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Redwood Coast News

September 2023

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Photo by Don Hess



Photo by Craig Tooley

History and Hearn Gulch

by Mark Escajeda

The Redwood Coast is home of *Sequoia sempervirens*, the coastal redwood. Extending 470 miles along Northern California's rugged and scenic coastline, massive stands of redwood historically existed up to 47 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean, with some of the thickest



concentrations found across Mendonoma.

The Pomo, Yurok and other indigenous peoples used parts of fallen and driftwood redwood for medicines, construction materials and everyday items like baskets. Co-existence with the enormous trees remains part of each culture today.

With the start of White settler immigration in the early 1800s, the quiet life of the redwoods changed, along with that of the peoples who lived with them. Native peoples of the Redwood Coast were driven from their land, leaving the world's tallest trees open for exploitation.

Redwood harvesting proved not only useful to a growing state, especially after the discovery of gold in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada, but profitable. Timber operations formed near easily accessed redwood stands and communities grew alongside them. Redwood Coast Land Conservancy's Mill Bend Preserve encompasses three historic lumber mill sites, while the adjoining town of Gualala persists from the first mill's earliest days.

Ten miles north of RCLC's newest property





operated as a **doghole port** for shipping redwood lumber out of nearby Schooner Gulch. Small, purpose-built schooners and steamers capable of navigating the precarious reef and tides transported the valuable wood to San Francisco, and from there, the world.

Little evidence of this activity remains at Hearn Gulch. What certainly persists, though, is appreciation for the effort and regret for the result. The redwoods are returning, slowly, to the areas from where they were harvested. Fairy rings stand in attestation. At Hearn, nature stands once again as the only sculptor and creator of the landscape. RCLC's place – with your help – is to preserve and protect Hearn Gulch so everyone can enjoy it forever.

*Historic Photos from Mendocino Historical Society
Present day photos by Anne Hanlon and Mark Escajeda*



RCLC & FoGR in Partnership for the Gualala River



The health of the Gualala River watershed serves as a barometer for our region's ecological well-being, sustaining wildlife, replenishing municipal water supplies, and supporting generations of Pomo People. It's little wonder then that there's so much interest in, and concern over, how best to steward the river.

Friends of Gualala River (FoGR) and RCLC have a long history of collaborating on initiatives to preserve and protect the watershed's vitality. Last year, FoGR and

RCLC partnered in support of the Stream Team, an opportunity for the public to join science-based projects aimed at testing and monitoring Gualala River water quality and salmonid habitat conditions. Findings increase understanding of the impacts of sediment to the river and its tributaries, which undermine habitat conditions and hamper successful fish spawning. FoGR is also working with the **North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board** to assess how best to identify and limit sediment throughout the 300-square-mile watershed. Following the assessment phase, FoGR will initiate

plan development, including robust public participation. The entire process is open to public participation and those interested in learning more or getting involved may visit [this site](#).

“FoGR has been a tireless advocate for the whole Gualala River watershed,” said executive director Jim Elias. “Though we sometimes take different approaches, we’ve had a highly productive partnership in our shared efforts to improve habitat conditions.”

Learn more and subscribe to FoGR’s news and updates at www.gualalariver.org.



Featured Volunteer: Karl Young

Karl Young has been a regular volunteer at the Gualala Bluff Trail on Tuesday mornings for the last several years. Here is your chance to learn more about him!

What brought you to the North Coast?

We’ve had a place in Gualala for almost 20 years (and lived in San Francisco for most of our lives). After a brief move to Joshua Tree, and despite how much we love the desert, we realized that our true home is the North Coast and have returned to be here full time, presumably for the duration.

Why do you give your time to RCLC?

I have tremendous appreciation for all the volunteer effort that goes into making the North Coast such a special place. In particular RCLC is such a tremendous resource for our community and as part of that, the effort that Bob and Mary Sue put into creating and maintaining the bluff trail made a real impression on me. So it seemed a natural choice to wade into volunteering by trying to help out with that.

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

Free time, hah ! :-) My Japanese bamboo flute (shakuhachi) habit takes up a significant amount of my time. And given that we live in such a beautiful place, I can’t avoid wandering around on some of the great trails in the area. But I’ve also been know to enjoy holing up in a dark corner to read arcane philosophy tomes.

Anything else you want us to know?



I just want to reiterate my deep appreciation for all the effort that goes into preserving, maintaining, and restoring the rich natural and human resources on the North Coast, not least of which is provided by RCLC.

Interested in joining Karl and others as they weed and clean up along the Gualala Bluff Trail? If you would like to learn more about Gualala Bluff Trail volunteer work please email Mary Sue Ittner at msittner@mcn.org.

Have you seen RCLC's Community Report?

MILL BEND PRESERVE
MILL BEND PRESERVE WILL HEADLINE RCLC'S RESTORATION EFFORTS FOR QUITE SOME TIME. NATURE HAS BEGUN TO HEAL ITSELF, THOUGH IT STILL NEEDS SOME HELP. MILL DEBRIS AND RUSTING VEHICLES REMIND US OF MILL BEND'S BRIEF BUT IMPACTFUL INDUSTRIAL PAST. INVASIVE PLANTS FOUND A FOOTHOLD, UNDERMINING NATIVE SPECIES AND RAISING WILDFIRE CONCERNS FOR THE NEIGHBORING COMMUNITY. AND GUALALA'S HISTORIC CEMETERY FELL VICTIM TO NEGLECT AND OCCASIONAL VANDALISM.
On the ground restoration efforts are well under way. Together with energetic volunteers, we have removed more than 50 tons of damaged debris and invasive plants and brown plants. Six Branch "Hot Debris" behind the Bluff Trail, following the original Highway 1 alignment in the corridor where trains once carried logs to downtown mills, and a spiral collapse near the Gualala Cemetery, housing and providing a glimpse into the lives of those at final rest there.

2022 FINANCIALS
RCLC is an always forward-looking individual donors and business support more than half our work. Public agency grants fund Mill Bend Preserve habitat restoration and trails development. Looking forward, RCLC plans to grow staff and increase capacity to advance conservation goals, while applying the same prudent fiscal management principles that have guided RCLC for more than 30 years.

REVENUE: \$433,467
NET INCOME: \$128,258
EXPENSES: \$305,209

HOW YOU CAN HELP
REDWOOD COAST LAND CONSERVANCY RELIES ON COMMUNITY SUPPORT. NO GIFT IS TOO LARGE OR SMALL. We welcome online donations at rclc.org/donate or scan below to give.

Checks may be mailed to:
RCLC
P.O. Box 9511
Gualala, CA 95445-9511

Supporters can donate stocks, mutual funds, IRA/Investment distributions, and personal property. Email info@rclc.org for more information about these and other options, or if you are considering including RCLC in your estate plans.

RCLC also invites your gift of time. To learn how you can join a work party, provide pro bono professional services, or help us reach out to the Mendocino business community, email volunteer@rclc.org

RCLC's 2023 Community Report is now available! Read about RCLC's recent successes, our plans for the future, and how you can help preserve the beautiful Mendocino Coast. Click [here](#) to view the report as a pdf on our website.

Would you like a print version? Simply reply to this email with your mailing address and we will send one your way.

Events and Updates

Events at Mill Bend Preserve
46902 Old Stage Rd, Gualala, CA 95445

September Mill Bend Open Houses

- Saturday, Sept. 16 11:00 am to 2:00 pm
- Saturday, Sept. 23 11:00 am to 2:00 pm
- Saturday, Sept. 30 11:00 am to 2:00 pm

The gate will be open for easy access to parking. Docents will be available to offer short tours through our meadows, forests and vista points. Visitors are welcome to learn about Gualala's recent past as a timber town, see historic photos of Mill Bend, learn about RCLC's plans for new interpretive trails and enjoy a self-guided tour through the historic Gualala Cemetery.

Mill Bend Clean Up Day
Saturday, Sept. 16 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

An afternoon of easy invasive sprout weeding in areas already cleared of larger plants or help with removing seed heads of invasive fennel, broom or pampas grass.



Native Habitat Tour

Saturday, Sept. 30 10:00 am

with Mary Hunter and Julia Larke of the CNPS Dorothy King Young Chapter.

Learn about native plants that live on Mill Bend Preserve and their role in creating healthy habitat for beneficial insects, birds and other animals

Find all the details on RCLC's website [events page](#).



Congrats to Perry Hoffman

Perry Hoffmann's "Curtain Fungi" was selected as the winner of RCLC's Environmental Award at this year's Art in the Redwoods.

Our Wish List

Can you help by providing any of the items below 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!

Equipment/Tools needed

- Digging and pitchforks
- Loppers and clippers
- Mattocks
- McLeod fire rakes
- Weed Whacker (battery operated)
- Wheelbarrow
- Watering can 5-gallon backpack sprayers
- Hand-pump water sprayer
- Yard cart (4-wheel with dump feature)

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 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!

REDWOOD COAST LAND CONSERVANCY
www.rclc.org | rclc@rclc.org



Redwood Coast Land Conservancy | P.O. Box 1511, Gualala, CA 95445 707-884-4426

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