Coastal Cleanup Month

Cleanups All Month Long!
LETTERS TO ECONEWS
We want to hear from you! Write us a letter 300 words or less that's relevant to EcoNews and we'll consider publishing it! The NEC reserves the right to reject any submitted material for any reason.
Email NEC@YOURNEC.ORG

COMMUNITY SUBMISSIONS
We want to feature your work. Do you have nature art or poetry you'd like to share? How about photos of your catio, compost bin, garden, solar array, etc?
Email NEC@YOURNEC.ORG

GREETINGS FROM THE NEC
The mission of EcoNews is to inform and educate the public on environmental issues around the world, state and bioregion. Many of these issues are complex and have varying levels of support. Our goal is to provide a platform to explore, discuss, and debate these topics to better understand their nuances. The ideas expressed in EcoNews do not necessarily reflect the positions of the NEC or its member groups. We appreciate and welcome alternative points of view.

ECONWS NEEDS YOUR VOICE!
To more accurately reflect the diverse voices and needs of our community, EcoNews wants to feature more articles on Indigenous perspectives, intersectional environmentalism, environmental justice, food justice, activism, and more.

We have a small fund to pay emerging voices. If you'd like to submit an article and potentially get paid for your work pitch your idea at nec@yournec.org.

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Dear EcoNews
Do you have a burning environmental question? Write to “Dear EcoNews” and we’ll get a professional in that field to address your eco quandaries, concerns, and queries.
Email nec@yournec.org

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News From the Center

Larry Glass, NEC Board President
Caroline Griffith, NEC Executive Director

In order to envision the future we want, it's imperative to look at the past. Not just to see how we arrived at this point and to avoid making the same mistakes again, but also to help us to imagine a time when things were different. Sometimes, when looking around at the mess we are in when it comes to climate catastrophe, prolonged drought, and persistent inequality, it can be difficult to imagine that we could have, or ever will, take a different path. In this issue, we have a couple of articles about history: the history of plastic packaging and the history of cars and how we've built our communities around them. Both of these phenomena, and the environmental degradation and pollution associated with them, are not that old in terms of human history. We have lived without them and being reminded of this fact can help us to envision a future in which these amazing and destructive inventions become rarities. One thing that both plastic and cars have in common is a dependence on petroleum. There seems to be consensus among the environmental community that petroleum has got to go, but what will the replacement be? There are trade-offs and impacts from every source of energy, from emissions to the methods used to extract the resources they are made from. As we embark on this transition, it's vital that we use our imaginations to rethink how and why we use resources and work to envision alternate ways of living that are less consumption based, less dependent on energy and resources, rather than just seeking a silver bullet solution that will allow us to continue on with business as usual.

Nuclear Energy
One energy source that is butting its ugly head into the conversation about non-carbon energy is nuclear, which the NEC has worked against for years. We've been surprised by the number of emails showing up in the NEC inbox lately touting the false climate solution of nuclear power. If you only look at the best case scenario and ignore the pesky problem of waste and radiation exposure, then yes, nuclear power may seem less polluting than fossil fuels. But doing so ignores the hard truth that nuclear power, specifically the waste products produced by this carbon-free energy source, are a threat to this and future generations. Unfortunately, the push to focus only on the carbon impact of energy sources is leading to a resurgence in nuclear power innovation. Along with education there will have to be a concerted and funded effort to really begin to reduce fuels by cultural burning techniques and mimicking those effects when burning is not possible. Part of the problem is how rapidly the climate has changed and how slow many of us have been in adjusting to it. It's time for local agencies and governments to dedicate the funds and people-power to forest management and to start subsidizing and empowering small landowners to do this work.

Racism In Our Community
On the morning of July 20, our friends at Jardin Sanctuario, a space nurtured by Centro del Pueblo and Cooperation Humboldt, arrived to find their sign (which welcomes visitors to the garden in English, Spanish, Mixteco and Soulátluk) had been defaced with the words “America” and “USA.” Centro del Pueblo works to support Indigenous immigrants in our community and the garden is a sanctuary for all people, regardless of immigration status. Here at the NEC we see this as an attempt to intimidate and silence valued community members and we want to make it clear that we stand united with our allies against hate in our communities. Although we talk a lot about environmental racism within these pages, we want to be explicit that all forms of racism hurt the environment because they divide us and work to silence and negate community members whose knowledge, experience and passion is vital to healing our planet. To support the work of Centro del Pueblo visit cdpueblo.com.

We need to be careful not to allow our demand for unlimited power lead us down a path that will leave behind a trail of waste that will remain deadly for thousands of years.

Fire’s Effect On Private Property
At the time of this writing, fire season has officially begun in Northern California. In recent years, there has been a dramatic increase in high-severity wildfire in Western forests, specifically in California, and there is a strong connection to past and present forest management along with drier and hotter temperatures. To add to the complexity, a recent study by researcher Jacob Lavine found the odds of high-severity fire on private industrial forest lands was 1.8 times greater than on “public” lands. Importantly, he found high-severity fire incidence was even greater in areas adjacent to private industrial land.

Another big factor in all this is how non-industrial property owners maintain their lands. Has there been any attempt at fuel reduction? Most of the time the answer is no. In California today, creating a defensible space is the law in fire prone areas, but that’s only one hundred feet around structures. What about all the rest of these properties? This job may be too much for the typical land owner. It’s clear that along with education there will have to be a concerted and funded effort to really begin to reduce fuels by cultural burning techniques and mimicking those effects when burning is not possible. Part of the problem is how rapidly the climate has changed and how slow many of us have been in adjusting to it. It’s time for local agencies and governments to dedicate the funds and people-power to forest management and to start subsidizing and empowering small landowners to do this work.

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It has come to our attention that an article in our August issue, *Salmon in the Anthropocene*, erroneously stated that Friends of the Eel River (FOER) are partnering with CalTrout to restore the Cedar Creek fish passage on the South Fork of the Eel River and the Salt River in the Eel River Estuary. Although FOER is not working on either of these restoration projects, it is doing important work to benefit salmonid populations, in conjunction with the Round Valley Tribes and many others, by ensuring that the Eel River Dams come down.

CalTrout is actually partnering with the local consulting firm McBain Associates and Hanford Environmental Restoration in Santa Rosa to restore the Cedar Creek fish passage on the South Fork of the Eel River; working with local partners, including GHD and CDFW, to develop engineering designs for restoration of Cannibal Island in the Eel River Estuary; was awarded funding to prepare a Climate Resiliency and Salmonid Recovery Plan for the entire Eel River Basin; along with several local partners including Northern Hydrology and Engineering, Tom Gast and Associates, McBain Associates, Pacific Earthscapes, and Samara Restoration completed the earthworks and restoration of Cochran Creek and Quail Slough on Organic Matter Farm near Indianola; is working with the McKinleyville Community Service District on the Mad River floodplain restoration and public access project, adjacent to School Road in McKinleyville; and has embarked on a multi-partner, multi-phased restoration of the lower mile of Prairie Creek, tributary to Redwood Creek near Orick, CA.

We take seriously our responsibility to provide readers with the fact-based reporting they need to make informed environmental decisions. We regret the error and promise to do better in the future.

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**Community Coastal Column**

**COASTAL CLEANUP MONTH HAS ARRIVED!**

Join with friends and family to make a difference for our beaches and ocean. Volunteers can win prizes!

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**SIGN UP ON OUR WEBSITE!**

[www.yournec.org/coastalcleanupmonth](http://www.yournec.org/coastalcleanupmonth)

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**ECONeWS CORRECTION**

*Caroline Griffith, EcoNews Editor*

Join us Saturday, September 24th at the McKinleyville location for a fun filled day! Vendors, free samples, raffles, face painting, BBQ and more!

2165 Central Ave, McKinleyville, CA
BIRD-A-THON SETS MANY RECORDS!

Redwood Region Audubon Society

The 7th Annual Tim McKay Bird-a-thon always sets all sorts of records when it comes around each year. This was a special year with a record total of at least 250 species tallied April 30 to May 2. The big news is that the five teams raised a total of $14,268.89, an all-time high, for sure! This included the Wandering Tallyer’s featuring Gary Friedrichsen, Laurie Lawrence, Bill Rodstrom, and Greg Chapman that garnered $7,164.60 for their 116 species, followed by the White-crowned Spotters with C.J. Ralph at the helm, Eric Olson, Tom Allen, Gary Bloomfield and Ken Burton, came in at $5,458.80 for their 128 species. Then the No (R) Egrets with Gary Falxa and Gayle Garman, scoring $1,204.29 and 101 species. Also contributing were the NEC team, Bird Curious with Carley Arroyo, Caroline Griffith, Ivy Munnerlyn and Jasmin Segura at $330, for their 41 species, and Papa Dori’s Budget Birding with Jose Luis Sandoval brought in $111.20, finding 56 species. Nice job, everyone!


The full story of some of the team’s adventures is on the Audubon website (ras.org). Our very sincere thanks to our sponsors which ranged from a respectable 25 folks donating about $20-25, up to a couple of very generous folks donating $650, an amazing average of about $145 per pledge.

CRAFT FOR THE COAST WINNERS

NEC Staff

The Northcoast Environmental Center (NEC) hosted its 2nd Annual Craft for the Coast Trash Art Contest in July. This exciting event engaged the local community through art, upcycling, and community activism. Craft for the Coast strives to bring awareness to marine debris issues and give litter a new life! The NEC embraces the idea that art is activism and has the power to influence policy and change the way we deal with litter as a community.

This year nine artists submitted creations made from trash and upcycled materials for a chance to win a variety of prizes. The community was able to engage with the art by attending an outdoor art show at the Arcata Farmers Market and by voting online for the People’s Choice Award.

Thank you so much to everyone who participated in Craft for the Coast this year. With your support we fundraised $575. A huge shout-out to all of the artists! We loved every piece of art from this event.

Here are our four prize winners:
- People’s Choice Award: Poseidon’s Loincloth
- Best Upcycled Creation: Heron on Wing
- Best Litter to Glitter: Mudlarking
- Best Multi-Functional Creation: Marsh Walk

Redwood Region Audubon Society President, Gail Kenny, handing a check to NEC Executive Director, Caroline Griffith.
Environmental Racism and Economic Injustice

Denise Villalva
Translated by Carrey Arroyo

Environmental Racism and Economic Injustice are the gap in capital that heightens the vulnerability and opportunities for Indigenous People and other communities that are marginalized.

The term environmental racism was coined in the United States by researcher Benjamin Chavis after observing that industrial chemical pollution was dumped mostly in Black neighborhoods. The people who are the most vulnerable to the pandemic are low-income populations living in urban communities and Indigenous communities because they are also the most affected by environmental and public health problems. This gives rise to hypervulnerability, a term we can consider a product of false equity in global health emergencies, and in countries with limited resources and access.

In this sense, environmental racism is a term that exposes a historical separation between those who reap the fruits of economic growth and those who get sick and die due to the environmental consequences of that same economic growth. The set of systematic damage to the health of these vulnerable communities makes them especially susceptible to the worst effects of all current and future social-environmental disasters.

To overcome the global health crisis, we need to bring racism to the forefront of the debate. Historical patterns of structural racial discrimination, especially environmental racism, which disproportionately impacts people of Afrodescendant and Indigenous communities, need to be eradicated. Structural racial discrimination is the legacy of a colonialist and slave-owning social culture, that leads to extreme poverty and unequal access to territory, a healthy environment, and basic natural resources such as water, soil, and spaces with better air quality. This leaves communities exposed to the environmental dangers caused by natural disasters, poisoned natural resources, and the higher loads of environmental contamination due to toxic waste.

The structural racial discrimination present in the institutions of the States results in the absence of ethnic-racial approaches that take into account the historical needs of these people in the planning, designing, and implementation of environmental policies. Ladonna Bravebull, Indigenous activist against environmental racism, stated, “My people rise up for the water and they attack us. My people defend the graves of our ancestors and they attack us. My people defend their holy places and they attack us. I know this is America, this is the story of my people. America has always walked on the blood of my people.”

The codes are changing but the results seem to be the same. Years ago Indigenous People stopped being portrayed as the bad guy in the movie. Now we see the romanticization of Indigeneity as a symbol of equality, representing us without having us present. Special programs for minority communities do not mean that the social and economic gap will be eradicated; until we are represented in a dignified manner within government councils, laws, schools, and streets it will remain. Thinking about the Earth is also keeping in mind those who have resisted the contamination or destruction of their land for thousands of years, seeing food, shelter, sharing traditions, food, and creations. Not keeping us in mind is wanting to erase ancestral memory of a series of historical actions of violence and destruction, to avoid them they will have to be recognized, they will have to be named.

An accelerated double death is caused by the arrogance of those who industrialize, supertransport, and capitalize on seas, land, air, and water. In the Anthropocene, as Donna Haraway names it, the tentacular forces are those of nuclear fire and coal. It burns the man who obsessively burns more and more fossils, creating more and more fossils in a grim parody of earthly energies.

The demand by the Indigenous world speaks to us of full awareness of ethnic belonging. A living example is the legitimacy of the Zapatista movements and the inclusion of the other, the different, the right to be different, the overcoming of marginalization, the rejection of the reduction of institutional frameworks, and the representation of another view that does not represent savage capitalism, where we are clearly devouring each other.

On August 17, the Caracoles of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) celebrated 19 years since their creation. Currently, the solidity of the political project is reflected in the Caracoles, their form of organizing, their way of seeing life, their conviction that other worlds are possible through healing, the care of the earth, respect for languages, of ancestral knowledge, and the defense of common territory and goods. This all reveals it as a horizon against climate catastrophe.

Let’s listen and raise the voice of another, and other worlds, because other worlds are possible.

DENISE VILLALVA

(scientific/graphic-animation-audiovisual/cultural manager)

Immigrant on Wiyot land, born in Mexico City, is a specialist in Paleobotanist and collaborated for 7 years at the Geology Institute of UNAM as editor. Her collective graphic-audiovisual, and scientific work has toured Brazil, Ecuador, Colombia, Bolivia, Peru and other countries such as Germany, Spain, China and the United States. She dedicates her time to promoting ecojustice and the human rights of immigrant Indigenous Peoples, seeking platforms for expression, production, and accompaniment of local talents where the diversity of artistic expressions work as a method of healing towards the exercise of our traditions, colors and forms, communicating who we are, how we fight, resist, and dream of better opportunities.
Racismo Ambiental e Injusticia Económica

Denise Villalva

Racismo Ambiental e Injusticia Económica, la brecha del capital que hipervulnera comunidades indígenas y poblaciones en menoría de oportunidades.

El término racismo ambiental fue acuñado en Estados Unidos por el investigador Benjamin Chavis luego de observar que la contaminación química de las industrias era vertida sólo en los barrios negros. Las personas más vulnerables ante la pandemia son las poblaciones urbanas pobres y las comunidades tradicionales e indígenas porque también son las más afectadas por los problemas ambientales y de salud pública. Esto da lugar a la hipervulnerabilidad, consideremos este término como un producto del false equilibrio en emergencias sanitarias a nivel mundial, los países con recursos y acceso limitado se encuentran en situaciones de hipervulnerabilidad.

En este sentido, el racismo ambiental es un término que expone una separación histórica entre lo que cosechan los frutos del crecimiento económico y los que enferman y mueren debido a las consecuencias ambientales de ese mismo crecimiento económico. El conjunto de daños sistemáticos a la salud de estas comunidades vulnerables las hace especialmente susceptibles a los peores efectos de todos los desastres sociales- ambientales actuales y venideros.

Para superar la crisis sanitaria global, necesitamos llevar el racismo al centro del debate. Erradicar los patrones históricos de discriminación racial estructural, en especial el racismo ambiental, que impactan desproporcionadamente a las personas afrodescendientes y comunidades indígenas. La discriminación racial estructural, herencia de una cultura social colonialista y esclavista, conlleva a que una gran cantidad de pobreza extrema y un acceso desigual al territorio, al medio ambiente sano y a recursos naturales básicos como agua, suelo, y espacios con mejor calidad del aire. Ese contexto las expone a peligros ambientales por motivos de desastres naturales extremadamente graves, así como en espacios con mayores cargas de contaminación del ambiente por desechos tóxicos, recursos naturales envenenados, entre otros.

La discriminación racial estructural presente en las instituciones de los Estados resulta en la ausencia de enfoques étnico-raciales que tomen en consideración las necesidades históricas de esas personas en la planificación, diseño e implementación de las políticas ambientales. Una activista muy importante contra el racismo ambiental es Ladonna Bravebull, afirma: “Mi pueblo se levanta por el agua y nos atacan. Mi pueblo defiende las tumbas de nuestros antepasados y nos atacan. Sólo que esto es América, esta es la historia de mi pueblo. Estados Unidos siempre ha caminado sobre la sangre de mi pueblo”.

Los códigos van cambiando pero los resultados parecen ser los mismos, hace años que los indios dejaron de ser siempre los malos de la película. Ahora vemos una romantización de lo indígena como símbolo de equidad, representarnos sin tenernos presentes, programas especiales para comunidades en minorías no significan que erradicará la brecha social y económica, hasta que seamos representados de manera digna dentro de consejos gubernamentales, leyes, escuelas, las calles, porque pensar en la Tierra es también tener presentes a aquellos que han resistido por miles de años a la contaminación o destrucción de sus tierras, buscando alimentos, refugio, compartiendo tradiciones, alimentos, creaciones, no tenernos presentes es querer borrar la memoria ancestral de una serie de acciones históricas de violencia y destrucción, para evitarlas habrá que reconocerlas, habrá que nombrarlas.

Una doble muerte acelerada, provocada por la arrogancia de quienes industrializan, supertransportan y capitalizan mares, tierras, aires y aguas. En el Antropoceno, como lo nombra Donna Haraway, las fuerzas tentaculares son las del fuego nuclear y el carbon; queman a la gente hacedor de fósiles que quema más y más fósiles de manera obsesiva, creando cada vez más fósiles en una parodia lúgubre de las energías terrestres.

La Reivindicación del mundo indígena, nos habla de una conciencia plena de la pertenencia étnica, un ejemplo vivo es la legitimidad de los movimientos zapatistas e la inclusión del otro, diferente, derecho a lo diferente, superar la marginalidad, rechazo de la reducción de los marcos institucionales, representar otra mirada que no representa el capitalismo salvaje, donde claramente nos estamos devorando unos a los otros.

Este pasado 7 de agosto se festejan 19 años de la creación de los Caracoles del Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN) Actualmente la solidez del proyecto político se refleja en los Caracoles, su forma de organización, la forma de ver la vida, la convicción de que otros mundos son posibles a través de la sanación, del cuidado de la tierra, del respeto a la lengua, a los saberes ancestrales, a la defensa del territorio y los bienes comunes lo revela como un horizonte contra la catástrofe climática.

Escuchemos, y alcemos la voz de otros y otros mundos, porque otros mundos son posibles.

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DENISE VILLALVA
(científica/ gráfica-animación-audiovisual/gestora cultural)

Migrante en tierra Wiyot, Nacida en la Ciudad de México, es especialista en Paleontología y colaboró por 7 años en el Instituto de Geología de la UNAM como editora científica. Su trabajo gráfico y audiovisual colectivo y científico ha recorrido Brasil, Ecuador, Colombia, Bolivia, Perú y otros como Alemania, España, China y Estados Unidos. Dedica su tiempo a promover ecojusticia y los derechos humanos de los Pueblos Indígenas migrantes, buscando plataformas de expresión, producción, y acompañamiento de talentos locales donde la diversidad de expresiones artísticas funcionen como método de sanación hacia el ejercicio de nuestras tradiciones, colores y formas, comunicando quiénes somos, cómo luchamos, resistimos, y soñamos con mejores oportunidades.
The Rules of the Road. How Did We Get Here?

Colin Fiske, Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities

One of the first major steps toward designing American communities for cars was the adoption of rules of the road that favored drivers over other street users. Or actually, the adoption of any rules of the road at all. Prior to the twentieth century, there were no laws at all about how to use streets and roads, and very little need for them. Pedestrians and horse-drawn vehicles traveled slowly and navigated around each other on a mostly ad hoc basis, aside from a general custom of keeping to the right. They also had little problem navigating around other accepted street users, including children playing and people selling various goods.

When cars were introduced to the streets, they threw this long-established order on its head. For one thing, cars had the ability to move very fast, and therefore posed a much greater safety threat to other road users than any previous mode of transportation. Indeed, cars were deeply unpopular for decades in most cities and towns, because they killed other street users—particularly children—with horrifying regularity.

The class implications were hard to miss. Automobiles were often referred to as “pleasure cars” and, at least initially, were mostly driven by wealthy hobbyists. The people they killed were more often members of the poor or working class. This tragic inequity continues to reverberate today. Car ownership is still too expensive for many people, and low-income people are still more likely to be killed by drivers while walking.

But in a sign of things to come, the first rules of the road were designed not to protect safety but to move traffic more quickly and efficiently. At the time, the concept of traffic “congestion” had not yet been invented by engineers, and few people considered slow speeds a problem on public streets. William Phelps Eno, scion of a wealthy New York family, however, felt differently. He became singularly obsessed with traffic efficiency and speed, and dedicated his life and his family’s sizeable fortune to imposing his ideas on cities from 1899 onward.

Eno’s first major success was convincing New York City to adopt his “Rules for Driving and the Regulation of Street Traffic” in 1903. It was the first set of official traffic laws ever adopted, and was concerned primarily with ensuring that drivers behaved in a predictable and orderly manner and that other street users did not interfere with the movement of vehicles. Indeed, the Rules asserted that “the roadbeds of highways and streets are primarily intended for vehicles,” a claim which at that time would have seemed positively absurd to most people, and for the first time directed pedestrians to enter the street only to cross at right angles, “preferably at a regular crossing.”

The Rules for Drivers were quickly copied by other cities and towns, thanks in no small part to Eno’s advocacy, and became the basis for traffic regulation in the United States. (They were also influential in Europe.) Eno continued to proselytize successfully for his vision of speedy, efficient, free-flowing traffic for decades. He was credited with inventing or popularizing one-way streets, traffic lights, stop signs, and medians, among other “traffic-flow innovations.” He created a foundation to promote his vision which is now called the Eno Center for Transportation and is still one of the most influential organizations in transportation policy today.

Of course, while Eno’s money and influence had a significant impact, no single person is responsible for the modern paradigm of traffic regulation which promotes the speedy and efficient flow of vehicles above all else, and makes other traditional street users into interlopers. Notably, this vision was also promoted by a generation of engineers beginning in the 1920s, who were mostly hired by downtown merchants worried that their business prospects were threatened by the mess automobiles had made of city streets. These first traffic engineers approached the problem the same way they did other civil engineering problems of the day like sewer and water systems—as a problem of flow—and their recommendations were widely implemented by cities thanks to their influential benefactors. The engineers organized as the Institute of Traffic Engineers in 1931. Now renamed the Institute of Transportation Engineers, it is still extremely influential. William Phelps Eno was made an honorary member.

Today, increasing evidence suggests that road rules that prioritize vehicular speed over everything else are partly to blame for the daily carnage on streets and highways. In fact, one school of thought holds that eliminating traffic rules in cities and towns altogether is the key to improving road safety. This philosophy is epitomized by the Dutch idea of the “woonerf” or “living street,” where many uses—including children playing—are allowed, and drivers are responsible for operating their vehicles slowly and safely. The fact that this idea seems so radical in the US is a reflection of the success of Eno and his contemporaries at shaping our laws, our culture and our communities over the last century.

Note: Much of the information in this article is drawn from historian Peter D. Norton’s masterful 2008 book Fighting Traffic: The Dawn of the Motor Age in the American City. Any otherwise uncited facts can be assumed to derive from this source.

Sources:
1Smart Growth America. 2022. Dangerous by Design. smartgrowthamerica.org/dangerous-by-design/
3The full text of the original Rules can be found here: enotrans.org/wp-content/uploads/RulesOfTheRoad.jpg
4Henebery 2015.
5Robinson et al. Undated. Pioneers of Transportation. www.ite.org/about-ite/history/
1956
The Federal Aid Hwy Act creates the modern interstate highway system. Over the following decades, the federal government spent hundreds of billions of dollars to build a road network exclusively for cars and trucks. The new highways destroyed and divided many formerly compact, mixed-use, thriving urban neighborhoods, often specifically targeting neighborhoods of color.

1926
The US Supreme Court upholds the legality of exclusionary ("Euclidean") zoning, which separates residential, commercial, and other uses from each other and thus requires people to travel longer distances and increases car dependency.

1903
New York City adopts "Rules for Driving." They are both the first formal traffic laws and the first time that traffic speed is endorsed as a priority on city streets.

Past - c. 1900
Homes, shops, and services are mixed together in cities, towns and villages, and people mostly walk between them. Streets and roads are public spaces for travel, commerce, and social activity.

1916
Berkeley adopts the nation’s first single-family zoning law as part of efforts to keep Black and Asian families from moving into White neighborhoods. The idea quickly spreads. Expensive car ownership adds to the exclusionary effect of single-family zoning.

1910s
The term "jaywalker" is invented to slander pedestrians. It is widely deployed in "safety campaigns" dominated by auto interests, labeling walking in the street as a foolish act and eventually a crime.

1956
The Bureau of Public Roads publishes the "Parking Guide for Cities" which aimed to ease car travel by providing enough free parking for the highest demand times, and was adopted into nearly every city zoning code in the country. This ensures a massive oversupply of parking.

1976
The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) publishes its first Trip Generation Manual. In 1985, ITE publishes its first Parking Generation Manual. These manuals provide estimates of car traffic and parking "demand" for various land uses based on observations of a small number of suburban sites. They have become the basis for establishing costly parking mandates in communities across the country.

Homes and businesses are far apart, and the routes between them are built almost exclusively for cars. But it’s not inevitable; it was planned that way. Here are a few of the key developments over the last century that led to our modern predicament.

Recommended Reading
Fighting Traffic (2008) by Peter Norton
The High Cost of Free Parking (2005) by Donald Shoup
"The Racist History of Single-Family Zoning" (2020) by Erin Baldassari and Molly Solomon, KQED Radio

Written by Colin Fiske, CRTP | Designed by Chelsea Pulliam
A Brief History of Plastic Packaging

Elena Bilheimer, EcoNews Journalist

With the recent signing of Senate Bill 54 (SB 54) into law on June 30, 2022 by Governor Gavin Newsom, the plastic packaging and waste systems in California are set to change in the near future. While this law isn’t a comprehensive cure-all solution to the massive plastics problem, it is the first of its kind in the U.S. and marks an important step on the journey towards a more sustainable relationship with waste. Understanding the history of plastic packaging and remembering what life looked like before single use plastic was ubiquitous can help open the collective imagination and inspire new patterns of consumption and methods of design for everyday products.

SB 54 mandates that all packaging in the state be recyclable or compostable by 2032, while also requiring that plastic industry members raise $5 billion over 10 years in order to respond to the damaging effects of plastic pollution on disadvantaged communities. By establishing a producer responsibility organization, the law attempts to shift the economic burden of plastic waste to producers in the industry rather than consumers. This is an integral part of the plastics problem, as the industry has long externalized the detrimental effects of plastic onto the general public, specifically causing the most harm to marginalized communities.

The most obvious example of the industry's lack of responsibility is through their extensive promotion of recycling. In 1826, the first man-made plastic was demonstrated at the Great International Exhibition in London by Alexander Parkes. However, it wasn't until the mid-forties that the plastic industry greatly expanded as a result of World War II, increasing plastic production by 300 percent. After the war, the industry continued to grow by using purposeful marketing strategies to convince the public to transition from a more prudent and less wasteful lifestyle to one in which consumption was the focus. Initially, there was a lot of public resistance, but the resistance was overcome by the convenience, efficiency, and ease that plastic provided.

Although dampened for a while, criticism about plastic rose in the 1970s with the celebration of the first Earth Day. As awareness about the finite nature of the earth grew, discontent and frustration at plastic companies rose as well. In response, many companies and some environmentalists supported an advertisement campaign by the anti-litter organization Keep America Beautiful that featured the slogan “People start pollution. People can stop it.” This campaign included the infamous commercial in which a white actor of Italian descent portrayed an Indigenous character who shed a slow tear in response to the rampant plastic pollution. Recycling was promoted as a response in order “to deal with the problem of disposability without endangering disposability,” as described by Dr. Max Liboiron, an Associate Professor in the Department of Geography at Memorial University who studies the intersection between pollution and colonialism.

While this focus on recycling did inspire more people to contribute to cleanups and remove plastic from the public eye, it did little to address the root cause. Instead, it redirected the blame onto the people who bought the plastic rather than the companies that produced it, all while providing concerned citizens with a false sense of assurance that their disposable lifestyle was being recycled and made into something new. This sense of assurance is a direct result of the considerable funds the plastic industry has poured into making recycling seem like the only solution. In actuality, a global study in 2018 found that only nine percent of plastics actually get recycled, with the rest going to landfills, the ocean, or countries in the Global South. Liboiron summarized these problems in a recent interview on the For the Wild podcast, “Do I recycle? Yes. Do I think it is a solution to plastic? Hell no... So recycling is good for ethics, you can be a good citizen. It’s better than nothing, but it is not the solution, because it actually allows the problem to continue—it allows that tap to keep going.”

With plastic production expected to triple by 2050, implementing stronger and more extensive laws regulating plastic use is a necessity. In the meantime, Maggie Gainer, one of the founders of Zero Waste Humboldt, suggests three key tips for navigating the world of plastic packaging, especially when it comes to claims about its recyclability. First and foremost, she advises against reading the packaging and allowing it to influence how you determine what is recyclable.

Secondly, and perhaps most challenging, Gainer suggests that when in doubt, consumers should throw a plastic package out rather than contaminate full loads of recycling with non-recyclable items. Her last suggestion is switching over to reusable containers and items in the first place, which can be difficult when almost everything in the grocery store is wrapped in plastic. In response, Gainer advises consumers to express their concerns about plastic to their local grocery store manager. However, she stressed that change would only occur if multiple people continuously communicated their concern.

While the system may be designed to enable endless single use plastic consumption, Liboiron emphasized in an interview that, “Most of that packaging has been necessary only since the 1950’s—that’s living memory. We can circulate goods in ways we remember from living memory differently than totally packaged in plastic.” Utilizing plastic in situations where it makes sense can be lifesaving, but using the longest lasting material for the shortest lived items fuels lifestyles of waste and overconsumption. While plastic companies have worked hard to implement the assumption that all humans are inherently wasteful, in reality, humans were taught to waste. “It’s possible to have a happy life without so many plastics,” said Gainer.

See the infographic on the following page for information about packaging before plastic in order to inspire ideas about how packaging could look in the future.

Resources for Further Learning:
- Plastic Wars, PBS Frontline
- California Passes First Sweeping US Law to Reduce Single-Use Plastic
- For the Wild Podcast Episode: Dr. Max Liboiron on Reorienting Within a World of Plastic
- Anti-Colonial Science & The Ubiquity of Plastic
Berries and some other fruits were put in compostable paper containers and were mostly available seasonally rather than put in plastic clam shells or frozen in plastic bags.

Cosmetics used to come in glass containers and were often capped with corks, while cleaning supplies were usually in powder form and sold in cardboard boxes. Lipstick and mascara would come in metal tins, while makeup brushes were made of wood and animal hair.

Cookies, crackers, and dry goods were often sold in bulk and dispensed in paper bags or tins. Later, snack foods came in bags made of paper sealed with wax inside larger paper boxes.

Milk and other beverages used to come in glass containers that would get washed and reused by the store. Reusable glass milk bottles are still available in some stores for a deposit, meaning that the price is higher initially but the deposit is refunded when the bottles are returned to the store.

While it can seem almost impossible to imagine how meat was packaged and sold before plastic, selections were picked out at the butcher’s counter and wrapped in paper. Cheese was also wrapped in either paper or cloth.
Offshore Wind on the Horizon

Tom Wheeler, EPIC Executive Director

Offshore Wind on the Horizon

Offshore wind is necessary to combat the climate crisis. With gigawatts of potential energy off of Humboldt’s coast as well as one of the first two lease areas proposed on the West Coast, Humboldt is leading the nation. As a leader, it is important that we set a strong example and that we can learn from this project to better develop offshore wind development that both maximizes the potential energy created while ensuring that whatever impacts occur are avoided, minimized and mitigated appropriately.

EPIC and our friends at Humboldt Baykeeper, the Northcoast Environmental Center, and the Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities recently submitted comments to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) on the proposed sale notice for the Humboldt Wind Area. This is one of the first opportunities to shape how wind energy is developed off our coast. This is one of the first opportunities to shape how wind energy is developed off our coast. The public comments focused both on standard conditions that BOEM would require across all proposed leases to benefit wildlife and to encourage energy storage and grid improvements.

Wildlife Impacts Uncertain, So Plan for Uncertainty

The marine environment 20-25 miles offshore is relatively poorly studied. While we have some information about what kinds of wildlife use the area, there are still holes in our understanding of what species might be impacted. Even for the species we know exist in this environment, it is unclear how they might interact with floating offshore wind turbines because—we are in uncharted waters. Only a handful of other floating offshore wind turbines exist and none on the West Coast. What do we do with uncertainty? One approach, adopted by our groups, is rigorous data collection that feeds into project modifications.

Given our dearth of data, we need to develop more. This includes both baseline monitoring of what wildlife utilize this area before the turbines are placed, as well as robust monitoring of wildlife during project operations. New technology can enable a much more robust understanding of the project area. Image recognition technology, for example, can replace human monitors and scan for wildlife in the project area and automatically feed open and transparent data portals.

Incentivize Energy Storage and Grid Improvements

Initial buildout of wind energy in our region is limited by the export capacity of our electrical grid. While the wind areas are capable of producing 1.6 gigawatts of power, the Schatz Energy Research Laboratory at CalPoly Humboldt anticipates we can only build about a tenth of that capacity, 174 megawatts, until grid improvements occur. Even then, there may be times when turbines need to be turned off because our grid can’t handle all the power that could be produced. Energy storage can reduce curtailment from offshore wind projects by sopping up “excess” power and storing it for later use.

One potential form of energy storage that is desired by the local community is “green hydrogen” production. Humboldt County’s hydrogen needs are currently met through hydrogen that is trucked into the county from around Sacramento. With projected increased hydrogen fuel needs, to meet demand by the Humboldt Transit Authority among other users, locally-produced hydrogen would be a substantial benefit to the project. In addition to fueling buses and other forms of transportation, hydrogen can also be blended into the fuel utilized at the Humboldt Bay Generating Station, reducing the greenhouse gas emissions from this power generation.

The data that is collected then needs to be put to a productive end. At the project outset, we should ensure that all feasible avoidance and mitigation measures are employed, from better site selection of individual turbines to the incorporation of technology to minimize risks. As the turbines operate and if new issues emerge—again, the benefit of robust and transparent data is the ability to scan for emerging issues—a science-based “adaptive management” program can ensure that modifications to the projects occur. If, say, bats are being impacted in a way that wasn’t initially anticipated, a panel of bat and wind energy experts could determine the best way to avoid impacts in the future.

There is no way to meet our clean energy needs without impacts. With a robust and objective program like we advocated for, we can best avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts to ensure that while taking action to stop the climate crisis we don’t also contribute to the related biodiversity crisis.

Please join RRAS for an in-person, and virtual program on:

The Natural History of the Seabirds of Trinidad and Humboldt Bay
~ Recent observations of the effects of predation, oceanography, and climate

Presented by Dan Barton, on Wednesday, Sept 21 at the Six Rivers Masonic Lodge, 251 Bayside Road, Arcata, this program will be simultaneously zoomed and the link will be available on the RRAS website. Social hour with goodies and hot drinks will start at 6:30 p.m. and the program will begin at 7 p.m.

Dan is an associate professor and the department chair of the Department of Wildlife at Cal Poly Humboldt. He received a B.S. from Evergreen State College in 2001, and a PhD from University of Montana in 2012.

Over the last 8 years, he has observed a variety of chance events – including extreme heat, eagle predation, raven harassment, and rising local sea levels – at colonies of seabirds around Humboldt Bay and Trinidad. Dan will share some of his observations, including aerial photo and video documentation of some of these events, largely through the lens of descriptive natural history – what was seen, when and how, and what might be happening. He hopes to help identify questions for future intensive natural history observation and targeted research on climate, predator, and direct anthropogenic impacts on seabirds in our region.

Left: Little River at Camel Rock, by Dan Barton.

RRAS Field Trips in SEPTEMBER!


Tuesday, September 6th – 6-8pm, join trip leader Janelle Chojnacki for a guided walk as part of the monthly Women and Girls’ Bird Walks series. Spice up a weekday evening with this free guided walk around the Arcata Marsh, where we will likely observe many migratory species including swallows and swifts foraging over the ponds as well as warblers, flycatchers, and maybe some raptors getting a last meal before night comes. We may also see the plethora of night herons take off from their diurnal roosts, and evening walks always carry the possibility of seeing owls out and about! Bring binoculars and a scope if you have one and meet at the south end of I Street (Klopp Lake).

Sat. September 10th – 8:30-11am. Join RRAS for a morning bird walk in Southern Humboldt along the South Fork Eel River and Southern Humboldt Community Park. Trip leader Ann Constantino will be focusing on riparian species and looking for migrants who might use the abundant food resources that riparian areas can provide. Email Andrew at andrew.RRAS@gmail.com for details, or just show up at Tooby Memorial Park.


Sun. September 18th – 9-11am. Ralph Bucher will lead a walk on the Eureka Waterfront. This trail is paved and is wheelchair accessible.


Sat. September 24th – 9-11am. Wigi Wetlands Volunteer Workday. Help create bird-friendly native habitat and restore a section of the bay trail behind the Bayshore Mall. We will provide tools and packaged snacks. Please bring your own water and gloves. Contact Jeremy Cashen at jeremy.cashen@yahoo.com or 214-605-7368 for more information.

Sun. September 25th – 8am. Ken Burton will lead an all-day exploration of the Titlow Hill/Forest Service Route 1 area. This is Humboldt’s premier montane birding locale but not visited much at this time of year; let’s see what we can find! Meet on Valley West Boulevard in front of Pepper’s at 8:00 a.m. to carpool, or at the base of Titlow Hill Road at 8:45am. Contact Ken at 707-499-1146 or shrikethree@gmail.com for more information.

Sun. September 25th – 9-12pm. Join RRAS in partnership with local guiding company, Kayak Trinidad, for a morning viewing local seabirds from a kayak. All kayaks and gear are provided. Space is limited and reservations are required. Cost for this trip is $109/person. Contact Andrew Orahoske at andrew.RRAS@gmail.com to reserve your spot.

*Contact Ralph at thebook@reninet.com for any walks he leads and all Arcata Marsh walks.
*Contact Field Trip Chair, Janelle Chojnacki at janelle.choj@gmail.com for more information on all other walks, unless otherwise specified. See our website for Covid protocols.
For the Love of Wildlife! (Part I)
An interview with Monte Merrick, Director of Humboldt Wildlife Care Center, and Bird Ally X

By Harriet Hill

We are most fortunate to have access to this excellent wildlife rehabilitation facility in our small county. I was grateful that there was a place to take the three injured or exhausted juvenile birds I found over the last 15 years: an owl (I don’t remember the species), a Common Murre, and a Cooper’s Hawk. The owl did not survive but the other two youngsters recovered and were released. In 2012, I volunteered to clean the quarters of some of the dozens of juvenile Brown Pelicans who were recovering from having their plumage fouled with fish oil disposed of by fishers in local harbors and the bay. I was impressed with this extensive volunteer effort that saved hundreds of young pelicans who would likely have drowned if untreated.

Below is the first installment of my interview with Monte (MM), which concerns the history and purpose of the center, and how he and his staff initially got involved in this unusual occupation. Next month’s installment will feature many interesting statistics and anecdotes about the patients and staff at the Humboldt Wildlife Care Center (HWCC).

HH: Tell me about the Center’s history – when was it formed, by whom, and how has it grown over the years?

MM: There are some gaps in my knowledge of who worked here at Humboldt Wildlife Care Center over the years, but the organization was founded in 1979. Many people in our community have been active with HWCC over the years and still are among our supporters and occasional helpers - like Kathy Pollard out near Carlotta who was the primary caregiver during the 1990s, and Bird Ally X (BAX) co-founder January Bill (who now leads the botulism effort in the Lower Klamath Refuge), was the director of HWCC while she attended Cal Poly Humboldt from 1999 to 2001. In 2006, the then-current board of directors secured our current site, and established an actual facility to receive wild patients. From 1979 until then all of the wildlife rehabilitation work was done at people’s homes – at that time it was more of a network of care providers than a center for treatment.

In 2011, the organization of which I [also] was a co-founder, Bird Ally X (BAX), took on the management of HWCC, after leading HWCC through a local Brown Pelican crisis involving juveniles getting into unsecured fish waste. We dealt with the same issue again in 2012 and HWCC became a part of BAX in 2013, and has operated under the BAX 501(c)3 since 2014.

Since 2006, however, at our facility on the Jacoby Creek Land Trust Property, we’ve been able to develop a treatment center that may be short on beauty, but it’s long on functionality. Since 2011 we’ve added seabird pools, a pelican aviary, a waterfowl aviary, a raptor housing, songbird and swallow housing, and more – including highly effective raccoon housing where orphaned raccoons can learn the wild skills they will need to survive - how to fish, how to dig for insects, climbing skills – in short as much as they can learn even though they are bereft of their mother’s care and teaching.

HH: What’s your mission? How do you go about achieving it?

MM: I really like our prepared statement so I’d like to quote it:

A few days later, the pair were in our shop just off the carport building a new nest. This is the first time they built a nest there. They worked on the nest for a week or so then the female began incubation. The male perched on the wire in the backyard singing in the daytime, and at night he roosted in the rafters of the shop near the nest. I would see him there every night when I locked the shop doors. Two weeks came and went, and I finally found a broken eggshell below the nest that looked like it had hatched. But I didn’t hear any baby birds begging.

A few days later I found a dead chick on the ground under the nest. It looked like it didn’t survive long after hatching. I looked in the nest and there was one unhatched egg there. It’s early August when I write this, and the female has abandoned the nest. I saw the male fly up to the nest with bugs in his mouth then fly away again when there was no one to feed. I miss seeing the chicks grow up this year. I wonder why the eggs didn’t hatch and the chick didn’t survive. Is it something genetic? Did they have pesticide poisoning from where they spent their winter? I will not know. I hope they come back next year.

Above: Barn Swallow nest, courtesy of inthevintagelkitchen.com/tag/barn-swallow-nest/.

(Continued on next page)
MM: Bird Ally X is a collective of wildlife care-providers committed to raising the standard of care available for sick or injured aquatic birds and other wild animals.

BAX works to help wild birds and other animals in their efforts to survive the hazards of civilization through:

• the direct action of caring for wild birds and other wild animals in distress
• supporting other rehabilitation groups through workshops and consultation
• generation and proliferation of educational and informational materials and literature, for our colleagues and our neighbors.

BAX will build, strengthen, and further develop the resources available to ensure that excellent care is provided by working with colleagues in wildlife rehabilitation to maintain an environment of mutual aid and benefit.

In all efforts, BAX is committed to continually elevating the quality of available care and providing uncompromising advocacy on behalf of wild birds and other wild animals.

BAX operates the Humboldt Wildlife Care Center, a wildlife rehabilitation facility serving the northwest corner of California. At our center, we admit injured wild animals and provide quality treatment to well over 1000 wild animal patients a year, with the goal of releasing them back to the wild. We also help resolve conflicts between people and wildlife, (such as raccoons denning inside houses, and other situations) with our Humane Solutions Team.

BAX has the expertise to help wildlife affected by oil spills and other emergencies and is part of the Oiled Wildlife Care Network.

Sharing professional knowledge about wildlife care is an important part of our mission. We publish books and other reference literature for our colleagues and neighbors. We offer workshops and consultations for rehabilitators, as well as internships.

Our Promoting Co-existence Team brings presentations to schools and community groups throughout the area.

We advocate for wild animals, addressing issues and public policy from a rehabilitation perspective.”

HH: How is HWCC funded?

MM: HWCC/BAX is funded almost entirely by community support, and all other support is in the form of grants from foundations and institutions, such as a grant we received from Coast Central Credit Union to purchase an outdoor walk-in freezer so that we could increase our ability to stock frozen food such as fish, for our many pescatarian patients. Still, the support we receive from our neighbors and supporters

Above: Great Blue Heron being released from HWCC care, by Laura Corsiglia across the state, nation and world is the lion’s share of our annual budget. It is too small, but our support grows each year, so I remain optimistic for our future.

HH: What got you started in this occupation?

MM: It’s kind of a cliché in wildlife rehab that everybody who enters the field has some story of finding an orphan or injured wild animal when they were kids, but I didn’t seem to have a story like that. About 16 years ago, I was giving a talk, which my mother attended, in my home state of New Jersey (sponsored by the Cape May Bird Observatory). The talk was on my time in Louisiana, responding to the myriad post-Katrina oil spills. When I was asked this question, I mentioned the cliché, and that I didn’t have such a story, but my mother heckled me with “what about the squirrels?”

In a rush I remembered. I’d found several neonatal Gray Squirrels on the ground at the base of a tree during the spring that I was nine years old. I tried to keep them alive on cow’s milk in one of my dresser drawers. They all died over the course of two or three days and then my mother found them. I forgot about them as soon as I could, I guess.

Still, it was my frustration with the lifelessness of ‘book-learning’ that hit me in my mid-thirties which made me seek out something intimate, tangible, and necessary. I lived in Seattle at the time, and when the New Carissa came ashore and broke up on the beach just north of Coos Bay, I watched the coverage on the local 24-hour news network and was amazed to see people out there rescuing oiled shorebirds – one person interviewed, Curt Clumpner, was identified as a “wildlife rehabilitator” – a profession I did not know existed! Immediately I began to see ads seeking volunteers to ‘help return an animal to the wild’ at the Progressive Animal Welfare Society (PAWS),

and fortuitously I met one of their rehabilitators at a party at the same time. She was awesome, a really smart, tough, compassionate person, and she got me to volunteer. That was 1999. I was 37. And proving that the field is indeed a small world, it turned out that Curt Clumpner had launched the wildlife clinic at PAWS two decades earlier.

HH: What drives others to work there?

MM: One common thread, or theme, that I’ve seen in my colleagues, both volunteers and paid staff, is a deep feeling that the wild is the highest reality, and that our society, in fact all industrialized societies, cause great harm to the wild as a matter of course. Stopping this harm is too daunting of a task for most people but helping every victim we can is the least we can do. There is a desire to ease the suffering of those who’ve come into conflict with our human mess, sprawl, and despoilment of the environment. There is a common feeling that it is our responsibility as members of that destructive society, to make some kind of amends, even if it’s a gesture as small as caring for a violet-green swallow’s fallen nestlings. This drive to help the wild as much as possible is a common feature of my friends in this field, certainly in the staff and volunteers of Humboldt Wildlife Care Center.

Currently our biggest challenge is moving our facility from our present location in Bayside, to the property we are raising funds to purchase in Manila. A daunting task, especially while continuing to meet our mission – and we won’t be able to do it without the support of our community. We’ll have the details of our funding needs on our website and social media soon. To donate to HWCC/BAX, go to their website at https://birdallyx.net/humboldt-wildlife-care-center-2/, or call (707) 822-8839.

(Next month: PART II of, ‘For the Love of Wildlife!’)
In July the Redwood Region Audubon Society’s Conservation Committee decided to add our 2¢ on the Nordic Aquaculture Project’s Final Environmental Impact Review (FEIR) of their planned fish factory at the former Samoa Pulp Mill. The Humboldt County Planning Commission (HCPC) approved and certified the FEIR at their July 28 Meeting. Since we believe it falls far short of complying with the California Environmental Quality Act, we agreed to join an appeal to the Board of Supervisors on the HCPC’s approval. We join in this effort with other organizations including the Humboldt Fisherman’s Marketing Association, and Humboldt 350 – a local affiliate of a nationwide effort to “end the age of fossil fuels.” You can read our public comments on the HCPC website at humboldtgov.org/3218/Nordic-Aquafarms-Project.

On another note, the Humboldt and Brookings Wind Energy Areas (WEA) leases by the Federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, present a huge series of decisions. We in Audubon have never been faced with deciding whether maximizing wind energy ASAP or going slowly and carefully, will drive fewer bird species to extinction. We have decided to focus on local energy needs for now, but know that State, Federal, and corporate goals are for full build-out of the WEAs and their connection to the western electricity grid. This will involve an 8-fold increase to transmission lines capacity out of the area, and potentially huge impacts to the environment they traverse.

Some good news is that certain non-profit organizations such as, Northcoast Regional Land Trust, Western Rivers Conservancy, and California Trout are working on restoring the Redwood Creek estuary. The primary benefit is fish, but estuary enhancement benefits all wildlife. Although no details are available now, a significant on-site meeting took place in August. We look forward to supporting this restoration effort. Feel free to take the bait and be hooked!

Please join us at our next Conservation Committee meeting on: September 8, 2022, at 12 pm on ZOOM link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87263853457?pwd=RHKR0FrWEJ4WHJJcFZFWDB4M0FFZz09.

The Second Prey-go-neesh Cohort has Arrived!
The newest cohort of California Condors was brought to Yurok Country on August 16th. The Yurok Tribe and the Northern California Condor Restoration Program (NCCRP), provide the standard medical exams, and mount transmitters prior to releasing them individually into the Release and Management Facility. The transfer and preparation work is performed with help from multiple organizations including, the Peregrine Fund, Pinnacles and Redwood National Parks, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Great Basin Institute, and departments at the Yurok Tribe. The cohort can be viewed live on the Yurok Condor Cam at www.yuroktribe.org/yurok-condor-live-feed. The young birds (one female and three males), will acclimatize in the facility for approximately one month prior to their staggered release into the wild. Tune in to see A4, A5, A6, and A7, and meet our ever-patient mentor bird, #746. The NCCRP expects to implement a staggered release of the birds this fall and to reintroduce one cohort of prey-go-neesh every year for at least the next two decades. The Yurok Tribe appreciates all your thoughts, prayers, and positive energy. If you’d like donate to the condor recovery program, please go to the Yurok Tribe’s Wildlife Department website at www.yuroktribe.org/yurok-condor-restoration-program.

Did You Know?
Facts shared by the RRAS Cat & Bird Safety Committee
The Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) is promoting responsible cat ownership as part of the Saving Animals From Extinction (SAFE) North American Songbird (NAS) program. The over 300 bird species that spend part of their annual cycle in North America are in persistent decline due in part to predation from domestic cats. Because citizen action is recognized as an important component of songbird recovery efforts, AZA is promoting that cat owners keep their pets indoors. It’s better for birds and better for cats!

European Bee-eaters live in the savannas of Africa, but migrate to sites in Europe to nest in sandy cliff faces. They lay up to 10 eggs in their burrow, and actively defend it.

Above: Cartoon and photography by Leslie Scopes Anderson. See more of Leslie’s work at www.flickr.com/photos/72064473@N07/. Left: Condor sketch, courtesy of freepik.com.

Wildlife Photographer Captures Hawks Handing-off a Snake: Southern Humboldt Photographer, Ann Constantino, sent in these amazing photographs capturing two parent hawks passing a snake from one to the other, mid-air! Ann notes: “I saw this Red-tailed Hawk with a King Snake in its claws, and before I knew it, the snake was being handed off to its mate – I’m guessing to be delivered to a juvenile who I could hear crying from deep in the trees beyond. I could not believe my eyes when it was happening – it was so fast I thought I had imagined the whole thing until I checked out my own photographs!”
Sustainable Habits Affordable for Everyone

Accessibility to low-income people and communities is often an important component missing in discussions of Zero Waste and sustainable materials management. Sustainable practices popularized in the media tend to be costly, such as buying organic or completely plastic free. While those practices are significant, not everyone can afford them. Corporations capitalize and profit off of products that are meant to reduce harm to our planet without accepting responsibility for the way they devastate our environment. Instead they shift the blame to the general public – consumers – misleading us to think if we don’t purchase their green-washed items, we aren’t doing our part. However, that is not true! There are many low cost, environmentally-beneficial practices that are easy to integrate into our daily habits.

1. Use natural lighting during the day. Conserving energy is a habit that is completely free, and will actually put money back into your pockets! Keeping lights off during the day will lower your living expenses, and help protect our environment from needless carbon dioxide emissions and excess resource use.

2. Reduce, reuse,... repurpose. Repurposing old items minimizes natural resource extraction and reduces the pollution from new product manufacture. It reduces landfill disposal and is significantly less energy-intensive than recycling. Repurposing helps limit our carbon footprint, and makes us more conscious of the waste we produce. Plus, repurposed items can be donated! Someone else may find treasure in items you no longer want.

3. Think about the veggies you buy...and grow them. While this practice isn’t cost-free to start, it will save you in the long run. Think of all the vegetables and fruits that are wrapped in plastic or sold in plastic containers that can be grown in your home.

4. Composting is a good alternative or addition to gardening. If you don’t have yard space nor access to a community garden, gardening may not be possible. You can still reduce food waste though by composting! Composting reduces landfill methane emissions, enriches soil (which is why it’s great for gardening), and aids in the uptake of carbon dioxide in plants - overall helping to combat climate change.

5. Question your purchases and consumption to save money. Often the single-use packaging for food and beverage purchases is a significant portion of the total price. For example, bottled water (most commonly from a tap) is thousands of times more expensive than tap water. Compare $0.002 per gallon for most tap water to a range of $0.89 to $8.26 per gallon for bottled waters. Have you ever planned on just buying one item, but left the store with many? It’s a cycle of ‘I see it, and I want it, so I’ll buy it.’ Next time, ask yourself: do I really need this? Can I borrow this? Chances are, you’ll discover that you in fact do not need to buy more than what you came for.

These are not the only free, affordable, and cost saving daily life habits readily available to people on a tight budget, they’re simply easy ones to start with. It may be overwhelming to try them all at once. Set small and achievable goals to integrate these habits into your daily routine. Living as environmentally-sustainable as possible looks different for each of us. We know that making an effort to reduce your environmental impacts does not need to be costly. To learn more visit our website zerowastehumboldt.org or follow us on social media.
New Multimodal Transit Center Coming to Eureka

A transit center or transit hub is a place where a number of public transit routes come together, enabling easier connections and transfers. Currently, Humboldt County has only one such facility, the Arcata Transit Center. It fills an important role as a terminus and connection point not only for Arcata & Mad River Transit buses, but also for regional buses going north to Crescent City and east to Willow Creek, and for Amtrak and Greyhound buses going south to the Bay Area. It’s also one of the busiest stops on the well-used regional Redwood Transit Service line.

The Arcata Transit Center also suffers from some problems. While it’s conveniently close to the center of town, it is set back from the street, bordered by highway berms and privacy fences, and only intermittently staffed, making it feel unwelcoming and even unsafe to many people. And it lacks many of the amenities that are considered critical for a modern transit hub, such as bikeshare and carshare stations to help transit riders cover the “last mile” and comfortable, weather-protected waiting areas.

Meanwhile, Eureka—despite being the North Coast’s most populous city and the Humboldt County seat—has never had a real transit center of its own. But that’s about to change! This spring, the Eureka City Council voted unanimously to support the construction of the Eureka Regional Transit and Housing Center ("EaRTH Center") on a downtown parking lot at 3rd and G Streets. And in July, the State Transportation Agency announced that it would grant almost $39 million to support the project, along with the Humboldt Transit Authority’s planned transition to zero-emission hydrogen fuel-cell buses.

The EaRTH Center will be located in the middle of Eureka’s bustling downtown/Old Town area, and in addition to transit facilities will include new apartments on upper floors of the building. Plans call for comfortable waiting areas and secure bike storage, along with bikeshare, car share, car rental, and rideshare facilities. Plans also include new express buses to Cal Poly Humboldt and south all the way to Ukiah, which would significantly improve options for car-free travel in the region.

The EaRTH Center will truly be a multimodal transit hub. It will allow Eureka residents to easily walk, bike, or bus to a central location where they can catch longer-distance buses, and allow residents from across the North Coast to travel to Eureka and then transfer to other buses, bikes or cars to travel the last mile to their destinations. And people living in the EaRTH Center apartments will just have to go downstairs to access all those healthy, sustainable transportation options. Hopefully, the EaRTH Center will become a model for the development (or in Arcata, the redevelopment) of other transit hubs throughout the region.
Smith River National Recreation Area Expansion into Oregon Clears Key Hurdle

Smith River Alliance

On July 22, Oregon’s U.S. Senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden announced the Smith River National Recreation Area Expansion Act (Smith River NRA), legislation to expand the Smith River NRA, cleared a key hurdle by passing out of a Senate committee on a bipartisan vote. Expanding the Smith River NRA by 58,000 acres into Oregon would protect the diverse ecosystems of the rivers, streams, and adjacent lands of the North Fork Smith River watershed, and help boost the local fishing and recreation industries that many Oregonians rely on.

“When we come together to protect our state’s natural wonders, we can create jobs, protect resources, grow our economy, and make sure future generations of Oregonians can enjoy our incredible public lands,” Merkley said. “Expanding the Smith River National Recreation Area is a commonsense win-win-win for our economy, adventurers across the Northwest, and those dedicated to preserving the ecosystems that make Oregon so special. I’m grateful to all of the local leaders, conservationists, and businesses who have been a part of this process so far, and I look forward to continuing to work together to get this bill signed into law.”

“Our legislation has strong bipartisan support at home, and I’m proud to have shepherded this important legislation, on which Senator Merkley and I partnered, through the Committee today,” Wyden said. “The Smith River watershed is home to an incredibly rich array of life and offers exceptional recreational activities. By expanding the Smith River Recreation Area, this bill will protect our state’s natural treasures, generate recreation jobs and invest in our local economies for years to come.”

In 1990, Congress enacted legislation to establish the Smith River NRA to protect the watershed, but the boundary stopped at the Oregon border, leaving the North Fork of the Smith River and its tributaries unprotected.

The Smith River NRA expansion would permanently withdraw the land from new mining claims, helping to protect this sensitive area from proposed nickel strip mines, and protect 75 miles of scenic rivers, including Baldface Creek, Chrome Creek, and nearby streams. Additionally, the legislation would task the Forest Service with the preparation of an updated recreation plan identifying specific plans for the entire National Recreation Area, and produce a special study of streams, fens, wetlands, and potentially unstable and vulnerable aquatic habitat areas.

The bill complements the Southwestern Oregon Watershed and Salmon Protection Act, which was introduced by the Senators earlier this year to protect the North Fork Smith River watershed and other Southwestern Oregon rivers and streams.

“The Smith River deserves complete protection because state lines are arbitrary to a river,” said Will Volpert, Indigo Creek Outfitters. “Oregon is lucky to have a piece of the Smith, as it is truly one of the most majestic and beautiful river systems anywhere. It is a place like no other—with canyon colors beyond vibrant and a terrain that begs to be explored yet is rugged enough to hold most adventurers back. Every time I visit the Smith, it feels like I’m the first person to visit the river canyon in all of history—and that’s a pretty special feeling.”

“Oregon’s North Fork Smith watershed is a botanical treasure and should have always been a part of the Smith River National Recreation Area,” said Joseph Vaile, Climate Director of the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center. “We thank Senator Merkley for introducing this legislation that will also designate many of the North Fork Smith River’s cold-water tributaries as Wild & Scenic. Anyone who has had a chance to explore the remote, primitive backcountry of Oregon’s North Fork Smith headwaters knows that it is one of the most spectacular rivers in the world.”

“We have been working to protect the North Fork Smith River’s wild headwaters—keeping its water pristine, protecting fish species’ habitats, and ensuring clean drinking water and outdoor recreation for local communities,” said Alyssa Babin, founder of Wild and Scenic Rivers in Brookings, Oregon. “We thank Senator Merkley for his leadership in introducing this bill, and his partnership in working to protect this important watershed.”

“The North Fork Smith is a national treasure, and it always should have been a part of the Smith River National Recreation Area,” said Michael Dotson, executive director of the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center. “We are thankful to Senator Merkley for his leadership in protecting one of the most spectacular rivers in the world.”

“The expansion of the Smith River National Recreation Area completes a conservation effort initiated over thirty years ago,” said Grant Werschkull, Co-Executive Director for Smith River Alliance. “This action is vitally important to downstream communities and the Smith River as a stronghold for Pacific salmon species.”

“The Smith River is recognized as one of the premier salmon strongholds on the West Coast,” said Guido Rahr, President and CEO of the Wild Salmon Center. “We’re grateful to Senators Merkley and Wyden for this investment in wild salmon and the coastal communities that depend on them. Protecting the Smith’s cold, clean flows across the entire watershed will secure this place for people and fish for generations to come.”
Greenwashing 101

Elena Bilheimer, EcoNews Journalist

By now, many environmentally-minded people are aware that companies use greenwashing and environmental marketing tools in an attempt to direct consumers to particular products and increase sales. Even with this awareness, it can be extremely difficult for consumers to navigate all the carefully designed labels that appear on every product in the store, from apples to shampoo. As the difference between false claims and credible certifications becomes harder to discern, improving label literacy is a useful tactic to identify greenwashing and choose products that reflect your environmental values.

Maggie Gainer, one of the Founders of Zero Waste Humboldt, defines greenwashing as “a way to influence environmentally conscientious consumers to believe something is better for the environment than it really is, whether it’s a package or a product.” In 1986, environmentalist Jay Westerveld coined the term greenwashing to describe the trend of hotels asking guests to consider reusing towels to save the environment, when in reality it was doing little more than saving them laundry costs. One of the first examples of this practice happened years earlier, when the electrical company Westinghouse responded to the anti-nuclear movement of the 1960’s with a series of ads depicting nuclear plants in pristine environments, impressing upon the public the cleanliness and safety of this energy source. Over the years, greenwashing has become entrenched in the practice of advertising, with companies developing tactics that are increasingly manipulative.

Because companies know that consumers look at labels in an effort to determine whether a product aligns with their values, labels are overloaded with a variety of symbols and appealing imagery and language. The Washington Post reported that some companies will even make up their own certifications in order to seem more credible to consumers, and over 90 percent of products are pushing false claims. Researching parent companies instead of individual products and brands is the most direct way to determine the seriousness of an environmental claim. If all else fails, supporting local farmers and businesses is one of the easiest ways to invest in your community and support the people and practices that most align with your values. For items that are not possible to buy locally, it is important to understand what certifications on a product mean. Here is a brief list to improve your label literacy:

The Recycling Symbol
This is the iconic three arrow triangle that almost everyone is familiar with. Although it is tempting to think that everything with this symbol can be tossed in the recycling bin, this symbol doesn’t actually communicate whether the product is recyclable in your area.

According to Gainer, this is the symbol consumers should be most wary of. Whether or not it says it can be recycled on the container, it is necessary to check with your local recycling program to see if they will actually accept it.

The Word “Natural” on Packaging
Doesn’t mean much! The U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s long standing policy “has considered the term ‘natural’ to mean that nothing artificial or synthetic (including all color additives regardless of source) has been included in, or has been added to, a food that would not normally be expected to be in that food.” This doesn’t address food production methods (including the use of pesticides) or food manufacturing and processing. Therefore, the word has been mostly left up for interpretation by the industry.

Organic Product Labels
In the United States, use of the word “organic” and organic certifications must be reviewed and approved by a United States Department of Agriculture-accredited certifying agent. The USDA organic symbol itself signifies that the product must contain at least 95 percent organic ingredients, meaning that the plant ingredients have grown on soil that had no prohibited substances applied for three years prior to harvest. These prohibited substances include most synthetic pesticides and fertilizers, sewage sludge, genetically modified organisms or any kind of ionizing radiation. For animal product ingredients, animals must not be administered antibiotics or hormones, must be fed 100 percent organic feed, and are supposed to be raised in humane living conditions that accommodate their natural behaviors. There are four different types of organic labels, including “100 percent organic” (everything in the product has been certified organic), “organic” (at least 95 percent organic ingredients), “made with organic ingredients” (at least 70 percent organic ingredients), and specific organic ingredient listings (meaning that the product contains less than 70 percent organic contents and the organic ingredients are specified in the ingredient list). Many food advocates claim that this certification isn’t as rigorous and strict as it needs to be.

Cruelty-Free and Leaping Bunny Symbol
The Leaping Bunny icon comes from the only international third-party cruelty free certification program. This certification signifies that there is no animal testing at any production stage of the product. However, a brand that is certified as cruelty free might still be owned by a parent company that conducts animal testing, again highlighting the importance of researching parent companies, not individual products and brands. It is also important to note that there is a difference between vegan and cruelty free, and products that are vegan may not necessarily be cruelty free, while products that are cruelty free may not necessarily be vegan.

The Fairtrade Mark
This is a highly recognized ethical certification, most easily spotted on coffee or bananas. This certification comes from Fairtrade International, and they claim that their primary goal is to ensure that the workers and farmers behind the products are paid fair wages. This certification is expensive, and there have been many criticisms of Fairtrade International. Some of them include a lack of transparency, favoring their own interests over the workers, and a failure to monitor standards properly.

Nature-Themed Packaging
If the product’s packaging is the color green, or has a picture of trees, flowers, bees, or anything nature related then all of these are greenwashing techniques designed to lure you to buy that product!

Resources for Further Learning:
- The 7 Sins of Greenwashing: A Bluedot Environmental Perspective
- Greenwashing 101: How to Decipher Corporate Claims About Climate
- The Treehugger Guide to Sustainable Certification
- Food Labels and Certifications: Eating in the 21st Century
- Your Guide to Ethical Labels
How To Add Sustainability Into Your Fashion

Karina Ramos Villalobos, EcoNews Intern

Some can care less about their fashion style. However, no matter what your scale is on fashion expression, people consume clothes and at some point it can become unsustainable. Most financial experts say people should budget around 5 percent of their paycheck when considering shopping for clothing. Take whatever your monthly income is and multiply it by .05.

Many fashion products are now being designed and made specifically for short-term ownership and premature disposal; this is known as “fast fashion.” Clothing quality is decreasing, along with costs, and the increased consumption levels of mass-manufactured fashion products are pushing up the consumption of natural resources. The fast fashion industry is known for exploiting its workers, who are underpaid and overworked. This situation has increased unsustainable lifestyles for shopping and the aftermath of getting rid of unwanted clothing.

What can help improve people’s desire to purchase that cute top or necessary pair of jeans at a large, retail store is to critically think and analyze the product and ask if it is a sustainable product. Sustainable fashion refers to clothing that is designed, manufactured, distributed, and used in ways that are environmentally friendly.

Practicing a fashion sustainability lifestyle can help reduce one’s carbon footprint. According to the World Economic Forum, the fashion industry makes up 10 percent of people’s carbon emissions, dries up water sources and pollutes rivers and streams. Fashion production is the second-largest consumer of the world’s water supply. About 85 percent of textiles go into landfills each year. Washing clothes releases 500,000 microfibers into the ocean each year which is equal to 50 billion plastic bottles. According to World Resources Institute, a global research organization that develops practical solutions that improve people’s lives and ensure nature can thrive, it takes 2,700 liters of water to make one cotton shirt; this is enough water for one person to drink for two and a half years. Also, polyester productions for textiles is carbon intensive. In 2015, production of polyester released about 706B kg of GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions, which is equal to 185 coal-fired power plants annual emissions.

Hopefully all those statistics can encourage people to shop at locally owned businesses, as well as research sustainable brands. Another tool to use while sustainably shopping is look for materials from natural or recycled fabrics that require significantly less to no chemical treatment, little water, less energy and no fertilizer or pesticides to grow.

SIX TIPS TO PRACTICE FASHION SUSTAINABILITY:

1. Know where you are shopping from:
   Many well-known clothing retailers use fast fashion. Fast fashion causes damage to the planet by using toxic materials, exploiting workers, exploiting prison labor, harming animals and using cheap materials to provide an “affordable-priced” product. A few corporations that take part in the production of fast fashion are Nike, Adidas, Forever 21, GAP, H&M, Urban Outfitters, and more, according to Panaprium, a company that prioritizes sharing and harnessing the power of fashion to drive change through ethical, vegan and sustainable lifestyles.

2. Research your products before purchase:
   Kevin Johnson, owner of Solutions, an organic, eco-friendly store located in Arcata, spoke with me about how being in business for 32 years has helped them cultivate many different products due to the amount of research along the years. “Our shop has always been geared just for that with products that make a difference,” Johnson said. He emphasized that it is important to look for small manufacturers with products made with organic cotton or hemp, compared to big corporations that would provide materials such as cotton which is known to have pesticides. Johnson recommends always checking your products after they are bought to ensure that it’s sustainable and environmentally friendly.

3. Take something old and make it into something new. Upscale your clothes: If you find yourself with a pile of clothes you want to get rid of, there are a few different options for how to repurpose those garments. You can take old t-shirts and turn them into cleaning rags. You can repurpose any piece of clothing into a scrunchie, reusable towels, plant holders, headbands, and more.

4. Use sustainable methods to get rid of your closet dump: Get together with a friend, family or groups of people to do a cloth swap. Clothing swaps are good for the environment. Instead of throwing away, selling, or donating clothing it is a sustainable way to clear unwanted pieces and reduce waste being sent to landfills. Clothing swaps can be fun and a great way to engage with family or friends, save money and build community. If you are a Cal Poly Humboldt student the Waste Reduction and Resource Awareness Program (WRRAP) conducts reusable office supply exchanges through the ROSE house and has resources for fashion sustainability such as Donation Dash, clothing exchanges and other related programs.

5. Learn where you can donate clothing:
   Local-owned thrift stores are a great resource to donate clothing and support locally-owned businesses within your community.

SB 100, signed into law by Gov. Jerry Brown, requires that eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources supply 100% of retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers and 100% of electricity procured to serve all state agencies by December 31, 2045.

Carbon-free energy
No carbon is emitted into the atmosphere. This is accomplished either through using energy sources that don’t emit carbon or by capturing carbon using emerging technologies in Carbon Capture and Sequestration.

Non-carbon energy
Refers to sources that include hydrogen and synthetic non-carbon fuels, battery power derived from zero-carbon electricity based on solar, wind, hydro, or nuclear power are some of the options for reducing GHG emissions, which could be considered zero-carbon.

Carbon-neutral
Refers to having a balance between emitting carbon and absorbing carbon from the atmosphere in carbon sinks. This is achieved through buying carbon offsets. Many environmentalists see this as allowing companies to pay to continue polluting.

Clean energy
Some sources define it as non-carbon, though others, like PG&E, seems to interchangeably use this term with low-emission or greenhouse gas-free energy. Sources that fall under this umbrella include nuclear, wind, solar, large hydro-electric facilities, and run of river hydropower.

Net-zero emissions
Refers to achieving an overall balance between greenhouse gas emissions produced and greenhouse gas emissions that are taken out of the atmosphere. Similar to carbon-neutral, but includes methane, nitrous oxide and other hydrofluorocarbons.

Renewable energy
State law defines this as using biomass, solar thermal, photovoltaic, wind, geothermal, fuel cells using renewable fuels, small hydro-electric generation of 30 megawatts or less, digester gas, municipal solid waste conversion, landfill gas, ocean wave, and ocean thermal.

Redwood Coast Energy Authority has set the goal of 100% power mix from a combination of renewable energy sources (solar, wind, biomass, small hydroelectric, and geothermal) and net-zero-carbon-emission existing large hydroelectric facilities by 2025.

By 2030 Humboldt County will be a net exporter of renewable electricity and RCEA’s power mix will consist of 100% local.

Designed by Karina Ramos Villalobos, EcoNews Intern.
Image source: Freepik.com

KNOW YOUR ENERGY TERMS
Dan Sealy, NEC Legislative Analyst

The US Senate passed a sweeping version of the “Water Resources Development Act of 2022” S. 4137 lead by Senator Capito (R-WV). That bill which passed with a vote of 91 – 1, encompasses water infrastructure, flooding, drought, sea-level and coastal erosion. The bill includes over 454 million to five counties in California. The Senate bill will need to go through a committee to work out differences with the House version, H.R. 7776, but with overwhelming bipartisan support, the bill is likely to pass in some form by the end of this congressional session. Though there were no specific mentions of any of the rivers in Northern California, we will be looking at the details as they emerge. The bill also includes language and funds to help restore the Lake Tahoe Basin and set up a “Good Neighbor” pilot program for “authorized restoration services” on forest, rangeland, and watersheds carried out on Federal lands. The current version of this biennial bill does not include any specifics for dams California. There is, however, a concern that more controversial elements demanded by the other West Virginia senator, Manchin (D-WV.) Sen. Manchin has already received support from President Biden, Senator Schumer and Speaker Nancy Pelosi to increase energy production by completing his troubled Mountain Valley Pipeline and implementing federal permitting reform. That permitting reform for power plants and other energy infrastructure such as power lines, was not allowed in what Congress considers a “reconciliation bill” thus requiring a second bill. Sen. Manchin has been clear he expects that companion bill to be passed as well proving there are few if any “perfect” legislative deals.

Grazing on Federal Lands

Decades ago, permitting livestock grazing on federal lands, including wilderness, was seen as necessary and positive to get federal lands bills passed and provide food for people. But the destruction of our public lands by grazing coupled with the extremely low rates for those grazing permits and exploiters of the public lands like the Bundy’s, have led some groups to tackle legislations to slowly offer changes to the system in a few paces. The Sierra Club has long decried the grazing on public lands that amount to what John Muir called their sheep livestock counterparts, “hoofed locusts.” Indiscriminately grazing on meadows of wildflowers and native grasses. Senate Bill, S. 2980, sponsored by Senator Heinrich (D-NM) would allow a grazing permit “donation” on some Federal lands in New Mexico. Some Senators such as Barrasso (R-WY) are pushing back, saying: “Passing this bill would open the door to retiring grazing permits in other Western states.” Heinrich reminded legislators grazing “permittees in New Mexico have asked me for voluntary grazing permit retirement.”

THE INFLATION REDUCTION ACT OF 2022: IMPERFECT PROGRESS

President Biden signed the Inflation Reduction Act into law, a bill that uses a title to address currents concerns about inflation, to promote some positive actions to address climate change. The bill reflects the US House H.R. 5376, along party lines, to match the recently passed Senate version. Congress used the “reconciliation” process which requires a simple majority but resulted in some progressive legislators questioning the bill’s impact.

The “Inflation Reduction Act of 2022” includes $369 billion in Energy Security and Climate Change programs. There are no new taxes, but the bill’s title is derived by its goal to reduce inflation by assuring a 15% minimum tax rate for large corporations.

Some takeaways: The bill has the potential to reduce emissions by 40% by 2030. “This legislation will be the greatest pro-climate legislation that Congress has ever passed,” said Majority Leader Schumer (D-NY.)

The bill attempts reduce methane by placing $700 million in a “Methane Emissions Reduction Program” at conventional gas wells coupled with increasing fees for big polluters. The bill will address cows’ methane gas emissions by adjusting feed and diet.

Environmental justice emerged as a major winner in the bill with $60 billion allocated for environmental justice, including $3 billion for block grants to impacted communities and funds for new clean school busses, garbage trucks and U.S. Postal Service vehicles.

The bill provides for a rebate program that awards grants to state energy offices and tribes which then award the rebates to low- and moderate-income homeowners that retrofit their homes for energy efficiency while also giving incentives to states and local governments to adopt and implement energy efficient building codes.

The bill includes $1.8 billion for “hazardous fuels” reduction in the “wildland-urban” interface, $200 million for forest-thinning in watersheds and probably most controversial, adds $100 million to “streamline” National Environmental Policy Act review process to make it more “effective and efficient.” Although occasionally promoted by both conservationists and the timber interests depending on project goals, streamlining typically means fast tracking which inevitably means less opportunity for public review and comment.

The bill would provide $50 million as startup for a new inventory of old growth and mature forests.

In recognition of recurring drought conditions, especially in the southwest, the bill would fund emergency drought relief on tribal land with $12.5 billion to provide, through direct financial assistance or cost-share and matching to address current and eminent drinking water shortages for tribes.

The package increases funding for endangered species recovery plans, conservation and habitat restoration and staffing on some federal lands.


CHOOSE YOUR POISON

Oil and gas cut-offs resulting from Russia’s Aggression on Ukraine along with international inflation pushed the global community to backtrack on progress to reduce fossil fuel and nuclear power production. Examples include Gov. Newsom’s support for keeping Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant online beyond the agreed-upon deadline and the Department of Energy’s (DOE) announcement to use much its $2 billion to build a sodium-cooled test reactor in Idaho to speed research on fuels and other components for new advanced nuclear plants that DOE hopes will switch dirty climate changing fossil fuels for dirty radioactive waste which still have no permanent safe storage plans.
DIY ZERO
a practical guide to reduce your carbon emissions

EFFICIENT APPLIANCE USE

Susan Nolan

Appliances are major consumers of energy in the average household. What can we do to cut back there? A big step is using full loads to get the most out of washing machines, dryers, and dishwashers. If you just need to run a small load, be sure to adjust the load size dial. For clothes washing, warm water uses half as much energy as hot, and works just as well except at getting out oil. Cold uses even less, and doesn’t fade bright colors as quickly.

Generating heat requires a lot of energy; dryers use significantly more energy than washers. Dry towels and other thick heavy fabrics separately. Drying multiple loads one after the other will put residual heat to good use. Air drying is a great way to reduce your consumption; a clothes line strung up in the garage or other sheltered space can serve on rainy days.

A full load is good for the refrigerator, too, building more thermal mass and allowing less air exchange when you open the door. It helps maintain the cold during energy outages as well. You can just fill lidded plastic tubs with water if you don’t keep a lot of food around. These can be switched between freezer and fridge as needed.

If you have a manual defrost fridge, attending to this little chore when ice builds up in the freezer compartment will reduce energy demand. The ice insulates the freezer walls (where cooling happens) from the food, so the motor has to work harder and consume more energy.

To defrost, make a note of where the temperature knob is set, then turn it all the way down to shut the refrigerator off. Pack the food into a cooler or cardboard box, with frozen items in the middle to keep it coldest. Leave the door and the freezer door open. After a while, the ice will start melting. You can start chipping it off with a hammer and screwdriver, just be very careful—puncturing the freezer wall can release the coolant gas, ruining the fridge. Remove the drawer under the freezer when that becomes possible.

Once all ice is gone, wipe remaining water away, because that is the ice of the future. Then return the food, and reset the temperature. When it’s time to replace your fridge, bear in mind that a frost-free model costs more to buy, and uses about 50 percent more electricity than a manual defrost refrigerator, because it uses a built-in heater to melt that ice.

For cooking, a lidless pot uses 60 percent more energy than a pot with a lid. Lids hold heat in for quicker cooking time. Thrift stores usually have a variety for cheap if you need one. Microwave, toaster ovens, and crockpots use less energy than ovens or stove burners. But when you need to use the oven, why not get the most out of it—if you’re cooking a casserole, say, how about throwing in some potatoes or yams to bake?

We’ll devote an entire article to highly-efficient induction cooking in the future.

When it comes to heating your home, when you’re away for the day, turn the thermostat down, or use programming. Try a sweatshirt instead of bumping up the temperature. As for cooling, close curtains on hot days. Fans use way less energy than air conditioning. Avoid cooking in the oven on hot days.

Turn things off when they’re not being used, such as lights or the TV.

A little good housekeeping allows appliances to run more efficiently: clearing the lint trap of your dryer with each use, vacuuming the coils behind the fridge, replacing furnace filters, etc.

Natural gas produces carbon dioxide when it burns, but if it escapes without being burned, it’s in the form of the much more virulent greenhouse gas methane. Slight leakage from the connecting hoses is common, so a simple thing you can do is to tighten the hose fittings with a wrench.

When the sad day comes that you must buy a new appliance, Energy Star labels can guide you to the most efficient models. This program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency rates appliances and issues simple, clear labels to guide purchasers: www.energystar.gov/about?sf=footer

Finally, scheduling electric appliance use around PG&E’s Time of Use program will save money and shift your electricity demand to when most renewable sources are producing: before 4 p.m. or after 9 p.m.
Get on Board for the Climate

Emissions Without Borders

Martha Walden, 350 Humboldt

Members of the Operating Engineers Local Three Union packed the Supervisors’ chambers at the Planning Commission meeting on July 28. One by one they voiced support for the aquaculture facility proposed by Nordic Aquafarms. They praised the project for furnishing not just jobs but food for the table and something to be proud of.

Humboldt activist Jack Nounan struck a different note when he addressed not just the Planning Commission but also the engineers. There is nothing wrong with wanting jobs, he said, but climate change must direct our choices. There’s no getting around the stark necessity of having to reduce our emissions and to do it fast. Our future depends on it.

Those who took their turns at the podium after Nounan gave no indication of weighing today’s benefits against consequences for tomorrow. Taking the claims of the project’s Environmental Impact Report (EIR) at face value, they praised its greenness. However, the other side of the picture emerged during the rest of the meeting as many more people phoned in to express their concerns about the varied impacts. 350 Humboldt targeted the climate ramifications of the proposed project, finding that large sectors of emissions were under-counted or missing altogether from the EIR.

The most egregious example concerns the emissions incurred by feeding the fish. Nordic took advantage of a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) loophole that said emissions occurring outside of California didn’t necessarily have to be counted. So, of course, they didn’t include them even though emissions have no geographical loyalties, and neither does climate change. 350 Humboldt has calculated those emissions at 96,000 to 191,000 metric tons per year, based on sustainability reports from two of the biggest fish food producers that Nordic has said it will use.

Nordic’s promise to supply their astronomical electricity needs – as much as Eureka’s and Fortuna’s combined – with renewable energy has made a good impression and would certainly help. However, the reality of our electricity situation here in Humboldt is complicated.

At this point we have no substantial local source of renewable energy except for biomass, a highly carbon-intensive and dirty fuel.

Many of us are hoping for offshore wind energy, but those megawatts haven’t hatched yet, and we can’t assume they will. It’s possible that Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) will simply secure renewable energy contracts somewhere in the state that would theoretically displace the same amount of fossil fuel energy that the aquafarm would use. But here at home the Bay Station would ramp up its natural-gas-based production and possibly the biomass plant would also.

Under this scenario it seems all but impossible that Humboldt would be able to significantly decrease our emissions by 2050, as the climate emergency and California law demands, while providing Nordic with all the electricity they need, and also electrifying our own buildings and transportation as well.

The planned aquafarm would be by far the largest land-based, recirculating aquaculture system in the world. If successful, it would guarantee huge profits for its investors, but huge losses could occur if it’s dogged by the same problems other RAS facilities have experienced. Many environmental advocates have suggested a smaller project for starters. It would be less risky, emit less GHG and require less electricity. Eventually, a nearby offshore wind project could provide all the clean, renewable energy they would need. So far this common sense suggestion has not found an audience.

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Nordic Aquafarms, 21%
Eureka, 16%
Arcata, 8%
Fortuna, 5%
Unincorporated, 47%
Rio Dell, 1%
Ferndale, 1%
Trinidad, 1%
Blue Lake 0.4%

Source: RCEA 2021
"We love our mini garden," said Angie Valetutto. "My daughter has enjoyed watching the fruits and veggies grow. It’s been inspiring to watch her trying the different foods that we are growing. Our whole family is loving the freedom of picking foods out of our garden to use with our meals."

"It’s amazing to witness the kids’ investment in the gardens when they help to plant them," said garden installer Argie Munoz. "They are eager to water and excited for upkeep and harvesting! This small gesture really can spark the beginning of a person’s connection with and stewardship of the world around us."

Another installer, Tony Scardina, agrees: "The highlight for me was seeing the excitement on the children’s faces. I’m happy to be planting the seeds for a new generation of gardeners!"

Cooperation Humboldt conducted a poll of this year’s recipients, revealing some encouraging impacts. 89% of respondents said the family spends more quality time together as a result of the mini garden; 76% said having a mini garden gives an overall decrease in stress; 93% said the children have learned new things and gained new skills; 100% said they are more likely to garden in the future compared with before receiving their mini garden.

This year’s installations were made possible through a contract with Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services using funding from their Adverse Childhood Experiences Prevention fund as well as through a grant from Coast Central Credit Union. Support was also provided by Open Door’s Health and Wellness gardens, Arcata Sunrise Rotary, Garberville Rotary, Pierson’s Building Center, The Mill Yard, Sylvandale Gardens, and Deep Seeded Farm.

Cooperation Humboldt’s food team also provides Little Free Pantries to facilitate neighborhood sharing, publishes an annual Community Food Guide, plants free fruit trees for the community, and offers a variety of educational opportunities relating to food production and local food sovereignty. Learn more by visiting CooperationHumboldt.com. Source: Co-op Humboldt

MORE WILD TIGERS FOUND

Thanks in part to improved surveying and monitoring efforts, the estimated number of wild tigers in the world has increased by 40% compared to 2015.

A recent population assessment by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) concluded there are between 3,700-5,500 wild tigers in the world, an increase of roughly 40% from the previous tiger assessment in 2015. Luke Hunter, executive director of the big cat program at Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), attributes higher numbers of tigers partly to conservation efforts by governments and organizations in tiger territory. But also, “We’re better at counting them,” Hunter said. “Many governments in particular have really sort of moved heaven and earth to do massive-scale surveys.”

Dale Miquelle, WCS Tiger Program Coordinator, shared this in a statement: “Although we still have a very long way to go, the new assessment shows that the tiger can be saved. There are more wild tigers alive today than in 2010, the result of range-state governments and partners committing to very focused protection of the species and its habitats. The threats have not gone away and will not for a long time. But there is every reason to believe the world can have even more tigers a decade from now if we double down on that commitment.”

Even with the higher count results, the IUCN still considers wild tigers Endangered. Illegal tiger poaching, hunting tiger prey, and destroying or fragmenting tiger habitats are still major issues for these big cats around the world. But global tiger populations are trending toward stable or increasing.

“When you succeed in saving tigers or conserving tigers, you are conserving very large wilderness landscapes, with a huge host of biodiversity but also a whole bunch of benefits to the human communities that live in and around those landscapes,” Hunter said. He believes these types of assessments show that conservation interventions can work. Source: NPR.
Chinook Salmon

The Chinook salmon is a migratory fish native to the North Pacific Ocean and surrounding river systems, ranging throughout the Alaska and California coastline. The typical lifespan of a Chinook salmon averages from one to eight years, a majority of which is spent in the ocean.

Depending on the time of life and location of the salmon, the diet of the Chinook salmon can consist of insects, crustaceans, and small fish. While in the ocean, Chinook salmon have dark-colored heads and take on silver-colored scales accompanied by dot speckling along their spine.

However, the Chinook salmon’s appearance changes in the later part of its life once spawning season nears (September to December). They migrate from the ocean into neighboring estuaries and freshwater river systems in order to spawn. Male Chinook spend their energy developing curved jaws and exaggerated scale colors. Chinook salmon invest all their energy into spawning, so much so that they do not eat or rest as they migrate, resulting in death after spawning.

Gumboot Chiton

The Gumboot Chiton (Cryptochiton stelleri), or Met-k’aa-chu in the Tolowa language, is a peculiar, yet intriguing mollusk that lives within the intertidal and subtidal zones of Humboldt County. Found along the northern Pacific coastline and southern islands of Japan, Gumboot Chitons cling onto rocks, moving slowly towards clusters of algae and other marine vegetation, such as Sea Lettuce and Giant Kelp. The Gumboot Chiton is nocturnal, feeding at night, as they seek refuge during the day; occasionally on cool, foggy days, the Gumboot Chiton can be seen emerging on tidal rocks above the water surface. The Gumboot Chiton is known for having visibly rubbery skin, however, there are plates or “shells” under a chiton’s skin. The chiton’s length can range from three to four inches, but some can be as long as ten inches. Despite the mysterious nature of the Gumboot Chiton, many people have come to fondly nickname the chiton “the wandering meatloaf” during tidepool exploration due to its similar appearance to meatloaf.

Gumboot Chiton

Cryptochiton stelleri
Tolowa Name: met-k’aa-chu

Nuttall’s Cockle

The Nuttall’s Cockle is a species of clam found in the Western coastal areas of North America. Their native range is along the west coast from the Bering Sea of Alaska to San Diego, CA. Their ideal habitat is deep sand and sheltered beaches, as it is a burrowing clam. Cockles can also live underneath gravel or rocky beaches.

The Nuttall’s Cockle has a digging leg, which resembles a tongue, that allows itself to dig into substrate or to flee from predators if sensed. The digging leg helps the cockle project itself away from danger.

The Nuttall’s Cockle is a bivalve: a mollusk with two shells connected with a hinge. Its shell is thick with line-like indentations, known as “ribs”. They can grow up to 5.5 inches, both in height and in length.

The shell color of the Nuttall’s Cockle can vary from a pale yellow to speckled brown, with the occasional dark purple. On its side, the cockle’s shell appears to be heart-shaped, allowing it to be nicknamed the “heart cockle”.

Nuttall’s Cockle

Clinocardioides nuttallii
Indigenous name (Tolowa): Humisi

Indigenous Name (Tolowa)
daa-xvt-luu-ke’
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