



COASTWALKER

THE NEWSLETTER OF COASTWALK
Leading the way on the California Coastal Trail
Spring 2008

Message from the President

By Fran Gibson

I feel both privileged and challenged to serve as your President of Coastwalk for the coming year. We face some critical battles—as do all environmental non-profits in our state—as we pledge to continue in our 24-year tradition of promoting coastal access and preservation along our 1,200 mile coastline.

We ALL have a critical part to play in the year ahead. Coastwalk has adopted its first strategic plan which will be the touchstone of our work. A major part of our plan is the promotion of the California Coastal Trail, which is 65% complete today. Judy Rosales, our Trail Steward, is busy up and down the state working with local jurisdictions ready to sign the CCT segments in their communities. (see page 4). Coastwalk helped unveil the first insignia for the CCT in all Los Angeles County in Hermosa Beach on March 14, and we commend our new Board member George Schmeltzer for

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Name this coastal place!



Just how well do you know our coast? If you think you know, or have a good guess, email lrاند@coastwalk.org with a subject line **"Name this Coastal Place!"** Be sure to name the place itself, as well as the county. Two names will be randomly pulled from the correct answers, and will each receive a Coastwalk tee-shirt!

Coastwalk is volunteer-run—no doubt about it. Our amazing cadre of volunteers does everything from running the Coastwalks to installing insignia on the CCT, and everything in between. Occasionally, one volunteer really stands out, even among this unbelievable crowd, and we find that we must offer some special recognition..



Meet Volunteer Extraordinaire Lou Wilkinson... pg. 3

Coastwalk Is...

THE COASTWALK MISSION:

To ensure the right of all people to reach and responsibly enjoy the California coast.

THE COASTWALK VISION:

A well-stewarded California coast, highly prized as an irreplaceable commons, open to all.

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Welcome to our New Board Members

Based in Southern California, **Timothy D. Naegele** is an attorney with an extensive legislative and financial regulatory background. He has served as counsel to the U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, and as chief of staff to a U.S. Senator. He has also served as special consultant to the FDIC and the states of California and Maine, having recodified Maine's banking laws. He authored and has written about several important pieces of legislation.

Amy Purvis has been involved in Coastwalk since she was nine year old; currently she studies Environmental Economics at UC Berkeley. On campus she works on Climate Change/Ocean legislation and awareness with CalPIRG and EnvironmentCA. She loves the outdoors and spends as much time as possible hiking, camping, skiing, running, and traveling.

Mike Reilly is a Sonoma County Supervisor representing 54 miles of the California Coast. He has served on the California Coastal Commission for the past twelve years including two years as its Chairman. Mike also served for two years on the Board of the Coastal Conservancy.

George Schmeltzer is the former Mayor and long-time resident of Hermosa Beach, CA. He has walked large parts of the California coast even before learning about Coastwalk, and would walk the entire CCT if his wife would join him. He's a big fan of the Backbone Trail. His goal is to make Coastwalk an even more successful organization.

Good News!

Our friends at the **Rockey Fund** have been supporting Coastwalk for years with matching grants—incentives for members and friends to donate. Over the past 8 months we have been working on a \$20,000 matching grant and it is with great excitement that we announce that the match has been met! The \$20,000 we raised instantly became \$40,000, funding our important work on the CCT, advocacy in defense of state parks, and education for coastal stewardship.

Our hiking adventures provide less than a third of the revenues we need for our ambitious program. The balance comes from a variety of other sources like membership dues, donations, sales of t-shirts and books, and grants. Over the past four years the Rockey Fund has been a very significant supporter, and a true partner in our work. We owe a special debt of gratitude to **Tammie Fraser**, a coastal steward in her own right, for facilitating these Rockey Fund grants for us.

How can you help? Volunteer, get a friend to join Coastwalk, make a donation, or give a gift for Coastwalk in your will or trust. No gift is too small—it will take all of us working together to save our coast for following generations.

A Fond Farewell to Jeff Norman

Many Coastwalkers had the pleasure of knowing Jeff, an avid naturalist whose lifelong passion was preserving the integrity of the Big Sur coast. He lived remotely, in a handsplit redwood cabin with no road access, on Big Sur's south coast for 28 years, and was a biologist, cultural historian and author whose knowledge of Monterey County was unsurpassed. He passed in October, 2007.

Longtime Coastwalker Steve Jones d.a. remembers: "In '92, Jeff led us (Monterey Coastwalkers), up Limekiln Creek at a time when it was known that it would be, but was not yet, a state park. From then on Jeff was leading us in one way or another on each summer walk and on our two whole coast walks..Jeff is one of many many people in the Big Sur community who have led, fed and otherwise supported Coastwalk all these years since 1991."

Meet Volunteer Extraordinaire Lou Wilkinson

Born in 1926 in New York City, Lou, after graduating high school in 1944, joined the Navy and trained as a medic, serving with the Marine Corps. He graduated from the University of Virginia and eventually found his way to San Francisco. In 1956 he married, and moved to the house in Sausalito where he and his wife have lived for 52 years. After 35 years in pharmaceutical sales, Lou retired in 1985.

“The concept of helping to create a contiguous trail from Oregon to Mexico is what inspired me to get involved with Coastwalk in the first place. I see the ‘signing’ of the Coast Trail as evidence of the success of Coastwalk’s efforts.

“I ran the Coastwalk in Marin for about 25 years. During those years I created and managed ‘trail maintenance work parties’ twice a year for both the Point Reyes National Seashore and Tomales Bay State Park. These are the two parks that we walked through and camped in during the Marin Coastwalks. Doing the work parties for both parks maintains a good relationship with the parks and has benefited Coastwalk in a number of ways.

“I think my favorite thing I have done for Coastwalk has been helping to create and perpetuate the Marin Coastwalk—it has given a great deal of pleasure and knowledge to a great many people over the years.

“It seemed like the other volunteers—cooks, etc., were so happy performing their roles, and the trip members seemed so pleased with their experience, that it was easy to continue to create the trips year after year. It was a matter of sharing knowledge about a beautiful area with other people.

“A special experience that happened almost every year took place at Tomales Bay State Park where we would camp for a night. After dinner, as it was getting dusk, the ranger—Carlos Porata—would take us to see the baby spotted owl. He knew where it nested and would call to it and the owl would fly down close to us, maybe 10 feet away. It seemed as curious about us as we were about it. As we walked slowly along the path the owl would swoop down and follow along until we got to the boundary of its territory. Then it would stay behind as we continued on the path. A lovely experience.”

Tides & Trails

Morro Bay CCT Improvements

The City of Morro Bay is improving the waterfront with pedestrian and bike paths to Morro Rock to make the area more appealing to walkers and bike riders. The final goal is to connect the rock with the Embarcadero and create a leg of the California Coastal Trail.

Oxnard Teen Makes a Difference

Oxnard teenager Erica Fernandez was alarmed to hear that a giant natural gas terminal was being proposed off the Ventura County coastline. The terminal would generate an estimated 500 million tons of air pollution a year. She was concerned not only about the coastline but about her father’s respiratory problems.

Erica decided to take action, and became one of the leaders in the effort to convince state officials that the terminal was a bad idea. She rallied her community to oppose the project, and spoke passionately at the Coastal Commission hearing before the Commission decide to kill the proposal. – *from the Sierra Club*

Montaña de Oro State park, San Luis Obispo County

A new CCT extension, the Point Buchon Trail, is now open from the south end of Montaña de Oro State Park onto PG&E land around the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant. The Coastal Commission required PG&E to open the area north of the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant to the public in exchange for permits to build a storage facility for the plants’ radioactive fuel. The trail will eventually link up with a new trail that continues south for three miles toward Crowbar Canyon just north of the Diablo Canyon.

Pillar Point Bluff – San Mateo County

The Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) is adding 3.67 acres of oceanfront land to its 119-acre Pillar Point Bluff property. The new property is north of Pillar Point in Half Moon Bay. In 2004, POST, in partnership with the California Coastal Conservancy, bought Pillar Point Bluff, where the two organizations plan to start building the Jean Lauer Trail next summer. The trail will be part of the CCT.

Did You Know?

Montaña de Oro State Park is one of the 48 state parks slated for closure under Governor Schwarzenegger’s proposed ‘08-’09 budget. Learn more about this potential disaster on page 5.

California Coastal Trail

Spring, 2008

Signing the California Coastal Trail

Eighty three miles and counting

Judy Rosales, Coastwalk Trail Steward

Coastwalk's statewide campaign to sign the California Coastal Trail is well on its way, with 244 emblems marking 83.2 miles of Coastal Trail.

In March, the Coastwalk Board of Directors unveiled the first CCT emblems installed in Los Angeles County. The signing of 1.2 miles of Coastal Trail in Hermosa Beach was cause for celebration for city officials, the local community, and Coastwalk board members who gathered on The Strand for the unveiling. The project was initiated and moved through the city permitting process by Coastwalk Board Member and Hermosa Beach resident George Schmeltzer.

On the North Coast, the signing of the Coastal Trail at Navarro Point Preserve in Mendocino County was another first and a milestone for Mendocino Land Trust. The three emblems posted on the 1.5 mile loop trail marked the first segment of CCT to be signed on MLT property. In addition to the emblem in-



Signing, *continued on page 6*

What's Ahead for Trestles

by Ed Schlegel, Surfrider Foundation

Coastwalkers joined in the battle to prevent a proposed toll road from destroying San Onofre State Beach in Orange County, by writing letters and appearing at the early February Coastal Commission meeting which resulted in defeat for the proposed toll road. Coastwalk is proud to work with agencies like Surfrider Foundation to protect our coastal commons. Read an update to the situation at the end of the article.

Save Trestles – Stop the Toll Road, a bumper sticker slogan, lies at the heart of Surfrider Foundation's effort to stop the construction of the 16 mile extension of Orange County's 241 toll road through San Onofre State Beach. Trestles is the name of the surf break within San Onofre State Beach, one of the most visited state parks in California and is internationally known for clean water and excellent surfing waves. The proposed toll road would bisect the inland portion of the park, force the park to abandon the campground, increase pollution at the beach, dissect the 1200 acre Donna O'Neill Land Conservancy, and pave over habitat of several endangered or threatened species.

The South Orange County chapter mobilized behind the slogan and over a ten-year period, raised awareness among the surf community, while coalition partners raised awareness among campground visitors, wildlife enthusiasts, and open space advocates.

We organized a Surf Day at Sacramento meeting with many legislators, including the Governor. Our National office helped by enlisting the support of surf industry companies, and many other invaluable support functions such as Internet action alerts. At every opportunity our members wrote letters to the editors of local papers, spoke at community forums and to civic groups, and met with local elected officials, the majority of whom were supportive of building the road. Wherever and whenever we could, we raised awareness of the threat to our state park, and the future of other parks if this road was approved.

Trestles, *continued on page 7*



Signing Navarro Point



Signing MacKerricher SB



Building the CCT in Big Sur: a Study in Community Building

What began as a fractured process to get the CCT up and running in the Big Sur area of Monterey and San Luis Obispo has become a model of community-building and compromise. Coastwalk Board President Fran Gibson has been involved in numerous meetings with concerned community members, some organized under the Big Sur Residents Committee for the Coastal Trail, and other interested parties like the Coastal Conservancy and Cal Trans, and the community is well on its way to a world-class stretch of Trail!

Monterey County's portion of the Trail is in two major sections: the Big Sur Trail, about 75 miles long, and the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Trail, about 20 miles long and under the purview of the Monterey County Transportation Agency.

Jack Ellwanger, leader of the Residents Committee, told Coastwalk: "We've developed a process for planning the California Coastal Trail through Big Sur. It is a community driven process. Our coast will be sectioned into six planning areas, and the residents of each area will design the trail through that section. One resident from each section will be elected to a steering committee. Public agencies will participate as planning resources.

"This is the product of ten months of community discussions and planning meetings. The meetings have been open to all Big Sur residents, and others who wanted to contribute to the process. An executive committee, composed of five coastal residents elected at large, will oversee the process to insure sharing of resources and planning consistency.

Big Sur, *continued on page 7*

Save Our State Parks & Coastal Commission!

Governor Schwarzenegger's recently proposed budget cuts will prove devastating for the California coast.

The budget calls for the closure of 48 state parks and staff reductions at 14 state beaches. Three state beaches could be closed, and 14 of the threatened state parks are on our coastline (within our protected coastal zone). This would be the first time, since the 1902 establishment of the California Dept. of Parks and Recreation, that state parks would be closed in order to save money—a terrible precedent. These closures would save only one-tenth of one percent of the projected deficit of \$14 billion!

Coastwalk is involved in a coalition of organizations and individuals, Save Our State Parks (SOS); and Coastwalkers have written letters, lobbied our legislators on State Park Advocacy Day, and rallied against the closures at the State Capitol. To find out what more you can do to help save our treasured state parks, visit the SOS website: www.savestateparks.org.

In another attempt to tighten the state's purse strings, the governor has proposed a 10% budget cut for the California Coastal Commission (CCC). The CCC, born out of a 1972 voter initiative calling for a public agency armed with enough resources to protect our coast, is the primary coastal watchdog in the state—monitoring development requests and enforcing the Coastal Act of 1976 on a daily basis. The CCC is already severely understaffed, with a backlog of 1,000 cases. The proposed \$1.2 million cut this year will require lay-offs of another 17 staff people—seriously crippling the CCC.

Write your state legislators to oppose gutting the CCC!

erving as Coastal Trail Ambassador and helping to get signage locations approved.

Part of our vision for the year ahead is to collaborate more effectively with other statewide groups who share our mission and vision. We recently signed an agreement with the California Coastal National Monument (CCNM) project of the Bureau of Land Management, to work together locally to inspire coastal stewardship and encourage coastal eco-tourism. The "Monument" was established through Presidential Proclamation in 2000 to protect the islands, pinnacles and some 20,000 rocks and reefs that dot our coast and serve as essential habitat for plants and animals. What better way to appreciate the Monument off our coast than when hiking on the CCT?

Another effort this coming year will be diversifying our funding base so Coastwalk remains sustainable. We are developing relationships with key foundations. Several foundations have recently provided financial help to us and we are grateful for this additional support. We have benefited in the past from the Rockey Fund in Marin County and appreciate greatly their willingness to fund us again through a matching grant.

Current members and supporters can help by including Coastwalk in your will, making a special or major donation and continuing to be active members and volunteers of our organization.

I serve you—and I want to hear from you regarding activities, concerns and future directions of Coastwalk. I have an "open door" to my office and will answer any email you send me (fragibson@comcast.net). I may not have the answer you need but I assure you I will carefully listen and respond to your concerns.

In the recent past Coastwalk has not always excelled in volunteer development and service, and I am determined to change this. The first step is hearing from you directly so I know the nature of your concerns and interests. If Coastwalk is to sustain itself we must support all of you in the field who do the "heavy lifting" for our organization by planning walks, being trail stewards and advocating locally for changes in coastal policies. We are nowhere without your hard work. A major part of this support function is making every effort to become truly statewide with active and satisfied volunteers across the state. Let me know how I can help you on the ground—even by meeting locally with you and your group to discuss ways state Coastwalk can be a better support to your fine work.

I hope to see you on the Trail!

Save the Date!

Coastwalk will be holding a 25th Anniversary Birthday Bash on October 11, 2008 in Sonoma County (can you believe it's been 25 years??)! All are invited—stay tuned!

stallation, MLT's Navarro Stewards worked on a trail maintenance project and pitched in on invasive weed removal. The group was treated to a sighting of grey whales migrating north at a premium viewing point off the Navarro headlands.

Signing the Coastal Trail is a collaborative effort involving numerous organizations and land management agencies throughout the state. Between May and September of 2008 we plan to sign segments of Coastal Trail in thirteen of the fifteen coastal counties.

We head south in May to unveil the first emblems marking the CCT in San Diego County. Working with the Port of San Diego we are planning an outing to celebrate the signing of the CCT at Spanish Landing Park in conjunction with the Trails and Greenways Conference. Visit the Coastwalk website for more information on the signing event and Coastwalk's participation in the Trails and Greenways Conference.

Board member Nancy Graves is working with the City of Pismo Beach to sign the CCT in her community. The July signing event will also include a segment of trail that runs through State Parks at Oceano Campground.

Signing events are also planned in the cities of Santa Cruz, Pacifica, and San Francisco, as well as in Santa Barbara, Sonoma, Mendocino, Humboldt and Del Norte counties. Join the excitement and sign up for a Summer Walk or a day hike that include a signing event. Visit the Coastwalk website for a complete schedule of events, www.coastwalk.org.

Save a Tree! Join our Email List!

As Coastwalk ramps up our advocacy work, we've been keeping members and supporters informed via email about important coastal developments, as well as about local day hikes and other events. Joining our email list is the best way to get up-to-date information and to stay in touch with the Coastwalk community.

Go to our website—www.coastwalk.org—and click to join our email list on the home page.

***AOL users - remember to "unblock"
Coastwalk so our emails get through to you!***

Celebrate Summer on the CCT!

It's not too late to register for a 2008 Coastwalk—and treat yourself to an unforgettable vacation, Coastwalk style!

For those of you with kids in your lives, we offer several Family Adventures, from the classic **Monterey Bay Aquarium Overnight Adventure** (where you literally sleep next to the fish!) to new variations on old themes, like the **Balclutha Overnight** (when was the last time you slept on an historical sailing ship in the SF Bay?) and the **Santa Monica Mountains Family Adventure** (days of swimming, playing and hiking among the oaks and chaparral above Malibu). This year we're also offering an overnight at historical **Ft. Ross**, during Sonoma County's famously gorgeous and warm fall.

We're offering two backpacks—**Marin Pt. Reyes** and the **Lost Coast**, as well as many classic favorites in the north coast. Our **Autumn in Del Norte**, at the luxurious Requa Inn, provides the perfect way to bid farewell to summer...

Visit coastwalk.org to learn more and to register online.

Trestles, *continued from page 4*

In early February of this year, at an attendance record setting meeting, the California Coastal Commission voted against the road.

The victory was an indication of the passion that people of all ages and walks of life, and not only surfers, have for their beaches, parks and natural resources. It proves that many more people want our coastal resources preserved for future generations, than to sacrifice it for more development. For activists, the saying "constant pressure, endlessly applied" could also summarize the campaign. From countless hours of public meetings and hearings, and public awareness events, emerged a wave of opposition that even the politics of Orange County could not suppress. "Don't mess with our coast" seems like a fair assessment of this victory!

*Ed Schlegel, Ex - Chairperson
South Orange County Chapter, Surfrider Foundation*

Update on the Trestles Campaign: The Transportation Corridor Agency has appealed to the Secretary of Commerce to override the Commission's decision. Congresswoman Susan Davis (D-San Diego) is circulating a letter to other California Members of Congress, asking them to sign on and urge the Secretary of Commerce to uphold the CCC decision and deny the TCA appeal. Visit the Save Trestles website (www.savetrestles.com) for more information on what you can do to help.

Big Sur, *continued from page 5*

"It has been an invigorating process, and our community is proud of it. Soon we will poll the whole coastal community to approve the plan and then conduct a community meeting to elect executive committee members.

"So, we're on our way to having the trail planned through the 90-mile Big Sur coast, and expect to have it done within a year.

"Coastwalk's interest and advice has been a big help. Fran attended several meetings, including meetings with other community groups to express support for a community driven process."

The community group has applied to several foundations to support their work and is ready to begin the process of planning CCT segments through each geographic area, totaling 75 miles from the Carmel River on the north (Monterey County) to San Carpoforo Creek (San Luis Obispo County).

The group has crafted a mission statement to guide their work: "To guide the planning and implementation of the California Coastal Trail through Big Sur, in a way that protects the ecosystems of the Big Sur Coast, and the Big Sur community, for the benefit of our visitors, residents and landowners alike."

Local work groups will be provided materials and information to guide their work in determining the specific alignments for the trail through their section. Each local work group is being challenged to afford trail users an "enjoyable and unique experience" while impacting Big Sur's sensitive environment and scenic qualities as little as possible.

A major guideline for the local community is that "no portion of the trail shall be established or opened for use until a public agency has assumed responsibility for maintaining and policing the portion including demonstrating funding adequate to ensure these duties can be performed for so long as the trail is open for public use."

The community group is planning to have part of the CCT use designated trails that already exist, and to go inland if necessary to avoid possible private property objections.

Says Fran Gibson, "this grassroots group is a wonderful model for true community trail stewardship and Coastwalk is proud to be a part of their process. I see an arc, from the 1972 voter-endorsed Prop. 20 calling for a state coastal trail, down to the fine work of the Big Sur community. We look forward to continuing our collaborative partnership with the community as they go forward with their CCT designation—working with public and private land owners who see the Coastal Trail as a real benefit to the well-being and economy of Big Sur. Ninety miles of stunning El Sur Grande coastline will be a treasured and well-stewarded part of the California Coastal Trail for generations to come."

If you are interested in becoming involved with the Big Sur CCT planning process, contact Jack Ellwanger at (831)667-2025 or rocinante@pelicannetwork.net.



Goodbye & Good Luck, Willow!

Longtime Coastwalk Director of Community Relations **Willow Taraja** has left Coastwalk to pursue further education. We'll all miss Willow's boundless energy, enthusiasm and efficiency, and wish her the best of luck in her future endeavors!

We plan to have an Events Coordinator position filled very soon. This person will provide support to volunteers on the summer Coastwalk programs, and will help to plan Coastwalk's upcoming **25th Birthday Party** scheduled for **October 11, 2008** (stay tuned for more info).



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Sign me up for the
Coastwalk e-newsletter

Membership Category:

\$20/month for 1 year (Sustaining Member) *your credit card will be charged once a month for the next 12 months*

\$30 (Individual) \$50 (Family) \$100 (Steward) \$200+ (Trailblazer)

Check enclosed (made payable to Coastwalk) Visa MasterCard

Name on credit card: _____

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Please fax or mail this form to: Coastwalk, 825 Gravenstein Hwy. North, #8, Sebastopol, CA 95472, fax: (707) 829-0326
or join online at www.coastwalk.org