EAST–WEST
ZOMBIE TRAIN
RETURNING FROM
THE DEAD...
AGAIN?
It’s time to take your right to vote as a responsibility, not just an option. Locally, the City of Eureka and the Humboldt Bay Harbor District have candidates running who have actually aligned themselves with the Trump inspired MAGA (Make America Great Again) movement. These folks are big supporters of turning Humboldt Bay into an industrial port and building the environmentally destructive east-west railroad to supply it. Read more in Tom Wheeler’s story on page 3.

In addition to our local elections, there will be other items for you to vote on. Propositions can be very confusing and titles can be misleading. Be sure to read the information provided in the sample ballot mailed to voters before the election. Also check the NEC website later in October where we will post the HOPE Coalition’s voter guide when it becomes available.

There are 11 propositions on the California November 2018 ballot. Here are three controversial examples:
• Proposition 3: California Water Infrastructure and Watershed Conservation Bond Initiative
• Proposition 4: Voter Approval for Future Gas and Vehicle Taxes and 2017 Tax Repeal Initiative
• Proposition 12: Farm Animal Confinement Initiative

The Sierra Club states that Proposition 3 benefits campaign funders and can harm the environment: “Prop 3 is a pay-to-play water bond for billionaires.” See their full editorial in the Mercury News at: https://tinyurl.com/cawaterbondprop3.

The Sierra Club also opposes Proposition 6. According to their July 9 press release, “the measure is an attempt to repeal Senate Bill 1, the Road Repair and Accountability Act, passed last year that raises about $5.2 billion a year to fix the state’s crumbling roads and bridges and improve public transit service. The funding is raised through an increase in taxes on gasoline and diesel fuel, marking the first gasoline tax increase since 1984.” Also, the California Chamber of Commerce estimates more than 680,000 good paying jobs would be eliminated if this proposition passes.

Proposition 12 is extremely controversial and it pits PETA and Friends of Animals against Center for Biological Diversity, Organic Consumers Association and the Humane Society. You should read extensive arguments on both sides of this to make up your own mind. For more detailed information on each of these and the other eight propositions, go to www.ballotpedia.org.

At the NEC, we’re keeping tabs on what’s happening with Last Chance Grade; Huffman’s Northwest California Wilderness, Recreation and Working Forests bill (H.R. 6596), which was introduced in Congress on July 26, 2018; two California

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News from the Center
Continued from previous page

...state bills to ban smoking in our state parks and beaches (SB 835 and SB 836); and the changes being proposed to SB 1029, which was once called the Great Redwood Trail Act.

Thanks to everyone who made it out to our Summer Slough Social at Carol & CJ Ralph’s house! The hikes through Lanphere Dunes were a highlight of the day, as was the delicious food and musical trio. It warmed our hearts to see so many of our supporters in one spot. Don’t miss out on this next year—mark your calendars for August 25, 2019!

On September 15, the NEC coordinated our 39th Annual Coastal Cleanup Day! The same weekend at the North Country Fair, we held our Second Annual Endangered Art Show and led another fantastic All Species Parade. Check out the photos on pages 5, 8, and 10 in this issue and on our website!

Coming up, mark your calendar for the return of the NEC Movie Night! Thursday, October 25 at the Arcata Playhouse, we’ll be showing the films Letter to Congress and Emptying the Skies. Both of these films are thought provoking and we plan on having some discussion afterwards. Doors open at 6 p.m., movies start at 6:30 p.m.

Volunteer Spotlight

Fred McLaughlin

In the early 1990’s, right before I ventured over to Humboldt County from Baton Rouge, Louisiana for a summer vacation, my old friend from Arcata mailed me a brochure packet containing the Redwood Summer edition of the EcoNews newspaper, whereupon I became impressed and fascinated by all of the articles on a wide variety of environmental topics. Because I had been a Geography major in college, I was amazingly able to understand the issues.

So after I ended up moving to Arcata, I started volunteering to record and edit the KHSU EcoNews Report in 1997 along with Tim McKay (as the only host at that time), and continued working after his passing up until now with a variety of EcoNews Report hosts.

I really feel grateful to be a part of the local earth-care energy effort, and welcome any volunteer who would like to learn about recording and editing the KHSU EcoNews Report radio program.

Fred McLaughlin. Photo: Bella Waters.

Interested in Serving on the NEC Board of Directors?
The NEC is looking for a couple of at-large board members. Desirable attributes include financial and/or legal expertise. Please email resume and letter of interest to board president Larry Glass.

Larry@yournec.org

The NEC is Hiring an Office Assistant
Help plan events, keep the office organized, and engage with the community.

For job description and how to apply, visit: https://www.yournec.org/officeassistant/

EcoNews Article Submissions Welcome!

Articles on subjects relevant to EcoNews readers may be submitted for consideration. Pitching your idea to the editor prior to submitting a draft is recommended. Articles must be submitted in digital format (email, Word doc, or Google doc) and may be edited for length or rejected for any reason. Include your name, phone number, and email with all submissions, to editor@yournec.org.

Letters to the Editor

Letters should be 300 words or less, be relevant to EcoNews readers and material covered in EcoNews, and must include the writer’s address and phone number. Letters may be edited and shortened for space. The NEC reserves the right to reject any submitted material for any reason (e.g., size, content, writing style, etc.).

Send to editor@yournec.org

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Fred McLaughlin. Photo: Bella Waters.

We have new shirts featuring our color logo!
Stop in our office at 415 I St., Arcata, to get yours today!

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Bouquets

• Bouquets to and attended our Summer Slough Social party, including our hosts CJ and Carol Ralph; oyster extraordinaires John Woolley, and Janet and Chuck Krull; fish grillers CJ and Gary Friedrichsen; music provided by Cindy Moyer, Karen Davy and Garrick Woods; event volunteers Barbara Reisman, Destiny Mancilla, Haley Isaacson, Gabe Richards, Simon Bueche, Katlynn Russo, and Papa & Barkley; flower arrangements by Barbara Wilkinson, Chris Beresford, and Madison Peters; and food donations from Arise Bakery, Brio Breadworks, Coast Seafoods, Cypress Grove, Ramone’s Bakery, Redwood Roots Farm, Salt Fish House, Shakefork Community Farm, and Violet Green Winery.

• Bouquets to SCRAP Humboldt, Same Old People, Humboldt Bandemonium, Arcata Playhouse, and everyone who came out to make this year’s All Species Parade spectacular!

• Bouquets to this year’s Coastal Cleanup Day sponsors: Coast Central Credit Union, Coast Seafoods Company, Crestmark, GHD, Hensel’s Ace Hardware, North Coast Co-op, Pacific Gas & Electric, Papa & Barkley, Pierson Building Center, Samara Restoration, The Shop, Sierra Club, and Visual Concepts, plus all the amazing site captains and volunteers who came out!
EAST-WEST TRAIN BACK FROM THE DEAD—AGAIN

Tom Wheeler

Like a zombie, the east-west railroad is back from the dead. Last we looked, in February 2017, Trinity County gave the idea a fatal blow by refusing a grant to perform a feasibility study of the railroad (when was the last time you saw a local government turn down free money?) and Eureka drove the final nails in the coffin by withdrawing its support of the railroad. But now the railroad proposal is back from the dead, and like in any zombie movie, it is scarier now.

Today’s train proposal is similar to past ideas—a rail line running from the I-5 corridor to Humboldt Bay, siphoning enough shipments from other ports to bring in big freight ships and oodles of blue collar jobs—but the new proposal is more fanciful. We environmentalists have ignored this new version because, to be frank, we thought this proposal was so absurd that it deserved no attention. But now that salesman and politicians are pushing this new train proposal, it is time to remind people: not only is this a dumb idea that is not worth your time, but local “investors” may be bilked of their money. Here’s why.

The idea of an east-west railroad has been studied ad nauseum, from the 1909 Lentell study to a 2013 study produced for the Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District. Each time it has been studied, the practical difficulties of constructing a rail line—the route would need to cross our infamously unstable and steep coast range—would drive up costs. The 2013 study concluded that the cost of developing a rail line would be 1.1 to 1.2 billion dollars. Based on that cost, “the estimated volume of rail cargo required to make a new rail route to Humboldt County economically feasible would make Humboldt Bay one of the largest dry bulk ports on the West Coast”—larger than Seattle, Tacoma, Vancouver, Long Beach and Los Angeles. A port in Humboldt offers few competitive advantages to these existing ports and a number of substantial disadvantages.

Today’s proposal comes at a much steeper cost. Project proponents estimate the rail construction to cost four billion—“plus”, together with another six billion—“plus” for port development. With no government willing to front the cash to develop the project—again, because this is a boondoggle—the developers are trying to gather $10 million in seed money from local “investors” to prove, supposedly, that there is local buy-in on the project.

This investment, as outlined in documents by Ryan Burns in the Lost Coast Outpost, more resembles a Ponzi scheme than an actual business. According to Burns’ reporting, investors were promised that once the first $100 million in gross proceeds was raised from a subsequent stock offering, initial investors would be paid back at four times their initial investment. Regardless of whether that amount—or any additional amount—is ever raised, those closest to the project are to be paid for their “work.” To be fair to the project developers, they offer clear warning signs that this is a scam. In all caps, the Outpost states, proponents warn: “THERE IS NO MARKET FOR THE COMPANY’S SECURITIES. NO INVESTMENT IN THE CLASS A UNITS SHOULD BE MADE BY ANY PERSON NOT FINANCIALLY ABLE TO LOSE THE ENTIRE AMOUNT OF SUCH INVESTMENT.” Similarly, a brochure for the railroad states, “Although we are very hopeful and optimistic that Pacific Northwest Railroad will become a reality, we must state loud and clear that this proposal is not a ‘sure thing’ or a ‘slam dunk.’ ”

There are other warning signs that this is a scam as well. Instead of standard diesel engines, proponents tout that trains will be “pulled” by locomotives powered by liquid hydrogen and emit nothing except water and limited amounts of heat,” never mind the fact that hydrogen fuel has not been employed to pull freight trains. Or maybe, more glaringly, that one of the companies involved, Pacific Charter Financial, misspells their own name on their website.

Why should we care if fools and their money are soon parted? Because this train obsession is getting in the way of actual governance. Instead of putting coastal dependent industrial lands to use, these lands too often sit gathering weeds waiting for the day when trains come back. Instead of converting old, unused railroad tracks to bike paths, train fans throw fits because “someday” these right of ways will be needed for rail. And instead of developing a modern vision of a working Humboldt Bay, like potentially becoming a hub for floating offshore wind development (something actually in the works), we are forced to rehash the same fights.
A Century of Efforts to Save Redwoods

Dan Sealy

For those who love redwood forests, with their towering trunks and carpets of ferns and redwood sorrel, 2018 has been a year of celebrations. The Save-the-Redwoods League is celebrating its 100th anniversary; Redwood National Park was established 50 years ago, and 40 years ago the Redwoods Expansion Act enlarged the park by another 48,000 acres.

The efforts to protect impressive groves of coast redwoods started as soon as settlers laid eyes on them, these forests that were so crucial to the lives of Native Americans.

The concept for the Save-the-Redwoods League was simple—donations were used to purchase important groves or tracts of land threatened by logging and donate those forests to the state of California. These areas then became parks for protection. The iconic large wooden signs, with yellow routed lettering identifying memorial groves, sprung up quickly. Redwood forests saved in this manner became the crown jewels of the state park system we know today: Richardson Grove, Humboldt Redwoods, Prairie Creek, Del Norte Redwoods and Jedediah Smith State Parks.

In the 1950s, redwood logging was still a major economic driver for coastal northern California and the saved groves were becoming isolated pockets of forests. In 1955, winter storms toppled 500 towering giants in Rockefeller Forest on Bull Creek, exposing the results of logging the upper reaches of watersheds. State parks were too small to fully protect the groves. As fewer old-growth trees remained, logging became more intense. Tourists driving along the Redwood Highway were shocked not only to see huge redwoods on trucks barreling through the state parks, but also the endless barren, treeless landscape along roads to popular destinations like Fern Canyon.

Many conservation organizations locally and nationally backed the creation of a national park to protect sustainable watersheds of forests, not just isolated groves. Timber companies were determined to remove all commercial trees, and logging was the primary source of employment for the region’s labor force. Most conservationists understood that the pressure to clear-cut was created by timber company corporate goals, rather than by loggers who were trying to make a living. Regardless, the region’s community became fractured and threats were made on both sides of the issue.

At the same time, the California Transportation Department (CalTrans) began a long-term plan to push a modern freeway connecting San Francisco to Oregon right through the heart of the redwoods—including through groves citizens had worked to protect. The freeway began in the parks of southern Humboldt now collectively known as the Avenue of the Giants. Forests were fragmented by roads, and the river was left surrounded by upper slopes where trees had been harvested. In the summer of 1960, with no irony at all, California Governor Edward Brown, father of today’s Gov. Jerry Brown, stood along the new multi-lane 101 freeway that cut through Humboldt Redwoods and proudly proclaimed: “…What we have done here will be done elsewhere in the redwoods—at Prairie Creek, Jedediah Smith and Richardson Grove!”

This plan caught the League in the crosshairs. “Thousands of Americans who contributed to the League did not intend the acres purchased with their donations to be assured to speed traveling salesmen and logging trucks,” wrote Sierra Club President Ed Wayburn.

One league donor wrote: “I am sorry not to contribute again to you but the State of California has welched on the understanding that existed when contributions have been made to preserve inviable for all time as natural areas.” Continued on page 13
YOU made a difference for our Coasts and Waterways on Coastal Cleanup Day

The Northcoast Environmental Center held the 39th Annual Coastal Cleanup Day on Saturday, September 15—our biggest event of the year!

For those of you who don’t know what Coastal Cleanup Day is, or the unique history it has here on the North Coast, here are a few fun facts. Now an international event, Coastal Cleanup Day began right here in Humboldt in 1979 as the Beach Beautification Project—a program conceived by Joe Abbott and his wife, Anne Morrissey in partnership with the NEC. The Beach Beautification Project evolved into Adopt-A-Beach, a program we still have at the NEC today.

After a few years, the program drew the attention of the California Coastal Commission and became a statewide cleanup. Next came the adoption by the Ocean Conservancy—turning this small town event into the world’s largest single-day volunteering event.

We at the NEC are incredibly honored by such a rich history. Next year, we are looking at our 40th anniversary and we hope to have our largest turnout yet!

This year’s cleanups drew over 57,000 people statewide, who cleaned up over 267 tons of debris from the coast! Data on the North Coast is still trickling in, but our current count stands at over 700 volunteers, 52 site captains, and 45 sites in Humboldt County. These wonderful volunteers cleaned up over six tons of debris from our local watersheds!

Many of our volunteers have been participating in Coastal Cleanup Day for several years (and even decades!), and we love to see them coming back every year.

We would also like to thank our sponsors for all of the support we received and helping to make this event possible year after year! We cannot thank all of you enough for your commitment to making this event such a success and keeping our watersheds clear of unwanted debris!

THANK YOU!

Photos by Megan Bunday, Destiny Mancilla, and Joe McKenzie.

With 3/4 of the cleanup sites reporting, the statewide totals are:
- 57,694 volunteers who picked up
- 487,053 pounds of trash and an additional
- 46,949 pounds of recyclables for a total of 534,002 pounds collected along 1,025 miles of waterways.

Preliminary North Coast Totals:
- 52 site captains
- ~ 45 cleanup sites
- ~ 700 volunteers

Over 6 tons of debris collected

For more information visit: yournec.org/coastalcleanup
2018 Coastal Cleanup Day Site Captains

Many thanks to our Site Captains!
The following is a list of sites for which data had been submitted by the time of EcoNews printing:

- Lee Rusconi - Big Lagoon County Park
- Rebecca Lueck, Trinidad Union School - Trinidad State Beach
- Carol Mone - Indian Beach/ Old Home Beach
- Greg Gibbs - Baker Beach
- Natalianne Tuttle, Norcal Beach Clean - Agate Beach
- Lucia Boyer, Eureka High School - Eureka High and Surrounding Areas
- Ben Morehead, Vanessa Munoz, Trinidad Coastal Land Trust - Luffenholtz & Moonstone Beaches
- Josh Koepeke, Samara Restoration - Murray Road Beach
- Allison Rafferty - Shay Park
- Simon Bueche, Northcoast Environmental Center - Clam Beach
- Aimee and Matt Beard - Samoa Beach
- HSU Chemistry Club - Arcata Marsh
- Lea Eider - Mad River County Park
- Le Club du Pied et La Bouche - Samoa Beach
- Alicia Hamann, Friends of the Eel - Crab Park
- Ashley Donnell, HSU Women's Rowing - Eureka Waterfront
- Joe McKenzie, Coast Seafoods - Palco Marsh
- Lynn Casillas, GHD - Arcata Bay Trail
- Debbie Marshall - Freshwater Lagoon
- HSU YES House - Clam Beach
- Humboldt Skindivers - Trinidad Harbor (Underwater)
- Coastal Grove School - Mad River Beach County Park
- George Ziminsky, Friends of Arcata Marsh (FOAM) - Arcata Marsh
- Kiya Villarreal, North Coast Co-op - Mad River Slough at Hwy 255/Samoa Blvd.
- Mad River Alliance - Mad River
- Jess Barger, Friends of the Dunes - Manila Dunes/Humboldt Coastal Nature Center/Friends of the Dunes (Stamps Lane)
- Damien Langsten, California Conservation Corps - Ma-lei’ Dunes South
- USCG - Samoa Blvd: Beach to USCG Station
- Lost Coast Rotaract - Samoa Beach: Power Poles
- Tim Haywood, PacOut Green Team - Samoa Beach: Samoa Bridge, Vance Avenue
- Surfrider Humboldt - Samoa Beach: Power Poles
- Blondies - LK Wood
- College of the Redwoods - Mattole Estuary
- Heather Brown & Dan Tangey, East High School - South Jetty/South Spit
- Jan Hawkes - King Salmon Beaches
- Olivia Santangini, Papa & Barkley - King Salmon Beaches
- Jenny McCarthy, Redwood Coast Zoo Keepers Association - Eureka Waterfront Trail
- Rachel Montgomery, PG&E Vegetation Management - Table Bluff County Park Beach to Eel River Mouth
- Amber Patzlaff - Fortuna Riverwalk
- Sea Scout Ship Yankee - Woodley Island/ Humboldt Bay
- Humboldt State Slackliners Club - Patrick's Point
- Daniel Tibbetts, California Conservation Corps - Centerville Beach County Parks
- Malia Freedlund, Mattole Elementary School - McNutt Gulch along the 7 Mile Stretch
- Fortuna High School Creeks/ Fortuna Interact Club - Table Bluff County Park Beach to Eel River Mouth
- Jen Kalt & Jasmin Segura, Humboldt Baykeeper, Wiyot Tribe, Humboldt Bay Aquatic Center, and Hog Island Oyster Company - Indian Island

Can’t Get Enough? Adopt-a-Beach!

Unable to make it out for Coastal Cleanup Day but still want to do your part? Have a passion for preventing debris from entering our waterways? Adopt-A-Beach through the NEC and give our beaches some love year round!

We provide bags, gloves, and other supplies. You clean up your adopted site on your own schedule! Contact us for more information:

707-822-6918
adoptabeach@yournec.org
yournec.org/adoptabeach

Support Our Sponsors
National Trails System Celebrates 50 Years

Ian Nelson

The year 1968 was a tumultuous one in our nation’s history, but it was also a significant year for redwoods (see page 4) and trails. President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the National Trails System Act into law on October 2, 1968.

The Act created a system of trails whose designations included National Scenic, National Historic, and National Recreation trails. The first two National Scenic Trails, designated on that day, were the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) and Appalachian Trail (AT). In the years since, nine National Scenic Trails have been added to the system, along with nineteen National Historic Trails and more than 1,000 National Recreation Trails. The Scenic and Historic designations require an act of Congress, while the Recreation Trail designation is an administrative one.

Trails have long been part of our nation’s history. Since humans first set out in search of food and water, we’ve created trails and pathways. In North America, native peoples blazed trails between summer and winter homes and hunting grounds. As Europeans settled the western part of the continent, they traveled across the Lewis and Clark Trail and the Oregon Trail, which have now been established as National Historic Trails.

Thanks to visionaries from the early part of the 20th century, the National Scenic Trails are prime examples of grassroots activism. Leaders such as Catherine Montgomery and Clinton C. Clarke on the PCT and Benton MacKaye on the AT conceived the ideas and made them happen.

Catherine Montgomery envisioned “a high winding trail down the heights of our western mountains” as early as 1926. Under the direction of Clarke, Warren Rogers led a series of YMCA relays along the PCT in the mid-1930s to get the PCT route on the map. Clarke worked tirelessly on behalf of the PCT at the grassroots level and that work eventually led to the creation of the Pacific Crest Trail Association, the primary private partner with U.S. Forest Service in managing the PCT.

Another important and somewhat lesser known piece of the history is the 1966 Trails for Outdoor Recreation. From the report: “In the Cascade Mountains of Washington and Oregon and the Sierra Nevada of California is found some of the earth’s most sublime scenery. Beloved by the famous naturalist John Muir, they include a generous share of the continent’s most verdant forests, tallest and oldest trees, highest mountains, and most breathtaking waterfalls. The Pacific Crest Trail traditionally...”

Gov. Brown Signs 100% Clean Energy Bill

Katy Gurin

Earlier this month, Governor Brown signed a plan to bring 100 percent clean grid electricity to California by 2045. State Senator Kevin de Leon, who is running against Dianne Feinstein for U.S. Senate, was SB 100’s principal author and chief advocate.

SB100 was one of the biggest climate bills advocates had rallied around during the 2017-2018 session. The bill will set “the nation’s strongest clean energy goals under legislation,” according to the LA Times, (although Hawaii had already passed comparable legislation) and California’s “boldest energy target yet,” according to David Roberts at Vox.

In a nutshell, SB 100 does two things:

1. It accelerates the requirements of the state’s primary renewable energy program—the Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS)—from 50 percent to 60 percent by 2030.

2. It establishes a new policy that 100 percent of the electricity produced to meet end-uses comes from zero-carbon resources by 2045. “Zero-carbon” includes renewables (along with “baseload” renewables like geothermal and some biomass), large hydro, nuclear power, or natural gas with carbon capture and storage (CCS).

The 100 percent target is important. We know that the world needs to transition off of fossil fuels (and start drawing down atmospheric carbon) immediately. That means, in part, ending the use of certain types of technologies, such as fossil fuel electricity generation, gas and diesel powered vehicles, and gas-powered home heating and cooking, as soon as possible, preferably well before mid-century. Yet, policy in the past has focused on gradual, aggregate emissions cuts that seem to leave a certain amount of wiggle room on new fossil fuel infrastructure.

At the beginning of the session, some thought SB 100 would pass easily, particularly given that the state legislature had...
Onshore and Offshore Wind Energy Projects Proposed for Humboldt

Hannah Sargent
This article was originally published on August 16 on the NEC’s website, www.yournec.org.

As the world’s finite energy sources continue to be depleted—creating massive environmental damage and increasing the rate of climate change along the way—shifting to renewable energy sources is more important than ever, and renewable energy sources are proving to be a necessary change in moving toward a more sustainable future.

A major energy source that presents a potential alternative to non-renewable energy in Humboldt County is wind energy, in which wind turbines convert the naturally-existing energy in wind to mechanical energy and ultimately to electrical power. This can then be used to power homes, businesses, etc. without burning fossil fuels and causing the inevitable environmental harm that comes along with that process.

Experts have noted that Humboldt County is a prime location for wind energy projects, with substantial energy potential relative to other regions. According to sustainable energy experts at the Arcata-based Schatz Energy Research Center, “Our local area is blessed with abundant renewable energy resources. By using our wind resource, Humboldt County can serve as a role model for other regions attempting to reduce their reliance on fossil fuels.”

Recognizing that Humboldt County holds great potential for producing wind energy, multiple organizations have proposed wind energy projects for the local area in recent years.

A few years back, Shell Wind proposed a wind energy farm to be built at Bear River Ridge near Ferndale—though this project was withdrawn in 2012 due to local opposition and declining natural gas prices.

Continued on page 20
Looking Back, Looking Forward

The 115th Congress (2017-2018) is about to wrap up most of its business. Elections in November will determine the make-up of both the House and Senate for the 116th Congress which will be sworn in January 2019.

Looking back, the 115th Congress has been a never-ending struggle for conservationists. With the Republican Party in charge of both chambers, they have been emboldened to attempt more anti-conservation legislation than we’ve seen in any recent Congress. Legislation to alter or attack the conservation legislation than we’ve seen in any recent Congress. Currently there is, in effect, no firewall against bad legislation except the voice of the people. If the November elections do not result in a change in Congress, the expectation is for an emboldened anti-conservation agenda that will require an even more heroic effort by conservation organizations to protect environmental and public health. If one or more chamber flips, that chamber or chambers will not only carry the potential to change the very nature of the legislative agenda but will also have the power to stop much of the worst actions by both Congress and the administration.

Budget Appropriations

Appropriations will be complete by the print date of this EcoNews unless Congress and the President can’t agree and shut down the government to negotiate on budget differences. At present it is expected that most of the anti-environmental riders in the House version of the Farm Bill will be removed by negotiations in the House-Senate conference committee. The committee also discussed positive programs for organic farming, land conservation, and rural jobs in clean energy. However, if the more politically charged new requirements for Food Stamps (SNAP) recipients are not worked out, those riders might be back on the table. Rep. Conaway (R-TX) and Senator Stabenow (D-MI) have not come to an agreement. President Trump has weighed in supporting Conaway. Stabenow pushed back saying: “In case you missed it, the Senate passed a bipartisan Farm Bill that got 86 votes—the most ever.”

“I’m not letting politics distract me from working across the aisle to finalize a good bill that will deliver certainty for farmers and families in Michigan and across the country.”

This is the bill most likely to come down to the wire at the September 30 deadline, as this issue of EcoNews goes to print.

Volunteer policy intern Jose Cervantes contributed to this article.

VOTE NOVEMBER 6!
The deadline to register to vote in California is October 22. To register, check your registration, or for more information, visit: https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD
SAVE THIS LIST OF CONTACTS FOR YOUR REFERENCE

HUMBOLDT COUNTY SUPERVISORS
825 5th Street, Room 111
Eureka, CA 95501

1st District - Rex Bohn
707-476-2391
rbohn@co.humboldt.ca.us

2nd District - Estelle Fennell
707-476-2392
efennell@co.humboldt.ca.us

3rd District - Mike Wilson
707-476-2393
mike.wilson@co.humboldt.ca.us

4th District - Virginia Bass
707-476-2394
vbass@co.humboldt.ca.us

5th District - Ryan Sundberg
707-476-2395
rsundberg@co.humboldt.ca.us

U.S. SENATORS - CALIFORNIA

Senator Diane Feinstein
https://feinstein.senate.gov/public
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20510
Phone: 202-224-3841

Senator Kamala Harris
https://harris.senate.gov
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20510
Phone: 202-224-3553

Look up other senators here:
https://www senate.gov/senators/index.htm

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE - CALIFORNIA DISTRICT 2

Congressman Jared Huffman
https://huffman.house.gov
1406 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515
Phone: 202-225-5161

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CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR

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https://www.gov.ca.gov
Governor Edmund G. Brown
c/o State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: 916-445-2841

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LOOKING FOR SOMEONE NOT ON THIS LIST?
WWW.USA.GOV/ELECTED-OFFICIALS
Over 60 pieces of art were submitted for the NEC’s second Endangered Art Show! The art was displayed at our booth at the North Country Fair, September 15 and 16. Here are just a few of the amazing pieces we received!

From left: San Joaquin kit fox by Ciera Wilbur, yellow-billed cuckoo by Sara Curtis, a bat by Marina (Grant School), In Memory of Sudan (northern white rhinoceros) by Mairead Dodd, hawkbill sea turtle by Elora Steffen.

...served horseback and foot travelers. This use pattern, accepted by most visitors to the trail, should be continued.”

Two years later, the PCT would become one of the nation’s first National Scenic Trails.

As we reflect on 50 years of our national trails, there are now 11 National Scenic Trails across the country creating a true system of trails that capture a variety of experiences. From Florida to the Olympic Peninsula and from Arizona to New England, there are more than 15,000 miles of trail offering the opportunity to walk for a day, a weekend, or perhaps many months at a time.

I first discovered the Appalachian Trail as a boy growing up in Maryland. I took some of my first long walks in the woods on the AT in western Maryland and in Virginia’s Shenandoah National Park. Later, while a student at Virginia Tech, I volunteered my weekends to help maintain the AT in Southwest Virginia. Volunteers around the country contribute hundreds of thousands of hours a year to our National Trails System. This incredible spirit of volunteer stewardship is a crucial part of the system and was referenced in the act itself. To learn more about the PCT and opportunities to volunteer, visit www.pcta.org. And, to learn more about the National Trails System, visit www.pnts.org.

So, get outside and experience one of your National Trails this fall. They are a true American treasure.

Ian Nelson has been the Pacific Crest Trail Association’s Regional Representative for Northern California and Southern Oregon for the past 14 years and is based in Medford, OR. He can be reached at inelson@pcta.org.

Sierra Club Endorses Richard Marks for Harbor District Div. 4 Commissioner

The Sierra Club has endorsed Richard Marks for a third term as Humboldt Bay Harbor, Conservation and Recreation District Division Four Commissioner. The District has made progress on a wide range of environmental challenges in recent years. A hallmark of his tenure has been effective working relations among the various officeholders and regulatory authorities. Most notably, Mr. Marks played an important leadership role in EPA’s 2013 emergency cleanup of the abandoned Evergreen Pulp site, removing three million gallons of dangerous toxic chemicals. Marks’s dedication and his background in local industry have been valuable assets to his constituents, and to the rest of us around Humboldt Bay.

“We are proud to join Richard Marks’s long list of supporters in the 2018 election,” said North Group Redwood Chapter Political Chair Ned Forsyth.

MAKE SURE YOUR VOICE IS HEARD AND EFFECTIVE

Don’t just get frustrated or angry with what is going on in Washington.

Joining the NEC’s Action Group!

Joining is easy! Just send an email to Dan.Sealy@yournec.org to have your name and email added to the action list members.

We have hosted Teach-Ins and attended Town Halls. Join us for letter-writing events, meetings, rallies and teach-ins and learn how you can help save the planet.

Watch our website and EcoNews for updates. Don’t be frustrated and angry—be effective!

WWW.YOURNEC.ORG
Focus on a watershed approach to land management

Steve Madrone on a backpacking trip to Caribou Lake in July 2018. Photo: Don Allan.

Over a four year period, more than 60 workers benefitted from the program. Steve also worked as a “circuit rider” and watershed coordinator, consulting with and assisting fledgling watershed programs throughout the western states in organizing their groups into non-profit organizations.

Another of Steve’s passions was building trails to connect communities and neighborhoods. In the late 1980s, he spear-headed the building of the Hammond Trail from Knox Cove to Widow White Creek, and from Vista Point to Clam Beach, and set the wheels in motion for the eventual completion of the “Hole-in-the-Hammond” in 2007. Steve also worked on the Little River Trail Feasibility Study to extend the Coastal Trail across the Little River.

In 2006, Steve returned to HSU to pursue a Master of Science degree in Watershed Management. At the same time he worked as a consultant in helping prepare the Trinidad Integrated Coastal Watershed Management Plan. The Plan led to securing millions of dollars in grants to protect the Trinidad Area of Special Biological Significance (the kelp beds around Trinidad Head) and protect the city’s water supply, including a first of its kind grant from the Department of Public Health that treated the sediment sources in the Luffenholtz Creek rather than just treating the excessive turbidity at the water plant.

After receiving his master’s degree, Steve worked as a hydrology lecturer at HSU and became the executive director of the Mattole Salmon Group, overseeing innovative projects in the Mattole estuary, including restoring grasslands by digging up large trees encroaching on the meadows and transporting the trees, roots and all, to the estuary by helicopter to provide cover and habitat diversity for salmon in the estuary.

Thanks to his hard work, effective campaigning, and coalition building, Steve’s narrow but monumental victory in the Board of Supervisors election in June fulfills a long time dream.
President’s Column
By Alexa DeJoannis

This is my favorite birding season: the time of year when birds are molting into fresh coats! As a fan of the marvels of feather molt, I enjoy seeing the process on an individual basis: symmetrical gaps in wing spreads; glossy new feathers intermixed with the ragged and faded; and roots of peeps showing a diverse progress of feather replacement. No offense to mammals (at least, those of you who don’t molt), but feather molt is a pretty dramatic way to replace your outer layer.

This is also a season of renewal for RRAS. We are forming a Steering Committee that will meet over the next several months to re-examine our mission, our strategy for fulfilling it, and future directions for RRAS. Your Audubon chapter needs your input! We are also searching for new members of our leadership team ahead of annual elections. If you’d like to find out more about how you can make a difference in your local environment, check out our website (www.rras.org). Feel free to contact chapter leaders directly or board@rras.org with questions.

FIELD TRIPS (continued)

Saturday, October 20: Southern Humboldt Community Park in Garberville. Meet leader Tom Leskiw at 9 a.m. at Tooby Park, one mile out on Sprowl Creek Road on the right. The walk is an easy 2- to 3-hour stroll. If you’re late you can easily catch up by walking towards the barn! Organic shade-grown (bird-friendly) coffee and extra binoculars are usually provided. No dogs, please. Porta-potty available on the trail. For information contact Jay at 707-923-2695 or Jaysooter10@gmail.com. Heavy rain cancels.

Saturday, October 20: Twilight Walk. Let’s stroll along the new Waterfront Trail and observe night fall on the Bay. Meet at 6 p.m. on 2nd St. next to Target in Eureka. Call Alexa DeJoannis at 707-826-7031 for more information.

Sunday, October 21: Eureka Waterfront. Meet at 9 a.m. by the concrete fishing pier at the foot of W. Del Norte St., where we will scope for birds off the public dock until everyone assembles. We will then drive to the base of the Hikshari’ Trail at Tuesdale Street and bird along the trail to the Elk River Wildlife Sanctuary. Contact Ralph Bucher at 707-499-1247 or thebook@reninet.com for more information.

Whose Butt Is This? Arcata Marsh, Sep. 23, 2018 © George Ziminsky. (Hint: this is a rather rare species locally.) See page 4 for answer.

Chapter leaders, members, and friends are invited to join Audubon California November 2-4 in Long Beach for the 2018 Audubon Assembly! Meet with chapter leaders, members, and partners from all over the state to enjoy birding coastal wetlands and other unique areas, explore conservation opportunities and practices, share stories with leaders from various regions, and establish peer-to-peer collaborations and partnerships. Please visit the Audubon California website at http://ca.audubon.org/about/chapters/audubon-california-assembly to register, reserve lodging, and see the agenda, or email chapternetworkca@audubon.org.
FIELD TRIPS

Every Saturday: Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary. These are our famous, rain-or-shine, docent-led field trips at the Marsh. Bring your binocular(s) and have a great morning birding! Meet in the parking lot at the end of South I Street (Klopp Lake) in Arcata at 8:30 a.m. Trips end around 11 a.m. Walks led by: Christine Keil (Oct 6); Cindy Moyer (Oct 13); Keith Slauson (Oct 20); Michael Morris (Oct 27). If you are interested in leading a Marsh walk, please contact Ken Burton at shrikethree@gmail.com.

Saturday, October 6: Azalea State Natural Reserve. Let’s amble through the thickets, looking for songbirds. Exit Hwy 101 north of the Mad River onto North Bank Rd., then turn left on Azalea Rd. in about a mile. Parking lot on left within a tenth of a mile. Meet at 9 a.m. Call Alexa DeJoannis at 707-826-7031 for more information.

Saturday, October 13: Willow Creek Bird Walk. Meet at Studio 299 (75 The Terrace, Willow Creek) starting at 9 a.m. We will depart promptly at 9:30 for our destination; carpooling available. Walks generally run 2-3 hours. All ages, abilities and interest levels welcome! For more information, please contact Birgitte Elbek at 707-267-4140 or willowcreekBirdWalks@gmail.com.

Saturday, October 13: Ferndale Birding Stroll. This is an easy walk through town, looking for our favorite backyard birds. Meet at 9 a.m. outside La Purisima cafe, 627 Shaw Ave, Ferndale. Call Alexa DeJoannis for 707-826-7031 for more information.

Sunday, October 14: Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge. This is a wonderful 2-to 3-hour trip for people wanting to learn the birds of the Humboldt Bay area. It takes a leisurely pace with emphasis on enjoying the birds! Beginners are more than welcome. Meet at the Refuge Visitor Center at 9 a.m. Call Jude Power at 707-822-3613 for more information.

PROGRAM: OCT. 12

Madagascar “Burning While We Speak!”

Madagascar, like Borneo and New Guinea, has lured naturalists since the first modern explorers made landfall. The island’s 80-million-year isolation has produced large numbers of endemic species. It is now suggested that of the 200,000 species that make Madagascar home, 80% occur nowhere else.

Last year, local marine biologist and commercial fisherman Gary Friedrichsen spent a month visiting the island with two friends. Gary’s travelogue features images of the varied landscape, flora, and fauna of this amazing region. He will discuss the many challenges and issues facing the inhabitants of this extremely threatened ecosystem.

PROGRAM: NOV. 9

The Road to Recovery: Snowy Plovers on the Oregon Coast

Snowy Plovers were once a common West Coast beach-nesting bird. As the human population increased, plovers suffered significant declines on the West Coast. In Oregon, surveys conducted from the early 1970s thru 1990 showed drastic declines, and by 1990, there were fewer than 50 plovers remaining at only a handful of nesting sites. In 1990, The Nature Conservancy began a monitoring program to determine how many plovers remained, where they were breeding, and helped coordinate and implement a recovery program along the Oregon coast. We present a history of the recovery effort, what recovery looks like, and what lessons in wildlife management we have learned. David J. Lauten has been studying Snowy Plovers for the Oregon Biodiversity Information Center since 1997.

A baobab tree, an iconic species of Madagascar © Gary Friedrichsen

Snowy plover chick © Kathy Castelein

Doors open at 7 p.m. Come early to socialize! Programs start at 7:30 p.m. at Six Rivers Masonic Lodge, 251 Bayside Road, Arcata. Bring a mug to enjoy shade-grown coffee and come fragrance-free.
At the Refuge

In October, celebrate National Wildlife Refuge Week by checking out the following free activities at Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

**Sunday, October 7, 10 a.m.-noon. Kayak & Canoe Hooken Slough.** On this high-tide paddle around Teal Island and Hooken Slough, you might see double-crested cormorants, Caspian terns, flocks of shorebirds, and other wildlife. You must bring your own non-motorized, hard-keel boat and Personal Flotation Devices for all people in your boat. Bring water and a snack. Take the Hooken Road exit off Hwy 101, exit #696 in Loleta, and follow Hooken Road west about one mile to the Hooken Slough Trailhead and boat launch.

**Saturday, October 13, 6-8 p.m. Nest in Peace.** Come view a collection of bird nests from North America on display from 6-7 p.m. then hear a presentation about them and the birds that created them beginning at 7 p.m. with Joyce Melin. Meet at the Visitor Center, 1020 Ranch Road, Loleta.

**Sunday, October 14, 1-4 p.m. Humboldt Bay Refuge Friends Art & Nature presents “Owls, Bats & Spiders, Oh My!” Fun, hands-on art and nature exploration activities for everyone. Drop-in, rain or shine. Local artists and all materials provided. Meet at the Visitor Center, 1020 Ranch Road, Loleta. Call 707-733-5406 or visit www.fws.gov/refuge/humboldt_bay/ for more information.”

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**Binoculars Backwards: A Microcosm of Complex Cannabis Confusion**

_By Jim Clark_

Various philosophies have embraced the concept that everything is connected to everything else. It wasn’t until the 1949 publication of _A Sand County Almanac_ by Aldo Leopold that the connectivity principle was framed in the context that gave birth to the conservation movement as we know it today. We continue to struggle with how to deal with ourselves and the environment as we discover more complexity and connectivity within our world. Discovering new facts about how we are connected to the world sometimes confronts us with realities that are unpleasant or inconvenient to face and take appropriate action on. This is especially true when the facts indicate a reversal or significant departure from our current course.

We humans have bestowed on the world a whole new layer of complexity with our social, civil, and technological systems. These systems interact with all the complex natural systems: more cogs and wheels.

A local example is the way Humboldt County is attempting to deal with recently state-regulated cannabis production. A high tax is placed on land on which cannabis is grown, after which there are more state and local taxes. Depending on the city, about one-third of the price for retail cannabis is tax. Add to that low wholesale prices and a significant black market and you’ve got trouble in the Emerald Triangle. Opinions vary, but I have not read or heard many that hold that Humboldt County has crafted a sustainable plan for the cannabis sector.

But wait, there’s more! Lots more! For example, there are at least 6,000 (conservative estimate) cannabis grow sites in Humboldt County that are currently operating in the black market or are abandoned. These are not the 1,700 or so that have applied for or are being permitted; these 6,000 are being dealt with on a complaint basis. Humboldt County Planning does not appear to have a plan to abate these illegal grow sites in a reasonable timeframe. Meanwhile, these non-permitted sites continue to pose an environmental threat to a degree that is not thoroughly known.

In a nutshell, Humboldt County has embarked on a cannabis regulation program that may not be economically sustainable, while failing to have a plan to deal with a massive number of non-permitted developments in a reasonable length of time.

What does this have to do with birds? Non-permitted vegetation removal, grading, stream diversion, refuse disposal, and pesticide contamination at thousands of sites negatively affect the low- and middle-elevation woodlands that are important breeding-bird habitat.

We all enjoy nature in special ways. With that enjoyment comes some responsibility to ensure that it continues. If we only see the cogs and wheels of an American Goldfinch feeding on a sunflower, we need to look, think, and act more widely if we are to protect what we enjoy. The social, civil, scientific, and technical aspects of our community all play a part in protecting and preserving birds and their habitat. For that to continue, we must provide the guidance to assure that our government is worthy of the public trust.

So, find your passion in nature and protect it.

*Note: I hope “Binoculars Backwards” will be an irregular feature that will explore the wider complications of various conservation issues and look more closely at the details, like looking backwards through binoculars.*

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"Thank You Volunteers!

All of you who have donated time to our chapter in the past year are cordially invited to attend the Annual Volunteer Appreciation Brunch on Sunday, October 28, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Emmerson Room at Humboldt Area Foundation, 363 Indianola Road in Bayside. There will be a nature/birding walk from 10-11 a.m., meeting just outside the Emmerson Room and following the Lynn Vietor Nature Trail. RRAS will furnish a selection of delicious brunch items, including citrus punch with or without champagne.

Please RSVP, indicating number in your party, by October 26 to Denise at daseeger@gmail.com or 707-444-2399.

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Rob Fowler (below) watching a juvenile sharp-tailed sandpiper (photo at left) at Centerville in September. © Alexa DeJoannis.
Domestic Cats are the Number-One Threat to Wild Birds

By Gail Kenny

I’m a birder and I’m also a cat lover. I have a vivid childhood memory of our Siamese cat, John, running along the back fence with a ball of string in his mouth containing tiny naked songbird chicks. I was shocked as he ate them before I could rescue them. In the 1960s almost everyone’s pet cat spent a lot of time outdoors. Litter boxes in the house were rare, so cats were trained to go outside to do their “business.”

Back then, we knew domestic cats were killing birds, but we didn’t know what a large negative impact they were having. A friend recently gave me the book *Cat Wars* by Peter Marra and Chris Santella. I read some alarming statistics on human-caused bird mortality. There’s hard evidence that cats kills are the top human-related cause of bird deaths, numbering in the billions per year! This is well above collisions with building glass, the number-two human-related cause of bird deaths, counted in the hundreds of millions per year. I made a list of facts I found at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s website (https://www.fws.gov/birds/bird-enthusiasts/threats-to-birds.php). So I could visualize these numbers better, I turned these numbers into a graph. I’ve extended it vertically so I could see some of the shorter bars.

I continued looking into this subject via an article in the peer-reviewed, open-access, scientific journal *Nature Communications* entitled “The Impact of Free-Ranging Cats on Wildlife in the United States” by Scott R. Loss, Tim Will, and Peter R. Marra. Their findings “suggest that free-ranging cats cause substantially greater wildlife mortality than previously thought and are likely the single greatest source of anthropogenic mortality for U.S. birds and mammals.” They also wrote that “un-owned cats, as opposed to owned pets, cause the majority of this mortality.” They estimate that 69% of the total estimate of birds killed by cats per year is caused by un-owned cats. Un-owned cats include farm/barn cats, strays that are fed by humans but not granted access to habitations, cats in subsidized colonies, and cats that are completely feral. These homeless cats are known to live shorter lives than those who live in human homes.

My last cat, Shadow, became an indoor cat after she was terribly frightened multiple times by a neighbor’s dog. She and I quickly got used to her being indoor-only. Though I had to clean litter boxes more often, I liked knowing she was safe inside and I no longer had to worry about birds she might kill. Before she died at 16 years old, I supervised her outside for 10-20 minutes a few times a month when she asked to go out. She liked to roll in the dust and eat grass and then I’d get her back inside.

When Shadow was young and allowed to roam outside, she brought home some bird kills. I kept a bell collar on her to scare the birds but that wasn’t completely effective. Now there is a Birdsbesafe® brand name cat collar cover with bright colors that has proven to be 87% effective in preventing cats from catching birds. People are also training their cats to walk on a leash, making enclosed patios called ‘catio’s’ for them, and even carrying them in backpacks they can see out of.

If we try a little harder and are more flexible in our habits and beliefs, we can make small changes that will help our wild birds survive in the habitats they evolved in. American birds evolved without defenses to domestic cats, which are now considered an invasive species. We need to have conversations in our community about the hard facts of why and how to be better stewards of domestic cats and wild birds. We need to change our habits and habitats to ensure survival of our wildlife.

[Editor’s Note: Peter Marra will be one of the keynote speakers at the 2019 Godwit Days festival in April.]

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Twenty Years of Shorebird Protection at Humboldt Bay Wetlands

By Chet Ogan

On September 13, 1988, the Humboldt Bay Complex was accepted as a site of international importance by the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN), based on surveys indicating that 100,000 shorebirds annually used the site. The Humboldt Bay Complex contains over 75 square miles of rich tidal mudflats, salt marsh, riverside habitat, eelgrass beds, sand dunes, and agricultural fields. The Complex stretches from the mouth of the Mad River to Centerville Beach, including the deltas of the Van Duzen, Eel, and Elk Rivers, and the Salmon, Freshwater, Jacoby, and Janes Creeks. The Humboldt Bay Complex was nominated for recognition by Chet Ogan, Keith Slauson, and Paul Springer. Eighteen square miles of the Complex is protected by federal or state fish and wildlife agencies. Eelgrass beds in the Bay provide cover and food for many species of marine and estuarine vertebrates and invertebrates. A 2018 spring migration count of shorebirds* (funded by Audubon California and RRAS) by Dr. Mark Colwell of Humboldt State University and a crew of local field biologists indicate that at least 500,000 shorebirds are present, warranting an upgrade of the site to Hemispheric Importance. Annually at least 34 species of shorebirds are present, and 31 species of waterfowl.

*Colwell, M.A. & E.J. Feucht. 2018. Humboldt Bay, California is more important to spring migrating shorebirds than previously recognized. Wader Study 125(2): xx-xx. doi:10.18194/ws.00111

Whose Butt Is This? George captured both photos of a magnolia warbler at the Arcata Marsh on Sep. 23, 2018. © George Ziminsky. (See first photo on page 2.)
Where are they now?

Former Coastal Education Specialist Justin Zakoren

In the spring of 2014, I had the pleasure of joining the team at the NEC as a Coastal Education Specialist. In this role, I developed and delivered an environmental education program primarily comprised of watershed science and plastic pollution education outreach to K-12 schools across Humboldt County. Funded by a grant from the California Coastal Commission, the ultimate goal of these outreach efforts was to promote pro-environmental behavior and volunteerism in students and schools in communities along the coast and higher up in watersheds. Specifically, this program worked to address the persistent problem of non-point source pollution and to support participation along the North Coast in the Coastal Cleanup Day, coordinated by the NEC. The opportunity to work for the NEC changed my life and the course of my career in environmental education.

With the end of the grant funding, I said farewell to the NEC and moved to Denver, Colorado with my wife, who had accepted an animal care position at the Denver Zoo. I grew up in Humboldt County, and leaving the region’s rivers, surf, and hiking was bittersweet. In Denver, I continued down the path of environmental education by taking on an instructor position with Thorne Nature Center, located in spectacular Boulder, Colorado. In many ways, working with Thorne Nature Center was the best remedy for any homesickness I felt from the move. Taking advantage of the abundance of spectacular parks and open spaces along the Front Range, Thorne’s mission is to build Earth stewardship by connecting youth to nature through joyful, hands-on, place-based environmental education experiences. In my time with Thorne, I created inquiry-based lesson plans, exercised student-centered practices, and provided inspiring nature experiences for students to achieve the combined goals of free nature play, ecological learning, and community building.

When my time with Thorne came to end, I said goodbye to the Boulder Flatirons and turned to take on an exciting new role with Jefferson County Public School District as the district’s first Resource Conservation Advocate. Working out of the district’s Energy Management Department, I was responsible for the development, implementation, and administration of conservation programs and competitions throughout the district. The overall aim of this work was to reduce district water and energy usage—with 155 schools and approximately 87,000 students, Jeffco Schools is the second largest district in Colorado and has a yearly energy cost of around $11 million.

My conservation programming efforts were geared towards addressing the behavioral, or human, side of energy use. I developed a district-wide energy saving competition, trained teachers and students in energy auditing, supported student “Green Teams,” created supporting materials and resources for these student-led school conservation efforts, and advocated conservation education as an essential and integral part of the district’s overall mission. By the end of 2017, schools participating in energy conservation efforts had saved over 236,000 Kwh of electricity (roughly the... Continued on page 13
Where are They
Continued from page 12

...equivalent of 400 barrels of oil (that didn’t have to be consumed), and saving the district approximately $60,000 in energy costs. My work with Jeffco Schools was incredibly gratifying, but when an unexpected opportunity to work with a national environmental education nonprofit fell in my lap, I jumped at the chance.

Today, I am happy to serve in the role as the Program Manager for Earth Force here along the Front Range of Colorado. Earth Force is an inspiring organization that has developed a project-based learning approach that engages young people as active citizens who improve the environment and their communities. In my role with Earth Force, I provide middle school educators with the training and support they need to engage and empower students to solve environmental problems in their communities. Using Earth Force’s six-step Community Action and Problem Solving Process, educators facilitate student-driven community investigations where students identify a local environmental problem, research that problem, learn about strategies to address it, and then take action.

A key part of this journey for the students is in engaging with community stakeholders and experts, and speaking to power. To give an idea of what students can do using our process, past projects have resulted in: a city ordinance banning polystyrene to-go packaging, another city requiring trash haulers to expand recycling services to multi-family housing, the establishment of community gardens, the construction of outdoor learning classrooms, stormwater stenciling, campus flood mitigation measures, the creation of rain gardens, and much more.

In a way, I’ve come full circle to the work during my time with the NEC and the service and stewardship it continues to provide along the North Coast, and beyond. The NEC is a stalwart advocate and model for the powerful impact community members, young and old, can have in addressing complex and entrenched environmental issues in their community, by working together toward a common cause. No matter how far removed, Humboldt will always be my home, and it is a comfort to me to know that the NEC and the good people who support it continue to advocate, organize, and take action to preserve the rich and irreplaceable natural heritage of the North Coast and its watersheds.

Thank you, NEC!

Redwoods
Continued from page 4

The push for a Redwood National Park was lit like a fire. In 1963, the National Geographic Society along with the Sierra Club measured a tree in what is now called Tall Trees Grove along Redwood Creek. This was the tallest known tree at the time and became a rallying point for those who wanted to protect redwoods.

There was not complete agreement among conservationists regarding where to focus the effort to save a large, relatively intact watershed. The League preferred Mill Creek in Del Norte County adjacent to Jedediah Smith State Park while the Sierra Club thought the public could not save both Mill Creek and Redwood Creek and focused their efforts on Redwood Creek in Humboldt County.

In 1968, President Lyndon Johnson signed legislation creating Redwood National Park—an effort his wife Lady Bird Johnson had championed. The new park still did not encompass full watersheds and, as clear-cuts on unstable soils came right to the border of the park, conservationists fought to fix the watershed problem. In 1978, Congress passed the Redwoods Expansion Act, which included most of the Redwood Creek watershed. In the meantime, the League launched the Redwoods Rising partnership (www.savetheredwoods.org/project/redwoods-rising/) with Redwood National and State Parks to provide much-needed funds and focus to restoration efforts.

In July, Congressman Jared Huffman introduced the Northwest California Wilderness, Recreation, and Working Forests Act. The Act would add Redwood Creek and several other tributaries to the Wild & Scenic River program and add thousands of acres of potential wilderness to assure these forests are preserved for this and future generations to wander in and find inspiration.

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Carol Ann Conners
707-725-3400
654 Main Street, Fortuna
carol@pattersonconners.com
CA License #0E79262

Redwood National Park. Photo: Martin Swett.

Lorelei Lane, Arcata OldGrowthTimbers.com 707-834-5340
Anne Maher

One of the best ways to move Humboldt County toward Zero Waste is to contact your representatives, stay up to date on policy, and vote! Zero Waste Humboldt has recently released several advocacy letters regarding various changes in California legislation. By doing so, we hope to influence policy, educate the community, and encourage Humboldt County to join us in voicing support.

In August, ZWH issued a press release in support of Senate Bill 1335. This legislation would prohibit state agencies and facilities from using food service packaging unless it is compostable or recyclable. While reusable items are always the best option, this bill takes into account that single-use items are sometimes necessary. In those cases, the product must be recyclable and/or compostable by the agency’s regional facility. To support this bill, contact your assembly member Jim Wood at https://a02.asmdc.org/.

Zero Waste Humboldt also released an advocacy letter regarding single-use items at outdoor festivals. In the state of California, it is currently illegal under CA Health Code #114353 to use reusable items at outdoor festivals (such as the North Country Fair or Oyster Fest in Arcata). This makes it near impossible to make these events truly Zero Waste. There is no current effort to change this code, and ZWH hopes to begin to direct the conversation on how to do so.

Most recently, ZWH issued a letter in support of banning single-use straws in the city of Arcata. This was presented at the Arcata City Council meeting on September 5, in the hopes of further persuading local government to work against single-use plastics. While we do not wish to prohibit the use of reusable or compostable straws, we hope to continue the trend of rejecting unnecessary, short-lived plastic products in Humboldt County. Continue to check our social media or contact the Arcata city council to receive updates on this topic.

All letters and further information are available in the News portion of our website. Please email us at contact@zerowastehumboldt.org if you hear of, or are involved in, advocacy issues that ZWH could be a part of.

Zero Waste Humboldt would also like to thank all the volunteers who joined the NEC to cleanup waterways on Coastal Cleanup Day, and everyone who volunteered to help attendees reduce waste all weekend at the North Country Fair in September! YOU are helping to make Zero Waste a reality in Humboldt County!
ECOLOGICAL RIGHTS FOUNDATION V. PG&E
Settlement will reduce dioxin runoff to Humboldt and San Francisco Bays

Jennifer Kalt, Director

Pacific Gas and Electric Co. recently settled a lawsuit brought in 2010 by the Ecological Rights Foundation of Garberville. As a result, PG&E has agreed to protect San Francisco and Humboldt bays from dioxin-containing chemicals used on its utility poles.

The lawsuit alleged that oil and wood waste containing dioxins washed into the bays and creeks via storm drains from poles stored at 31 PG&E service yards, endangering human health and the environment.

Under the settlement, PG&E must clean up the storage yards and nearby storm drains, and future discharges are prohibited.

“Dioxins are among the most toxic chemicals known to science,” Fredric Evenson, an attorney with Ecological Rights Foundation, told KPIX News in San Francisco. “This has been a hard-fought, eight-year legal battle, but in the end PG&E now appears to understand that dioxin has no business in our bay, and will now take meaningful action to benefit [Humboldt and] San Francisco Bay’s wildlife and residents who eat locally caught seafood.”

Pentachlorophenol, a wood preservative and fungicide containing high levels of dioxins, was banned by the U.S. EPA 30 years ago for all uses other than power poles. It was widely used in lumber and plywood mills around Humboldt Bay. Although several of these sites have been cleaned up, there are numerous remaining hotspots with contaminated soil, groundwater, and bay sediment. Dioxins can cause cancer and reproductive damage. They accumulate in fish and magnify in fish-eating birds and mammals, posing a threat to human health.

Under the agreement, PG&E will identify storage yards containing treated poles, and will test and implement technologies for reducing dioxin runoff, such as covering poles or keeping them indoors; stormwater treatment; and possibly the use of different materials, such as cement or steel, for utility poles, according to Evenson.

Coastal Cleanup Day: Paddle-and-Cleanup on Indian Island

Since 2014, Humboldt Baykeeper has been partnering with the Wiyot Tribe and the Humboldt Bay Aquatic Center to lead kayak trips to remove trash twice a year. On Coastal Cleanup Day in September, more than two dozen volunteers paddled from the Eureka waterfront to Indian Island, where this year’s event yielded the least amount of trash ever! We hope this is a sign that our efforts are getting ahead of the trash, which washes up on high tides and blows down from the Samoa Bridge. Thanks to the Coast Seafoods crew led by Joe McKenzie, who hauled the trash back to Eureka for disposal. We’ll do it again for Earth Day in April! Thanks to the Humboldt Area Foundation for funding Baykeeper’s 2018 volunteer paddle-and-cleanup events.
EPIC Fights for North Coast Wildlife

Tom Wheeler, Executive Director

Humboldt Marten Protected in California, Run Over in Oregon

On August 23, the California Fish and Game Commission unanimously voted to list the Humboldt marten under the California Endangered Species Act. The decision is a result of a listing petition that EPIC filed with the Commission in 2015. As a result of the listing, the marten will enjoy greater protections for both itself and its habitat, as well as provide additional funding for marten conservation efforts. An EPIC victory!

Oregon, like always, is behind us enlightened Californians. On September 14, the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission voted to deny EPIC’s petition under the Endangered Species Act. Oregon’s marten population is as precarious as California’s. Only two isolated populations of Humboldt martens survive in Oregon—one in the Siskiyou National Forest and another in the Siuslaw National Forest. A 2018 study concluded that Humboldt martens on Oregon’s central coast could be wiped out within three decades with trapping or roadkill of just two or three individuals annually.

Advocates celebrate Humboldt marten victory at September 14, 2018 Fish and Game Commission Hearing in Fortuna. Photo: Briana Villalobos.

Humboldt marten. Photo: Charlotte Eriksson, Oregon State University.

Green Diamond’s Special Treatment Continues

The company has gotten another sweetheart deal that allows them to clearcut with impunity, once again proving that the rules don’t apply to the big boys. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has just released a draft Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) that would allow Green Diamond to clearcut more northern spotted owl habitat than otherwise permitted in exchange for a promise to shoot barred owls. We think this deal stinks. Here’s why:

Green Diamond is currently operating under an older HCP for owls, approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1992. Under the 1992 HCP, Green Diamond set up a series of 40 “reserves,” no-cut areas set aside for the benefit of the owl, totaling 13,243 acres. The set-asides were designed to be large enough to support multiple pairs of owls and were spread out across Green Diamond’s ownership.

Under the new HCP, the set-asides disappear in favor of a “dynamic” reserve system. Under the dynamic reserve system, the company will “protect” 44 owl nest sites, but just barely. The company will set aside 89 acres of forest around individual nest sites that are at minimum 46 years old and 233 total acres within 0.5 miles of the nest that are at least 31 years old.

You might think, “at least they have agreed to protect some habitat. Surely that’s better than nothing!” Sorry pal, you are mistaken. Absent the HCP, Green Diamond would presumably have to follow “take avoidance” guidance established by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for THPs in the redwood region. That take avoidance guidance would preserve 500 total acres of habitat within 0.7 miles of a nest site, including the 100 acres of the highest quality habitat near the nest site. In other words, Green Diamond would preserve more habitat if they had to follow the law that everyone else is bound by.

Why did the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agree to this? Did they gain anything? Green Diamond has agreed to kill barred owls on its property. Barred owls are a problem for our spotties and a limited experiment on Green Diamond land has shown that barred owl removal can help reestablish owl sites abandoned to barred owls. But is this deal enough? If barred owl removal doesn’t arrest the decline of the owl on Green Diamond’s property, then we are looking at the potential loss of barred owls along much of the coast.

The northern spotted owl is going extinct before our eyes. The rate of owl decline is increasing and in some areas, the owl has entered an “extinction vortex,” whereby owl declines reinforce processes that further hasten the owl’s decline, leading ultimately to its extinction. EPIC is on the case. We drafted comments on the draft Habitat Conservation Plan and are prepared to defend our spotties in court, if necessary.

EPIC’s Fall Celebration

Saturday, November 10th
at Beginnings Octagon in Briceland

Join EPIC and friends as we celebrate over four decades of forest advocacy and grassroots activism!

Doors Open at 6PM
Annual Silent Auction 6-9PM
Dinner Courtesy of Sue’s Organics 7PM
Semprivirens Award Ceremony Honoring Jene McCovey 8PM
Musical Guests No Pardon 9PM

Pre-Sale Tickets $50 // Tickets At the Door $60

Tickets are available online at wildcalifornia.org & at Wildberries and Redwood Liquors

For more info visit www.wildcalifornia.org
Wildfire Shenanigans

Felice Pace

Timber interests are once again attempting to use fear of wildfire as a means to increase logging and the Trump Administration, with Ryan Zinke in the lead, is pushing the timber industry’s agenda. Zinke went so far as to call those who want to protect forests “environmental terrorists.”

Using fear of fire to increase logging is nothing new and it is not limited to Republicans. Here in California, the Democrat-dominated legislature recently passed and Governor Brown signed SB 901 which will loosen logging rules and provide logging exemptions in order to reduce fire risk. Brown originally proposed allowing private landowners to cut trees up to 36 inches in diameter on property of 300 acres or less and to build roads of up to 600 feet long without getting a logging permit from the state. Those provisions were scaled back in the final version to trees up to 26 inches in diameter and temporary road construction on slopes less than 30%. The Sierra Club strongly opposed the legislation.

Proposals to increase logging in order to reduce fire risk fly in the face of what scientists have learned about fire in western forests. First and foremost, research indicates that weather, not the amount of fuel, usually determines how intense a fire will burn. Several studies also confirm that unlogged forests and protected lands typically burn at lower intensity as compared to logged forests and that tree plantations resulting from salvage logging are most likely to burn at high intensity.

In an attempt to introduce good science into the wildfire debate, over 150 scientists recently sent an “Open Letter to Decision Makers Concerning Wildfires in the West.”

Here is how they end the letter:

Public lands were established for the public good and include most of the nation’s remaining examples of intact ecosystems that provide clean water for millions of Americans, essential wildlife habitat, recreation and economic benefits to rural communities, as well as sequestering vast quantities of carbon. When a fire burns down a home it is tragic; when fire burns in a forest it is natural and essential to the integrity of the ecosystem, while also providing the most cost-effective means of reducing fuels over large areas. Though it may seem to laypersons that a post-fire landscape is a catastrophe, numerous studies tell us that even in the patches where fires burn most intensely, the resulting wildlife habitats are among the most biologically diverse in the West. For these reasons, we urge you to reject misplaced logging proposals that will damage our environment, hinder climate mitigation goals and will fail to protect communities from wildfire.

Unfortunately, most politicians appear to be listening more to timber interests than to scientists.

North Group Underwrites Three Campers

Sue Leskiw

This summer, North Group sponsored three campers—a 10-year-old girl from Eureka, an 11-year-old girl from McKinleyville, and an 8-year-old boy from Loleta—to attend a week-long session at Lost Coast Camp near Petrolia. (A fourth child had been selected but canceled at the last minute.)

This is the second year that campers sponsored through donations to the Lucille Vinyard/Susie van Kirk Environmental Education Fund have gone to overnight camp at this venue in the Mattole Valley. The facility’s mission is to “provide youth with a dynamic summer camp experience, which promotes building self-esteem and positive friendships, individual expression, and fostering an appreciation for the natural world.”

In exchange for their tuition, the campers agreed to submit an essay to North Group about their experience. Below are excerpts:

Camper 1: “I had a great experience at Lost Coast Camp! Some of my favorite activities were art, swimming in the river, and archery. I also really enjoyed making new friends, the amazing food, and playing capture the flag in the forest. I love art, so it was great to make lanyards, bracelets, and masks, as well as to draw and paint. There were many art supplies to be creative with, such as feathers, googly eyes, and ribbons. The river was fairly warm and it was great to jump in after a long day of hiking and walking around camp and the farm. I think archery was my favorite activity. Instructors taught us how to safely use, aim, and shoot the bow. I loved having the opportunity to go to this camp and am thankful for the scholarship that enabled me to attend.”

Camper 2: “Every day we hiked down to the river and had a lot of fun. The river was big and we played in it every day. The ranch was so fun. We hung out in the garden, then picked squash and apples and climbed on the hay. We saw the cows that were so cute and I liked throwing them apples and squash to eat. We also had a lot of fun with pranks. If you’re looking for a fun summer thing to do, you just found it!!!”

Camper 3: “I really feel lucky to have gone to Lost Coast Camp. I made a lot of friends and we got to do all kinds of fun stuff. I love swimming and we got to do it every day. I also liked that we got to do art projects such as making masks. I made lots of memories at camp but my most important one is having fun. Signed, Happy Camper.”

Events

One need not be a Sierra Club member to participate in these outings. Please join us!

Sunday October 14—North Group Horse Mountain Botanical Area trails Hike. Two loop trails: one with views of the King Range, the Siskiyous, and the coast, and another loop viewing Trinity Alps and Yolla Bollys. Bring lunch, water and good boots. No dogs. Medium difficulty, five miles, less than 1,000 feet elevation change. Carpools: Meet 9 a.m. Valley West (Ray’s) Shopping Center, 10 a.m. Horse Mountain parking area. Leader Ned, nedforsyth48@gmail.com or 707-825-3652. Bad weather cancels.

Sunday Nov. 11—North Group Lacks Creek/Pine Ridge Prairies Hike. Explore this nearby BLM area off Highway 299 on new and old trails. We will see a mix of oak savannas, old-growth conifers, and actively managed hardwoods. Bring lunch and water, and dress for a fall day at 3,600 feet elevation. Medium difficulty, about five miles, less than 1,000 feet elevation gain/loss. Carpools: Meet 9 a.m. Valley West (Ray’s) Shopping Center. Leader Ned, nedforsyth48@gmail.com, or 707-825-3652. Bad weather cancels.
Field Trips & Plant Walks

October 6, Saturday—Lassics Day Hike. In the Lassics area of Six Rivers National Forest west of Ruth Lake the air is invigorating; the views are stupendous; the geology is impressive; the plants are hardy, unique, and rare. We will hike two short trails to the tops of two peaks, at 4,000-5,000 ft. elevation. Bring lunch, snacks, and plenty of water. There are no facilities. Return late afternoon or evening. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Pacific Union School (3001 Janes Rd., Arcata), 8:30 a.m. at the Kohl’s end of Bayshore Mall parking lot, or 10 a.m. at Dinsmore Store on Highway 36. From there it is about a half-hour. Tell Carol you are coming: 707-822-2015 or theralphs@humboldt1.com.

October 14, Sunday 1-3 p.m.—Botanizing the Hammond Trail Loop. Along this wonderful McKinleyville trail, see remnants of the native vegetation. Wildflower author and enthusiast Elaine Allison will lead this walk of about one mile along coastal bluffs and coastal prairie, through Beach Pine forest and streamside forest, where you will see many common plants and at least one officially rare species. Meet at the west end of Murray Rd. For information: 707-822-2015 or theralphs@humboldt1.com

October 21, Sunday, 1:00-3:00 p.m.—“Conifers on Campus,” a plant walk with Dr. Dennis Walker, the man who brought conifers from all corners of the world to create a remarkable collection on Humboldt State University Campus. Not all conifers look like Christmas trees! Learn what makes a conifer and broaden your understanding of these trees and shrubs. Meet at the green front doors of the dome greenhouse, east of B St. between Science D (where the Botany labs are) and the Wildlife Building. Weekend parking is free in campus lots. 707-822-2015.

November 4, Sunday—Bear River Ridge, Monument Ridge Day Hike. To witness firsthand the setting and habitat of the proposed wind energy development on Monument Ridge above Rio Dell, we will walk one or more segments of the small, quiet, county road that traverses it. See Hike 60 in Hiking Humboldt Vol. 2 by Rees Hughes. The open prairie along the ridge offers grand views in various directions. We will respect the private property by staying on the road. Bring lunch and water; dress for the weather. Meet to carpool at 9:00 a.m. at Pacific Union School (3001 Janes Rd., Arcata) or 9:30 a.m. at the Kohl’s end of Bayshore Mall parking lot. Tell Carol you are coming: 707-822-2015 or theralphs@humboldt1.com.

November 10, Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.—“Campions of Northwestern California.” A talk by a plant taxonomist about the Silene hookeri complex might sound too academic, but Dr. Michael Mesler, also a pollination biologist at Humboldt State University, will bring it alive as he takes us roaming the Klamath Mountains, finding Silenes of various colors and forms. He will take us with him pursuing the question, “Is this a new species?” His studies defined five species in northwestern California and western Oregon, all decidedly rare. Defining the species is where taxonomy meets conservation, another topic Mike will explore. The genus Silene includes Indian Pink (Silene laciniata), a familiar, bright red species, and other species called catch-flies and campions. The largest and showiest flower in the genus, and everyone’s favorite on our South Fork Trinity hike (see report elsewhere in this newsletter), is the newly described Silene nelsonii, possibly to be known as Stringflower or Nelson’s Campion, a “champion” in the genus.

November 14, Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.—“Restoring Nature One Garden at a Time.” Real gardens grow bugs? Yes! Learn about the vital role insects play in the web of life from an informative, entertaining, and inspirational video of a lecture by Douglas Tallamy. Tallamy is a professor of entomology at the University of Delaware who has pioneered research comparing insect diversity on native and non-native plants. He is also the author of Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife With Native Plants—a book that presents the powerful claim that the choices we make as gardeners can profoundly impact the diversity of life in our gardens, our communities, and our planet.

Conifers in Russian Wilderness

In July, we saw nine species of conifers around Sugar Lake in the Russian Wilderness, and three more along the trail there. The trail was modestly graded, about 3 miles long, and earned the title “Treasure Trail” because new plant treasures kept showing up, especially the non-green kind. We recommend this hike, #16 in Michael Kauffmann’s “Conifer Country.”
At the Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities, we know that well-designed transportation systems can go a long way toward achieving many popular public goals, from protecting our environment to promoting public health to supporting small businesses—which means they should have broad public support. But we don’t shy away from advocating for the best fact-based solutions to public problems, even when not everyone agrees with us. Over the last year, we've added our unique voice to public discussions on several important local projects, and in doing so have helped educate the public and shift the debate in ways large and small.

The Village
For almost a year, CRTP repeatedly reminded Arcata planning commissioners and city council members of the importance of dense infill developments like the proposed Village housing project. Dense infill allows us to achieve climate-related goals of more walking and biking and bus riding, while avoiding development of the important wildland and agricultural lands on the outskirts of town. But we also criticized some aspects of the project's design, and suggested ways to make it more walking-, biking-, and bus-friendly. Most importantly, we advocated for “unbundling” parking spaces from residential rents—in other words, charging separately for parking and for apartment rent, so that those who choose not to bring cars don’t have to subsidize drivers. Research shows this to be one of the most effective measures for reducing car use in residential developments. In a major victory, the developer and the city agreed to unbundling as a condition of approval for the project. However, at the time of this writing, it appears that the project is stalled for lack of support on the city council.

H & I Streets
CRTP also weighed in on Eureka's proposed redesign of H & I Streets. This project has attracted some opposition, which we think is misguided. We've pointed out the importance of the project to a safe and effective bicycle system in the city, and the importance of biking for meeting our climate goals and improving our local communities. We also joined our friends at the Humboldt Bay Bicycle Commuters Association in advocating for design “Option 1,” which includes adding a buffered bike lane to each of the two streets. At a well-attended meeting in August, the Eureka City Council directed staff to move ahead with Option 1.

The Arcata Plaza
EcoNews readers know that CRTP has also been advocating for improvements to the Arcata Plaza for over a year, and we continue to do so. Our proposals include closing 8th and 9th Streets to most vehicles on the Plaza, while turning G & H Streets into slow-speed “pedestrian priority” zones. Although we have received broad support for these proposals, we know not everyone agrees with us. But we remain convinced that implementing them, while following other recognized principles for the design of successful public spaces, will improve downtown Arcata for everyone. You can sign a petition supporting these proposals at www.transportationpriorities.org/plaza.
Climate Bill
Continued from page 7

...a Democratic supermajority. A broad coalition including local elected officials (shout out to Eureka City Councilmember Austin Allison!), labor, faith, business, political clubs, environmental justice, environmental, climate action, community, student, health, and industry groups rallied around it.

However, passing SB 100 proved difficult. The bill was approved by the State Senate in May of 2017, but became mired in the Assembly Utilities and Energy Committee, where it was stalled from late 2017 to July 2018. There were concerns that it would be amended to weaken it or tie it to some more controversial policy, such as grid regionalization. There were rumors that the bill had died completely.

However, the grassroots push for SB 100 continued. A coalition of advocates made weekly calls to check in on news and strategy. Advocates held in-district meetings with representatives, media campaigns, tabling events, and calling campaigns, and talked to offices of every single assemblymember. By the time of its passing, SB 100 had a whopping 21 coauthors.

Despite all this, the day of the assembly floor vote was a nail-biter, taking three votes to pass with 43 yesses.

What’s next? The hope is that other states will be inspired to follow California’s lead and decarbonize their electrical grids. However, although this is a big win, decarbonizing electrical grids is not enough to adequately deal with our climate crisis. For example, electricity only contributes 16 percent of California’s greenhouse gas emissions.

On the day he signed SB 100, Governor Brown also released an executive order (EO B-55-18) directing the state to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 and net negative greenhouse-gas emissions after that. In order to do this, home heating and transportation will have to be electrified (while also stopping any new fossil fuel infrastructure, reducing emissions in areas like waste and industry, using land more wisely, sequestering atmospheric carbon through things like afforestation, contributing to social justice and equity, etc.).

Two bills were also introduced this session that dealt with building decarbonization (SB 1477 and AB 3232) which passed and have been signed by the Governor.

Wind Energy
Continued from page 8

Onshore Wind Energy Proposal for Monument Ridge (Humboldt Wind LLC)

A new onshore wind energy project is now in the works, proposed by San Diego-based company Humboldt Wind LLC. The project would consist of up to sixty wind turbines installed in an area near Monument Ridge, southwest of Scotia. This proposed wind energy farm is estimated to produce enough energy to power roughly 33,000 homes.

After the previous failure of the Shell project, Humboldt Wind LLC seems to be making more of an effort to connect with local residents, holding meetings to gather input and working to reduce the negative impacts that a large wind energy project may have on the community. This wind energy farm would be constructed on land owned by a single entity, making it easier to acquire the property.

Studies have yet to be conducted on the potential environmental impacts of this project. A major environmental impact of wind energy farms is the danger they present for local wildlife—particularly birds, who have frequently been killed by flying into the turbines. Local environmentalists will be waiting to assess the project once these critical environmental studies have been done.

This onshore wind energy project is still in its early stages, and would need approval from the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors before it is able to move forward.

Community-Scale Offshore Wind Energy Proposal (Redwood Coast Energy Authority)

A second wind energy project in Humboldt County has also been proposed by local energy provider Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA), which has partnered with a “highly capable consortium” of other private businesses with experience in wind energy projects.

This project proposes a floating offshore wind farm located more than 20 miles off the coast of Eureka, which would consist of approximately 10-15 floating wind turbines.

Because of its offshore location, this project must first be approved by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), a government agency responsible for regulating federal waters. Editor’s update: On September 12, RCEA announced it has submitted a lease application to BOEM to explore offshore wind in Humboldt County. Upon approval, it would allow the company to begin conducting studies at the proposed site and start solidifying plans for the project. For more information, visit: https://redwoodenergy.org/offshore-wind-energy/.

Potential Lease Areas for Commercial-Scale Offshore Wind Energy Projects (Bureau of Ocean Energy Management)

BOEM is also independently working to identify lease areas for solicited bids in waters off the coast of Mendocino, Humboldt, and Del Norte counties for other renewable energy projects. These leases would be awarded by the agency competitively, and unlike the RCEA project, BOEM is looking to site massive commercial-scale projects that would produce far more energy than we could use locally. A project of this magnitude would require significant upgrades to the transmission lines to the main power grid, and would call for the consideration of a broad scope of scientific data and input from stakeholders.

According to the agency’s website, “BOEM is currently working with the State of California on planning for potential leasing for offshore wind in federal waters off California.” As of now, BOEM is in the process of holding stakeholder meetings to gather data and information that will help inform decisions about future offshore wind energy projects along the California coast.

Like the onshore project proposed by Humboldt Wind LLC, any offshore projects would also need to be thoroughly studied for potential environmental impacts before they are undertaken. These studies will be particularly important, as there is relatively little existing data on the impacts of floating wind turbines on wildlife populations so far offshore.

Each of these potential wind energy projects are very different logistically, but all share the common goal of moving toward renewable, sustainable energy sources and shifting away from fossil fuels.
**CREATURE FEATURE**

**Nudibranchs**

*All nudibranchs are sea slugs, but not all sea slugs are nudibranchs.*

*Casey Cruikshank*

Sea slugs are soft-bodied marine gastropods (mollusks). The word nudibranch refers to a specific type of sea slug, but is often misused as an umbrella term for all sea slugs. Sea slugs belong to the subclass Opisthobranchia, within which there are five orders, including: headshield slugs (Cephalaspidea), sap-sucking slugs (Scoglossa), sea hares (Anaspidea), sidegill slugs (Notaspidea) and nudibranchs (Nudibranchia).

**Sight**

Almost all sea slugs have some form of eyes, but they are much less developed than human eyes or even those of their molluscan relatives. Most often their eyes are merely a pigment spot imbedded deep within the tissue. It still remains uncertain how opisthobranchs view their environment. They appear to be sensitive to light but are unable to differentiate between colors.

**Smell**

If nudibranchs have the ability to smell, it comes from the horn-like structure located on their head. These structures are called rinophore which can be directly translated as “ri-no” for nose and “phore” for carrier. Many sea slugs have developed rinophores in an array of colors and shapes, though not all Opisthobranchia are equipped with rinophores. The more advanced rinophores are larger, allowing the species improved chemical detection. Rinophores not only help sea slugs navigate their environment but they play a crucial role in taxonomic and visual identification of species.

**Hearing**

Interestingly, while sea slugs do not detect sound as humans do, they have otoliths which are the evolutionary precursor to human ear bones. In animals such as sea slugs, these bones probably function more for spatial orientation than for sound.

**Respiration**

Gills provide the function of extracting oxygen from seawater. Just like rinophores, gills provide a key role in the identification of species. There is a variety of forms gills can take in sea slugs. However, many species have gills located on the outside of their bodies. As a matter of fact, the term nudibranch is translated from the Latin word nudus (naked) and the Greek word branchiae (gill). Many sea slugs with external gills have the ability to retract the appendage when they feel threatened.

**Movement**

Similar to slugs on land, sea slugs crawl using a flat and flexible foot located under their body. As they move, they secrete a thick layer of mucus that helps them move along. Most sea slugs have also developed the ability to swim, though this skill is more often used to escape predators than as a primary form of locomotion.

**Local Sea Slugs**

A variety of sea slugs can be found while tidepooling locally. To see a sea slug in person, find a rocky shore and visit during a very low tide (remember to always be aware of the incoming tide and never turn your back to the ocean). Bakers Beach is one local spot where sea slugs can almost always be found during a low tide. If you look closely, they can often be found munching in the sea grasses or hiding in crevices.

The three nudibranchs featured on this page were photographed locally and are commonly found in our tide pools. While they appear large in the photos, they are actually quite small.

The opalescent nudibranch (*Hermysenda crassicornis*) can be found from the intertidal zone to a depth of 122 feet. They grow up to three inches long and feeds on hydroids and anemones. While dining on anemones, opalescent nudibranchs consume stinging cells called nematocysts. These are then transferred to their own frilly appendages (cercaria) and used as a defense mechanism.

Frosted nudibranchs (*Dirona albolineata*) feed on a wide variety of prey and have specialized teeth that are strong enough to crack open snail shells.

The third sea slug is called a Hopkin’s rose (*Hopkinsia rosacea*). They grow up to one inch long and feed on bryozoans (tiny invertebrates only a fraction of a millimeter in size). Their habitat range is from Oregon to Baja, California.

*Hopkins rose nudibranch. Photo: Casey Cruikshank*
Center of Attention

Pat Ferris
This article is reprinted from the October 1978 issue of EcoNews.

After seven years of struggling for your environment and sometimes its own existence, the Northcoast Environmental Center still offers the community a place to discuss and learn the latest information on a variety of issues.

Some of those issues presently in focus are herbicide spraying and its alternatives, roadless areas and wilderness classifications, fishing rights, endangered species, wild rivers and all the lobbying and legislation concerning these and more topics.

Our library, which is open to everyone, includes current information on many local and distant environmental issues, valuable documents and research papers not available anywhere else on the North Coast, maps, slide shows, and easy reading.

The ECONEWS, our monthly newsletter, is the only local newspaper which regularly covers environmental issues and provides a forum for public input.

Another Center project is the Arcata Community Recycling Center, which has its own quarters at 9th and N Streets in Arcata. The Recycling Center itself operates at least six recycling depots around Humboldt County. It also established its first affiliate center in Garberville last year, and helped set up the new Eureka Recycling Center on Wabash near Broadway.

The Center can arrange for speakers, films, field trips, bird walks and programs on many conservation topics. We are working with other local non-profit organizations to pool our resources and pursue a course toward community self-reliance and education.

Like always, we aim to speak up for the mute portion of the community—the air, water and land which support us.

The Northcoast Environmental Center is supported by contributions, individual memberships (which include a year’s subscription to ECONEWS), and annual dues paid by our 10 member organizations.

Since we have only one full-time coordinator and two part-time aides, much of our strength and success has been due to the people who volunteer their time and energy to keep the Center going.

We welcome anyone who is interested and willing to spend a little time doing mundane tasks—filing, answering the phone, typing, or even sweeping the floor—and some not-so-mundane. These include researching, writing and helping publish the ECONEWS, telling a class of third graders about the famous New Jersey Pine Barrens.

Exemption proposal, so the Snail Darter is likely to be back in the news.

The appropriations bill, HR 12932, allows money for the Forest Service to increase timber sales to 12.4 billion board feet from 11.5 billion. That same bill sliced 39 percent off the budget of the Forest Service wildlife program. On the other hand, some dams were sliced out in President Carter’s veto of the public works bill.

The 1977 year of the 95th Congress is considered even more phenomenal by some observers with its record of an expanded Redwood National Park, legislation to regulate strip mining and air quality over national parks, and the creation of an Energy Department with broad powers to regulate the environmental impacts of energy leasing, etc.

The 95th Congress promises to be equally exciting as the Alaska Lands bill is at the top of a list with includes RARE II, the reconstitution of the 1872 mining law and reorganization of natural resources administration. It looks like they are really going to try to put the Forest Service in the Department of the Interior, though no one believes that it will be an easy task.

Congressional Scoreboard—Some Hits, Few Errors

Tim McKay
This article is reprinted from the November 1978 issue of EcoNews.

The green side of the now-adjourned 95th Congress was notable for the important legislation that became law as well as for the bills that died.

The Alaska Lands Bill in the Senate leads the obituaries. However some people say the Carter Administration’s threat to hogtie the Alaska Lands with the Antiquities Act—by declaring all these lands National Monuments—could get an Alaskan Park Bill through the 96th Congress by next summer.

Surviving legislation gave wilderness to Montana, Wisconsin, and Colorado, and to Minnesota where the Boundary Waters Canoe Area was established at 1,075,000 acres.

The so-called “Park Barrel” legislation, authored by Rep. Phillip Burton, became the largest parks bill in U.S. history. More than 100 park areas were added to the federal system, from California where Mideral King was transferred from the Forest Service to the Park Service, to the east where the bill protects the famous New Jersey Pine Barrens.

The Endangered Species Act was extended for another 18 months, with a new provision for exempting certain federal projects after another layer of internal review. Four of six agency heads on a special committee would have to concur with any
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