

west
marin

C environmental
action
committee

ADVOCATE

PROTECTING AND SUSTAINING THE UNIQUE LANDS,
WATERS, AND BIODIVERSITY OF WEST MARIN SINCE 1971

ACTION ALERTS, PROGRAMS, EVENTS, VOLUNTEERING & GIVING

WINTER 2017 | 2018

Executive Director's Note

As we approach the winter holidays and celebrate environmental successes for the Tomales Dunes and San Geronimo Valley Open Space, I find myself reflecting on the importance of EAC's work and vital role in West Marin's environmental legacy.

It takes Vision, Vigilance, and You.

EAC was founded in 1971 by a committee of activists and community leaders who understood encroaching development would devastate the West Marin environment. EAC's voice was needed to advocate for open space, appropriate development planning, and protection of our coastal resources. The vision of our founders has remained a touchstone for over 46 years, as the organization has evolved and responds to new challenges.

The environmental movement of the 1970s manifested itself upon the West Marin land and waters in the forms of parks, open space, wilderness, marine protected areas, and preservation of agricultural lands creating a conservation, and open space mecca. Today, people, birds, and animals alike migrate to West Marin for respite and relaxation taking advantage of the environmental protections put into place.

On the surface, West Marin is an example of what conservation efforts and long-term development planning can do to protect the environment. However, this takes unrelenting vigilance, and time—sometimes decades—to ensure environmental protections are put into place, and even more time to ensure that they remain.

You can see this type of work in action, when you explore the restored wilderness of Drakes Estero, swim or sail along Tomales Bay, or explore the coastal dunes systems at Dillon Beach. Because of your support we were able to remain engaged for years to ensure the preservation and protection of these special places.

But we cannot do it alone. EAC needs you. Your voice, your support, and your pen. Together, we can work to ensure there is a voice for the environment at the table. I invite you to engage in our work by joining or renewing your membership, taking local action through our action alerts, signing petitions, joining us at a hearing, volunteering in our office, or at an event.

As we approach our 50th anniversary in 2021, I am profoundly honored by EAC's achievements, and I am excited for our future. With your help, we will work together to protect the lands, waters, and biodiversity of West Marin for our current and future generations.

Here's to 2018 and all that it will bring.

In gratitude,
Morgan Patton | Executive Director



MISSION

To protect and sustain the unique lands, waters, and biodiversity of West Marin.

VISION

To provide long-term protection and conservation of the unique ecosystems and rural communities of West Marin to serve as a foundation for environmental protection for future generations.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

ADVOCACY

Use grassroots strategies to research and publicize local environmental issues facing our community to inform, empower, and educate stakeholders and our members.

APPRECIATION

Respect the complex ecology and intrinsic value of the natural world.

COLLABORATION

Partner with local communities, organizations, governments, businesses, and members to ensure maximum public participation around local environmental issues.

EDUCATION

Provide opportunities to learn about the environment through events, community workshops, outreach, and publications.

ENGAGEMENT

Engage our community in activities that promote a healthy environment, including stewardship through membership, events, citizen science and volunteer opportunities.

INTEGRITY

Use science, law, and policy to make ethical decisions around complex environmental issues in a dynamic environmental and political landscape.

Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean.

- Ryunosuke Satoro



Winter is an exciting time to visit Point Reyes National Seashore. One can view Pacific gray whales migrating south to their birthing lagoons in Mexico, and view Northern elephant seals return to Chimney Rock beaches to birth and mate. Due to increased traffic along the Point Reyes Headlands, especially on weekends, the Seashore instituted a shuttle bus system in 1998, which typically begins on the last Saturday of December and continues through late March or mid-April. Please plan accordingly.

Learn more at www.nps.gov/pore/planyourvisit/shuttle.htm

“If future generations are to remember us with gratitude rather than contempt, we must leave them something more than the miracles of technology. We must leave them a glimpse of the world as it was in the beginning, not just after we got through with it.” - Lyndon B. Johnson



Protecting West Marin Lands

When Bay Area counties are ranked by the acres they have permanently protected in parks, wildlife refuges and open space preserves, Marin County comes in first with 55.6% of its land, or approximately 289 square miles protected. These lands are primarily found in the western region of the county, in or around what we affectionately call West Marin. Shaped by tectonic plates, divided by the San Andreas Fault, and set along the Pacific Flyway and Pacific Ocean, West Marin is species rich, diverse, and beaming with life and park protections. However, with roughly 6.5% of Marin’s population residing in the area, plus 2 million visitors a year, environmental threats like development, pollution, and climate change pose a unique set of challenges to its use and management. Since 1971, EAC has been actively advocating for land protection from Dillon to Muir beaches. Our prior successes have included opposing the county-wide plan that would have constructed a six-lane highway from the Golden Gate Bridge to Point Reyes and constructed over 1.3 million homes, stopping the West Marin landfill expansion, and protecting of the Drakes Estero wilderness. But our work continues, and we are excited to share some of our current news and updates on our land programs below.

Protecting the Tomales Dunes Past and Present

The Tomales Dunes, located at the mouth of Tomales Bay near the town of Dillon Beach, California, support several distinct habitats and are surrounded by a rich coastal environment including coastal prairie, coastal scrub, salt marsh, tidal flats, bay, and ocean. The dunes are also the primary location of a local commercial business, Lawson’s Landing, a long-established local fishing spot, boating resort and private campground. Since the beginning of EAC’s history, we have been monitoring development activities and advocating for the protection, preservation, and restoration of the Tomales Dunes, brought about by concerns that the sensitive environmental dune habitat and Tomales Bay were being impaired.

Due to EAC’s work in the 2000s, the dunes were protected by a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) issued by the California Coastal Commission in 2011, legalizing Lawson’s Landing. The CDP implemented standards for development and camping activities; required the removal of private trailers and leach fields; and established a protection, restoration, and

.....[Continued on page 10](#)

The Future of Seashore Ranching

The National Park Service (NPS) started the General Management Plan Amendment (GMPA) process for Point Reyes National Seashore and the north district of Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The GMPA was initiated following a lawsuit against NPS for their 2014-2016 Ranch Comprehensive Management Plan program. A GMPA is required under the settlement of that lawsuit. This is the start of a lengthy process in which NPS will update management guidance for more than 28,000 acres of national park service lands, including all lands currently leased for ranching.

NPS released a set of six conceptual alternatives in mid-October focused on where ranching will occur in the Seashore and accepted public comments through November 22nd. This comment period is outside of the standard NEPA process many of us are used to and allows for additional public review. This is in response to an executive order requiring regulatory streamlining. To ensure maximum public participation and time to gather facts, NPS put forward these concepts

.....[Continued on page 11](#)

Local Coastal Planning Halts Over Environmental Hazards

In 1976, the California Legislature enacted the Coastal Act, largely responsible for the preservation of California’s 840-mile coastline. The Act created a mandate for coastal counties to manage the conservation and development of coastal resources through a comprehensive planning and regulatory program, which includes Local Coastal Programs (LCPs).

The LCP is a planning document that identifies the location, type, densities, and other ground rules for future development in the coastal zone. Each LCP includes a land use plan and an implementation plan. These programs govern decisions that determine the short and long-term conservation and use of coastal land, water, and other resources.

Marin County certified its current LCP in 1981, and in 2008 started a process to significantly amend it. The 1981 LCP has provided a development framework for public participation that has successfully protected and conserved natural and coastal resources, the community character of our unique

.....[Continued on page 11](#)

Protecting West Marin Waters

Marin County is composed of roughly 308 square miles (37.5%) of water resources, including a robust watershed of fresh water creeks, ponds, lakes and reservoirs; but its defining water feature is the vast Pacific Ocean, which surrounds roughly 60% of its shores. In rural West Marin, you can find over 140+ miles of public coastline between Dillon and Muir beaches, plus a federally designated Seashore, and two offshore national marine sanctuaries protecting and providing thousands of square miles of critical habitat for plants, marine and land mammals, birds, and fish, including the federally endangered coho salmon. Since 1971, EAC has been dedicated to the protection of our coastal resources, which are sensitive to environmental threats like development, marine debris, pollution, climate change and sea-level rise, just to name a few. Prior successes for our work have included protection of the Estero Americano and Estero San Antonio from land use development and sewage waste, the jet skis ban in the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary and Tomales Bay, and the designation of Tomales Bay as a Ramsar site, or wetland of international importance. But our work continues, and we are excited to share some of our current news and updates on our water programs below.

Safeguarding Tomales Bay

Now recognized for protection by the California Bays and Estuaries Policy, Tomales Bay has been a working waterway for hundreds of years. During the last 250 years, many environmentally catastrophic impacts occurred from livestock overgrazing, cultivation of row crops, introduction of non-native species, over-fishing, unmanaged aquaculture, erosion, and over-logging activities within the waters and along the shoreline. These activities fundamentally altered the complex ecology of Tomales Bay.

Over time, groups like EAC, have been working to protect Tomales Bay and its watershed. Some of EAC's most notable work to protect Tomales Bay includes protecting the Giacomini Wetlands, stopping the city of Santa Rosa from dumping its raw sewage into Estero Americano, banning jet skis from the Bay to the Farallon Islands, and securing Tomales Bay as a Ramsar Site, which gained the Bay recognition as a wetland of international significance. Within the last 50 years, significant work has been accomplished to begin to restore and preserve habitat for

future generations. We are all fortunate beneficiaries of this work and guardians to ensure the Bay remains healthy and ecologically balanced for generations to come.

EAC remains active in our legacy of Tomales Bay protection, including current work on aquaculture best management practices and the new shellfish lease proposed for the Bay.

Partnering for a Cleaner Tomales Bay

Despite our collective efforts, Tomales Bay still faces environmental issues. Many of these issues can be remediated and new threats stopped. Today, we have an opportunity to reduce the amount of marine debris and plastic entering the bay and harming habitat and wildlife.

One way EAC is working to combat marine debris is by working with shellfish growers and government agencies to address marine debris dispersed through aquaculture practices. Debris enters the water through natural, accidental, and/or incidental loss and includes plastic oyster growing bags, plastic zip ties, and other industrial items.

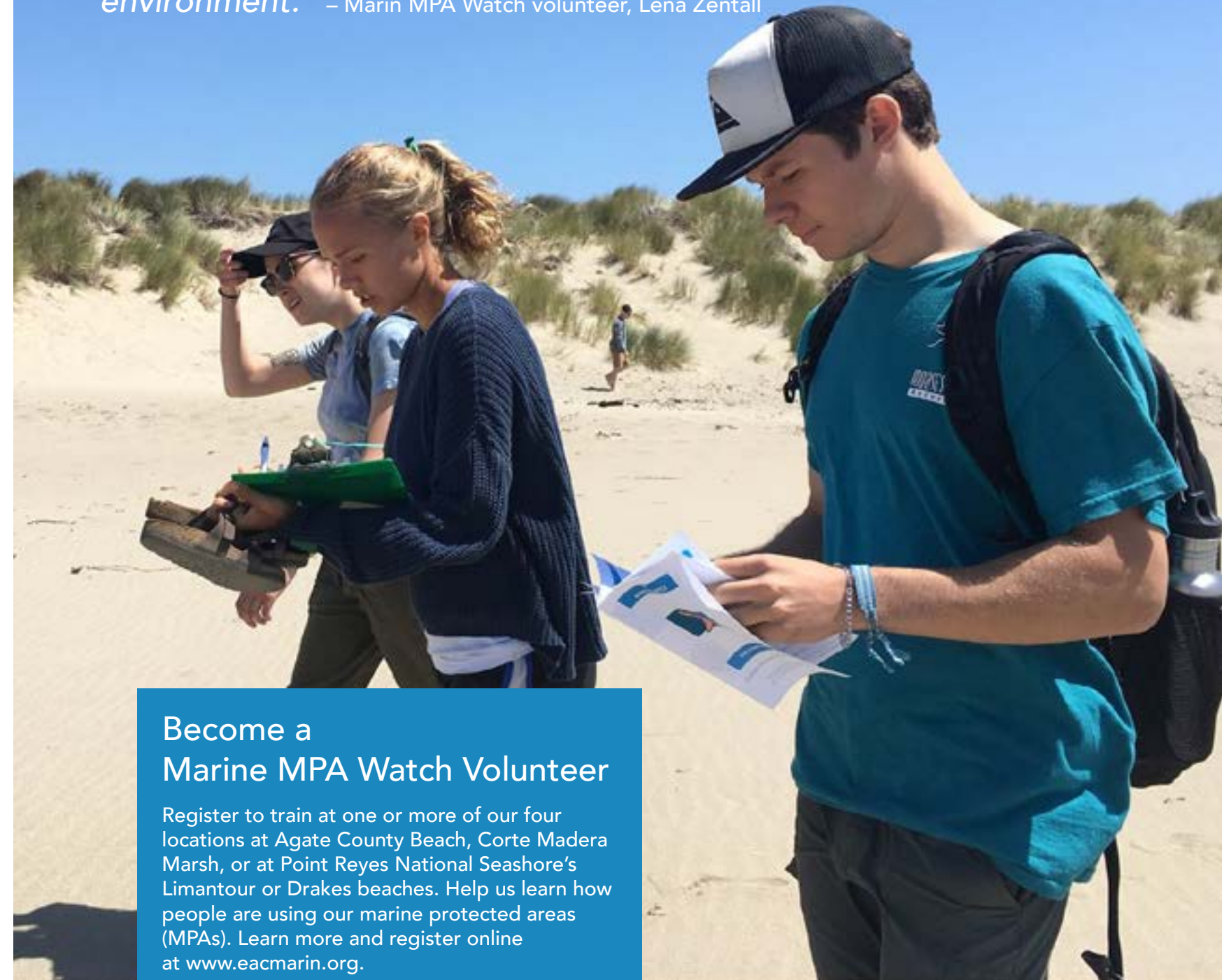
To address this problem, stakeholders are working on aquaculture best management practices (BMPs). It is our hope that through the implementation of BMPs, aquaculture marine debris will be reduced and routine clean ups will take place. EAC is engaged with our local community advocating for measurable and enforceable BMPs, mandatory clean ups, and employee training to ensure marine pollution is minimized and ideally eliminated. This is an excellent first step to address a current environmental problem on the Bay and work with other stakeholders to create a workable solution.

EAC is committed to the long-term health of Tomales Bay and its watershed. To ensure the effectiveness of this commitment we will continue to work with our community around these issues to create partnerships and educational opportunities so that we can all contribute to the restoration and preservation of Tomales Bay.

New Aquaculture Lease Proposed

The end of 2016 marked the first new Tomales Bay aquaculture lease proposal in over 25 years. The applicationContinued on page 11

"EAC is doing important work in West Marin. Plus, they are a friendly organization to volunteer with and respect my time. Volunteering is a perfect way to take a relaxing walk on the beach solo, or with my family, while at the same time supporting the environment." – Marin MPA Watch volunteer, Lena Zentall



Become a Marine MPA Watch Volunteer

Register to train at one or more of our four locations at Agate County Beach, Corte Madera Marsh, or at Point Reyes National Seashore's Limantour or Drakes beaches. Help us learn how people are using our marine protected areas (MPAs). Learn more and register online at www.eacmarin.org.

*"We don't inherit the earth from our ancestors,
we borrow it from our children."* - David Brower



Take Action

Learn about new action alerts and how you can take action, including lending your voice to important issues through attending hearings, submitting online petitions, contacting your representatives, and volunteering your time. Learn more by signing up for our online newsletter or by visiting our Take Action webpage online at www.eacmarin.org.

Protecting West Marin's Biodiversity

Biodiversity, a combination of bio (life) and diversity, generally refers to the variety and variability of life on Earth. Variation is measured at the genetic, the species, and the ecosystem level. No feature of Earth is more complex, dynamic, and varied than the layer of living organisms that occupy its surfaces and its seas, and no feature is experiencing more dramatic change at the hands of humans. West Marin has been identified as being a part of the California Floristic Province, or one of 25 internationally recognized botanical hotspots with the most concentrated biological diversity and most severe threat of loss according to Conservation International. A snapshot of West Marin's biodiversity includes 490+ North American bird species, 80+ species of land and marine mammals, 85+ species of fresh and saltwater fish, 29+ species of reptiles and amphibians, 50+ rare, threatened, and endangered wildlife species, and thousands of aquatic and terrestrial invertebrate species including sea anemones, starfish, butterflies, and insects. EAC works with agencies and partners who manage a wide range of parks, open space, and agricultural lands to provide long-term protection for the unique ecosystems supporting our species rich environment. Learn more about our current biodiversity programs below.

Banding Together for Birds

Marin County provides unique habitat for nesting and migratory birds. Located along the Pacific Flyway, the area is home to some of the largest bird diversity anywhere on the planet, with over 54% of all North American bird species sighted within the Point Reyes Seashore. In spring and fall, thousands of migratory birds descend upon the county. They are relatively easy to observe, and excellent indicators of environmental health. Unfortunately, these *canaries in the coal mine* are under threat due to a number of factors, including human disturbances, development, climate change, habitat loss, and pesticide use.

Since 2015, EAC has received complaints from the community concerning potentially harmful roadside vegetation management practices by a number of businesses and agencies who cut trees in the area, threatening and/or harming nesting birds, including an osprey nest with young. After reviewing the concerns presented by the community and researching the current bird protection laws, we decided to take action.

Since 1918, migrating and nesting birds have been protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which makes it illegal for anyone to interfere with any migratory bird or active nests except under a valid permit issued by the United States Department of Fish and Wildlife. The California Fish and Game code also has protections which make it *"unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird,"* with limited exceptions. We felt that the laws were not being clearly followed and that there was a need for more protection for our unique and diverse bird populations.

In March of 2017, we partnered with Audubon Canyon Ranch (ACR) and Point Blue Conservation Science (PBCS) requesting the Marin County Supervisors address current roadside vegetation management practices by enacting an ordinance to protect bird habitat and ensure compliance with the current laws. *"This is an opportunity for us to do something at the local level and to tailor an initiative to this county, which is such a bird hot spot,"* says Ashley Eagle-Gibbs, EAC's Conservation Director. As a result of our outreach,Continued on page 15 Supervisor Rodoni's office facilitated

Partnering for San Geronimo Open Space

This November, EAC supported the Marin County Parks purchase of the 157-acre San Geronimo Golf Course, which would extend the natural habitats and greenbelt within the San Geronimo Valley's rural villages.

"This opportunity would be a capstone of a multi-generational effort to preserve San Geronimo Valley's rural character and magnificent natural resources," said Marin County Parks Director Max Korten.

We are happy to report the Marin County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously in favor of the acquisition.

EAC and other environmental groups worked together to support the County's acquisition to create open space, as it is extremely beneficial to the upper watershed of Lagunitas Creek and the Tomales Bay watershed.

It will also protect and allow for restoration of endangered coho salmon and threatened steelhead trout habitats, improve water quality, eliminate a host of fertilizers andContinued on page 11

Protecting the Tomales Dunes Past and Present

Continued

enhancement plan to restore the dunes-wetland complex. The Lawson's Landing entity (Lawson's) was **required to return to the Commission with a CDP amendment to develop a wastewater system on the uphill, agricultural portion of their 960-acre property on a location already reviewed and approved by the Commission.** However, this fall, the Lawson's submitted an amendment to the 2011 CDP to the Commission.

EAC had two problems with the amendment:

First, the amendment proposed to place an administrative and retail complex and a wastewater system in a location that has been designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA) and California Red-Legged Frog corridor, a federally and state protected species. In 2011, the proposed area was marked for the mandatory removal of all illegal development (i.e. buildings), and any future development in this area was prohibited.

Second, Commission staff is recommending that this illegal development be approved by using a process called Conflict Resolution, which is a way to resolve a conflict between two equally important mandates of the Coastal Act, such as coastal recreation and protection of natural resources.

The Commission used conflict resolution in the original 2011 CDP to approve recreational development in wetlands and ESHA in which development is prohibited. Having done that, it explicitly protected specific areas of ESHA from future

development, including ESHA in Area 6. To now undo those specific limitations imposed on present and future development that formed critical parts of that conflict resolution process, would signal that all such protections obtained under conflict resolution can be removed and render the process itself meaningless.

EAC testified at the Commission hearing on November 8th in Bodega Bay to argue against the proposed CDP amendment and that using conflict resolution to rebalance a balanced permit would make a mockery of the original permit.

After hours of public testimony, the **Commissioners upheld the Coastal Act and the 2011 CDP with a 8-4 vote, rejecting the amendment.** The Commission also gave specific instructions to staff and the Lawson's to stay out of ESHA and advised that a future wastewater system must not interfere with ESHA, frog corridors, or the pond the Commission tried so hard to protect in 2011. **The decision by the Commission was an important milestone for the future protection of the Tomales Dunes** and a reminder that *"the coast is never saved, it is always being saved"* – Peter Douglas, former Executive Director of the Coastal Commission.

Thank you to our supporters and members who have followed this environmental issue with EAC for the last 30+ years, and especially to the 60 members who sent in comments and attended the hearing to ensure the Commission Honored Thy Dunes!

Learn more at www.eacmarin.org/tomales-dunes

Local Coastal Planning Halts

Continued

coastal villages, our scenic vistas, public access to coastal areas, and the agricultural lands of West Marin for 36 years.

For the past eight years, EAC has been actively engaged in researching, reviewing, testifying at meetings, and providing comments to agencies and county supervisors about the pending LCP amendments.

In November 2016, the **Coastal Commission conditionally certified Marin County's proposed Land Use Plan and the Implementation Plan with revisions to the definition of the term ongoing agriculture. The Commission did not approve the Environmental Hazards sections, that address sea-level rise planning,** instead directing the Commission and Marin County to return later with an agreed upon document.

In 2017, we saw some progress towards the non-Environmental Hazards LCP sections being approved by Marin County at a Board of Supervisors hearing in May 2016, even though there are some issues with the Board resolution and the County has not submitted anything to the Coastal Commission for sign off by the Executive Director.

Unfortunately, there has been little progress towards culmination of the Environmental Hazards sections in 2017. Marin County withdrew the sections with the intention to re-submit them in 2018, citing no practical way of finishing discussions and holding a stakeholder meeting before the September 29th deadline for Coastal

Over Environmental Hazards

Commission action. These sections are a vital piece in addressing sea-level rise and climate change in our county. As you can imagine, **climate change is not addressed in the 1981 Certified LCP, which remains in effect.**

It appears further stakeholder and agency discussions will be delayed until the new year, and it is **unclear whether the county will meet their May 2018 deadline to accept the November 2016 conditional certification or if we will all have to begin anew.** We are dedicated to advocating for the protection of our irreplaceable coastal resources and will keep you informed on the progress of this long-term work.

Learn more at www.eacmarin.org/marin-lcp.

Partnering for San Geronimo Valley Open Space

Continued

pesticide use in the watershed, significantly save water, and protect migratory birds and other native wildlife.

Under County ownership, county parks would be able to pursue potential projects such as recreational opportunities, and creek enhancements which would benefit the community and generations to come. We are happy to have been a partner on this victory.

Stay tuned for news and updates through our online action alerts.

New Aquaculture

Lease Proposed

Continued

submitted by San Andreas Shellfish company to the California Fish and Game Commission (CFG) **proposes a lease in a area that will likely impact harbor seals, birds, eelgrass, vessel traffic, and public access.**

EAC testified at the February 2017 CFG hearing, requesting a re-submittal. EAC stated, *"The application is incomplete, ambiguous, nearly illegible and contains several inconsistencies."* Despite our comments, the CFG marked the application as received, primarily as a procedural matter.

The application is now under Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) review. According to the regulations, **"No state leases shall be issued, unless the Commission determines that the lease is in the public interest in a public hearing conducted in a fair and transparent manner, with notice and comment..."** CDFW will help the CFG make this determination by preparing a report.

We are fully engaged in the public process surrounding this lease application and have been in contact with CFG, CDFW, the California Coastal Commission, the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, and other Tomales Bay advocates and stakeholders to ensure coastal resources are not harmed by the proposed lease.

We will keep our members informed on the status of the application, next steps, and opportunities for public involvement in online action alerts.

The Future of

Seashore Ranching

Continued

and conducted public workshops to gather additional information.

It is our understanding that the concepts presented are preliminary, and thus are deficient in definitions, baselines, and scope. This comment period is **an opportunity for the public to seek clarification, question the conceptual alternatives, and present missing information.**

We submitted extensive comments focused on eight key points: baseline, management strategies and regulations, diversification of operations, protection of natural resources, climate change, habitat protections, habitat restoration, and public access. See full comment letter and additional information using the link below.

Point Reyes National Seashore is a unique landscape, a combination of wilderness, recreation, and pastoral landscapes. As this process develops, **we will remain committed to our guiding principles** to ensure the protection and preservation of natural resources, restoration of degraded habitats and park resources, and maximum public access to parklands.

The GMPA must protect, restore, and preserve park resources using ranch leases that ensure multi-generational, environmentally sustainable ranching is complementary to the natural resources and visitor experiences within the park.

We look forward to keeping you up to date on this important issue.

Learn more at www.eacmarin.org/gmpa2017.

GET INVOLVED & GIVE BACK



Join, renew, give a gift membership, or consider a special year-end gift.

#GivingTuesday on November 28th kicked off the charitable season, harnessing the generosity of people around the world to bring real change to their communities. It's a great time to give - whether it's some of your time, a donation, or the power of your voice.

Learn more about ways to give online at www.eacmarin.org.

Thank you!

Ways to Give & Support Our Work

Year End Gifts Doubled!

In the spirit of year-end giving and #GivingTuesday our board has generously offered to match all donations to EAC 1:1 up to \$20,000 through December 31st.

This is a great time to consider joining, renewing your annual membership, increasing your annual giving, or joining our Guardian Circle (\$1,000+) as it will double your impact for our mission. Member gifts are critical to our successes, thank you!

Remember **checks and online gifts need to be postmarked prior to December 31st in order to qualify for your 2017 taxes.** Gifts are tax-deductible unless benefits of value are noted.

Sending in a gift of stock? Be sure to check with you broker on timing to ensure delivery before 2017 ends.

Go Green: Give Monthly!

Become a Sustaining member and give a recurring monthly or quarterly gift.

Recurring gifts are an excellent way to help our mission throughout the year. This predictable income allows us to plan and reduce our resources.

Consider a monthly gift of \$10, \$15, \$25, \$50, \$100 or more, and receive special perks and updates throughout the year. Gifts of \$100 or more places you in our Guardian Circle (\$1,000+). You can also schedule a recurring annual gift with us directly by phone.

Workplace Giving Can Triple Your Impact

Many companies not only encourage their employees to give, and volunteer time to nonprofits in their communities, but they will also match those efforts with dollars and other means of support.

Triple your impact for EAC by asking your employer about their workplace giving options, which can include:

- Payroll Deduction (Monthly, Quarterly or Annual)
- Employer Matching Gifts
- Volunteer Support Programs

Planning on giving through your workplace? Contact us to give us a heads up, so we can properly authorize it with your employer.

Shop & Give Programs

Shopping online this holiday season?

Consider shopping through one or more of our Shop & Give Programs by adding the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin as one of your charities of choice, and help raise funds for the mission.

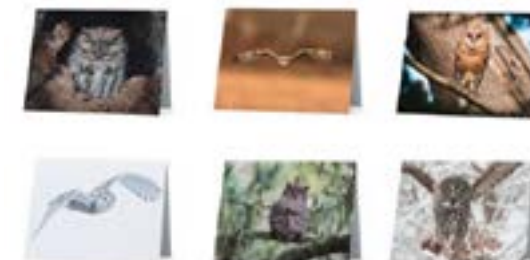
Enjoy huge savings at 3,000+ popular online retailers like Target and Office Depot, and great deals like exclusive Lowe's coupons! Plus no cards required. Learn more about [GIVING ASSISTANT](#), [ESCRIP](#) & [AMAZONSMILE](#) at www.eacmarin.org.

Give a Gift Membership

Introduce a friend or family member to our member circle by giving a gift membership this holiday season.

For household memberships of \$50 or more, your recipient will receive a personal gift card, plus a stationary set of six owl cards and envelopes by local wildlife photographer and EAC board member, Daniel Dietrich.

Contact us directly before December 20th to ensure your gift.



Volunteer

Give the gift of your time and skills. Office, event and special projects support needed. Have specialized skills in IT, policy, marketing, or social media and want to give back? Contact us directly.

Not Online? Mail Us.

EAC | ATTN: GIVING
PO Box 609
Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Questions? Contact Us
(415) 663.9312
giving@eacmarin.org

Community Profile: Wildlife Conservationist & Donor Jules Evens



This fall, I sat down with Jules Evens, a wildlife biologist, conservationist, and author to learn a little more about his connection to EAC and why he has supported us for over 30 years.

Jessica Taylor: Greetings Jules! Thanks for meeting with me. Tell me how you first heard about EAC.

Jules Evens: I first heard about EAC in the late 1970s when they were protesting the expansion of the levees in the marshlands at the south end of Tomales Bay. It was years of advocacy and dedication that eventually led to the levee removal, and the restoration of what we now know as the Giacomini Wetlands.

Jessica Taylor: So, how did you get involved with EAC?

Jules Evens: When I first came to West Marin, the landscape reminded of my Vermont home. As a biologist and conservationist, I was concerned about the continued protection of the biological diversity and the natural heritage of the area. At the time, EAC had a campaign against the West Marin landfill expansion, and they were one of the only local nonprofits taking on environmental advocacy campaigns

and presenting them before boards, supervisors and committees to ensure long-term protections were in place. I wanted to be a part of that. So, I joined as a contributing member.

Jessica Taylor: What made you take the leap to become a board member?

Jules Evens: EAC was and is a grassroots nonprofit, with a long history of success in protecting natural values of West Marin, but it also means all hands on deck. As a contributing member, I knew I was helping financially to ensure the work could be done, but I also had become friends with other members and wanted to contribute more. Because of my background in biology and writing, I was able to take my giving to the next level. Under the urging of then Executive Director Catherine Caufield, we successfully petitioned the Ramsar Convention, an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands, for Tomales Bay to be designated as a wetland of international importance. Working on the petition gave me a deeper connection with, and appreciation for the Bay, but also with the organization who worked diligently to ensure these special places were protected.

Jessica Taylor: What do you think are the biggest environmental threats to West Marin today?

Jules Evens: The current administration is trying to privatize public lands, to *commodify the commons*. This is a dangerous threat to parks and wilderness. Small activist groups such as EAC are critical watchdogs with local influence that will need to resist this land grab. Another threat, particularly to wetlands, is climate change and

subsequent sea-level rise. Additionally, we are experiencing an increase in visitation and shifting demographics, with people having less connection to place, which potentially means less philanthropic or stewardship engagement.



Jessica Taylor: What would you tell someone who is thinking about donating or volunteering with EAC?

Jules Evens: Do it! No gift is too big! EAC has a long history of effective leadership and uncompromising advocacy for coastal issues, wildlife protection and land-use stewardship in our community, but they can't do this without member support. I currently give monthly to help the organization throughout the year, but annual gifts are the financial backbone of the organization. As I explore the Point Reyes wilderness, the Giacomini Wetlands, or Tomales Dunes; I feel that EAC and the personal donations that support it have made a huge difference. When my kids and grandkids return for a visit, and they experience the natural beauty and ecological diversity of West Marin, a place we called home for over four decades, I am particularly thankful for all the work that has gone into protecting this unique place.

Jessica Taylor: Jules, you are a true

gem to this community and organization. Thank you for your time and story!

Jules Evens: My pleasure. A big thanks to the staff and board for carrying on this legacy. I'll see you at the bird festival!

Jules Evens, born and raised in New England, lived and worked as a wildlife biologist in West Marin for over four decades. He served on the EAC board for several years, and has led a number of trips for our spring fundraiser, the Point Reyes Birding and Nature Festival. He is the principal of an environmental consulting group, Avocet Research Associates. His primary research focuses on tidal wetlands, avian population trends, and species at-risk. He has written or co-authored three books in the University of California Press Natural History Series—The Natural History of the Point Reyes Peninsula (3rd edition, 2008), An Introduction to California Birdlife (2005), and Birds of the Northern California Coast (2014)—as well as various scientific papers and natural history articles.

Banding Together for Nesting Birds *Continued*

a stakeholder meeting in the fall of 2017 to assess the environmental concerns and current agency/business practices or lack thereof. Attendees included EAC, PBCS, Marin Audubon Society (MAS), Supervisor Rodoni and his aide Rhonda Kutter, Maureen Parton, aide to Supervisor Kate Sears, Parks and Open Space, Department of Public Works, Pacific Gas and Electric, and Caltrans. We continue to work with our partners to advocate for stronger bird protections in Marin County. Sierra Club and MAS have also joined our efforts by sending additional letters of support.

It is important that the County establish best management practices (BMPs) to ensure compliance with federal and state laws. This includes implementing BMPs, scheduling maintenance for sensitive habitat areas (like wetlands and riparian corridors) outside of nesting season, training employees and contractors to identify nests, requiring advance bird surveys by qualified biologists, creating public transparency,

SAVE THE DATE

Grab your brood and flock to our annual fundraiser

POINT REYES BIRDING & NATURE FESTIVAL
April 27th - 29th, 2018

Keynote Speakers
Keith Hansen &
Peter Pyle

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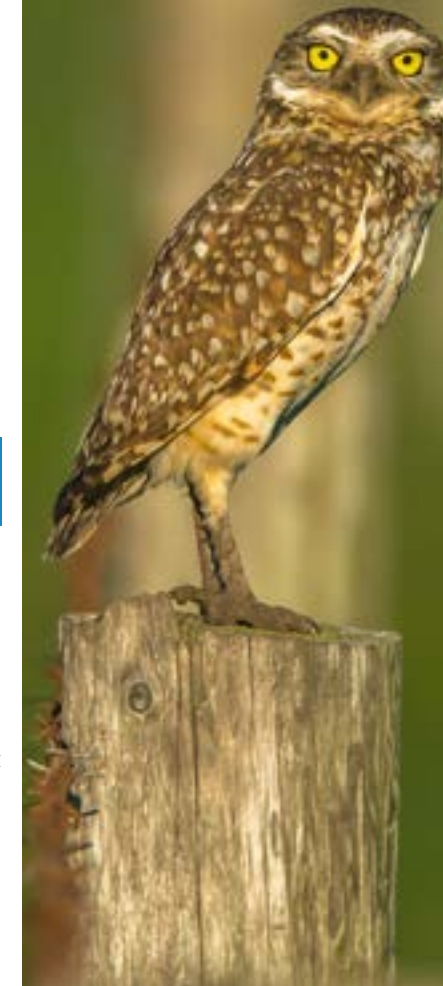
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and establishing an evaluation process to measure the success and compliance with the new protective measures.

We plan to meet with Supervisor Rodoni's office again this winter in order to discuss the next steps towards better bird protections. We can use your support by signing our online petition letting Marin Supervisors know this issue matters to West Marin. Visit www.eacmarin.org/bird-protection to submit your comments.

2017 Member Meeting & Potluck + Jerry Friedman Scholarship Awardee



This June, we kicked off spring by welcoming over 100 of our members to our annual member meeting and potluck. Held at the Dance Palace, this event provides an opportunity for members to connect with each other, and EAC staff and board members, showcase their culinary skills, thank our volunteers, elect our board of directors, and honor a community member with our Peter Behr Steward of the Land Award.

This year, we thanked our outstanding volunteers Karen Gray and Conner Cimmiyotti for their work. Karen helped to coordinate and plan the 2016 Litter Bugs Me event which removed over 6,000 pounds of debris from our roadsides and waterways. Conner is a Coastal Advocate Intern with our Marin MPA Watch, who was instrumental in helping to manage the program this summer. In addition, EAC members reelected three board members, Ken Drexler, Jerry Meral, and David Wimpfheimer.

We were honored to have speaker Dennis Rodoni, newly elected Marin County District Four Supervisor, who shared some important issues facing our West Marin community including restoration of Chicken Ranch Beach and a potential purchase of the San Geronimo Golf Course for conversion to Open Space.

We also presented Sharon Farrell, Vice President of Stewardship and Conservation at Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, with the Peter Behr Steward of the Land Award for her work with the One Tam, a community initiative to help ensure a healthy future for Mt. Tamalpais.

Thank you to everyone who attended! We encourage members to join us in June 2018.



Congratulations to Wendi Kallins of Forest Knolls, our 2017 Jerry Friedman Scholarship recipient.

Each year we offer a full scholarship to enable a Marin resident to attend the Environmental Forum of Marin's Master Class training program in tribute to environmentalist, veteran Marin County Planning Commissioner, and EAC founder, Jerry Friedman. Our hope is this scholarship will help local residents continue in the steps of people like Jerry, who made such a difference to keep West Marin Wild.

Kallins says, *"I couldn't afford to take this 11-week class without the help of EAC. As a leader in the Marin sustainability movement, I wanted to stay current on Marin issues, especially in regards to climate change, because without addressing it, all conservation and preservation of our local lands will be for naught."*

Wendi is the co-founder and Program Coordinator for Marin Safe Routes to Schools, the national model program. She is the President of Sustainable Marin and is on the steering committee of Coalition for a Livable Marin. She has been actively promoting sustainability, affordable housing and green transportation county-wide for 35 years. She was named one of 10 national Active Living Heroes for 2006, the 2002 Clean Air Champion award from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, and the 2001 Marin League of Women Voters Bunny Lucheta Award for outstanding public service.

Learn more and apply for the 2018 scholarship this spring online at www.eacmarin.org.

Volunteers Rally for Coastal Clean Up & Marin MPA Watch



This September we switched up our regular Coastal Clean Up Day at Drakes Beach to join the community effort to clean up Tomales Bay. The event was coordinated by Hog Island Oyster Company, EAC and Marconi State Historic Park & Conference Center.

Together we harnessed 60+ staff and volunteers to fight ocean debris in West Marin. Volunteers came from all over the Bay Area, and as far as Sacramento to join the effort. Trash was collected by boat from various sites along the bay courtesy of shellfish growers, while family groups tackled the roadsides from Walker Creek south to Millerton Point.

"It was such a great event for me and my family. Now when we are on the road my new instinct is to look for debris to be picked up. I can't wait to help out again." - volunteer, Cecilia Lin

In total, we removed 1,000+ pounds of debris from the Tomales Bay watershed. Notables included a whole couch and numerous tires, but the majority of items found included cigarette butts, glass, plastics, and microtrash.

The event was followed by an amazing friends barbecue with donated goods from Acme Bread, Caggiano Company, Cliff Bar, Hog Island Oyster Company, Honey Bucket, Lagunitas Brewing Company, Marconi Historic State Park, McEvoy Ranch, The Palace Market, and Whole Foods Market.

Stay tuned for how to get involved in September 2018 at www.eacmarin.org.



The Marin MPA Watch volunteer program, a collaboration between California Academy of Sciences, Point Reyes National Seashore, and EAC who manages the program, is about to celebrate 5 years, and has had over 250+ volunteers since its inception. The program is part of a state-wide network of MPA Watch programs that are collecting data on how people are using our state Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

Volunteers are trained as citizen scientists to observe and record all offshore and onshore coastal activities in and outside MPAs on data sheets at four locations: Drakes Beach, Limantour Beach, Agate Beach, and Corte Madera Marsh. *"I am inspired to be a MPA volunteer because it ensures that I will spend time in a place I love, and have a chance to encounter something special,"* says volunteer, Michael Warren. Additionally, the program has cameras monitoring offshore trend activities along the Point Reyes Headlands and Point Resistance.

A key focus for the program is to inform California's management of MPAs. Volunteer support helps generate quantities of monitoring data that would not be possible under the current state budget. *"When I take my 8-year old son with me, we have our favorite landmarks, including a large piece of driftwood in the shape of a sea dragon. I frequently encounter sand dollars, cockle shells, limpets, anemones, many types of kelp, algae, shorebirds, and crabs, which I track using iNaturalist,"* says volunteer, Lena Zentall.

"When I walk the beach, I have been surprised how few visitors there are, and little vessel activity on the bay. I have to remind myself that even a zero observation is a valid piece of data, plus I get outside and active," says Michael Warren.

Learn more about the program and register for an upcoming training at www.eacmarin.org.

Give the gift of *West Marin Wild* this holiday season,
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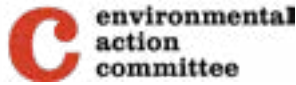
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the ocean touches you with every breath you take,
every drop of water you drink, every bite you consume.
Everyone, everywhere is inextricably connected to and utterly
dependent upon the existence of the sea." - Sylvia A. Earle



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Carlos Porrata front and back cover, pages 9, 14-15 and
19 | David Wimpfheimer page 3



PIPER ON THE RIDGE

We enjoyed a successful Piper on the Ridge on October 6th. The weather, sunset, moonrise and stars could not have been better! A special thanks to our piper Dan McNear, park ranger Mia Monroe, storyteller Ane Carla Rovetta, and naturalist Todd Plummer for a wonderful evening program on top of Mount Vision, Point Reyes National Seashore. We hope you'll join us next fall!