

REDWOOD COAST LAND CONSERVANCY

Dedicated to protection of open spaces and natural resources from the Navarro to the Russian rivers

President's Report: RCLC at the Crossroads

by Laurie Mueller

Thanks to generous support from our local community and the dedicated work of many volunteers, RCLC has grown from just an idea to a working land trust that has taken the lead in preserving many local coastal properties. A list of RCLC projects follows this report.

We want to build on our strengths as your local land trust. Interest in preserving the remaining open space along our coast is high. We see many exciting opportunities to work with local landowners and funding agencies to set aside conservation and trail easements.

We also see that we can no longer rely on our current structure as an all-volunteer organization if we want to take on new projects. Each project we undertake can require dozens, and in some cases, hundreds, of hours of work to acquire funding, negotiate easements, conduct surveys, develop management plans, prepare permit applications, supervise work and monitor easements.

Our organization is at a crossroads. If we want to manage our current commitments and, at the same time, respond to new opportunities that arise, we will need to hire a part-time staff person. This is an important decision for a small land trust to make. Rather than being limited by current capabili-

ties, we have chosen to expand those capabilities by hiring a paid administrator.

To hire staff, RCLC will require a higher level of funding than we have needed in the past. RCLC has traditionally obtained operating funds through our newsletter mailings and our annual raffle. While the raffle has been a heartwarming example of community support, this coming year RCLC plans to concentrate efforts on a major membership campaign to bring in a steady source of operating income.

The next few months will tell us how successful those efforts have been. We hope to have funding for a staff person in place by early next year so that we can move ahead on several projects. If you would like to support this effort and help keep your local land trust strong, please use the envelope included in this newsletter to send in your membership gift today.

Thank you,

Laurie

Laurie Mueller 

RCLC Projects

GUALALA BLUFF TRAIL: A 500-foot landscaped path from the bluff edge behind Sea Cliff Center to the Surf Motel. Phase II will extend the Trail to Oceansong Restaurant.

DOBBINS CONSERVATION EASEMENT: Six acres of open space and wildlife habitat along Hathaway Creek outside Point Arena set aside by Peter and Anna Dobbins.

BOURNS LANDING: Coastal access easements set aside by the Bonham family. Work is underway to provide a bluff-top public viewing platform and access trail down to Cooks Beach from the Bourns Landing headlands on Old State Hwy. 1.

HEARN GULCH: A 3.5 acre portion of the Hearn Gulch Headlands south of Point Arena. This acquisition, RCLC's first land purchase, will assure public access to a broad bluff-top overlook, a sheltered ravine, and a sandy



Winter stream at Hearn Gulch. Photo by Rosemarie Hocker

REDWOOD COAST LAND CONSERVANCY

PRESIDENT: Laurie Mueller
 VICE PRESIDENT: Shirley Eberly
 SECRETARY: Cecilia Moelter
 TREASURER: Bob Rutemoeller
 DIRECTORS: Rosemarie Hocker, Ray Van de Water
 HISTORIAN: Ramona Crooks
 BLUFF TRAIL COMMITTEE: Cecilia Moelter, Fiona O'Neill and Bill Wiemeyer
 ADVISORS: Sharon Burningham, Roger Dingman, Kristen Drake, Vivian Green, Doug Hammerstrom, Jerry Immel, Mary Sue Ittner, Ray Jackman, Jim Lotter, Fiona O'Neill, Brian Regan, Mary Rhyne, Barbara Russell, Dorothy Scherer, Doug Simmonds, Kristine Thomure, Florence Van de Water, Jan Venolia, Julie Verran and Bill Wiemeyer
 WEB DESIGN: Ivan de la Garza

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Rosemarie Hocker

WEBSITE EDITORS: David and Charlotte Scholz

MAILING VOLUNTEERS: Dwight and Shirley Eberly, Rosemarie Hocker, Cecilia and John Moelter, Laurie Mueller, Bob Rutemoeller, and Ray and Flo Van de Water
 TRAIL MONITORS: Shirley and Dwight Eberly, Kristen Drake, Mary Sue Ittner, Sue and Bob Lease, Harry and Lois Lutz, Cecilia Moelter, Laurie and Leigh Mueller, Bob Rutemoeller, Kathleen Sandidge and Flo and Ray Van de Water, Marian Van de Water and Julie Verran

CONTRIBUTORS to this issue include Lois Lutz, Cecilia Moelter, Laurie Mueller, Rosemarie Hocker, Bob Rutemoeller

RCLC is a member of the National Land Trust Alliance, California Land Trust Council, Redwood Coast Chamber of Commerce.

RCLC OBJECTIVES

The specific purposes of this corporation include, but are not limited to:

- The conservation of lands for recreational, educational, ecological, agricultural, scenic and open space opportunities. Conservation of lands shall be accomplished by acquiring real property or partial interests therein, including conservation easements as defined in California Civil Code Section 815.2, and recording appropriate instruments necessary to protect in perpetuity the physical environment of the area for wildlife, ecological and aesthetic purposes beneficial to the public interest;
- To promote, activate and develop public coastal accesses to the ocean, rivers and other natural or scenic features, including developing trails, paths and walkways;
- To study, project and develop plans for future needs in respect to public recreational lands, accesses and facilities;
- To determine open space and conservation needs in the coastal areas of Mendocino and Sonoma counties and to arrange for necessary stewardship and conservation by easements, agreements or other mechanisms;
- To publicize local needs of the type mentioned above and to raise funds by public subscriptions, grants or other means as necessary to meet such objectives.

PLEASE CHECK YOUR NEWSLETTER LABEL

If there is a "02" or "03" in front of your name, that means you have sent RCLC a contribution or membership donation for that year. If there is no number to the left of your name, or if it shows a contribution for 2002, please consider helping us this year. A contribution form is printed on the return envelope in this issue. Thanks for your help.

beach through which flows a small creek.

ST. ORRES CREEK and BEACH: John and Mary Sue Erickson have generously granted an access easement along St. Orres Creek across from St. Orres Inn and Restaurant, the well-known local landmark on Highway 1 to provide public access to a scenic

ART IN THE REDWOODS AWARD *By Rob Elder*

Last winter, fierce storms ripped away parts of the stairs to Walk On Beach at The Sea Ranch.

But the second of those storms also left hundreds of small stones, unlike any I have seen before or since, colored in shades of mauve, peach, purple and ivory, often swirled together in the same rock. I filled my pockets and came back next day for more, but the ocean had reclaimed them.



Rob Elder with Ocean, Earth and Sky. Photo by Rosemarie Hocker

Still, I had dozens, and determined then and there to share their beauty.

Polished and combined with sea glass, driftwood and feathers from other walks, they became my assemblage "Ocean, Earth and Sky," winner of the Art in the Redwoods Award for Excellence in Portraying the Coastal Environment. Thank you, Redwood Coast Land Conservancy.

WHY RALLY? *By Lois Lutz and Cecilia Moelter*

Five RCLC members joined land trust staff and volunteers from all over the nation at the annual Land Trust Alliance Rally held in Sacramento in October. Rally provided a sense of the larger conservation picture, as well as invaluable training in the many aspects of land preservation. Multiple workshops and speakers over a four-day period covered topics such as ethics, fundraising, stewardship, and tax issues. As the president of the Land Trust Alliance put it, "Rally is a Town Meeting of a National Movement." And as at a town meeting, the exchange of ideas and opportunities to meet new people involved in the same

cause was stimulating indeed!

OTHER PROPERTIES UNDER CONSIDERATION: The RCLC is actively negotiating the purchase or acceptance of conservation easements for other coastal properties with outstanding scenic and ecological values. 🌲

cause was stimulating indeed!
 Rally reinforced the need to build a strong land trust to ensure the permanence of our properties and conservation easements, and to seek collaboration with other land trusts and organizations to do more strategic conservation. When residents understand and support the work of a land trust, great things happen.

Our attendees, Cecilia Moelter, Lois Lutz, Bob Rutemoeller, Shirley Eberly, and Dave Scholz, all learned a great deal and have returned reinvigorated and ready to put our learning into action. 🌲

RCLC PROFILE - Bob Rutemoeller *by Rosemarie Hocker*



Bob Rutemoeller, RCLC treasurer. Photo by Rosemarie Hocker

RCLC interviewed Board Member Bob Rutemoeller. Never one to “toot his own horn”. Bob plays a number of incredibly important roles in RCLC. He’s another of our gems on the coast.

RCLC: How did you become interested in RCLC and what are some of the things you do for RCLC?

Bob: In 1992 Ray Van de Water recruited me and a few other people to put together RCLC’s non-profit corporation papers. Since then I’ve been the treasurer and maintain our list of donors and friends. As an all-volunteer group there are always interesting meetings and projects in progress. We have a great cadre of helpers from the Board of Directors and many others who support our efforts. But we are always happy for more friends to volunteer.

RCLC: Tell us about yourself. Were there early influences that put you on the path toward working with land trusts?

Bob: I was born and grew up in the western (Sunset) district of San Francisco. I always enjoyed Golden Gate Park and its many nooks and crannies. We had a distant view of the ocean and Mount Tamalpais. After graduating from Santa Clara University, I moved to Hayward and began attending Sierra Club meetings in Berkeley and Oakland. That is how I met Mary Sue Ittner, my wife. We both enjoyed the beautiful parks in the Bay Area and Point Reyes on the coast. After many

years of environmental activity, I was attracted to the idea of voluntary land conservation in our local coastal and forest region. I work professionally as a financial planner and tax preparer and know the tax code has incentives for owners to grant conservation easements and protections for private land.

RCLC: How long have you lived here on the coast? How does your life style here compare or contrast with other places you have lived? What makes a special difference and why?

Bob: Mary Sue and I came to the Mendocino Coast from our home in Stockton for vacations. We started going to the village of Mendocino, but soon found Gualala and Anchor Bay. We loved staying at the Mar Vista for many years. In 1988 we were driving along the ridge in Gualala and happened upon our future home on Ocean Ridge Drive. We had not planned to move here eleven months later, but are very happy we did after fourteen years. We always enjoyed this beautiful region but found even more special the people and friends that makes this a great community.

RCLC: Are there places on the coast really special for you?

Bob: It is hard to mention a special place - there are so many. My newest ‘special place’ is Hearn Gulch that RCLC was able to acquire with funds from the California Coastal Conservancy. In spring and early summer there are beautiful wildflowers and the pocket beach is a treasure. Dorothy Scherer did a wonderful plant survey and gave us ideas for protecting some of the native plants at Hearn Gulch.

RCLC: Please tell us why you support the work of RCLC and how you would encourage others to participate in the work of the conservancy?

Bob: I do a lot of “office” work for RCLC, but find the outside fieldwork more interesting and rewarding. We see some beautiful areas and get to meet property owners who really care about their land. The prognosis for large government purchases of land indicates dwindling funds. State and federal budget deficits will make caring for what they already have more difficult. The alternative is for Land Trusts such as our Redwood Coast Land Conservancy to provide local support for individual property owners to preserve more of our coastal and forest resources.

We are very active in providing and improving coastal access. So far we have accomplished a lot. But there is lots more to do. We need more financial and volunteer support. We were helped a great deal by grant funding for our projects, but we need to provide for our share of funds (volunteer help counts, too).

RCLC: Thanks, Bob. We’ll carry on!



Bob Rutemoeller in the field. Photo by Rosemarie Hocker

In Memory & Honor

RCLC thanks each and everyone for their generous donations. We cherish the thought of conserving the spectacular lands of Northern California's ridges and coast. Your donations further this precious work. With thanks and deepest appreciation to:

W. H. Haines in memory of **Dale Wood**.

Betty and Gillette Bechtel in memory of **Beverly Harpster Pettit**.

Robert L. Rasmussen in memory of **Siusiadh M. Rasmussen**.

Larry and Pat Delaney in memory of **Roy Pratt**.

Barbara Schnieders in memory of **Ed and Marje Warwick**.

Mary Ann West and Candy Harris in memory of **Iola Cabassi**.

Bob Rutemoeller and Mary Sue Ittner in memory of **Dwight Eberly, Jr.**

Mike and Ginger Gandes for the Bluff Trail fund in memory of **Dwight Eberly, Jr.**

John and Cecilia Moelter in memory of **Dwight Eberly, Jr.**

Bob Rutemoeller and Mary Sue Ittner, to honor **Florence Van de Water** for her special birthday.

Irene Leidner and Bill Davy, to honor **Ray and Florence Van de Water** "...true role models for any community - we are so lucky they live here!"

Steve and Gayle Brugler and Rosemarie Hocker for Stewardship Donations for RCLC Projects. 🌲

TRAIL BLAZING

by Cecilia Moelter

Good News! RCLC received a grant of \$38,500 from the Coastal Conservancy on August 14th. After submitting the Management Plan for Gualala Bluff Trail Phase Two, the last requirement is a Mendocino County permit. Then comes breaking ground to construct this continuation of the trail from the Surf Motel going south to Oceansong.

With a bridge, stairs and path to a rock outcrop overlooking the Gualala River, visitors and residents will be able to watch waves, whales, otters, seals, birds and sunsets. RCLC thanks the Coastal Conservancy for this generous award that will increase public access to a beautiful coastal outlook. Because the cost of building the trail will exceed the grant monies, the need for matching funds is a primary focus for this project. While waiting for Phase Two, please enjoy Bluff Trail Phase One and stroll along the bluff from Trinks to the Surf Motel. 🌲

REDWOOD COAST
LAND CONSERVANCY

P.O. Box 1511, Gualala, CA 95445-1511
(707) 785-3327 • email: rclc@mcn.org
website: www.rc-lc.org

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
GUALALA, CA 95445
PERMIT NO. 60

Return Service Requested



Hearn Gulch stream. Photo by Rosemarie Hocker.

