



Safeguarding West Marin's Coast

The California Coast lost a true champion this spring with the passing of Peter Douglas, 69, former executive director of the California Coastal Commission. While he will be greatly missed, Peter's intrepid spirit, graceful and powerful presence, and passionate activism for safeguarding California's majestic coastline will live on through coastal activists across the state.

Peter's activism played a significant role in 1976 being a watershed year for West Marin's priceless coastal resources. That year, the California Coastal Act was passed into law, implementing the coastal initiative passed by voters in 1972, and Congress passed the Point Reyes Wilderness Act, which designated over 33,000 acres of the National Seashore as wilderness.

EAC has been working overtime to honor the intent and mandates of both laws – to ensure full wilderness status for Drakes Estero, and ensure that Marin County's Local Coastal Program Amendment does not weaken existing coastal resource protections. Both matters have significant legal, policy, and scientific details to analyze and consider, and despite the expedited pace of both public processes EAC has remained continuously engaged to uphold West Marin's environmental integrity.

In working to protect the West Coast's only Congressionally designated marine wilderness area at Drakes Estero, like thousands of Americans, EAC would like Secretary Salazar to honor the 1976 wilderness designation and decline to issue a new operating permit this fall. The landmark Wilderness Act of 1964 protects areas of land and water where Earth's most ancient processes are uninhibited by man's desires and interruptions. Until oyster cultivation

began roughly seventy-five years ago, for millennia Drakes Estero was a place where wild nature ran untamed, where the rugged genius of planet Earth could evolve on its own terms. Zooming motorboats, thousands of pieces of plastic oyster debris, millions of oysters, and the spread of highly invasive marine organisms are incompatible with wilderness, and should be removed to allow natural processes to resume. Wilderness is part of our humanness, a place we go not to escape our lives, but to connect with ourselves on a deeper internal level. For many, wilderness is a church, a sacred place of solace and spiritual renewal. Whatever wilderness means to you, EAC believes that both the essence and legal protections afforded by the 1964 and 1976 Acts are worth fighting to uphold.

*Amy Trainer
Executive Director*

“The Coast is never saved,
it's always being saved.”

~ Peter Douglas (1942 – 2012), former executive director, California Coastal Commission



92% of the 52,473 comments said “no new permit”

Wilderness Is the Environmentally Preferred Alternative For Drakes Estero

This fall Interior Secretary Salazar will decide whether to exercise his discretion under a 2009 rider to a federal budget bill and extend the lease for the commercial oyster operation in Drakes Estero by ten years beyond its statutorily mandated cutoff. The National Park Service’s draft environmental review document prepared to inform Secretary Salazar’s decision concluded that the “environmentally preferred alternative” based on law, policy and science is to allow full wilderness protection for Drakes Estero, the ecological heart of Pt. Reyes National Seashore, once the oyster company’s operating permit expires on November 30, 2012.

In 1976 Congress designated Drakes Estero as “potential wilderness” with full wilderness status to become effective upon the expiration of the 40-year lease for oyster operations in the Estero.

EAC has long supported allowing the existing commercial oyster lease to expire in 2012, and opposed any extension of operations, to allow full wilderness protection as Congress directed. Full wilderness protection in 2012 is supported by the public, by the peer-reviewed Draft EIS, and by federal wilderness management policies and laws. Full wilderness protection in 2012 would also allow restoration of the historic ecological baseline in the Estero, avoid setting a dangerous industry-driven precedent, and eliminate the continued adverse impacts to the Estero’s ecology from the ongoing operations.

The Public and Experts Overwhelmingly Call For Wilderness Protection in 2012

Since release of the Draft EIS, tens of thousands of Americans have called on Secretary Salazar to fulfill the 1976 promise of a protected marine wilderness at Drakes Estero. Across the country, national park and wilderness supporters exercised their right to submit public comments on the draft document, and the results were overwhelming: 92% of the 52,473 comments said “no new permit” and believe wilderness in 2012 should prevail.

Ocean conservation champion Dr. Sylvia Earle, world-renowned conservationist Dr. Edward O. Wilson, and other marine conservation champions such as Jean-Michel Cousteau and Thomas Lovejoy expressed their full support for wilderness as well. They wrote to Secretary Salazar earlier this spring saying that, “Drakes Estero can be restored to its natural beauty and biological productivity. Such a large, commercial operation fostering non-native species within such a sensitive, rare habitat is in direct conflict with the Seashore’s mandate of natural systems management as well as wilderness laws and national park management policies.”

In a Huffington Post piece, Dr. Earle noted that, “The Oyster Company knew the limited terms of use when they bought the business seven years ago from the original owner. It is time for the new owners to honor [Congress’s] historic marine wilder-

ness designation, and stop seeking special favors in order to derive financial gain at the expense of a national treasure.”

Granting A New Permit Would Be Unprecedented, Setting A Dangerous Precedent

Granting the Drakes Bay Oyster Company (DBOC) a new Special Use Permit would be an unprecedented act.

If Secretary Salazar were to issue a new permit to the commercial oyster operation, it would result in significant, clear negative impacts to wilderness values in the Estero.

Granting an extension or expansion of this industrial-scale commercial enterprise in a Congressionally designated potential wilderness area is without precedent – it has never happened - and would be in apparent contravention of the authorizing legislation’s intent, the Wilderness Act and the Park Service’s own management policies.

Although the 2009 rider expressly states that it will not serve as precedent for administrative actions elsewhere within the National Wilderness Preservation System, this is a false promise. If the Secretary exercises his discretion to issue a new permit to the commercial oyster operation in contravention of long-standing wilderness protection laws and policies, it would stand as a dangerous precedent that could embolden industry across the country to use political pressure and favors to gain

access to some of our nation’s most precious park areas.

As Arthur Wright, then President of The Wilderness Society, warned at a 1976 hearing on designation of wilderness areas in Badlands National Monument,

“We do not believe the legislative history of [The Wilderness Act] or the act itself is favorable to [the] idea of Congress delegating authority to make wilderness judgments [by designating potential wilderness and leaving its conversion to wilderness up to an executive agency]. Moreover, we have a concern that something could happen to potential wilderness additions if they receive bad handling . . . or there are administrative or legal loopholes involved in potential additions and I think with strong economic pressures, somehow, someway, potential wilderness additions could find themselves in deep trouble, and not make this wilderness system as intended by Congress.”

Sadly, Mr. Wright’s warning bears truth today as industry lobbyists and political pressure seek to overturn the 1976 Congressional designation for Drakes Estero and protections it affords.

Peer-review Upholds Science, Conclusions in Draft EIS

After the release of the Draft EIS, the U.S. Department of Interior secured an independent peer review of the scientific findings relied on in the Draft EIS. That 92-page report examined the scientific and technical information and scholarly analysis presented in the draft EIS to assess whether: appropriate scientific information was used; reasonable conclusions were drawn from the information; whether significant information was omitted from consideration; and if NPS interpretation of the information was reasonable.

The peer review report upheld the Draft EIS conclusions that wilderness is the environmentally preferable alternative, stating that, “Overall, the reviewers found the analyses to be appropriate, and that there is no fundamental flaw with the larger scientific underpinning of the [Draft EIS].”

These objective, third-party findings, along with dozens of other peer-reviewed studies, substantiate Park Service science that shows extending the lease for the Drakes Bay oyster operation within this national park wilderness area will have long-term adverse impacts on the National Seashore’s fragile coastal habitat and wildlife.

Historic Ecological Baseline of Drakes Estero Had Very Few Oysters

New research released in April by the National Park Service and published by archeological experts at Sonoma State University confirms that the historic ecological baseline of the Estero included very few native Olympia oysters. These findings close a major research gap noted in the 2009 National Academy of Sciences report on Drakes Estero, and directly contradict one of the oyster company’s cornerstone claims.

In its study, the Anthropological Studies Center at Sonoma State examined Native American harvest sites around Drakes Estero and concluded that native oysters did not play a significant role in the ecology of the estuary. It concluded that “...the absence of other prehistoric sites in the area containing quantities of native oyster shells makes it unlikely that Drakes Estero was a habitat for a large oyster population in prehistory.” The report suggested that this was because for thousands of years the Estero has had a muddy substrate unsuitable for oyster habitat. This published research confirms that the oyster company’s operations have artificially modified the Estero’s natural ecology, and are inconsistent with the estuary’s natural, historic ecological baseline.

Ongoing Oyster Operations Are Unsustainable, Damage the Estero Ecology

Oyster operations in Drakes Estero continue to have adverse impacts on the Estero. Operations have converted major portions of the estuary to non-native spe-

cies; over 3700 motorized boat trips per year disturb marine mammals and birds; the operations have littered the National Seashore’s beaches with thousands of pieces of its plastic debris; and the mariculture gear used in the operations facilitates the spread of highly invasive marine organisms in the Estero.

In particular, the oyster operations foster the spreading of the highly invasive tunicate, *Didemnum vexillum*, which is known to drastically adversely modify the habitats it invades. *D. vexillum*, which has spread onto eelgrass blades in the Estero, can block the plant’s most basic processes including photosynthesis. Eelgrass is considered a crucial component of the marine food chain both as habitat and sustenance. The invasion of eelgrass by *D. Vexillum* is a real ecological threat to the continued health and biodiversity of Drakes Estero.

Ongoing Operations Violate Coastal Protection Laws

In 2007, the California Coastal Commission issued a Cease and Desist Order to the oyster company directing it to adhere to agreed-upon harbor seal protection measures. Four years later, in September 2011, the Commission warned the oyster company that its ongoing illegal use of motorboats near sensitive seal areas posed “serious threats to marine habitats and wildlife.” The Commission also put the company on notice that its operations

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allowed thousands of pieces of plastic marine debris from its operations to litter the waters and beaches in the National Park.

In February 2012, the California Coastal Commission again rebuked the oyster company for its lack of proper stewardship practices. In its letter, the Coastal Commission stated that the company has violated the California Coastal Act and the 2007 Cease and Desist Order issued by the Commission. The letter noted concern that the company had failed to address current and prior violations and warned of potential penalties and litigation if the company refused to adhere to agreed-upon harbor seal protection measures.

The Commission's February 1st letter states: "as demonstrated by numerous photographs reviewed by Commission staff and corroborated by your admission during our meeting of January 4, 2012, DBOC has been consistently acting in a manner inconsistent with . . . the 2008 special use permit that has been in place since April 22, 2008. As a result, DBOC has been in violation of the Order since April 22, 2008."

The Commission rejected the DBOC's offered explanation for its repeated failure to adhere to harbor seal protections as contradicting the plain language of the harbor seal protections rules and an agreement that DBOC signed as part of its special use

permit with the National Park Service.

In 2011, Tom Baty, a local Inverness resident, collected hundred of pieces of distinctive plastic used in the company's operations scattered all over the beaches of the Seashore and wrote the Coastal Commission about it. Early in 2012, Baty performed a 6-month follow-up. Over a ten-day window, he again found hundreds of pieces of distinct DBOC plastic all over the Seashore's beaches at the same locations as last summer. In a February 29, 2012 letter to the Coastal Commission, Baty noted that DBOC's calling this plastic "legacy debris" was a specious excuse, since DBOC's own photos and videos of its operations show their use of this plastic and it is legally responsible for this debris.

The Public Discussion and Basis for Decision

EAC believes that a decision about the extension of commercial operations in the Estero must be based on truth and integrity with an essential foundation in law and policy informed by science. Unfortunately, much of the public debate, particularly from persons supporting an extension of the commercial operations in the Estero, has consisted of flawed analysis of data, cherry-picked facts, or claims of scientific misconduct and bias by the National Park Service. These claims have been found

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by third parties outside the current debate to be without merit. As a result much of the debate has distracted from the real issue facing Secretary Salazar: whether to uphold long-standing national park laws and policies, or roll them back to allow private industry to commercialize the heart of a national park.

Claims by proponents of extension of the oyster operations in the Estero have been rejected or criticized by agencies such as the National Academy of Sciences, the Marine Mammal Commission, and the California Coastal Commission as failing to reflect the best available science or the weight of expert opinion.



Photo: Don Bartling

visit www.savepointreyeswilderness.org for more information

In contrast, the National Park Service (NPS) analysis of harbor seal disturbances has been peer-reviewed, published in the respected journal Aquatic Conservation, and has been upheld by the Marine Mammal Commission. The Commission found that NPS used the best available scientific information and had a sufficient basis from which to conclude that "from time to time, mariculture activities in the estuary do disturb harbor seals" and that there is a statistically significant correlation between increased mariculture activity and decreased seal use of the estuary.

The Wilderness Act of 1964

The Wilderness Act of 1964 took a concept – that our nation was blessed with such uniquely special places and natural resources that they deserved a higher order of protection – and made it law. With the Act, Congress created a national system for protecting and preserving in perpetuity our nation's most sacred, biologically rich, and extraordinarily beautiful places. In 1976, Drakes Estero was deemed worthy of such protection, but the American public has had to wait until private rights negotiated with the Park Service in 1972 expire this year. Congress has not designated any other marine wilderness area on the West Coast, and private ownership and development precludes other such designations. It is time to defend the promise for a marine wilderness at Drakes Estero made by Congress in 1976, and the integrity of the Wilderness Act.

Please stand with EAC and thousands of Americans across the country asking Secretary Salazar to honor the Congressional designation for Drakes Estero wilderness this year.

The Support of Our Members is the Foundation of EAC

EAC has a forty-year record of successful advocacy to protect the beauty, biodiversity, and rural character of the entire Tomales Bay watershed and beyond. Please support our important work today!

EAC is very grateful for your continued generous financial support of our work to protect West Marin's diversity, peace, and natural wealth for future generations. We value your financial support and use it wisely!

Please consider these two great ways to make your donations to EAC go farther. EAC has received a very generous matching grant, and by becoming a sustaining member you can help support 40 more years of EAC's work to protect the West Marin you love!

\$100,000 Matching Grant:

EAC has been given a unique opportunity to support our coastal protection work, including full wilderness protection for the West Coast's only Congressionally designated marine wilderness area, Drakes Estero. By donating to this special appeal, you will make your EAC contribution go twice as far and enable twice as much conservation work to protect wild West Marin!

Sustaining Membership:

Becoming a sustaining member is a great way to support EAC all year long! Sustaining members agree to regular monthly payments of at least \$10, or \$30 per quarter, via credit card. Sustaining memberships provide the financial backbone for EAC's work by ensuring regular income that gives us more time to engage in important work rather than fundraising.

Your ongoing partnership with EAC is tremendously important to West Marin.

EAC is the only region-wide environmental watchdog in West Marin with an office and staff. In the absence of local government in our unincorporated area, EAC plays an essential role in ensuring that county, state, and federal governments hear our environmental voice about policy and permit decisions.

Contact Morgan Patton, EAC's Financial & Membership Associate, today to begin your sustaining membership: eacadmin@svn.net

Sustaining membership—the way to show long-term support for EAC!

Draft Local Coastal Program Amendment Weakens Current Coastal Protections

For the past three years, the County has been updating the coastal protection policies that implement the California Coastal Act, called the Local Coastal Program, as well as the development code provisions that implement the policies. The existing LCP, certified in 1981, has largely worked to protect West Marin's coastal resources, so it is unclear why the county has spent so much time, money, and energy to significantly change it.

Beginning last summer, the Planning Commission held numerous public hearings to review and discuss the proposed policy and code changes, which are substantial. These changes make up the Local Coastal Program Amendment document that the Planning Commission approved in February, and which the Board of Supervisors will consider beginning in August. While some important improvements are proposed to Marin's coastal protection regulations, like improved stormwater management best practices, significant deficiencies remain. EAC continues to engage and advocate vigorously for environmental protections at least equal to those currently in place.

Despite everyone's best efforts and hard work, the draft LCP Amendment still needs a considerable amount of work to comply with Coastal Act requirements. Since last summer EAC has reviewed, analyzed, and commented on the nearly 4,000 pages of development code and land use policy documents that have been part of the public process to amend Marin County's LCP. EAC's in-depth review reveals that the draft LCP documents approved by the Planning Commission in February – both the LCP policies and corresponding Development Code updates - would weaken protections for environmentally sensitive habitat areas and agricultural lands. The California Coastal Commission staff has expressed similar concerns in numerous letters to the

County. EAC will continue to engage the County and Coastal Commission staff to ensure current coastal protections are not weakened.

The Amended LCP Should Be At Least As Strong as the Current LCP

The LCP Amendment must be consistent with the provisions of the Coastal Act. Therefore, the baseline against which the proposed LCP Amendment must be mea-

Regarding the proposed changes to agricultural land use policies, the Coastal Commission has repeatedly stated its concern “that existing protections would be weakened and the need for adequate analyses to evaluate the consistency of these changes with the Coastal Act.”

sured is the existing LCP that was certified and approved by the Coastal Commission in 1981. Proposals to measure the LCP Amendment against the Countywide Plan should be rejected since the latter does not incorporate the provisions of the California Coastal Act. West Marin's coastal resources, which are state and national treasures, deserve the full protections embodied in the California Coastal Act.

Rushed Process Has Led To Little Public Involvement, Weaker Protections

The County's process for the LCP Amendment has been protracted, yet rushed

through public hearings that virtually assured little public involvement and input. There has been insufficient time provided to the public for orderly and informed consideration of the voluminous materials and information – nearly 4,000 pages from June 2011 to February 2012. Although numerous workshops and hearings were held throughout the process, neither staff nor the public could have a full comprehension of the magnitude of the substantial revisions proposed to both the LCP and Development Code. One result: the draft LCP document that the Board of Supervisors will consider in August fails to adequately protect the most sensitive and important environmental and coastal resources designated for priority protection under the California Coastal Act, and numerous inconsistencies remain.

Findings Justifying Amendments Not Provided to Public For Review

In an April, 2009 letter the Coastal Commission informed the County that, “Where you proposed to alter or delete standards in the certified LCP it is important to provide data and analysis explaining the change so it can be evaluated for conformance with the Coastal Act.” The public deserves a full and fair opportunity to review all purported data or studies on which the County and its staff are relying in proposing the LCP Amendment. EAC has asked that this information be given to the public prior to the August public hearing. To date, this information has not been provided for the public to review.

Significant Background Information Deleted

As the proposed LCP Amendment notes, “The original plans contain important information regarding the natural resources, geology, and historical development of the Coastal Region. This plan is a continuation of the direction and foundation of knowledge established in the original plans.” However, very little of the information from the original LCP has been updated and brought into this LCP despite having already been certified by the Coastal

Commission. For example, the Biological Resources section's introduction and discussion is less than half as long as the comparable section in the existing Unit II LCP alone. Among the elements omitted are:

- Mention of the dependence of Black Brant and Pacific herring upon eel grass in Tomales Bay for food.
- Discussion of the resources of and threats to Estero Americano and Estero de San Antonio.
- Discussion of the ecological role of riparian habitats.
- Discussion of the importance of fresh-water flow into Tomales Bay.

EAC has repeatedly requested that this substantive information be retained, and updated to the extent possible, and used as the foundation of the LCP Amendment policies.

Wetlands and Stream Buffers Must Be Retained

Currently, wetlands and streams are protected with a buffer of 100 feet or more. The proposed LCP would weaken this in several ways. Exemption from buffer standards would be expanded to include development if such development would be “infeasible” outside a buffer and to permit projects where a parcel is only “substantially located within a stream buffer.”

The proposed LCP would expand the buffer exemption to ordinary projects. Having set a 100 foot minimum buffer size, there is no justification for reducing that buffer size except in the rare circumstances and to prevent a taking of private property. The existing protections for wetlands and stream buffers should be maintained.

Water Quality Impacts Not Adequately Addressed

Both the Natural Systems and Water Resource sections omit mention of the often substantial impacts to water quality from agricultural operations and dilapidated septic systems. In the current LCP Unit

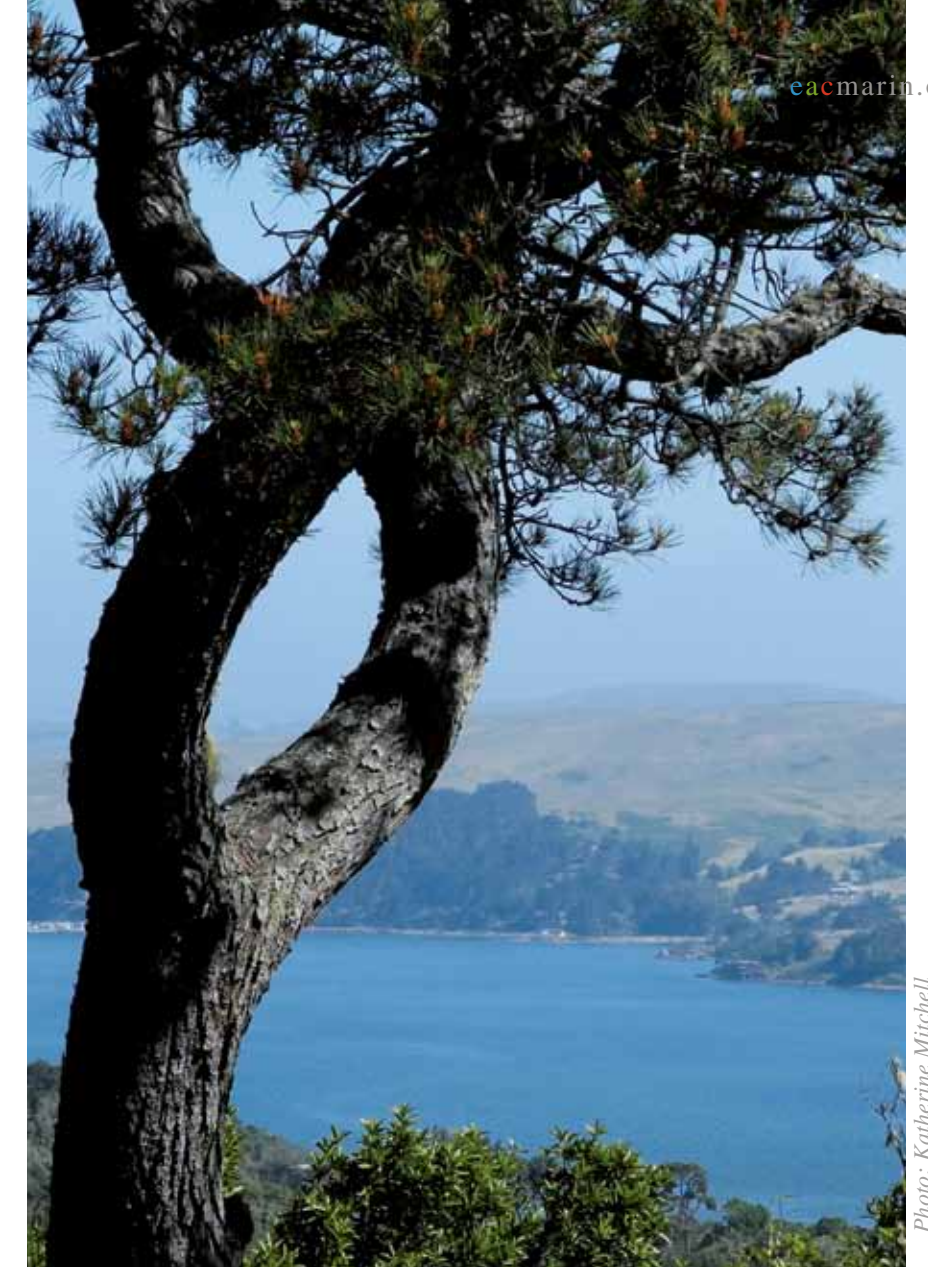


Photo: Katherine Mitchell

II, water quality problems from improper agricultural practices are acknowledged. The LCP Amendment must likewise acknowledge that agriculture and outdated septic systems substantially contribute to the impaired state of Tomales Bay which remains an impaired water body under section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act due to nutrient loading, pathogens, sedimentation from upland practices, and mercury. The Tomales Bay Watershed Council conducts water quality sampling in Tomales Bay and reports the results to the public. These reports are the best available science addressing year-round water quality impacts to the Bay.

EAC has repeatedly encouraged the County staff to utilize this best available science for decision-making and to require

appropriate monitoring and mitigation. EAC will continue to advocate for policies that would improve the impaired water quality status of Tomales Bay.

Impacts to Water Resources Inadequately Addressed

Having a reliable and safe water supply is of special importance to the coastal marine and visitor-serving facilities. The LCP Amendment is incomplete and misleading because it ignores the clear mandate under the existing LCP and Coastal Act that a coastal development permit is required for all wells, including exploratory and agricultural wells without limitation. The LCP Amendment needs to require that new wells within the coastal zone not only

secure a permit, but pro-actively perform groundwater tests to show that the new well will not have adverse impacts on neighboring wells and surface water flows.

Given the increasing number of competing demands for water, and the expected effects of climate change and sea level rise, it is imperative that all new wells and water sources secure a permit after demonstrating no adverse impacts.

The LCP Amendment gives consideration only to effects on sensitive habitats, not for the consequences to other properties and to the health of our public water supply. Particularly in the Tomales Bay watershed, the potential adverse effects of an exploratory or agricultural well depend entirely on the location and depth of the well and the amount of its production.

For example,

- An upstream agricultural well can deplete or divert the aquifers with the result that existing down-slope wells or springs utilizing the same or nearby aquifers are depleted, with devastating effect on those who rely on that water for drinking and other fresh water uses. This could adversely affect commercial and recreational marine activities as well as visitor serving uses such as accommodations and restaurants that depend on the water supply, not to mention existing homes and businesses.
- Over drawing water from an aquifer can allow saline or other non-drinkable water to migrate to the aquifer, temporarily or permanently making it useless as a fresh water source to the particular well and to others using the same aquifer.

Weakened Protections For Agricultural Lands

The LCP, the county's agricultural zoning, and land trust conservation easements have been largely successful in preserving open space, habitat, and viewsheds in the coastal zone. EAC is concerned that the County's proposed LCP revisions weaken these existing protections. The staff has offered no analysis of how the proposed revisions to the Agriculture Element, which allow more non-agricultural use of agricultural

lands and exempt certain uses from protection measures like Master Plans, would affect these lands.

EAC has repeatedly stated that its goal is to find the right balance with the LCP between the need to continue existing strong coastal resource protections while finding creative ways to allow local food producers, ranchers, dairies, and their workers the means to thrive, all while addressing needed protection and improvement of the water quality in Tomales Bay.

The Coastal Commission has repeatedly stated its concern "that existing protections would be weakened and the need for adequate analyses to evaluate the consistency of these changes with the Coastal Act." The County staff, partially due to the limited available time, have presented no findings or facts to address the Commission's overall conclusion that the current draft as proposed would weaken protections for coastal resources in the agricultural protection zone.

Weakened Building Clustering Requirement

Clustering is a land use concept applied to group buildings and structures so that the largest available land area remains open or for productive purposes.

The current LCP mandates clustering but the proposed new clustering language states that non-agricultural development shall be placed in one or more groups on a total of no more than five percent of the gross acreage to the extent feasible.

Strict standards for grouping are essential -- the "one or more" groups "to the extent feasible" opens the way for piecemeal development that is incompatible with agricultural uses. EAC repeatedly requested, but was not provided, a justification for this considerable weakening of agricultural use protections.

Coastal Permit Needed for Intensification Of Land Use

Under the Coastal Act, any intensification of land or water use requires a coastal permit. This is the only way to ensure that any

Given the increasing number of competing demands for water, and the anticipated effects of climate change and sea level rise, it is imperative that all new wells in the coastal zone secure a coastal permit.

proposed intensification of land use would not cause negative impacts to Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas, wildlife, and other important coastal resources. For example, a decision by a local agricultural producer to change the primary use from ranching to vineyards could place an irrevocable strain on water supplies, and the terracing of sloped hillsides could increase erosion and pesticide use near streams and wetlands on the property. The coastal development permit process plays a vital part in ensuring the sustainable use of land and water, conformance to community plan standards, and support for the long term, cumulative health of agricultural lands and wildlife habitat in the coastal zone.

Inter-Generational Housing

A new concept introduced in the LCP Amendment process, which EAC supports, is to allow an "inter-generational" house to be built on agricultural lands. This would allow older generation farmers or ranchers to remain living on their property while the younger generation moves on to continue working the land. This is essentially a new development right for ag land owners, but one that should have benefits beyond the impacts of the development it entails. Currently agricultural landowners would need to secure subdivision approval in order to utilize their allowable housing density and construct new housing. EAC supports the idea of allowing an inter-generational house and farmworker housing that is properly sited and clus-

tered, adequately protects environmentally sensitive habitat areas, and complies with all other coastal protection regulations.

EAC Working to Protect the Entire Tomales Bay Watershed and Beyond

Despite the number of issues of concern remaining with the LCP Amendment, EAC will remain fully engaged in the public process and beyond. As always, you can count on EAC to ensure protection of the lands, waters, and all resident and migratory inhabitants of the Tomales Bay Watershed and West Marin coastal zone!

Thanks to Planning Commission, and Coastal Commission and County Staff

EAC would like to extend its sincere thanks to you the Marin County Planning Commission and planning staff for their diligent and thorough work the past several months. We would also like to extend our sincere thanks to the California Coastal Commission's staff for consistently and diligently providing comments on the draft LCP Amendment language.



Lawson's Landing Update

Earlier this year the Coastal Commission issued the final Coastal Permit for Lawson's Landing, reflecting changes urged by EAC. The family's plans for the revamped campground show a much-reduced footprint. The campground plan, which has to be reviewed and approved by the Commission, calls for camping spaces for about 260 RVs, 132 tents, and 32 small vans or pop-ups. There will also be as many as 137 overnight cottages at Sand Point, the area now occupied by approximately 230 travel trailers. These trailers must be removed within the next four years.

Lawson's Landing proposes a phased changeover to the new system, with Phase 1 including the new camping plan layout in all areas except Sand Point, and a new reservation system which will allocate spaces so that those in the most sensitive areas are only occupied on a few weekends each year. The next Phase will occur when the travel trailers are removed and the new septic system is in place. This is due to happen by July 2014, although the Commission can agree to an extension to July 2016 if there is "good cause." The Tomales Wetlands-Dunes Complex Protection Restoration and Enhancement Plan is already underway and EAC is working with the Coastal Commission and the Lawson family to ensure the protection of the wetlands, dunes, and wildlife of this exceptional coastal site.



Photo: Dorene Schiro

2012 Point Reyes Birding & Nature Festival A Great Success!

Hundreds of birding enthusiasts from the Bay Area and all across the country, including New York, Mississippi, Texas, Montana and Washington, enjoyed EAC's third-annual Point Reyes Birding & Nature Festival April 27th through 30th.

We wish to extend a huge thank you to the many businesses, organizations, community members, and many volunteers who made this event an enormous success. Many local businesses generously supported the Festival as co-sponsors,

Perry's Deli, Busy Bee Bakery, and the Bovine Bakery. The widespread generosity included auction item donations, cash sponsorships, donated baked goods for the Festival's dessert reception, and discounts offered by our bakeries and delis to attendees during the Festival weekend. Thank you very much!!

The 2012 Festival featured fabulous walks and presentations about birds, wildflowers, butterflies, dragonflies, native grasses, marine mammals, bats, and

birds and wildlife he saw while birding on foot or by bicycle in 2010. On Saturday early evening birders packed the Dance



Photo: Dorene Schiro

Palace for a happy hour and silent and live auctions. The evening dinner banquet didn't disappoint with Pam Ferrari's gourmet local, organic cuisine and an excellent, lively presentation by Jack Laws on our innate skills to perceive and observe nature and her many wonderful creatures.

Hundreds of people attended the Festival, patronized our many wonderful local businesses, and learned about the inspiring array of local organizations working in West Marin, all while experiencing the magnificent natural wonders of the Point Reyes area.

We are grateful for everyone who supported and attended the Festival, which we hope will continue to benefit the local economy and EAC's work to protect West Marin for years to come!



Photo: Brian Valente

including Flower Power, Toby's Feed-barn, Blackbird Café, Station House Café, Rodoni Construction, Motel Inverness, Dancing Coyote Beach, Olema Inn & Restaurant, Olema Cottages, Whole Foods,

wildlife photography. Bolinas artist and naturalist Keith Hansen entertained a large crowd at the Inverness Yacht Club at the Friday evening dessert reception with a video of his carbon-free big year – all the



Environmental Action Committee of West Marin Calendar of Events 2012

- June 15th 41st Annual Members Meeting & Annual Potluck Dinner at the Dance Palace 5:30 Happy Hour, 6:30 Dinner
- July 16th EAC Board Meeting, 5:00 Point Reyes Firehouse, Members Welcome!
- August 7th Board of Supervisors Public Hearing on Local Coastal Program Amendment 1:30 at Supervisors Chamber, Marin County Civic Center
- August 10th Trail maintenance Day, Tomales Bay State Park
- August 20th EAC Board Meeting, 5:00 Point Reyes Firehouse, Members Welcome!
- September 15th Coastal Cleanup Day, 10am, Kehoe Beach
- September 17th EAC Board Meeting, 5:00 Point Reyes Firehouse, Members Welcome!
- September 30th Piper on the Ridge! Join EAC to celebrate the changing seasons viewing the full moon rise and sunset atop Mount Vision with bagpiper Dan McNear.
- October 7th Pelagic bird watching trip from Bodega Bay to Cordell Bank. Email eacadmin@svn.net for more information.
- October 13th Litter Bugs Me! Roadside Clean-up around West Marin. Meet at 8am at the White House Pool parking lot for coffee and doughnuts.
- October 15th EAC Board Meeting, 5:00 Point Reyes Firehouse, Members Welcome!
- November 19th EAC Board Meeting, 5:00 Point Reyes Firehouse, Members Welcome!

Please remember to join the Third Thursday Weeders to pull invasive weeds and nonnative plants in the National Seashore!

For more information on all events please visit www.eacmarin.org, or email eacadmin@svn.net

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- Amy Trainer, Executive Director
- Morgan Patton, Finance & Membership Associate

The Environmental Action Committee of West Marin is dedicated to the protection and appreciation of West Marin's natural resources, biological diversity, and rural character. EAC advocates for clean air, pure waters, healthy oceans and ecosystems, and the preservation of wilderness.

eacmarin.org

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