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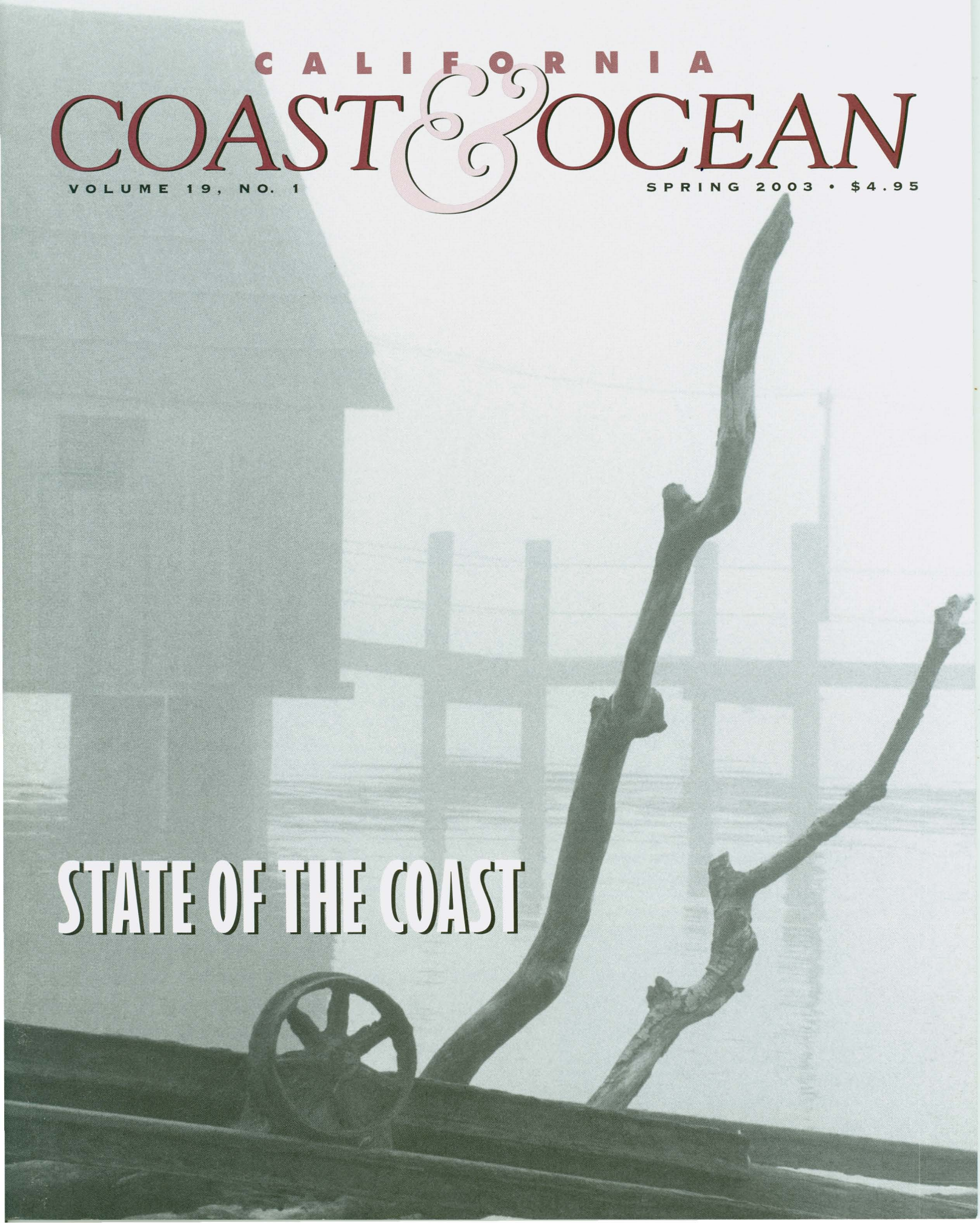

STATE OF THE COAST

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Important Notice

The last issue of *Coast & Ocean,* Winter 2002–2003, was incorrectly numbered on the cover. It was Volume 18, Number 4, as correctly indicated on the Table of Contents. This issue is Volume 19, Number 1. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.

Cover: China Camp State Park, Marin County, 1989. Clifford Baker, a fourth-generation Californian, began his lifelong love affair with the coast and ocean at his grandparents' beach cottage on the Rincon, between Santa Barbara and Ventura. He graduated from Stanford University, and was artist in residence with California State Parks in 1982, working for a summer along the central coast. His photographs have been widely published. He lives in San Rafael, and is working on a book about Point Reyes.

Back cover: Brown pelican by Kenneth Gardiner

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Snowy Egret landing, San Francisco Bay

COASTAL VIEWPOINT

Anarchy or Law and Order?

WHILE VISITING in Finland some years ago, I learned that everyone there was free to wander in the woods, no matter who owned them, to pick berries and gather mushrooms. It was expected no gates would be left open and the privacy of nearby residents would be respected. This was so different from custom and law in this country that I was amazed. Yet it's not unusual in Europe. Footpaths traverse fields that have been cultivated for hundreds of years in Germany and elsewhere. In England, walking is a favorite sport and the right to ramble and roam is firmly established (see p. 20).

In lands with ancient traditions and stable, relatively homogenous populations, unwritten ground rules may suffice because they come from shared values. On California's coast, with its rapidly growing population and changing society, more explicit standards are needed. Here too there are footpaths, along blufftops and across coastal meadows to beaches and fishing spots, used for uncounted years by people who know where to find them. In some cases, historic use may have established public rights-of-way (see p. 16).

We are also fortunate to have expanding networks of trails and much more shoreline access than people enjoy elsewhere in this country. As more and more of the open space on the coast is either developed or protected, however, public access for recreation is increasingly formalized, codified, regulated, and restricted.

This trend is part of a societal change. We have become more fearful, less open to strangers. Our social contract is frayed, our sense of a shared commons diminished. As the gulf between urban and rural dwellers widens and impoverished school systems can no longer serve their essential function of preparing new generations of citizens to assume stewardship of our heritage, rules take the place of shared values. More and more signs with ever-longer lists of rules are posted in public places. No dogs. No skateboards. No loitering. Will we eventually see the sign that reads: Everything not expressly permitted is forbidden?

As Phyllis Faber reports in her review of the state of our coast (p. 3), we have come a long way in protecting our shoreline from exploitation and irresponsible development. But as we assert authority over natural places, can we resist the temptation to overmanage?

When I was a child in the city of Kaunas, Lithuania, most afternoons my grandmother would take me and my little sister to a nicely manicured park. It was boring. But when we visited a favorite aunt and uncle at their farm, I found magical places. One day I walked into field of wheat that was taller than I, and following a furrow, discovered a little pond. It became my place. I did not need to own it. It was enough that I had found it and could go there, in fact or in dreams. I told no one about it.

All children need to discover special places where they can feel free in nature, even if only for a little while—and adults do too. My daughter grew up in San Francisco without ever seeing a golden wheat field with blue cornflowers and red poppies. But she and her friends had discovered neglected pockets of wildness and made them their own. (I didn't know that till much later.)

In the urban landscape, wildness may be found in an abandoned industrial landscape that is being reclaimed by nature. Such is the Albany Bulb, an old landfill extending into San Francisco Bay from its eastern shore. It is now part of a new state park that is of symbolic significance, for the municipal garbage dumps that used to smoulder there were catalysts for the Save San Francisco Bay movement, which sparked the Save Our Coast movement, which led to the California Coastal Act of 1972. In this issue, Don Neuwirth, chief planner for Eastshore State Park, offers his perspective on the general plan that was completed in March.

The Albany Bulb was a Gordian knot. Since the landfill was closed in 1984, life had moved in without asking permission. Wild shrubbery and grasses covered rubble and junk. Homeless people settled in, then were evicted, leaving behind not just trash but artful dwellings, paintings on rocks, and sculptures made of twisted rebar and old hubcaps. A group of artists began to meet on the shore on weekends to paint on hunks of concrete and sculpt shapes from Styrofoam washed in by winter storms. People who came to walk and let their dogs run on the Bulb discovered these creations, were amazed, told friends, and came back to see what was new (see *Coast & Ocean*, Winter 1999–2000). When the park planning process began, some of these people organized as Let It Be, to plead: Don't mess with this unique place, it's great.

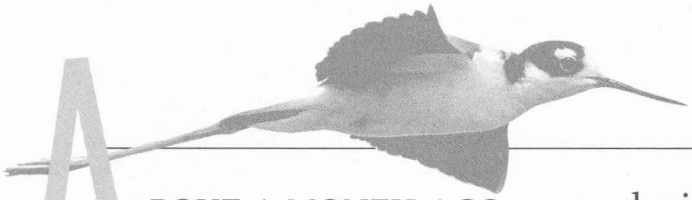
The artists and the planners did not seem able to find common ground. It's not clear how hard anyone tried, or what might have resolved the impasse. Neuwirth writes that the artwork "will be evaluated and removed."

Was there no way to retain this little island of anarchy (i.e., self-organization) within the larger park plan—as long as it continued to work without causing problems? Was it simply fear of what might happen that ruled it out? We preserve Native American shellmounds as part of our cultural heritage. Is this old landfill, with the life that has manifested on it, not also part of our heritage? Might we not benefit from watching and studying the exuberant and unplanned processes taking place here, at least until there is good reason to do something else? By so doing, we might learn something we need to know about ourselves.

—*Rasa Gustaitis*

State of the Coast

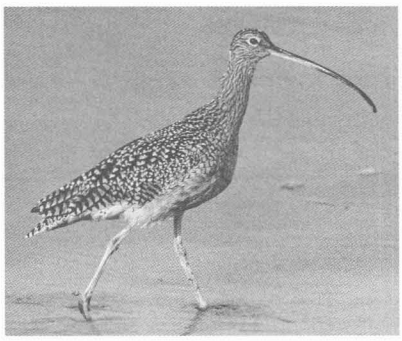
PETER VILMS



PHYLLIS M. FABER

ABOUT A MONTH AGO, on a glorious sparkling day, I drove south along the San Mateo County Coast with two longtime allies, on our way to a gathering of coastal activists in Monterey. We were euphoric at the beauty and pristine wildness of the coast around us, just over the hill from a metropolitan region of seven million people. An absolute miracle, we all agreed.

Today, most of us take the stunning California coast for granted. We expect to have access to beaches and to be able to drive past miles of sea bluffs and marine terraces with unimpeded views of the ocean. Do we ever wonder

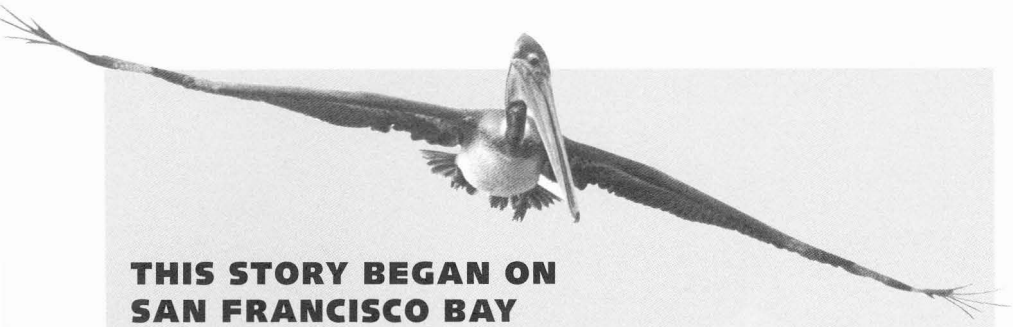


BIRD PHOTOS THIS STORY: KEN GARDINER

Top: Port San Luis Lighthouse in San Luis Obispo County

Above left: Black-necked stilt

Above: Curlew



THIS STORY BEGAN ON SAN FRANCISCO BAY

THE COASTAL COMMISSION was in part modeled after the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), established in 1965 by the McAteer-Petris Act to create a comprehensive management system for San Francisco Bay. This was the first such regulatory body in the nation created by citizen activism—a remarkable feat in such a large and urbanized area. At the time, the Bay had shrunk by a third because of diking and filling for agriculture and urban development and all but four miles of the nine-county shoreline was inaccessible to the public. Under BCDC's watch, not only have diking and filling stopped, but California's largest estuary has actually been allowed to expand. Even as the metropolitan area's population keeps growing—it stands today at nearly seven million—significant portions of the shoreline are being given back to nature. To date, some 30,000 acres of historic wetlands have been acquired for restoration or are in process of being acquired—unthinkable 40 years ago. In March escrow closed on the 15,000-acre South Bay Cargill salt ponds, the largest acquisition yet. Public access has been expanded to about 200 miles, and the 400-mile Bay Trail has been brought more than halfway to completion. It will eventually circle the Bay. BCDC Executive Director Will Travis warns, however, that because the Bay is shallow and therefore easy to fill, it will continue to be threatened.

Top: Brown pelican

Above: Western sandpipers

how such an undeveloped coastline could continue to exist in a state with a population of 34 million (double what it was two decades ago), 80 percent living within five miles of the coast?

Thirty years ago a very different coastline was in the works, with high-rise developments and private locked-gate estates, heavy oil and sand extraction industries, nuclear power plants, and a multi-lane coastal freeway. Public access was being closed off, scenic landscapes and beaches were threatened. How so much of the coast's natural character has been preserved is indeed a remarkable story.

In 1972 a small group of coastal activists, organized as the Coastal Alliance, spearheaded a "Save Our Coast" voter initiative, Proposition 20 (see *Coast & Ocean,* Winter 2002–2003, pp. 27–32). This ballot measure created the California Coastal Commission and gave it regulatory power over land use within a designated Coastal Zone for four years, during which time it was to develop a coastal plan for California. After extensive hearings in many coastal communities, the Commission submitted a comprehensive Coastal Plan to the Legislature, which then, despite ongoing opposition from development and local government interests, passed the 1976 California Coastal Act. Many of the values set out in the Coastal Plan were adopted into this legislation, and the Commission was made permanent. In a separate bill, the Legislature created the Coastal Conservancy, a non-regulatory agency with flexible powers enabling it to buy lands when the opportunity arises, consolidate properties, resell them, and undertake projects to preserve, protect, and restore the coast in keeping with the Coastal Act. The combined efforts of these two agencies have given California a coastline that is the envy of the nation.

Today, 30 years later, has the vision of the Coastal Alliance as expressed in Proposition 20 been realized along the coast? Has the coast truly been saved? Peter Douglas, the Commission's executive director for the past 18 years, is fond of saying, "The coast is never saved, it is always being saved." He believes, however, that a basic shift in expectations has occurred. Because a protective Coastal Commission exists, people believe that the coast is theirs, a common treasure rather than undeveloped real estate. They assume the coast is safeguarded. Politicians know this. In 2002, when a court of appeal upheld a challenge to the Commission's constitutionality, Governor Gray Davis called the Legislature into special session and it quickly passed a bipartisan bill correcting the problem. In signing the bill on February 16, 2003, Governor Davis said: "I've long believed that the coast belongs to everyone, not just to those who are fortunate enough to live there," and referred to the Coastal Commission as "guardian angel of the coast."

That "guardian angel," however, gets its strength from public vigilance and support. The Coastal Act may have changed the ground rules, but the tug-of-war among different interests continues to intensify as California's population keeps growing and land available for development and preservation keeps shrinking. In fact, our level of

coastal protection is only as strong as the commitment of the appointing authorities (the Assembly, the Senate, and the Governor, each of whom appoints four commissioners) to select commissioners who will uphold the law. The 1976 Coastal Act, not unlike the U.S. Constitution, requires interpretation as it comes into play in specific cases. Its application depends on who is on the Commission, as well as on the ability of its staff to make a case. An alert, informed public that turns out to vote for representatives supportive of coastal protection is mandatory for long-term success.

New Ground Rules

PROBABLY THE LARGEST accomplishment in coastal protection is not measurable. We will never know what wasn't proposed—what projects never saw the light of day because of the change in ground rules resulting from Proposition 20. Developers' view of "the possible" was severely curtailed, and fortunately we will never know what "might have been" along much of the coast. In retrospect, some early proposals now look preposterous. A marina in the lush tidal marsh of the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve? An off-shore causeway across Santa Monica Bay? Absurd, from our present perspective—because Proposition 20 and the Coastal Act changed what's considered reasonable. As a result, today travelers on the two-lane highway that winds along much of the coast enjoy uninterrupted views of the ocean across grasslands and farmlands.

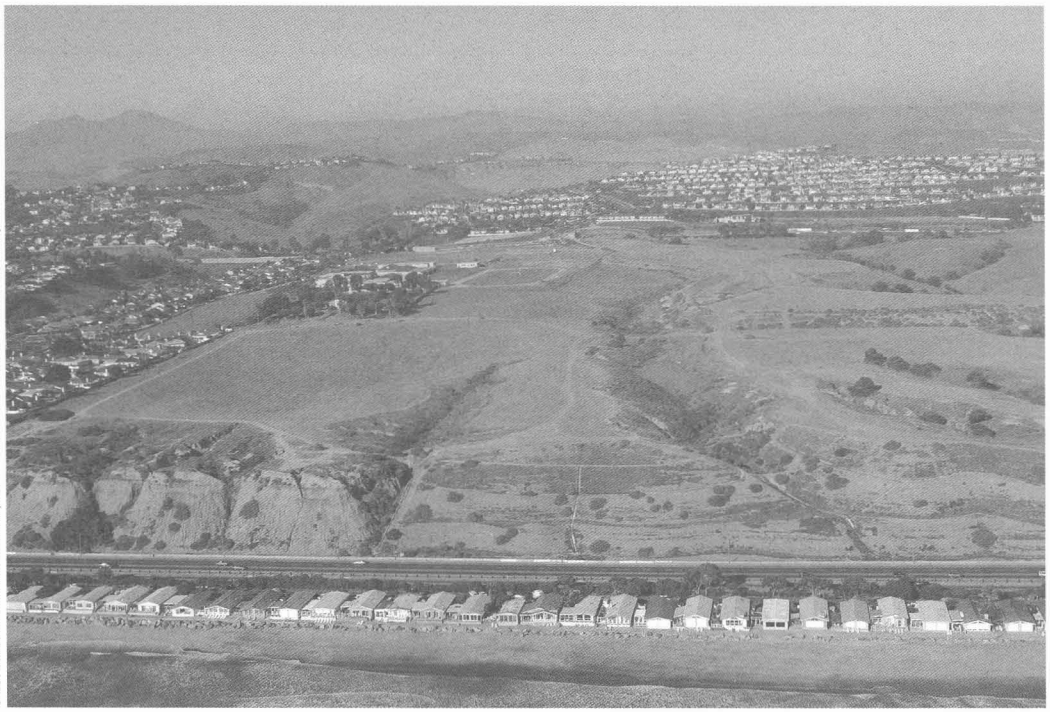
The Coastal Act was not written to stop development, and it certainly has not done so. Since 1976, the Commission has processed some 106,000 permits, about 95 percent of which were approved. The system did, however, reshape the character of coastal development, which had earlier been the sole responsibility of local governments, and made it more orderly. Now an extensive process of discussion and negotiation often precedes project approval, and what is built is often very different from what was first proposed.

The recent Commission approval of the Marblehead development in San Clemente is a case in point—a triumph for citizen activists, good planning, and good judgment. Original development plans for this magnificent 250-acre parcel were withdrawn in the face of major citizen opposition. When resubmitted with less density and grading, the creation of parks and open space, protection for wetlands and blufftops, and public access to the ocean, the proposal won the Commission's unanimous support.

The quality of projects has risen because permit applicants must now consider scale

Sanderling

Because a protective Coastal Commission exists, people believe that the coast is theirs, a common treasure rather than undeveloped real estate.



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Most of the flat, open areas of this land at Marblehead, in San Clemente, are scheduled for residential and commercial development. Plans include trails and some parkland. Canyons will be preserved for wildlife. The houses on the beach were built before the Coastal Act.

BOLSA CHICA STEWARDS

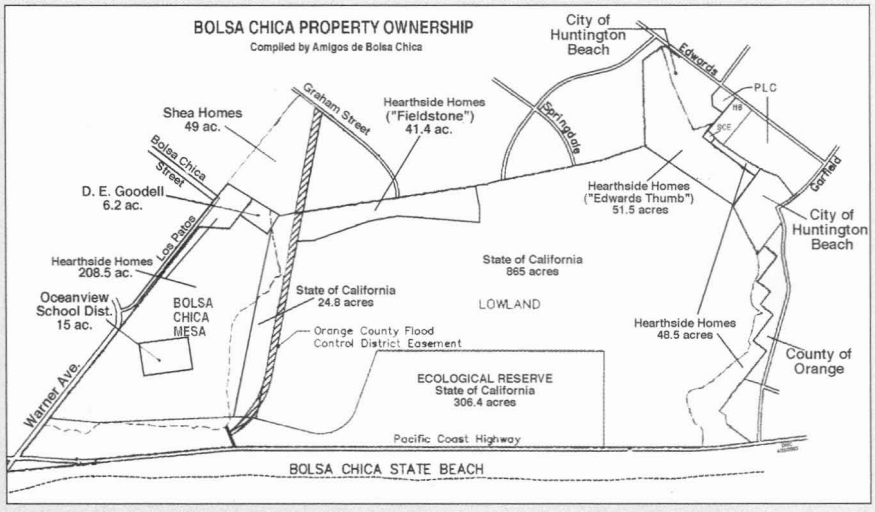
THE ALL-VOLUNTEER Bolsa Chica Stewards have been planting coastal sage scrub species on a blufftop at the Ecological Reserve for seven years now. "We have about 5,000 plants, close to 50 species, on seven to eight acres, and we're delighted at how they're doing," reported Marinka Horack of Huntington Beach. On the third Saturday of every month, many hands appear to do the necessary work. "And it's not just people from around here. This is a regional project," she said. To join in or see what has been accomplished, contact volunteer coordinator Kelly Keller: (562) 920-4215 or Kelly.Keller@Jacobs.com.

BOLSA CHICA STEWARDS

BOLSA CHICA STEWARDS

GROWING BOLSA CHICA

THE COASTAL ACT saved Bolsa Chica. Thirty years ago, much of this remnant of a once-vast estuarine marsh seemed destined to disappear under new residences and a marina. Today it is southern California's largest coastal wetlands complex—and growing. In 1973, the Bolsa Chica State Ecological Reserve was established on 557.5 acres, only 300 of them state-owned. Four years later, the State Lands Commission bought 865 acres, bringing the acreage protected to nearly 1,200. Now activists are trying to preserve and restore the Oceanview, Fieldstone, and Edwards properties (see map). Hearthside Homes has agreed in concept to sell the Fieldstone property and about 49 acres to be included in a county park along the lower Bolsa Chica Mesa. Residential development is proceeding on 208 acres of the upper Mesa. Still uncertain is the future of the Shea Homes property. The owner is seeking permits to build 175 residential units, while activists are attempting to secure the land for restoration as wetland.



and a community's special character as well as scenic resources, habitat protection, and public access. The formal framework for defining these values is the Local Coastal Plan (LCP), which each coastal county and city has been required to adopt, submit for Commission approval, and include in its General Plan. Permit applications must then fall within the parameters laid out in the LCP. Citizens may challenge permits—and often do—by appealing to the Coastal Commission. Commissioners may also individually initiate appeals. At present 16 cities still lack certified LCPs, including Solana Beach, Newport Beach, Seal Beach, Hermosa Beach, Los Angeles, Carmel, and Monterey. In these jurisdictions, the Commission continues to handle permitting—a heavy burden.

It took a legislative mandate to achieve an LCP for the City of Malibu. After decades of effort and more than 100 committee meetings, the Legislature passed a bill requiring the Commission to prepare a draft Land Use Plan, submit it to the City before January 2002 and, after public hearings and consultation, certify an LCP by September 15, 2002. The task was completed two days before the deadline. Coastal activists have been urging the Legislature to follow the example set with Malibu in the other jurisdictions without LCPs.

A gull fishing in the surf

Widening Networks

INVIGORATED BY PARK and wildlife bond funds approved by voters in the 1980s and 1990s (most recently Propositions 12, 40, and 50), local watchdog groups and land trusts have proliferated; these in turn have secured substantial resource protection and public access by acquiring fee titles to and easements on key properties from willing sellers, then transferring all or most of them to state and national park and wildlife agencies. Whether this conservation work can keep up with development pressures in a faltering economy, amid rising land prices and shifting political currents, remains to be seen.

What is certain is that California's coastal management program has evolved and matured in the past 30 years. It now includes an extensive network of public resource agencies and local jurisdictions working with large numbers of citizens organized within local communities and motivated by a variety of interests, both separate and related. Together, they have helped many coastal communities to preserve their unique character, expanded public access along the shore and to beaches, and protected many miles of coastal bluffs and terraces for open space and agriculture. They have built extensive public trail networks, opened urban waterfronts to public enjoyment, and created new marine reserves. Increasingly, they consider the coast in relation to watersheds and nearshore waters.

California's coastal management program grew from a grassroots initiative, and it continues, in large part, as an outgrowth and organic composite of local efforts. Hardly a marsh or a creek lacks its "Friends of" defenders, who clean up trash, pull out invasive grasses, plant natives, monitor water quality, and give educational tours to school groups. Once caught up in a local effort, some people begin to see their cause in a more inclusive framework and move on to larger goals. For example, Donna Frye, a surfer, wanted to figure out why so many surfers seemed to be getting sick, and began to look into beach water pollution sources. She is now a member of the San Diego City Council.

California's coastal management program grew from a grassroots initiative, and it continues, in large part, as an outgrowth and organic composite of local efforts.

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Top: POST acquired the 5,638-acre Cloverdale Coastal Ranch in 1997 for $6.35 million. It intends to protect, restore, and enhance the land's natural character, provide for low-intensity recreation, and continue agricultural use where appropriate.

Bottom: Sanderlings

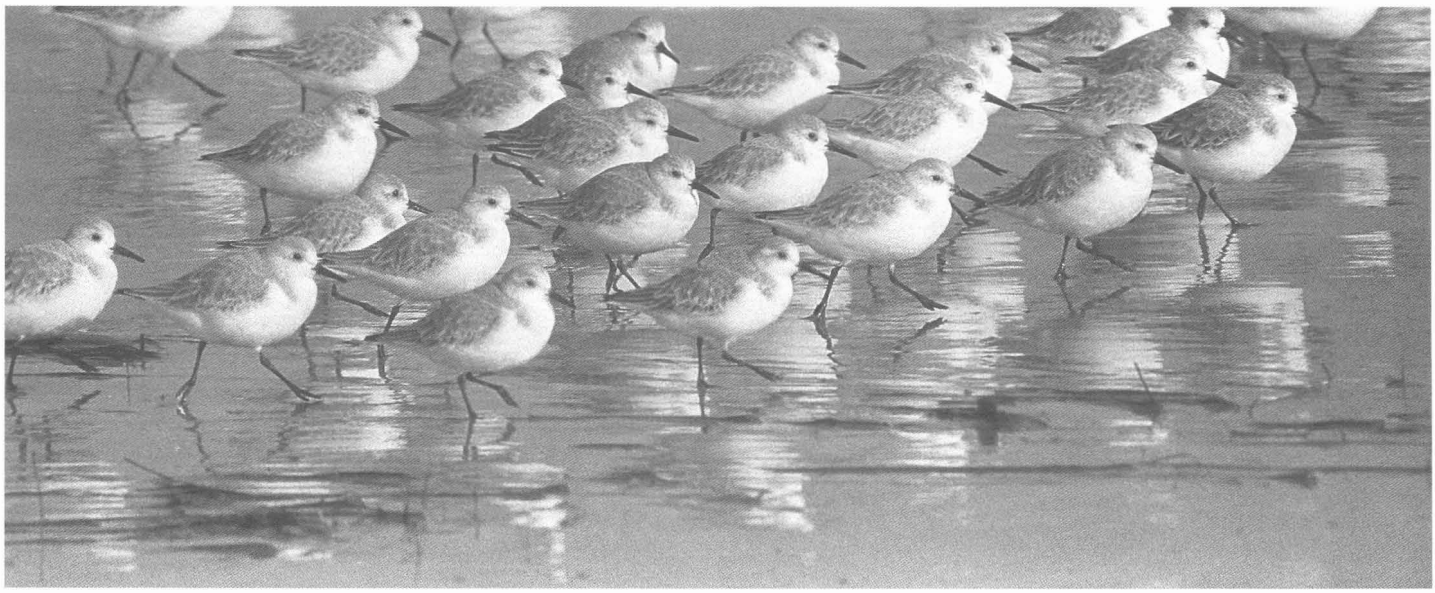
A Sense of Place

MANY COASTAL communities have preserved their special characters as envisioned in their LCPs. They wanted development to remain in scale along the coast: no blockbuster convention centers, no nationwide chain stores, and no six-lane highways. Local plans often call for bed-and-breakfast inns rather than hotels. Today an array of brightly painted farmhouses and restored historic cottages dots the coast, with names like Abigail's Elegant Victorian Mansion, Inn of the Tides, and Ollalieberry Inn. Thanks in large part to vigorous and persistent local resistance to inappropriate development, local jurisdictions and the Coastal Commission have withstood the pressures of well-financed and well-connected interests, thereby protecting a coastal sense of place.

Five years ago, San Luis Obispo County sought to update its LCP in a manner that matched the expressed wishes of the Hearst Corporation, which hoped to build a resort development with a shoreline golf course beside Point San Simeon. Coastal Commission staff came up with a very different update proposal. Hundreds of citizens packed the Commission's January 1998 meeting and spoke against the County's proposal. Many others spoke for it and for Hearst. At the end of the second long day of listening to pros and cons, the Commission unanimously rejected the County's LCP update and voted for the revisions proposed by its staff.

Such congregations of empowered activists and community groups have been seen repeatedly up and down the coast over the past 30 years. Yeoman service has been rendered for the entire coast by Susan Jordan of the League of Coastal Protection and Mark Massara of the Sierra Club's Coastal Program. Eloquent, impassioned, and knowledgeable, they attend just about every Commission meeting and work hard to keep the public and the Commission alert and well informed.

Conservation battles often go on for years, with citizen volunteers donating time and money to make their case against permit applicants able to hire well-prepared attorneys and lobbyists. Yet with persistence, endurance, and the support of the Commission and the Conservancy, local communities have won protection for



CITIZEN ACTIVISTS AT WORK

THIS busload of Carmel residents came to San Luis Obispo in March to plead with the Coastal Commission for a decrease in the permissible size of houses being built or remodeled in their "village in the forest by the sea." The Commission staff report for Carmel's Land Use Plan, which was up for approval, proposed such a limit: 1,600 square-foot coverage on the 4,000 square-foot lots that constitute about half the lots in this historic town. Many small houses on such lots have recently been bought by investors, demolished, and replaced by larger vacation homes that sell for $1.3 million or more, reported project manager Mike Watson. Carmel's Mayor Sue McCloud and several others, however, argued for 1,800 square feet and won the Commission's approval. Because Carmel still does not have a certified Local Coastal Plan, each permit application must be approved by the Commission. Carmel has six months to accept the Land Use Plan as accepted, with modifications, by the Commission.

I REPRESENT the white-tailed kites. If they could be here, this is what they would say," Matthew Fox told the Coastal Commission, pointing at the sign reading "Save me!" hanging from the neck of his home-made bird. The discovery of white-tailed kites on the site of the proposed Arco Dos Pueblos Golf Course was the latest setback for its proponents. Coastal advocates have been fighting attempts to build a blufftop golf course near Naples, on Santa Barbara's Gaviota Coast, for more than ten years. Last December the Commission unanimously denied a permit application. In March—again unanimously—the Commission rejected a request for reconsideration.

PHOTOS THIS PAGE: RASA GUSTAITIS

treasured coastal spots. Many headlands have been saved, from Point St. George in Del Norte County to Point Cabrillo in Mendocino County and San Pedro Point in San Mateo County. The old beach cottages at Crystal Cove in Orange County are to be restored by State Parks. The South San Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuge has been established and now provides habitat for sea turtles and other marine life. In each case, the special character of the place was at stake.

Such resource protection has helped local entrepreneurs to make modest livings by offering guided kayak and canoe trips, tours to watch birds, whales, seals, otters, and other wildlife, and botanical walks with a focus on native plants—with refreshments, perhaps, from a local bakery, and maybe a stop at a shop featuring local artisans or locally produced gourmet food items.

The sense of the coast as a commons, a shared treasure, is enhanced by the steadily growing network of trails that now links urban centers, parklands, rivers, bays, and the ocean, enjoyed by walkers, hikers, bicyclists, skateboarders, wheelchair riders, and equestrians. You can now follow a levee trail along the Los Angeles River, through the Glendale Narrows and beyond, passing tiny green oases—created by local efforts—on banks that once were nearly bare of life. Upcoast, you can bicycle from Ventura to the town of Ojai, 12 miles up into the watershed, and look down on the coast and the landscape below.

The Santa Monica Mountains Backbone Trail, nearly complete, offers access to wilderness within a county with 9.9 million people. Regional trails are being expanded around San Diego Bay, Santa Monica Bay, Monterey Bay, San Francisco Bay, and Humboldt Bay. These in turn are being linked to the California Coastal Trail, envisioned by Bill Kortum in the 1970s and vigorously

PETER BRAND

promoted by the nonprofit Coastwalk and the Coastal Conservancy. Each year, Coastwalk sponsors long hikes, led by knowledgeable guides, along the border-to-border trail, about a fourth of which has been completed so far. This year, for the second time, a small group will hike the whole coast, (see *Coast & Ocean,* Winter 2002–2003, or www.coastwalk.org).

Some groups that came together to protect local natural assets have grown up to become 501(c)3 nonprofit land trusts, which not only ward off potential despoilers of local treasures but also assume responsibility for their safekeeping, restoration, and display to the public.

Top: Coastal agricultural land near Calleguas Road in Ventura County, looking toward Calleguas Creek, 1993

Bottom: Herring gull with fish

Land Trust Partners

LAND TRUSTS HAVE BEEN growing in number nationwide. The Trust for Public Land (TPL) and the Coastal Conservancy helped many to get started and nurtured them to strength. Along the California coast there are now at least 100 community-based organizations engaged in coastal protection. Many have partnered with the Coastal Conservancy, State Parks, the Wildlife Conservation Board, and other agencies in land acquisitions, leveraging private and public money to serve common purpose.

Such conservation acquisitions, many of them very large, have been increasingly important to the integrity of the coast. Much of the funding has come from voter-approved bonds, particularly Propositions 12 and 40, through the Coastal Conservancy.

In 2000, TPL acquired the 7,500-acre Coast Dairies and Land Company property in southern Santa Cruz County, thus protecting seven miles of coast. TPL will sell 920 acres to the U.S. Forest Service and the rest to the Bureau of Land Management. A management plan that includes public access is nearing completion.

In 2002, with help from the Conservancy and the Nature Conservancy, the Big Sur Land Trust purchased the Palo Corona Ranch, putting an end to development plans on nearly 10,000 acres and uniting 13 parks and preserves at the gateway to Big Sur. Save-the-Redwoods League acquired the 25,000-acre Mill Creek property on the Smith River in Del Norte County for a state park, while the Mendocino Land Trust assembled and acquired the 7,000-acre Big River Preserve in Mendocino County.

Some land trusts are small volunteer groups that raise funds through events such as pancake breakfasts and the sale of children's art works to protect treasured wild places, then use these funds to leverage large public grants. Among the larger ones is Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), which works regionally between San Francisco and Santa Cruz, in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties, and has an awesome reputation as a fundraiser. Two of its recent coups are the acquisition of Bair Island, a 3,200-acre wetland that has been, or will be added to the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Reserve, and Whaler's Cove and Pigeon Point, where public access was to be cut off and the view of the landmark lighthouse marred by a bed-and-breakfast development. POST paid $2.65 million from its acquisition fund for this property of about three acres, counting on reimbursement from government grants and contributions, and took the unfinished bed-and-breakfast inn down. POST expects to turn this property over to State Parks, and is working with that agency to acquire the historic Pigeon Point lighthouse from the federal government. It will also raise the funds needed to restore the tower and reopen it to the public.

Where agricultural land is involved in a conservation purchase, POST often places an agricultural easement on some of the property and leases it for farming. It did so on 300 acres of the 1,700-acre Bolsa Point Ranches, another recent acquisition.

Agriculture is especially hard to protect and keep viable along the coast, but the Marin Agricultural Land Trust (MALT), the first agricultural land trust in the nation, has succeeded in protecting in perpetuity nearly a third of Marin County's farmland, largely by acquiring easements that extinguished development rights and supported agricultural use.

When newly acquired lands are opened for public enjoyment, citizens' sense of ownership of their natural heritage grows. MALT's farm tours are highly popular, as are the walks led by the Sonoma Land Trust on lands it has helped to protect. Many

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Pigeon Point Lighthouse, with AYH hostel alongside

PHOTOS THIS PAGE: RASA GUSTAITIS

Fifth and sixth-graders from Longfellow and Eisler Schools in Bakersfield spent a week at Camp Keep, in Montaña de Oro State Park, learning about nature on the coast. Although 33 Bakersfield schools were eligible to go to the camp, only 20 managed to raise the required funds. The Kern County Superintendent of Schools operates Camp Keep.

community-based groups seek out volunteers for restoration projects on the coast, in wetlands, and along streams. Anyone who has walked on saved land or dug into the soil to bring life back to a place that once seemed destined to disappear under pavement will share pride and concern about the future of that particular place.

For many, the first step toward coastal awareness came through a Coastal Cleanup Day, an educational program initiated by the Coastal Commission, which has brought people out to "their" beaches on a September Saturday for the past 18 years. This event, cosponsored by the Ocean Conservancy (formerly the Center for Marine Conservation) and more recently also some corporate partners, is now part of a worldwide International Coastal Cleanup. It has grown exponentially, encompassing more people and places each year. The Commission's Adopt-a-Beach program extends cleanup activities year-round to numerous coastal sites. An activity guide for schools, "Waves, Wetlands, and Watersheds," is being translated into Spanish. The Commission has been able to expand its environmental education efforts—even while state funding cutbacks have shrunk its project staff—because it receives a substantial share of the income from the Whale Tail license plate, the most popular of all the state's special plates, which has raised $4.3 million since it was introduced in 1997.

Not by the Coastal Act Alone

CALIFORNIA'S COASTAL management program was not built on the Coastal Act alone. It grew from the precedent set by the grassroots Save San Francisco Bay campaign, which established the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (see page 4), and from a foundation of federal legislation, passed mostly in the 1970s, including the Clean Water Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act, Endangered Species Act, and National Marine Sanctuary Act. Agencies implementing these laws are also involved.

Coastal conservation planning now reaches across jurisdictional boundaries, particularly as regards water quality, shoreline erosion, beachwater pollution, and wildlife habitat. In the past 30 years, a remarkable level of cooperation has developed among state, federal, and local gov-

ernment agencies. Necessity and common sense have driven them to work together toward shared goals that none could easily achieve alone.

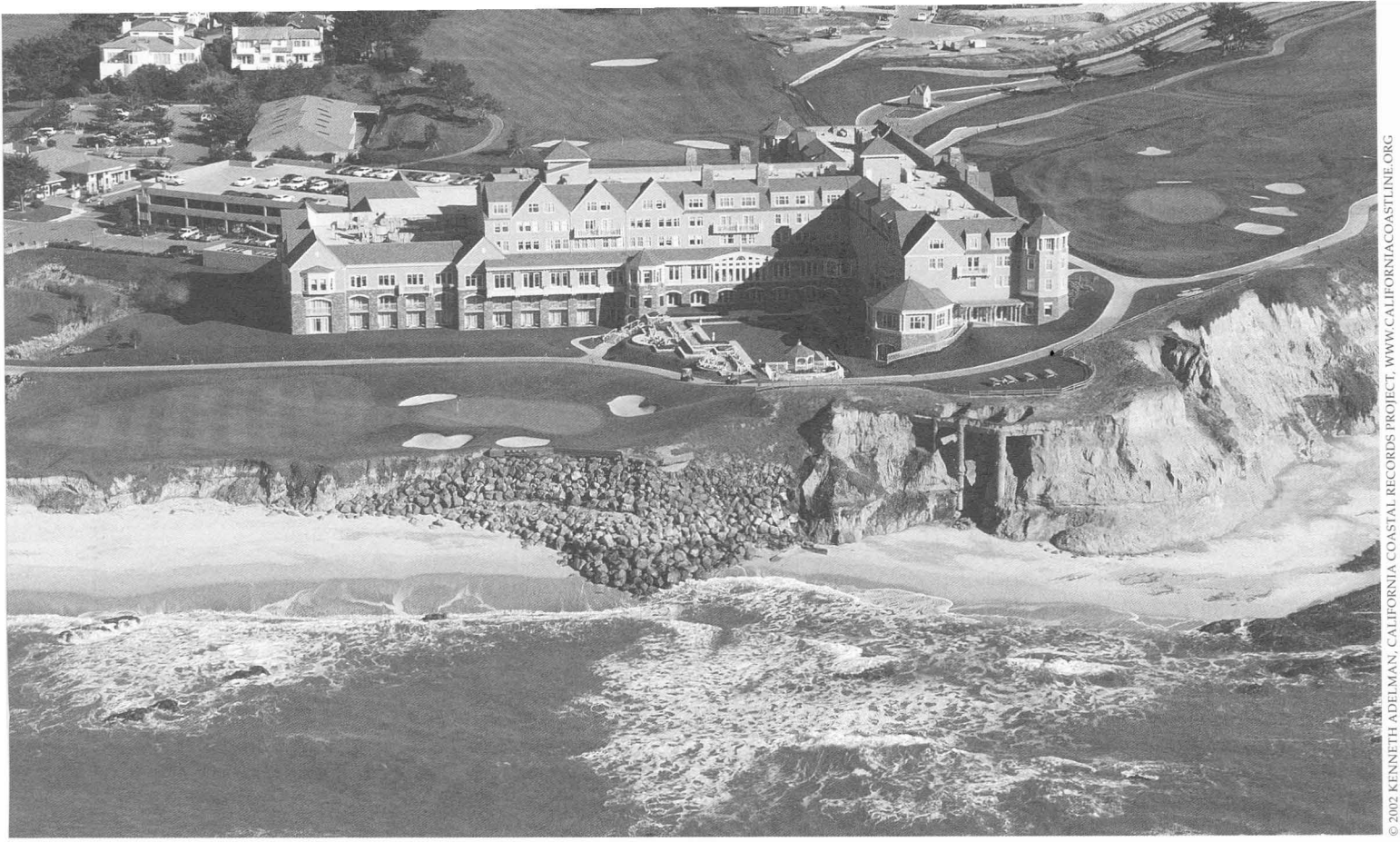
Particularly in lean years, agency cooperation has furthered difficult projects dear to everyone's heart. Among these are a California Non–Point Source Pollution Control Plan, adopted by the Coastal Commission and the State Water Quality Control Board and incorporated into the federal Coastal Zone Program, and the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project (SCWRP), a remarkable alliance of 17 federal, state, and local government agencies, nonprofit environmental organizations, businesses, and community groups, with a goal of acquiring, restoring, and expanding wetlands and watersheds from Santa Barbara to the Mexican border. Focusing its efforts on the Upper San Gabriel River and Los Angeles River watersheds, the lagoons of San Diego, and other fragile coastal environments, SCWRP currently is developing working drawings for the long-awaited and long-embattled restoration of the Bolsa Chica wetlands.

In the wake of Proposition 20, much land was identified as appropriate for parkland, and was acquired as speculators became willing sellers. Coastal state parkland thus expanded enormously and now covers more than 200 miles of the 1,100-mile coast. Among the properties State Parks wanted, but was unable to purchase when it was available, was the Point Cabrillo headland in Mendocino County. The Coastal Conservancy therefore bought it and held it for State Parks, forming a nonprofit organization, the North Coast Interpretive Association, to manage the property, open it to the public, and restore the historic light station. Fourteen years later, in 2002, State Parks finally had the funds to take it over. The nonprofit group will continue to play a stewardship role.

The Conservancy's flexible powers have enabled it to take on a similar role in other acquisitions, including Cowell Ranch in San Mateo County. Last year it transferred 24 acres at Gorda, in Big Sur, to the U.S. Forest Service.

MONTEREY BAY DUNES COALITION

An architect's interpretation of the maximum potential buildout under the 1982 Local Coastal Plan for Sand City and Seaside in Monterey County, created for advocates of dune preservation. This LCP was later revised, and some of the properties shown are now protected in state ownership. Some development potential remains.



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A monumental rockpile was dumped on the beach in Half Moon Bay in winter 1999 to protect the 18th hole of the golf course above, owned by Ocean Colony Partners. Neither the City of Half Moon Bay nor the Coastal Commission had given permission for this rock dump. After the Commission issued a cease and desist order, Ocean Colony signed a consent agreement that has led to the recent removal of half the rocks seen in this photograph. What happens to the rest, and to the bluff and 18th hole, will be decided by the Coastal Commission later this year. Ocean Colony also agreed to build a path and stairway to the beach to the north of the golf course as mitigation for damages.

The 261-room Ritz-Carlton Hotel opened in 2001. A claim of vested rights to build a hotel at this site was secured under Proposition 20, before 1976. If a permit to build it were sought today, chances are it would not be approved so close to the bluff and at this scale.

Troubles to Keep in Mind

WHILE PAST SUCCESSES are vast and thrilling, some long-standing problems have worsened. Fisheries continue to decline drastically. Beach and water pollution and sand loss threaten the economic health of visitor-dependent communities, especially in southern California. Public access is being eroded where people with homes on the shore make incursions into public rights-of-way, and by conflicts between residents and beach visitors. As the state's population keeps growing, competition for land and water will intensify. By 2040, California is expected to have 59 million residents, almost twice today's population.

Several years ago the Surfrider Foundation, Heal the Bay in Santa Monica, and Heal the Ocean in Santa Barbara publicized the fact that beach waters were significantly polluted and unsafe for swimmers and surfers. Most nearshore pollution flows from watersheds; its impacts on the ocean continue to be ignored. Better coordination of land and ocean policies is needed.

Increasingly, we realize that many issues can and should now be considered in a landscape and watershed context. How do activities in a watershed influence wetlands and beach water quality? How can wildlife corridors be secured? How many productive farms are needed in an area for coastal farming to survive? What can be done to stop the loss of sand from beaches, and where are sources for replenishment to be found? Will there be enough fresh water to support both farmers and anadromous fish (a troublesome issue on the central coast as well as on the Klamath River in the north)? With GIS and other tools, the cumulative impacts of many small changes, many individual projects, become more visible.

Most LCPs for cities and counties were adopted in the 1980s, and today many need to be updated to reflect new realities, such as recent open space acquisitions, developments, or roadways, stronger urban boundary lines, and changes in agricultural land use. The town of Gualala in Mendocino County, for example, is among the first to address the subject of polluted stormwater runoff in revisions to its town plan. Overall, having detailed LCPs within city and county general plans has helped maintain orderly growth along the coast; however, it may be time for legislation requiring the updating of all local coastal plans, so that they remain relevent and defensible. (Five years after the Commission rejected San Luis Obispo County's proposed LCP up-

date, the County has yet to adopt a new one, despite substantial technical and financial assistance from the Commission for the task. At the Commission's March 2003 meeting, "some progress" was reported, but local activists accused the County of dragging its feet.)

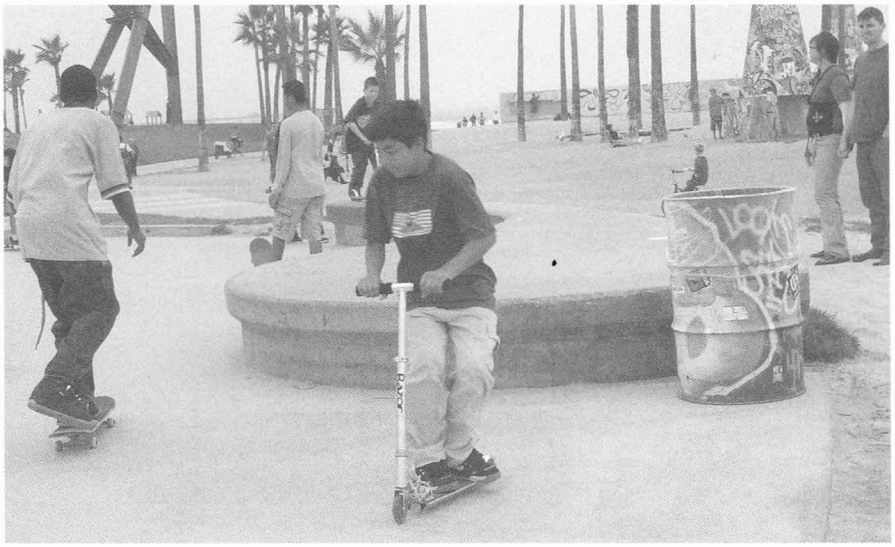
Recent budget cuts have forced the Commission to retrench. Under the governor's hiring freeze, staffers who retire cannot be replaced, and layoffs may occur. This may diminish the Commission's effectiveness, for each complicated permit requires considerable research and negotiation. Long-range planning may have to be pushed aside altogether.

Other coastal services are also being curtailed due to draconian funding cuts. The budget for State Parks was cut by $35 million this year. The parks department was allowed to recover $20 million of that by raising fees, but it remains understaffed, and soon will lose 90 more staff positions. The public needs to speak up for its outstanding, internationally celebrated park system.

In addition to the State's serious budget shortfalls, attacks launched by the federal government against a wide spectrum of environmental laws could adversely affect the coast. The current administration is attempting to short-circuit state review of offshore oil-drilling leases, roll back federal protections of wetlands, disregard and not defend federally designated wildlife habitats under the Endangered Species Act, and reduce or eliminate cleanup or protection laws for federal agencies, particularly on military lands where there are numerous rare and endangered species. California needs to stand firm in opposition to those who would undo the accomplishments made possible by the Coastal Act.

Staying the Course

As we drove along the coast on that sunny Saturday to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Coastal Initiative, our appreciation of the beauty around us was enhanced by awareness of the grassroots movement that has protected it. The forces that led to the creation of the Commission have become engaged at every level to support coastal protection: Citizen activists helped to create the LCP process and continue to watch over its implementation.



COASTAL TRAIL PROJECT

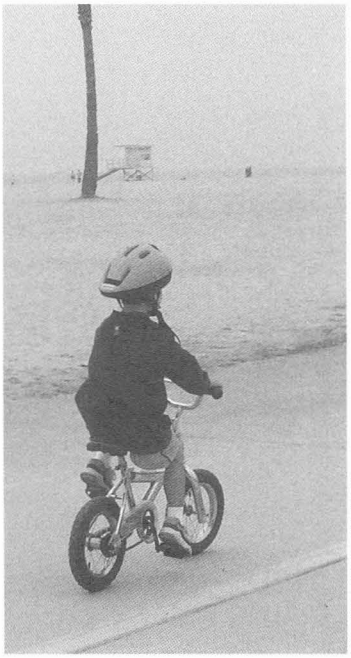
Top and bottom: Freewheeling at Venice Beach

They have spearheaded successful campaigns for huge bond acts to acquire open space, including beaches and coastal watersheds, for wildlife and the public. They are the eyes, ears, and voice of the coast. Coastal Commissioners, the Coastal Conservancy and staff, local jurisdictions, fellow resource agencies, and land trusts have all pulled together with passion and devotion to make the preservation of California's coast a truly democratic process.

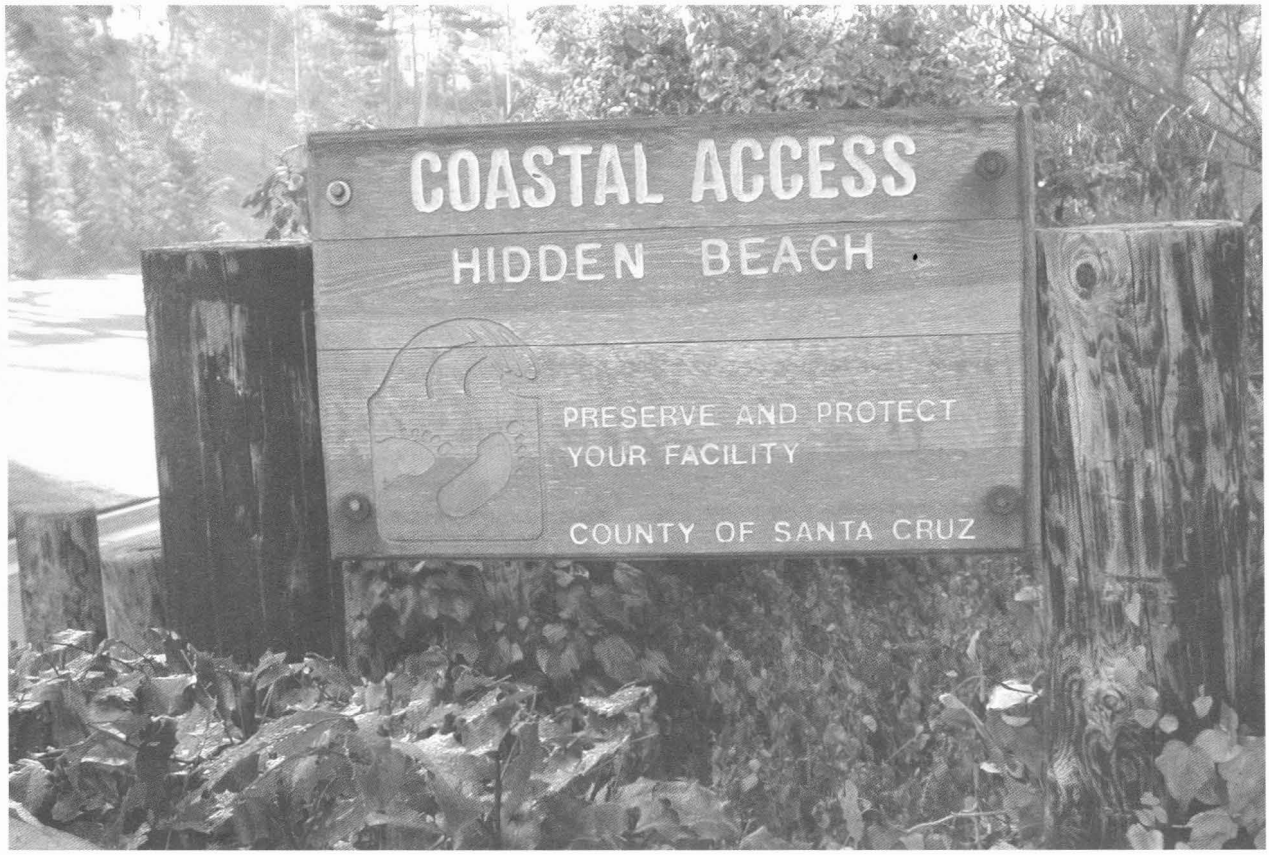
Michael Fischer, past executive director of the Coastal Commission and past executive officer of the Coastal Conservancy, wonders how long this success story can last, and worries about what conditions the seventh generation to come will inherit. Coastal Commissioner and activist Sara Wan is concerned that citizens may become complacent. If they fail to keep a watchful eye on what the Commission is doing, or fail to elect supportive representatives, she says, the coast as we know it may disappear bit by bit.

Maintaining the coast that we see today will require vigilance and continuing dedication from the public. While the process is certainly not perfect, and there is a raft of problems yet to solve, overall it has been an inspirational 30 years. California's coast is spectacular and is still being saved. Let's keep it up! ■

Phyllis Faber, a wetland biologist, has been active in behalf of the coast for more than 30 years. She served on the North Central Regional Coastal Commission from 1973–79, as chair 1977–79, and was a founding member of the League for Coastal Protection. Currently, she is co-editor of University of California Press's Natural History Series.



COASTAL TRAIL PROJECT



JOY CHASE

Rights by Use in California When the public has a right to cross private land to the shore

JOY CHASE

CONTRARY TO POPULAR belief, not all California's beaches and the pathways leading to them are public. Uncounted hidden trails to pocket beaches, shoreline blufftops with endless vistas, and even acres of sandy beach are private property. The public may have used them for many decades, but its right to continue doing so has not been legally established. As rural and oceanfront property becomes scarcer and astronomically more costly, the development pressure on these informal public uses is being felt dramatically. Landowners bristle at the thought of any public access right on their property.

The most indignant lament I have encountered in researching public use of these areas is: "I thought all the beaches in California were public!" The truth is less sympathetic. In large part, State Lands are those that lie below the Mean High Tide Line, a wiggly definition that moves with the sand through the year and seems to require repeated legal interpretation.

But the public may have attained the right to use these informal trails or areas through the doctrine of implied dedication. Confirmed and explained by the California Supreme Court in *Gion vs. City of Santa Cruz* (1970), implied dedications are essentially easements over real property that come into being without the owner's explicit consent. An implied dedication is a form of prescriptive right. To obtain an easement through an implied dedication for coastal properties in California, those who seek it must show that the public has used the land for five years as if it were public recreational land, under these conditions: without asking or receiving permission from the owner with the actual or presumed knowledge of the owner; without significant objection or bona fide attempts by the fee owner to prevent or halt such use; and by showing that

the use has been substantial rather than minimal. Ultimately, only a court of law can determine that a prescriptive right exists.

The California Constitution clearly favors public access to shoreline areas. The California Coastal Act embodies this goal in Public Resources Code Section 30211, which states:

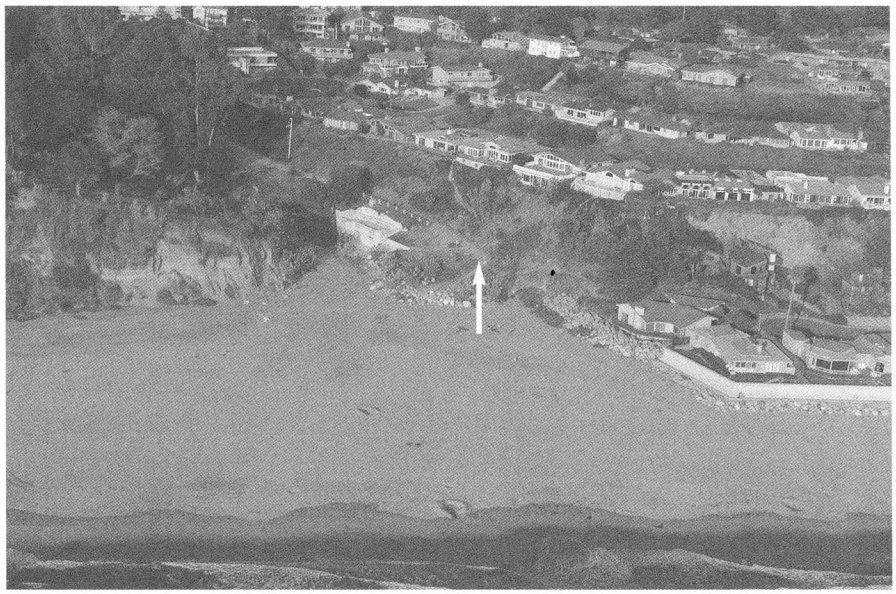
> *Development shall not interfere with the public's right of access to the sea where acquired through use, or legislative authorization, including, but not limited to, the use of dry sand and rocky coastal beaches to the first line of terrestrial vegetation.*

To determine the location of areas where development would interfere with rights "acquired through use," the Coastal Commission undertakes prescriptive rights studies (commonly called public use studies). These might be prompted by a call from a beachgoer turned back by a new property owner, or by a proposal to build a house on a sandy beach or near a publicly used trail. After a preliminary investigation is conducted, if the evidence points to substantial public use and the potential for prescriptive rights, a public use study is initiated. Seven prescriptive rights studies are currently under way. One for Hidden Beach in Santa Cruz County and another for Santa Claus Beach in Santa Barbara County were published in May 2001 on the Commission's web site (www.coastal.ca.gov/access/prc-access.html).

In the first instance, the County had received an application for the construction of two megahouses on the sandy beach, which is backed by an eroding bluff, beyond which lies Hidden Beach County Park, with a paved trail signed for coastal access. The trail leads down to the six-acre sandy beach, where visitors scatter up and down the shore. Who would know that the county's legal interest in the beach itself was only a 10-foot-wide swath to the mean high tide line? Not the public, according to the public-use questionnaires returned to the Commission.

The public response to the potential development of houses on Hidden Beach was immediate, well-organized, and unwavering. Over the next few months the Commission received more than 500 responses to its public-use questionnaires. The respondents represented every age group, reported use over several decades, and reported every type of use: sunbathing, picnicking, playing volleyball or frisbee, building sand castles, camping, swimming, surfing, running, visiting the beach, climbing the cliffs, fishing, and more. The area has been used for school outings, birthday parties, and weddings. Some who used the beach lived within walking distance, others far away—inland in California or out of state. With few exceptions, they believed the beach was owned by the County or the State. Many believed that all beaches were owned by the public.

The results of the questionnaire were summarized, and in February 2002 the Commission's *Report of Prescriptive Rights Study for Hidden Beach* was forwarded to the office of the Attorney General. In April 2002, the Coastal Commission filed a Complaint



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Hidden Beach, Santa Cruz County. Beach access is via the path in the center, from Hidden Beach County Park, at top left.

Santa Claus Beach, Santa Barbara County

JOY CHASE

Hidden Beach has long been used for recreation, as documented by family photos.

to Quiet Title and for Declaratory Relief in Santa Cruz County Superior Court. The Commission and its legal counsel, the Office Attorney General, are optimistic that a settlement agreement will be reached in the near future, permanently preserving the beach and the arroyo for public use.

The other study, in Santa Barbara County, has similar characteristics. A Highway 101 off-ramp leads to Seaside Village Drive (until recently named Santa Claus Lane), which runs parallel to the coast for about half a mile before returning to the freeway. Seaward of the Drive, across the Union Pacific railroad tracks, is Santa Claus Beach, with clean sand and safe waters. It is a favorite family beach. Day camps for children are held there every summer and surfing competitions take place.

Santa Claus Beach is subdivided into several undeveloped parcels. In 2000, the owner of one of these applied to the County for a permit to build a residence on pilings. County historical records located the Mean High Tide Line at the base of the riprap that protects the railroad bed from wave runup. The railroad right-of-way is contiguous with the inland property line of the site proposed for development. Hence, the develop-

ment site was identified as being on State Lands and the County found it could not process the application.

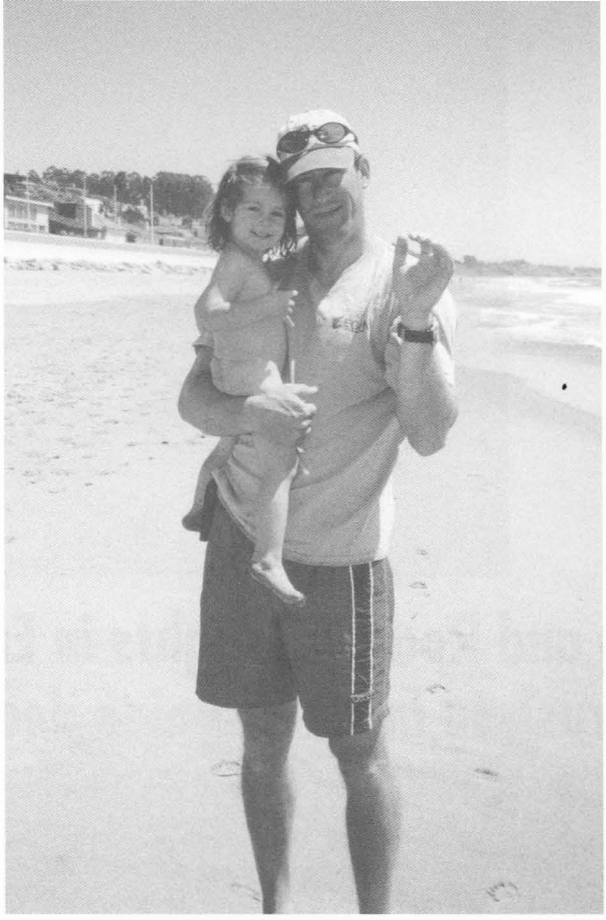
Santa Barbara County planning documents support public use of Santa Claus Beach. The County has undertaken studies to clarify ownership and plan for future public improvements. Concurrent with the County studies, the Coastal Commission began a prescriptive rights study in a cooperative effort to identify the access status and protect any public interest that may exist. This study has had a significant public response.

When a beach is urban or suburban and heavily used, the self-interest of nearby residents facilitates public use studies. They know others who use the beach and can reach out to them. They may be willing to stand on the beach and pass out questionnaires to people, and may prevail on local newspapers, newsletters, and neighborhood associations to advertise the study and help to persuade local governments to protect public use. Such outreach is very effective in developing a critical mass of questionnaires.

Far more problematic are public use studies of paths to sandy beaches and rocky coves in rural areas. These are the paths that lead the initiated to favorite fishing spots, along lonely blufftops, to diver entry points, and to surf breaks. A great many such informal trails exist; many can be traced on aerial photographs back through the 1960s.

But how many people use these trails? What does "substantial rather than minimal" public use mean in a northern California coastal county such as Humboldt, where population density is 35 people per square mile, as contrasted to 574 per square mile in Santa Cruz County? And how are these recreational users to be reached?

Further adding to the difficulty in the pursuit of rural public use studies is the frequent reluctance of the local community to support the research. For some people, formalizing public use raises the specter of increased public use, damage to fragile coastal resources, and loss of local sanctuary. Local residents may reach private agreements with the landowner of the study site to allow them to continue using the access, while opposing the formalization of public use. When that happens, other users tend to become less willing to support the research. The result may be a short-term gain for local people at the expense of everyone's long-term interest.



PHOTOS THIS SPREAD COURTESY CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

A successful prescriptive rights study—one that results in a negotiated settlement or a legally certified quitclaim action—is one means to preserve public access to the areas in question for future generations. But its value is diminishing with time. In 1970, in *Gion vs. City of Santa Cruz,* the California Supreme Court applied the doctrine of implied dedication by law to find a public easement for recreational uses for a shoreline property in Santa Cruz City. The public had used the property without objection by the landowner since the 1900s. In 1972, the California Legislature provided property owners with the means to prevent the creation of public rights by implied dedication in the future. Landowners may post notice pursuant to Civil Code Sec. 1008, or record on their deeds a Notice of Consent to Use as provided in Civil Code Sec. 813. From the day of posting forward, prescriptive rights cannot accrue. Hence, if a Sec. 813 Notice was recorded in 1990 for a property currently under investigation, only use preceding that date can be used as evidence. In effect, the doctrine of implied dedication becomes more and more difficult to use as a tool to protect the public's rights to historic coastal access areas. ■

Joy Chase is the prescriptive rights analyst for the Coastal Commission's Coastal Access Program.

PHOTOS THIS SPREAD: THE RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION

Rambling and Roaming Rights in England

Walkers rush to meet mapping deadlines

SHIRLEY SKEEL

TEN YEARS AGO, a golf course developer in Oxfordshire, England, built a new clubhouse smack in the middle of a countryside public path. Had he been of English walking stock himself, he would have known better.

As soon as it heard, the Ramblers Association, a walkers' lobby group, complained to the local council. The council rebuked the developer for failing to apply for a diversion of the public right of way and told walkers not to be deterred.

For the next several weeks, as the hammering went on, country walkers stoically tramped through the front door of the half-finished clubhouse, picking up a hard hat on the way in and dropping it off as they went out the back. The frazzled developer applied to have the path moved and soon had a new route marked to bypass the clubhouse.

The incident was only one of many that English walkers have endured over the 150 years since romantic writers such as William Wordsworth and philosophers such as John Stuart Mill made walking a fashionable recreation for the middle classes. Over the years, landowners have been known to threaten walkers with shotguns or deter them with barbed wire or ranging bulls.

But the British love to walk, and landowners' intransigence has only led to the formation of groups such as Ramblers, a registered charity with 137,000 members. Walking is the nation's most popular outdoor activity, with 15 million people, or one-quarter of the population, walking for pleasure at least once every month.

For the past 68 years, the London-based Ramblers Association has lobbied to protect the public rights of way that were established over centuries by farmers trekking to market or church. This common-law right was confirmed by statute during the last 200 years. But restrictions remained, spurring Ramblers to fight for more legroom for country visitors.

At the end of 2000, a major victory was won with the passage of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act. This toughened the policy on country pathways, but extended walkers' right to roam in open countryside. Both historic pathways and lands newly approved for roaming must now be officially designated.

The new law requires that every historic pathway be individually investigated and mapped by the end of 2025, said Janet Davis, Ramblers' head of Footpath Policy. Any path left out will cease to exist. The first 140,000 miles are already mapped due to work ordered by Parliament back in 1949. Another 10,000 miles remain.

Ramblers therefore has enlisted about 1,000 volunteers—including many retired people and homemakers—to help the local councils draft the required maps. The volunteers scour parish church records, interview horse riders on country trails, put ads in local newspapers, and pore over 200-year-old estate maps to find evidence that the public either has an historic right of way

or has used the path unhindered for the past 20 years.

"It's a big job," says Davis. "And if anybody objects, that puts a spanner in the works."

Local councils are to publish each draft map. If someone objects, a public inquiry is held, and suits may be filed. A legal fight can be bitter—and expensive. Ramblers, with an annual budget of £3 million ($5 million), counts on money from membership fees, donations, and a trust fund.

Meanwhile, the second job required by the Act is half done. Before walkers can roam over more open land, the government's Countryside Agency must map the designated sites, which include "mountain, moor, heath, down, and common land." The Agency aims to finish by 2005. But again, Ramblers is snapping at the government's heels.

To country dwellers, whose growth in numbers has tripled that of city-siders since 1981, this mapping effort has meant the occasional treat of seeing an enthusiast rambler, in strange country garb, standing on the roof of a car or clambering up a barn, binoculars in hand.

Kate Conto, Ramblers' campaign officer for the Right to Roam, says several hundred of these volunteers have been trained to identify the features of the new open land. They take the Countryside Agency's draft maps—often drawn from records decades old—to the sites and check the boundaries.

Again, some landowners are proving wily in their resistance. Because cultivated land does not qualify for roaming, newly plowed fields are springing up as estate owners develop a curious new interest in farming. To see a better example set, Ramblers has appealed to the Church of England and the Crown Estate to volunteer their land.

"Maybe the Queen can help us out," Conto quips.

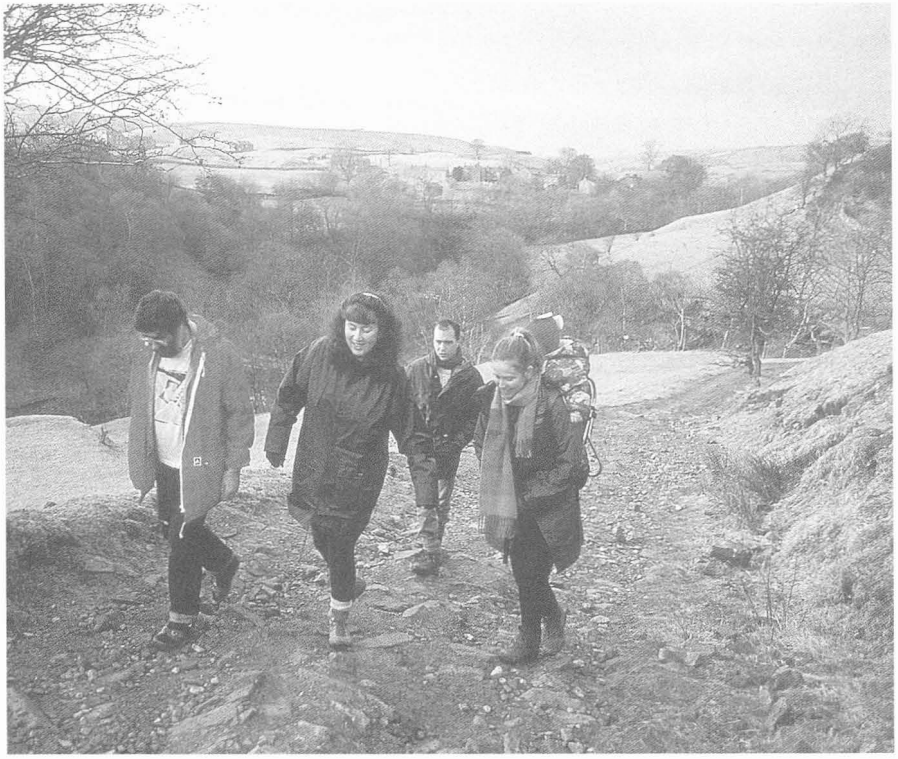
Buckingham Palace agreed it was a "lovely idea" to participate, says Conto, as a way of marking the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002. But so far, the royal household has done zilch. Other twitchy landowners are waiting to see regulations that might give them money in compensation for their largesse. However, Conto is resigned that, at some fences, walkers may just have to accept defeat and take their sorrow to the nearest pub.

"I don't think landowners will be lining up to dedicate land," she sighs.

With the hard work of winning government legislation behind it, Ramblers is confident enthusiasts will soon have greater freedom to roam the British Isles. But the watchdog still has 20 years of hard sweat ahead to ensure it wrings the most out of the new pathways law. Davis is cautiously optimistic.

"It's not beyond the realms of possibility that the job will be done," she says. ■

Shirley Skeel is a freelance radio and print journalist based in San Francisco, who worked for twelve years in London writing business news for the Daily Telegraph, Daily Mail, Bloomberg Newswire, *and other publications.*



Pathways Furor in Los Altos Hills

Traditional trails now controversial

SHIRLEY SKEEL

IN THE TOWN of Los Altos Hills, where multimillion-dollar homes share the hills with oaks and apricot trees, songbirds and deer, the citizens might be expected to be content and serene. Young girls ride by on horses, couples push strollers down sunny lanes, and cars nose slowly around the cul-de-sacs.

This is the peace the local ranchers and businessmen intended when they laid out the town, 35 miles south of San Francisco, with an unusual network of dead-end roads and public pathways more than 40 years ago.

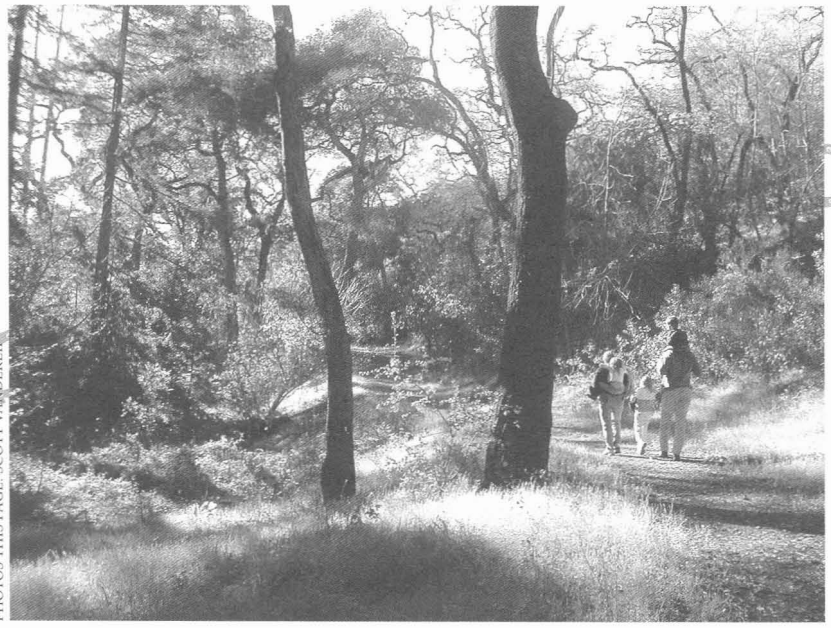
Or is it? Even the greatest designer of all failed to devise a plan that would make us all good neighbors. Ever since 1981, when the Town Council detailed the founders' vision by setting out 113 miles of criss-crossing pathways in a Master Path Plan, that plan has been a source of bitterness and anger.

Jorge Fernandes, an entrepreneur with four start-ups to his name, moved to Los Altos Hills from San Francisco ten years ago and built a house for his family. He calls the Master Path Plan "an impossible utopia designed by some bozos sitting around and saying this will be the pathway plan."

One pathway on the map runs alongside Fernandes's three-acre plot, less than 20 feet from his house, separated by a few pines. He worries that his two young daughters might be abducted by a passing stranger as they play in the yard. He says four-wheel-drive vehicles tear illegally down the passage, and horses trespass on his land. He wants this pathway deleted from the map. "There is a total invasion of privacy and total lack of respect for other

Top: Mary Stutz Path runs through forest land to link two roads.

Bottom: A family hike



PHOTOS THIS PAGE: SCOTT VANDERLIP

people's property," says Fernandes, a member of the Town Council's Pathways Committee. Some people have labeled him "anti-pathway," but he insists that he only wants to close paths that are redundant and intrusive.

Ginger Summit, author of five books on gourd-craft, has lived in Los Altos Hills for 38 years, and cherishes the neighborly atmosphere brought by the pathways. "We say paths build community," she says, "and it's for the safety of children, so they don't have to walk on the roadside."

Scott Vanderlip, a software developer and six-year resident, agrees, adding that many others, including himself, rely on the paths. Without them, he explains, he would have to walk three and a half miles to "go around the block" because of convoluted streets and dead-end roads.

The controversy began heating up in late 2001 when the Pathways Committee began a review of the Master Path Plan. Staff searched old title documents and held public hearings to determine whether any changes were needed. The Council paid veteran hiker Brian Robinson $3,000 to walk 75 miles to verify the map. (Robinson had won fame in 2001 by hiking 7,371 miles of national scenic routes in ten months.)

Although in the beginning all members of the Pathways Committee agreed that a review was needed, before it was over charges of political shenanigans were flying, a bomb threat was called in at a critical moment during a meeting, and a log was rammed through a Council member's window. A woman running for the Council claimed her cat was kidnapped because of her opposition to some pathways.

In April 2002, the Pathways Committee held an election that led to the ouster of its three co-chairwomen (including Ginger Summit) and their replacement with DuBose Montgomery, who was keen to reduce the number of off-road pathways. Pathway supporters railed that the election procedure was "underhanded" because the co-chairs had not been informed that a vote was to be taken. Jorge Fernandes, the Committee's secretary, says it was on the agenda, which was mailed to all committee members. Montgomery had not returned this reporter's numerous phone calls by the time this article went to press.

By September 2002 the reshuffled committee had completed a new 2002 Master Path Plan, which kept all existing paths but cut plans for new paths from 24 miles to eight. Scott Vanderlip insists that this new map "completely ignored" the views of local residents. "They took out all the most important scenic off-road pathways and replaced them with roadside ones," he says.

Fernandes counters: "It was a very fair map and allowed the public to have a say." An environmental review followed, and by November the map was ready to go before the Council.

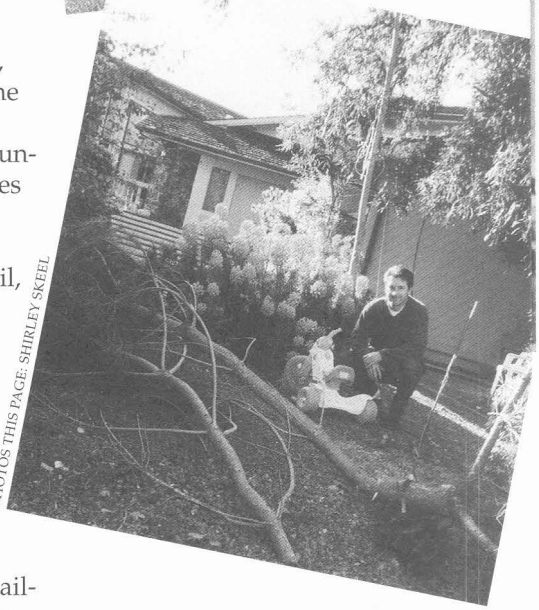
The game of political musical chairs continued as a November Council election came up. Local voting was heavy and put pathway sympathizers back in the majority. However, two days after the election, the lame-duck Council put the new diminished pathway map to a vote.

The Council meeting on November 7 was packed with citizens beseeching the members to delay the vote until the new Council was sworn in. The meeting was interrupted by a bomb threat, which was called in to 911 from a pay phone just outside Council chambers and led to a 20-minute delay as the building was evacuated. When the meeting resumed, Council members voted and adopted the diminished pathway map.

Infuriated, Scott Vanderlip rallied volunteers who collected some 1,100 signatures (14 percent of the town's population of 7,900) on a petition for a referendum on the just-adopted map. The Town Council, with two new members sympathetic to pathways, had two legal options in response to the petition. It could hold a referendum, or simply reverse the previous Council's decision. It chose the latter course. The Pathways committee is now revising the original 1981 Plan.

The issue is still far from resolved. Volunteers are digging through legal records to ensure the new map is unassailable. Once it is ready—and it could be several months—there will be more public input, more Council meetings, more debate . . . and, no doubt, more fireworks.

Meanwhile, life continues on the manicured lawns and in the shady lanes of Los Altos Hills. Ginger Summit will write another book on gourds, Jorge Fernandes will hammer out more plans for his fledgling business, and who knows, Scott Vanderlip may even get another chance to be a local hero. ■



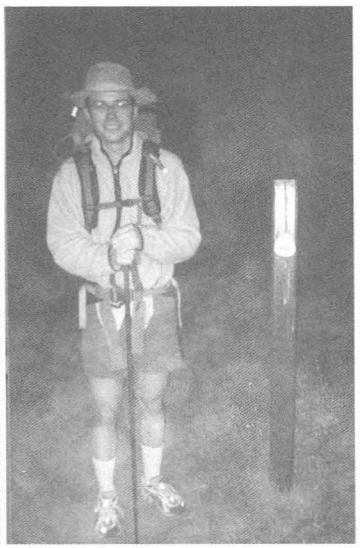
PHOTOS THIS PAGE: SHIRLEY SKEEL

Top and middle: Ginger Summit and Scott Vanderlip, vocal advocates of the Los Altos Hills pathways, enjoy walking on the Byrne Reserve.

Bottom: Jorge Fernandes sits by the pathway near his home.

Hiking the Pacific Crest Trail from Mexico to Oregon

Long Walk along the Top of the Watershed



PHOTOS THIS SPREAD: ARNO HOLSCHUH

Top: Below Muir Pass

Above: The author starts his trek at the Mexican border.

ARNO HOLSCHUH

LIVING IN Humboldt County, I took it for granted that the coast and ocean played a large role in my life. They were always there, in the form of fresh seafood and the eternally rainy, cool weather of the Pacific Northwest. I wore a raincoat six months out of the year and developed a fondness for Dungeness crab.

I assumed that the ocean stopped dictating the flow of life maybe five miles inland. Not until I took a long look west from the top of the Sierra did I learn differently.

In May 2002, I left Humboldt County and flew down to the Mexican border, where I began a hike along the Pacific Crest Trail, which runs to the Canadian border and is more than 2,600 miles long. I went as far as the Oregon border, 1,700 miles. During this trek, I began to understand that the ocean that laps on California's beaches is the lifeblood of the mountain ranges, from the San Felipes in the south to the Siskiyous in the north.

Ocean, coast, and mountains are all part of a single living, breathing system. Cool, moist ocean air flows to the hot inland valleys, condenses, and then precipitates snow and rain on the western side of the mountains, allowing deserts to bloom and high alpine peaks to shine with pure snow. The snowpack stores water for the dry season, releasing it downstream just when it's needed. In the past, that water fed vast wetlands and grasslands before flowing into the ocean. Within the last couple of centuries, however, people have manipulated that natural cycle by building dams and aquifers to serve agriculture, cities, and industry. More than 70 percent of California's residents live within 60 miles of the coast now, and their thirst for water has kept growing.

The Pacific Crest Trail, which follows the spine of the mountain ranges, allows for a

bird's-eye view of both the natural water system and its human manipulation. Walking north, you have green vegetation to the west, thanks to the ocean, while to your right the slopes are dry and brown. And you meet people who live in the mountains, people whose lives are influenced by the fight for water with cities hundreds of miles to the west.

I did not approach this hiking challenge without experience. In the summer of 1999 I hiked the Appalachian Trail from end to end—2,161 miles from Mt. Springer, Georgia, to Mt. Katahdin, Maine. But the Appalachians are lush, green, and warm—at least until one walks into the bald mountains of New Hampshire. Streams usually flow throughout the summer, and there's no snowpack to speak of. One normally suffers from neither a paucity of liquid water nor an overabundance of ice. On the PCT, in contrast, both sets of conditions regularly influence your lifestyle: not only do you have to carry extra water storage capacity, but light mountaineering gear is a very good idea as well.

Lack of drinking water, lots of snow: it's counterintuitive, but I never respected the effects of the Pacific Ocean so strongly as when I was walking along the spines of mountains.

The Mojave Desert was the first real physical challenge. By the time I reached its heart, 500 miles into the hike, I had heard enough to know it would not be pleasant. It's the sort of thing hikers discuss in hushed tones over a shared evening meal.

Actually, the Trail only crosses one small chunk of the desert: Antelope Valley, a flat bottom along the desert's western rim. You come out of hills on the southern edge, make a beeline across the valley floor, and climb back up into comparatively friendly hills on the northern edge of the desert.

The stretch of trail through Antelope Valley has a reputation as one of the most dangerous stretches along the Trail, second only to the treacherous snow in the High Sierra. Temperatures in May, when most hikers pass through, routinely climb above 100°F, and water sources are few and far between. Several experts even recommend hiking this piece at night, to avoid the heat—the only problem being that rattlesnakes have a habit of coming out to hunt for mice during the cool evening hours.

Rattlesnakes or scorching heat? Being a coward, I opted for the latter. Starting at dawn, I put on a good pace to get it over with as soon as possible. Hours passed. One, three, five hours, then it was noon and the heat was almost unbearable.

When I first saw the eight-foot-wide concrete path in front of me, it didn't even occur to me to wonder what the unlikely street was doing in the middle of a wasteland. But as the day wore on and I walked over mile after mile of concrete, I became curious. It was odd: too narrow to be a real road, too finished to be a jeep track. Once or twice every mile there was a concrete box on the left side of the street. If you listened closely, you could hear an unfamiliar noise coming out of the boxes. It sounded almost like water, but that made so little sense that I dismissed the thought. The boxes were locked, so there was no way to tell what was inside.

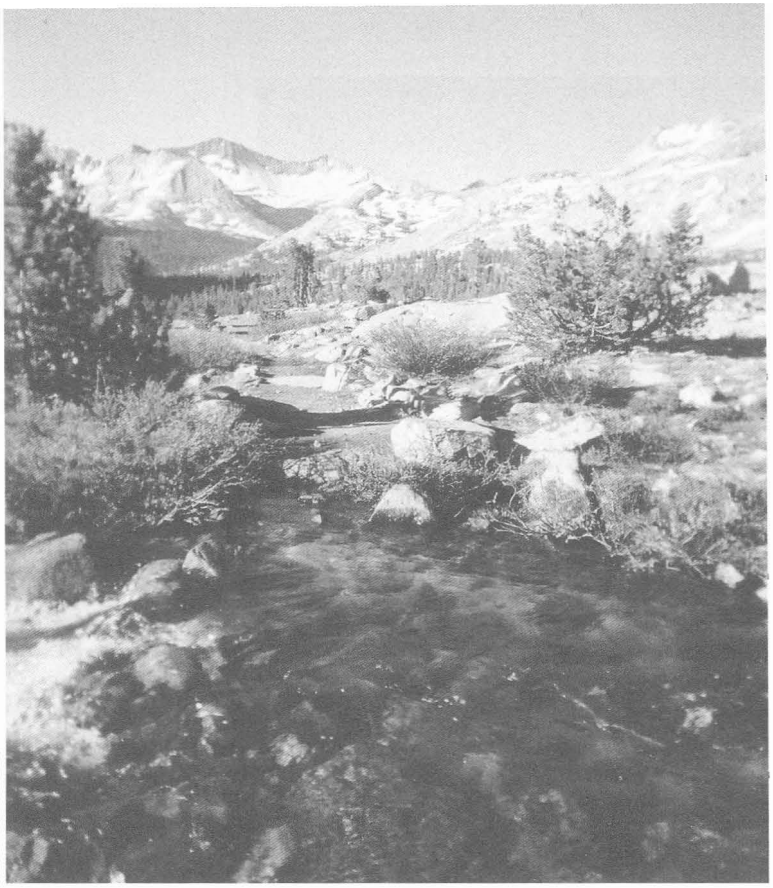
Somewhere in sunny southern California

By midafternoon, the trail veered away from the enigmatic concrete lane and into a shallow wash. There I found a small congregation of fellow hikers lounging around a man-made spring, laughing and taking a break. Clear cold water bubbled up out of a pipe. I thought I must be dreaming.

"Where's that water coming from?" I asked an elderly gentleman who was dozing in the shade of a cottonwood tree.

"You don't know?" he asked.

"Honestly, no."



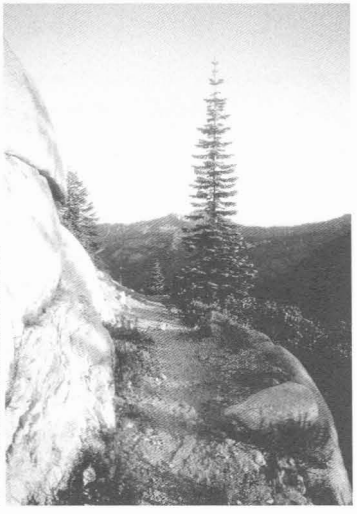
ARNO HOLSCHUH

"That's an aqueduct for the Los Angeles municipal water supply, my boy. It's all pure Sierra water, being piped down to the good people of L.A."

I was dumbfounded. Incongruities are not rare in the desert: I had already seen houses with bright green lawns in a desert valley—and not without some bitter reflections about the use of hundreds of gallons of fresh water to support grass when I was so dry that the dust was literally collecting in my mouth—but this beat everything I'd seen to date. I was quite literally in the driest region traversed by the Trail, in a place where a person's daily schedule and happiness is determined by the availability of a bucketful of potable water. And here, underneath my feet, was a gushing man-made river, flowing toward the coast. I thought back to that noise I had heard earlier by the concrete boxes. It was the noise of a very, very thirsty city.

Top: Below Mather Pass, King's Canyon National Park

Bottom: Russian Wilderness



PACIFIC CREST TRAIL ASSOCIATION

Ribs. Big slabs of beef ribs with sweet sticky sauce that clings to your fingers for days after you've stopped eating.

That's all I'm thinking about as I walk into Grumpy Bear's, a restaurant in Kennedy Meadows, a tiny unincorporated settlement 700 miles along the Trail. Nestled between the desert and the High Sierra, Kennedy Meadows boasts a general store (with movies shown once a week in an outdoor amphitheater) and Grumpy Bear's, and that's it. One almost gets the feeling that tourists and city slickers are unwelcome. I found that people here don't think of themselves as living in southern California, because SoCal is synonymous with L.A. "We ain't got nothing to do with those people back there in La-La Land," as a lean, tanned man sitting on the porch of the general store put it.

Still, Grumpy Bear's is a trekker's dream come true. It serves only one meal a day, but that meal is "all-you-can-eat." Long-distance hikers all suffer from malnutrition to one degree or another. The daily expenditure of calories is approximately double that of a normal person, and there's a constant motivation to cut the weight of your pack, meaning you carry as little food as possible. In a desperate effort to fuel their engines, almost all hikers carry compact, concentrated, high-energy food—in other words, junk food. Snickers are so well loved that they can sometimes be traded like hard currency in the wilderness. It's an odd feeling to justify munching three Ho-Hos for breakfast, but when you burn over 5,000 calories a day, it really is the way to go. Still, even chocolate and peanuts wear thin after a month, and places like Grumpy Bear's provide a welcome chance to tank up on fresh protein and fat.

So I was in a state of ecstasy as I settled down by myself at a table by the window. I started in on the ribs, then switched to the cole slaw, then to the baked beans. I was sopping up some extra sauce with a chunk of bread when I saw the waitress run outside.

"What's wrong?" I asked the man at the next table, who was wearing jeans, a flannel shirt, and a sooty-looking baseball cap. He looked out the window and said through pressed lips, "Could be a forest fire." I followed his gaze and saw that the sky, normally a monotonous clear blue, was clouded with a brownish haze. According to Trail legend, a PCT hiker had started a disastrous fire just miles south of Kennedy Meadows three years before: in an attempt to minimize his environmental impact, he'd burned his toilet paper.

After a minute of silence during which we all calculated how we would escape the fire, the waitress came back in.

"False alarm," she said. "It's just Owens Lake."

Owens Lake is one of the most famous casualties of Los Angeles's unquenchable thirst. Until 1913, it was one the most important stopover points for migratory

birds in southern California. All but dry through the summer, it would fill with shallow water in the wet season, just in time for the arriving flocks.

Then the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power decided to take the water. Over the course of the next six decades, despite fierce and sometimes violent local opposition, the city built increasingly effective mechanisms to siphon Owens Valley water into L.A. As it tapped surface water and then groundwater, marshes dried, springs stopped flowing, plant communities underwent drastic changes. Local residents were put on water meters. Dust storms kicked up by high winds blowing across the arid plains became so bad that air pollution controls were triggered. In 1999, Los Angeles agreed to fill a small part of the lake—using Owens Valley groundwater. That did not fix the problem.

As anyone unlucky enough to have been caught in one of those storms can attest, they are not fun. And for people up in Kennedy Meadows, those dust storms from the dry lake bed, which look like forest fires, are another reason to resent "those city folk."

During my long hike, I had ample time to think about the water cycle as it plays out between the ocean and the Sierra, and about the way human lives along the coast relate to the lives of people I was meeting along the way. While the natural system is one interdependent whole, the human ecology needs mending. It has been said by many that water is more precious than gold in California. How it's shared is key to the nature of the society we have.

After thirty days of obsessing about water—rationing it, fantasizing about it, and once even having to chase a rattlesnake away from a spring to access it—it seemed to me that there could never be enough to go around. Then suddenly, standing at the foot of Muir Pass in the 832nd mile of the hike, I almost unbelievably faced too much water. The pass, at 12,000 feet, is not remarkably high, but because it is well shielded from the alpine sun, it normally holds its snowpack well into late June—and I was there in the middle of the month. I looked at the valley before me and saw nothing but shimmering, blinding white snow with a black, frozen lake in the center.

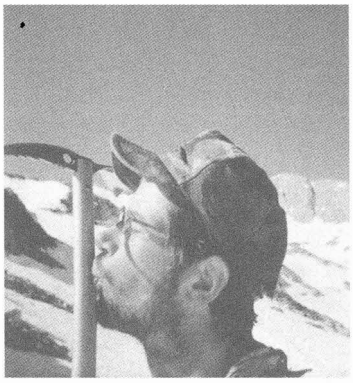
And then I swore at the empty, desolate crags around me in the most colorful language I could muster, because for a hiker, snow is difficult and treacherous. It freezes your feet, and one false step in the slush can send you sliding down a steep, smooth slope to jagged rocks a mile below.

In the mountains as in the desert, the coastal connection runs through water. In the Mojave Desert I had been amazed (and not a little disgusted) at the aqueduct draining mountain water to serve southern cities. In the Sierra, I was amazed (and cowed) by the vast volume of water stored in the snowpack. This water determined the rhythm of my gait—and the pace, which was, to say the least, slow. You take a step, test it once or twice to make sure the snow isn't going to give way, gradually bring your full weight to bear on the little foothold you've made, then drag your other foot forward.

In early August, after more than 1,600 miles, I reached the Klamath River, where water wars have been pitting farmers against the needs of salmon and those who depend on them, including the Yurok Tribe. Here, it's the inland people rather than coastal residents who have the upper hand. Upstream agricultural interests have historically had claim to water that would normally flow downstream. Coastal communities, including Eureka and Crescent City, which once thrived on the Klamath's salmon runs, have watched the water and the salmon go away without being able to do much about it.

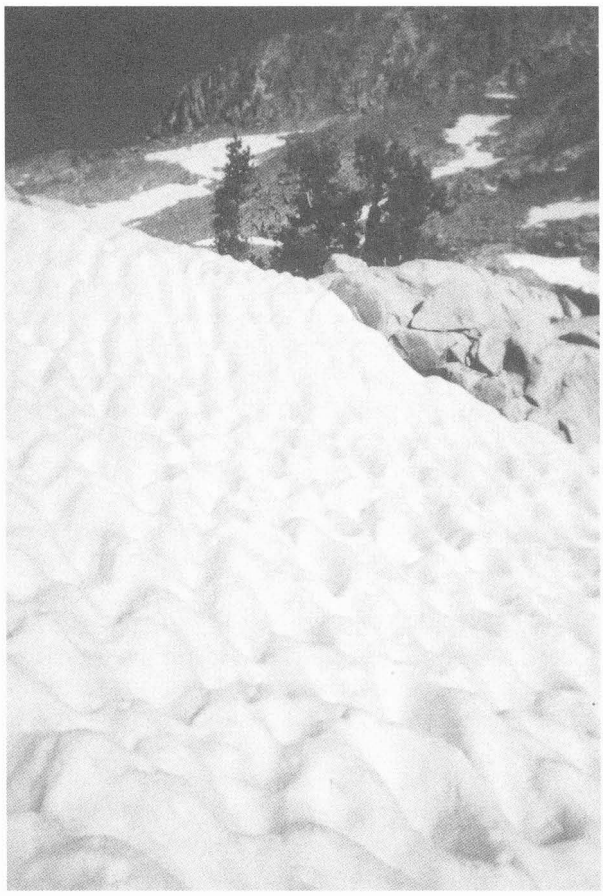
Which is how it should be, according to many who live in the basin. These are farmers, people who have carved out a life by working incredibly hard, and they cannot see why some fish should be given priority over the water they need to grow alfalfa, grains, potatoes, and row crops. This fight came to a head in 2001, when the Bureau of Reclamation shut the gates on an irrigation project to protect threatened species of salmon. Farmers occupied the irrigation facilities and

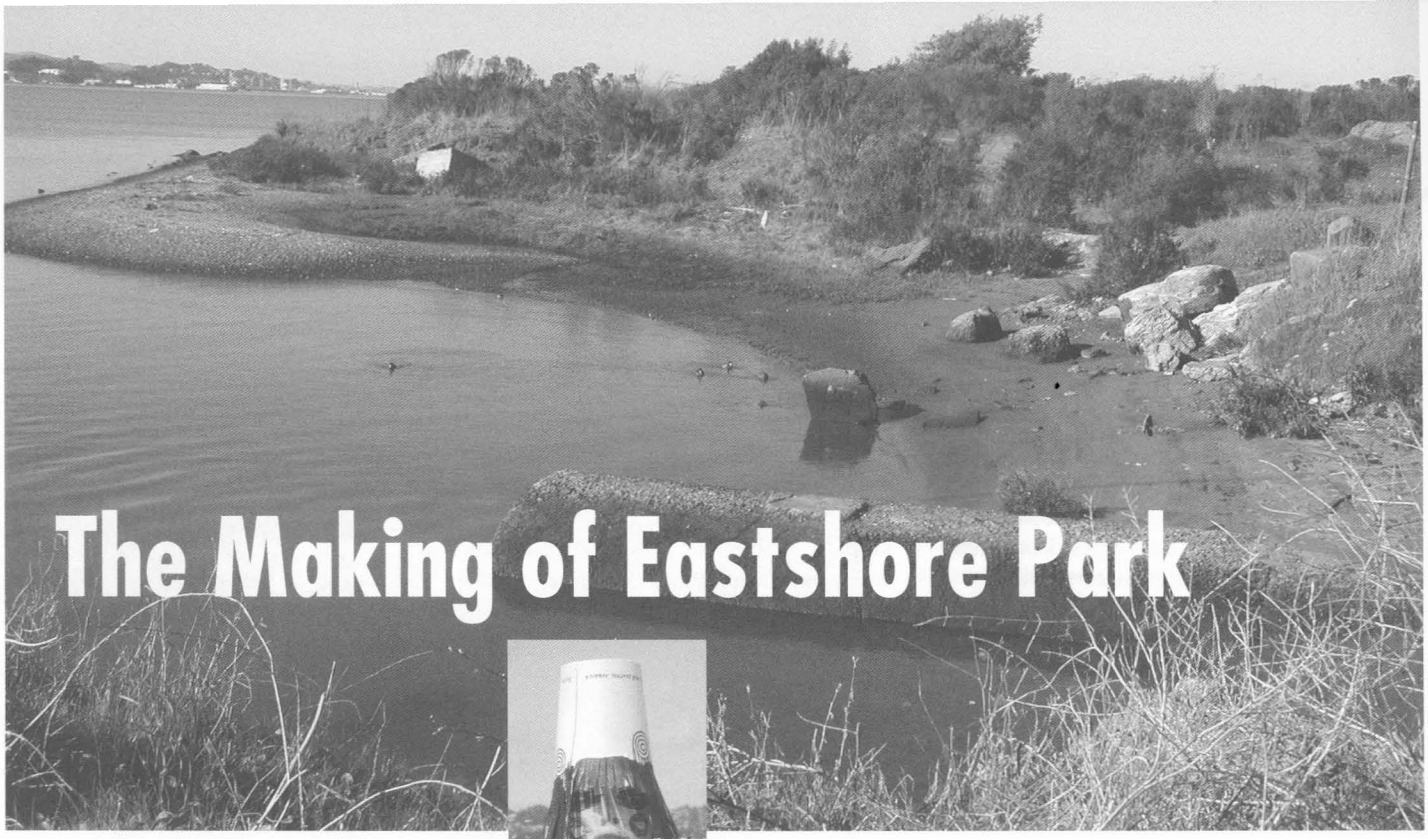
(continued on page 40)



Above: The author

Below: Snowcups below Muir Pass





The Making of Eastshore Park

FRIENDS OF FIVE CREEKS

DAN ROBBIN

A Milestone in Coastal History

IN **1961**, the *Oakland Tribune* published a map prepared by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers showing San Francisco Bay—California's largest estuary—reduced to about a third its size by 2020. The Corps had concluded that 70 percent of the bay was shallow enough to be suitable for filling.

That map shocked three Berkeley women into action. Sylvia McLaughlin, Kay Kerr, and the late Esther Gulick made some phone calls inviting a few people to Gulick's home, and the Save San Francisco Bay Association was born. It campaigned successfully for legislation that created the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) to protect the bay ecosystem and provide public access to the shore (see p. 4).

After BCDC put an end to major filling projects and moved to close the municipal garbage dumps that burned at the edges of the bay, Bay advocates turned their attention to existing undeveloped landfills, most owned by the Santa Fe Railroad Company. It was obvious to Save the Bay that since this land could not be returned to its natural state, it should be opened to everyone's enjoyment.

"Our first thought was stopping the fill, but I envisioned how nice it would be to have all this open space," Sylvia McLaughlin said recently, sitting at her dining room table with the bay visible through the window behind her. Back in 1960 she had written to the president of the Santa Fe Railroad asking if the company would like to donate their land. Not surprisingly, she got no response. Santa Fe had big plans for that land, including an 18-story twin-tower hotel extending into the Emeryville mudflats, a shopping center on the Berkeley waterfront, an office and retail complex in Albany. Save the Bay fought these proposals, and oth-

A Planner's Perspective

DON NEUWIRTH

CONVERTING A STRING of landfills and garbage dumps along the eastern shoreline of San Francisco Bay into a state park took 30 years of work by a passionate group of activists. Formal planning for the park took only the last two years. The hard part had been done. A coalition of dedicated and well-organized citizens had changed their communities' perception of the waterfront, raised the $28 million needed to buy 8.5 miles of shoreline between the Bay Bridge and Richmond from the Santa Fe Railroad, and persuaded public agencies to create a new state park. A waterfront that for decades had been viewed as suitable for dumps and real estate development was perceived as a valued natural habitat and recreation area by the time formal planning for the park began.

Nevertheless, the agencies charged with responsibility for planning, designing, and shaping Eastshore State Park—State Parks, the Coastal Conservancy, and the East Bay Regional Park District, the lead planner—faced a thorny set of issues. The political will that had brought development projects to a halt and forced the agencies to buy the parkland could not agree on the new uses for this land. The citizens' coalition had been united until it had secured the parkland. With that goal achieved, divergent visions of the park emerged. Some groups wanted to protect the reclaimed shore as wildlife habitat, with minimal human presence; others looked for a more active waterfront, which would accommodate sports and other public uses.

ers that appeared whenever one was defeated, with letters, petitions, lawsuits, appeals to legislators, and innumerable meetings.

"I can't tell you the number of Saturday meetings we had at this table with Santa Fe Railroad," McLaughlin said. "They finally gave up."

Meanwhile, the idea of a shoreline state park took root, promoted by Save the Bay and the Sierra Club, working with citizens in Oakland, Emeryville, Berkeley, Albany, and Richmond. In 1982, the Coastal Conservancy started a citizen planning effort in support of the park concept and State Parks undertook a feasibility study. In 1985, to carry the idea forward and raise the necessary funds to buy the land, Citizens for Eastshore State Park was formed. A total of $40 million was secured: $25 million in State park bond money, the rest from the East Bay Regional Park District's (EBRPD) measure AA.

State Parks had not exactly jumped to embrace the park idea. An urban landfill was not a typical state park. "I was incensed when they said it was just a dump," McLaughlin recalled, "We thought it had great potential. And they finally came around."

With crucial help from Assemblyman Tom Bates, State Parks and EBRPD began to negotiate with Santa Fe, and in 1997 bought 1,800 acres along the 8.5 miles of shoreline between the Oakland end of the Bay Bridge and the Richmond Marina. Eastshore State Park was now a reality, and in 2000 State Parks, EBRPD, and the Coastal Conservancy began a two-year planning process, which resulted in a general plan meant to accommodate diverse forms of life and recreation.

This park carries symbolic significance, for it is on the site where the movement to save the bay—predecessor of the movement to save the coast—began, and where people can experience themselves in relation to the regenerative power of nature. During the years of contention over use of the land, nature moved in. Birds brought seeds, and plants became established. Informal trails appeared, especially at the Albany Bulb, the former Albany municipal dump, now a rough urban wilderness. People come to walk here, alone or with dogs, enjoying the views across the bay. Artists, including some of the homeless who lived for a time in the shelter of the greenery, created sculptures of rebar, Styrofoam, and other debris that had been dumped here or brought in by storms. (The same impulse inspires people to make driftwood structures along the shore.) How the park will look when the general plan is implemented, and whether traces of this modern history will be saved, will not be known for some time.

Save the Bay is now working toward a goal only dreamers would have considered possible 30 years ago: to acquire and restore 30,000 acres of wetlands that were lost to diking and filling in the past century or so. Kay Kerr, in her 90s, continues to receive and read the minutes of Save the Bay meetings. Sylvia McLaughlin, now 86, seldom has time to visit the new park. She's too busy with "things that come my way," as things have a way of doing when someone is an imaginative, energetic, and much-appreciated community leader. "The next task is resolving the Magna proposal issue," she said, referring to a large hotel and retail complex proposed for land owned by Golden Gate Fields. There was a look in her eye that was both playful and feisty as she pointed out: "It's right in the middle of our park."

THOMAS MIKKELSEN

Above: The Albany Bulb

Opposite page: Schoolhouse Creek empties through this pipe into the Bay north of Berkeley Meadow. About 700 feet of the creek wil be "daylighted."

In addition, people who had come to know and enjoy this shoreline in the years it lay untended wanted to make sure they could continue doing so in their own special ways. The shoreline was wild, overgrown with vegetation, and many people had discovered its special qualities. The homeless made it their home; individuals searching for solitude in nature were drawn by its raw character and spectacular views, as were groups looking for excitement and opportunities for creative expression. Sculptures appeared, built of debris dumped into marshlands or washed ashore by winds and tides. Dogs ran free while their owners meandered along informal footpaths, resting mind and spirit in a place that nature was reclaiming. The task of the planners was to forge conflicting interests into a comprehensive vision for the park, embodied in a general plan.

The Place

IT TAKES SOME imagination to see Eastshore State Park as a single entity. It extends along the fringe of the bay as a series of embayments and peninsulas, covering a total of about 1,800 acres, of which 80 percent is submerged tidelands while the remainder, 400 acres of dry land, is composed almost entirely of landfills. Before filling began, the natural shoreline was about a quarter-mile inland. Five cities—Oakland, Emeryville, Berkeley, Albany, and Richmond—and two counties—Alameda and Contra Costa—have jurisdiction over both the water and the land.

To the east is I-80, one of the most congested highways in the country. As commuters creep along—traffic is heavy most of the day—they are afforded views across the bay of the San Francisco skyline, Bay Bridge, Golden Gate Bridge, and Marin Headlands.

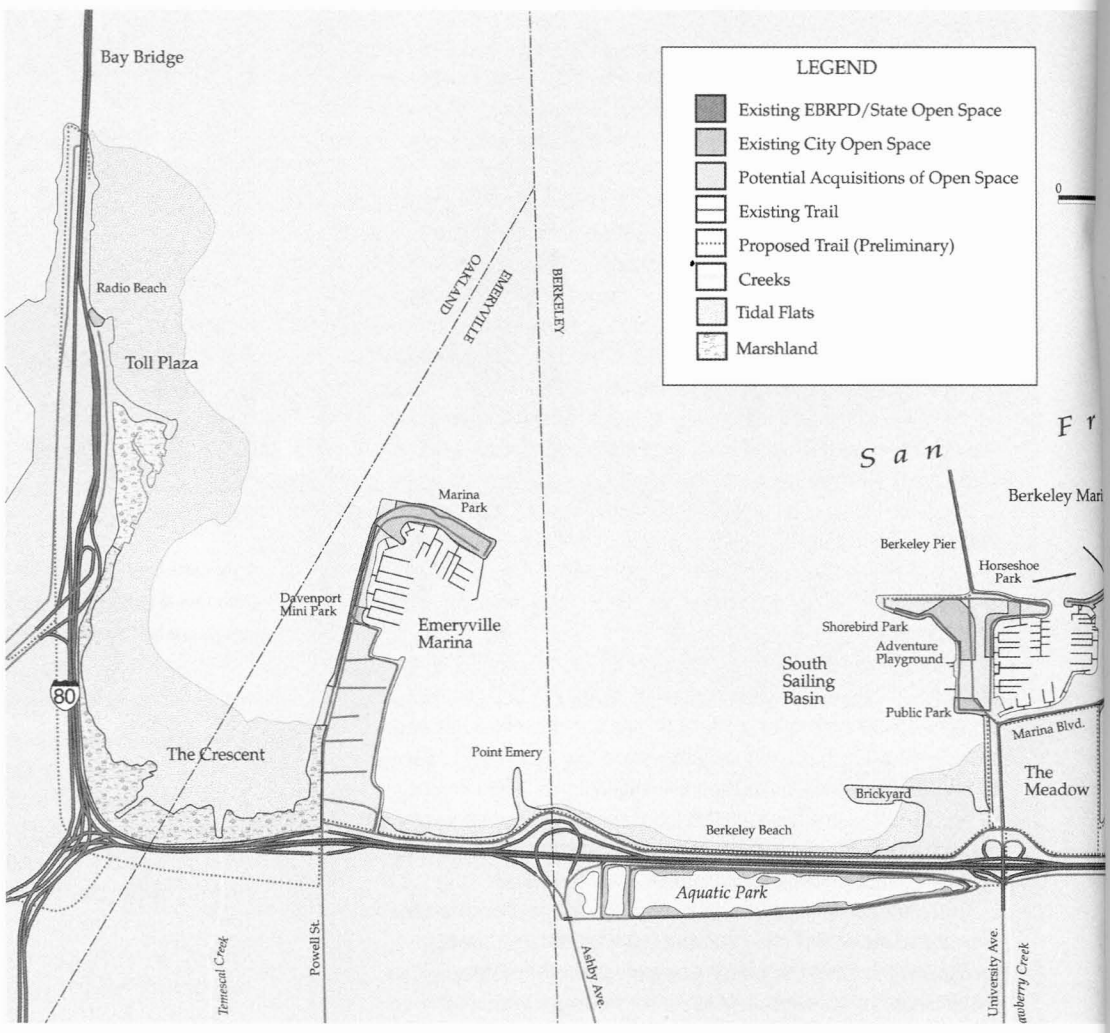
Robert Cheasty, Citizens for Eastshore State Park

OUR GOAL was to make a park on the East Bay shoreline; to guarantee people access to their shoreline while protecting the wild things that live there.

A lot more work has to be done to ensure that the park is implemented as planned. We hope to add more land as it becomes available—for example, excess land that Golden Gate Fields may no longer need. Securing funding has always been a challenge, but this park was created out of dreams. We had nothing but hope and determination when we started.

This is a movement that came from a vision that was best embodied in Save the Bay. Our efforts brought in so many volunteers it's impossible to list them all; stalwarts who have stayed with the efforts for 20 years and more, others who were like sprinters, taking time from their lives for a bond campaign or waterfront protection initiative, and then passing the baton back to the stalwarts; the thousands who voted for the bonds and protections. Elected leaders like Tom Bates shared the vision and did what was needed to make the park happen.

Now we just have to keep imagining. There was a time when there were so many birds on the Bay that when they took flight, they darkened the sky. Can you imagine restoring that, or at least some of it?

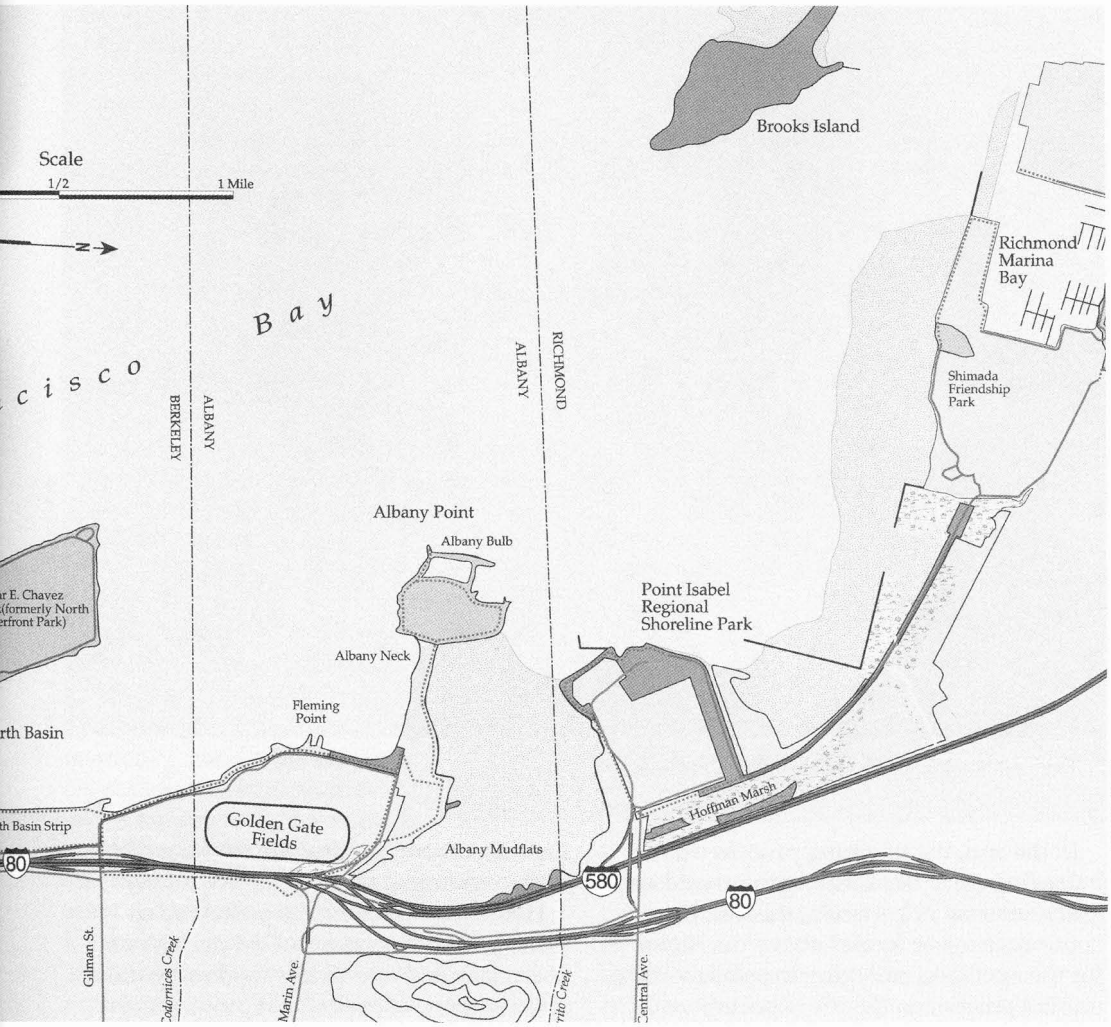


They may notice shorebirds as they pass the Albany mudflats and the Emeryville Crescent, where salt marsh habitat has been restored by the California Department of Transportation. They may know waterfront parks that have been developed on landfills by Emeryville, Berkeley, and Albany. But few are likely to know of the existence of Eastshore State Park between the road they are traveling and the shimmering water.

The Process

TO MANAGE THE planning process, the three agencies responsible for Eastshore State Park formed a Steering Committee. They hired me as a planning manager to run the program, and a team of consultants, led by Wallace, Roberts & Todd, LLC, to do the technical planning and environmental analysis. An 18-month process was outlined to reach out to the community and complete all the studies necessary to meet the legal requirements of a state park general plan. The goal was to use the best science and planning principles to guide land use decisions in an open public process. Political scientists call this "transparency" in government. The planning team called it "trusting the process." Often in this kind of deliberation the most extremist advocates dominate or good science is trumped by bad politics. Sometimes conflicts extend the process and prevent any decision being made at all.

The planning process, which was built on hard deadlines, encouraged public involvement through participation in more than 75 meetings. These included regional workshops in each of the five jurisdictions to present planning milestones: issue identification, alternatives, concept plan and preferred concept, and the environmental impact report. Each of these large meetings, which lasted up to four hours, attracted some 500 people; more than a hundred spoke at each session, with each member of the public limited to three minutes.



EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT

The workshops were followed by a set of five local briefings on the planning milestones, held in each of the local jurisdictions. In addition, the planners held "stakeholder" (user groups) meetings, as well as conducting focus groups, site tours, and meetings with other interested organizations. These were all vital face-to-face opportunities for the planners to learn from the community.

A newsletter was produced to announce each regional workshop and provide a summary of the plan, and an extensive web site was created to encourage people to download reports and send e-mail comments to the planning team. In the last year of the project, almost almost 200,000 hits were recorded on this site. An 800 phone number was also effective in allowing the public to communicate with the planning team.

Press coverage of each phase of the effort was extensive. The massive Resource Inventory, Draft Plan, and Draft Environmental Impact Report were made available free of charge at a copy shop and main libraries in each city. As a result of this varied and extensive outreach, most people who wanted to help shape the park's future ended up feeling heard. And the planners learned about the issues.

The Issues

THE EAST BAY is a diverse natural and political environment, and many ideas were put forward. The public's differing visions and perspectives were mirrored among the agencies. Some steering committee members viewed the park as a string of local parklands, others saw the shoreline as a regional open space, and still others struggled to define an urban state park. All these agency visions conflicted with local desires to continue current informal uses. The planning team proposed innovations which had to be sold to the agencies as feasible in operational as well as political terms.

Osha Neumann, Attorney, Artist

THEY WERE unable to imagine incorporating wildness into this park—a wildness people love. It's the wildness of overgrown and abandoned remains of our industrial civilization. This [the Albany Bulb] could have been a tool for teaching about the relation between human artifacts and the natural environment. It's too bad there isn't room for this kind of experience. The rest of the plan is great.

Joan Collignon, Kayaker, Birder

MY GOAL was to have more access to the water for the average person. I'm a sea kayaker—but a fair-weather sea kayaker—and also a member of the Audubon Society and a volunteer at Arrowhead Marsh. Sometimes the Sierra Club leadership goes too far in trying to protect places for birds. I am happy to stay away from some protected areas, but I do want a good place to put my kayak in. Everyone has to give a little bit.

Jerry Yukic, Point Isabel Dog Owners

WE WERE successful in getting what we wanted. For a while we were afraid we might lose North Point Isabel [a newly acquired chunk of parkland just north of Point Isabel, where dogs are permitted off leash], so I personally attended all the meetings of Citizens for Eastshore State Park.

Scott Hewitt, Sniff Artist

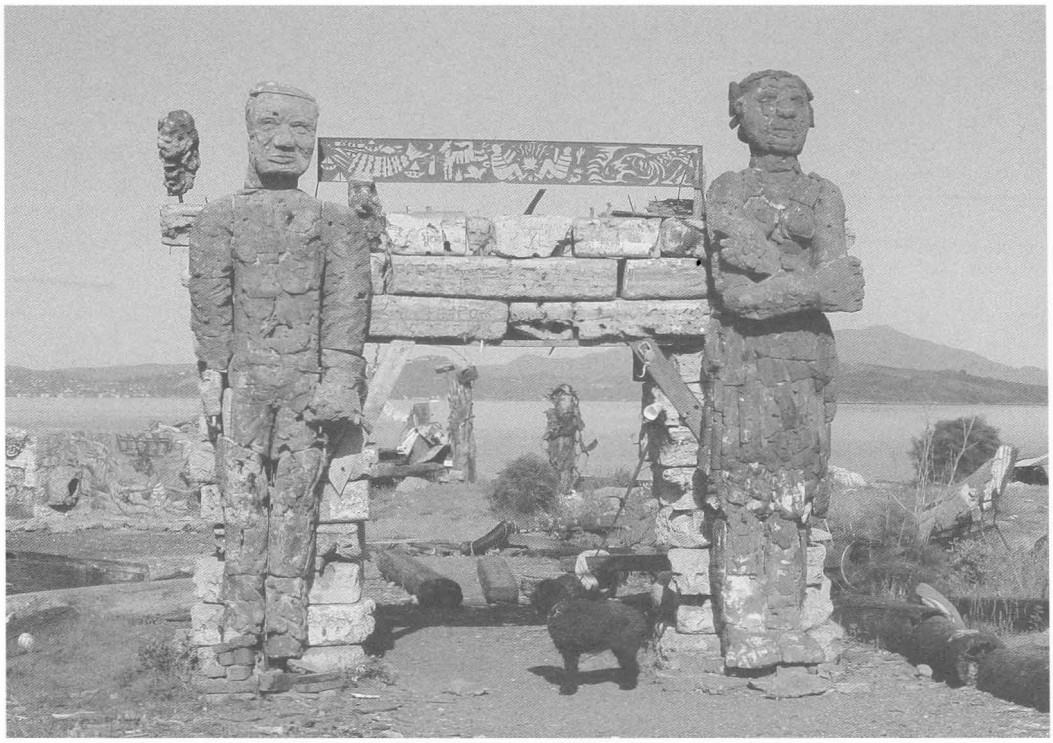
SEEMS LIKE the park is being created for someone who doesn't go to the Albany Bulb right now and may never go there. People who come out like it there and they like our stuff, they like to see strange things popping up. We've been surprised, especially by the older people. And kids don't think it's strange. Committee art is pretty boring, it's numbing to people. We wouldn't want to go through their committees to do one of our paintings, we'd rather just wrap it up.

We all know it's the beginning of the end. The paintings on concrete, I'd rather paint them out grey. They've been doing that in the front part of the park already, covering anything that appears there with gray paint. When we're out of here, once this becomes a park, taggers will take over. Now people take care of the stuff that's there.

They say the place might not be maintained [if the untamed art work is allowed to continue] but it's been maintained for years by the people who use it. People pick trash up and take it out. We've always brought trash bags and dragged tons of trash out. This is actually working and they want to stop it.

Norman LaForce, Sierra Club

THE CLUB has no comment at this time.



PHOTOS THIS SPREAD: DAN ROBBIN

A visitor sniffs "Sniff" art at the Albany Bulb.

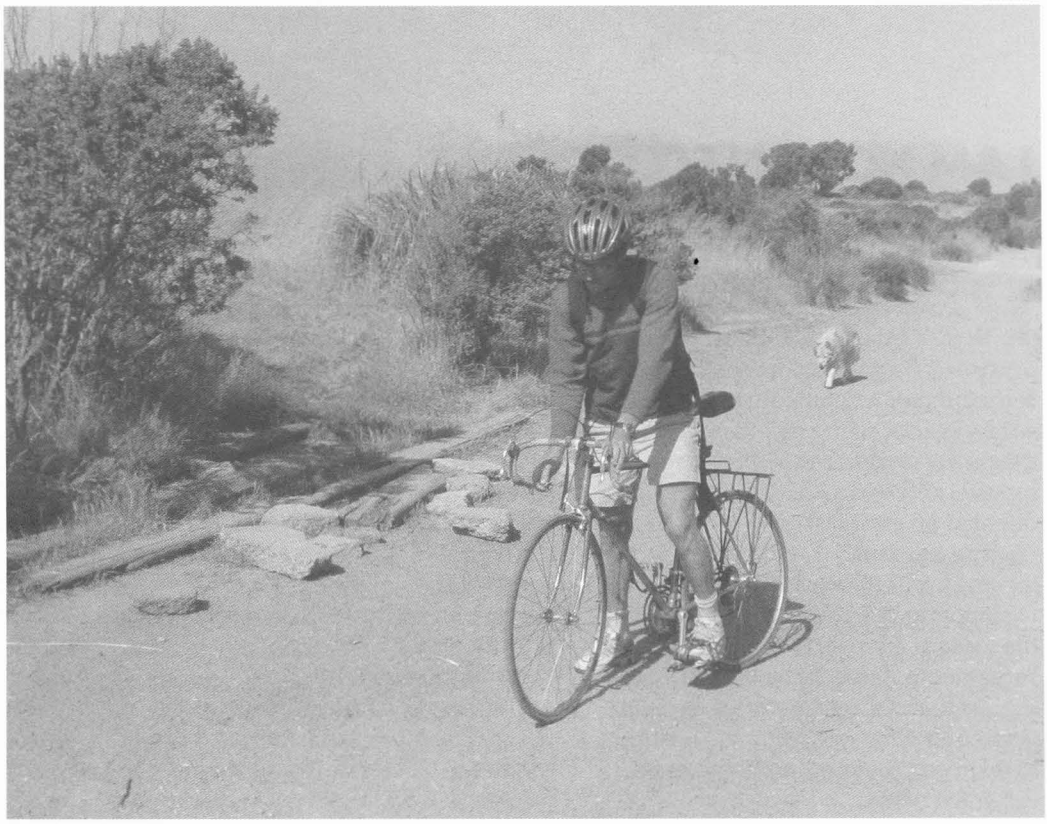
In the end, the planning process was a balancing act. After meeting in private and much internal negotiation, the steering committee made formal policy decisions for the agencies, emerging in public with a unified position and clear expectations as to the future of Eastshore State Park.

Only one feature was accepted without controversy: the continuation of the Bay Trail through the park. Controversy focused on the value of bird habitat versus sports facilities, off-leash dog use, shoreline access for water sports, and the artworks that had appeared, particularly on the Albany Bulb. The number of facilities proposed in the plan—parking, water access facilities, sports fields—caused some worry. Surprisingly, technical concerns, such as geotechnical and toxic issues, were minor.

Local governments and interest groups wanted specific policies regarding off-leash dog areas, for instance, but park managers wanted flexibility to cover all contingencies during the 20-year planning horizon. Agencies and advocates wanted reassurance that the details were clear, yet a general plan, by definition, must be general. The plan that ultimately emerged was as general as possible, but it resolved most of the use conflicts. The planning team offered tradeoffs between uses, based on known environmental constraints, and the steering committee endorsed them.

Habitat values are to be preserved in principle. Various areas of the park have been classified into three broad categories: preservation, where habitat protection is most stringent; conservation, where public access is permitted but habitat must be considered; and recreation, where intensive public use is allowed. Major creeks that now flow through pipes into the bay are to be

"daylighted"—restored to as natural a state as possible. A 75-acre meadow in Berkeley will be enhanced with native plants, in response to a major demand by environmentalists. Parking is to be clustered to support active and passive recreational uses. Off-leash dog walking is to be allowed on 20 percent of the parkland; restrictions are to be imposed on the other 80 percent. Kayaking and windsurfing facilities are to be provided in appropriate areas. Sports fields are to be allowed if stringent environmental constraints can be met. (Late in the planning process, East Bay Regional Parks acquired a site that might prove more appropriate for formal sports facilities than the Albany plateau, the area first selected.) As a trade-off for restricting public access in sensitive natural areas, promenades are proposed for suitable waterfront areas. Facilities essential for visitors and for the park's operation are included in the plan. Public art is to be incorporated into the park, but the existing art works will be evaluated as cultural resources by State Parks and then removed.



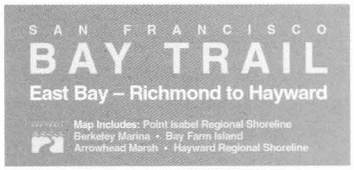
After much controversy regarding the classification of the park under the State Park system, the new park has been classified as a state seashore and formally named Eastshore State Park. The "seashore" classification is new to the State Parks Department and its significance is unclear. However, the environmentalists were reassured that more habitat protection could be provided than in a "state park" or "state recreation area." The Draft General Plan was reviewed and unanimously approved by the State Parks Commission. It won the support of Citizens for Eastshore State Park, the Sierra Club, the Audubon Society, the sports field advocates, and a major dog owners' group. Local governments and regulatory agencies endorsed it.

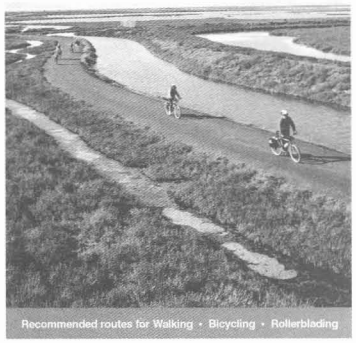
Not everyone went away pleased. The windsurfers were disappointed that they will not be able to drive autos to prime launching spots on the Albany Bulb and were not consoled by the promise of new launching facilities elsewhere in the park. An ad hoc group of off-leash dog walkers calling themselves "Let It Be" was incensed by requirements that dogs be on leash in sensitive habitat areas. The group of painters known as "Sniff" was opposed to losing its outdoor studio on the bay. The planning team tried to engage the group in dialogue to develop a creative way of maintaining art in the park, but the artists insisted on their right to unhampered private expression. They considered the planners to be unimaginative bureaucrats.

A tenuous consensus exists on the plan. A broad citizen coalition supports its implementation. Eastshore will have to compete for funding with other State Parks priorities. Park bond funds, mitigation money, and other funding resources will be marshaled by State Parks, the Conservancy, and the East Bay Regional Park District, but only if the citizens' vision continutes to be palpable and motivates the agencies during fiscally austere times. ■

Don Neuwirth, an independent planning consultant, was the planning manager for Eastshore State Park. In the late 1970s and early 1980s he was the State's first Coastal Access Program manager. He launched this magazine in 1985 as California WaterfrontAge.

A set of six new maps of the Bay shoreline is now available (see p. 37).





I AM NOT AN ECOTOURIST

REGULAR READERS of *Coast & Ocean* know that last year was the "International Year of Ecotourism." Ecotourism has enjoyed something of a vogue during the last several years, with newspaper and magazine stories, conferences, special reports, and so on. *Coast & Ocean* devoted an entire issue to what it called "nature tourism" as early as 1997 (Spring), and in late March of this year I was invited to give a brief speech on the topic at a breakfast meeting in Sacramento. I may have caused some indigestion, though: I started by suggesting that the first thing we needed to do about ecotourism was to stop using the word.

Who really wants to be known as an "ecotourist?" Who wants to be known as *any* kind of tourist? I don't have a better word; I prefer to talk about camping, hiking, backpacking, and bird watching, all activities that I freely profess and enjoy whenever possible. For lack of anything better I call it nature tourism.

Of course, the point of the breakfast meeting was that tourism in California is *really big*, and that nature tourism could and should be part of it. According to our Division of Tourism, travel and tourism expenditures in California amount to over $75 billion annually, provide employment for over one million Californians, and generate almost $5 billion in State and local tax revenue.

California's coastline is a prime area for nature tourism, already enjoyed by visitors and residents alike. Thanks to the many large-scale restoration projects now under way up and down our coast, this will only get better. Indeed, in some parts of California you can even go on restoration tours. California's coastline has an additional competitive advantage: a permanent in-house advertising campaign. Movies, television, and music have made our south coast beaches famous throughout the world. Along with our rocky shores, coastal redwood forests, whales, elephant seals, and otters, they are among the Golden State's greatest tourist attractions.

The Coastal Conservancy is doing its part to improve nature tourism opportunities in California. In southern California, the Conservancy is working with others to develop a birding and watchable wildlife corridor between San Diego and Santa Barbara Counties. We envision a well-coordinated system of sites at which birds and other wildlife could be viewed and for which visitors would be provided with a wide range of informational materials. Corridor facilities and informational materials would be closely tied to other related tourist attractions, and marketing for the corridor would be coordinated with other tourist marketing efforts.

Much of the physical support for nature tourism is already in place on California's coast, and additional improvements (such as highway and interpretive signs) could be readily added. Funding from recent bond acts is available for construction of trails and other visitor-serving facilities. For instance, within Proposition 50, 10 percent of the funds available to the Coastal Conservancy must go to access and visitor-serving facilities. The Conservancy and its many partners continue to open new pathways to beaches and to develop the California Coastal Trail, which one day will stretch along the coast from Oregon to Mexico, as well as regional trails around our major bays.

One of the most important things we can do is take a more expansive view of nature tourism, and this is why I don't like the term "ecotourism." It has always seemed a little elitist to me, as if it excludes the broad range of active recreational pastimes like sea kayaking and white-water rafting as well as consumptive activities like hunting and fishing. According to the most recent information from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing added up to over $6.5 billion of economic activity in California. Marine recreational fishing alone is a multi-billion dollar enterprise in this state. Arguably, hunting and fishing were the earliest forms of nature tourism. They have a long history in the western United States, and were among the earliest reasons Easterners came to visit. California's own history includes inventing new forms of outdoor recreation. Mountain biking was invented here, the first sailboards were built here, and many of the premier outdoor equipment companies were launched in California.

We have a great big beautiful state with all sorts of outdoor activities, some old and some new, and we're constantly thinking up new ones. This combination of natural beauty and creative spirit is an enormous tourist asset, and we ought to be thinking holistically about how to capitalize on it. Thinking holistically means breaking down the boxes around individual outdoor activities, and packaging California as a place to combine a wide variety of natural recreational activities all in one trip. The message should be that California has something outdoors for everyone—even ecotourists! ■

—Sam Schuchat

COASTAL CONSERVANCY NEWS

VOTER BONDS WORKING FOR COAST AND BAY

BETWEEN JANUARY and April, the Coastal Conservancy enabled a wide variety of projects to begin, advance, or be completed along the California coast and on San Francisco Bay. These include efforts to resolve land use conflicts, eradicate invasive alien plants, restore wetland habitat, and acquire land for conservation, public access, and recreation in collaboration with other resource agencies, local governments, private landowners, and land trusts. Most of the Conservancy's funds for these projects came from Proposition 40, the resources bond act passed by voters last March, and Proposition 12, the parks bond act of 2000.

The Yurok Tribe, in Humboldt County, will use $50,000 from the Conservancy to prepare a master plan for the 12.5-acre **Tsurai Village** site in an effort to resolve a conflict related to a public trail and protection of cultural resources. The village stood on the side of a bluff overlooking the harbor in what is now **Trinidad.** Its last inhabitant was removed in 1916. In 1997 the Tribe built a trail following an ancient pathway that runs along the edge of the village site and down the bluff to the ocean. It passes Trinidad Memorial Lighthouse, which stands above the village site. Hikers have at times strayed to the site and disturbed it. Trinidad resident John Frame, joined by the Tsurai Ancestral Society, filed a lawsuit against the City of Trinidad demanding that the blufftop Wagner Street Trail be closed or relocated, and that control of the village site be turned over to the Tribe. The Tribe will manage the planning process with the City and the Tsurai Ancestral Society to ensure that all interests are represented in the plan, and in hopes of resolving the conflict.

Circuit Rider Productions, a nonprofit organization, will remove invasive giant reed, ***Arundo donax,*** from about 150 locations on 70 acres along the **Russian River** in **Mendocino and Sonoma Counties,** and will restore native vegetation, using $500,000 approved by the Conservancy and $400,000 from the State Water Resources Control Board. The work is to be completed in three years. *Arundo donax* is a tall bamboo-like grass that forms dense stands and crowds out native vegetation along streams and rivers, constricts water flows, and is extremely flammable. It has also overrun the watersheds of many rivers in southern California, where agencies are spending millions of dollars to control it.

Sonoma Coast State Beach will be expanded by the addition of the 910-acre **Red Hill Ranch,** including 40 acres of old-growth redwoods. The property was acquired by the Sonoma Land Trust for $2.7 million, using $1.37 million from the Sonoma County Agricultural and Open Space District and $1 million from the Coastal Conservancy. The Sonoma Land Trust structured the deal, managed the acquisition process, acted as interim owner, and secured funding for clean-up. The nonprofit LandPaths and State Parks are using volunteer crews to build trail links, and Stewards of Slavianka is prepared to take over volunteer stewardship functions.

The **Bodega Bay Trail Loop** will be completed when a half-mile segment is added at Pinnacle Gulch, connecting to Pinnacle Gulch Trail and becoming part of the California Coastal Trail. The Sonoma County Regional Parks Department expects to complete the segment by autumn, with the help of $80,000 from the Conservancy.

Public open space on **Sausalito's** waterfront will expand significantly with the purchase of a 2.5-acre property for addition to the 1.8-acre **Dunphy Park** on Bridgeway Boulevard. The City of Sausalito will fund the purchase with $2.2 million from the Conservancy, of which $1 million will be reimbursed during the next 15 years from lease revenues collected for use of tidelands for an expanded marina. This property, the last privately owned undeveloped parcel on the Sausalito waterfront, includes 5.9 acres of submerged baylands. Marin County will arrange for $500,000 to be provided to the City.

San Francisco Bay wetlands gained 16,500 protected acres with the purchase of the **South Bay Cargill Salt Ponds** in March. Planning for restoration is now under way, coordinated by the Coastal Conservancy. Cargill is phasing out salt production, a process that will take one to eight years. As water in individual ponds is brought to San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board standards for release into the bay, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will take over management.

The $100 million acquisition price for these Cargill properties includes $72 million of State funds, $8 million from Fish and Wildlife, and $20 million from a consortium of the Hewlett, Moore, and Packard Foundations and the Goldman and Resources Legacy Funds. The private foundations are also providing $15 million toward the cost of initial stewardship and long-term restoration planning.

The 4,262-acre **Rancho Corral de Tierra,** just north of Half Moon Bay in **San Mateo County,** one of the largest privately owned undeveloped properties in the San Francisco Bay Area, was acquired by the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) for almost $30 million to protect open space, wildlife habitat, farmland, and recreational land. The Conservancy contributed $9 million toward the acquisition. POST intends to sell 250 acres to a farmer, subject to a conservation easement, and hopes to transfer the rest to the National Park Service.

Meanwhile, **San Mateo County's** effort to purchase 15 acres on the shoreline just north of Half Moon Bay moved

BIG SUR LAND TRUST

Palo Corona Ranch

forward in February when the Coastal Conservancy allotted $1.5 million for the project, plus $100,000 to design a **California Coastal Trail** link, bridging a gap in the 14-mile trail between Pillar Point Harbor and Half Moon Bay. The County is working to raise another $1.5 million to meet the $3 million purchase price for this part of the 49-acre Mirada Surf property, which straddles Highway 1. It acquired the 34-acre eastern portion for $3 million in January.

San Mateo County's Ryder Park will be improved with the help of a $400,000 grant from the Conservancy. A covered picnic area and restroom facilities will be built.

With $1.8 million approved by the Conservancy, 198 acres in the Santa Cruz Mountains will be added to the **Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve.** The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District will use the funds to buy property owned by the Presentation Center at the intersection of Summit and Bear Creek roads in **Santa Clara and Santa Cruz Counties.** It will also buy an additional 30 acres of timber harvest rights to protect the 100-year-old forest on adjacent land that the Presentation Center will continue to own.

In **San Francisco,** a $475,000 Conservancy grant to Friends of Recreation and Parks will fund the construction of a new overlook for wildlife viewing on **Lake Merced,** and the replacement of exotic plants by native species along the lakeshore.

At the northern edge of **Big Sur,** the 9,898-acre **Palo Corona Ranch** extends along the east side of Highway 1 and south from the Carmel River to the Ventana Wilderness in Los Padres National Forest, across 16 coastal watersheds. In 2002, the Nature Conservancy and the Big Sur Land Trust acquired the ranch with interim funding, in expectation that public agencies would eventually purchase it for permanent protection. A week later, Governor Gray Davis committed $32 million in state bond funds, and the Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District committed $5 million to meet the purchase price of $37 million. The Coastal Conservancy provided $12.25 million in February to enable the Park District to acquire the 681 northernmost acres from the Land Trust and the Nature Conservancy. California State Parks and the Wildlife Conservation Board are expected to contribute $23 million for the purchase. The Park District will reimburse the Conservancy $3.2 million of its grant.

In **San Luis Obispo County,** State Parks will be able to acquire the 746-acre **Sea West Ranch,** which spans three miles of shoreline on the county's northern coast, with $7 million from the Conservancy and $6.5 million from the Wildlife Conservation Board. State Parks will contribute $1 million to meet the purchase price. Because this property has been approved for subdivision and development of nine residential lots, this acquisition is considered crucial to the preservation strategy for the Harmony Coast.

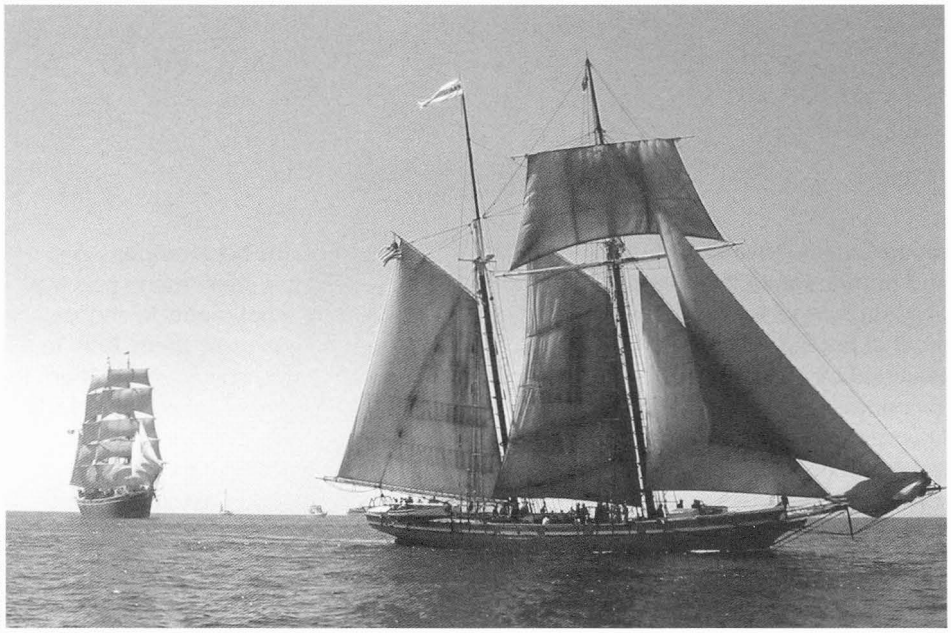
The 1,566-acre **Fairmont Ranch** is the largest undeveloped, privately held open space in **Ojai Valley.** Extending three miles along the **Ventura River,** it includes five miles of tributary streams, mature riparian forest, dense oak woodlands, and rolling grasslands. It provides valuable habitat for southern steelhead and other wildlife, and has the potential for providing public access to trails throughout the region. The Ojai Valley Land Conservancy is seeking to acquire it for conservation, thereby staving off development plans for a golf course and estate homes. The acquisition cost is $3 million for 1,406 acres in fee plus 150 acres under conservation easement, based on fair market value appraisal. The Land Conservancy has signed a purchase agreement and borrowed funds to make payment of initial deposits amounting to $100,000. In January the Coastal Conservancy approved $3.1 million to the Land Conservancy, contingent on evaluation of

OJAI VALLEY LAND CONSERVANCY

Above: Catalina mariposa *(Calochortus catalinae)* at Fairmont Ranch

Below: Fairmont Ranch

OJAI VALLEY LAND CONSERVANCY



MAGGIE PIATT

The tall ship *Californian* is a replica of an 1848 revenue cutter, built in 1984 and currently an attraction on the San Diego waterfront. The Maritime Museum Association of San Diego will repair it so it can travel to other cities, benefiting their tourist industries, and also serve as a traveling classroom. The Coastal Conservancy has approved up to $300,000 for this project.

its ability to manage the land in perpetuity and on completion of a conservation easement. The purchase, if accomplished, will constitute the largest conservation acquisition in Ventura County's history.

The **City of Huntington Beach** is using $2 million approved by the Conservancy in January for the final stage of a ten-year improvement project at its ocean beaches. These include new restrooms, showers, and improvements to 1,760 feet of the California Coastal Trail.

A $1.2-million Conservancy grant to the Huntington Beach Wetlands Conservancy will fund the acquisition of 45 acres of wetlands along the Pacific Coast Highway on either side of Magnolia Street. The nonprofit California Earth Corps will contribute $450,000 to the acquisition.

With $1 million from the Coastal Conservancy, San Diego County will plan and design habitat improvements and public trails for the new **Tijuana River Valley Regional Park,** west of Interstate 5, just north of the Mexican border.

The **City of Imperial Beach** continues to suffer from a stagnant economy and insufficient tax revenue. Important changes are occurring on its doorstep, however, with the development of trails and facilities at the Tijuana River Valley Regional Park and the San Diego Bay Trail, and restoration planning for the Tijuana Estuary and San Diego Bay. The city has two waterfront districts, one bordered by the ocean and the Tijuana Estuary, the other on San Diego Bay. While its beach has been the focus of attention, the City has taken note of the rise in popularity of birdwatching, hiking, and biking nationwide and proposes to take a fresh look at its potential for attracting and accommodating more visitors. In February the Conservancy approved $130,000 for the City to study ways to encourage tourism, public access to the coast, and private development in its urban waterfront district while maintaining its unique environmental values and small-town atmosphere.

NEW BAY TRAIL MAPS

A SET OF SIX BEAUTIFUL up-to-date maps of the San Francisco Bay Trail network is now available. Prepared by the San Francisco Bay Trail Project for walkers, bicyclists, wildlife watchers, and others interested in exploring the shoreline, they show not only the completed 230 miles of this multi-use trail but also the entire planned 400-mile route. The backs of the maps are packed with useful information, including recommended routes, directions, points of interest, distances, trail surfaces, and public transit. To order, see www.baytrail.org or call (510) 464-7900.

EPA HONORS HUMMER

THE 2002 ANNUAL REPORT of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's WasteWise program has named General Motors as a "Program Champion, Very Large Business" for having developed "one of the most environmentally friendly all-terrain vehicles currently cruising into the market," namely the Hummer H2.

This is the same oversized 4x4 named in the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy's *2003 Green Book* as among the ten "meanest vehicles for the environment," with a "green score" of 12 on a scale where 100 equals a pollution-free vehicle. Green score factors include fuel economy and cost, health cost, greenhouse gas emissions, and environmental damage. (The "greenest" car, by the way, was found to be the gas/electric hybrid Honda Insight, with a green score of 57.)

Who's right? The EPA reports: "The environmental craze about GM's work on this vehicle isn't how it looks or what's under the hood—it's about the fact that the Hummer H2 is among one *[sic]* of the most recyclable vehicles ever manufactured! GM marked nearly 5,000 tons of the vehicles' molded plastic for recycling, which will ease the recovery process when the vehicle has reached the end of its life."

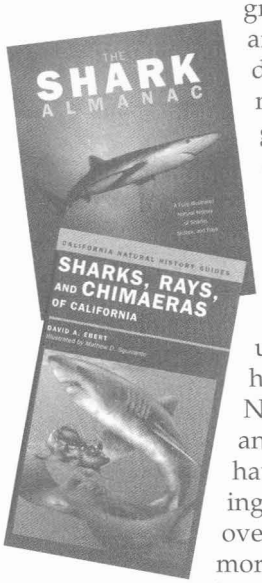
WasteWise is a "free, voluntary partnership program" sponsored by the USEPA. For more information, see www.epa.gov/wastewise and www.aceee.org.

ALL ABOUT SHARKS

Sharks, Rays, and Chimaeras of California, *by David A. Ebert. University of California Press, Berkeley, 2003. 304 pp., $39.95 (hard cover), $19.95 (paper).*

The Shark Almanac, *by Thomas B. Allen. Lyons Press, Guilford, CT, 2003. 274 pp., $19.95 (paper).*

TWO NEW GUIDES to sharks and their relatives approach the subject from different angles, and nicely complement each other. There is a far greater diversity among the Chondrichthyes (cartilaginous fishes) than generally imagined, as David Ebert points out, and this is well represented along the California coast. Even some of the rarest and least understood species have been found here. Noting that fishermen and scientists often have difficulty identifying them, Ebert describes over 40 shark species, more than 20 batoids (rays and skates), and two chimaeras (ratfishes)—all the species that have been reported in California waters.



It's not uncommon to spot small nearshore bottom-dwelling sharks swimming around California piers, and everyone is well acquainted with the awe-inspiring great white, of "maneater" infamy. Strange creatures like the huge basking shark, the gaping megamouth shark, and the extremely rare and peculiarly beaked goblin shark have also been found in California waters, as have flattened angel sharks, hammerheads, and a wide range of batoids. This guide gives excellent species descriptions, along with information on habitats and ranges, natural history, nomenclature, and human interaction for each. My only slight reservations about the book are that the illustrations, while nicely executed by Matthew D. Squillante, give no sense of the relative sizes of various species, and it's difficult to make out much detail for many of the dark-colored ones.

This book is the latest addition to the California Natural History Guides series, now being republished and expanded by the University of California Press.

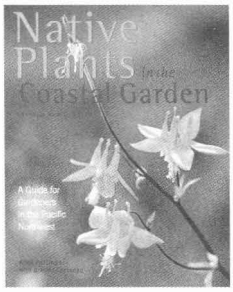
The *Shark Almanac's* line drawings and photographs in color and black-and-white give a somewhat better idea of what these fishes look like. Allen's approach is a bit more casual and anecdotal than Ebert's, and he includes a selection of shark stories. The *Almanac* lists species that do not occur off California and has less scientific detail, but is more enjoyable to read.

—HMH

GARDENING WITH NATIVE PLANTS

Native Plants in the Coastal Garden: A Guide for Gardeners in the Pacific Northwest, *revised edition, by April Pettinger and Brenda Costanzo. Timber Press, Portland, OR, 2002. 248 pp., $19.95 (paper).*

THIS BOOK, first published in 1996, is wonderfully useful for gardeners, especially those interested in integrating native plants into their collections. Part One describes historic fashions in gardens, from the emphasis on naturalism in U.S. gardens of the 1800s to the northern European love of perennials and the charm of English cottage gardens, all of which have influenced how we incorporate native plants in our gardens today.



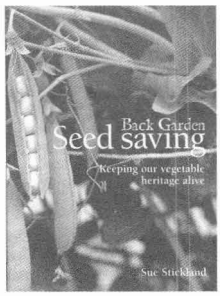
Throughout, the book emphasizes nature's logic and offers many practical tips, including what plants to choose, how and where to grow them, how to propagate them, and how to use them to attract wildlife. Part Two is particularly helpful, describing different plant communities, such as shoreline, forest, corridor, or wetland, and the requirements and virtues of the plants that grow in these settings. Part Three provides a regional resource guide for gardeners. Though written for gardeners in Oregon and Washington, northern Californians, and even those of us in the Bay Area, will find this volume a valuable addition to our gardening bookshelves.

—Phyllis Faber

SAVING SEEDS

Back Garden Seed Saving: Keeping Our Vegetable Heritage Alive, *by Sue Stickland. Eco-Logic Books, Bristol, UK, 2001; distributed by Chelsea Green, White River Junction, VT, www.chelseagreen.com, (800) 639-4099. 200 pp., $17.95 (paper).*

YOU WON'T HAVE to be an Anglophile or even live in an English climate to appreciate this gem of a book. Whether you are interested in biodiversity, permaculture, vegetable gardening, propagation, or history and folklore, this volume is inspiring, informative, and practical. Organized by vegetable type, it provides step-by-step instructions for growing and selecting plants and collecting, cleaning, storing, and using home-grown or wild seed. I learned several new procedures and ideas, even though I'm an old hand at seed saving, and I was truly charmed by the stories the gardeners had to tell of their favorite—sometimes for generations of their families—vegetable varieties.



—Jill Kjömpedahl

COURTESY BILL KORTUM

DIFFERENT BIKERS

Editor:

Thanks for the fine interview of Lew Reid regarding the writing and passage of the coastal initiative, Proposition 20. We need to be reminded from time to time that the coastline we enjoy is the product of such dedication.

Also important to remember is the role of then–Secretary of State Jerry Brown, who utilized new legislation to publicize campaign funding, alerting voters to the sources of the huge special-interest contributions to defeat Proposition 20.

A family note: the bikers in the photo on page 29 were on a different campaign ride than that described in the caption. The young bikers pictured had ridden from Jenner to just south of Bodega Bay. The two big-wheel bikes have no gears or brakes: imagine freewheeling that route! Riding one of the big wheelers, top center, is our nephew Max Durney, and near center front are two of our kids, Julie and Sam. Perhaps some of your readers can identify others of those adventurous bikers.

Lucy Kortum
Petaluma

BEACH POLLUTION—ANOTHER ANGLE

Editor:

John Largier provided an excellent summary of our current knowledge and need for information on nearshore marine water quality issues ("Beach Water Pollution: Learning What We Need to Know," *Coast & Ocean*, Winter 2002–2003). I was pleased with the importance he gives to source identification, and read with interest the oceanographic methods he described; however, I was surprised that he did not mention molecular chemistry techniques. Several scientists have recently described new methods for identifying the source of fecal contamination in surface waters. Jorge Santo Domingo, a microbiologist with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Research and Development in Cincinnati, has published a paper summarizing the various methods that use genetic characteristics. These methods take advantage of the fact that every species has a unique, identifiable strain of fecal bacteria. Birds, seals, dogs, cats, cattle, horses, and humans each have their own characteristic strain. Potential sources of beach water pollution may be sampled, the genetic characteristics of their bacteria identified and catalogued in a library. The genetic characteristics of the bacteria in the contaminated water are then compared to the characteristics of potential sources in the library. If the genetic characteristics of bacteria in the contaminated water do not match those of a potential source, that potential source may be eliminated from the list of suspect sources. While I am neither an expert in beach water pollution nor in molecular biology, I strongly suspect that molecular biology may be able to contribute to the identification of sources of the contamination found at southern California beaches, and allow us to focus limited resources on the primary sources of beach water pollution.

James E. Hardwick
Office of Oil Spill
Prevention and Response
Department of Fish and Game
Vacaville, CA

CRUISE SHIP TRADEOFF

Editor:

While the cruise ship controversy has apparently not yet hit the Coastal Commission, it is only a matter of time—for the Monterey Peninsula, the sooner the better. Meanwhile, I would like to throw in my two cents, as I have suffered a degree of expertise in the form of a couple of recent cruises—one of two weeks in the inland waterway of Alaska, the other in the western Caribbean. Neither was my cup of tea, as I am an outdoor person and need to stretch my legs a little more than is possible on the deck of a ship, but both cruises were of great pleasure to the vast majority on board.

Everything that could be enjoyed at home was there on these ships, in a far more convenient and concentrated fashion. Within a few hundred yards—and almost around the clock—were shows, lectures, gambling, dancing, health and fitness, a night club, swimming pool, computer room with Internet, and a well-stocked library. The most significant item, however, was food. Indeed, the cruises were promoted as gourmet experiences, and I suspect that that was the principle motivation of most of the patrons. It certainly was the primary topic of conversation.

Large ships have several restaurants with three meals daily, and snacks at any time. The evening meal was a dress-up affair, with a waiter standing behind each passenger at table—a food service staff of over 300. There were six

courses, each served on another plate, and nine eating utensils—a different knife, fork, or spoon for each dish. You couldn't complain that you didn't need all the dishes, or send back the ones you didn't use. The waiters didn't speak English, and even the head waiter did not comprehend—they were just following orders.

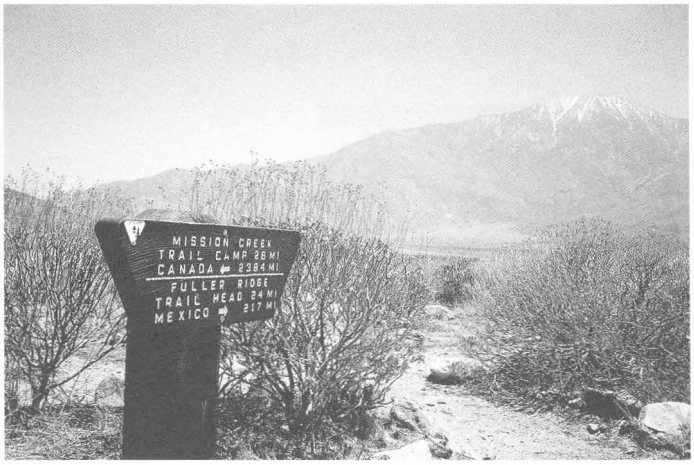
All this food meant dishwater—that is, wastewater—that has to go somewhere. Even the best of treated wastewater is a bit ugly. So it is of genuine concern that cities, even of the Inland Passage, some helplessly reliant on tourism for their income, seek to control discharge of wastewater by cruise ships. Many legislatures near the water realize that they are sitting on a time-bomb.

The real rub is that cruise ships offer only a trade-off—a degree of pollution for money in the bank. In fact, I don't remember spending one cent in most of the ports we put into. We ate all our meals on board, and if we wanted to shop, everything was available on the ship, usually cheaper and tax-free. Many passengers never go ashore. Those who do get a good deal: walk the streets and parks, see the sights, use facilities, all free of charge. Onshore cruise options are usually conducted by the ship's crew, and add little to the ports' income. In my opinion a lot of these communities have been taken in by the cruise ship operators, and are on the losing end of the trade-off.

Harry Rockey
Carmel

The return of cruise ships to Monterey has brought both enthusiasm and controversy. After learning in March that the Crystal Harmony *had broken an agreement by dumping wastewater inside the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary during a visit in October 2002, and had withheld this information for months, the City of Monterey banned the Crystal Lines fleet for 15 years. Since then, visits by Celebrity Cruises'* Mercury *have turned into festive events, with merchants, museums, and the Monterey Bay Aquarium reporting surges of sales and visitors.* Mercury *is reported to have been very cooperative in protecting the Sanctuary. Meanwhile, State Assemblyman John Laird, who represents Monterey, has introduced a bill that would halt wastewater discharges in California waters.*

PACIFIC CREST TRAIL *continued from page 27*



San Gorgonio Pass

forced the gates open while local police looked on. Massive numbers of salmon died. Now the word is that the U.S. Interior Department will allot even more water to the farmers, leading to more massive fish kills.

Trying to hitchhike from a trailhead on Highway 96 into the mountain town of Seiad Valley, near the Klamath, I was picked up by a young man in a rusty old Honda who told me he was volunteering on a local salmon restoration project. When I asked him what he thought of the Klamath question, he responded that he thought the current system was insane. "You know, I do this work because I love being out in this beautiful country," he said, "but I wonder what good it's doing." Without a new set of priorities that takes restoring threatened species seriously, he could survey all the salmon habitat he wanted to without effecting any change, he said. The fundamental problem is water, and unless the farmers give some of theirs to the fish, salmon decline is inevitable.

"But I have to admit, people around here would probably kill me if I said so out loud," he said. "They're trying to make a living, you know? And they just don't see the other side of the problem."

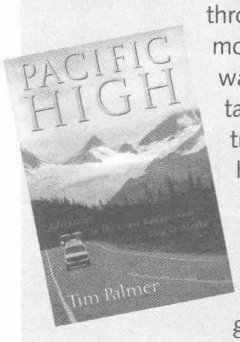
I guess that used to be the case for me, too. Living on the coast, I viewed the mountains as a separate world. The weather was different, the plants were different, the people were different. But now, after three months of foot travel, I know better. Every time someone in L.A. flushes a toilet, you can hear it in the mountains. Every time a farmer in the Klamath Basin starts flooding his field of alfalfa, he risks the life of a salmon trying to swim upstream.

Which is not to say that there are easy solutions. Southern California's population is growing, and with it grows the need for water. Farmers want to continue tilling, as their fathers and grandfathers did—and who can blame them? And hikers have their own perspective: they measure water in liters to drink or miles of snow to cross. Of course, water rules our lives in coastal cities as well, from our morning showers to the salmon we look forward to for dinner. ■

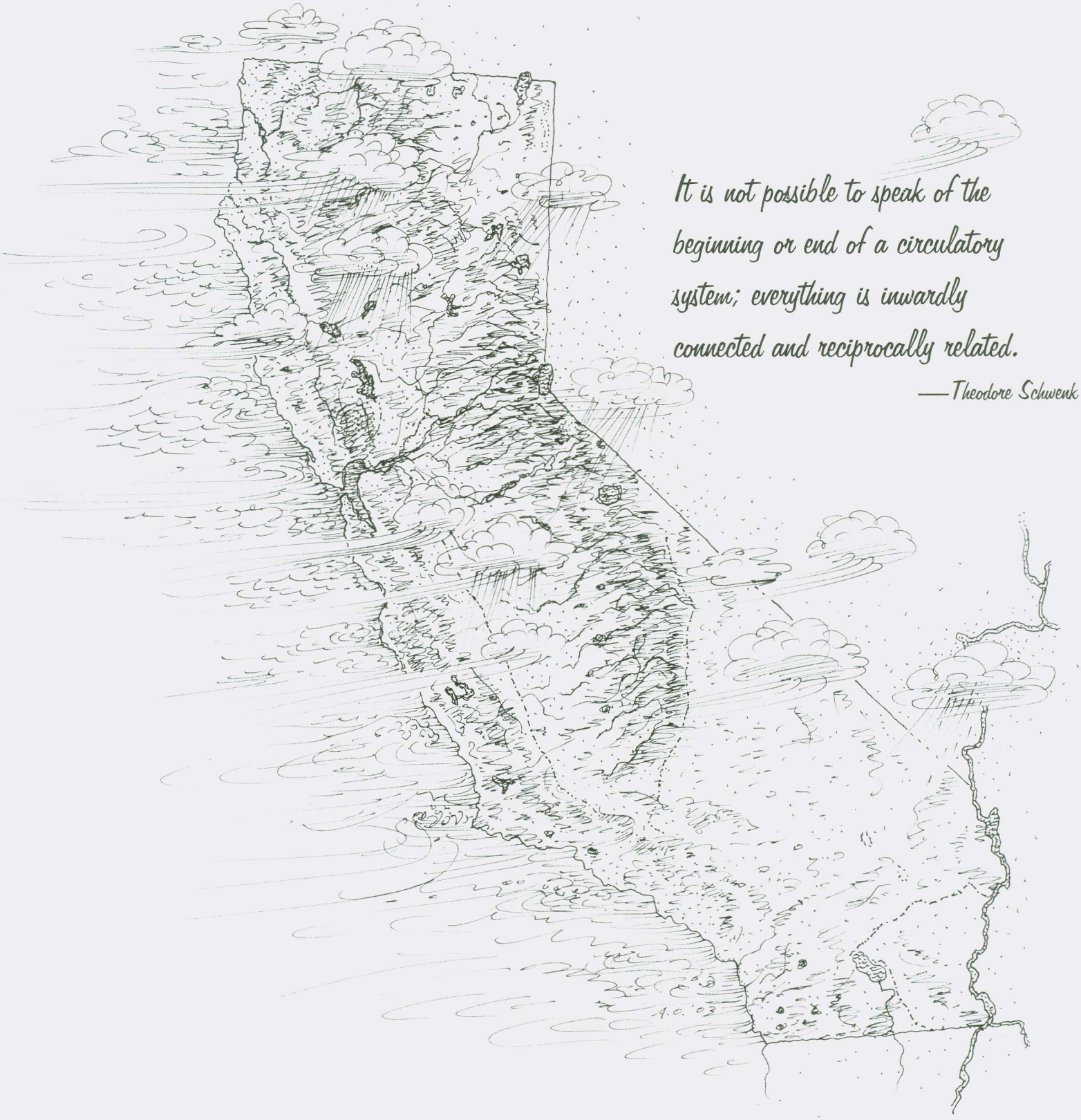
Arno Holschuh, formerly a reporter for the North Coast Journal, *is living in Berlin this year on a Fulbright Fellowship, writing columns about his life as an American abroad.*

Pacific High: Adventures in the Coast Ranges from Baja to Alaska, *by Tim Palmer. Island Press, Washington, DC, 2002. 468 pp., $28 (hard cover).*

Tim Palmer and his wife Ann drove from southern Baja California to Kodiak Island, Alaska, a nine-month journey through the coastal mountains. Along the way, they stopped to talk to local people, trying to understand how and why humans are inexorably transforming this part of the world. This story goes well beyond the usual travelogue, giving insights into the state of the coast ranges and their likely fate.



—HMH



It is not possible to speak of the beginning or end of a circulatory system; everything is inwardly connected and reciprocally related.

—Theodore Schwenk

DRAWING BY ARTHUR OKAMURA

Coastal Conservancy

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