Trans-Pacific Partnership: Down to the Line

As has been previously reported, the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is a massive trade deal being negotiated among twelve countries in the Pacific Rim, an area of immense environmental sensitivity that includes both Australia’s Great Barrier Reef and part of the Amazon rain forest—two of the most biologically diverse areas on Earth. The Asia-Pacific region accounts for about one third of all the threatened species in the world, some of them in rapid decline, and illegal logging in a number of countries involved in the TPP threatens both natural forests and the communities dependent upon them.

While the contents of the TPP are still secret, we do know that it does include a chapter on the environment, with provisions that are too weak to safeguard the environment. Trade agreements should strengthen environmental and climate protections, not undermine them. At a minimum, a sound environment chapter should:

- Include the same dispute settlement provisions as commercial chapters
- Ensure that countries uphold and strengthen their domestic environmental laws and policies and their obligations under multilateral environmental agreements
- Address the special environmental challenges of the Pacific region by including enforceable prohibitions on trade in illegally obtained timber and wildlife.

Instead, the TPP proposes to follow the model of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) by allowing corporations to sue governments directly—for unlimited cash compensation—over almost any domestic environmental (or other) law that the corporation alleges reduces its ability to profit. Such cases are decided in special trade tribunals that are accountable to any other national or international authority—not only undermining health and environmental protections, but doing so in a completely opaque and irresponsible manner.

The TPP would also require the U.S. Department of Energy to give automatic approval onto all natural gas exports to other countries in the partnership. This would inevitably lead to an increase in hydraulic fracturing (“fracking”) in this country, and probably increased electricity prices as well.

Earlier this year the Obama administration asked Congress to authorize Trade Promotion Authority (TPA), known commonly as “Fast Track.” Under Fast Track, once the TPP is agreed upon by all participating countries, the President signs it, and passes it to Congress which can give only a straight up-or-down vote, with no room for amendments and limited floor debate.

The Sierra Club and our partners in the labor movement fought hard to defeat Fast Track, and came within a whisker of prevailing, but after a complex series of arcane political maneuvers, President Obama obtained the negotiating authority he sought late in June.

It is by no means certain that all the members of Congress who voted for Fast Track will support the TPP itself when it comes before them in the fall or (more likely) some time early in 2016. All across the nation, Sierra Club lobbyists and volunteers took advantage of the August Congressional recess to meet with legislators who voted for Fast Track in their district offices and talk to them about the evils of TPP, as well as to express gratitude those legislators who voted against Fast Track.

Here in Redwood Chapter, all three members of our stellar Congressional delegation (Congressmen Jared Huffman, John Garamendi, and Mike Thompson) voted against Fast Track, and all three are expected to oppose the TPP when it finally comes before Congress. However, they will all be subjected to intense lobbying pressure from special interest groups and the Executive Branch, and now more than ever, need to hear that their constituents remain behind their decision to vote against Fast Track.

Thank you for your continued support of the Sierra Club and opposition to shady, irresponsible trade deals! Together, we can defeat the Trans-Pacific Partnership in the name of the environment. For more information on Sierra Club’s Responsible Trade Program, please call me at 707-994-1931 or send an email to vbrandon@lakeville.info

What You Can Do: Please take a moment to contact your Congressman to thank him for his vote, and to encourage him to oppose the TPP. They all accept emails through their Congressional websites, or you can call 415-258-9657 (Huffman); 530-753-5301 (Garamendi); and 707-226-9898 (Thompson). Please tell the aide who answers (or the message machine) that you are calling at the request of the Sierra Club.

Great News for California’s Wildlife

On August 5 Redwood Chapter Conservation Chair Diane Beck attended the meeting of the California Fish and Game Commission to urge that the Commission ban bobcat trapping in the state altogether, as was the original intent of the 2013 “Bobcat Protection Act.” As discussed in an Action Alert in the previous edition of the Redwood Needles, this action would fully implement the 2013 “Bobcat Protection Act” and was one of two options before the Commission, the other being to establish extensive bobcat closure areas near national parks, monuments and wildlife refuges.

Diane is delighted to report that after extended debate and in the presence of more than 100 members of the public the Commission did the right thing: commercial trapping of these iconic predators is now completely forbidden in California! Congratulations to the Commissioners, and thanks to everyone who wrote a letter, sent an email, made a phone call, and attended the meeting.

Then less than two weeks later we got some more exciting news: the first pack of wild wolves—two adults and four cubs—to be seen in California in nearly a century has settled in. The location given is a bit vague (for obvious protective reasons), but the location of the “Shasta Pack” seems to be somewhere in eastern Siskiyou county. That means they have set up housekeeping in Mother Lode Chapter instead of Redwood, but with an established pack in the Rogue National Forest just across the Oregon border our time is surely coming soon. For some great photos of these new residents, check out http://www.lostcoastoutpost.com.

For more Redwood Chapter information: http://www.sierraclub.org/redwood

Expanding Potential Wilderness on Mt. Lassic

On Sunday July 12 North Group excom member Ned Forsyth led a moderate six mile hike into the Mt. Lassic Wilderness and Botanical Area in Six Rivers National Forest, a natural wonderland characterized by sweeping views, vernal pools, stark serpentine and peridotite barrens, and vegetation with character. To make things particularly exciting, an additional 1300 acres of wilderness has been proposed in this area as part of the Mountains and Rivers campaign–visit mountainsanddrivers.org to learn more.

Congressman Mike Thompson, Redwood Chapter Chair Victoria Brandon, Citizens Trade Campaign Coordinator Xiomara Castro, and Napa/Solano Central Labor Council Executive Director Jon Riley met to discuss the TPP and related issues on August 27.

Hiking the Salmon Summit National Scenic Trail. (Photo courtesy Ned Forsyth.)

Black Lassic from the Mt Lassic summit. (Photo courtesy Ned Forsyth.)
2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference

In December, world leaders will meet at the United Nations Climate Change Conference, tasked with reaching an international agreement to cut carbon emissions. There is overwhelming scientific consensus and a growing global climate movement that recognizes the need for swift action.

The 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC) aims to achieve, for the first time, an agreement among all of the nations of the world to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It is the first time in over 20 years of UN negotiations, a meaningful agreement on climate action. This is critical because we know that the climate crisis has reached its tipping point, and we are the first generation that is seeing the lasting effects of the climate crisis but may be the last generation that has the chance to do anything about it. With that in mind, the 195 countries that participate in this annual conference will be gathering in just a few short months to attempt to agree on how to combat climate disruption.

They’ll develop objectives, rules, and outline their individual climate action contributions at this conference.

Why Is Paris So Special?

Each of the UNFCCC’s 195 member countries have agreed to submit an Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) this year, which will outline the actions each country intends to take between 2020 and 2025 or 2030. Given that developed countries have massive carbon footprints, the UNFCCC has asked these countries to lead the way and make the biggest commitments. However, they are also asking for new funds to be sent to developing countries, since it is undoubtedly more difficult for small governments with fewer resources to find big solutions.

And while reaching a universal climate standard will be difficult, 15 major countries— including the United States, China, and the UK—have already released climate commitments in preparation to adopt the Paris standards.

But while Paris will be an important step for meaningful and lasting climate action, this isn’t the last step in the fight to quell the climate. A strong agreement in Paris will leave the door open for continued climate action in the years to come, and in the meantime, people around the world aren’t waiting for politicians and world leaders to act. Soon, carbon levels may be too high, the Arctic may have already melted, or the sea levels will have risen too much to turn back the tide. Paris is so monumentally important because not only are we finally making a globalized statement that these things are, indeed, happening, but that it’s even more vital that we stop their progress.

The Sierra Club And The UNFCCC

The Sierra Club has long been actively engaged in the UNFCCC process. In most years, we have focused our work inside the negotiations to achieve specific policy outcomes and to ensure that the U.S. plays a constructive role. This year, with a headline deal on the agenda, the stakes will be much higher, and international climate issues will gain far more attention than at any time since the Copenhagen meeting in 2009.

As a result, we created the #ActInParis campaign to bring awareness to the negotiations and show our support for meaningful climate action at all levels—from local to national to international.

What You Can Do:

Send a Message to President Obama

Be sure to check out our website, http://www.sierraclub.org/paris, to tell President Obama that you support strong climate action in Paris, and to find more helpful resources for this year’s climate negotiations.

Join the Day of Action on Oct. 14th by Finding an Event Near You or Starting Your Own!

The nation’s leading environmental organizations and the People’s Climate Movement (PCM) have designated October 14, 2015 as a National Day of Action ahead of international climate negotiations this December in Paris. Events will be organized by local grassroots climate advocates in cities and towns throughout the nation under the umbrella of the People’s Climate Movement, which coordinated last year’s historic People’s Climate March.

When over 400,000 people joined last year’s People’s Climate March in New York City, it signaled to both U.S. and global leaders that Americans are committed to tackling the climate crisis. The march was the largest action on climate in history, and successfully elevated the significance of protecting the climate as an issue around the world.

Now, recognizing that the movement for action on climate needs not just “everyone” but “everyone, everywhere,” grassroots advocates are joining organizations from across the board in driving local events in cities and towns throughout the United States. Visit http://www.peoplesclimate.org for details.

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 have no information about the planning of these activities and makes no representations or warranties about the planning of these activities and makes no representations or warranties about the 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. Meets 9 am and usually ends around 11:30. These walks are moderate. Fun way to exercise with friends. For info call Bob Martin 707-539-6300.

Sonoma County Regional Parks trail work days.

On the day of the project you can call 707-548-4424 for an update or 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 707-565-3356. 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 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 & wear sturdy footgear. Light refreshments provided. Info Victoria Wikle 865-2474 VictoriaWikle@usa.net.
Outings

Thu.-Sat. Oct. 8-10 - Death Valley Wilderness Restoration.
Join us in restoring wilderness values in this remote and beautiful desert National Park by helping to clean up marijuana grow sites in the Hunter Mnt area. 4WD required possibility of carpooling. Meet Thursday afternoon at the junction of Hwy 190 and the South Saline Valley Road. Work Thur. afternoon and all day Friday. On Sat, either more clean up, or we may be free to enjoy the park. Camping is primitive, bring all the food and water that you need for the weekend, plus a trowel or shovel for personal needs. Leader: Kate Allen, kj.allen96@gmail.com, 661-944-4056. CNRCC Desert Committee.

Hike on a road to a mine site Wilbur Springs. The trail descends on road to mine site. Bring water and lunch. Class: M-4-8. Carpool: meet 8:00 am Lower Lake Coffee Co. on Main Street, off junction of Hwy 29 & 53 or 9:00 am trail Head (390 O’Dell St) at 9:30 am. 3 miles from Hwy 53/20 intersection at a BLM fire gate on the left side of the road just past Judge Davis TH and before Colusa County line. By reservation only. Leader Steve Devoto sdevoto@mchsi.com 707-279-8308. Rain cancels.

The last time I led this hike I missed a turn and got confused. This time I promise to bring a map. We’ll start at the North Trail trailhead on Hwy 1 and follow it through pine forests to the Pygmy Forest. Then we’ll follow Central Trail down to the bluffs below Gerstle Cove for lunch. We’ll return to the cars by way of Gerstle Cove and Salt Point trail, with views of striking sea carved rocks, about 6 miles. Bring lunch, liquids, dress for coastal weather including fog, mist and wind. Class: M-6-A. Contact: k.lingh@gmail.com or phone 915 & Park’n’Ride on River Road just west of Hwy 101 - Leader Carl Inglin, 538-8271 or chinling@sonic.net. Rain cancels.

Take advantage of a rare opportunity to experience the seasonal Green Valley Falls, located on land accessible only with special permission. Trail is over uneven ground, mostly level, but with a steep 500’ elevation gain at the end. Bring sturdy shoes, water, hat, sunscreen, and a snack. Total trip time estimated to be 3 hours. Possible snake and poison oak encounters. The hike is limited to 30 persons 14 and older. Persons under 18 must be with a parent. Due to processing fees imposed by the City of Vallejo, we are asking for a donation of $7 per hiker for the park entrance. Class: M-10. Reserve only. Leader Steve Devoto sdevoto@mchsi.com 707-279-8308. Rain cancels.

Come and explore this nearbyok to the Pygmy Forest. Then we’ll follow Central Trail down to the bluffs below Gerstle Cove for lunch. We’ll return to the cars by way of Gerstle Cove and Salt Point trail, with views of striking sea carved rocks, about 6 miles. Bring lunch, liquids, dress for coastal weather including fog, mist and wind. Class: M-6-A. Contact: k.lingh@gmail.com or phone 915 & Park’n’Ride on River Road just west of Hwy 101 - Leader Carl Inglin, 538-8271 or chinling@sonic.net. Rain cancels.

Explore the Green Valley Falls with a great view over the Pygers power plants. Class: M-10. Bring lunch and liquids of water. Meet: 8 am car pool parking lot at the corner of Live Oak Drive and Highway 29 in Kelseyville. Class: M-10 by reservation only. Leader Steve Devoto sdevoto@mchsi.com 707-279-8308. Rain cancels.

Explore and come experience this nearby prairie. Bring lunch and liquids. Meet at 10 am. Leader: Tom McFarling 707-434-9812. Contact: k.lingh@ sonic.net or phone 915. Rain cancels.

Instructions to hikers:
Outings will start not later than 15 minutes after scheduled meeting time. The leader is in charge of the trip and is responsible for your welfare and the good name of the Club. He/she must have your cooperation to make the trip safe, pleasant and rewarding. Never charge ahead of the leader and keep within sight or shouting distance of the person ahead of you so you do not miss an interesting trail. Do not lag behind rear leader if you need help, the rear leader will remain to assist you. Do not leave the group without the leader’s permission. Be adequately equipped and prepared. You should carry lunch and liquids. Wear footwear appropriate for the outing. In most cases that would be hiking boots. Guard against fire. Do not smoke on Sierra Club outings. Build fires only with the leader’s permission, and extinguish them completely. Guns, pets, or radios are not to be brought on hikes.

The Sierra Club does not have insurance for carpooling arrangements and assumes no liability for them. Participants assume the risks associated with travel. Reimburse the car driver. Car pools are not part of the outing but a means of conserving natural resources.

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

Visitors are welcome
All Sierra Club trips are open to the public unless otherwise announced. You must register. Leader Phil Kohmetz philagogo@bigglobal.net Sat. Oct. 24 - Lake Group. Mahnke Peak Hike.
This hike starts at the south end of Kelsey Creek Drive and follows a moderately sloped dirt road to Mahnke Peak with a great view over the pygers power plants. Class: M-10. Bring lunch and liquids of water. Meet: 8 am car pool parking lot at the corner of Live Oak Drive and Highway 29 in Kelseyville. Class: M-10 by reservation only. Leader Steve Devoto sdevoto@mchsi.com 707-279-8308. Rain cancels.

Explore and come experience this nearby prairie. Bring lunch and liquids. Meet at 10 am. Leader: Tom McFarling 707-434-9812. Contact: k.lingh@sonic.net or phone 915. Rain cancels.

Sat. Oct. 31-Nov. 1 - Ghost Town Extravaganza.
Celebrate Halloween by visiting the ghosts of California’s colorful past in the eerie desert landscape near Death Valley. Camp near the historic ghost town of Ballarat. Saturday, a challenging hike to ghost town lookout with historian Hal Fowler who will regale us with tales of this wild west town. We’ll return to camp for Happy Hour and a potluck feast, followed by a midnight visit to Ballarat’s graveyard. On Sunday, we’ll make a quick visit to the infamous Riley townsite. Send $8 per person (check payable to Lygeira Gerard) home and work phones, email address and ride shares to Leader: Lygeira Gerard, P.O. Box 721039, Pinon Hills, CA 92372, 760-868-2179. Mojave Group/CNRCC Desert Committee.

Sat. Nov. 14 - North Group. Humboldt Redwoods State Park Avenue of the Giants Hike. Two separate trails, about a mile away, each take us to a view of the Eel river from High Rock (an actual rock along the river), and to a grove of stately redwoods about 1,000 feet above. Bring lunch and water. Fall colors. Band-tailed Pigeons? Class: M-5-A. Carpool: Meet 9 a.m. Herrick Avenue Park and Ride in Eureka. Leader Ned nedforsyth84@gmail.com, (707) 825-3652 message phone. Heavy rain cancels.

Thu.-Sat. Nov. 19-21 - Death Valley Wilderness Service Trip.
Come help restore wilderness values in this stunning desert national park. The work project has not been determined yet. It might be marijuana grow site or help with the clean-up of the canopy in the Panamints. (Or something else entirely.) We will meet Thursday afternoon, place TBD and work Thursday afternoon and Friday. Pot luck either Thursday or Friday night. Leader: Kate Allen, kj.allen96@gmail.com, 661-944-4056. CNRCC Desert Committee.

We’ll start at the new Petaluma Hill

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 grouped according to how fast they hike overall. 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.

Fast pace with few or no stops: Paul Rosso Carol Magill
Moderate pace with few stops: Don Anderson Lorrie Lagasse Julie Kreis
Moderate pace with more frequent stops: Pete McGee Tim Bartos Melinda Mann Val Nordeman Carol Vallianni Yvonne Krampe Martin Farber Brian Collert Carl Inglin Tom McFarling Nanette DeDonato Jonah Freedman Steve Devoto Ned Forsyth Nick Caston
Slower pace: Allison Bronkall
Outings Chair Report

The Lake County fires impacted some of our outings leaders and many members of Sierra Club. Leader Pete McGree, experienced in fire fighting, took part in controlling the advance of the fast spreading fire by Clearlake and Middletown. This was an exhausting task, fighting a fire exhibiting a behavior that was unprecedented. Last I heard the Rocky Mountain fire had burned over 70,000 acres. A big thank you goes out to first responders and for all the support from other counties and states. California has many wildfires burning and our outing leaders will see a vastly changed landscape come spring. Put in a call if possible before going into the backcountry to scout your outing. Many trees have fallen across trails. The predicted heavy winter rains will have a toll on bulldozed mountain tops and landslides are probable.

Rollye Wikerson passed on July 29th. Rollye was one of the Mare Island engineers who helped maintain Benson Hut on Sierra Club work parties. This group went backpacking, hiking and camping together. He will be missed. He was also known for sailing, bird watching, trail maintenance and woodcarving. His memorial at Mare Island was a reunion of many groups. I had been in touch with Eugene Miya, another Benson Hut work party regular, as we were trying to piece together a history of John Benson. See the article on John Benson of our beloved Benson Hut in the high Sierra.

—CAROL VELLUTINI, REDWOOD CHAPTER OUTINGS CHAIR

Remembering Benson Hut’s Namesake

The Redwood Chapter was leading work parties to Benson Hut when I joined Sierra Club in 1982. Benson Hut was built in 1947-49 by friends and members of Sierra Club. Benson Hut is located just below the north face of Anderson Peak, 5.5 miles beyond the Pacific Crest Trail trailhead on Donner Pass Road. Redwood Chapter leaders to the hut were Clark Nartkerpem in the 50’s, Ken Thatcher (started leading in 1968 until 1998) Carol Vellutini led until around 2004, followed by current work party leader Jim Gannon. Many engineers and workers from Mare Island were hut volunteers and that is the Rollye Wikerson connection to Mare Island where his memorial was held. Some faithful volunteers I knew were Howard Hofman, Jim Hench, Dick Thatcher, George Grammens, Everett Games, Rollye Wikerson, Sam McGee, Doug Porter, June Smith, Ed Smith, Eugene Miya, Ed Schrieber and Tom Raboin. There were many others but my space is limited. Major accomplishments were new roof 1994-2001 and new stove 2004. Eugene Miya and I started emailing about Sierra Club member John Benson’s history when Val Rios (the President of the 10th Mtn. Div. Sierra Nevada Chapter) and Eugene were doing the same research on the 87th Regiment Company K. Val provided me with the photo of Lt. John Benson’s grave site. Val now has photos of all 10th Mtn. Div.soldiers who are buried at the American Cemetery near Florence, Italy. This was a project that Val initiated in 2012 (Val’s 96 yr. old Dad was in the 87th Regiment same as Lt. Benson) and just completed a few months ago so family members (in that Sierra Club Chapter) unable to go to Florence, will be able to see a photo of their family member’s final resting place.

John Benson enlisted on February 9, 1942 in the Presidio of Monterey, California. He was about 24 at the time, had completed two years of college, and was not married. He first served with the 87th Infantry, Company I. A payroll report lists him as a Private First Class in December of 1942. Records show that by 1943 he had been promoted to 2nd Lieutenant. His officer number was O3177976. He was transferred in grade to 87-F on February 21, 1944, and stayed with that unit until his death in Italy possibly in 1945. I am not certain about the accuracy of all details of this history but wanted to give members an idea about who the John Benson of Benson Hut was. John was an ardent Skier and loved the Sierra.

—CAROL VELLUTINI, REDWOOD CHAPTER OUTINGS CHAIR

Sierra Club Volunteer/Activist Opportunities

“Don’t count the days, make the days count.”

—Muhammad Ali

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

Work with the Sonoma Group Water Committee! NOTICE: The Water Committee is now meeting at 5:00 PM on the first Mondays of most months in conjunction with the Conservation and Energy Committee meetings. The Water Committee develops and promotes measures to conserve, save, and reuse 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 wastewaters. Help protect the quality of our water for people, wildlife, fish and other aquatic life. Check for our meeting dates in the Redwood Needles. To get on our Water Committee e-mail list, e-mail Len Holt at lholt@sbcglobal.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-Poell: Email: Shirlgirl707@yahoo.com, home 206-1138, or call office 544-7651.
Streamflow and Water Pollution - the Shasta River Example

There is a famous saying about water pollution: the answer to pollution is dilution. The truth that the saying expresses is fundamental: a stream’s water quality and flow are intertwined and cannot be separated.

Let’s consider the Shasta River as an example. The North Coast Regional Water Quality Board (North Coast Board) designated the Shasta River as “impaired” with respect to water temperature and dissolved oxygen in the early 1990s. Eventually, and only after a lawsuit by environmental groups, the North Coast Board conducted a study to identify the sources of impairment and an implementation plan to clean-up the pollution and restore beneficial uses, including ESA-listed Coho and at-risk Chinook Salmon, as required by the federal Clean Water Act and the state Porter Cogology Act. The Shasta TMDL and Implementation Plan was adopted in 2006.

The study conducted by the Water Board found that the temperature of Shasta River water could be lowered sufficiently to support salmon and other beneficial uses if Shasta River flows were increased by 45 cubic feet per second. The Shasta TMDL Implementation Plan calls for that flow increase to be achieved by those who divert water from the River and its tributaries employing “water management practices and activities that result in increased dedicated cold water instream flow.” Assistance to landowners, most of whom are ranchers and hay growers, in reducing water use is provided by the local Resources Conservation District, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, the California Department of Water Resources and directly by the North Coast Water Board.

Toxic Algae at Dwinelle Reservoir near Weed. The Reservoir heats cold water coming from the Mount Eddy Roadless Area, which can be seen in the background, and other public lands. (Photo courtesy of Klamath Riverkeeper)

The plan calls for the diversion of water from the river and its tributaries to:

“Report to the Regional Water Board, either individually or through the Shasta Valley RCD and its CRMP, an documenting dedicated cold water in stream flow in the Shasta River in relation to the 45 cfs goal or alternative flow regime that achieves the same temperature reductions from May 15 to October 15.

The report was due in 2002; there is no evidence that it has ever been filed.

The deadline for achieving the required 45 cfs increase in river flows through voluntary means was also 2002. If the flow increase was not achieved, the Implementation Plan states that the Water Board:

“May recommend that the State Water Board consider seeking modifications to the decree (In re Waters of Shasta River and its Tributaries, No. 7035 [Sutter Co. Superior Court Dec. 29, 1932]), conducting proceedings under the public trust doctrine, and/or conducting proceedings under the state and unreasonable use provisions of the California Constitution and the California Water Code.”

Needless to say, the “required” 45 cfs increase in Shasta River flows has not been achieved. Nor has the Water Board recommended modification of the Shasta River water right adjudication decree. The Board’s Executive Officer has not even informed the North Coast Board that Shasta River flows, and the beneficial uses those flows support, remain impaired.

Today as I write this report Shasta River flows are a pitiful 24 cfs. No doubt those who divert water from the River would claim that is the result of drought. However, when we check out Shasta River flows over time as measured by the US Geological Survey near the River’s mouth we discover that the flows have been very similar year after year since when the USGS first began measuring the flows in 2007. That’s because Shasta River flows reflect the vastly different volcanic springs rather than snowmelt. Volcanic springs are little affected by short term changes in precipitation or snowpack.

Those among you who want to learn more about the Water Board’s plans and actions to clean up water quality problems on the Shasta River at http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/tmdl/shasta_river/060707_finalshasta_tmdlaplanc plan.pdf. You can check out current and time series flows for the Shasta and other streams in California and across the nation at this application: nwis.waterdata.usgs.gov/.

It’s Election Time at the North Group

The Sierra Club is the only national environmental group that is a true membership organization. Most Boards of Directors of national and even local environmental groups are self-selecting; when new board members are needed the existing board members recruit and elect them. At the Sierra Club the members elect not only the national board but members of chapter and group executive committees.

The North Group will soon elect members of the Group’s Executive Committee. If you would like to seek election to the North Group Executive Committee contact Nominating Committee Chairperson Diane Beck at dbbeck@siestacer.com. Join us!

The North Group’s Executive Committee meets on the second Tuesday of each month in the first floor conference room at the Adorni Center on the waterfront in Eureka. The meeting, which covers regular business and conservation issues, begins at 6:45 PM. Members and non-members with environmental concerns are encouraged to attend. When a new person comes to us with an environmental issue or concern, we often place them first or early on the agenda.

—FELICE PAC, NORTH GROUP WATER CHAIR

Discounted prices for purchase of calendars at the Environmental Center at $55 Ridgeway, Santa Rosa: Wilderries: $13, Engagement: $14; prices listed include sales tax. Call for hours: 707-544-7651. In ordering by mail, shipping is $2 per calendar. The mailing address is Sierra Club, PO Box 466, Santa Rosa, CA 95402. Your purchases directly benefit Sierra Club’s conservation work.

Redwood Needles

December Deadline: Due Nov. 4
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 Inglin: cinglin@sonic.net

LAKE GROUP REPORT

Community Choice in Lake County

For the past several months Lake Group has been keeping a close eye on a proposal to set up a Community Choice Energy provider in Lake County as an alternative to PG&E. Unlike the system established in Sonoma County (with the extended enthusiastic support of Sonoma Group) the original proposal involved contracting with a private company called California Clean Power, a deal that as originally presented in May would have included a questionable legal multi-million dollar payment to the county general fund. After several meetings and extended public input, the details of the agreement were changed considerably, but it was nonetheless dismaying to learn in mid-August that the county still proposed to waive the normal competitive bidding process.

When this proposal came before the Supervisors on August 18 Lake Group Chair Ed Robey spoke on behalf of the Group to warn that the proposal was inadequate and had failed to address the environmental issues at stake. He cited the predevelopment review process as the least problematic of the three—will not be built. On August 25, the Board of Supervisors voted to support the Planning Commission’s unanimous rejection of the application, primarily because the location across from the high school raised traffic and safety concerns, but also because the business seemed incompatible with the characteristics of the community.

A complete application for the Middletown store has still not been received, and it is apparent that similar considerations will apply, only more so. Lake Group has submitted detailed comments on the preliminary application and expects to take an active part in the discussion once a full proposal is available. As for the Loch Lomond store, nothing further has been heard about it since the predevelopment review process seemed the least problematic of the three—will not be built.

LAKE GROUP CONSERVATION CHAIR

—VICTORIA BRANDON, LAKE GROUP CONSERVATION CHAIR

North Group Report

Depleted by irrigation water withdrawals, the Shasta River runs hot and nasty during summer and early fall. (Photo courtesy of Klamath Riverkeeper)

The plan calls for the diversion of water from the river and its tributaries to:

“Report to the Regional Water Board, either individually or through the Shasta Valley RCD and its CRMP, an documenting dedicated cold water in stream flow in the Shasta River in relation to the 45 cfs goal or alternative flow regime that achieves the same temperature reductions from May 15 to October 15.

The report was due in 2002; there is no evidence that it has ever been filed.

The deadline for achieving the required 45 cfs increase in river flows through voluntary means was also 2002. If the flow increase was not achieved, the Implementation Plan states that the Water Board:

“May recommend that the State Water Board consider seeking modifications to the decree (In re Waters of Shasta River and its Tributaries, No. 7035 [Sutter Co. Superior Court Dec. 29, 1932]), conducting proceedings under the public trust doctrine, and/or conducting proceedings under the state and unreasonable use provisions of the California Constitution and the California Water Code.”

Needless to say, the “required” 45 cfs increase in Shasta River flows has not been achieved. Nor has the Water Board recommended modification of the Shasta River water right adjudication decree. The Board’s Executive Officer has not even informed the North Coast Board that Shasta River flows, and the beneficial uses those flows support, remain impaired.

Today as I write this report Shasta River flows are a pitiful 24 cfs. No doubt those who divert water from the River would claim that is the result of drought. However, when we check out Shasta River flows over time as measured by the US Geological Survey near the River’s mouth we discover that the flows have been very similar year after year since when the USGS first began measuring the flows in 2007. That’s because Shasta River flows reflect the vastly different volcanic springs rather than snowmelt. Volcanic springs are little affected by short term changes in precipitation or snowpack.

Those among you who want to learn more about the Water Boards plans and actions to clean up water quality problems on the Shasta River at http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/tmdl/shasta_river/060707_finalshasta_tmdlactionplan.pdf. You can check out current and time series flows for the Shasta and other streams in California and across the nation at this application: nwis.waterdata.usgs.gov/.

It’s Election Time at the North Group

The Sierra Club is the only national environmental group that is a true membership organization. Most Boards of Directors of national and even local environmental groups are self-selecting; when new board members are needed the existing board members recruit and elect them. At the Sierra Club the members elect not only the national board but members of chapter and group executive committees.

The North Group will soon elect members of the Group’s Executive Committee. If you would like to seek election to the North Group Executive Committee contact Nominating Committee Chairperson Diane Beck at dbbeck@siestacer.com. Join us!

The North Group’s Executive Committee meets on the second Tuesday of each month in the first floor conference room at the Adorni Center on the waterfront in Eureka. The meeting, which covers regular business and conservation issues, begins at 6:45 PM. Members and non-members with environmental concerns are encouraged to attend. When a new person comes to us with an environmental issue or concern, we often place them first or early on the agenda.

—FELICE PAC, NORTH GROUP WATER CHAIR

Discounted prices for purchase of calendars at the Environmental Center at $55 Ridgeway, Santa Rosa: Wilderries: $13, Engagement: $14; prices include sales tax. Call for hours: 707-544-7651. If ordering by mail, shipping is $2 per calendar. The mailing address is Sierra Club, PO Box 466, Santa Rosa, CA 95402. Your purchases directly benefit Sierra Club’s conservation work.
Keep the SMART Station at Corona Road:
The Petaluma City Council needs to hear from city residents so that development interests don’t get the north Petaluma SMART station moved to a site near Penngrove - at the edge of the city rather than where people live.

Local Coastal Plan:
The agricultural element of the County’s draft update of the Local Coastal Plan is vague and full of loopholes. We might see increased conversion of coastal grazing land to vineyards and more wineries and event centers along Highway 1. Stay tuned for hearings on this.

Heritage Roads:
Is there a winding old road through a beautiful landscape near you? The County is interested in preserving these old roads, and keeping them from being widened and straightened. Let your supervisor know if there is a heritage road near you.

City of Sonoma Leaf-Blower Ban:
Not only are leaf blowers loud and polluting, but many users blow the leaves into storm drains rather than picking them up and binning them for compost. This practice is bad for creeks, which can only handle decomposition of a natural amount of biological material.

Gualala River Logging:
Friends of the Gualala River are opposing the recent timber harvest plans that Gualala Redwood Timber has submitted to Cal-Fire. GRT wants to log redwoods in the Gualala River’s floodplain and along river and creek banks in northern Sonoma County. This logging operation will trash the floodplain and pump huge amounts of water from the River as it goes. For more information and to support Friends of the Gualala River, see their website at gualalariver.org.

Sonoma Developmental Center:
You can participate in the process of transforming the Sonoma Developmental Center. Sonoma Land Trust is leading a movement to save this mostly undisturbed habitat, which is full of wildlife, valley and blue oak forests and steelhead streams, and provides a crucial piece of an east-west wildlife corridor through the county. The next community meeting is October 17. See transformsonoma.edu for details.

Keep the green waste and garbage out of your blue recycling bin!
North Bay Corporation reports that about 50% of the content of the blue bins is garbage - its recycling systems are breaking down, and it has asked for a rate increase.

Sonoma Group Meetings:
Next Sonoma Group meetings, held at the Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway in Santa Rosa:
October 5: Conservation issues from 5:00 to 6:30pm, Executive Committee meeting from 6:30 to 8:00pm.
November 2: Conservation issues from 5:00 to 6:30pm, Executive Committee meeting from 6:30 to 8:00pm.

–SUZANNE DOYLE, SONOMA GROUP VICE CHAIR

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.

Napa Group Report

Show you Care: October 13th
Reverie Winery Hearing
Unbelievably, the Napa County Planning Commission voted last June to “forgive and forget” Reverie Winery’s flagrant violations of their use permit, which include:
• building a 4700 sq ft unpermitted cave
• degrading a creek
• adding an unpermitted outdoor tasting area
• exceeding their permitted production capacity
• exceeding their permitted visitation by 100%

These violations came to light when a party interested in purchasing the property, which is on Diamond Mountain near Calistoga, discovered them through due diligence research.

Local resident George Caloyanidides has, at his own expense, appealed this decision to the Board of Supervisors, and this appeal is to be heard at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, Oct 13th, at the Board of Supervisors Meeting in Napa.

Public pressure is the only hope left to reverse this decision, which encourages landowners and developers to openly flout the law, undermining our protections against over-development, and putting law-abiding business people at a competitive disadvantage. Reverie’s current owners are set to make a huge profit by their law-breaking, since the property will command a much higher price with the expanded capacity.

This appeal is not about just one winery. Over the years, the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors have taken a cavalier attitude to violations by developers, resulting in a prevailing attitude of “do it and ask forgiveness later.” If our County government will not enforce the law, there is no hope for managing development in Napa County.

You can help by attending the Oct. 13th hearing, or by contacting Board members:
Diane Dillon (countyofnapa.org)
Brad Wagenknecht (countyofnapa.org)
Keith Caldwell (countyofnapa.org)
Mark Luce (countyofnapa.org)
Alfred Pedraza (countyofnapa.org)

Ask the Supervisors to support the appeal against Reverie Winery. It is time that wineries and land developers got the message that violations of the law will be punished. If you plan on attending the hearing, please contact me: nancy@ayafund.org

–NANCY TAMARISK, NAPA GROUP CHAIR

Sonoma Group Report

Holiday Networking Party for Environmental and Social Justice Groups
Wednesday, Dec. 2, 5-8 p.m.
at the Sebastopol Grange

Save the Date! Details will appear in the December Redwood Needles.

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

Thanks to: Nancy, Jane, Justin, Adam, Camelo, Beverly and friends for staffing the VALCORE Recycling and Confidential Paper Shredding event.
VALCORE Recycling and Paper Shredding updates:
Solano Group will be helping out every 3rd Saturday of the month at 87 Sheridan Street, Vallejo from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. There is a charge of $10 (CASH or CHECK ONLY) per twenty pounds of paper shredded. (Maximum: 100 pounds.) Sierra Club volunteers help tend the money and direct traffic. Once a year is all we ask and you only need work an hour or so. Volunteers get free shredding.

NEW WEEKDAY SHREDDING from 10 am to 4 pm – closed 1 pm to 2 pm for lunch.
Weekdays we accept CREDIT or DEBIT ONLY.

Help us in Lori’s Garden
We continually work at Lori’s Native Plant Garden located at 225 Amador St, Vallejo. We also weed, plant, prune and mulch year-round. If you have an hour, call Jane and she’ll work with you to get you started.

707-319-6398.

The 2015 Recycling Guide is online at recycle.solanocounty.com.
November 14 is America Recycles Day. VALCORE will hold a winter coat drive. Coats will be given out locally. Drop them by when VALCORE Recycling is open.

Looking for Volunteers
Step up and help Solano Group be more of a presence in Solano County. We need members to volunteer to take officer positions. Thank you.

–CONTRIBUTOR: JANE BOGNER EDITOR: GREG PETERSON

Mendocino Group Report

The latest news on the Solid Waste Transfer Station is that the roll out of the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) has been postponed indefinitely. This is due in large part to very strong letters in opposition from CA Dept of Fish and Wildlife and CA Dept Parks and Recreation, and with heroic efforts from Linda Perkins and Rixanne Wolfenbarger, itname 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.

NEW WEEKDAY SHREDDING from 10 am to 4 pm – closed 1 pm to 2 pm for lunch.
Weekdays we accept CREDIT or DEBIT ONLY.

Help us in Lori’s Garden
We continually work at Lori’s Native Plant Garden located at 225 Amador St, Vallejo. We also weed, plant, prune and mulch year-round. If you have an hour, call Jane and she’ll work with you to get you started.

707-319-6398.

The 2015 Recycling Guide is online at recycle.solanocounty.com.
November 14 is America Recycles Day. VALCORE will hold a winter coat drive. Coats will be given out locally. Drop them by when VALCORE Recycling is open.

Looking for Volunteers
Step up and help Solano Group be more of a presence in Solano County. We need members to volunteer to take officer positions. Thank you.

–CONTRIBUTOR: JANE BOGNER EDITOR: GREG PETERSON

Mendocino Group Report

The latest news on the Solid Waste Transfer Station is that the roll out of the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) has been postponed indefinitely. This is due in large part to very strong letters in opposition from CA Dept of Fish and Wildlife and CA Dept Parks and Recreation, and with heroic efforts from Linda Perkins and Rixanne Wolfenbarger, itname 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.

NEW WEEKDAY SHREDDING from 10 am to 4 pm – closed 1 pm to 2 pm for lunch.
Weekdays we accept CREDIT or DEBIT ONLY.

Help us in Lori’s Garden
We continually work at Lori’s Native Plant Garden located at 225 Amador St, Vallejo. We also weed, plant, prune and mulch year-round. If you have an hour, call Jane and she’ll work with you to get you started.

707-319-6398.

The 2015 Recycling Guide is online at recycle.solanocounty.com.
November 14 is America Recycles Day. VALCORE will hold a winter coat drive. Coats will be given out locally. Drop them by when VALCORE Recycling is open.

Looking for Volunteers
Step up and help Solano Group be more of a presence in Solano County. We need members to volunteer to take officer positions. Thank you.

–CONTRIBUTOR: JANE BOGNER EDITOR: GREG PETERSON
Nominating Committee Chairs

Redwood Chapter:
Diana Nasser diananas@sonic.net 822-4293
Napa: Nancy Tamarisk napaquail@gmail.com 257-3121
North Group: Diane Beck dbeck@sitestar.net 445-2690
Sonoma Group: Suzanne Doyle carsort@gmail.com 707-206-1138
Lake Group: Carolyn Ruttan caninoridge@gmail.com 295-0333
Mendocino Group: Tom Wodetski TW@mcn.org

Tell Sonoma County to Renew its Greenbelt Protections

For 20 years, Sonoma County’s community separator policies have prevented subdivisions, shopping malls and big box stores from sprawling into nearly 17,000 acres of natural and agricultural lands between our towns and cities. In 2016, Sonoma County must renew the voter-backed community separator measures that passed with more than 70% of the countywide vote.

For the first time in decades, Sonoma County has an opportunity to review, revise and improve voter-backed open space policies.

Sierra Club’s Sonoma Group was among the first to send a letter to the Board of Supervisors urging them to develop and support a robust renewal, update, and expansion of community separators.

So far, the supervisors have not committed to anything beyond a bare-bones renewal.

They will soon vote on a work plan to renew the community separators, so individual and organizational letters are needed now to urge them to extend community separator designations to:

• priority greenbelts
• lands around Penngrove
• lands between Cloverdale and Healdsburg
• lands with high natural resource values

Community separators protect agriculture, waterways, drinking water, groundwater and recharge, wildlife corridors, hillside, and woodlands and preserve clean air, water, and climate resiliency—all key to public health and wellness across populations and income levels.

Greenbelt protections are strongly supported by voters in Sonoma County. Three supervisors are up for re-election in 2016: Supervisors Susan Gorin, Shirlee Zane and Efren Carrillo. To demonstrate their commitment to protecting Sonoma County’s natural and agricultural lands easy, they must direct the Permit Resource and Management Department to implement a community separator work plan for the 2016 ballot measure that includes renewal, revisions of 20-year old policies and consideration of additional designations in priority areas.

Pressure is once again mounting to sacrifice Sonoma County’s greenbelts and communities to sprawl like we’ve seen throughout the Bay Area.

Maintaining policies that prevent sprawl is cost-effective for government and cities. The need for housing in Sonoma County can be met through infill development within existing footprints.

Please write or call your supervisor to support community separator renewal and expansion now, not later. (707)565-2241
Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org
Shirlee.Zane@sonoma-county.org
Efren.Carrillo@sonoma-county.org
James.Gore@sonoma-county.org
David.Rabbitt@sonoma-county.org

An action alert with sample letter is posted on Greenbelt Alliance’s website, greenbelt.org. To join the campaign, contact Teri shore at shore@greenbelt.org or 707-575-3661.

Meetings

Send all Meeting events by the 8th of the month to Carl Inglin: chinlin@sonic.net Sierra Club meetings are open to all members. 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).

Thurs. Oct. 1 - Solano Group ExCom
Come join us for our monthly meetings which rotate between Vallejo, Fairfield and Vacaville. We are working on 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. Oct. 5 - Sonoma Group
Santa Rosa Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway is the site of three related meetings:

Water Committee meets 5:00 – 5:30 p.m. Contact Len Holt: 707-527-7516 or holtl@sonic.net; Climate & Energy Committee at 5:30 p.m., Contact Shirley, shirlgirl707@yahoo.com, 707-206-1138; Conservation Committee at 6:00 p.m. Info: Suzanne Doyle carsort@gmail.com

Sonoma Group Executive Committee at 6:30 p.m. Info: Suzanne Doyle carsort@gmail.com

Tues. Oct. 13 – North Group
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.

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

Water Committee meets 5:00 – 5:30 p.m. Contact Len Holt: 707-527-7516 or holtl@sonic.net; Climate & Energy Committee at 5:30 p.m., Contact Shirley, shirlgirl707@yahoo.com, 707-206-1138; Conservation Committee at 6:00 p.m. Info: Suzanne Doyle carsort@gmail.com

Sonoma Group Executive Committee at 6:30 p.m. Info: Suzanne Doyle carsort@gmail.com
Tues. Nov. 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.

Sat. Nov. 14 - Redwood Chapter ExCom, And ConsCom
Location: Best Western in Willits. Conservation Committee meets at 10 a.m., ExCom meets 1–3 p.m. Info: Victoria vbrandon@lakelieve.info

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

Thurs. Nov. 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.

There will be no Water Committee meeting in December. Meeting dates for 2016 are January 4 and February 1.