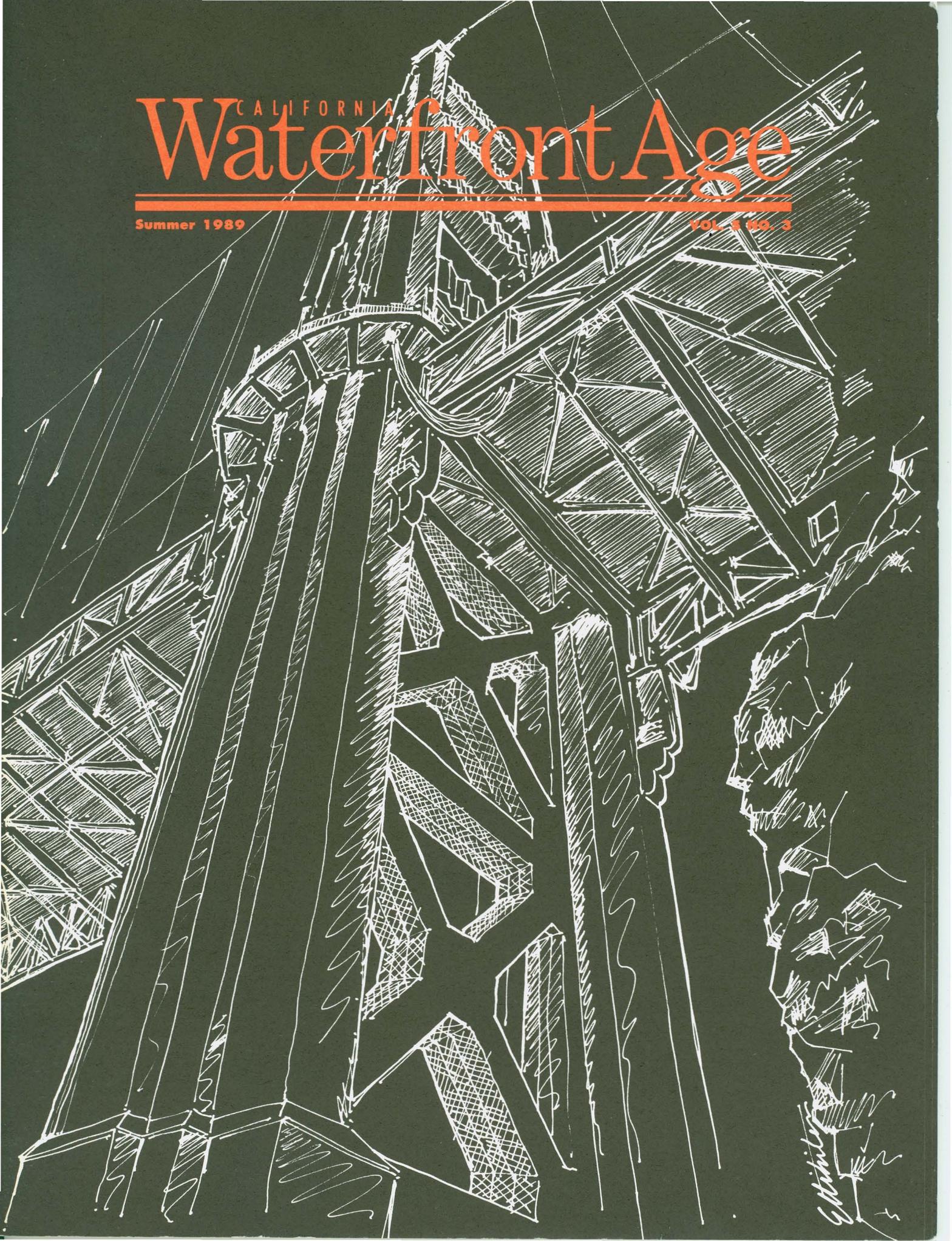


# CALIFORNIA Waterfront Age

Summer 1989

VOL. 5 NO. 3



G. Richter

## **Guidelines for Contributors**

*California Waterfront Age* is glad to consider contributions of articles and shorter items related to the California coast, and especially to its waterfronts. We aim to provide a forum for the description and discussion of public programs and private initiatives relating to waterfront restoration and development, coastal resource management, and economic development.

We will consider articles of up to 3,000 words on the following subjects:

1. Economic development, project finance, waterfront restoration, the impact of changing uses.
2. Land-use conflict resolution.
3. Water quality, resource restoration, enhancement.
4. Maritime industries.
5. Tourism, waterfront parks, public access.
6. Environmental education and occupations.
7. Cultural and historical issues.

We will also consider the following shorter features:

Conferences: We publish announcements and summaries of waterfront-related conferences.

Book reviews: We seek relevant reviews, about 500 words long, of current books and other publications of interest to our readers.

Essays: Reflections on themes related to waterfronts are welcome. They can be verbal, photographic, graphic, or in cartoon form.

Interested contributors should call or write the editor. Send self-addressed stamped envelopes with submissions.

## **Are you on our mailing list?**

To receive *California Waterfront Age*, or for information on the programs or projects of the State Coastal Conservancy, please send a note with your name, organization, address, and affiliation (civic group, government agency, consultant, development/financial, maritime industry, other) to:

California Waterfront Age  
State Coastal Conservancy  
1330 Broadway, Suite 1100  
Oakland, CA 94612

## STATE COASTAL CONSERVANCY

### Board Members:

Gordon K. Van Vleck  
Jesse R. Huff  
Michael Wornum  
Margaret Azevedo  
Penny Allen  
Marcus E. Powers  
Reginald F. Dupuy

### Alternates:

Gordon Snow  
LaFenus Stancell

### Executive Officer:

Peter Grenell

## CALIFORNIA WATERFRONT AGE

Rasa Gustaitis, *Editor*

Jan Jue, *Associate Editor*

Avril Angevine, *Art Director*

Dewey Schwartzenburg,  
*Managing Editor*

Warren's Waller Press Inc., *Printing*

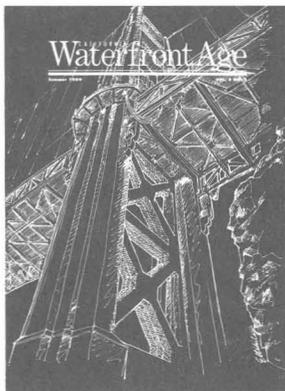
## CALIFORNIA WATERFRONT AGE

(ISSN 8756-0852) is published four times a year by the California State Coastal Conservancy in association with the Romberg Tiburon Centers, San Francisco State University. Copyright © 1989 State Coastal Conservancy, all rights reserved. No part of this issue may be reproduced by any mechanical, photographic or electronic process or otherwise copied for public or private use without written permission of the publisher. All opinions expressed are the responsibility of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the positions, official or otherwise, of either the State Coastal Conservancy or The Romberg Tiburon Centers. Direct all correspondence, including editorial submissions, to CALIFORNIA WATERFRONT AGE, State Coastal Conservancy, 1330 Broadway, Suite 1100, Oakland, CA 94612. (415) 464-1015. For more information on the programs and projects of the State Coastal Conservancy, contact the Conservancy at the address or telephone number above.

# CALIFORNIA Waterfront Age

Summer 1989

VOL. 5 NO. 3



Cover: A rare view of the Golden Gate Bridge. Drawing by Erick Damon Mikiten



RALF HOTCHKISS

**Wheelchair  
Coastal  
Access:  
see pages  
38-45**

## Contents

- 2 From the Executive Office**
- 4 Ebb and Flow**
- 7 Conference Log**
- 8** *Nipomo Dunes and Cowell Ranch  
State Gains Two Treasures*
- 16** *Dune People  
Rasa Gustaitis*
- 21** *Is California Ready for Its Next Oil Spill?  
Michael Herz*
- 25** *The SF BayKeeper  
Making New Waves*
- 27** *Oily Warnings from Alaska  
Dennis Kelso*
- 30** *Steam Beer Was 5¢ . . . and  
So Was a Good Cigar  
Nancy Olmsted*
- 34** *Hostel Encounters  
Kristi Farnham*
- 37** *How Public Access Affects Wetlands*
- 38** *A Wheelchair Rider Explores  
Coasting on the Wild Side  
Erick Damon Mikiten*
- 43** *A Day at the Beach  
Ralf Hotchkiss and Deborah Kaplan*
- 46 Letters**  
*Landfill Reconsidered*

## **From the Executive Office** by Peter Grenell

**I**N 1983, THE UNITED STATES ANNEXED an area larger than its entire landmass. President Reagan proclaimed a new 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone around the country and each of its possessions, including even the tiniest islands in the Pacific, claiming sovereignty over virtually all the resources within this vast domain. In a second proclamation, issued in December 1988, the outgoing president further extended the nation's proprietary claims into common waters by expanding the "territorial sea"—which the country controls completely—from three miles to 12.

Thus, the nation's relationship to the oceans was dramatically altered. In effect, an "American ocean" was created. But how is this new national ocean to be governed, according to what principles, and toward what goals?

To discuss these and related questions, the Ocean and Coastal Policy Center, Marine Science Institute, of the University of California, Santa Barbara, held an interdisciplinary conference June 16–29 on "Values and the American Ocean." Its purpose was to explore the "role of government as the steward of ocean resources and of ocean space, and the rights and duties of citizens toward ocean resources in the American Ocean."

Profound questions were discussed in the panel sessions:

- What are the government's stewardship responsibilities?
- Are today's governments responsible to future generations?
- Is it ethical (or appropriate) to manage ocean resources more crudely than land resources?
- Do citizens feel they have a stake in the oceans?
- Is a constitution, or bill of rights, needed for the oceans?
- What are the views and claims of indige-

nous peoples toward the oceans?

Lawyers, historians, philosophers, scientists, and environmental advocates raised and debated these and other issues. Then a panel of "practitioners"—government officials, businesspeople, fishermen, environmentalists—briefly considered how the points raised in the panel discussions would affect those who govern, use, and protect the ocean and ocean resources.

Several areas of agreement emerged:

- Ocean and ocean resource governance should be based on areas. Existing policy and administrative structures that are based on function are inappropriate for this fluid environment.

- Conflict-resolution forums and mechanisms are needed to address problems raised by multiple interests and multiple uses of ocean space, its depths, and its animals, plants, and minerals.

- Leadership is urgently needed. A practical view suggests that some form of coordinated, joint effort of government at different levels will emerge to fill the void.



• The ocean should not be viewed as a "grab bag of commodities." We must recognize that our well-being is linked to the living ocean and its creatures.

• What values, and whose values, are operative, and which will prevail, need to be articulated and recognized. The "rights" of entrepreneurship, our technological "manifest destiny," the inclination, if not compulsion, to "use" resources that otherwise would go to "waste," and other values that permeated our exploitation of the American West in the 19th century are not necessarily appropriate or desired in this aquatic context, but they exist and must be reckoned with.

No formal "bill of rights" and constitution for the "American ocean" is likely to be especially productive. The existing Law of the Sea Treaty may be adequate, suitably modified, for ocean governance.

Admiralty law is apparently more progressive than land law and is likely to provide a more flexible and effective basis for ocean stewardship.

• The experiences of practical politics suggest caution, flexibility, and acknowledgment that we know very little about the

ocean. Further, history demonstrates that administrative discretion has frequently skewed legislative intent. This, too, must be recognized in devising and implementing policy.

• We can do a great deal now to conserve the ocean. Most ocean pollution originates on land, for example, and we can address it on land.

• The experiences and ways of indigenous people provide lessons for living more harmoniously with the ocean and can have beneficial implications for ocean policy and governance.

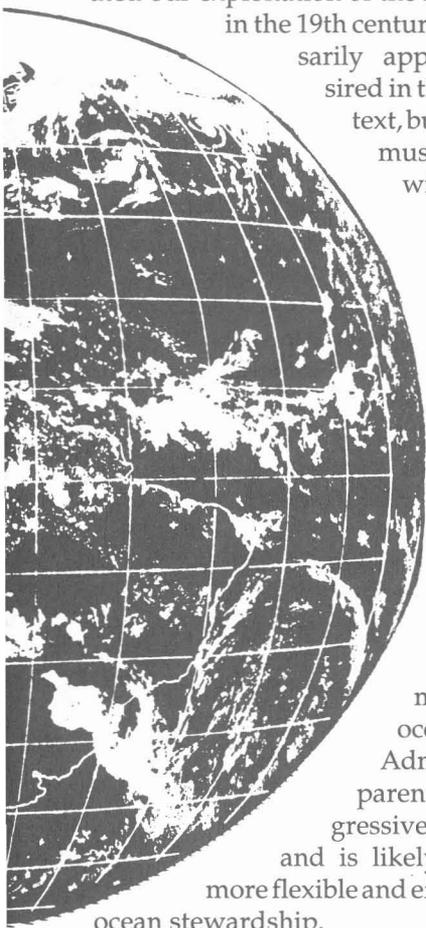
• It is essential that citizens participate in setting ocean policy. A leader and facilitator is needed to help galvanize public opinion, identify points for public involvement, and generate support within other parts of the political system.

• In considering issues and devising policy, we are forced to make decisions based on imperfect and incomplete information. We must blend consideration of natural resource protection with economics, consider other values than just economic ones, and must identify who pays the opportunity costs of ocean resource development.

All this is a large order, to be sure, and the conferees had no illusions about the degree of awareness, understanding, and engagement that exists among politicians, officials, and the general public regarding ocean governance. It was nonetheless encouraging to see recognition of the fact that, as biologist Sylvia Earle, the deep-sea explorer, put it, we are at an exploratory stage of our meeting with the ocean. If we forget that, we will be misled in making policy. □

***"The oceans are a natural commons and always will remain so. Owners cannot brand fish, and pollutants wander according to rules that are not made by mankind."***

**—Robert Friedheim,  
University of Southern California**



## **Ebb and Flow**

---

### **Proposition 70 Acquisitions: Cowell Ranch and Mobil Dunes**

The Coastal Conservancy authorized two major land acquisitions provided for in Proposition 70 last year. In April, it authorized the disbursement of \$5.3 million to acquire conservation and trail easements on the 1,270-acre Cowell Ranch, just south of Half Moon Bay in San Mateo County. This is one of the largest agricultural preservation and habitat conservation projects undertaken by this agency in San Mateo County. In June, the Conservancy approved the acquisition of 2,500 acres of unspoiled dune habitat in the Nipomo Dunes of San Luis Obispo County from the Mobil Foundation. The \$2.6 million purchase price is \$425,000 less than market value and the foundation will donate an additional \$100,000 to endow a site management and maintenance fund. The property will be managed by The Nature Conservancy under contract to the Coastal Conservancy, as part of the overall Nipomo Dunes Preserve. [See article on Page 8.]

### **Manhattan Beach Pier Repair**

The city of Manhattan Beach in Los Angeles County will reconstruct the Manhattan Beach Pier with \$1.3 million authorized by the Conservancy in May. An engineering analysis prepared with a prior \$50,000 Conservancy grant recommended that the deck of the concrete pier be replaced with one of cast-in-place concrete designed to current standards, that pier piles and other pile elements be repaired, and that utility systems and a building at the pier end be replaced. The estimated total construction cost is \$2.7 million. The city has committed \$873,427 in federal Community Development Block Grant funds. The Legislature authorized \$600,000 to the Conservancy from the Spe-

cial Account For Capital Outlay (SAFCO), and an additional \$500,000 is being sought from other local and state funds. The Conservancy will provide \$748,000 in addition to the SAFCO \$600,000. Each year, hundreds of thousands of visitors come to the pier, including thousands of schoolchildren from throughout Southern California who visit the pier's roundhouse marine educational facility operated by the Oceanographic Teaching Station, Inc., a community nonprofit.

### **Mendocino Ranch Purchase**

Fifteen miles north of Fort Bragg in Mendocino County, the 935-acre Jones Ranch extends from the ocean shoreline to a mountaintop 1,000 feet above sea level. It includes coastal grassland terrace, gently sloping pasture, steep riparian canyons, and over 200 acres of dense redwood/pine forest.

In May, the Conservancy authorized up to \$200,000 for options to purchase the ranch, up to \$4 million to exercise these options and acquire fee title, and \$50,000 to prepare a disposition plan for the property in cooperation with Mendocino County and the state Department of Parks and Recreation. The Legislature has appropriated \$4 million to the Conservancy from the Environmental License Plate Fund for this purpose.

The disposition plan will determine how much of the land should be preserved for park use. The landowners have offered to sell the ranch under a unique arrangement. They will donate it to a charitable trust for the benefit of the Statewide Air Pollution Research Center at the University of California, Riverside. The Conservancy will buy the land from the trust. The purchase revenues will thus support research projects beneficial to the environment, while the land becomes available for both preservation and public recreation.

---

### **Francisco Estate, Bolinas Lagoon**

The Marin County Open Space District was granted up to \$425,000 in May to acquire the 44-acre Francisco Estate on the north shore of Bolinas Lagoon, and up to \$25,000 to provide public access. Marin County requested help so it could enter a bid at a probate sale for the property, which adjoins the Olema-Bolinas Road and is the only portion of the Lagoon shoreline not now publicly owned. The Conservancy funds will be combined with \$600,000 in county monies, a \$600,000 donation from the Marin Community Foundation, and additional county or nonprofit funds if they are needed. The Conservancy would like to see maximum public access to the site consistent with protection of sensitive resource areas. Unfortunately, the property was purchased at auction by a private individual; discussions continue on its future.

### **Carquinez Shoreline Access**

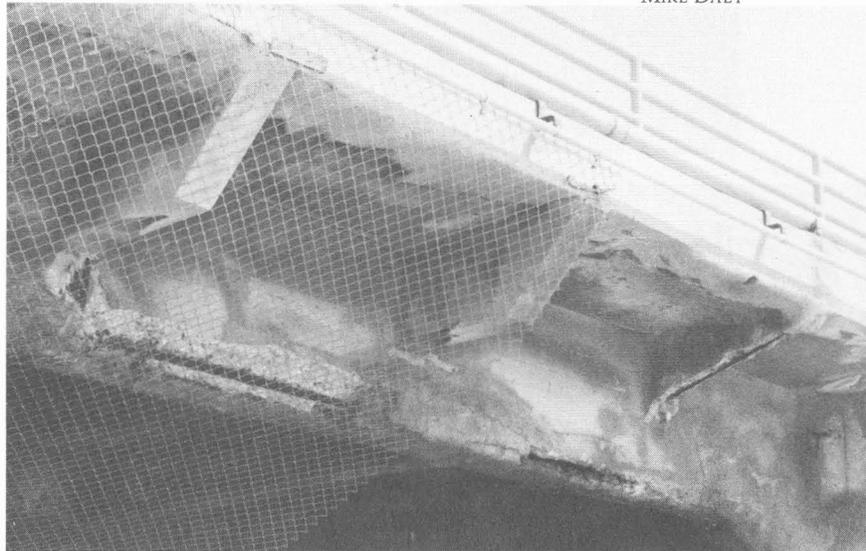
A grant of up to \$50,000 approved in April will enable the East Bay Regional Park District to build an access staging area on the former Sacchi property off Carquinez Shoreline Drive to link up with regional trails and parks. This and other planned trail links will provide access to 756 acres of parkland along three miles of bay shoreline and a direct link to three regional parks: Martinez Shoreline, Carquinez Shoreline, and Briones. The park district will fund half the improvements and maintain the staging area.

### **Palco Marsh, Humboldt Bay**

A grant of up to \$900,000 authorized to the city of Eureka was approved in May to enhance the Palco Marsh on the eastern shore of Humboldt Bay. This project provides a rare opportunity to improve freshwater,

saltwater, and brackish wetlands, as well as riparian areas and grassy uplands, all at one site. A \$610,000 Conservancy grant in 1985 allowed the city to buy this unique area for wildlife use. That grant also included \$30,000 to plan for habitat improvement and for access. The public now has little access to the Humboldt Bay shoreline. The city will re-

MIKE DALY



store tidal circulation in the marsh, remove invasive exotic vegetation, create new deep-water habitat, and build a system of trails, some benches, and interpretive signs.

### **Eureka Dune Mitigation Bank**

The city of Eureka was also granted \$42,000 in May to implement the first phase of the Dune Mitigation Enhancement Plan, designed to protect rare dune scrub habitat from off-road vehicles and provide public access. A fence will be built around the perimeter of the 80-acre mitigation bank site. A second fence, parallel to the southern perimeter, will mark a safe walkway to the ocean. The Nature Conservancy will manage the property. Eventually, in a second

**Underside of Manhattan Beach pier shows damage to concrete structure, which will be replaced as part of a \$2.7 million restoration beginning in 1990.**

---

phase of the project, dune scrub habitat and wetland areas within the site will be restored and enhanced.

### ***Petaluma Marsh Plan***

The city of Petaluma is actively pursuing a variety of river-related projects. In May, the Conservancy authorized up to \$50,000 to enable Petaluma to prepare a plan for enhancing natural resources and public access for 200 acres of historic tidal marsh and riparian corridors along the Petaluma River, where wildlife habitat has been disturbed by diking, filling, and stream channelization.

### ***Pacifica Waterfront Access***

Up to \$200,000 was approved for the city of Pacifica to complete improvements on the Beach Boulevard Promenade and seawall, which were severely damaged by storms in 1982. The California Department of Boating and Waterways and the city of Pacifica have also contributed to the project.

### ***Mattole River Mouth Plan***

Alarmed by the high mortality rate of King salmon in the Mattole River estuary, the Bureau of Land Management, the Department of Fish and Game, the Coastal Conservancy, and the Mattole Restoration Council, a nonprofit organization, met recently to seek a remedy. They agreed that a comprehensive plan for the estuary is needed. In May, the Coastal Conservancy authorized a grant of up to \$50,000 to the Mattole Restoration Council to oversee the plan preparation.

### ***Redwood High School Marsh***

The Marin Audubon Society will enhance a marsh owned by the Tamalpais Union High

School District, bordering Redwood High School, with a \$151,000 grant authorized in April. Sloughs will be excavated and dredged, exotic vegetation removed and replaced with native marsh plants, and a program will be established to monitor and maintain the marsh, together with flood control capacity. With additional funds from the Marin Community Foundation, the Audubon Society will also establish educational guidelines for a field biology program at Redwood High School, focusing on wetland ecology. This project demonstrates that small "pocket" marshes—often the only habitat available to wildlife in urban areas—can be enhanced, managed, and maintained by cooperative landowners, local governments, and conservation groups.

### ***Access in Big Sur***

The Conservancy authorized \$12,500 in May to acquire an option on a 24-acre parcel at Gorda in Big Sur. It also authorized \$25,000 for a plan to protect resources and provide public access on the site, which lies 50 miles south of Carmel and extends from Highway 1 to the shoreline.

It includes a graded terrace along the highway, hillsides covered with chaparral, coastal bluffs, and two black sand beaches. The view of the ocean is spectacular from the upper portion of this property. Preliminary site studies have led to a concept plan for a day-use public access facility on the terrace with parking, restrooms, picnic tables, overlooks, bicycle shelters, and interpretive information. To protect sensitive habitats, public access to the interior will be limited. This project will open opportunities to observe predatory birds hunting, whales migrating, elephant seal haul-outs, and a rare land and seascape, while helping to protect fragile coastal resources. □

# Conference Log

## Stream Renewal

More than 200 citizens variously engaged in stream preservation and restoration gathered at the University of California, Berkeley, May 6-7 for the first California Creeks Conference. The event marked the emergence of a movement. In hundreds of communities in this state and elsewhere in the nation, streams are now being protected, resuscitated, and resurrected, largely by local initiative.

For nearly a century, rivers and creeks have been channelized or buried for the sake of flood control and to create more developable land. Now the recognition is rapidly spreading that streams are aesthetic, environmental, and economic assets that also serve flood control functions.

Several factors have coincided to bring about the shift of perspective. The conventional structural approaches to flood control are less affordable as public funding sources have shrunk. Their environmental costs are also more obvious. Public agencies have therefore begun to encourage the development of more environmentally sensitive and less costly alternatives.

"Communities are beginning to develop flood reduction and bank stabilization plans that rely more on local resources because conventional federally assisted flood control projects have been plagued with long delays, rising local costs and unacceptable environmental and social impacts to the community," states a pamphlet recently published by the Urban Stream Restoration Program of the California Department of Water Resources.

At the same time, public appreciation of local streams and rivers has grown, especially in urban areas. With most of the urban riparian habitat gone, citizens are more likely to fight for what is left. Learning from each other's successes, they have found that they

can influence their local and state governments and achieve their goals.

Stream protection and restoration projects planned or underway come in many sizes and degrees of complexity. Boulder, Colorado, has "re-

naturalized" Boulder Creek, removing unsightly cement flood control structures and replacing them with soft, park-like landscaping that also serves to control floods. Gary Lacy, who coordinated that city's creek project, told the conference how the creek was transformed from an ugly channel to a pleasant waterway that is now the scene of many community events and celebrations, and is popular with fishermen, hikers, and boaters. He knew of only one complaint: a creek-side resident complained that the babbling of the creek was now too loud.

San Luis Obispo is among California cities that have made stream renewal the centerpiece of downtown development plans. In Santa Cruz, the now confined San Lorenzo River will be restored to a more natural state in a project that may take a decade to complete and could cost \$30 million.

Many smaller and simpler projects described at the conference have been initiated

CITY OF BERKELEY



GAY SCOTT



**Before restoration, Berkeley's Strawberry Creek was buried under a railroad yard (upper); broken-up paving was used to line resurrected creek (lower).**

*Continued on Page 20*

Now these lands will be protected through Coastal Conservancy acquisitions with funds provided by voters under Proposition 70 last fall.\*

# *State Gains*



PHOTOS BY CAROL ARNOLD

# Two Treasures



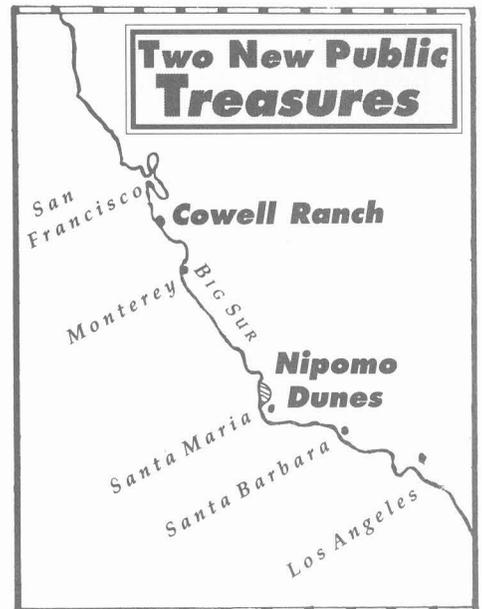
## Nipomo Dunes

TO WALK IN THE NIPOMO DUNES is to enter a landscape so remote from urban life that it is easy to imagine oneself in the time of the Chumash people. The dunes extend for about 18 miles along the coast and about three miles inland between Mussel Rock in Northern Santa Barbara County and Pismo Beach in San Luis Obispo County. Windswept and sparsely visited by humans, they harbor a greater species diversity than any other natural area in this state.

The classic dunescape is here, the kind we have seen in desert movies and the photographs of Edward Weston and Ansel Adams, with sharp ridges etched against the sky and steep slopes of bare sand casting huge shadows in the early light. But life is abundant here, too, and much of it is unique to this place.

The beach is continuous and seems endless. Behind it are the foredunes, a scenic backdrop to ocean views. Delicate plants draw the hiker's eye downward, but the wind coaxes her on. Behind the foredunes are the stabilized, vegetated backdunes, the valleys between them sheltering an abundance of plants, many of them candidates for the federal endangered species list. The giant coreopsis brightens slopes with its yellow blossoms. It grows only on the coast of Cali-

\* See Page 4 for more on these Coastal Conservancy acquisitions.





ifornia, as far south as Los Angeles and as far north as this place.

The dunes are still actively moving in the direction of the prevailing northwest winds, and in time they may cover some of the lush agricultural land that begins where they now end. But that is a slow process. Human impact moves faster and has more than once threatened to destroy the dunes. But people who knew and loved this place worked hard to protect it.

In June, protection was assured for a large and critically important portion of the dunes when the State Coastal Conservancy authorized \$2.6 million to buy the 2,250-acre property owned for 50 years by Mobil Oil Corporation. After the property proved unproductive for oil extraction, the corporation do-

nated it to its nonprofit arm, the Mobil Foundation, which sold it to the Conservancy. The land will be managed by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) as part of a 3,417-acre Nipomo Dunes Preserve after TNC completes a management plan and the Coastal Conservancy approves it.

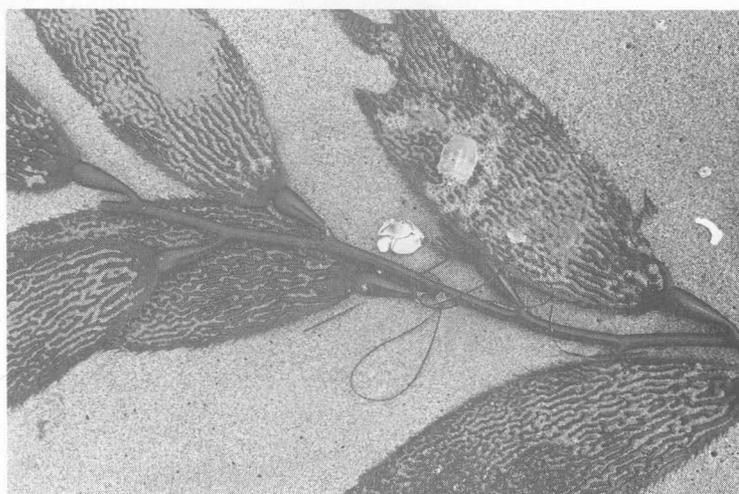
Because this land is so remote from human traffic and the habitat is so diverse, many species of wildlife have found it a haven. More than 40 species of mammals have been seen here, including gray fox, mule deer, badger, bobcats, and at least one mountain lion. The endangered California Least Tern may nest on the open sand, and at least 200 species of birds visit the dunes and wetlands.

The acquisition of the Mobil property will



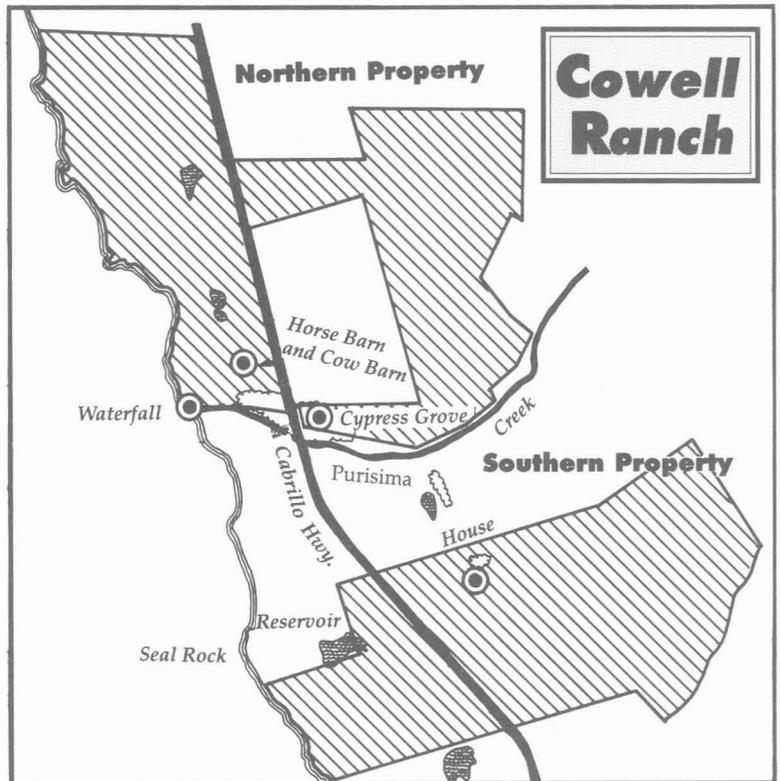
bring the total publicly owned acreage in the Nipomo Dunes to 7,150. Within the public lands, 2,200 acres are an off-road vehicle recreation area, held by the Off-Highway Vehicle Division of the state Department of Parks and Recreation, and another 1,300 acres are parklands off-limits to off-road vehicles. An additional 560 acres were acquired last year with a Coastal Conservancy grant and are now owned by Santa Barbara County and leased to The Nature Conservancy for management.

Eventually, those who fought to protect the dunes hope that the Nipomo Dunes Preserve will be expanded, to delight generations of citizens and provide them with the gift of joyful solitude within a magnificent remnant of California's ancient coast. □





PHOTOS BY DAVID HAYES



# Cowell Ranch

SOUTH OF HALF MOON BAY, where flowers and broccoli fields meet with the edge of urban sprawl, Purisima Creek empties into the ocean with a dramatic 90-foot waterfall. The gently sloping coastal terraces west of Cabrillo Highway (Highway 1) are planted with artichokes, Brussels sprouts, and green beans. To the east of the scenic roadway, pumpkins, hay, and Christmas trees grow. Farther east, cattle graze in the hills that merge into the steep forested slopes of the Santa Cruz Mountains. Climb the hills and look west, and the quilt-like patterns of cropland extend before you, interrupted by meandering ribbons of dense green creekside vegetation, ending abruptly at the ocean's edge.

This is the 1,215-acre Cowell Ranch, now being protected as a citizens' heirloom in a collaborative effort led by the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) and the State Coastal Conservancy. In May, the Conservancy authorized \$5.4 million in funds provided by Proposition 70 for this project, high on the priority list for 15 years with the San Mateo County Parks Department, the Coastal Commission, and several citizens' groups. The Conservancy acted on the purchase less than six months after Proposition 70 became law as the Wildlife, Coastal and Park Land Conservation Act.

At the turn of the century, the tiny town of Purissima stood on Purisima Creek. It has since disappeared from the maps, perhaps because the Ocean Shore Railroad, despite its slogan, "It Reaches the Beaches," did not reach this far. The railroad, too, is gone, but what surely was a disappointment to earlier local residents is now the public's gain—because the land on both sides of the creek remained a farm and is now recognized as a precious natural and scenic resource.

Cowell Ranch is a 35-minute drive from San Francisco and 20 minutes from downtown San Mateo. Its acquisition established a strong and permanent urban open space buffer. It ensures the preservation of produc-

tive agricultural land. It provides public access to formerly inaccessible beaches. It preserves unique coastal habitats and scenic corridors, restricts speculative development, and provides trail links to other open spaces.

A variety of projects is planned at the ranch by POST, the California Department of Parks and Recreation, and the State Coastal Conservancy. The first, by POST, will open access to the northern beach on the ranch, providing some parking and a barrier-free walking trail bordering fields of artichokes and Brussels sprouts to the ocean bluff-top and along the bluff. There will be some benches where views of the beach and ocean, 90 feet below, can be enjoyed, and a path and



stairs to the beach. The bluff-top trail will continue to a spot where harbor seals can be watched pulling up onto rocks and beach to rest, sun, and breed. It will bypass the second of the ranch's three beaches so as not to disturb the harbor seals and continue to south beach, bridging the Purisima Creek waterfall, and then turning inland to a parking area. POST will build the project, at an estimated cost of \$130,000, and donate it to the state parks department.

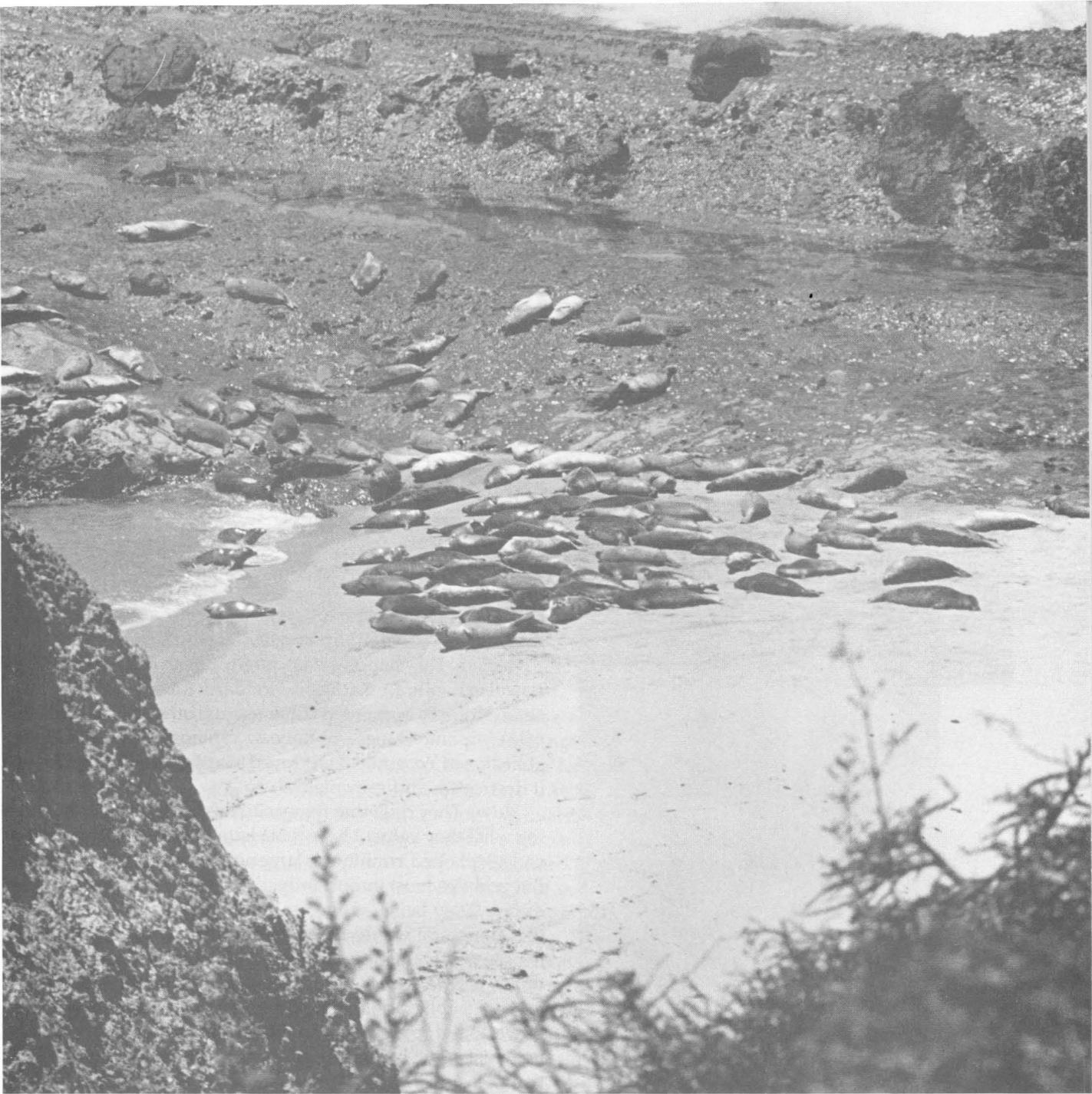
There are plans for a picnic area near the old Purissima town site, for improvements



in farm access roads and other farm facilities. The brushlands and woods in areas too steep for cultivation or grazing will be left wild, for other forms of wildlife.

POST bought the ranch in October 1987, after a fund-raising effort that raised \$2 million for the downpayment in just six months. It has held the property for the past two years at its own expense, to give the state an opportunity to buy it with Proposition 70 funds. San Mateo County, the Coastal Commission, and the state Department of Parks and Recreation have all advocated public acquisition of the Cowell Ranch beaches. Because of the Conservancy's expertise in complex projects that involve several entities and multiple uses, it was the appropriate agency to act on behalf of the public.

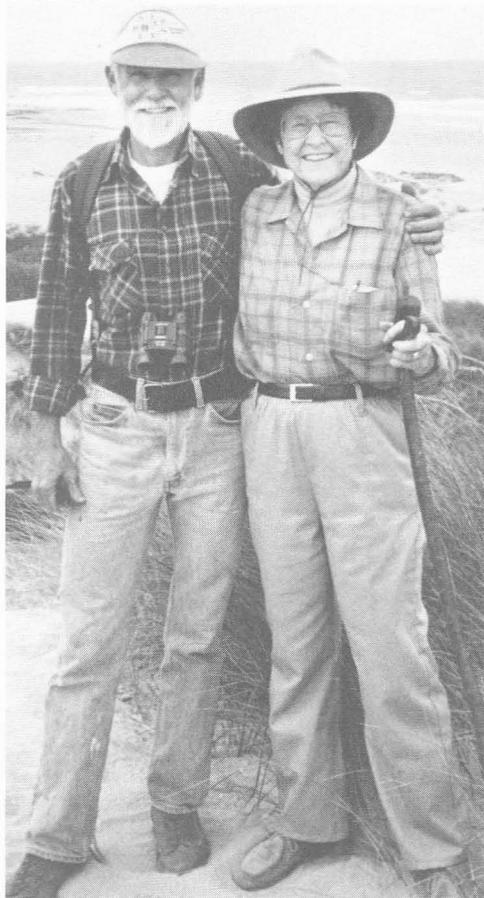
The Conservancy will purchase permanent agricultural, habitat conservation, and scenic easements over the entire ranch; recreational easements for the appropriate areas; and most of the development density credits for existing and future development potential of the property. It will assume fee title ownership of the three beaches. POST will then sell the farmland to farmers who must farm and manage them. Still to be resolved are issues concerning the location of



greenhouses and farmworker housing. These will be dealt with as the project proceeds. The easement areas used for public access and recreation will be transferred to the state parks department for permanent management. The department has been extraordinarily cooperative with the Cowell Ranch project, despite budgetary and staffing constraints.

As the Bay area continues to grow, its citizens are sure to find increasing value in this regional asset. □

RASA GUSTAITIS



# Dune People

**A WALK WITH KATHLEEN JONES**

**AND BILL DENNEEN, GUARDIANS**

**OF THE NIPOMO DUNES**

**M**ANY PEOPLE ACCEPTED APPLAUSE when it was announced that 2,250 acres in the Nipomo Dunes would be permanently protected. This happy event might never have happened, however, without Kathleen Goddard Jones and Bill Denneen. Nobody appointed these two citizens to be guardians of the Nipomo Dunes—as nobody appointed John Muir to be guardian of Yosemite. They loved a landscape, refused to see it destroyed, and prevailed.

How? They did what many citizens have done in defending what they value: They wrote letters, testified at hearings, and telephoned, running up large non-reimbursable expenses. But perhaps most importantly, they took people out into the dunes. They believed that anyone who saw—really saw—this landscape would agree that its abuse was unthinkable. People who wanted to talk with Jones and Denneen about the dunes had to walk—industry executives hoping to build a harbor, public utility officials seeking a site for a nuclear power plant, politicians, journalists, and, of course, conservationists. On a beautiful, windy day early this summer, I had that pleasure.

I assume I'll be going only with Denneen, that a four-hour hike up and down sand dunes would be too much for an 82-year-old lady, especially on a sunny summer day. But that is before I meet Kathleen Goddard Jones—ready to go, with a broad-brimmed hat, shades that flip up on her glasses, and her special ribbonwood staff. Very soon it is obvious that if anyone would have to stop and rest, it would probably be I.

"Once I get out here, it's hard to go home," she says. Since March, when *Sunset* magazine printed a photograph of Coreopsis Hill covered with yellow blossoms and mentioned that a "remarkable octogenarian" led walks in the dunes, she has led at least two weekly four-hour trips.



Just past Oso Flaco Lake we stop on the slope of a large sand dune and turn back for a look at the freshwater lake and the grove of willows in the wetland to its south. A couple of ducks are enjoying the water. It's still early, the afternoon wind has not yet risen, and everything seems very still.

"I first came out here with my jeep in 1960," says Denneen. "There weren't many OHVs (off-highway vehicles) around. Then there were thousands. I stopped coming. They were destroying everything."

"Right here where we're standing was a favorite parking lot," says Jones. It's hard to believe now. OHVs still have 2,200 acres in the dunes, but since 1982, a fence keeps them out of protected areas.

"We now have a white whistling swan here—since the vehicles were taken out," says Jones. "You can sometimes see a muskrat come out and paddle around. One day Bill counted 20 great blue herons." She scans the lake where at the moment only a two-legged mammal is visible, a fisherman standing on the shore. "When my children grew up [six of them], I went back to college and took botany," she says. "Now, even though I'm 82, I want so much to catch up on this bird thing that a friend is looking for binoculars

that I can use with my glasses."

Denneen has disappeared to explore something at the lake's edge. We continue in a southerly direction, and he soon rejoins us along an overgrown path through "the tunnels," a marshy willow thicket.

Time has lost its sharp edges under the influence of sun and sand. Denneen keeps disappearing and returning after various brief explorations. Jones keeps a steady pace, pausing frequently to provide a running commentary on the vegetation.

"Notice the topiary action of the wind, particularly on the wax myrtle. The University of California never succeeded in having anyone study the willow wax myrtle communities the way they should be studied. . . . There—the rare dune aster . . . beach burr, a wonderful sand holder. You don't walk on it in August. . . . And this is *Senecio blochmaniae*, dunes groundsel. We call it comet's plume. I give common names to just about everything."

Like a dedicated gardener, she knows stories about just about every shrub and plant. "The strawberries in this area have been studied by Royce Bringhurst of UC Davis [professor emeritus, College of Agriculture and Environmental Science] for 35

years. They have more resistance than domestic hybrids. After the strawberry industry was devastated by a fungus some years back, the strawberries between San Francisco's back yards were crossbred with these."

Jones and Denneen have worked for the dunes since the early 1960s. He was teaching biology in Hancock Community College, she was president of the Los Padres chapter of the Sierra Club, of which she was a founder. They met after the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) bought land north of Oso Flaco Lake, intending to build a nuclear power plant.

In 1984, they joined with others to found People for the Nipomo Dunes National Seashore, since renamed People for the Nipomo Dunes, with the intent of saving the 18,000 acres extending along 18 miles of shore between Pismo State Beach and Point Sal.

They have their differences: Denneen likes to lead equestrian dune explorations. Jones would prefer to keep horses out. But mutual respect overcomes disagreement and keeps them a team. Denneen has retired after 25 years of teaching and now has a hostel at his home, shared with four horses, some goats, pigs, chickens, and other fowl. He likes to bring young people out to the dunes. Jones keeps track of media, politics, but has stepped back to let younger leaders emerge.

We climb Oso Flaco Peak from which we overlook the shoreline and the acreage being acquired by the State Coastal Conservancy from the Mobil Foundation. An uninterrupted beach backed by dunes stretches south into the mist as far as the boundary of Vandenberg Air Force Base. Only one other human is in view, a man with a dog, carrying a plastic bag with a few scraps of litter inside. Charlie Andrews, retired, stops to chat. He has been walking the dunes for years, always carrying a bag to collect things that don't belong here. He has noticed that there seems to be much less litter now than there used to be.

We descend to the shore. Here Denneen has seen whales go by, dolphins play, and all

kinds of dead creatures wash up—a great blue whale, porpoises, even a human body. Again we move inland, passing a spray of shells from an ancient midden. The Chumash lived here for 9,000 years.

Then suddenly we are above a hollow filled with blooming silver dune lupen and willows. We have arrived at Hidden Willow Valley, named by Jones. Denneen, who has hastened ahead, is lying in the shade. There is a stone campfire place, with a few pieces of wood around it to serve as seats and one unusual object: a whale jawbone, found by Denneen on the beach and pulled here by horse. We all settle down in the shade.

"You know, if you camp here at full moon," says Jones, "and you say to everybody, 'Let's walk up and meet the moon,' you walk up and up and up and there's never a top. The slope keeps on rising. Eventually the moon comes up, but it's ahead of you."

Atop a post is a little box with a door. It contains a pencil and a book. Inside, I read: "For Kathleen Jones, who found this place in her dune wanderings and showed me how to get there." Visitors are invited to write on the pages that follow. "Many who come here are alone and not aware of others who may have been here just a few hours before. This is as it should be. There is, however, something to be gained by reading what others have seen and felt while in this valley. . . ." Norman Hammond, a fireman and poet, placed the book here. We read, we write, then we rest a while and talk.

**Waterfront Age:** *Well, it's obvious to me that you are both stewards of this place. You fought to protect it against a harbor, a nuclear power plant. And Bill, you have repaired trails and patrol the dunes on your horse. How did all that happen? Nobody gave you each a badge and said, "This is your job"?*

**Bill Denneen:** We've been working for so many years, and all of a sudden it's not: "Will it be protected?" but "How?" My emphasis is more on the Point Sal area; Kathleen's is on

the dunes. One reason I stayed in the area is because Point Sal is so inspiring, with waves hitting the cliffs, the wildflowers. It's in the process of being protected. First time I came to Point Sal was with my high school biology students. And I've been coming ever since.

**Kathleen Jones:** After we organized the Los Padres chapter, we said, "The Sierra Club stands for walking outdoors, let's take a walk." And a man said, "I know a beautiful place, big sand dunes." And on the first Saturday of 1962 we took our first walk. That day was more significant than we knew.

**WA:** *There have been threats to these dunes over the years, right?*

**KJ:** As recently as three years ago people wanted to build things here.

**BD:** Collier Carbon wanted to put a port in, that was one of the early ones.

**KJ:** They were shipping their coke in open gondola cars and they wanted to build this conveyor, on high supports, over the Southern Pacific Railway through the dunes. I led a trip every Sunday for a whole year. Collier finally gave up on the struggle.

Then in 1962 there was a tiny article in the newspaper in San Luis Obispo: PG&E is buying 1,100 acres and considering building a nuclear power plant. I decided, I cannot fight them because I don't have enough nuclear physics. But I am going to communicate with them. I am going to educate them. I'll get other people to talk to them, and I will show them that this is a scenic wonderland. And that was the beginning of a wonderful relationship between PG&E and the Sierra Club. They invited the Sierra Club to go with them to look at land. Eventually they ended up in Diablo Canyon. In the canyon there was nothing rare. I reported at a hearing what I found: nothing significant. And, of course, I was pilloried—but it was true. And you know, the ironic thing: I live downwind from Diablo, exactly downwind.

**BD:** Many of my neighbors could not understand why I was opposed to a nuclear power plant, because a nuclear power plant

brings a lot of money, a lot of tax dollars, therefore makes for better schools, and here I was an educator not favoring schools.

**WA:** *What was the next threat?*

**BD:** The vehicles had penetrated all aspects of the dunes, they were a slow destructive force that went everywhere. Signs meant

nothing. Then the three-wheelers came and they were like ants. We led hikes in the dunes. We were outmaneuvered, outnumbered, and outvoiced,

but we persisted. It was quite dangerous, they could come over the hill and not see a group. We would carry a flag and wave it. There were only two or three rangers and thousands of vehicles. It was complete anarchy and that was one of the things the vehicle people liked. They could drink beer and be what they wanted to be, get into their machines, and go tearing over the dunes. They loved the dunes in their own way. It wasn't a tranquil way.

Then someone figured out, you put stickers on the vehicles, that makes income, and you can therefore hire rangers to control them. The fence cost the OHV people \$100,000. Now, the Oso Flaco area is protected. But they are flattening the dunes.

It is time to go. On the way back, Denneen, taking me to the top of one of the highest dunes, says: "The only way to go down is to take a big jump, yelling as loud as you can."

I look down—steep and deep, maybe 100 feet. To run down would be an immense scary thrill. But then there's the climb. I choose a less challenging dune and run down that one twice, yelling into the wind. Maybe next time. Thanks to these two citizen warriors, I'll be able to return.

***"We've been working for so many years, and all of a sudden it's not: 'Will it be protected?' but 'How?'"***

## Conference Log

Continued from Page 7

---

and accomplished by local citizens. In the suburban city of Walnut Creek, Contra Costa County, neighbors rebelled against a flood control plan that would have directed 2.8 miles of local creeks into channels, pipes, and culverts. They organized, enlisted community and local government support, won a grant from the Department of Water Resources to develop a non-structural flood control alternative, and persuaded the county to adopt it instead of the conventional plan proposed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Consequently, Grayson and Murderer's creeks will continue to flow freely between green banks. Flood waters will be channeled into man-made holding ponds.

In Berkeley, meanwhile, 200 feet of Strawberry Creek have been freed from an underground culvert under a railroad freight yard. The running water now sparkles in the sun, centerpiece of a new park. "Probably a dozen activists made this happen," said landscape architect Doug Wolfe, who led the way. He said he designed the project "by the seat of the pants," seizing the opportunity that existed as the new park was being built. After seeing the project withstand a major storm, Wolfe and allies now propose to continue the creek liberation, disinterring the stream for another half-mile, from the edge of the University of California campus to the Hall of Justice.

Creeks and rivers throughout California now have allies who seek setback ordinances that protect them against development that would destroy riparian habitat and cause erosion, provide public access to river banks, and restore dead waters to life. There is even a group called Friends of the Los Angeles River, started—fittingly—by poet Lewis MacAdams, "a 40-year art work to bring the Los Angeles River back to life." Among the goals: reforestation of the river's San Gabriel Mountains watershed, a greenbelt from the Sepul-

veda Basin to Long Beach, "soft river bottoms instead of concrete, and revegetation of the concrete walls."

The conference was sponsored by the Urban Creeks Council, 2706 Fulton St., Berkeley, CA 94705. (415) 848-1029. Among other sources of help and information for stream restoration projects: the Coastal Conservancy, the U.S. Corps of Engineers, the state Department of Water Resources, and the state Department of Fish and Game.

R.G.

### **How To Conserve a River**

"Advocates of river conservation are growing in numbers, but often lack information about the steps necessary to begin and sustain an effective river conservation effort," according to the *Riverwork Book*, published by the National Park Service (1988). This 97-page reference manual for local river planning efforts presents a process that emphasizes citizen participation, networking, and constituency building.

It contains step-by-step instruction in organizing and managing a river conservation program and also includes some basic information on river functions.

The manual was written for the NPS River Conservation Workshop Program for local governments, citizens organizations, and individuals. This program is designed to stimulate wider recognition and appreciation of local river resource values and to help organize and direct all levels of government and the private sector toward focused conservation actions.

Copies of the *Riverwork Book* are available free from the Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program, National Park Service, Western Region, 450 Golden Gate Ave., San Francisco, CA 94102. (415) 556-5751.

R.G.

# Is California Ready For Its Next Oil Spill?

by Michael Herz

**T**HE EXXON VALDEZ DISASTER has created a tragic window of opportunity for California and the rest of the country. It has focused international attention on the manner in which the United States develops and transports its oil, on what it does to prevent environmental disasters, and on how it responds to spills of magnitudes never previously experienced. The public and legislators are mad as hell and want to know why this accident happened, what can be done to prevent future accidents, and how our ability to respond to them can be improved.

A similar outcry occurred locally in the year after the *Puerto Rican* tanker exploded, burned, and broke up just outside the Golden Gate on October 31, 1984, spilling only about 10 percent of what was lost in Alaska. Less than 5 percent of the 1 million to 1.5 million gallons spilled by the *Puerto Rican* was recovered. My analysis of that incident (conducted with Diane Kopec for the Romberg Tiburon Centers of San Francisco State University), called for ten major improvements in response capability critical to ensuring that a *Valdez*-like disaster does not happen here. These suggestions were supported by a number of legislators, environmentalists, and

regulatory agency staff.

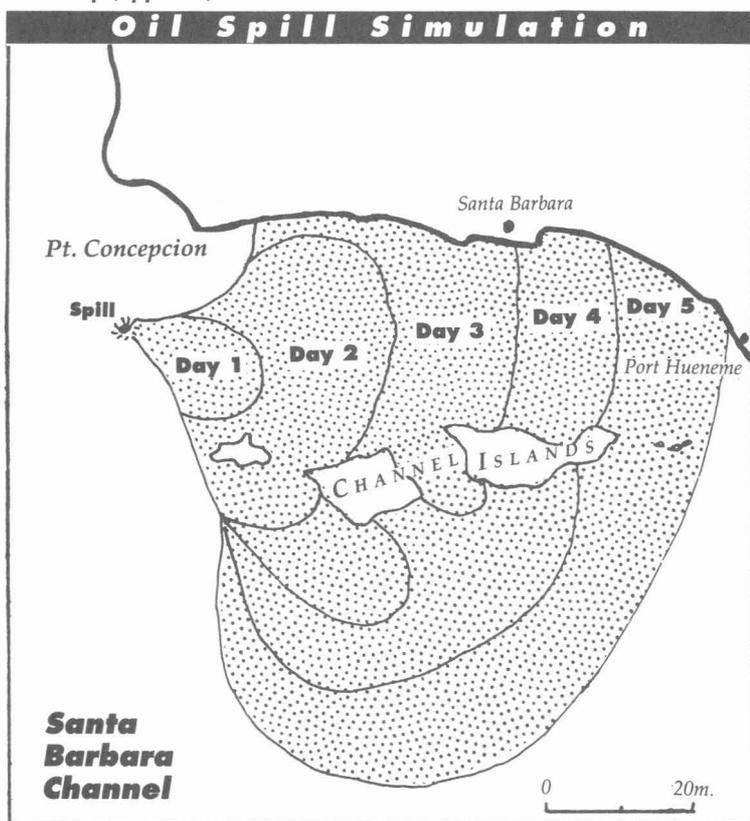
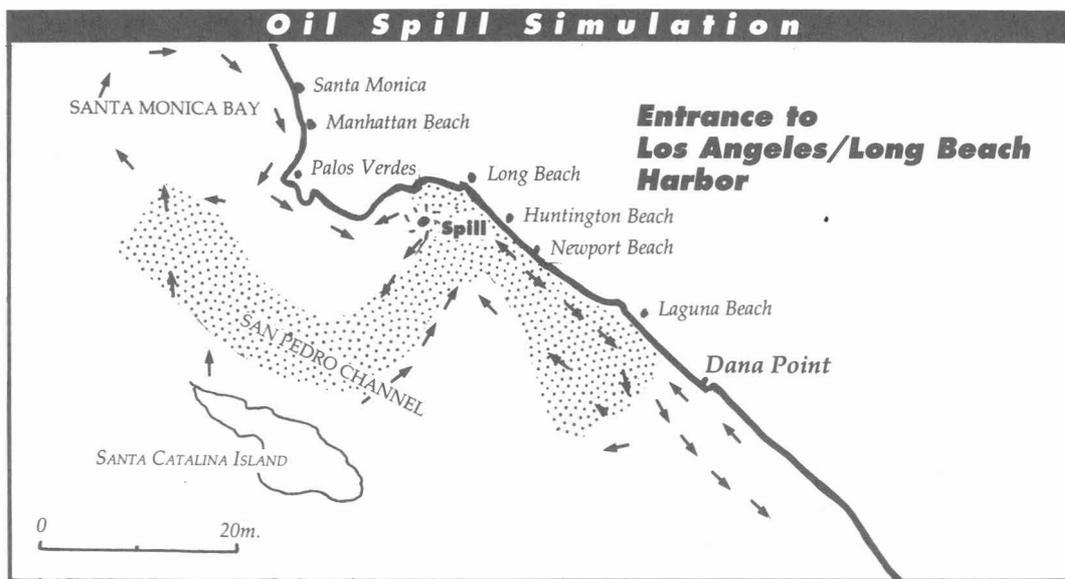
Four years later, none has been fully implemented. Some of the recommendations were actively fought by industry. Others were lost in state and federal bureaucracies.

It is important to remember that following the *Puerto Rican* incident, Clean Bay, the oil industry's cooperative—considered by some industry experts and many regulators to be one of the best in the country—said that its equipment was primarily for San Francisco Bay spills. The co-op's literature, however, states that the equipment is designed to serve the area from Fort Bragg in Mendocino County to Cape San Martin in southern Monterey County—almost 300 miles of coastline. California has no boats or equipment designed to respond to ocean spills north of Point San Luis. The new Clean Bay vessel may be able to reach the North Coast from San Francisco. But that trip would require 16 to 20 hours of travel. Containment and cleanup are most

ERIC LUSE, SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE



Projected oil spills off Long Beach (upper) and Santa Barbara (lower), prepared for the state Lands Commission. Both postulate a Valdez-size spill. The Long Beach map, based on "reasonable engineering judgments," shows a 4- to 5-day contour. The Santa Barbara scenario is based on computer models, as is the Point Arena map (opposite).



The Exxon Valdez incident demonstrates that trying to remove oil after it has spread across hundreds of miles of ocean and beaches is like trying to empty a swimming pool with an eyedropper. Exxon Corporation President Frank Iarossi, a booster of cleanup capability if ever there was one, said "Most of the skimming equipment in the world is ineffective." Cleanup and containment technologies, as well as the rest of the spill response system resources, provide limited capability for mitigating damage, especially of large spills. This means that when major spills occur, little can be done to keep oil off beaches and away from sensitive habitats, or to protect fish and wildlife.

Much more effort and money must be put into prevention—in California and in all other oil-producing areas. Federal and state budgets for enforcement of regulations—especially for Coast Guard safety inspections—must be increased. Vessel navigation equipment must be inspected more often, vessel traffic systems must become mandatory (they are now voluntary), and safety, rather than maximization of offshore oil development, must be established as the primary goal of these traffic systems.

The federal Minerals Management Service recently proposed that the Coast Guard create northbound and southbound traffic lanes offshore, with space for drilling rigs between the two. This arrangement would magnify the risk of disaster. It would be

effective within five or six hours after an oil spill.

Coastal areas south of Monterey County have a far higher level of protection because current gas development and exploration has forced industry cooperatives Clean Seas and Coastal Waters to develop oceangoing capability.

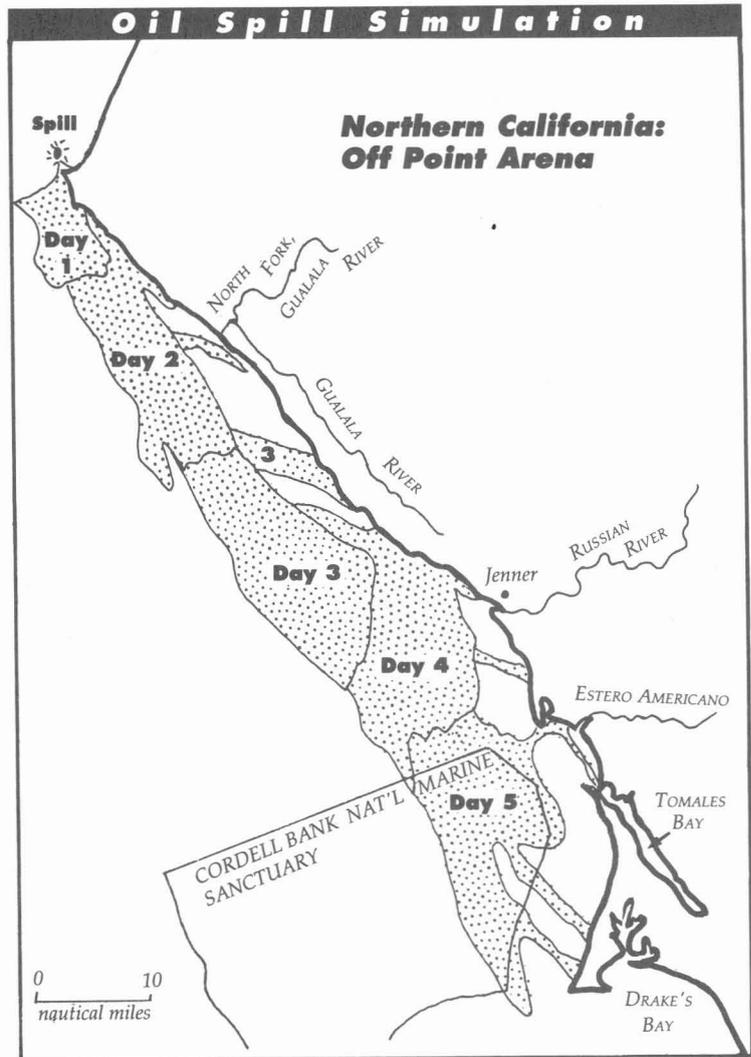
equivalent to placing gas stations on median strips of California freeways. It also is directly counter to the Coastal Commission's policy that offshore oil rigs not be placed in areas where they will "conflict with vessel traffic lanes used by tankers and cargo ships."

Currently, the California Coastal Commission is fighting that proposal, under their consistency review, in which federal development plans must conform to policies the commission has for the California coast.

Sound technology is also intrinsic to prevention, and California should require the best equipment available, including double-hulled tankers, automatic vessel-tracking systems, and backup systems. Certification and screening processes for deck and engineering officers should be strengthened and enforced; tanker and barge manning requirements should be reviewed, strengthened, and enforced; and tugs should accompany tankers as well as barges when they are navigating harbors and sensitive bays.

Of course, even the best prevention program cannot stop spills. More than 1,200 tankers visit the San Francisco Bay area annually; 600 visit Long Beach. Spills that look insignificant, compared with the *Valdez* incident, still create enormous damage. At least 10,000 birds died when 620 barrels of oil leaked from an oil barge being towed from San Francisco to Long Beach in 1987. That was less than 1/300th of the amount spilled in Prince William Sound.

Our response system must be prepared to deal with oil spills as quickly and efficiently as possible. Although contingency plans exist, the *Valdez* disaster shows the importance of precision. Policy-makers and industry representatives in Alaska are debating the viability of their contingency plan, who was responsible for ensuring that viability (including the claims for response time, and availability and condition of equipment, especially in relation to sea conditions), and whether the plan was advisory or mandatory. These crucial questions should have



been settled when the plans were adopted.

California's response capability has improved significantly in the last ten years. Before 1980, industry cooperatives had no offshore response vessels. The only response available was from the Coast Guard's strike force at Hamilton Air Force Base. (At that time, it was the only strike team located in Region IX.) Now there are four vessels, and a fifth will arrive soon.

In addition, we now have a wide array of contingency plans for dealing with spills off the coast and in the bays of California. We have federal, state, regional, and local plans, plans for individual facilities, and plans for industry cooperatives. But this is a patchwork design, not a comprehensive provision for the entire coastal area. It is time to develop a more coherent statewide policy.

**Projected oil spill off Point Arena, produced by the Santa Rosa Press Democrat from computer information provided by NOAA.**

It is also time to begin effectively evaluating these plans by field testing them, especially by calling surprise drills. Many of the deficiencies that caused the unacceptably slow and minimal response to the *Exxon Valdez* spill might have been corrected had field exercises been called to test the Alyeska Terminal's approved contingency plan more recently than three years ago.

Various agencies have authority to call unannounced field exercises on the California coast and offshore: the state Lands Commission, the California Coastal Commission, the Minerals Management Service, and the Coast Guard. In some cases, jurisdiction overlaps. The state Lands Commission would do great service by clarifying the roles of the various agencies. This could be done by documenting the regulations under which each agency can call drills and, most importantly, by creating a record of the successes and failures of drills and field exercises conducted by those agencies.

No public agency oversees or monitors what the industry is required to do or what equipment it must have beyond that required at facilities such as platforms and marine terminals. Thus, where there are no facilities, we must depend on the voluntary capability of the industry. The Coastal Commission is a leader in its calls for equipment inventory, contingency planning, and spill drills. And since the *Valdez* incident, the commission has been especially concerned with prevention and contingency planning that includes a focus on international response. But its authority is still tied to permits and regulations for existing facilities, and it has no authority as a spill response agency.

The Bay Conservation and Development Commission recently established general guidelines for containment and cleanup resources for facilities seeking bayfront permits, establishing a mandatory traffic system, conducting surprise oil drills, and ensuring that large tankers be escorted by tugs. These are all fine recommendations.

But the oil industry is still in total control of the response to tanker accidents, although the Oil Spill Task Force recently admitted to being incapable of responding to spills of more than 15,000 barrels. No standards or criteria have been imposed for what it must be capable of doing to protect citizens and their natural resources when tanker accidents happen. Federal or state governments must create a mechanism for criteria, requirements, and oversight.

The industry has been strategically brilliant in voluntarily establishing both oil spill cooperatives, and, most recently, the Petroleum Industry Response Organization (PIRO). That program is designed to fight oil spills by establishing five 24-hour regional response centers with equipment and staff to fight catastrophic spills in any U.S. waters.

PIRO was conceived and planned in a frenzy after the *Valdez* incident. It is wonderful that the industry acknowledges its responsibility. But it is tragic that they waited until an incident of this magnitude. In addition, we can question the genuineness of their sentiments, given that PIRO was created in the face of legislation calling for industry-sponsored cleanups.

All who knew Prince William Sound and the hazards of ocean oil transport realized that disaster was inevitable. Yet the necessary precautions were not taken. It is only a matter of time for California. On April 14th of this year the *Overseas Juneau*, carrying 17 million gallons of North Slope crude oil, under charter for Exxon, rammed the Chevron Corporation refinery pier in Richmond, Contra Costa County, underscoring the vulnerability of the bay and coastline. We were lucky, as we were lucky with the *Puerto Rican*, when currents and weather were favorable. We can't count on that next time. □

*Michael Herz, the San Francisco BayKeeper, has studied oil spills, their causes and effects, and responses to them for 15 years.*

# Making New Waves

**D**ESPITE A NUMBER of environmental laws passed in the 1970s, a shocking lack of monitoring and enforcement leaves San Francisco Bay seriously threatened by oil spills, illegal filling, and a score of other water pollution sources, marine scientist Michael Herz recently found.

Herz made his findings in a study finished this year for the San Francisco Bay Association. That resulted in another important finding as well: that San Francisco Bay needs a bay keeper to guard the body of water for the public interest and to stimulate action on behalf of its health and well-being.

As a result, Herz now has a new job with the San Francisco Bay Delta Preservation Association, holding a title nobody has ever held before: San Francisco "BayKeeper."

Herz will patrol by boat, looking out for polluters, illegal dredgers, and other law-breakers; report violations and other environmental problems he sees to public agencies; initiate legal remediation; and try to serve as catalyst for translating diffuse concern into action to protect the bay. Broadly, his assignment is stewardship.

The BayKeeper program was established as the principal activity of the San Francisco Bay Delta Preservation Association after Herz completed a feasibility study, sponsored by the San Francisco Bay Foundation with financial support from the Hudson Riverkeeper Fund and the Gerbode and San Francisco foundations. As part of the study, he held discussions with nearly 50 people

representing 10 regulatory agencies and 15 advocacy and research organizations whose activities are centered on San Francisco Bay. He found that:

- Despite tough laws to protect the bay and delta, there is practically no on-the-water presence to detect violations or to deter violators from illegally discharging, dumping, filling, or polluting. There was a consensus that a BayKeeper could help fill this vacuum.

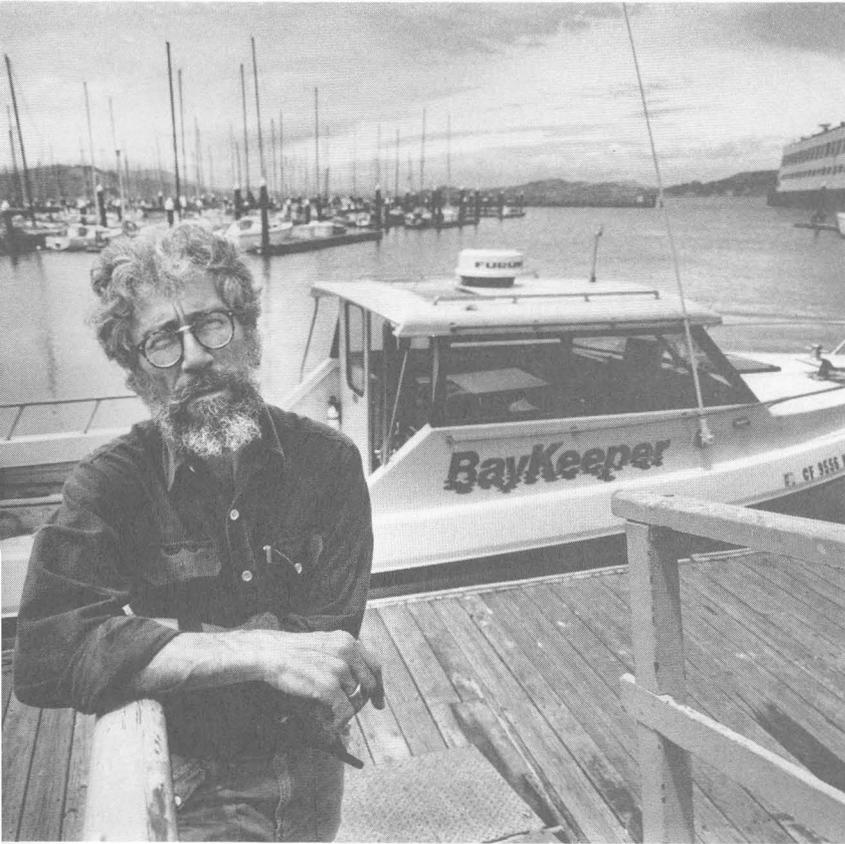
- Prosecution of violators is extremely slow, and penalties are often very small.

- To be effective, a BayKeeper needs to have litigation capacity or support. A program similar to that established for the Hudson Riverkeeper with Pace University could be set up in cooperation with Bay area law schools, benefiting both the public and the students.

- Many legally mandated activities designed to protect the bay and delta are not being carried out, such as monitoring dredge spoil disposal and marine water quality. A BayKeeper could do some of this work.

- The BayKeeper could establish other useful services, such as a bay hot-line and a group of volunteer bay watchers for specific places on the bay. He or she could serve as a lightning rod for citizen complaints, focus attention on bay issues, and work with the many citizens' groups and regulatory agencies concerned with the bay.

The concept of a natural-resource keeper goes back to medieval England, when game-



**Michael Herz** keepers and riverkeepers policed the kings' and lords' hunting and fishing grounds, looking for poachers. The modern model, however, is the Hudson Riverkeeper, who since 1983 has been patrolling that river, on assignment by the Hudson River Fishermen's Association. After 16 years of volunteer work, the Fishermen's Association saw a need for full-time motorized vigilance. The riverkeeper project was established with some of the money from a settlement with Consolidated Edison Co. and other utilities in a suit over fish kills at power stations.

During his first five years on the job, Hudson Riverkeeper John Cronin, a former legislative aide and a commercial fisherman, uncovered numerous environmental problems and participated in more than 30 legal cases involving the river. He received important support from the Hudson Riverkeeper/Pace University Environmental Litigation Clinic, headed by Robert F. Kennedy Jr. His biggest case involved Exxon Corporation. He discovered that Exxon oil tankers would steam upriver to dump their oily saltwater ballast, and then take on loads of fresh river water to sell to the Caribbean island of Aruba

and to use in an Exxon refinery there. Exxon settled out of court, agreeing to stop tanker activity on the Hudson River and paying \$1.75 million into a special fund, the Hudson River Improvement Fund, established to support improvement projects on the river.

Public awareness of the Hudson's problems has risen since the riverkeeper has been on the job. Cronin is far more than a one-man crime watch. He hopes to see the river healthy again. "My dream is that someday any kid who lives on the Hudson will be able to walk down the street with a fishing pole over his shoulder," he told one reporter.

San Francisco Bay is the fourth body of water in the nation to get a keeper. The Long Island Soundkeeper, Terry Backer, is a third-generation commercial fisherman. The Delaware Riverkeeper, Cynthia Poten, is a writer who has been involved in environmental issues for more than a decade. The San Francisco BayKeeper is a marine scientist and long-time citizen activist who has worked for the protection of the bay and delta for the past 15 years. Assistance from the Hudson Riverkeeper Fund helped to launch all three. Each program is a unique variant.

"Our program will differ from the others in that it will not be primarily one person in a boat," Herz said. "We will train and use citizen volunteers to work on land, in boats, and hopefully, in planes, so that we can, hopefully, cover the entire bay."

The launching of the San Francisco BayKeeper was announced July 6. Funds for the purchase of a 26-foot motorized patrol boat and to operate the program for the first six months have been provided by the Gerbode, Marin Community, and San Francisco foundations, and the Goldman Fund. The annual budget is \$200,000. The BayKeeper's office is at Building A, Fort Mason, San Francisco, CA 94123-1382. To volunteer, call (415) 567-4401. A bay hot-line, 1 (800) KEEP BAY, is ready to take citizen reports on water pollution, oil spills, wetland filling, diking, and other illegal or questionable activities. □

# Oily Warnings from Alaska

by Dennis Kelso,  
Commissioner of the Alaska Department  
of Environmental Conservation

**H**OW CAN THE PEOPLE and institutions of California—and really, all over America—avoid the disaster that we've experienced in my state?

- **First—and most obvious—is prevention.** Simple and straightforward vigilance in doing one's job on shore and at sea will greatly reduce the chances that a ship will go on the rocks. Tug escorts, better navigational aids, and other prevention-oriented actions may make the difference in the future.

- **Contingency Plans.** Chances are, your contingency plans were developed as ours were—that is to say, backwards.

The way the system works now, the industry writes the plan and hands it to the state. We then look at it, suggest changes, and ask the industry to make the changes in a timely manner. What's wrong with that picture? The government is in a reactive rather than an initiating role. In a public safety issue of this magnitude, that's not the position the government should be in.

Further, the plans leave the implementation up to the industry. They're supposed to have all the gear and all the people necessary to respond to a spill. Again, the government is left on the sidelines. Under current law, the responsible party—the oil company or the shipper or the pipeline company—has a right to do the spill response. Only if it refuses to do the job—or fails to do the job—is the government allowed to direct the cleanup.

That's not the way it should happen.

Contingency planning should be a cooperative process. We need to work with the industry in the spirit of good faith, but we need to have a healthy skepticism—and some legal hammers we can use fairly and effectively to bang a contingency plan into proper shape, or to forge an effective spill response.

The government ought to lay out the specific requirements for spill response, which we then hand to the industry. We should say, "Industry, here's how response to an oil spill should proceed. If you have problems with what we've developed here, you have 30 days to respond. If you still disagree, we'll give you a fair hearing. If you're unable at the hearing to convince us of the legitimacy of your complaints, then we—the government—adopt the plan as a matter of public safety."

Under Alaska state statutes, a contingency plan is not—I repeat, not—just a set of guidelines. A tested, approved contingency plan is a requirement for operating in Alaska. If your state laws aren't clear about that, then I suggest you make them clear. Contingency plans must be a part of the industry's license to operate, and to be protected you must have adequate civil and criminal penalties to enforce your rights.

***"The creativity, knowledge, energy, and organization of local communities is a resource that is not adequately tapped under the current contingency planning processes."***

Further, I think the government, through the Coast Guard, the state, and local communities, should have some response capability of our own. We should not have to wait for the responsible party to do everything—or to fail. And in fact, it was action by the state of Alaska and a home-grown guerilla navy of fishermen that got the most done in Prince William Sound over the first few weeks. My spill experts—who have worked on major spills all over the world—were working not just as overseers, which is our proper role. They were working as active directors of the response with the fishermen.

The local fishermen deployed protective booms at the hatcheries and sensitive estuaries. It was local fishermen who scooped thousands of gallons of oil from the water with plastic buckets, snares, suction equipment, and whatever else we could find. The creativity, knowledge, energy, and organization of local communities is a resource that is not adequately tapped under the current contingency planning processes.

The Soviet skimmer *Vaydaghubsky*, in port at Valdez, awaiting orders from Exxon.



ELIZABETH SEYMOURIAN, U.S. COAST GUARD

So I suggest that if you have a plan, take a hard look at it. Look at how the planning is done, and make sure that the people, through their governments, have the power to make the industry do what we believe is necessary to respond to a spill—not just what the industry believes is necessary.

• **Tanker Operations.** It's not enough to have good company policies on the books, because a bad sailor can negate any good policy. But can't we design operations systems that can't be short-circuited by one bad sailor? I think we can. We need to think of tanker operations as sophisticated industrial systems, not relics of Capt. Cook and the 18th century Royal Navy.

• **Tanker Design.** In 1989, a tanker is, essentially, a big steel canister with an engine. Is that the best way to carry a small sea of toxic cargo? Maybe double hulls are part of the answer; maybe not. But the point is, we have to take a good look at the alternatives for tanker design and construction.

• **Tanker Traffic.** Gov. Steve Cowper has called on Congress to require more complete and accurate surveillance and direction for supertankers. We need better radio and radar coverage, as well as direct guidance in the air and on the water. The state of Alaska has already acted through an emergency order, but federal action is needed over the long term.

• **Technology.** Over the past few weeks I've been increasingly amazed at the state of oil spill technology in the United States. Why is Norway so far ahead of us? Why do Shetland Island oil ports have tighter restrictions and more sophisticated operations? Why did other countries have such better equipment for cold water, open-ocean work? How is it that the Soviet Union happened to have a 425-foot super skimmer, and we in the United States did not? We need to answer these questions quickly.

• **Computerized Information.** After the *Exxon Valdez* ran aground, the industry groped all over the world to find boom and



other material to work on the cleanup. The state and the local communities were able to find equipment that Exxon had missed. Why didn't Exxon know exactly where it was, who controlled it, what the capabilities of the equipment were, and—most important—how fast they could get it to Prince William Sound? Gov. Cowper has suggested that this critical information should be on a database, along with key information on weather, ocean, and climate.

I hope you'll keep these points in mind as you consider California's ability to respond to a spill—contingency planning, tanker traffic, tanker operations, vessel design, improved technology, and computerized location of key information.

The state of Alaska looks forward to working cooperatively with all the coastal states. We need to work together. Congress can be helpful, but it can also be a 1,000-pound gorilla. We need federal legislation and oversight, but we must make sure that the coastal states have a place at the table

when it comes to making decisions about spill planning and response. As new oil spill legislation winds its way through Congress, we must work cooperatively to make sure Uncle Sam doesn't nudge us all off the train. Some of the bills before Congress right now need to have the states' role strengthened.

- **The Human Factor.** Finally, keep in mind that the social and economic effects of a spill are as devastating as toxic oil on the beaches. We'll be cleaning up this spill for a long time, in that regard, and we will need the help and cooperation of all Americans. Moreover, when you consider your response to a disaster such as this, crank people into the equation. Think about their livelihoods and their mental health. That's as much a part of spill response planning as the technical data. □

**Dozens of vessels at work trying to clean the mess in Prince William Sound.**

*Excerpted from Dennis Kelso's statement before the California State Lands Commission on May 25, 1989, in San Francisco.*

PLATE 1

PLATE 2



# Steam Beer Was 5¢ ...and So Was a Good Cigar

by Nancy Olmsted

IN JULY 1898, STONEMASONS placed the last piece of Colusa sandstone on the clock tower of the Ferry Building, and San Francisco had a landmark to love.

On Tuesday, June 3, 1913, around noon, a photographer climbed the narrow tower steps for 250 feet, carrying his heavy equipment to the city's highest lookout point. He put his tripod in place, set up his camera, and loaded it with a 14-inch glass plate—not once, but four times. Each time he shifted his camera, carefully, to create this panoramic view of the waterfront: East Street (now the Embarcadero) and up Market Street. What he captured is an ad man's dream. The bill-

boards so prominent in these photographs were probably seen by 60,000 people a day—not once, but twice on every working day.

This is the gateway to San Francisco. Twenty-three ferryboats make a total of 180 trips daily. On weekends, crowds come through on excursions. Trolleys, boats, and connecting trains bring working people and tourists to the foot of Market Street.

This is a workingman's waterfront. At 16 East St., between Mission and Market (far left view), Yosemite beer is advertised in stained art glass at 5¢ a glass. A man might put away a dozen oysters on the half shell at Herman

PLATE 3

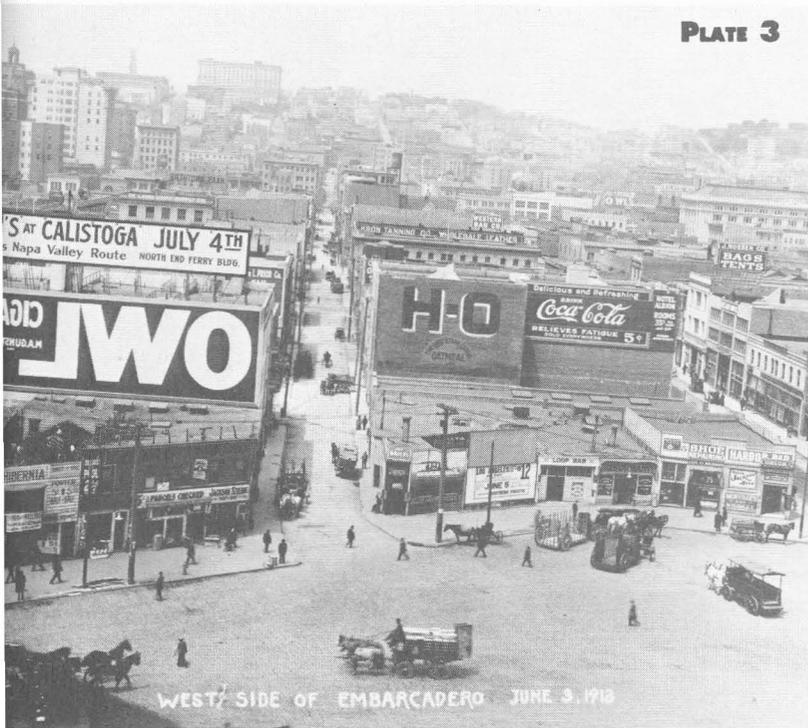


PLATE 4

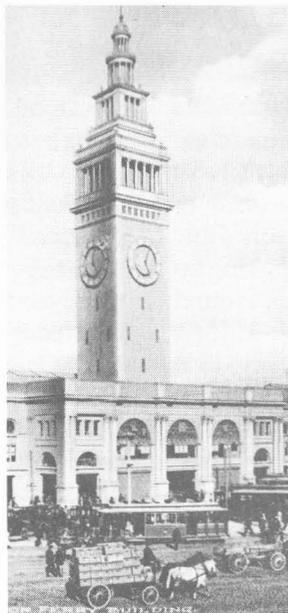


Dree's sidewalk oyster bar at 2 East St., and wash them down with Jackson or Albany beer (brewed locally) or imported Bohemian Lager. He might drop into the Ensign saloon (front door on Market, back-door-get-away on East Street). The ferry bootblack would shine his shoes while he reads the paper or surveys the changing scene. He might choose to indulge in a steam-towel shave at the barber shop, next door, before strolling down Market Street to enjoy his after-lunch cigar.

Transportation is still fun in 1913. Observe the race (in Plate 2) between the white horse, making a fast inside turn from Market onto East, and the dark horse team, edged out by the turn of the Market Street Trolley, heading south on East Street. Sidewalk spectators, at the foot of Market, in front of the Ensign saloon, are looking over the most important status symbol of the decade—a smart, open two-seater automobile.

The *Morning Call* this day carried ads for "Six Passenger Tor-

pedo Sports Cars at \$5,000" and "Comfortable, two-bedroom cottages on Pacific Street at \$3,500." Most automobiles are spidery little things, meant mostly for amusement. The work of the waterfront is done by low-slung drays, drawn by horses, like the ones in front of Catechi's Chop House and the Loop Bar (Plate 3, on East, between Commercial and Clay). The automobile is used more for weekend outings than for travel, although it is clearly more than a passing fad. Still, there is not yet enough traffic to require stop signs or to divert a policeman from his sidewalk beat. Market Street looks pleasantly empty in this scene, although ten trolleys move along the four tracks that connect to a network of car lines and cable car slots, leading all over the city.



Two days earlier, June 1, was the official "Straw Hat Day," and several men in the view have acknowledged the arrival of sum-

A panoramic view from the Ferry Building Tower of SF's waterfront in 1913, with East Street (now the Embarcadero) in the foreground, looking up Market Street. The "OWL" sign is printed in reverse as an advertising ploy.

The Ferry Building in 1913.



Plate 4, enlarged. What's missing from Telegraph Hill, at far right, in the distance?

mer with a new straw boater. The skirts of the only woman visible in the pictures just clear the East Street paving blocks, which have been freshly watered to settle the summer dust. It's "Big Doin's at Calistoga July 4th!" Coca-Cola is recommended for "relieving fatigue." Los Angeles is \$12 away—that's round trip—and a hotel room costs as little as 15¢ a day at the Cosmopolitan or as much as \$15 at the Fairmont (seen in the distance in Plate 3, beyond the OWL billboard with its eye-catching reverse print, as the dominant building on the skyline). From Telegraph Hill (Plate 4,

far right, distance), eucalyptus trees and shingle-roofed, board-and-batten cottages overlook the bay, a bay that saw 1,004 merchant ships in the previous two years, 449 of them sailing ships.

San Francisco, in 1913, has a working waterfront. The harbor commissioners have boasted that "the port is self-supporting, as it has been since its inception." Business on the waterfront is viewed as a public trust, and charges are kept low to make berths attractive for ships of the world.

Perhaps the most important reason for the



port's prosperity is the happy marriage of rail transportation to boats. One railroad-car ferry, the *Thoroughfare*, carried 16 loaded rail-freight cars on a single trip across the bay. Concern is expressed in the press that the state-controlled port might be given back to "local interests"—meaning Southern Pacific, which wields enormous power in the state Legislature and has the most to gain from local control.

One of the city's proudest achievements is the Belt Line Railroad. San Francisco is one of two world ports with a continuous waterfront railroad system to service ships alongside piers and take cargo to warehouse districts and further rail transport (the other is Rio). Ambitious plans for the future include new piers from Taylor Street

south to San Mateo, for 36.6 miles of docking space for the port. The Belt Line's five locomotives are scheduled to run to Fort Mason through a 1,500-foot tunnel—to be built for the upcoming Panama Pacific Exposition, which would celebrate "The City Beautiful," as well as the opening of the Panama Canal.

In the Ensign saloon, longshoremen and ship chandlers, sea captains and stock brokers, merchants and tradesmen, all lift a mug of Hibernia or Anchor Steam to toast the opening of the Panama Canal in July 1914. The great disaster of 1906, only seven years

before, performed the unlooked-for miracle of creating a building boom that rescued so many from the plight of "Dollar a day is damn little pay. A dollar a day without board. One cent for coffee, two cents for bread, three for a beef steak, and four for a bed." So goes a popular trade union song of the day. Lovers of sailing ships might swap a South Sea yarn with Fred Klebingat under the fine spread of sails of the barkentine *S.N. Castle*, or take a picture of the proud figurehead on the French bark *Champigny*, a ship of 2,729 tons.

This detailed 1913 panorama chances upon the end of an era. Clues are in the morning papers, "During April, emigration from Hamburg and Bremen is heavier than in years. 43,000 people left Germany for the United States." The sell-out musical in San Francisco is "When Johnny Comes Marching Home!"

Another clue may be found on Plate 1, using a magnifying glass. The American flag flies not far from the Brunswick Whiskey ad, below which a banner announces "MEN WANTED FOR THE UNITED STATES ARMY." Upstairs, over East Street, sandwiched between the many trade union headquarters and the real estate brokers, is this first indication of the future, with concerns larger than a public relations fair or the opening of the Panama Canal.

The photographer caught a moment in history. The age of the sailing ship is ending, and the technology of the future is spelled: F-R-E-E-W-A-Y. An elevated freeway spells the end of the view from the tower that once was the tallest place in town. □

*Nancy Olmsted is author or coauthor of 12 books on California history, predominantly on San Francisco. These photographs from the National Maritime Museum of San Francisco have, to her knowledge, never before been published.*

Old  
light-  
houses  
and  
military  
bases are  
scenes of

---

# Hostel Encounters

by Kristi Farnham

Jackie Cassidy, 24, dropped her backpack onto the floor and collapsed on a bunkbed. "I'm worn out," she said cheerfully. She and her younger sister, Vonnie, both natives of Northern Ireland, had spent most of the day getting from the San Francisco Airport to the Golden Gate Youth Hostel, located on the Marin Headlands west of Sausalito. After taking three buses, they had walked the last two miles. Now the first of their seven vacation days was gone, but they were undismayed. "We don't have much money. We work as *au pair* girls in Philadelphia and New Jersey," said Jackie. "A friend told us about the hostels around San Francisco. We couldn't have visited California any other way."

Two more women entered the sparsely furnished, high-ceilinged room and claimed bunks. Joan, 28, an Australian nurse, was just beginning a year's tour of the United States and Europe, and Nancy, in her 40s, from Monterey, was enjoying the last of a three-day weekend before returning to her job as a data processor. As we sat and shared travel tips and stories, memories of the people I met while hostelng in Europe two years ago came rushing back to me. Somehow a hostel—whether 20 miles from home or 2,000—

creates a feeling you're meeting old friends.

Many Americans cherish memories of hostelng in Europe, but few realize they can do it in this country, too, enjoying the same feeling of camaraderie. There are 240 American Youth Hostels nationwide, 26 in California—5 are home hostels, accommodating 4 to 10 travelers a night in private residences; 9 are along the coast. Three more are in the works as part of the Coastal Conservancy's long-range plan for a string of hostels along the entire coast. While in Germany you might find yourself in an old castle, in California you can stay in lighthouses, a converted farmhouse, and on former military bases, usually for under \$10 a night.

The Golden Gate Youth Hostel—one of several on the California coast—occupies a white-frame house built in 1907, once the bachelor officers' quarters at Fort Barry, and is less than a mile from Rodeo Beach. A common area with worn, comfortable couches, a fireplace, and long tables takes up most of the first floor. The hostel can sleep 60 people, though on the Sunday in May I visited, it was only half full. When I registered, I signed up on the housekeeping chore list to sweep the front and back porches—a small price to pay in exchange for comfortable,



friendly accommodations at \$6 a night.

After I stowed my gear under a bunk upstairs, I set out to explore. Less than a mile from the hostel I stumbled across the California Marine Mammal Center, where orphaned baby harbor seals and elephant seals with skin diseases were being tended by the staff. Down the hill on the beach, a few late-afternoon sunbathers still lingered in swimsuits, and several picnics were in progress. Hikers on trails which lead up from the beach onto the headlands were silhouetted by the setting sun.

After sunset, Jackie, Vonnie, and I drove into Sausalito for dinner. We passed up many expensive-looking restaurants in favor of a sandwich shop on a back street where we picked up dinner supplies. From there, we walked to the Marina and dined at the end of a pier surrounded by yachts and sailboats.

When we returned to the hostel, a few people were pooling resources to create spaghetti and salad in the communal kitchen. The registration desk sells basic staples like cans of beans and soup, but most guests either prepared meals from makings they'd bought elsewhere or ate in Sausalito or San Francisco. Without a car, getting to the hostel can be difficult. Buses all the way from San Francisco to within walking distance of the Golden Gate Hostel on the Marin Headlands only run on Sundays until 4:30 p.m.; other days you must hitchhike, bike, or hike about three miles, or take a taxi from Sausalito.

In the evening, several visitors relaxed on couches in the common room—reading, talking, consulting maps and travel guides, and comparing trip itineraries. The Cassidy sisters planned to spend the following three nights in the San Francisco Hostel, and I invited them to come to Berkeley later in the week and spend the last night of their vacation at my house. I said goodbye to my new friends that night and left the hostel early the next morning.

The San Francisco International Youth Hostel at Fort Mason is a two-story white-

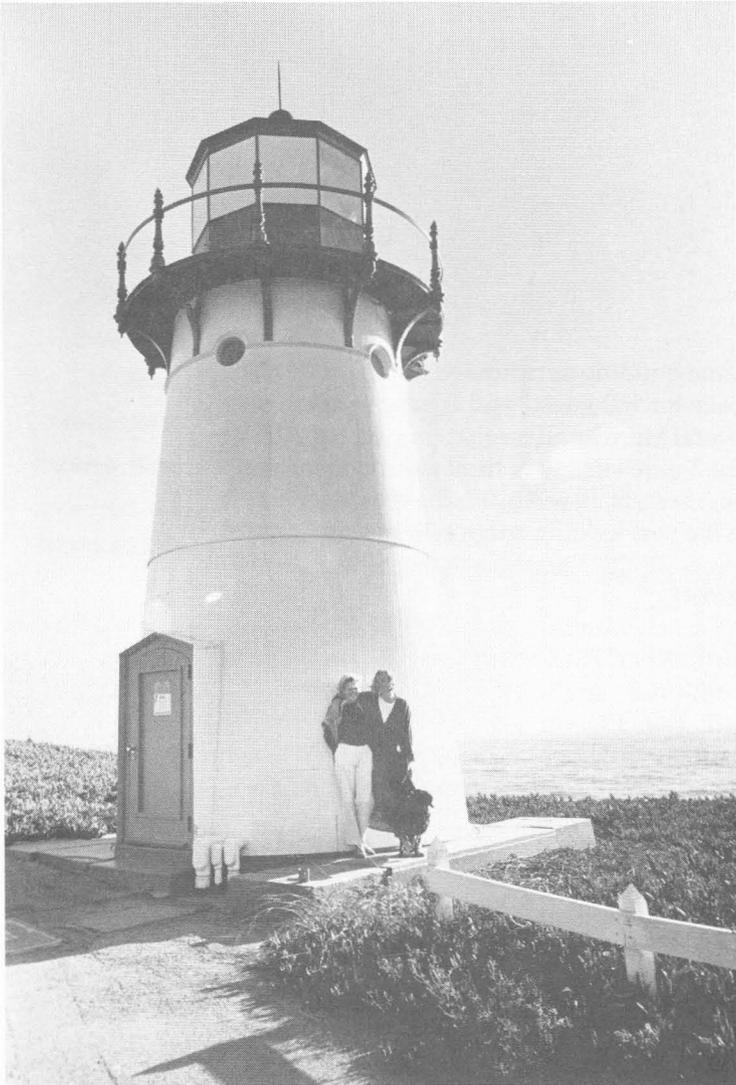
frame building surrounded by lawns. It has space for 160 guests and is easy to reach on several Muni bus lines that connect to BART. The 2 a.m. curfew is three hours later than most hostels. Few Americans visit what may be the best lodging bargain in the city; most guests at the Fort Mason hostel are from abroad.

Travel 50 miles south of San Francisco, and you'll find the Pigeon Point Lighthouse Hostel perched on a cliff overlooking the ocean. Of the many lighthouses that once stood on the California coast, 23 remain. Pigeon Point is one of 12 currently open to the public. Guests at Pigeon Point stay in the four adjoining white cottages once occupied by Coast Guard members and their families. Each cottage has bunk rooms and a shared living room and kitchen. I was

one of 20 guests on a Sunday night; the capacity is 60. An outdoor hot tub can be rented by hostel guests, and the former Fog Signal Building is now a recreation room with a piano, couches, and a ping-pong table. That evening, I got to know some of the other hostellers in my cottage: Rainer, a physics student from Germany who was hitchhiking along the coast after visiting Bay area universities, and Michael, a mechanic from England. Both were working off their hostel fees by painting and helping to build new bunks.



**New friends on  
Marin Headlands.**



**Montara  
Lighthouse**

During winter months, many of the Pigeon Point visitors are weekend travelers from Northern California. Groups of students from nearby schools often stay two or three nights as a part of environmental study programs. Summertime is busier; many guests are from abroad, and the hostel is usually full on weekends. A few beds are set aside nightly for late arrivals on foot or bicycle. "We never turn away hikers or bikers who come at night with no means of getting to another place," said Ann Goldberg, the evening staff person, "but sometimes we have to direct people who arrive by car to the Montara Lighthouse Hostel or motels in Half Moon Bay." Buses from Santa Cruz and San Francisco to Pigeon Point run three times a day during the week. Weekend service is even more limited.

Unlike Europe, where in most places the nearest hostel is a short walk from a train station and some hostels are within hiking or biking distance from each other, hosteling in

the United States without a car can be time consuming and complicated. But beautiful surroundings, low prices, and opportunities for new friendships make it worth the effort.

Other hostels along the coast north of San Francisco are Point Reyes Hostel in Marin County and Redwood Hostel near Crescent City; to the south there are Montara Lighthouse Hostel, Santa Cruz Hostel, YMCA Hostel in Carmel, San Clemente International Hostel, three hostels in the Los Angeles area, San Diego International Hostel, Point Loma Hostel, and Imperial Beach Hostel. Currently in the works are hostels in Santa Monica, at Point Sur Lighthouse, and at Point Cabrillo Lighthouse. Some operate only in the summer, and most require reservations on weekends and in summer months. It's always a good idea to call ahead to be sure of reservations, vacancies, directions, bus routes, and hours.

With a bit of advance planning, flexibility, and openmindedness, travelers of all ages interested in friendly and adventurous budget travel can take advantage of California's hostels.

The Coastal Conservancy has awarded a grant to American Youth Hostels to make four Bay area hostels handicap accessible. Montara and Point Reyes have been converted, and the Pigeon Point and San Francisco International hostels are almost ready.

I had a wonderful time showing Jackie and Vonnie Cassidy around Berkeley. We walked the length of Telegraph Avenue, toured the University of California campus, and ate at a Thai restaurant (their first taste of Thai food). Later that night, I taught them to make their favorite American dessert—chocolate chip cookies. Saying goodbye at the BART station the next day was sad; we'd become good friends. A week later, a letter came from Jackie inviting me to visit her family's farm in Ireland. Someday I'll go. □

*For more information on hosteling, call the American Youth Hostels Inc. at (415) 863-1444.*

## How Public Access Affects Wetlands

**P**UBLIC ACCESS IS AN INTEGRAL PART of many wetland enhancement projects, especially in urban areas of California. Yet little information is available on the effect of such access on wildlife. *Public Access and Wetlands: Impacts of Recreational Use*, is a report by Michael Josselyn, Molly Martindale, and Joan Duffield of San Francisco State University supported by the State Coastal Conservancy. The Conservancy commissioned the study to aid it in designing its wetland protection projects. It consisted of three components: a literature survey, a questionnaire to wetland managers, and a field study.

Few studies have been completed on this important issue. Based on a comprehensive literature search, only 26 articles and unpublished reports were found, most describing short-term impacts on plants, birds, mammals, and invertebrates. Documentation on long-term impacts, such as reductions in population numbers, was non-existent. Much of the literature dealt with the impacts of trampling on vegetation. In addition, reductions in breeding success of wildlife were reported from areas of high public access. No studies were found on the relative effectiveness of buffers and barriers, though these are often required in public access designs.

A questionnaire sent to 300 park and wildlife managers yielded 80 responses. Dirt roads and paths exist on many wetland sites, and interpretive centers are fairly common. The most common recreational activities are walking and bird watching. Regarding impacts, most respondents noted short-term effects, such as the initiation of movement or flight, but few had documented any long-term effects, such as reduction in population numbers. The barriers considered most effective were channels and high vegetation. Wetland managers saw a need for more information about the impact of public access on wildlife use of wetlands.

In the field study, birds in wetlands with the highest level of surrounding human activity were less frequently disturbed by

people than birds in areas with low human activity. It appears that the birds were accustomed to human activity. In areas of less frequent human presence, birds were far more sensitive. However—and most importantly—areas of high human use had substantially lower overall bird use than areas of



infrequent human use.

In conclusion, public access around wetlands can be detrimental to wildlife, though the impacts may be difficult to observe over the short term. More long-term studies need to be completed, especially at sites that are subject to increasing human use. Special attention needs to be focused on appropriate buffer distances and configurations, as it appears that without them, our urban wetlands will not support the diversity of wildlife that is found in natural wetlands. □

**Public Access and Wetlands: Impacts of Recreational Use**, 56 pages, is available from the Romberg Tiburon Centers, P.O. Box 855, Tiburon, CA 94920, for \$10, including postage and handling.

**A Wheelchair Rider Explores**

# Coasting on

**by Erick Damon Mikiten**

*Erick Damon Mikiten, who has a background in architecture and has used a manual wheelchair since early childhood, recently visited shoreline sites and hostels in the San Francisco Bay area in search of the most wheelchair-accessible and interesting places. He is compiling a guidebook to 20 accessible areas between Santa Cruz and Point Reyes for the Coastal Conservancy. The booklet will contain regional and local maps and other practical information, including access hours, any entry fees, and locations of accessible restrooms and reserved parking. It will be available this fall.*

## **The Edge of Nature**

*I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.*

—Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*

**C**ENTRAL TO WHEELCHAIR ACCESS is the fundamental issue of access to nature. Thoreau also wrote that “Our lives need the relief of the wilderness where the pine flourishes and the jay still screams.” Such relief is available at shoreline sites near populated areas along the San Francisco Bay. These places offer opportunities to move from an urban to a natural environment. They transform the constructed landscape produced by reasoning minds to the more enduring landscape beyond. In the gridded streets of the city we are enmeshed in a societal structure. Nature’s open spaces and irregularity break down this rigid framework, liberating us to encounter the environment on our own terms rather than on those of a developer or city planner. Experiences in nature can result in a new personal and professional point of view. My architectural training influences my perception of environments as individually calculated structures that do not necessarily work with each other. But in recent shoreline



SKETCHES BY ERICK D. MIKITEN

# the Wild Side

explorations, I appreciated causal interactions between plants and animals I encountered. I began to see the world through the eye of an individual rather than the eye of an architect. I enjoyed this liberation on challenging paths more than along manicured paved roads. Experiences in nature are physical encounters. We should be able to engage a steep, rocky slope or a sandy beach rather than having to settle only for easily crossed flat terrain.

The fringe of ocean that slips over the sandy edge of land or pounds against its rocky border is a place of dramatic change. Whether the land is flat beach or sheer cliff, it becomes horizontal along the margin of the Pacific Ocean. The ability to enjoy that contrast firsthand is essential to the full appreciation of both elements. But access for wheelchair riders to that convergence of water and land is emblematic of many other disability access problems; in everyday settings we can often get close to a goal, but are prevented from reaching it by one little staircase or, more crucially, a narrow restroom door.

There are places along the coast, however, where bodily contact with nature is possible for the wheelchair rider, where we can enter the water unassisted on tidal ramps or forge our way across rough terrain where nature is within arm's reach. These experiences allow us to begin to realize the larger connectivity of the body and spirit between man and nature.

With the specific issue of wheelchair access and the broader concern of appreciating nature in mind, I traveled the coastline and bay edge from the urban Santa Cruz Boardwalk to the Point Reyes wilderness on assignment for *California Waterfront Age* in search of places that provide the best access to the undulating line between the land and the sea.

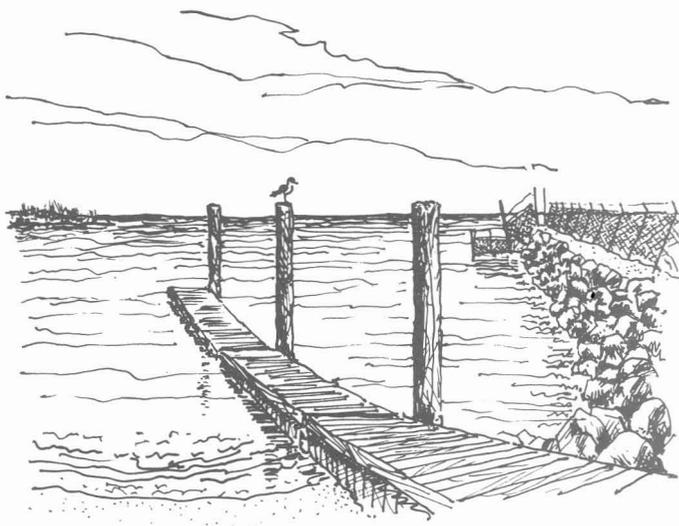
## **A Point of View**

My first encounter with the dramatic California coastline was three years ago, during a seven-month internship at an architectural firm in Santa Monica. That waterfront landscape is more commercially manipulated than many Bay area waterfronts, but significant access points exist. Marina Del Rey's tidal ramp and lender wheelchair program for going into the salt water is one successful example.

This research project allowed me to explore the coastline in a methodical way. Sustained observation such as this reveals the perpetual essence of nature. I felt a comradeship with the naturalist John Muir, who wrote: "It is always the sunrise somewhere; the dew is never all dried at once; a shower is forever falling; vapor is forever rising."

Park brochures and the California Coastal Commission's *California Coastal Access Guide* are good sources of basic information for the Pacific coastline. However, the book excludes

bay waterfronts from its discussion, and some entries in the latest edition, published in 1983, are out of date or are insufficiently detailed to be of much use.



*Encinal Launching and Fishing Facility, Alameda*

and hares rush across the path around you. All these are part of the wetlands where two-thirds of our coastal fish and shellfish spend part of their lives.

### **The Exploration**

A wonderfully exhausting six-mile wheelchair trip along the East Bay can reveal several faces of the Hayward Regional Shoreline. At its northern edge, San Leandro's Marina Park has a winding asphalt path that connects many paved picnic table and barbecue areas. The park's large open space is often filled with people throwing Frisbees, playing baseball, and flying kites. Nearby, a smooth, slightly rolling one-mile asphalt jogging loop is a convenient exercise course.

Another asphalt path leads south across a bridge and along the shore for one and a quarter miles before changing to dusty dirt and crushed rock. It extends across a pedestrian bridge over the San Lorenzo Creek and eventually reaches the staging area at Grant Avenue. The degradation I found here was disappointing, signaling the critical condition of our shoreline.

From Grant Avenue the path connects to ones that originate at the park office at Winton Avenue and the Hayward Shoreline Interpretive Center off Highway 92 at the southern end of the Regional Shoreline.

Moving along the area's mud flats, I began to understand how they changed with the weather. Sometimes they are cold, barren landscapes across which wicked winds fly off the bay waters. Other times they are vibrant, expansive landscapes full of life, where birds with long, thin, nerve-tipped bills probe into the ooze and where ground squirrels

The Interpretive Center is a wonderful and accessible station for learning to appreciate even the less dramatic areas of the bay. Once we realize that fill and development has diminished the bay to half the size it was in 1850, we can understand and cherish these remnants of an ecosystem that was previously much more diverse.

In time we discover special places that allow us to appropriate something in the public domain. The experience of being alone underneath the Golden Gate Bridge or making a long trek out a dusty back trail are intimate encounters that let us adopt public places as our own. Exploration off the beaten path reveals these places that are so important to the individual enjoyment of nature.

Fort Point, on the San Francisco side of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, is archetypical of the best of the Bay area urban waterfront. It offers a contrast between the drama of water and land and that of the human built environment. There are reserved parking spaces and accessible restrooms located periodically along the bay from the fort to the South Beach Marina. You can plot out an exercise routine—depending on time and stamina—to confront the hill between Fort Mason and Aquatic Park or the wide open spaces along Marina Green. Or you might plan a casual stroll out to the point to contemplate the dramatic landscape where enormous tankers pass below the Golden Gate Bridge, which rises above the blocky fort building. At sunset, from this spot below

the massive rust-colored girders of the bridge, looking southeast toward the city, you see the light-colored buildings glow with the reddening light from the setting sun, radiant against the foreground of Italian stone pines along the roads incised in the nearby cliff side.

Elsewhere around the Golden Gate, such as at Fort Funston, there are more natural areas that display only remnants of past human interventions. A number of abandoned forts and batteries are accessible to wheelchairs and often have parking nearby. The ruin-like concrete shell of Fort Funston's Battery Baker is dark and ominous. Broken bottles and charred floors indicate a nocturnal use of these places by people who are gone in the daytime. Light that finds its way in is quickly absorbed by the shadows. Echoes rebound off smooth, hard walls covered with graffiti about war. These graffiti and the debris left behind by the anonymous visitors form a subtext that, in the cold darkness of the battery chambers, provides a sobering backdrop to the objective historical signage at the beginning of the trails leading you here.

South of San Francisco, Natural Bridges in Santa Cruz is an example of how focus is continued inland from the actual coastline in places that are part of the park property. Monarch butterflies roost in the tall eucalyptus here from early October to March. An extensive ramp system allows access to the gully where the monarchs perch. The ramp terminates in a wooden walkway that connects to a three-level viewing platform. Only the lowest level is wheelchair accessible, although the other levels easily could have been made so. Two steps down from the wooden walkway prevent wheelchair access to a dirt path. The path becomes impassable by wheelchair in a few

hundred yards, but contact with the ground should have been incorporated into the design. It is difficult to comprehend the logic of a ramp that takes the wheelchair rider down about 40 feet only to be kept from the ground by two 7-inch steps.

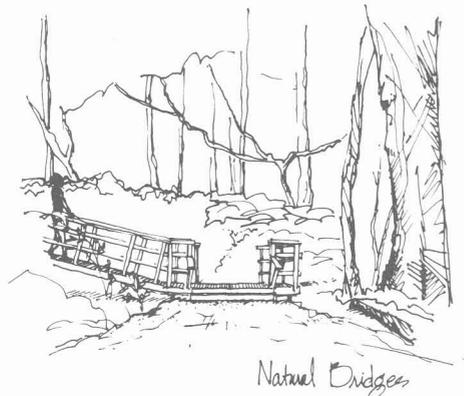
The visitors' center at the top of the ramp is inaccessible because of two steps up to its entry door. And the fine sand of the nearby beach has no accommodation for wheelchair access. In the aggregate, this is a place to which some attention has been paid and a large effort has been made to provide wheelchair access, but a few issues small in scale but large in significance have been overlooked.

A bike and jogging path follows West Cliff Drive from Natural Bridges to the Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf, the longest public drive-on pier on the West Coast. From the wharf one can fish and look back to the Santa Cruz Boardwalk. Teeming with people, it looks like a colorful stage set displayed against the backdrop of the mountains and the foreground of the beach and ocean. A temporary access ramp to the beach near the wharf is in the works, and two permanent access points to the beach in the wharf area are being planned for the near future.

### **The Guidebook**

I experienced these places in an Everest&Jennings Ultra Lite Premier—a foldable manual chair. I conferred with the user of an electric wheelchair to have a broader base for characterizing the conditions I encountered, but because

information required for definitive access knowledge varies with every kind of disability and every sort of wheelchair, the guidebook takes a descriptive approach rather than an ascriptive "yes" or "no" approach.





Keller Beach Richmond

Note is made of eccentricities, such as the illogical placement of curb cuts around the Golden Gate Yacht Club near the Presidio, or the apparent surplus of blue parking spaces at the Juan Manuel De Ayala Vista Point on the other side of the Golden Gate. Locations of accessible restrooms and other practical information provide the peace of mind essential for full enjoyment of any excursion. Since the status of shoreline development is in constant flux, the guidebook will contain information about future plans and numbers to call to find out whether the work has been completed.

I characterize some places as "mountain-wheelchair" environments. These require leverage, shifting weight, and concentration on the road rather than on the scenery. Some trails in the Point Reyes area are like this. Others, such as San Francisco's bayside trails, are better described as interesting urban hikes or friendly strolls; their reliable surfaces suit the wheelchair rider who wants to give most of his attention to the surroundings.

The consistency of beach sand ranges from very fine powder to something close to gravel. The more coarse it is, the more readily it will support a wheelchair. But I found none on which I could confidently go out more than ten feet without assistance. At several sites, such as the Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf and the Half Moon Bay State Beach, access is planned not only across the beach, but also to the water.

I discovered practical conveniences for wheelchair riders through trial and error. Fingerless gloves with leather palms of the sort used for weight-lifting or biking are good in dusty, fairly flat areas for increased pushing and braking traction. However, they interfere with power and control on steep climbs and rough terrain because of the larger effective diameter one has to grip.

A standard backpack slung across my chair's push handles holds my camera and sketchpad, a biker's water bottle, binoculars, and moist towelettes. The water bottle is useful because of the many different sizes and configurations of drinking fountains. Some of the low ones were actually more difficult for me to use than high ones, so I did not attempt to qualify these for other people. Water bottles can easily be filled up anywhere, provided you have full hand function. Get one that won't leak when other things in the backpack press against it.

Binoculars are useful for looking at path conditions ahead, wildlife, and the panoramic views that the shoreline always offers. The naturalist David Cavagnaro said that "the closer one looks, the farther one sees." Binoculars reveal the details that lie between ourselves and the horizon. Seeing everything—being able to discern people and cars and animals moving—allowed a greater appreciation of the vastness of some of the landscapes I encountered. Binoculars bring you closer to the inevitable inaccessible places, such as Santa Cruz's Lighthouse Beach, where surfers climb down stairs to water that smashes against the rocks below the waterfront bicycle path.

Portable bathrooms have no sinks for washing the unavoidable dust off your hands and wheel grips. So pack moist towelettes to clean up after a trek in the hills.

### **The Extent of Access**

It is understandable that complete access was not provided at certain places when they were first set aside for public use. Attitudes and awareness were different when these sites were first secured by their respective

*Continued on Page 48*

# A Day at the Beach

by Ralf Hotchkiss  
and Deborah Kaplan

**W**HEN OUR FAMILY visited the beach at Santa Cruz a while ago, our experience was not unusual. We decided to explore the jetty at the north side of the harbor, because it provided a workable way to get our wheelchairs close to the water. Unfortunately, a chained and locked gate blocked the path to the jetty. We were almost finished cutting through the chain with a bolt cutter when along came a burly fellow who jimmied the "No Entrance" sign so that we could squeeze under. So we left the chain in place and went on, taking advantage of a rare opportunity to get near the beach.

For many people with physical disabilities, California's beaches are a source of frustration rather than recreation. Wheelchair riders (we prefer this term over "wheelchair-bound" and others that imply inactivity and restriction) simply can't make it over sand; their wheels sink in and can't move. People who use canes, crutches, or walkers share the problem. For all of us, the narrow paths, uneven surfaces, and slopes that lead to most beaches are equally impossible.

Without access to beaches, disabled people cannot enjoy the coastline. (Rocky shores are accessible only to the most nimble, of course.)

This means that they cannot join in social activities that take place on our beaches and are excluded from gatherings of family and friends at barbecues, picnics, and other get-togethers.

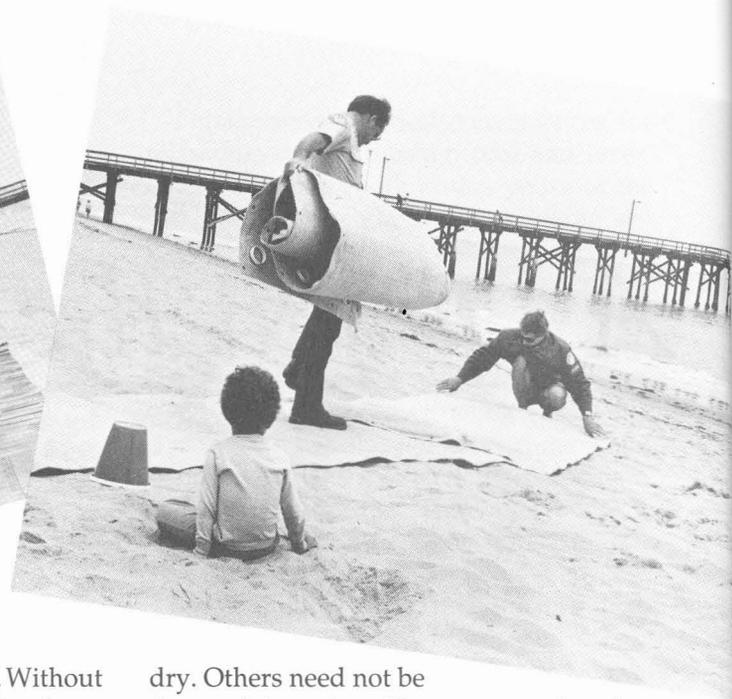
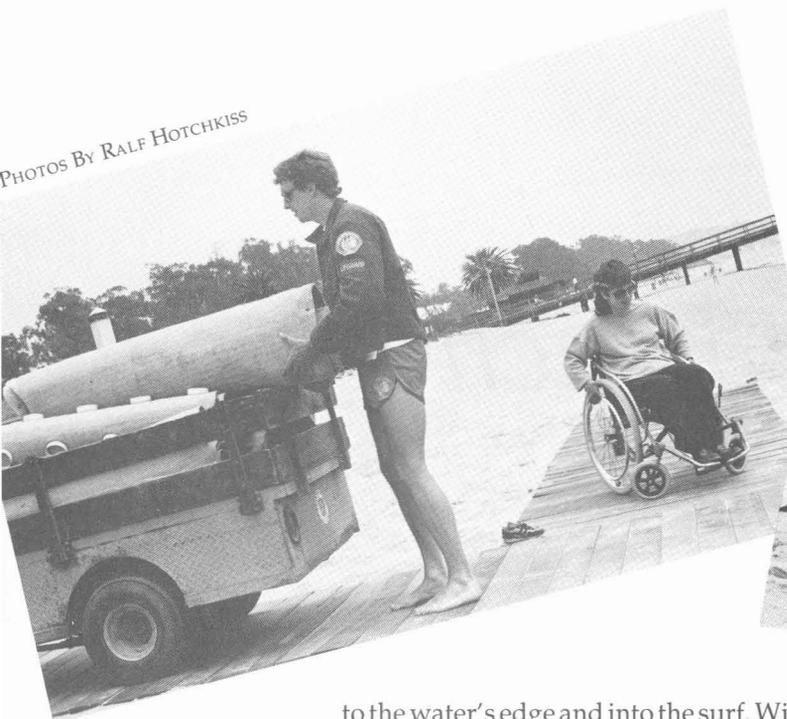
Beach barriers had an increasing impact on our family as our son grew into a toddler and into an active little boy. Now three years old, he loves the beach, but still needs close supervision. Because we both are disabled, we have not been able to watch over him at the water, nor enjoy his first forays into the waves, nor help to build his first sand castles. When we go to a beach, we must find friends to take him to the water while we wait on firm ground away from the sand.

With this in mind, the Coastal Conservancy asked us to visit Goleta Beach County Park near Santa Barbara to check out the provisions for access, which go far beyond those provided in most other areas. In 1987, the park rangers there consulted with disabled people from the local community and began to make gradual changes designed to bring disabled people

RALF HOTCHKISS



**Sand rickshaw  
at Goleta Beach.**



to the water's edge and into the surf. Without any specific budget allocations, the Santa Barbara County Park Department has accomplished major improvements.

In addition to fairly standard access features such as bathroom modifications, parking for disabled persons, and access to other fixed facilities, the park now has a wood-slat platform leading from a paved path near the parking lot to the high tide level on the beach. For the strip of shoreline exposed during low tide there are mats of reinforced felt, which can be laid on the sand to form a path. There is also a beach chair, called a sand rickshaw, on fat balloon tires for moving over sand and floating in the water. The mats and chair require a non-disabled person to pull.

We arrived at Goleta Beach one early June morning. The park offers a wide, sandy beach and a picnic area, a bird sanctuary, and a fishing pier.

The wood-slat platform at the beach passes right by the lifeguard tower, so we went over and asked what was available. Rangers and lifeguards were ready and eager to provide a demonstration. Within ten minutes the beach mats had been taken out of the storage area and brought over in the back of an electric cart. It took another couple of minutes to roll them out over the wet sand down to the water. A ranger told us that these mats have one unfortunate feature: when wet, they mildew. This is a constant problem, for they are covered with water with every incoming tide. Rangers put them out on the grass to

dry. Others need not be deterred from installing mats on beaches, however, for now plastic ones that do not mildew are available.

The mats created a temporary access path that was certainly easier to roll over than sand. We had no trouble getting down to the end of the rolls, despite the steepness of the beach's incline this year. With such an incline, the footrests of a wheelchair can dig into the ground in front of the chair. However, the softness of this surface helped to slow down our descent, giving us more control of the chairs. Once down on the wet sand, we were able to scoot up and down the beach where the waves were washing—something we had never done before. Getting back up was another matter. Because of the steep slope and the soft surface, we needed a push.

We built sand castles with our son on this beach, we played with seaweed and jellyfish. Toward the end of the day we tried out the sand rickshaw, but did not use it to go into the water. The chair is lightweight and easy to pull over sand. It is also remarkably stable on sand, even over uneven surfaces. Its major shortcoming is that it cannot be used independently and requires a non-disabled person to pull it. Because balancing the chair in surf requires skill, the lifeguards said they prefer to do the pulling. This poses obvious problems for disabled persons who want to enjoy the beach without feeling they are imposing on others. On the other hand, the



staff made it quite clear that they were more than willing to take us for a ride.

At another part of this park, we discovered a barrier to access. Children's playgrounds are always attractive to our family, and Goleta Beach has one. Unfortunately, like many other playgrounds, it has a sand surface. Our son played on the swings and climbing structures, but once again we could not join him and had to watch from the sidelines, hoping he would not get hurt. In some playgrounds, mats of thick rubber, stiff foam, or plastic are now used to prevent injuries without denying access.

### **A Visit to Crown Beach**

We also recently visited Crown Beach in Alameda on San Francisco Bay. Here the State Coastal Conservancy planners and the East Bay Regional Park District set out to provide barrier-free access to a rocky intertidal area. In contrast to the shifting sands of Goleta, a permanent concrete rampway with a continuous handrail was planned for this urban waterfront park. It starts at the top of the shoreline and continues to the low-tide mark, allowing people with mobility impairments to see the tidepools and get as close to the water as possible.

The Crown Beach walk is very well-done. The surface of the walkway is textured cement, protecting people who walk from slipping. The incline of the walk is gentle, so that wheelchair riders should be able to manage

it without assistance. Other facilities are also well designed. A bathroom next to the visitors' center has a sliding door, lots of space inside for turning around, and sturdy and well-placed grab bars. There is a ramp into the visitors' center, and there are paved walkways to the accessible shoreline trail.

The walkway runs along the rocks, making tidal vegetation easy to see and feel at low tide. Because it is mostly underwater at high tide, checking the tidal schedules and going at low tide is definitely worth the trouble. Goleta Beach is best when the tide is going out—more sand is wet and well packed then. We learned the hard way by hitting both beach access points at the wrong times—but it felt so damn good to get down to the surf after years of watching from the bluffs that we just did not care. □

*Deborah Kaplan is staff attorney for the World Institute on Disability in Berkeley. She is working to organize the civil rights movement for the disabled worldwide.*

*Ralf Hotchkiss, Deborah's husband, is a wheelchair designer who has worked with wheelchair riders in many Third World countries, helping to design wheelchairs specially suited to the riders' needs and using readily available materials. Last month, he received a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Fellowship.*

*Hotchkiss and Kaplan used lightweight manual chairs for their beach visits. However, Hotchkiss says, most electric chairs would also work fine on Goleta and Crown beaches.*

**Lifeguards roll out the mat for access to the water's edge at Goleta Beach.**

## Letter to the Editor

---

### **Landfill Reconsidered**

Editor:

In your spring issue, Heather Clendenin Antilla made it sound like a fine idea to reclaim old landfills by letting landscape architects and artists work magic on their surfaces. But the article had a special poignancy for me.

My company, Urban Ore, Inc., operated a municipal composting facility on one of those old landfills for nearly four years until the middle of 1986, proving the feasibility of large-scale composting as a disposal option for yard debris. This was significant because yard debris is about 20 to 25 percent of a city's total discards. We were forced off the landfill by a lawsuit and public relations campaign with one central idea: composting was incompatible with a planned park of just the sort that Antilla's article commends.

The park is now being built atop a layer of clay that caps an environmental disaster. All landfills are environmental disasters, from old open dumps to modern lined fills. As Antilla says, the newest, most modern ones are lined with "impermeable" membranes. But recent tests show the membranes may leak as soon as 24 hours after being challenged by leachate. Leachate is the toxic cocktail that seeps for many years out of every landfill when the buried liquids mix with rainwater and dissolved solids from the garbage. Detection systems cannot prevent leaks; they simply tell us when the containment has failed. The leachate will inevitably end up in the nearest groundwater, river, or bay. The landfill also gives off methane, which is the next most voluminous of the greenhouse gases after carbon dioxide; it is 25 times as effective as CO<sub>2</sub> at trapping heat in the atmosphere. Reusing these toxic time-bombs as parks is like landscaping an old mine's slag heap that is still polluting a river.

In at least two instances, landfill parks have foreclosed composting. Consequently, resources that could have been turned into humus have continued to produce leachate or methane. The closing of Urban Ore's Compost Farm left the Bay area with only the city of San Mateo municipal composting facility, run on the surface of the city's closed landfill. It, too, is now closed, and the site is to become a park.

Now no municipal plant-debris compost facilities remain in the Bay area, to my knowledge. The East Bay Municipal Utility District composts sewage sludge, but it uses wood chips imported from the forest products industry for the composting, not local plant debris. Several garbage companies shred plant debris, but screen it immediately and sell the finest particles to nurseries and landscapers. Only about 10 percent of the original supply is eventually used in horticulture. The other 90 percent is burned as boiler fuel, which is another way of saying it is instantly turned into carbon dioxide. Several disposal companies in the Bay area have expressed interest in composting at least some of their plant debris. But they say they cannot locate enough space to do it.

Composting is space-intensive. Plant debris has to be shredded and piled in windrows, where it sits for three to six months decomposing into rich, black humus. Turning and watering speed the process.

Urban Ore stabilized its space requirements at about 6.5 acres serving a population base of about 150,000, and our disposal fee was low enough to capture about three-quarters of the available plant debris. We sold most of what we made, too. About 260 acres could suffice to compost all the plant debris the Bay area produces.

The stakes are large. In addition to the plant debris, non-reusable wood could be shredded and added to the compost. (Wood

is 10 percent of total discards.) Another 5 percent is soil from excavations. Nearly all of that could be blended with compost to make a heavy, mineralized product close to natural topsoil. If a composting facility added crushing equipment, it could crush concrete, non-reusable brick, plaster, rock, and wall-board into sand, gravel, and powders. Some could be sold, some blended with the compost to make various specialized products. These crushable materials make up another 5 percent of the total discards currently dumped at landfills. Recycling them would take perhaps the same amount of space as plant debris would require. The total volume of these four categories—plant debris, wood, soil, and rubble—approaches 50 percent of discards. So recycling nearly half of the Bay area's current discards would require about 520 acres.

I wish *Waterfront Age* readers would think hard for a few minutes about where to find 520 acres in the Bay area usable for these purposes. A single huge site would not do, for hauling would cost too much. Commercial property is too expensive; to pay the rent, recyclers would have to charge a high disposal fee. Besides, commercial properties are seldom large enough. Most other lands are either spoken for or unsuitable.

The most logical recycling sites are on old landfills. Most are conveniently located, so users can get to them easily and economically. New landfills can be reached only by a long haul by truck, wasting diesel fuel.

The new upland landfills have also brought a new connection between garbage and water resources. The old fills were along the shorelines; Antilla correctly points out that "dumping garbage along shorelines and marshes is now illegal in this country, and is generally regarded as uncouth." But it is not illegal or uncouth to dump garbage into the headwaters of streams, where new upland

fills are located. Landfills are now sited in canyons, cut by creeks that still flow at the bottoms of those very canyons, feeding streams that discharge into the ocean or into San Francisco Bay. They thus pollute not only the bay, but the headwaters and everything in between.

Those new sites could receive as much as 50 percent less material if old sites were used for recycling. We should amend landfill closure rules to permit and even require the continued use of landfill surfaces for this use. If enough low-cost land were available for recycling, disposal fees could be kept low enough to capture the supply of discards and prevent them from going to competing facilities, such as upland dumps.

I have no objection to using art to remind us of how landfills came to be. Still, it seems in the best interest of the environment to share the space with a form of disposal that slows the rate of today's landfilling. That would be a living, working solution built on top of yesterday's disaster.

As of now, all the landscaping and artwork are only artifices that cover the harsh reality of a stunted and truncated recycling industry that has no room to work. The parks are fueling the continued march of destructive landfills over our landscape.

Daniel Knapp  
General Manager  
Urban Ore, Inc.

NANCY GORRELL



The recycler's ideal

## Wheelchair Access

Continued from Page 42

agencies. But now it is time to make the accommodations that will open as many places as possible to us all. Natural landscapes are crucial to each of us.

hastily. We must preserve the rough physical quality of nature and be cautious with our constructed interventions. Some paths had a foot or two of gravel on each side. In addition,

one had a swath of grass mowed down beyond the gravel edge. Such borders prevent contact with plants along the path and constitute the difference between looking at nature and being with nature.

The guidebook is one wheelchair rider's examination of some places with varying degrees of access. It is a sourcebook for people who need the information it contains, and it is part of the dialogue between those who provide access and those who use it. We hope that the guidebook will raise some awareness of the practical results of completed projects and contribute something to projects yet to be built.

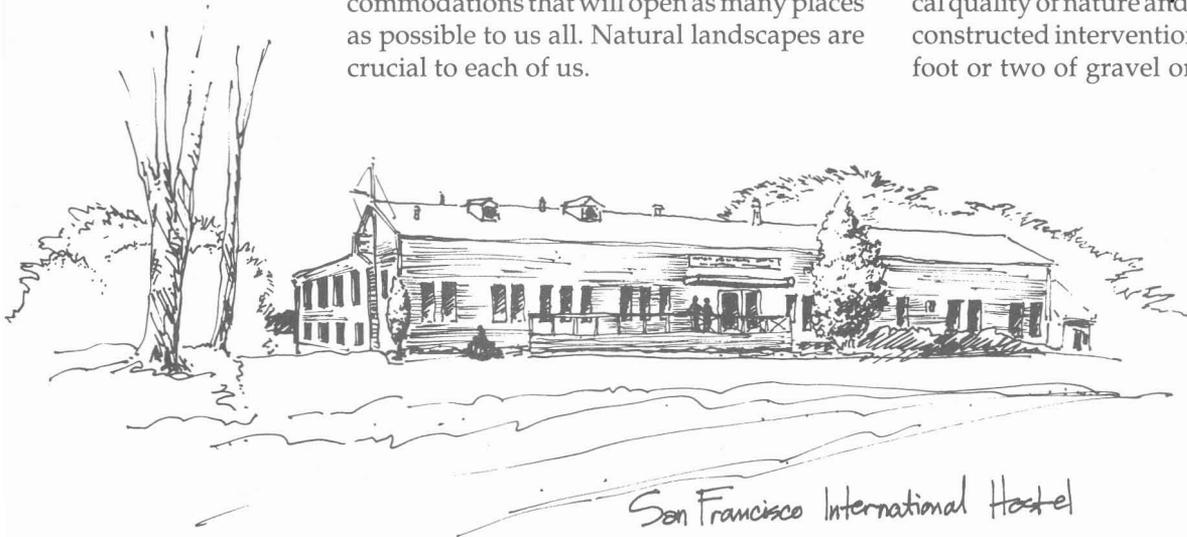
A display at the elaborate and accessible Coyote Point Museum quoted the San Mateo Planning Department: "The natural environment sets many subtle restrictions on man's use of land." We must be sensitive to this when we consider the way in which we interface with the natural environment and the degree of automobile, pedestrian, or wheelchair access we can have. □

At the same time, there are public places, such as the beach access down Santa Cruz's cliff sides for surfers, for which costly ramp systems would be completely impractical and would probably be rarely used. I disagree with the unrealistic argument that no public access should be paid for with public funds unless complete access is provided for people with disabilities. This attitude would deprive the majority of the public of some significant points of access to nature and

would deprive us all of some places that can only be made partially accessible for people with disabilities. Instead, work priorities must be established requiring that core areas around parking and other facilities get attended to first. And relatively minor conditions that are obstacles to access—such as the two steps at the

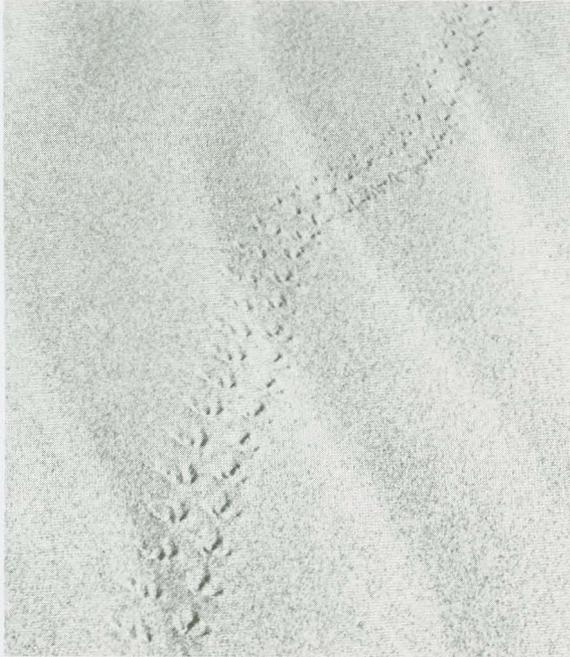
Natural Bridges visitors' center—should be addressed immediately.

Once we are assured that instruments of access will be supplied at a particular site, we must be mindful not to make the changes too



**To receive the wheelchair access guide, write to:  
California Waterfront Age,  
State Coastal Conservancy,  
1330 Broadway, Suite 1100,  
Oakland, CA 94612.  
Agencies or organizations  
please indicate the number of  
copies you would like.**

*Erick Damon Mikiten received a Master of Architecture degree from the University of California at Berkeley this spring. He has lived in Oakland for the past year.*



## **Mystery Photo**

Looks easy, doesn't it? We'll see! Identify this photo, provided by Jeff Northam at San Mateo's Coyote Point Museum, and win a free subscription to your favorite magazine, *Waterfront Age*.

**Last issue's mystery solved:**

Sharon Moreland, an ecologist with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, provided us with everything we ever wanted to know (and even some things we never expected) about our last mystery photo: "concretions in eroded sandstone bluff at Bowling Ball Beach just north of Schooner Gulch Beach, located in the southern part of Mendocino County at approximately mile post 11.5 on Highway 1." Reward for most complete answer: one subscription to *Waterfront Age*.

SIMONE WILSON



The Romberg Tiburon Centers  
San Francisco State University  
1600 Holloway Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94132

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
San Francisco, CA  
Permit No. 7741

