over 1500 signatures. We mounted a yard sign campaign distributing more than 500 yard signs all around Sonoma County.

The Sierra Club, Communities for a Better Environment and the Sunflower Alliance also helped mobilize people to attend hearings and comment against the project. This has built community momentum to oppose the project. Comments have been received from outside entities as diverse as the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, Yolo County Board of Supervisors, the City of Davis and California Attorney General Kamala Harris.

Now the Final Environmental Impact Report has been issued. The good news is the FEIR has identified the “No Project Alternative” as the most “Environmentally Sound Alternative”. The Benicia Planning Commission Public Hearing has been set for Monday, February 8, with a possible continuation on the 9th and 10th if necessary to receive all of the comments.

The community of Benicia understands that we are on the front line of fighting against global climate disruption. We also need people from elsewhere in California to join us, as we will be together with us to oppose this dangerous and unnecessary project.

The community of Benicia understands that we are on the front line of fighting against global climate disruption. We also need people from elsewhere in California to join us, as we will be together with us to oppose this dangerous and unnecessary project.

Global climate, regional air quality and the health of the local community are at stake. Please join us on February 8. For more information visit SaveBenicia.org

“Marching for Action” continued from page 1

of Santa Rosa at 9:00 am, and made a pickup at Sonoma State before arriving in Oakland. Prior to the bus trip, the Sierra Club and Conservation Action assisted Sonoma County 350.org in an art project—the creation of a redwood tree shaped signs—which was brought to the Santa Rosa Junior College campus by the coalition of the Sustainability Committee. A small forest of signs were carried by Sonoma County activists to downtown Oakland, only stopping for the occasional group dance that led the cadence, followed by a marching band. Music and good cheer filled the air for the participants of many colors, backgrounds, and physical ability. To look around and see the many faces of kind determination was a beautiful sight. This is what community is about, getting together and acknowledging humanity—we need to protect the planet! The march concluded at the Frank Ogawa Plaza where the chanting and dancing continued through the night.

Weary, but uplifted passengers disembarked the buses at SSU and downtown Santa Rosa as daylight began to ebb. In small ways a message was sent to Paris. Perhaps just as important, that message is embedded in the hearts and minds of those who rode the bus to Oakland, who sent their hopes to Paris, and committed themselves to the long road to climate stability and to sustainable and just ways of living together on this Earth.

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Redwood Newsletters • February 1, 2016 3
Instructions to hikers

Outings will start not later than 15 minutes after scheduled meeting time. The leader in charge of the trip is responsible for your welfare and will be the good name of the Club. He/she must have your permission to make the trip safe, pleasant and rewarding. Never charge ahead of the leader and keep to the planned route, unless instructed by the leader. Do not leave the group without the leader's permission, and extinguish them completely. Guns, pets, or alcohol are not permitted. Each participant must carry a comprehensive first-aid kit to aid in a wilderness environment.

Modestly equip yourself. Bring the following to keep warm and dry:

- Sturdy, broken-in hiking shoes
- Water-resistant hiking pants
- Waterproof jacket
- Lightweight, warm long-sleeved shirt
- Comfortable undergarments
- Warm hat and gloves
- Sunscreen
- Lip balm
- Insect repellent
- Whistle
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Compass and/or GPS
- Map of the route
- First-aid kit

All leaders must coordinate their outings with the leader. Some will issue instructions to the rear leader to remain to assist you. Do not leave the group without the leader's permission.

In a big end-of-year win for greenbelts, all five Sonoma County supervisors voted unanimously to develop a ballot measure to extend voter protections for community separators and adding to them in 2016! Community separators are one of the important tools protecting the greenbelt lands between Sonoma county cities and towns from sprawl development.

In a room filled with about 50 supporters wearing “Strength Community Separators” stickers, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to develop a ballot measure for November 2016 to renew county community separators. See the front page Press Democrat article for more. http://www.pressedemocrat.com/city-government/sonoma-county-supervisors-endorse-voter-ref-measure&slide=1

All five supervisors also made a commitment to consider adding as many as 22,000 acres of priority greenbelts to the county’s 34,000-acre Urban Growth Boundary through the General Plan. Hear it in their own words in this short KRCB radio interview: http://radio.krcb. org/post/community-separators-going-back-sonoma-county-voters-

This is a big win for greenbelts, no doubt about it. Yes, we still have work to do, but now we have a clear path forward to renewing, strengthening, and expanding community separators. Thank the Sonoma County supervisors for giving the light to greenbelts in Sonoma County and let us know we look forward to moving forward together. http://www.greenbelt.org/action/renew-sonoma-county-greenbelt-protection/

What The Supervisors Agreed To Do Next Year

Ballot Measure: The Sonoma County supervisors voted unanimously to develop a ballot measure to extend voter protections for community separators in Sonoma County for the November 2016 general election.

The supervisors agreed to extend voter protections to existing and future community separators between unincorporated communities for 30 years, a strong new policy that opens the door to community separators between places like Forestville and Graton.

They decided to keep their protection linked to urban growth boundaries. The revised policy maintains voter protections for community separators in perpetuity—as long as a city maintains voter protections for its Urban Growth Boundary. For each city the earliest possible date for all community separators are more protective by preventing lapses in voter protections.

They did not agree to add any new designations through the General Plan Amendment. The supervisors voted to designate priority greenbelts and consider designating other at-risk county lands by amending the General Plan in a parallel public process in 2016 for adoption no later than January 2017.

Please note that they will consider adding more as 22,000 acres of priority greenbelts outside of cities to the county’s 34,000-acre Urban Growth Boundary through the General Plan Amendment.

In a year from now you may wish you had started today. “–Karen Lamb

Sierra Club Volunteer/Activist/Ops/Individual leader

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

Work with the Sonoma County Water Committee! NOTICE: The Water Committee is now meeting at 5:00 p.m. at the Environmental Center on the first Mondays of most months in 2016. The Water Committee develops policies and procedures on water conservation, save, and reuse of our water resources. Our goal is to preserve and improve the natural water environment by promoting the responsible use of water and the safe reuse or disposal of our wastes.

Protect the quality of our water for people, wildlife, fish and other aquatic life. Check for our meeting dates in the Sonoma County Times. To get on our Water Committee e-mail list, e-mail Len Holt at lholt@sonic.net. If you are not able to attend our meetings, you may e-mail Len Holt with your concerns and ideas.

Get Charged by attending the Climate & Energy Committee. Join us on the 1st of the month at 5:00-5:30 p.m. at the Environmental Center in Santa Rosa, learn about what is going on in our community to fight climate change through renewable energy programs. Contact Chair Shirley Johnson-Feuill: Email: Shirigif707@yahoo.com, home 206-1138, or office p 144-7651.
Outings

Outings Leaders

The Solano Group is working to develop a new outings program. Solano County has many rich open spaces that are Sierra Club members and residents would like to visit if given the chance. People with an interest in and knowledge of Grizzly Island, Green Valley Lakes, Mare Island open space, Cullinan Ranch and other similar places are encouraged to volunteer to become a hike leader. If you have an interest in becoming a trained hike leader — and specific hikes you would like to lead — please contact Marilyn Farley at 707-434-0316 or email mjfarley01@gmail.com.

Outings Chair Report

The recent storms in the Sierra have produced the first good snowpack in years. The hut trips have been full. Clair Tappaan Lodge is a great place to stay if you don’t want to backpack into the huts. Thank you Solano Group. The ExCom has committed to revive our outing program. Brian Collett, who led for years, is still in town when he returns home (hopefully at the end of this year) will resume leading at Mare Island. For now, Marilyn Farley will be the Outings coordinator (see article below) with help from Phil Kohlmetz. Isabelle Saint-Guilly and I will also be available to help. We are excited as Solano needs new leaders and an Outings Chair. This is a fantastic start.

The Sonoma Group will have a new leader-in-training as of the end of January. Her name is Tiffany Hoang. Tiffany moved to Santa Rosa from Albuquerque NM 4 months ago for a full time job with USDA. Tiffany is originally from Austin, TX. Tiffany is an avid day hiker and enjoys longer hikes, averaging around 7 miles. Tiffany is a beginner backpacker. She was an in AmeriCorps VISTA with DOUSDA last year in Albuquerque and volunteered for 3 months in Iceland with the difficulty of the hike. If the rating is moderate with few or more frequent stops a fast pace hiker must hike slower to accommodate that rating. Varies, see hike description for details: Isabelle Saint-Guilly

Ratings for Outings Leaders How fast or slow do you go? Wonder if an outing leader walks fast or slow? Keep in mind that the leader’s speed is but one part of hiking. How high up a mountain the hike starts, the total mileage and elevation gain (up hill) and loss (down hill) greatly affect the difficulty of a hike, regardless of how fast or slow you walk. If you have any doubts about being able to do a hike or have other questions, please call the leader to discuss your concerns. These ratings only serve as a guide and are not a substitute for you being in appropriate physical condition before participating in an outing.

Leaders are grouped according to how fast they normally hike. Please keep in mind that this info is to help you decide if a hike is right for you. The outing rating instructions to hikers is also important for participants to read. Look at the difficulty of the hike. If the rating is moderate with few or more frequent stops a fast pace hiker must hike slower to accommodate that rating. Varies, see hike description for details: Isabelle Saint-Guilly

Gannons Phil Kohlmetz

Fast-pace with few or no stops: Paul Bozzo Carol Magill Paul Farley Moderate-pace with few stops: Don Anderson Lorrie Lagasse Julie Kreis Moderate-pace with more frequent stops: Pete McGee Tim Bartice Melinda Geon Carmi Linnval Val Nordenman CarolVellutini Yvonne Kramer Martin Farber Brian Collett Tom McFarling Nanette DeDonato Jonah Freedman Steve Devosto Ned Forsyth Nick Causton Shower-place: Allison Brookall

With your help we can protect the wolf

Wolves are vitally important to maintaining nature’s balance, culling out weak and sick animals to keep populations of elk and deer healthy and in check. The Sierra Club is working to defend wolf populations from continued threats from politicians.

Lead the pack & JOIN Sierra Club.

Outings Chair Report

The Environmental Agency of Iceland working on various conservation management tasks, mostly involving trail repair. I am hoping she will also want to do trail work on the Nattkemper Trail. On a sad note Johnny Va passed on Dec. 11. Johnny had gone on many backpack trips with us and was a great adventurer. Johnny and his wife loved to travel all around the world and to our National Parks. Johnny had a unique personality that will never be replaced. His celebration of life was Jan 25 and many of us in Sierra Club attended. Johnny will have a memorial bench in a Regional Park. I drove to Lake County last month to visit my son in Hidden Valley. I saw for the 1st time the damage the wildfire caused. It is so shocking to walk down streets and see the damage than to see the photos in the newspaper or on TV. No comparison. Many huge trees are still standing, but are deep black skeletons with the green grass starting to grow. The fire burnt as far as you can see. It will be years before the area is restored. The fire went so fast it hopped and skipped over some houses but burned others to the ground. Lake leaders will resume their outings this month.

Have a wonderful winter.

Leader Jim Gannon, Snowshoeing into Sierra Club’s Peter Grub Hut.

Non-Sierra Club Outings

The following events and activities 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.

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 from Guerneville pedestrian bridge. Access entrance from the driveway in front of Sonoma Nesting Co. (16132 Main Street, just east of Armstrong Woods Rd). At bottom of driveway look for blue & white “Russian Riverkeeper Stewardship Park” sign. Bring drinking water & sturdy footwear. Light refreshments provided. Info Victoria Wikel 865-2474 VictoriaWikel@usa.net.

Volunteer Days Riverkeeper Stewardship Park in Guerneville, Every Wednesday.

Volunteer Days Riverkeeper Stewardship Park in Guerneville, April 16th and May 14th from 9am – noon.

Contact Maggie Hart (farlortoncllunge@usa.net) or Maggie Hart (707) 527-9277 x100 or maggiehart@lagunafoundation.org.

River Otters Themed Open House, Saturday, February 13, 10:00am-3:00pm

Fremont Park. Our Open House in February is going to be all about River Otters! Our friends from the River Otter Ecology Project (ROEP) will be joining us and will have educational displays and fun, hands-on activities for all ages. Displays will include current maps of river otter sightings; information on the ROEP’s Education, Research, and Citizen Science programs; River Otter v. Sea Otter display and skull models for comparison; and children’s coloring activities. Heron Hall, Laguna Environmental Center 900 Sanford Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95401 VISIT: lagunafoundation.org.

Laguna Keepers Workdays: February 20, March 12, April 16 and May 14: Saturday mornings from 9am – noon

Contact Maggie Hart for location details/directions (707) 527-9277 x100 or maggiehart@lagunafoundation.org.

Volunteers assist in exotic plant removal, native plant and tree planting, and restoration project maintenance. Little or no experience is needed! Only heavy rain cancels. Dress for dirt. Snacks are provided but please bring water, gloves and friends.

Non-Sierra Club Outings

Saturday Saunters for Santa Rosa Area.

Every Saturday. Meets 9 am and usually ends around 11:30. These walks are moderate. Fun way to exercise with friends. For info call Bob Martin 707-539-6100 bmmphoto@comcast.net.

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With your help we can protect the wolf

Wolves are vitally important to maintaining nature’s balance, culling out weak and sick animals to keep populations of elk and deer healthy and in check. The Sierra Club is working to defend wolf populations from continued threats from politicians.

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North Group Report

2016 Redwood Chapter and Group Election Results

Redwood Chapter
Victoria Brandon
Keith Kaulum

Solano County Group
Greg Peterson
Joseph Feller
Amynoel Coughran

Lake County Group
Tricia Evans
Viorica Bandon

Sonoma County Group
Adrienne Leihy
Suzanne Doyle
Teri Shore

North Group
Ned Forsyth
Felice Pace
Gregg Gold

Mendocino County Group
Mary Walsh
Rixanne Wehren

Napa County Group
Karen Culler
Christina Benz

California Forestry Reform Moves Forward

California’s new Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration (TRFR) Program is continuing to be implemented, following the enactment of AB 1492 in 2012. State officials and other interested parties met in Ukiah on December 15 for the latest in a series of public hearings to collaborate on “planning Watershed Pilot Projects” and other aspects of the TRFR Program. I participated as a representative of the North Group, Redwood Chapter of the Sierra Club.

Now, in the early stages of the Program, there is a real opportunity for citizen environmentalists, scientists, restoration practitioners, and other stakeholders including large and small landowners and the timber industry, to take advantage of this new publicly-funded, science-based approach to conserving the public’s shared natural heritage of our magnificent productive forests. Detailed information and public comments are available at http://resources.ca.gov/forestry.

The watershed pilot projects will assess cumulative effects of past and present logging practices toward identifying specific restoration needs, and the projects will serve as a “laboratory” for examining the efficacy and effectiveness in gathering actionable data and developing a set of best practices to best serve all stakeholders. A “planning watershed” is a discrete landscape of three to ten thousand acres in size.

In addition to the Pilot Project Working Group (PPWG), TRFR provides working groups for the Leadership Team, for Data and Monitoring, and for developing Ecological Performance Measures, for example analysis of limiting factors on anadromous salmonids. Overall leadership will be provided by the California Natural Resources Agency Assistant Secretary of Forest Resources Management, with guidance from the TRFR Program Advisory Committee. As before, review of individual Timber Harvest Plans (THPs) will be done by the State’s inter-agency review teams, staff members of the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Regional Water Quality Control Board and California Geological Survey.

The December meeting was attended by over fifty people, mostly in person and also via WebEx and conference call. Early comments, both oral and written, emphasized their vision of the role of the PPWG as active participants, not just as advisors. Other points remarked to the key importance of describing watershed conditions at the outset, to include original conditions as well as subsequent forest damage: in order to chart a realistic pathway to an optimally functioning ecosystem, all participants should have a common understanding of the starting point.

It was pointed out that THPs, while a potential source of historical watershed health data, may be subject to bias inasmuch as the reported data may arise from a narrow set of legal permit requirements on an hourly-paid basis, rather than from true scientific inquiry. Procedural questions were

North Group Report

Watershed-wide logging in the 1980s devastated water quality and wildlife habitat. This is Terwer Creek on the Lower Klamath River, controlled and logged by Simpson Timber Co, now GDR. Photo courtesy of Patrick Higgins. The long-awaited Climate Action Plan is mandated. Urgency for these reforms was added by the budget problems of 2009-2010 that led to appalling staff shortages and inability to carry out THP reviews as intended by the original Forest Practice Act of 1973. Judging from the form and content of these initial public meetings for the pilot projects, there is hope for some improvement in outcomes for our imperiled wildlife. With the State’s increased commitment to gathering scientific data, and to increased funding to restore damaged waterheds, and more opportunities for input from us, the public, we should expect to make some headway against the serious losses our forests and rivers have suffered from industrialized forestry and building development. We do have some faith in mitigating these problems with more people and more knowledge of what we need to do. It’s said that money doesn’t grow on trees, but I say that science and restoration are a wise investment on behalf of our future and our natural surroundings.

All of us who feel a personal or professional commitment to protecting and restoring the natural world should at least take a look at these new opportunities, at this timely moment afforded by California’s elected stewards and public servants.

–NED FORSYTH, NORTH GROUP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE VICE CHAIR

Napa Group Report

New Faces in Leadership

Napa Executive Committee welcomes Karen Culler as our newest member, while honoring the long service of retiring members, Marc Pandone and Isabelle Saint-Guily. Marc’s many years of service have focused on water and land use issues, while Isabelle has revitalized our member outreach, especially with her professionalization of our newsletter. Isabelle will continue as chair of our Outings Committee, and we hope to continue to access Marc’s store of wisdom as issues arise. We also welcome Pam Jackson, who is taking over our e-newsletter.

Open Volunteer Opportunities

For the first time in many years, we are one person short on the executive committee. This is a great opportunity to influence the future of Napa County. For the social-minded, we need a volunteer to coordinate our Membership Outreach, while a policy wonk might find a happy niche representing us on the Sierra Club’s ad hoc Bay Area Transportation Committee (work done by e-mail and phone conference.) Please contact me, Nancy Tamarisk nancy@aya.yale.edu, if you would like more information about these positions.

Events

Climate Change takes Center Stage: Sierra Club at the Library “Time to take Decisive Action”

Monday, Feb 8, 6:30 – 8:30 pm, Napa Library – Free

Let’s Make this Fun, and Make a Difference!

Napa County Supervisor Candidate Forum

Monday, April 4, 6:30 – 8:30 pm, Napa Library – Free

Co-sponsored by Napa Sierra Club, Friends of the Napa River, Get a Grip on Growth, and Napa Valley Can Do

2016: Expect Napa to be a Hotbed of Environmental Activism

Napa Supervisor Alfredo Pedroza finds himself challenged by two candidates with backgrounds in environmental and growth issues: Diane Shapp and Chris Malan.

Solutions to the explosion in winery growth and to protection of natural habitat and watershed remain controversial as local front-page news. And will the County take desperately needed action on groundwater management?

The long-awaited Climate Action Plan is being crafted, with Sierra Club input, Climate change will be a central concern of our local activities.

Keep A abreast of Napa Events and Issues

Contact us at napavalleysierrachair@gmail.com to receive our monthly e-mail newsletter. We promise not to bombard you with messages, or share your address with other organizations.

–NANCY TAMARISK, NAPA GROUP CHAIR

Napa Group Members

Our e-newsletter arrives in your mailbox on the 3rd of every month. If you are not seeing it: check your spam folder or send us an e-mail so that we can add you to our list: napavalleysierrachair@gmail.com

Napa Valley Sierrachair@gmail.com
Solano Breeze Corner
Covering Benicia, Fairfield, Rio Vista, Suisun, Vacaville and Vallejo
sierraculbsolangroup@gmail.com
707-319-6398

20th Flywheel Festival February 19 - 22
SAVE THE DATE!
Marc Island, Vallejo, CA
Solano Group needs volunteers to set up on Friday afternoon, staff a table on Saturday and take the booth down on Sunday. Contact Jane @ 707 319-6398

Thanks for the help!
Thanks to Nancy, Jane, Justin, Alisa, Erol, Beverly and friends for staffing the VALCORE Recycling and Confidential Paper Shredding event.

VALCORE Recycling and Paper Shredding updates:
Solano Group will be going out with paper shredding every 3rd Saturday of the month at 38 Sheridan Street, Vallejo from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. There is a charge of $10 (CASH ONLY) per twenty pounds of paper shredded. (Maximum: 100 pounds).

NEW WEEKDAY SHREDDING from 9 am to 4 pm, closed 1 pm to 2 pm for lunch (CREDIT OR DEBIT ONLY).
Sierra Club volunteers help tend the money and direct traffic. Once a year is all we ask, and you only need work an hour or so. Volunteers get free shredding!

CONTRIBUTOR: JANE BOSNER  EDITOR: GREG PETERSON

Sonoma Group Report

Forum on Roundup 1/28
In 2015, the World Health Organization determined that glyphosate (active ingredient of Roundup), the most-used herbicide in the world and in Sonoma County, is a probable human carcinogen. What has happened since this finding and how is the California EPA responding? The Sierra Club Sonoma Group and Watertrough Children’s Alliance are co-sponsoring an update forum. The event is also a fundraiser for our legal actions against the county to require thorough environmental review for new vineyards.

January 28, 2016 @ 6:00pm
Sebastopol Grange, 6000 Sebastopol Ave. (on Hwy 12) $20 per person includes dinner catered by Seed

For more information, go to the Sonoma Group website at http://www.sierragroup.org/valcore.

Hearing on Jennings Avenue SMART pedestrian crossing on February 1st
The California Public Utilities Commission will have a public hearing at:
Monday, Feb. 1 at 7:00pm
Helen Lehman School in Santa Rosa, 1700 Jennings Avenue (between Guerneville Rd. & College Ave. west of Dutton Ave)

The Sierra Club and other citizen groups are joining the City of Santa Rosa in an urgent call to approve an at-grade crossing with warning bells and gates so that pedestrians and cyclists can safely cross the SMART train tracks at Jennings Avenue near Coddingtown. We need your help to convince the California Public Utilities Commission to allow the at-grade crossing to be built at as soon as possible, and to take down the fences that now block the crossing.

Please join us at the public hearing, or send a comment to the CPUC. For more information, see the article on page one. Become engaged with local environmental issues!

Come to one of our Conservation issues meetings to learn about some of the issues that the Sonoma Group is working on, such as:

Community Separators: The county supervisors have agreed to put a measure on the ballot to renew the county's community separators, the greenbelts separating our urban areas. Help to pass the measure and to expand and strengthen the greenbelts.

Living Wage Coalition: The Sonoma Group supports the work of the Living Wage Coalition to increase minimum wage – we can’t have a healthy environment when people don’t have enough to live on in this very expensive county.

Keep Composting in Sonoma County: We are shipping our yard waste out to other counties and no longer have the supply of local compost that we need. Help us convince the county supervisors to take action on a new local composting facility.

Local Coastal Plan: The special plan for the Sonoma Coast is being updated. Help to strengthen this plan to keep the coast the underdeveloped and natural treasure that it is.

Political Year 2016: Interested in working on political endorsements with the Sonoma Group? Help us interview local candidates about their environmental positions. Email Suzanne at casinus@gmail.com if you would like to join the committee.

Next Sonoma Group meetings:
Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway in Santa Rosa, west of 101
February 1: Conservation issues from 6:00 to 7:00pm, Executive Committee meeting from 7:00 to 8:00pm.
March 7: Conservation issues from 5:00 to 6:30pm, Executive Committee meeting from 6:30 to 8:00pm.

~SUZANNE DOYLE, SONOMA GROUP VICE CHAIR

Lake Group Report

Clear Lake: getting the facts about water quality
The January 21 Lake Group general meeting, held at the Round Room at Mendocino College in Lakeport, and will focus on cyanobacteria (“blue green algae”) in Clear Lake. Since the fall of 2014 Big Valley Rancheria and Elem Indian Colony have been conducting regular testing for cyanotoxins produced by the “algae” blooms that have plagued the lake annually since 2009. Environmental Director Sarah Ryan and Karen Kennedy will present the results of the Tribe’s Cyanotoxin Monitoring Program and the ways it affects both recreational use of the lake and our drinking water. The meeting is free and open to the public as always.

~VICTORIA BRANDON, LAKE GROUP CONSERVATION CHAIR

Mendocino Group Report

A very joyous New Year’s wish to all. The Mendo Group Executive Committee is holding up against the welcome wet, with an ear open to the release of the new Environmental Impact Report for the Mendocino Coast Transfer Station rumored to be appearing in January. We are planning a General Membership Meeting in March. Stay warm and dry and watch for falling trees.

~MATT WALSH, MENDOCINO GROUP CHAIR

Lake BOS says no to “Jefferson”
With strong support from Lake Group, on December 15 the Lake County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to rescind a March 3 resolution that would have placed an advisory measure on the November 2016 ballot asking if the county should adopt a declaration of support for seceding from California in order to participate in the formation of a new state.

The proposal to rescind was brought forward by Board Chair Anthony Farrington at the request of community residents. Farrington questioned the “Jefferson” movement’s financial analysis, which fails to take into account many sources of state funding received by the county as well as direct support from state agencies, access to California’s higher education system, and branding for agricultural products. The importance of this support was particularly evident during the wildfire fires that devastated the county during the past summer. After discussion and public comment (almost entirely opposed to the rescission proposal) the board agreed that state support is essential to the future of the county, and that the community needs to pull together to concentrate on recovery rather than squabbling over a divisive political play.

Local “State of Jefferson” proponents still retain the option of placing an advisory vote on the November 2016 ballot asking if the county should adopt a declaration of support for seceding from California. For more information visit KeepCalifornia.org.

~SUSANNA DOYLE, SONOMA GROUP VICE CHAIR

September 1, 2015

KEEP IT CALIFORNIA

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~MATT WALSH, MENDOCINO GROUP CHAIR

Redwood Needles February 1, 2016
Seeking Young Activists

Redwood Chapter is proud to announce that for the second year in a row we plan to sponsor a participant in SPROG (short for "Summer Program"), the Sierra Student Coalition's cutting-edge training program for youthful grassroots environmental activists. An environmental and social justice leadership training program for young people (ages 14-28) across the country, SPROG is an intensive week-long training program run by young people, for young people. It provides the knowledge and skills needed to succeed as a grassroots organizer and make a substantial difference in the future of the community and the planet, and also connects participants with a supportive network of young activists who fight similar battles and share similar passions. Past SPROG participants have described it as one of the most inspiring and fulfilling weeks of their life.

Interested? More information about the program is available at http://www.sierraclub.org/youth/summer-sprog-training. To apply for the Chapter's sponsorship—which covers the full cost of the intensive week-long training program for youthful grassroots environmental activists—please contact Victoria Brandon at 707 994 1931 or vbrandon@lakelive.info.

ROUNDUP: Updates on recent WHO findings and California EPA’s stance on glyphosate

January 28, 2016 @ 6:00pm
Sebastopol Grange, 6000 Sebastopol Ave. (on Hwy 12)

In 2015, the World Health Organization determined that glyphosate (active ingredient of Roundup), the most-used herbicide in the world and in Sonoma County, is a probable human carcinogen. What has happened since this finding and how is the California EPA responding?

Moderator: Sarah Glade Gurney, mayor of Sebastopol
Speaker: Jonathan Evan, attorney, Center for Biological Diversity
Speaker: Ella Teevan, organizer, Food & Water Watch

$20 per person, includes dinner catered by Seed and presentation.
Registration: http://wcaroundupevent.brownpapertickets.com/
Further information: info@wcachildren.org or http://www.sierraclub.org/redwood/sonoma