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Redwood Coast News

June 2022

In this Issue...

Kayaking the Gualala River with Local Students

Discover Mill Bend Preserve... On Your Own!

Featured Volunteer:
Joaquin Jacob

A Little History:
Gualala Cemetery Happenings at Mill Bend

New Weather Station and New Business Partner:
Further Reach

Updates and Our Wish List

We had a great open house at Mill Bend Preserve with

tours for Earth Day!



Goats cleaning up invasive weeds



Trish Miller, RCLC Board Member
and Timmarie Hammill of The Stream Team



Photos by Anne Hanlon and Chris Braley

Donate to Support RCLC...

Responding to Community Input



RCLC Board President John Walton

When the community was asked about its dreams for Mill Bend, one of the top priorities supported in the [Mill Bend 2020 Survey](#), was to “Develop a river front trail east of Highway 1 that connects with trails behind Gualala Arts.”

Some of you have probably been walking on a Mill Bend trail in this location for years... without knowing it. When Gualala Arts Center (GAC) opened a trail system behind the center years ago they improved access down the hill to the old railroad bed on Mill Bend property that runs along the river. The walkable portion of the old railroad bed has been a “social trail” for decades, yet, most folks never made it to the end of this unofficial trail because fallen trees, debris, and steep banks made passage difficult and unsafe.



Photo by Anne Hanlon

Once again, the strong spirit of volunteerism and generosity in our community has made a difference. Led by volunteers from The Sea Ranch Hot Shots, an energetic group has donated dozens of hours to make the trail much safer and more accessible. Donated timbers salvaged from an 1870's farmhouse in Manchester were used to help repair the stairs and provide handrails and benches. Wood cut from fallen trees across the trail was also used in safety improvements and to make viewing benches. The newly refurbished "River Rail Trail" will offer a walk along the river in beautiful forest with a river bend viewing area at the end of the surviving railbed on RCLC land. The trail connects with the GAC trails at two points providing the opportunity to loop back up the hill to the GAC picnic area.

Watch for our announcement of the opening of this spectacular hiking experience.

Sincerely,

John Walton

RCLC Board President

Kayaking the Gualala River with Local Students

Ms. Isabel Kuniholm and her class of 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students at Pacific Charter School exchanged their classroom desks and chairs for paddles and kayaks on a Gualala River tour sponsored by RCLC and led by Adventure Rents.



The water was high on this day in May and the weather glorious for the three-hour tour up river. Many of the students had prior experience with kayaking. Before long, everyone had the swing of things and were zipping expertly – when they weren't engaged in good-natured, slow-speed collisions. The usual calm of the river was interrupted by the exuberant sounds of teen-age wildlife, but not enough to ruffle the feathers of two families of Canadian geese, a few mallards, and the lone cormorant foraging along the river banks.

Although the students had to return to school for their last period of the week, their answer to the question of what remained in their day was ART! Whether the river muse inspired artistic creativity or not, this tour was a happy experience for teacher, students, and chaperones.



We also hosted the 5th and 6th grade class of Ms. Celeste Mildrum at Horicon Elementary School. They forged the water like champs! Here are a few quotes from the kids themselves:

"It had been a long time since I went to the river, so I enjoyed being a part of the experience. Since it was my first time, I was a

little nervous but excited at the same time. The moment I got pushed into the water, I felt like I would fall, but I didn't." – Kamila Zavala

"I was really happy because I've never been under the bridge. The birds nests on the bridge are so neat. When we were under the bridge Ms. Mildrum told me about the birds and then we listened together." – Allisson Villagomez

"Kayaking is a really good exercise for your muscles. I love the field trip. The water was really cold, but at the same time, it was a little bit hot. It was a great sunny day. I'm sure everybody loved the field trip." – Emili Herrera

"It was so fun! I got to enjoy and see the beautiful nature. Also I got to experience something new. It was fun when it came to go to the water playing with my classmates and enjoy the nature wild playing and having some fun time." – H.L.V.

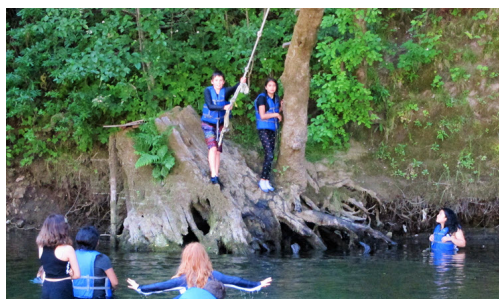
"The water felt really good. It was refreshing after paddling all the way down the river. And, it was really fun to lay down in the sun beside the river. The campsite that we ate at was great. We got to go on the rope swing! Jumping off of it was great." Fritz Riggs

We had a third trip with students from Arena Union Elementary School, and Timmarie Hammill of The Stream Team joined us to demonstrate the process of measuring water quality at the river. Here's a quick note from Cristin Allen, the teacher for this 6th grade class:

"My 6th graders at Arena Elementary had an incredible experience on the river with Adventure Rents thanks to RCLC. We got to take our learning of the Gualala watershed outside the classroom and actually experience our local ecosystem first hand. The kids learned healthy ways to stay active, saw some awesome wildlife, and built stronger relationships with one another as they worked their way together up and down the river together. The water monitoring activity was a great addition as a hands-on learning experience for my students. Thank you RCLC!"

It was satisfying to spend this time with our local students!

Photos by Dave Shpak



Discover Mill Bend Preserve... On Your Own!

Have you found yourself in Gualala with a little time to kill? **Stop by Mill Bend** and check out our progress. Huge piles of invasives have been removed, roads levelled, junk cars removed, trails cleaned up, and ... wildflowers abound.

We welcome you to visit Mill Bend Upland Preserve Area on your own (46902 Old State Hwy – 400ft from Hwy 1). Discover newly refurbished trails, scenic views, wildlife, photo opportunities, and a bit of history too! Stop by anytime during daylight hours. Interior parking is restricted on most days but parking space is available just outside our west gate with walk in access.



You may also enter at our eastern gate from the Gualala Art Center parking area. Enjoy the expansive river-and ocean views, walk through the quiet, peaceful forest, visit the historic cemetery, enjoy a stroll along the river.

Volunteers will be available most Tuesday and Saturday afternoons to provide brochures and share more information about current access as well as plans for future trails and interpretive signage. Check our website regularly for updates and details about scheduled tours and family events at both Mill Bend and Cooks Beach. ([click here](#))

See you there!



Featured Volunteer: Joaquin Jacobs

Joaquin joins the RCLC community as a caretaker for the Mill Bend Preserve. We are grateful for his commitment to this Preserve and we hope that you get a chance to meet him soon the next time you come to Mill Bend!

Joaquin's background is interesting. He founded Pan-Equus in 1993 in Grass Valley CA, as a non-profit corporation to study Equine Human interaction. Joaquin and Pan-Equus are currently involved in trauma healing for veterans suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress and Traumatic Brain Injury along with the many areas where horses are so effective in helping humans.



What brought you to the North Coast?

About 40 years ago, Joaquin heard something about a dead school bus parked off the road on the Old State Highway. He decided he

needed to go find it. He and his friends tracked it down and stayed awhile and that was the beginning. He's been coming here ever since. He just sold a large ranch in Yuba County and has moved here full time!

Why are you giving your time to RCLC?

A chance meeting brought him to RCLC. He had come up here in January to stay for a couple of weeks. He was exploring and happened to pull into the entrance of Mill Bend Preserve during a work party. He met Cheryl Harris and learned about this new Preserve. He looked around and thought it was heaven, to see this once-abandoned land and the amount of restoration work that's already been done...He was hooked.

What are a few of your favorite things to do in your free time?

A lot of it is hiking, taking pictures, music, and writing a second book about his relationship with horses from age 8 to now.

Anything else you want us to know?

The most important thing for Joaquin now is that he is conscious and exploring the role of nature and art...we can learn a lot about our role in this. Nature figured out how to regenerate the land after the old lumber mill closed and brought life again to Mill Bend. We can learn from Nature about our role in regeneration.

For example, the Native American Nisenan Tribe lived on the land around his ranch in Yuba County for thousands of years. At one time they were 9,000 in numbers. They lived completely on the land... pine nuts, acorns...fully sustained. They understood how to live on the land, and the land provided everything they needed.

Gualala Cemetery Happenings at Mill Bend

Thanks to the participation and support of their descendant families, major progress is being made in restoring historic landscape features of the site. This month, volunteers welcomed members of the Kjeldsen family, descendants of Ludvig Kjeldsen (1871-1889), who brought personally-milled lumber and hand-turned finials for reconstruction of their original family plot border. Descendants of the Schultze and Poggi families have also come forward with generous financial contributions and building materials to complete restorations of their family plots. Other cemetery visitors this month included board members of The Sea

Ranch Foundation, whose grant funding has supported site restoration efforts over the past two years.

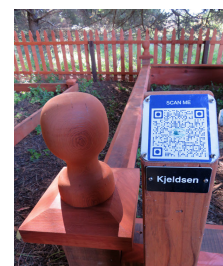


We are pleased to report that the family history project, an effort to document the lives of local pioneers laid to rest at the Gualala Cemetery, is also well underway and has gone digital. To date, results of genealogical studies and outreach to local descendants, including historic profiles and photographs, have been posted on the cemetery web page (www.rclc.org/gualala-cemetery) for eight pioneer families, and this information is

now available at individual grave sites through the installation of QR codes. Research on additional families continues, and descendant assistance and participation is most welcomed



Finally, visitors to the cemetery will now find a new brochure available at the cemetery kiosk which provides a pictorial history of restoration efforts, as well as contact information for descendants and for donations to support ongoing maintenance, construction, and genealogical research.



Text and photos by Kay Martin

New Weather Station and New Business Partner!



Be sure to check out the new weather station now operating from Gualala Point Regional Park! It has a wealth of detail about our real time weather,



and RCLC has placed a link on our website ([click here](#)) . This is made possible due to a generous collaboration between Sonoma County Parks, Friends of the Gualala River and Further Reach.

Special thanks to Further Reach, our most recent business partner, working together with us to preserve this beautiful land! Further Reach has donated internet service to the Mill Bend

Preserve for the past year. We are grateful!

Upcoming Events



JOIN US!

Please feel free to join us weekly at Mill Bend! Help clear trails and improve wildlife habitat. Tuesday afternoons 1:00pm – 3:00pm at 46902 Old State Hwy, Gualala. Or join a weekend work party on the third Saturday of each month. Contact Cheryl Harris for

details at cheryleharris@sbcglobal.net.

SAVE THE DATE: On Saturday, September 17 we are having a community event to give updates on Mill Bend. We hope you can come!

Watch our website and emails for upcoming Summer Family Nature Walks, Bird Walks, and more!

Our Wish List



Can you help by providing any of these items or donating funds to help purchase?

Redwood Coast Land Conservancy is in need of the following items. ***(Many thanks for the items recently donated!)*** If you have something to donate, please contact us at the information below. Thank you!

Tools needed

- Shovels/spades, spading/digging forks
- Loppers, clippers and pruning shears
- Matlocks, post hole digger and digging bar
- Carpentry tools, workbench and sawhorses
- Garbage cans
- Weed Whacker (battery operated)
- Utility Vehicle/Pickup/4 WD Gator
- Burn cage

Other items needed

- Barbeque grill (propane)
- Picnic tables
- Rainwater collection and storage system

If you would like to contribute toward a purchase of one of these items or have an item to donate to RCLC, please contact us at [\(707\) 884-4426](tel:7078844426) or by email at rclc@rclc.org and leave a message. If you come to a work party at Mill Bend, feel free to bring your donated item.

Thank you for sharing your excess tools and equipment to help us maintain our conservation properties!



Donate Today

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Web: www.rclc.org | Email: rclc@rclc.org



Redwood Coast Land Conservancy is a California 501(c)(3) non-profit.

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