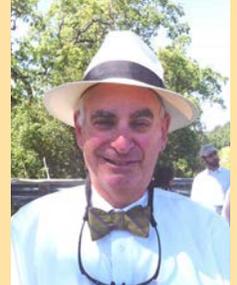


State Coastal Conservancy 2015 ANNUAL REPORT



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

2015 was another good year for California's coast. The Coastal Conservancy supported more than **90 projects** in all parts of the coast with awards totaling almost **\$38 million**, leveraging more than **\$63 million** from the federal government and other non-state sources. These projects are protecting and improving natural lands, supporting local economies, helping communities prepare for climate change, and expanding opportunities for people to enjoy the outdoors.



In 2015 the Conservancy marked the fulfillment of several long-term efforts, each more than a dozen years in the making. On Monterey County's

Carmel River the removal of the 106-foot-high **San Clemente Dam**—California's largest dam-removal project—gave downstream residents flood security and steelhead trout access to miles of historic spawning and rearing habitat. The breaching of a levee on San Mateo County's **Bair Island**,

the largest island in San Francisco Bay, opened historic wetlands to tidal flows for the first time since the 1880s, allowing a natural restoration process to begin. Trails and panoramic views on north **Sonoma Mountain** were opened to hikers and bikers, and major portions of the **Ka Kahleh Coastal Trail** opened the **Fort**

Bragg waterfront to the public after more than 100 years of industrial use.

Many Conservancy projects are aimed at improving conditions in **disadvantaged communities** through cleanup of creeks and open areas and upgrades to local parks, playgrounds, and trails. The **Explore the Coast** program has brought hundreds of underserved students and families to coastal parklands for education and pure fun.

Better times are ahead for San Francisco Bay's birds, fish, and other wildlife thanks to continued work by the Conservancy and its partners on restoring habitats in the **South Bay Salt Ponds** and at **Sears Point**, eradicating **non-native cordgrass** that has long threatened shallow-water environments, and establishing biologically rich "**living shorelines**." Our wetlands restoration and living shorelines work is

also good news for bayside communities because it is building a natural defense against flooding from sea level rise.

Projects initiated through our **Climate Ready Program** in 2015 are helping dozens of communities prepare for rising seas, extreme storms, drought, and other effects of a changing climate. The projects are designed to increase the resiliency of urban neighborhoods, coastal areas, farming operations, and wildlife habitats to climate change.

Everywhere along the coast and around San Francisco Bay the Coastal Conservancy is working to build trails, develop parks, protect and improve water quality and natural lands, and make California's beautiful coast better for residents and visitors. I promise no letup in 2016.

Sam Schuchat, *Executive Officer*
State Coastal Conservancy

Point Bonita YMCA Students



Coastal Trail, Fort Bragg



Ocean Science Explorers Field Trip, San Diego



San Clemente Dam Removal



Southern Sea Otter



Getting Outdoors!

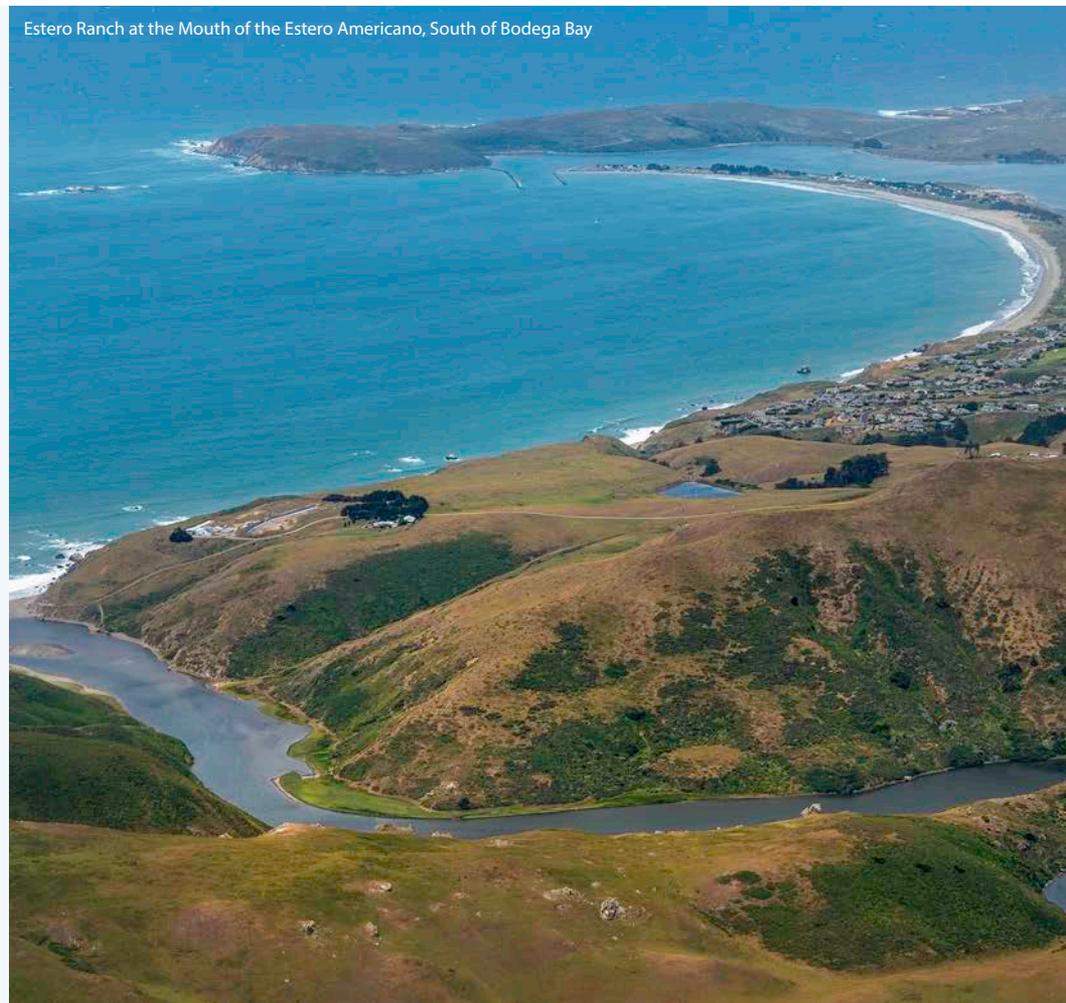
In 2015 the Coastal Conservancy advanced its long-term goal of completing the **California Coastal Trail**, with new trail segments opened on the **Scripps Campus** in San Diego, at **Garrapata State Park** in Big Sur, and on the **Fort Bragg waterfront**, along with replacement of a damaged bridge over **Pilarcitos Creek** in Half Moon Bay. The Conservancy also provided funding for new sections of the trail in **Pacific Grove, Santa Cruz, and Pacifica.**

In San Diego County the Flume Trail in **San Diego River Park** was opened and, after years of construction, the historic ship *San Salvador* made its maiden voyage on San Diego Bay, where it will serve as a waterfront attraction, museum, and sailing classroom. The Ocean Discovery Institute broke ground for its **Living Lab** in San Diego's City Heights neighborhood and the Conservancy made funding available for the design of public trails in 12 **San Diego urban canyons** and for the **San Diego River Trail Mural Project** in Santee.

Elsewhere in Southern California the Conservancy provided funding for a new visitor center at **Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park** in Laguna Niguel and for almost four miles of the **Santa Ana River Parkway Trail** in San Bernardino and Redlands.

In the Bay Area hikers and bikers welcomed the opening of the **Richmond Plunge** portion of the **San Francisco Bay Trail** and new sections of the **Bay Area Ridge Trail** in Santa Clara County's **Sanborn Park** and on north **Sonoma Mountain**. Funding was provided for a new Bay Trail section in **Pinole**, a new Ridge Trail section in **Fairfield**, and the **Children's Discovery Museum of San José**. The **San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail** also grew with the addition of seven new designated trailheads.

In the North Coast the Conservancy funded plans for new and improved trails on Healdsburg's **Fitch Mountain**, new facilities at the **Jug Handle Creek Farm**



Estero Ranch at the Mouth of the Estero Americano, South of Bodega Bay



New Bridge Over Pilarcitos Creek on the Coastal Trail, Half Moon Bay

and Nature Center near Fort Bragg, a nature trail and nursery at the **Freshwater Farms Reserve** near Eureka, and plans for a trail network at the **Orick Mill Site.**

Parks & Habitats

In 2015 the Conservancy helped purchase several properties to protect wildlife habitats and expand opportunities for outdoor recreation. In San Mateo County new additions are being added to **Pillar Point Bluff County Park** and to Brisbane's

San Bruno Mountain parklands, and in the East Bay the **John Muir National Historic Site** will grow by 44 rugged acres that offer room for miles of new trails. In Marin County the environmental community hailed a long-sought addition to the **Corte Madera Marsh Ecological Reserve** and hikers, bikers, and equestrians celebrated the purchase of **Sky Ranch** in the hills of Fairfax and San Anselmo. On the Sonoma County coast the 547-acre **Estero Ranch** will greatly expand access to the Estero Americano and the



Site for Campground Above Port San Luis Harbor



SF Bay Trail - Richmond Flume



Protected Farmland - Gallagher Ranch, Marin County

Stephen Joseph



Historic Ship San Salvador

Maggie Walton



Freshwater Farms Reserve, Eureka

Michael Woolsey

688-acre **Richardson-Kashia** purchase will provide the Kashia Band of Pomo Indians with a coast-side home for the first time in 150 years and allow a northward extension of the California Coastal Trail from Salt Point State Park. Farther north the 1.8-acre **Point Arena Cove** property offers visitors a new coastal overlook and expanded beach access and a 14-acre property at the mouth of **Little River** offers an opportunity to extend the Coastal Trail south of Trinidad.

Land & Water Conservation

After many years of work the obsolete and unsafe **San Clemente Dam** on the Carmel River was brought down in 2015, allowing steelhead trout unblocked access to over 25 miles of spawning and rearing habitat upstream. Other projects to improve fish habitats were completed on **Stuart and Austin creeks** in Sonoma County, and

funding was provided to benefit fish in **Carmel River Lagoon; Pinole, Wildcat, and San Pablo creeks** in Contra Costa County; the **Napa River; Hamilton Creek** in Del Norte County; and **Sidney Gulch** in Trinity County.

In 2015 the Conservancy provided new funding for major, long-term habitat restoration projects at **San Elijo Lagoon** in San Diego County, **Santa Clara River** in Ventura County, **Elkhorn Slough** in Monterey County, **Dutch Slough** in Contra Costa County, **Bel Marin Keys** in Marin County, **Salt River and Humboldt Bay** in Humboldt County, and the upper **Klamath River** in Oregon. Mountain lions and other wildlife will one day benefit from Conservancy-funded plans for the **Liberty Canyon Wildlife Crossing** over Highway 101 in Los Angeles County, and sea otters will benefit from continued research funded through the **California Sea Otter Fund**, an income tax check-off program.

Climate Change

In 2015 the Conservancy's **Climate Ready** program supported more than two dozen projects to help local communities prepare for climate change. Some of the projects are targeting city streets and parks—including **Eugene A. Obregon Park** in East Los Angeles and **Crissy Field** in San Francisco—to conserve water, provide shade relief for residents, and prepare for sea level rise. Others aim at increasing the climate resiliency of natural areas, urban infrastructure, and farmland. Along the **Napa River**, student volunteers began planting 5,000 oaks to improve wildlife habitat, sequester carbon, and increase the land's water-holding capacity.



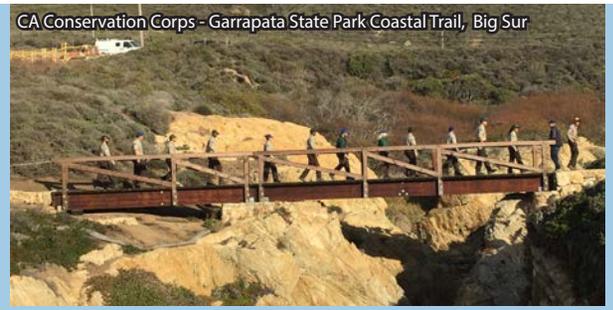
Planting 5,000 Oaks Along the Napa River



Richardson-Kashia Property, Sonoma Co.



John Muir National Historic Site Addition



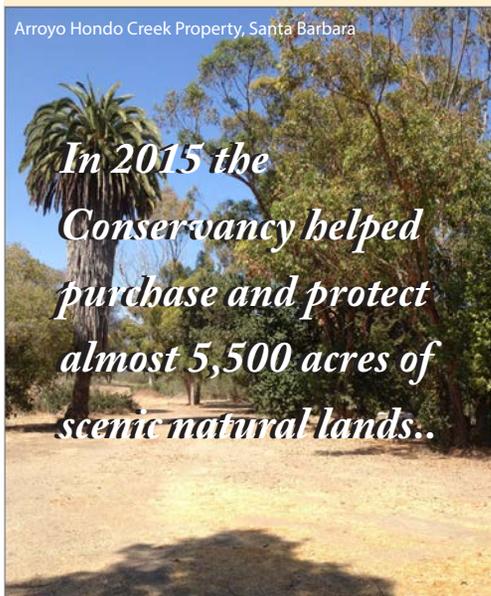
CA Conservation Corps - Garrapata State Park Coastal Trail, Big Sur



San Elio Lagoon

Rennett Stowe

The Coastal Conservancy is a State agency, established in 1976, that protects and improves natural lands and waterways, helps people get to and enjoy coastal areas, and sustains local economies along California's coast. The Conservancy works along the entire length of the coast, within the watersheds of rivers and streams that extend inland from the coast, and throughout the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. The Conservancy is non-regulatory and achieves its goals by joining forces with local communities, nonprofit organizations, other government agencies, businesses, and private landowners.



Arroyo Hondo Creek Property, Santa Barbara

In 2015 the Conservancy helped purchase and protect almost 5,500 acres of scenic natural lands..

Alex Size



Crissy Field, San Francisco

Yuichi Sakuraba

MEMBERS OF THE COASTAL CONSERVANCY — 2015

- Douglas Bosco, Chairman, Public Member
- Sara Ramirez Giroux, Public Member
- Ann Notthoff, Public Member
- Peter Sadowski, Public Member
- John Laird, Secretary for Natural Resources; Bryan Cash (Designated)
- Steve Kinsey, Coastal Commission Chair; Susan Hansch (Designated)
- Michael Cohen, Director, Department of Finance; Karen Finn (Designated)

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