

# Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

Preservation through Education and Stewardship

Russian River District State Parks

Volume XXIV, Number 4, Winter 2009



## Hope for State Parks in 2010

Michele Luna, Executive Director

It is with great hope that we report that a significant step towards sustainability for our State Parks was taken by the California State Parks Foundation and other Environmental partners. On November 3rd a proposed statewide ballot measure was filed with the Attorney General's office. The "California State Parks and Wildlife Conservation Trust Fund Act of 2010, will create a stable, reliable and adequate source of funding to protect state parks and conserve California wildlife." At this time we are waiting for the Attorney General to provide a title and summary, after which petitions will be prepared and signature gathering will begin. It will take at least 800,000 signatures to validate enough needed to put the measure on the ballot in November of 2010. In addition, funds need to be raised to run a robust campaign to get the needed votes to pass this crucial initiative.

With the financial outlook for 2010 looking just as dismal as the past two years, we can expect further cuts to our treasured State Parks. Currently, we are experiencing campground closures, closed day-use areas and many parks are only open on the weekends.

Stewards sponsored the first signature gathering workshop in the state on December 12th to train teams of signature gatherers in Northern California. Contact us if you want to attend the next workshop after the first of the year at [stewards@mcn.org](mailto:stewards@mcn.org).

### From the California State Park Foundation's website:

#### Initiative Basics:

- The State Parks and Wildlife Conservation Trust Fund ("Trust Fund") revenues could only be spent on state parks, wildlife, natural lands and ocean conservation programs.
- The Trust Fund would be funded by an \$18 annual State Park Access Pass surcharge on all California cars, motorcycles and recreational vehicles that would be collected by the Department of Motor Vehicles as part of the annual vehicle license fee. Larger commercial vehicles (those subject to the Commercial Vehicle Registration Act), mobile homes and permanent trailers would be exempt.

#### Mission Statement

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods (Stewards) works in partnership with California State Parks to protect and interpret the natural and cultural resources of the Russian River District.

#### State Parks Supported

Armstrong Redwoods State Nat. Reserve  
Austin Creek State Recreation Area  
Sonoma Coast State Park

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods  
P.O. Box 2, Duncans Mills, CA 95430  
707.869.9177, 707.869.8252 Fax  
[stewards@mcn.org](mailto:stewards@mcn.org)  
[www.stewardsofthecoastandredwoods.org](http://www.stewardsofthecoastandredwoods.org)

- Vehicles subject to the surcharge and all occupants of those vehicles would have free day use admission to all state parks throughout the year.
- Trust Fund revenues would amount to approximately \$500 million each year (based on about 28 million registered vehicles) and 85% would be allocated to state parks and 15% to other state wildlife and ocean protection agencies.
- With a new dedicated revenue stream in place, approximately \$130 million of General Fund dollars, that provide a portion of overall state parks funding, would now be available for other vital needs, like schools, health care, social services or public safety.
- The Trust Fund would be subject to an independent audit by the State Auditor and a Citizens' Oversight Committee would be created to ensure funds are spent appropriately. Audit, oversight and administrative costs of this measure would be limited to 1% of the annual revenues.

*Happy Holidays from Stewards'  
Staff and Board of Directors*

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Michele Luna  
Lisa Bacon - Editing

## Contributors

Hollis Bewley  
Bea Brunn  
Ruby Herrick

## Photography

Kevin O'Connor

## E-News

To receive our E-Newsletter please go to our website and sign up for these periodic updates. You can customize your subscription.

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

*Michele Luna, Executive Director*

It's hard to believe 2009 is quickly coming to an end. It's been a challenging year for State Parks and a hardworking year for Stewards as we again stepped up to the plate by supporting our parks through advocacy. Despite the frustration we experienced, we made the best of the year by focusing time on celebrating the 75th Anniversary of Armstrong Redwoods, one of the reasons we are fighting so hard to keep our parks open. From the initial launch in April to the Gourmet Hike in July and then our grand finale weekend in September we remembered the history of the preservation of the largest old growth redwood forest in Sonoma County and why we appreciate the Armstrong family and others for their foresight in preserving this park for the enjoyment of all.

One of our favorite events, our Annual Volunteer Celebration was well attended and again, a very memorable event. Everyday someone new walks into the office with positive comments about the event last Friday evening. Everyone seemed to enjoy the new cocktail party format with live music, which was provided gratis by Edge of Town, an excellent local band. We have grown past the point of being able to accommodate everyone for a sit down dinner so we had to come up with a new idea. Special thanks to Annie Cresswell, Liz Beale, Becky Scharmburg and Tiffany Watkins for planning and preparing all the wonderful appetizers and desserts. Also, thanks to the many State Park employees who helped throughout the day and evening with set-up, serving, food prep, bartending and clean-up. Finally, thanks to the entire Stewards staff for all their work planning this annual event.

The Holiday Auction also did well and raised over \$5,600 to support our education and stewardship volunteer programs. We had over 150 items thanks to our wonderful auction donors! Special thanks to Amy Racina for all her help prepping and staffing the auction.

It's been an incredibly busy fundraising year for Stewards and I will honestly say that I am looking forward to a short break through the holidays. We are very thankful for the generosity of our donors. We netted about \$40,000 from fundraising events, \$50,000 from individual donations and \$70,000 from grants. This doesn't include another \$40,000 to date from resale. We have also almost met our goal of matching a \$10,000 grant from the Dean Witter Foundation with donations since the end of October. If you haven't already made a year-end donation we would greatly appreciate your support and help in reaching this goal.

On behalf of the Stewards staff and Board of Directors, I wish you all a joyous and peaceful holiday season and a New Year filled with hope, happiness and plenty of time to reflect on the beauty we are fortunate to enjoy in Sonoma County.



*Becky Scharmburg, Denise Alexander, Liz Beale and Annie Cresswell  
Kitchen Crew at Volunteer Celebration*

# CAL REPORT

Linda Rath, Sector Superintendent and Cooperating Association Liaison

Season Greetings! I can't believe another year has gone by. And what an eventful and challenging year it has been! Full of unknowns, major budget and staffing cuts, service reductions, frustrations, and relief (yes, it could have been much worse).

Yet, we are still here and so are the parks. We have been able to keep as much of our parks open as feasibly possible while trying to remain within our allotted budget and with much reduced staffing levels. Our resources are still being protected to the best of our abilities, projects funded in prior years and through other funding sources are still proceeding and the public is still being served with our limited resources. Much of this is thanks to each and every one of you through your continued financial support and volunteering for State Parks through the many and various Stewards' programs.

The 2009 year, although difficult, has also demonstrated the need for and willingness of everyone to work together to support each other to accomplish our mutual goals and mission: *to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.*

Thank you to Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods and to all of you who have, and continue to, support Stewards and California State Parks. Through it all, we have continued to work harder than ever to maintain the integrity of our parks and their relevance to the people of California. This is truly a grassroots effort and each of you has played an important role in making your voices heard, protecting our parks and providing the highest quality of public service. **THANKYOU!**

The battle continues next year, but, with your support, so do the parks.

Have a very happy holiday and here's to a wonderful new year.

## INSPIRATION FROM RUBY HERRICK

Ruby Herrick, Programs Manager

After reading The Mountains of California by John Muir, I thought I'd share part of Edward Hoagland's introduction to the book. He is a prolific writer of books and essays on nature and travel. These two eloquent yet concise paragraphs give me food for thought on our relationship with nature, each time I read them.

*Until quite recently indeed (as such things go), the whole world was a wilderness in which mankind lived as cannily as deer, overmastering with spears or snares even their woodsmanship and that of other creatures, finding a path wherever wildlife could go. Nature was the central theater of life for everybody's ancestors, not a hideaway where people went to rest and recharge after a hard stint in an urban or suburban arena, and many of us still do swim, hike, fish, birdwatch, sleep on the ground, or paddle a boat on vacation, and will loll like a lizard in the sun any other chance we have. We can't help grinning for at least a moment at the sight of surf, or sunlight on a river meadow, as if remembering in our mind's eye Paleolithic pleasures in a home before memories officially began.*

*It is a thoughtless grin because nature predates "thought." Aristotle was a naturalist, and, nearer to our own time, Darwin and Thoreau made of the close observation of bits of nature as a lever to examine life in many ways on a large scale. Yet nature writing, despite its basis in science, usually rings with rhapsody as well—a belief that nature is an expression of God.*

Edward Hoagland



Photo taken by Rich Lawton - Tuolumne Meadows at Sunset

## WINTER ECOADVENTURE

Register for EcoAdventures online at: <http://www.stewardsofthecoastandredwoods.org/lecoadventures.htm>

### Birds of Prey on the Kortum Trail with Hollis and Jerry Bewley

Saturday, December 19, 2009, 9 am, meet in Shell Beach Parking lot

We're fortunate to have some "Species of Special Concern" hunting in our State Parks & they're easy to spot once you know what to look for. Possible sightings: northern harriers, white-tailed kites, kestrels, red-tailed and migrant hawks. Bring binoculars, water and a snack. Dress in layers. Will raincheck if necessary. **Limited to 20, \$15 per person donation, Stewards members FREE. Registration required.**

### Interested in being a Jenner Headlands Docent?

Stewards is recruiting docents who are interested in being trained to lead guided hikes on the new Jenner Headlands acquisition as soon as the property transfers into the hands of the Sonoma Land Trust. This is an exciting opportunity to access beautiful wildflower displays in the Spring and Summer and the Historic Rule Ranch, with its fascinating story and the vistas of the magnificent Sonoma Coast. If you are interested please contact Michele Luna at [mluna@mcn.org](mailto:mluna@mcn.org).

### Bird of the Season - Buffleheads

*Hollis Bewley, Docent*

The first of November marks the return of Buffleheads to the Jenner Estuary & Bodega Harbor. Buffleheads are the smallest diving ducks and most endearing to many of us. The males are eye-catching with their large round "buffalo" heads in contrasting black and white, though a closer look reveals that the "black" is really deep shades of iridescent purples and greens.



Unlike most ducks, Buffleheads are monogamous with long-term pair bonds carrying over from season to season and year to year. Even in winter we see males energetically chasing other males who might be getting too chummy with a mate. The Bufflehead dive is characteristically energetic as well – a sudden jump up out of the water, then straight down, then bobbing like a cork on return to the surface. One duck often watches for predators while the rest of the flotilla dives and forages for food.

The days seem suddenly shorter with the loss of Daylight Savings Time each year, but we look forward to the arrival of these little charmers and enjoy their company throughout the winter months.

### Tidepool Classroom Visits - Docents Needed

What causes tides? What makes the intersection of ocean and continent such a tough neighborhood? What are three major challenges facing all plants and animals living there? How does each of these amazing animals adapt in order to survive?

These are some of the questions asked of students during a presentation put together by State Parks Interpreter II Mike Wisehart. Mike has been sharing his knowledge and experience with volunteer docents who will be visiting classrooms this spring to prepare students and teachers for low-tide field trips to the Sonoma Coast.

Sound interesting? Would you like to participate in classroom or field trip visits? Contact Ruby Herrick, Programs Manager, at [rherrick@mcn.org](mailto:rherrick@mcn.org) or (707) 869-9177 ext. 1# - or register online at <http://stewardsofthecoastandredwoods.org/volunteertraining.htm> to attend one of three general orientations for new volunteers as well as a dedicated tidepool program orientation on February 27.

It's a great way to get outdoors and learn more about a fascinating world while sharing your respect for the environment with a new generation of stewards.



*Bat Star - Photo taken by Kevin O'Connor*

# WHALE WATCH

Bea Brunn, Whale Mother

Here we are gearing up for another Whale Watch season. Our orientation on Saturday, November 14th turned out great. About 50 people showed up, many of our “old-timers” and also many new faces. Everyone was excited and we had many sign-ups.

Again we wish to thank Ruby and Michele Sokol for their help with coffee and goodies.

Since we’ve had whale sightings along our coast all summer and fall, we were all delighted to have several whales show up during our visit to Bodega Head during the water safety talk by our lifeguard.

Unfortunately your whale mother had some bad information regarding the dates for the annual Fisherman’s Festival in April. The dates for the festival are April 17-18 and there will be no whale watching on that weekend. However we will need volunteers to sign up for April 10-11 instead. Let me know if you are available.

Thanks for your enthusiasm and commitment. I look forward to seeing you all at Bodega Head starting on January 2, and we are again looking forward to Ruby’s whale cookies complete with whale lice.

[Editor’s note: Special thanks to Bea Brunn for conducting a wonderful training again. We are blessed by her dedicated service to our Whale Watch program for the past 23 years!]

## Docent and Community Education Program

January through June 2010 Stewards will be busy with our very popular orientations, trainings and seminars. We’re working with a tight budget next year, so we need your support and understanding. We are asking active volunteers and members to donate \$5.00 for each seminar they attend (no one will be turned away for inability to donate). The general public is asked to donate \$15 per seminar. This will help us cover costs.

Our new volunteer orientations for 2010 will take place on:  
(Help us spread the word)

January 9, 2010, 9:00 am to 11:30 am

March 20, 2010, 9:00 am to 11:30 am

May 15, 2010, 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm

Register on our website:

[http://www.stewardsofthecoastandredwoods.org/seminar\\_registrationpage.htm](http://www.stewardsofthecoastandredwoods.org/seminar_registrationpage.htm)

We are also happy to announce some new presenters for this year’s seminar series.

On February 6, 2010 we are pleased to welcome Rebecca Pearlroth, the Chair of the Geology Department at SRJC who will conduct our “Geology of Sonoma Coast” Seminar.

On February 27, 2010, Carl Menard, the Aquatic Resources Manager at the Bodega Marine Lab will present “Exploring the Intertidal Zone.”

Back by popular demand, Breck Parkman will take docents on another intriguing hike back in time to explore the “Archeology and History of Sonoma Coast” on March 27, 2010.

Then on May 15, 2010 we welcome Sherrie Althouse from the California Flora Plant Nursery, who will lead a Plant and Wildflower ID Hike on Sonoma Coast.

Our seminars fill up early so we encourage early registration through our website.



## How to Volunteer for VIP Programs

Call the Stewards office:  
869-9177 x1# or email  
rherrick@mcn.org

### Program Activities

#### Armstrong Redwoods

Visitor Center Staffing  
FAR  
Docent Tour Guides  
Trail Maintenance  
Habitat Restoration Project  
Pond Farm Interest Group

#### Sonoma Coast State Park

Visitor Center Staffing  
Seal Watch  
Whale Watch  
Tide pool Programs  
Watershed Program  
Environmental Living Prog.  
Sonoma Coast Stewardship

### Other Projects

Recycling & Firewood  
Office Help & Special  
Events

### Volunteer Program Coordinators

Joyce Bacci, ARVC  
Lanny Keyston, AR Trails, FAR  
Laura Parent, Pond Farm  
Linda Fisher, Jenner VC  
Bob Caricato, Seal Watch  
Bea Brunn, Whale Watch  
Suzanne Abrams, ELP  
Fred Luna, Recycling  
Vacant, Willow Creek Ed.  
Bill Bambrick, Sonoma Coast  
Water Quality Monitoring  
and Trail Crew  
The Sorensons, Marine  
Debris, & Beach Cleanups  
Hollis & Jerry Bewley, Tidepool  
Prog.

### State Park Volunteer

#### Coordinators

Ranger Ellen Brem  
Armstrong/Austin Creek  
Ranger Ben Vanden Heuvel  
Sonoma Coast State Park

## APPRECIATION FROM OUR YOUNGEST STEWARDS

Docents lead thousands of school groups through the Redwoods and in the Tidepools each year and we always receive adorable thank you letters and drawings. Here are a few we hope you enjoy.

Dear Mr Bob Lewek

Thank you for giving me the tour. I learned that the caves in trees are goose pens. Thanks again.

Sincerely  
Bentley

Dear Ms. Suzanne

Thank you for guiding my group. I learned that the tallest redwood is 310 ft. How tall is the second tallest tree?

Sincerely  
Gary

Dear Mr Keith Nelson

Thank you for having me come to Armstrong Woods. I learned what poison oak looked like. It was very fun.

Sincerely  
Catalina



Dear Ruby, Mel, Bill and Carol,

Thank you for helping us at the tide pools. We had lots of fun! We enjoyed touching, seeing, and searching for all the sea creatures.

Your friend,  
Cyrus

Dear Mr Bob

I learned a lot about the woods. One thing out of all the stuff that I learned was that the Armstrong woods has its own theater. Your were a great tour guide. Did Mr Armstrong have a sister or a brother? And why do you let people WRITE stuff on the LOGS.

Sincerely  
Esteban

## 2009 Auction Donors

Anne Alexander · Randy Arnold/Barefoot Wines · Arrowood Vineyards & Winery · Lisa Bacon · Margaret Adams Baird · Balletto Vineyards · Diane Barth · Denise Bickert · Bella Vineyards · Adrienne Biggs · Bea Brunn · Hollis & Jerry Bewley · Burke's Canoes Camellia Inn · David Caplan · Bob Caricato · Joyce Carlson · Ann Chambers · Christopher Queen Gallery · Janet Ciel · Connie Cloak Vesta Copestakes · Dr. Frank Dane · DeLoach Vineyards · Doris Dickenson · Nikki Dohn · Dry Creek Vineyard · Sandy Eastoak Enjoy Day Spa · Thomas Fallon · Robert Feld · Frank Field · Dr. Carmen Finley · Susan Gabriel · Marie & Larry Gray · Hartford Family Wines · Frederika Haskell · Roz Hendy · Paul Hoffman · Instant Pool Cards · Robert Janover · Norma Jellison · Jenner Inn and Cottages · Margaret & Michael Kennett · Lanny & Joann Keyston · Doug and Audrey King · Kenwood Vineyards · Korbel · Kathy Langrock · Lagunitas Brewing · Rich Lawton · Wanda Lee · Michele and Fred Luna · Felix Macias · Eric Massick · Matanzas Creek Winery · Osher Marin JCC · Lollie Mercer · Harvey Mendelson · Lolli Mercer · Jacque Mielke · Northwood Golf Course Jim Ocean · Kevin O'Connor · Osmosis Day Spa Sanctuary · Arrow Olesky · Leslie Pike · Steven Pryputnievicz · Quercia Gallery Amy Racina · Linda Rath · Ravenswood Winery · Catherine Ries · Rio Villa Resort · Riverlane Resort · RiverSea Getaways · Roslind Robinson · Rocker Oysterfeller's Kitchen & Saloon · Evalena Rose · Faith Rumm · Russian River Getaways · Russian River State Parks Carole and Ferd Sabino · Saint Francis Vineyards and Winery · Joel Slaton · Michele Sokol · Sonoma County Tourism · Sophie's Cellars Souverain · Kathy Stenger · Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods · Simone Thayer · The Earth Organization · Barbara Tobin · Toad Hollow Vineyards · Dr. Tremayne D.C. · Jacquie Villanueva · Watertreks · Weavers and Dreamers · Bud Veliquette · Gretchen Williams · Wordly Goods · George Zastrow

# In Appreciation of our Donors

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Bodega Bay Fisherman's Festival  
California State Coastal Conservancy  
California State Coastal Commission  
California State Parks Foundation  
Community Foundation Sonoma County  
Environmental Grant  
The Dean Witter Foundation  
Save the Redwoods League  
State Farm N. CA Public Affairs  
Westamerica Bank

## Businesses/Corporations

Sophies Cellars  
Webhelper  
Whole Foods Market, Santa Rosa  
Bodega Seafood Art and Wine Festival

## Event Sponsors 2009

### Redwood Canopy - \$5,000

Russian River Getaways - Old Grove  
PG & E - Bodega Festival & Old Grove

### Understory Sponsors - \$1,500

Cresco  
General Mills

Russian River Recreation & Parks District

### Wildflower Sponsors - \$1,000 plus

#### In-Kind

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### Mushroom Sponsors - \$500

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### Other Sponsors

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Matanzas Creek Winery  
Moshin Vineyards  
Ravenswood Winery  
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Sophie's Cellars  
Souverain  
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A New Wrinkle · The River Choir · The Thugz · Honeybees  
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## Raffle Donors

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## Osprey Circle Donors - 2009

### \$1,000 plus

Clark & Josephine  
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Charlotte and Arthur Zitrin  
Foundation

### \$500 plus

American Humanist Assn.  
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Austin Creek Waterfall

## NEW MEMBERS

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Susan Ronkowski

### Supporting and Businesses \$100

John Braito  
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### Contributing \$50

Nancy Hair  
Neil Kneibler  
Linda Rosen

### Family

Beth Ladin  
Rod & Phyllis Palmieri  
Kelley Staley & Matt  
Anderson  
Ruby Williams

### Individual

Nancy D'India  
Kathleen Goodman  
Linda LeMole  
Stella Lundquist  
Paula Reid

### Senior/Student

Katie Musick

Stewards members receive this quarterly newsletter by email or mail with information about park issues, special events and opportunities for volunteering.

Members are also entitled to 20% discount on purchases at Stewards run visitor centers and at our special events. In addition, Members can attend our educational seminars for a \$5 donation.

## Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

Membership Form

Renewal

YES, I'd like to become a member.

- Senior/Student  \$20.00  
 Individual  \$25.00  
 Family  \$35.00  
 Contributing  \$50.00  
 Supporting  \$100.00  
 Business  \$100.00  
 Patron  \$200.00 plus  
 Osprey Circle  \$500.00 plus

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

I'd like to help with an additional donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_

Payment type: Check  Charge Card  Visa MC Total tax deductible donation \$\_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to Stewards. Account # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Renewal Date: February 1 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Bequests

### Your Gift to the Future of State Park Volunteerism

With your help future generations will enjoy quality interpretation through "Volunteers in Parks" programs for many years to come. A gift to Stewards is the simplest form of giving from your estate. There are several types of charitable bequests by will (or beneficiary designation).

Sample:

I hereby give and bequest to Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods, a nonprofit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of California, with a principal address at P.O. Box 2, Duncans Mills, CA 95430, \_\_\_\_\_ percent of my estate, (or) the sum of \_\_\_\_\_ dollars, (or) the following assets

\_\_\_\_\_.

For Information on contributing to Stewards' Endowment in support of Armstrong Redwoods please contact Michele Luna at the Stewards office (707) 869-9177 X4#.

CALL 800-320-0476 TO MAKE A VEHICLE DONATION IN THE NAME OF  
 STEWARDS OF THE COAST AND REDWOODS

## Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

PO Box 2, Duncans Mills, CA 95430

(707) 869.9177, FAX (707) 869.8252

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