

THE MCKINLEYVILLE LAND TRUST

NEWSLETTER FALL 2010 NUMBER 27

Mad River Bluffs Makeover

By Emily Teraoka

If you've been to the Mad River Bluffs recently, you may have noticed some trails are closed and some construction is happening. The Mad River Bluffs property is in the middle of a trails improvement project! Thanks to a grant from the California River Parkway Program (Prop 50), the McKinleyville Land Trust (MLT) has been able to partner with the Redwood Community Action Agency to improve nearly 20 acres of the 74 acre parcel at the Mad River Bluffs.

This project will include upgrading approximately 1,500 ft of informal trails with a durable, well-drained trail surface, decommissioning several informal or social-trails that threaten to further erode the bluff face and disturb the natural resources of the area, and enhance access to the Mad River estuary by improving the current stairway and building a new set of stairs at the north end of the property. In addition, there will be new parking located at the end of Ocean Drive, one trail will be made ADA accessible, several overlooks will be improved with fencing to protect the bluffs, and new benches and interpretive signs will be installed. There will also be three kiosks located on the property with a trails map, new dogi-pot stations, and even some new picnic tables.

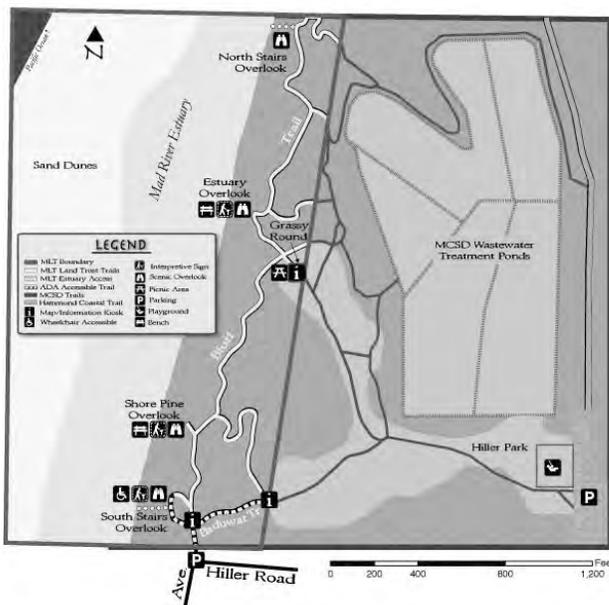


The on-the-ground work is being done by the California Conservation Corps (CCC), who have been working hard over the last few months to upgrade the trails, build the stairs, and even remove some of the exotic invasive species that are threatening the native forest plants on the property.

The project is expected to be completed in December 2010, but minor trail work will continue throughout the winter rainy season. A grand opening is planned for the spring of 2011 – stay tuned for more information.



Trail Map



Dows Prairie Wetland News

By Gina Rimson

As this newsletter goes to press, the initial restoration work at the Dow's Prairie Educational Wetland (DPEW) has started, thanks to the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the FWS Foundation. Heavy equipment is being used to remove the invasive plants, grind the vegetation on-site, and clear the trail area.

The wetland has been chosen to be one of Northern California's first Schoolyard Habitat Program (SHP) sites. The FWS Foundation recently awarded the MLT a \$6000 grant. Along with \$2000 cash from the MLT general fund, and \$2000 of in-kind donations, the money will be used to remove blackberries and Scotch broom that surround the native *Spirea* and seasonal pond, as well as to construct a trail and purchase native plants.

The SHP program offers the perfect opportunity for the MLT to partner with Dow's Prairie Elementary School in making this a real outdoor classroom. Students will be involved at the site in various ways, not just studying the plants and animals that live or visit the pond. For example, a portion of the school garden can be used to cultivate native plants that can later be transplanted at the DPEW. Best of all, the children will have an easily accessible natural habitat to explore and discover.



It's been over a decade since MCSD Director John Corbett hatched a plan, with the MLT, to buy and conserve (in perpetuity) the seasonal pond and wetland behind Dows Prairie School. The Simpson Timber Foundation (now Green Diamond) awarded the MLT \$15,000 to buy the the 2.5-acre wetland, Over the years, many other local individuals and businesses have donated time, money and resources to make the educational wetland a reality.

Former Dows Prairie kids (now in high school or college) will

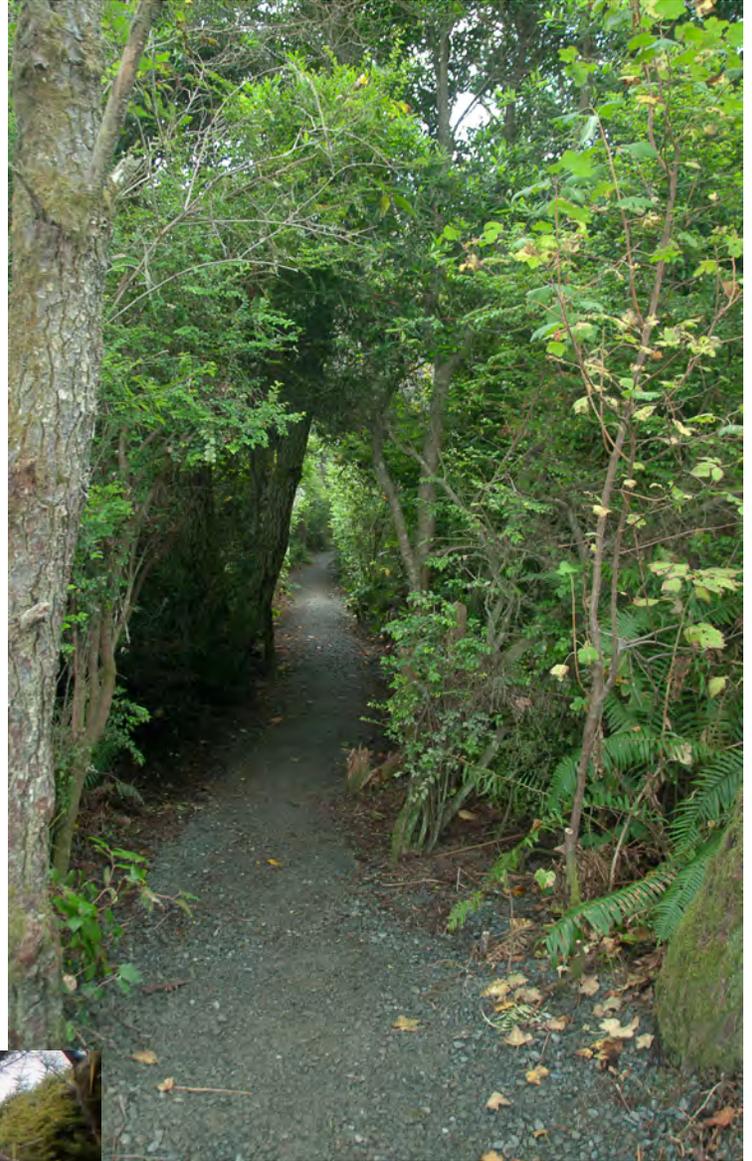
remember dressing up as frogs in support of the wetland and hopping in the Pony Express Days parade. Now, that spirit continues as Principal Rowland and the Dows Prairie staff and students gear up for the future including on-site, hands-on environmental, horticultural, cultural and art education projects.

The MLT extends heartfelt thanks to local FWS staff for hours of restoration planning, cost estimates and submitting the grant application. Dow's Prairie School Principal Jane Rowland was enthusiastic about the SHP from the beginning and pledged the school's support.

Replanting with native species will begin in January and February. Meanwhile, the MLT will be seeking cash and material donations to help build the trail, signs and new gates. For more information, call 839-LAND. Parents and community members interested in volunteering can contact the MLT liaison to Dows Prairie School, Nanette Kelley at nanette.kelley@yahoo.com or Gina Rimson at 839-1900.



More Mad River Bluffs Photographs



Tools and California Conservation Corps crews renew Mad River Bluffs trails and overlooks. Come hike the new trails and enjoy the view.



General Plan Update

By Joyce King

The County General Plan update will have the broadest land use consequences of any governmental action in Humboldt today. It will dictate permitted uses and boundaries for county lands for the next 20 years. Thus, it should be no surprise that the process has taken nearly 10 conflict-ridden years and will continue through 2011.

So far, advocates for industry and commerce, natural resource conservation, alternative energy, transportation, and low-cost housing have squared off in predictable fashion. But some unusual coalitions have emerged, such as notable back-to-landers joining timber industry and real estate development interests to defend property rights against policies attempting to comply with state climate change mandates and widespread cumulative impacts to fish, forests, watersheds, and prime soils.

The Planning Commission's public hearings on Forest and Agricultural Resources chapters were long and arduous. Real estate development interests and rural land owners were always well represented, effectively repeating opposition to any limits on their ability to subdivide and increase land values. In the decision-making phase, two veteran planning commissioners were replaced by two conservative property-rights supporters who had not witnessed the past several years' comments and debates. As a result, policies protecting forest and farm lands from conversion to residential development emerged significantly weaker.

Hearings on Water Resources, Biological Resources, and Open Space will take place in the next few months. These sections will continue to grapple with how to accommodate sustainable development without harming the long-term health of riparian corridors, wetlands, water quality, salmon and other species at risk. Because of the protracted hearings on Forest and Agriculture, the Planning Commission's final General Plan draft will not be available for approval by the Board of Supervisors until next year. Though couched in various terms, the direction of future economic and land development was the prime issue of this November's election, and the fate of the General Plan will be in the hands of the new Board of Supervisors.

As the global human population climbs to 7 billion, economic and climate stressors will push populations toward regions like ours with cooler temperatures and greater land and resource bases. Only comprehensive land use planning will prevent irretrievable loss of Humboldt's finest natural resources. Given the current decline of government resources and public opposition to regulation, land trusts could become an important part of the planning equation. Land trusts can work with willing landowners to protect resource lands and natural habitat from development that would otherwise be allowed under the General Plan. McKinleyville Land Trust will continue to monitor the General Plan Update and look for creative solutions to our county's critical land use questions. However, we need all citizens who care about the long-term social, economic, and environmental health of our county to become informed, and participate in the solutions.

For more about the General Plan and opportunities for public participation, go to <http://co.humboldt.ca.us/gpu/> or contact Martha Spencer at 268-3704. You may also visit the Healthy Humboldt Coalition website at www.healthyhumboldt.org or call 633-6478.

In memory of Scott Gavin

The MLT is saddened to hear of the death of Dr. Scott Gavin on October 18. Scott was a longtime friend; he helped form the Concerned Citizens of McKinleyville, the group that founded MLT in the early 90's. He lived next to Chah-GAH-Cho, and was a helpful and concerned neighbor. He will be missed.



**McKinleyville Land Trust
Board of Directors 2010**

- Allen Bird - President
- Nancy Correll - Vice-President
- Dorothy Klein - Secretary
- Gina Rimson - Treasurer
- Darci Short
- Joyce King
- Tom Lisle
- Judy Haggard
- Emily Teraoka

McKinleyville Land Trust
MUGS!

Available for \$8 at Blake's
Books

(and at the Annual Dinner)

Thanks to all volunteers!

Site cleanups:

Dorothy Klein, Allen Bird, Darci Short, Frank Bickner, Tom Lisle, Ken Miller, Joyce King, Richard Duning, Nancy Correll, Judy Haggard,

North Country Fair:

Gina Rimson deserves special notice for organizing this event, and for keeping up our spirits in the rain!

Allen Bird, Richard Duning, Nancy Correll, Frank Bickner, Darci Short, Chris Hatcher, Emily Teraoka, Jason Teraoka, Joyce King, Larry Hand, Linda Evans, Patrick Evans, Jeff Dunk, Haleigh Dunk, Dorothy Klein, Laura Bridy, Johnny Calkins, Gail Raymer, Maya Bickner, Alison Hartley, Adele Nitkau, Tamara Clohessy, Jean Reichert, David Powell, Linda Doerflinger, Linda Seymour, Mimi Morgan, Gordon Leppig, Julie Neander, Lynne Bryan, Katie Farro, Courtney Blake, Chris Heppe, Julian Barbash, Natalie Lindley, Chelsea Fusek.

John Shelter helped with consultation on Chah-GAH-Cho. So did Paul Meyer and Pastor Steve Lundeen of the Church of the Joyful Healer; Sylvia Garlick, & Fred Neighbor.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of our bare-bones annual budget of around \$8,000. But we need SOME money to keep the organization running. (Insurance, membership fees, matching funds, newsletter printing, storage rent, etc.) You can help by sending us a donation in the envelope enclosed. Thank you!

Give the Gift that lasts FOREVER

Land Trusts protect land in perpetuity. That means that whether we buy land, or help a willing landowner put a conservation easement on it, that land is protected forever. As a land trust, it is our job to monitor the land to make sure that the promise of perpetual protection is honored.

To make sure that we can care for these lands into the future, we fundraise to help pay the costs of monitoring, and we hold endowment funds in reserve for possible legal challenges to the easements.

Here's where you come in. An endowment donation, a bequest in your will, a regular giving program, or charitable remainder trust – any of these can help us prepare for perpetuity. Your gift can go a long way -- forever, in fact.

Call 839-LAND to discuss a way for you to give.

How better to protect the earth?

The McKinleyville Land Trust
P.O. Box 2723
McKinleyville, CA 95519

Seen on a bumper sticker:

There is no Planet B.

Presenting our new board member:

Emily Teraoka!

Emily Teraoka joined the board of the McKinleyville Land Trust in June of 2010. Emily is a native of upstate New York, went to Williams College in western Massachusetts and after a few years working for Grand Canyon National Park in Arizona, finally made her way to the redwoods and the north coast. She recently finished her Master's degree at HSU in Natural Resources/Forestry and works as an Ecologist at Stillwater Sciences, a local environmental consulting firm. She moved to McKinleyville 8 years ago and loves walking with her husband Jason and their dog at the Mad River Bluffs and all of our local beaches. In her spare time, Emily enjoys traveling, hiking around the north coast, canoeing, and reading as much as possible.



Workers constructing trails at Mad River Bluffs. See front page.

Save the date: April 9, 2011

That's the date of the next McKinleyville Land Trust Annual Dinner. Come enjoy a delicious dinner, a social occasion with your neighbors, and a stimulating program. AND there's a raffle. Don't miss it.