

REDWOOD COAST LAND CONSERVANCY

Dedicated to conserving open spaces and the natural environment along the Mendonoma Coast

GUALALA BLUFF TRAIL PRESENTATION AT COASTAL COMMISSION MEETING

Several residents from the local community attended last month's meeting of the California Coastal Commission in Fort Bragg to encourage the Commission to move forward on a pending proposal to build a retaining wall system along the Gualala Bluff Trail.

The proposal by property owner John Bower to install a Geoweb wall system for a distance of 285 feet along the bluff face behind Surf Super has been on hold since 2008, when the Coastal Commission determined that a staff "de novo" evaluation would be needed before the project could come to the Commission for review. The proposed installation of the GeoWeb system has caused concerns because it would require the removal of much of the native vegetation that has been planted and maintained by RCLC volunteers along the bluff face and the trail.

Mary Sue Ittner, Gualala Bluff Trail Volunteer Coordinator, made a short presentation during time set aside for public expression at the Commission meeting about the current status and appearance of the Gualala Bluff Trail, the amount of effort taken by volunteers during the past several



Native plants and boulders placed by RCLC volunteers along the Gualala Bluff Trail.
Photo by Bob Rutemoeller

years to establish and maintain the native plants along the trail, and the effect that the proposed Geoweb installation would have on the plantings both on the trail and along the bluff face.

The review on the proposed wall system had been delayed in part because of concerns raised about possible contamination from the underground gas station tanks removed from the landowner's property. The case was closed in 2017 after an investigation by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board found no contamination at the site.

After the Fort Bragg meeting presentation, the Commission staff indicated that the review of the proposal could proceed since the contamination issue had been resolved. RCLC was encouraged by these comments and has submitted a follow-up letter to the Commission to urge that the "de novo" evaluation and hearing be conducted as soon as possible so that this long-standing issue can be resolved.



The Geoweb system proposed for the bluff face would remove vegetation planted and maintained by RCLC volunteers along the Gualala Bluff Trail behind the Surf Super.
Photo by Mary Sue Ittner



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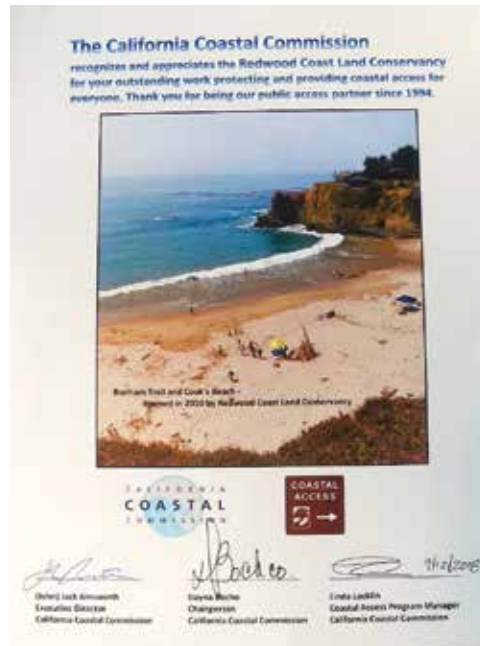
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We envision a protected and restored Mendonoma coast conserved for public enjoyment and appreciation of its natural beauty, abundant diversity of wildlife, and rich cultural history.

President's Corner

RCLC was founded by a dedicated group of volunteers who had a vision of preserving our natural environment and providing public access to our beautiful coast. Over the years, RCLC volunteers have worked steadily toward those goals and have succeeded in conserving valuable

habitat and scenic vistas for public enjoyment. With the help of community donations, volunteers continue to maintain and improve these sites which have become favorite destinations for our local community. Please consider making a contribution to RCLC.



Plaque presented to RCLC

RCLC Recognized By Coastal Commission

At the California Coastal Commission's September 2018 meeting in Fort Bragg, Redwood Coast Land Conservancy was recognized as a valued public access partner of the Commission and was presented with a framed document in recognition of RCLC's "outstanding work protecting and providing coastal access" since 1994.

Linda Locklin, the Commission's Coastal Access Manager, stated that the plaque was the first such recognition given to a group who has worked with the Commission as a partner on public access projects.

The State Coastal Conservancy has provided major funding for the Gualala Bluff Trail, Cooks Beach and Hearn Gulch public access sites.

Mill Bend Prospects

RCLC continues to work with other environmental organizations, foundations and state agencies to explore funding opportunities for the acquisition of Mill Bend, and is hopeful that a way can be

found to protect the scenic beauty and valuable habitat of the Gualala River Estuary and forever preserve the Mill Bend properties for community use and enjoyment.



Mill Bend, a place of rich biodiversity and striking beauty, where the Gualala River takes a sweeping turn as it heads out to sea.
Photo by Laurie Mueller



Bluff Trail Volunteers

By Mary Sue Ittner
Gualala Bluff Trail Volunteer Coordinator

Once a year on the 4th of July interested current and past bluff volunteers walk on the trail and lunch together afterwards.

Photo by Bob Rutemoeller

RCLC Volunteers monitor the Gualala Bluff Trail two times a week, picking up trash, noting any problems, and talking to visitors on the trail. Once a year a monitoring report summary is sent to the California Coastal Commission, the State Coastal Conservancy, and Mendocino County.

The monitors do an outstanding job in documenting what is happening on the trail. Besides the reports of cigarette butts, dog poop, and the trash around the Surf Market, especially on windy days, there are also many positives in their reports.

Sometimes monitors include photos of problem areas or just beautiful views they see while monitoring. Here are a few comments from this year:

“Gorgeous day with gorgeous views;

“no people but lots of birds in the estuary and in the air including sea gulls, a cormorant and brown pelicans;

“the wild flowers, grasses looked so beautiful; so neat to see the Gualala River before, and then after the big Friday rain event flowing like gangbusters with harbor seals having tons of fun.”

“We saw no one else on the trail while we were there. We did see a beautiful fox down by the river, seals and whales. It was a fun time.”

“Friday was sunny and a perfect day to enjoy the bluff trail. I saw 8 adults, 1 child and one dog enjoying the trail. The Bald Eagle flew by when I was on Bluff 2.”

Current Monitors: Trudy Armer, Adrian Adams, Ken and Marian Brown, John and Lynn Walton, John and Jackie Peterson, Chris Howard, Joan Jordan, Ginger Thompson-Veys, Susan Moore, Carol and Steve Chell, Darlene and Jim Gorman, Ron and April Dammann, Harmony Susalla, Gary Beall and Sharon Monroe, Wendell and Joanne Corey, Martin Steinpress, Kathie Anderson, Mary Sue Ittner, and Bob Rutemoeller.

Keeping Up With The Weeds

Unfortunately there are a lot of weeds along the trail and although we pay people to help us (mow, weed whack, distribute gravel, take weeds to the transfer station, etc.), many volunteer hours go into weeding as well. We have been fortunate to have had paid help from Ruben Villagomez for a number of years and wish him well as he moves on to a full time job working for The Sea Ranch.

Weed Volunteers: Gary Beall, Maurie Veys, Susan Moore, Harmony Susalla, P.D. Serratoni, Dona Dougherty, Mary Sue Ittner, Bob Rutemoeller, Sharon Monroe, Donna Dougherty, Laura Cover, Katrina Van Walterop, Willem Ijams, and Helena Ijams.



Maurie Veys and Bob Rutemoeller remove weeds along the bluff edge.
Photo by Mary Sue Ittner

Bluff trail volunteer extraordinaire, Bob Rutemoeller, does all the watering. We appreciate that Surf Market and the Breakers Inn supply the water.

We can always use more bluff volunteers. If you are interested please contact Mary Sue Ittner at msittner@mcn.org or 884-4824.

Maintaining Our Public Access Sites

Making and keeping our public access projects safe and attractive is an ongoing project for our RCLC volunteers. This past year we have installed two new benches to provide opportunities to quietly reflect on the beauty that surrounds us. We have also had to deal with hazards such as log jams and with nuisances such as doggie detritus along the trails and beaches we monitor. We want to thank our dedicated RCLC volunteers for the work they are doing to maintain and improve our public access sites for our community to enjoy.

Gualala Bluff Trail Bollards Replaced

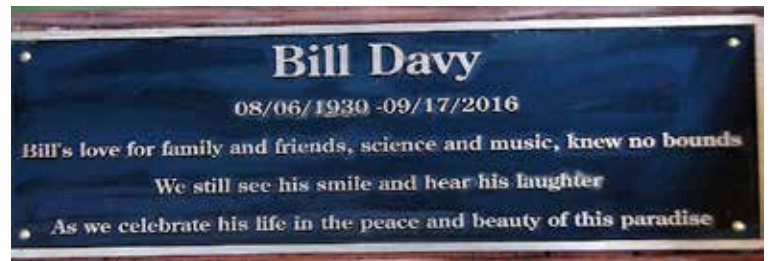


Replacing bollards that keep the trail separate from Surf Super's parking lot has become an important part of maintaining the Gualala Bluff trail. Twice during this past year RCLC has put in new bollards to replace ones that had been damaged. *Photo by Bob Rutemoeller*



Bill Wiemeyer and Bob Rutemoeller replace a damaged bollard. *Photo by Mary Sue Ittner*

Gualala Bluff Trail Bench Installed



RCLC Board members Bruce Jones, Joel Chaban and Bob Rutemoeller install new bench in memory of long-time RCLC volunteer Bill Davy at the north end of the Gualala Bluff Trail. *Photo by Gary Beall.*

As Cooks Beach becomes an increasingly popular destination, unfortunately a thoughtless few have created problems with illegal campfires, leaving rubbish and dog droppings, vandalism, and other behavior that lessens the enjoyment of the beach for others, prompting the posting of this sign.



RCLC is looking for some volunteers to help monitor Cooks Beach and alert us about problems. If you'd like to help, please contact us at rclc@rclc.org.

Cooks Beach

Cooks Beach Bench

Volunteers have installed a new bench at Cooks Beach overlook in memory of Ray Van de Water, who worked many years to make RCLC's Cooks Beach public access project a reality, and his wife Florence, who shared his love of this beautiful spot.



Young volunteer Orion practices his new bench-leveling skills learned from his parents Susan Moon and Adam Brown.

Photo by Bob Rutemoeller



Joel Chaban, Susan Moon, Orion and Adam Brown take a break after installing the new bench.

Photo by Bob Rutemoeller



View of Cooks Beach from the top of the bluff.

Photo by Irene Leidner

Log Jam Cleared on Cooks Beach

Stormy seas often deposit driftwood on Cooks Beach. This summer RCLC Volunteers Joel Chaban and Brent Klopfer tackled the log jam at the bottom of the stairs and cleared a pathway to the beach.



A jumble of logs washed up after a rainstorm prevents easy access to the beach.

Photo by Joel Chaban



A space is cleared between the logs

Photos by Joel Chaban

Gifts from July 2016 to September 2018

RCLC wishes to thank the following people and organizations for their contributions:

Gary Abel & Richard Winn
Beatrice Acosta
Nancy Alumbaugh
George and Kathie Anderson
Karl Anderson
Ward & Betsy Anderson
Arkin Tilt Architects
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Memorial and Commemorative Gifts

Gifts to RCLC in memory of friends, family members and colleagues or to honor significant events in people's lives provide a wonderful legacy for those who wish to preserve the beauty of our natural environment

In Memory of

Ted Adshade

Susan & Larry Seymour

Alpha Gillett Bechtel

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Iris Borg

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Margo Tarver

In Honor of

All Dog Owners Who Pick Up After Their Pooches

Harmony & Sus Susalla

Linda Bell

Elisabeth Watson & Nigel Blair-Johns

Gualala Bluff Trail Volunteers & Ruben Villagomez

Mary Sue Ittner & Bob Rutemoeller

Abbey Horn

Harm Wilkinson & Debra Sue Kessler

Ijams Twins

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Kathie & Marilyn, The Great Litter Pickup & Recycling Duo

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Susan Moon

Susan Moon & Orion & Adam Brown

John & Rhonda Brown

Jane & Wayne Novak

Yvonne Novak & Aaron Weindling

Harmony & Sus Susalla

Mary Sue Ittner & Bob Rutemoeller

Every little bit adds up

By Mary Sue Ittner

In 2003, when the Thursday Ramblers hiking group was picking up garbage on a road hike, they decided to turn in the bottles and cans with redemption value and give the money to RCLC for Gualala Bluff Trail maintenance. The total from the first year was \$67. Over the years others have joined the effort and have turned in their bottles or recycling money. The Physical Gym and the Four-Eyed Frog began contributing to the effort and this year Twofish Baking Company did as well.

The dynamic duo of Marilyn Alderson and Kathie Anderson pick up along Highway One and Old Stage Road and turn over bags sorted for recycling. They also encourage businesses to contribute to the effort. The most ever raised was \$412 in 2016, but I expect this year we will top that. The total amount raised through 2017 was \$3510.27, so it all adds up and helps pay for replacement plants, bollards, gravel, and hiring help for trail maintenance. RCLC is grateful for all the contributions.



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Send us an email at rclc@rclc.org with the email address you prefer and the names attached to that email. If your mailing address and phone have changed, please send that along as well.



Dusk at Gualala Point Park by Paul Brewer

Art In the Redwoods Award - August 2018

At each year's Art In the Redwoods festival, RCLC presents the RCLC Environmental Award for the entry that best captures the beauty and spirit of our local natural environment. This year's RCLC Environmental Award was presented to well-known local photographer Paul Brewer for his work *Dusk at Gualala Point Park*, a striking sunset shot of the Sakha Serge Poles installed in the park in 2014. The poles overlook the Gualala River estuary that RCLC is working to protect.

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