



THE

Highlander

Sept./Oct. 2018

The Rural Bonny Doon Association Newsletter

RBDA Public Meeting: Preparing for Wildfire During the Height of Fire Season

Wednesday, September 12, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.

**Bonny Doon Elementary School Multipurpose Room
Pine Flat & Ice Cream Grade**

Joe Christy,

President of the Bonny Doon Fire Safe Council



Joe Christy, President, BD Fire Safe Council

In 2010, Joe Christy, a former chairman of the RBDA, was lucky enough to join a truly extraordinary group of Bonny Doon residents in forming the Bonny Doon Fire Safe Council, whose mission is to “educate and mobilize people of Bonny Doon to protect our community, homes and environment from wildfire.” He has served as President since that time, writing a monthly column in the Battle Mountain News on wildfire preparedness. The Bonny Doon Fire Safe Council has secured over \$500,000 in grant funding and a somewhat greater amount in in-kind contributions from community members in order to carry out a variety of projects on the landscape and neighborhood scale. In addition, with the generous financial support of our community, the Council works with individual homeowners to make their properties fire safe. He has been trained by the National Fire Prevention Association on Assessing Wildfire Risk in the Home Ignition Zone and currently serves as Vice President of Fire Safe Santa Cruz County.

Please join us at the RBDA Public meeting for a presentation and discussion led by Joe Christy about how to prepare and respond to wildfire on Sept. 12.

Draft Environmental Impact Report for North Coast Rail Trail Released

Charging ahead like an express train behind schedule, the Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) issued the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the North Coast section of the planned Rail Trail.

Faced with a December 2020 deadline to begin construction if they don't want to lose millions of dollars in funding from the State and the Santa Cruz County Land Trust, the RTC seems to be risking the project flying off the rails by taking the unusual path of preparing a DEIR for a project whose exact location is still unknown.

As we reported last year, the RTC committed the error of assuming that the present track from Wilder Ranch State Park to Davenport was within the proper right-of-way, and planned the path to follow it. But when its surveyors went out they discovered that is not the case. Apparently, over the many years that trains have plied that route, the tracks have followed at least three different paths. That means that the RTC has to negotiate new rights-of-way, and that the DEIR has not studied at least some of the actual areas on

which the Rail Trail will be built.

Securing the new rights-of-way is not necessarily a given. Most of the Rail Trail goes through land owned by State Parks and private individuals, most of whom are farmers. Much of the land is leased by the State to other farmers, who have a say in the matter. And right now the farmers are not happy, because the proposed path cuts them off from some of their fields and equipment yards, and makes their operations more difficult and expensive. They also are not delighted that a lot of people will be tramping or cycling through their farms.

The farmers submitted their own idea for where the trail should go, with the southern half, below Davenport, located much closer to Highway One. The RTC studied that route in a cursory way in the DEIR, and rejected it as environmentally inferior to their preferred path along the rail bed. Don't be surprised if the farmers take the matter to court, which would virtually guarantee that construction won't start before the December 2020 deadline to not forfeit the State and Land Trust funding.

Opposition to the RTC's plan is also coming from Santa Cruz Greenway, which is fighting for a trail that excludes trains. While a train on the southern portion of the trail, between Watsonville and Santa Cruz, may make sense despite serious problems including high cost, low ridership, the so-called “last mile” of a commute, parking lot and station construction, the serious physical challenges of fitting a bicycle/pedestrian path and a train track in several areas of the route, the impact of a train on bikers and walkers, and determined neighborhood opposition. However, the economics of repairing and then maintaining tracks between Santa Cruz and Davenport for the occasional tourist train seem prohibitive.

The DEIR studied in detail the RTC's preferred option of rail plus trail, and the alternative of trail-only. They concluded that removing the rail would be more of an environmentally impactful option than keeping it, despite the fact that the present tracks and ties are much deteriorated and need to be largely replaced and new ties and

continued on page 2

Do You Have a Plan for Pet Evacuation in a Wildfire Emergency?

Pet and livestock ownership requires a great deal of knowledge, time, patience and love. Many animal owners may not always consider the need to plan for their pets in the event of a disaster. A little planning and awareness before a disaster occurs can prevent tragedies afterwards. Here are some tips and guidelines for preparing your pets and livestock for evacuation (adapted from the SPCA Disaster Preparedness Packet at spcamc.org and UC Davis Veterinary Medicine Disaster Preparedness resources at vetmed.ucdavis.edu/ceh/):

Small Animal Evacuation

How Should I Prepare?

- Keep your pet's vaccinations current and always keep a collar and tags on your pets.
- Microchip your pets.
- Keep your supplies in a safe, easily accessible location.
- Include your pets in your evacuation drills so they are relaxed about travel and confinement.
- Submit your pet's information to SPCA's free Guardian Angel program.
- Check SPCAmc.org for disaster training classes.

During a Disaster

- When you receive warning of a pending disaster or evacuation, ensure your pets are wearing collars and tags, bring them inside so you can locate them quickly, and locate your preparedness supplies.
- Bring your animals with you when evacuating. If your animals are in danger, contact the SPCA.
- Locate a current pet friendly hotels and motels listing from the SPCA or contact friends and family about taking you and your pets in.

After a Disaster

- Examine your property to ensure fencing is intact and remove dangerous debris.
- Watch for your pet's personality changes or changes in behavior.
- Consult your veterinarian or the SPCA if any behavior problems persist.

Horses and Livestock

Identification is critical for reunification

- Permanent forms of identification such as microchipping is recommended; make sure to register.
- Other good forms of ID: an tag attached to the horse's halter or a plastic neck-band engraved or marked with information including owners name(s), address, phone number, backup contact's name, address, and phone number.
- Temporary identification is encouraged during an evacuation such as a leg band, or spray painting your name and phone

number on the horse.

- Keep photographs and medical records accessible. Photographs should be accompanied by detailed descriptions for each horse you own including breed, color, size, markings, scars, and other significant features. Keep copies in a sealed waterproof bag in a safe place. Send a copy to a friend or family member, or keep a copy in digital form on a cloud server for access from a mobile device.

Keep halters and lead ropes ready

- On each halter attach a luggage tag with the following: the horse's name, your name, e-mail address, telephone number, and an emergency contact's telephone number.

Transportation

- If you have your own horse trailer, keep it road ready by checking the tires, floors and hitch frequently. Make sure your truck is in good working order and that the gas tank is at least half full.
- If you don't have a horse trailer, make arrangements to have your horse trailered in an emergency. If you can, have several reliable people lined up to help.
- It is vital that your horses are comfortable being loaded into and unloaded from a trailer. If your horses have not been trained to load and unload, train or have them trained and practice the procedure.

Know where you can take your horses in an emergency evacuation

- Identify at least two exit routes and a prearranged destination.
- Make arrangements with another horse owner to stable your horses in a safe zone.
- Contact your local animal control agency or local emergency management authorities for information about shelters in your area.
- During mandatory evacuations, shelter sites for animals will be identified by the Office of Emergency Services.

Have a back-up plan

- Consider different types of disasters and whether your horses would be better off in a barn or loose in a field. Your local humane organization or emergency management agency should be able to provide you with information about your community's disaster response plans.

Emergency supplies

- Have at least 72 hours worth of fresh water and hay available. Don't forget the water buckets.
- Prepare a potable basic first-aid kit for your horses and keep it easily accessible.
- Prepare an emergency kit that includes water buckets, tarpaulins, leg wraps, knife, scissors and wire cutters (see cal-cares.com/personal-family-for-emergency-kit-ideas).

Sign Up for Bonny Doon's Alert Text Message System!

Stay informed about general public safety incidents by signing up for the Bonny Doon text message alert system. Based on 911 call center incident reports, this system provides information on general public safety events including fires, traffic collisions, road blockages, and power lines down, and includes a Google Map link for incident location and a firescan.net responder audio stream link (when relevant). This service is limited to Bonny Doon and access roads.

To subscribe, text the word ALERT to 831.216.0004; to unsubscribe, text the word REMOVE to 831.216.0004. You will receive an immediate confirmation text message.

North Coast Rail Trail DEIR

continued from page 1

track periodically installed. An additional problem is that weed killers would be constantly applied to keep vegetation off the tracks.

The RTC's bias for keeping the rail is evident in their claim that removing the tracks will delay the beginning of the trail's construction by eight years, in order to obtain the proper permits. At the meeting in late August to present the DEIR and take public comment, the RTC staff admitted the eight-year estimate was little more than a guess. We think it's very possible that permits can be obtained much more quickly, and that the RTC is putting out that claim as a scare tactic to support its preference for keeping the tracks, which they say is a historic resource.

In addition, keeping the tracks requires that a fence be built to separate it from the bike/pedestrian path. This adds expense and impacts the experience of using the trail. Even if it takes a longer time to complete the trail, ***we feel that the criteria should not be building it in the shortest time, but making it the best possible experience for the people who will use it for years to come.***

The Draft EIR can be found at scrtc.org/projects/multi-modal/monterey-bay-sanctuary-scenic-trail/north-coast-rail-trail/. All Public comments on the DEIR must be received prior to 5 p.m. on September 24, 2018. Send written comments to Cory Caletti, Senior Transportation Planner, at 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, California 95060, or NCRTDraftEIR@scrtc.org.

Supervisor Coonerty's Update on North Coast Rail Trail and Coastal Cleanups

This is an invited contribution by Ryan Coonerty, our Third District Supervisor. The opinions stated below are not necessarily those of the RBDA Executive Board. However, the RBDA is very interested in receiving feedback about these issues. Please share your opinions with us by contacting any of the Board members (see page 4 for our phone numbers), or e-mail us at board@rbda.us.

North Coast Rail Trail

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) has released the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the proposed North Coast Rail Trail Project. The public review and comment period is open until September 24, 2018.

The proposed Project is a 7.5 mile multi-use bicycle and pedestrian trail that would extend along the RTC- owned rail corridor from Wilder Ranch State Park in the south to Davenport in the north. In addition, the project would include trail connections and improvements to three existing parking areas: Davenport Beach, Bonny Doon Beach and Panther/Yellowbank Beach. The Project would include a variety of trail amenities such as benches, bike racks, informational and educational signs, restrooms, and trash and recycling containers. Most of these trail amenities would be located in the three parking lots. Restrooms would be provided at the Davenport Beach and Panther/Yellowbank Beach parking lots.

While the proposed Project would locate the new multi-use trail almost exclusively on the coastal side of the existing railroad tracks, largely consistent with the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network Master Plan, other trail alignments are also evaluated in the DEIR.

The DEIR is online at sccrtc.org/north-coast and electronic copies on thumb drives are available at the RTC office, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz. Hard copies are available for review at the RTC office, Santa Cruz Public Libraries, and the Davenport Resource Service Center. Public meetings were held on August 22 and 23. Written comments can be submitted via e-mail: ncrdtdrafter@sccrtc.org.

Downtown Streets Team Cleanups on the North Coast

Another exciting development this summer is the addition of the Downtown Streets Team on the North Coast. As you may know, the Downtown Streets Team is an organization that provides stipends to individuals experiencing homelessness who give their time to clean local streets and neighborhoods. During budget hearings, I was able to get funding to develop a Downtown Streets team dedicated to cleaning Davenport Beach and other County Parks and beaches on the North Coast. They are usually in teams of 4-5 individuals with a supervisor. If you have been Downtown this past year, you may have seen them cleaning the streets, parks, and waterways in Santa Cruz. The Downtown Streets Team members have made such a positive difference Downtown, that I advocated to create a team dedicated to the North Coast. The North Coast team cleans three times per week for four hours; if you see them on the coast wearing their bright yellow shirts, give them a thumbs up!

Support Our Sponsors

FRANS LANTING

Wildlife & Nature Photography
108 High Road
Santa Cruz CA 95060
831-429-1331
www.lanting.com

THE FLOWER LADIES

Flower Arrangements for
Weddings & Special Occasions
www.theflowerladies.com
831-423-0261

NORTH COAST BERRY FARMS

340 Woodpecker Ridge
Bonny Doon CA 95060
831-426-3733

MCHENRY VINEYARD

Estate Pinot Noir
Bonny Doon CA 95060
www.mchenryvineyard.com
530-756-3202

HEIDI E. HART, President, CEO

California Dreaming Real Estate
Local / Non-Corporate
myagentheidi@gmail.com
831-247-9410

BOYCE-ABEL ASSOCIATES & FAMILY LAND PLANNING

Facilitating & mediating land, estate and
asset transference issues
www.familylands.com
831-469-9223

Sponsorships:

\$100 a year (6 issues).

Send check and text to:

**RBDA, P.O. Box 551
Felton, CA 95018**

RBDA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Yearly dues are \$20/pp or \$15/pp for multiple members at same address.

Memberships expire on Jan. 31 of the next year. *

Number of Members _____ Number of years you are joining or renewing for _____

Multiply years times number of memberships. Checks only, please, made out to RBDA.

Amount enclosed for dues: \$ _____

I also wish to support the RBDA with an additional contribution of \$ _____

Total amount of enclosed check \$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-Mail Address(es) _____

I certify that I (we) live or own property in the Bonny Doon Planning District.

Clip out and mail to RBDA, P.O. Box 551, Felton, CA 95018.

Dues mostly go for
printing and mailing
The Highlander,
your voice for keeping
Bonny Doon rural
and natural.

Additional contributions
are gladly accepted and
greatly appreciated!

*Dues paid after Nov. 30
count toward the next year.



THE Highlander

Keeping Bonny Doon Rural and Natural since 1957

Prsrt Std
US Postage PAID
Complete Mailing
Service, Inc.

The Rural Bonny Doon Association Newsletter P.O. Box 551 • Felton, CA 95018

Bonny Doon's voice in preserving our special quality of life, The Highlander, is mailed free 6 times a year. RBDA Public Meetings are usually held the second Wednesdays of January, March, May, September and November. We encourage you to participate. Send correspondence to The Highlander at the above address.

Access the RBDA on the Internet at:
www.bonnydoon.got.net

E-mail us at:

board@rbda.us

Facebook (RBDA Members Only):

RBDA, Rural Bonny Doon Association

RBDA EXECUTIVE BOARD

CHAIR: Andy Davidson 650-862-2639

VICE CHAIR: David Rubin 818-7085

TREASURER: Tom Hearn 423-2483

MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR: Jennifer Joslin 459-9760

RECORDING SECRETARY: David Regus 401-339-6424

ACTING CORRESPONDING SECRETARY: David Regus 401-339-6424

HIGHLANDER EDITOR: Kendra Turk-Kubo 626-379-7232

CONSULTANTS: Ted Benhari and Marty Demare (former board members)

**Bonny Doon Resident
Santa Cruz, CA 95060**

Come to our Sept. 12 public meeting - 7:30 p.m. at Bonny Doon Elementary

County Reviewing Land Trust's Public Access Plan for San Vicente Redwoods

In the May and July 2018 editions of The Highlander, we reported on the newly released Public Access Plan for San Vicente Redwoods, developed by the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County (LTSCC). The public access plan employs an adaptive management approach, where access to the property will occur in three phases, and advancement from phase to phase is reliant on successful management using multiple well-defined metrics including keeping parking from spilling out onto Empire Grade and securing necessary funding to manage, patrol and maintain the property. The LTSCC planning document is available at landtrustsantacruz.org/svr_publicaccessplan_publicreview/.

These plans are presently under review at County Planning, and while this process is active, there will be no public meetings. Bryan Largay, Conservation Director at the LTSCC, informed the RBDA that there is no current time line for milestones, including public meetings held by the County, but meetings are expected in the future. Largay encourages people to join their e-mail list to receive updates. Just let the LTSCC know you are interested by sending an e-mail to Access@LandTrustSantaCruz.org.

Construction of trails is anticipated to begin in the spring of 2019, opening Phase I access by the end of 2019. *The RBDA Executive Board is still interested in hearing from you about this issue. Do you have any concerns about the LTSCC's management plan for SVR? What do residents consider an unacceptable impact to their neighborhood? Please share your opinions by contacting any of the Board members, or e-mail us at board@rbda.us.*

Thank you to all the sponsors, volunteers, and community members who came out to the first annual Taco Social at the Martin Fire Station on August 25! This was a fun and successful fundraiser for our Bonny Doon Fire and Rescue Team.



Smokey the Bear visits the Bonny Doon Volunteer Fire Team Taco Social