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Steffen Allen

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## **2017 Annual Report**

### **McKinleyville Land Trust**

#### **Board membership**

We said our goodbyes to Zia Schatz as she retired from the Board. We said hello to Monica Bueno and Steffen Allen as they joined the Board.

#### **Fundraising/publicity**

MLT held its annual fundraisers, which were financial and publicity successes:

- Annual Dinner on March 5 (with speaker Jennifer Wheeler)
- The food (gyro) booth at the North Country Fair on September 17 and 18.
- We hosted 1 Pints for Non Profit event
- Our annual newsletter was published in early December and garnered some generous donations.

#### **Budget**

In 2017 the McKinleyville Land Trust had a net positive balance of \$6,812.36 for the year. Donations to the land trust exceeded expectations in 2017, and spending on fee property management was less than predicted. The land trust had \$15,076.97 in total operating costs split between program services (managing fee properties and conservation easements), preparing for fundraising events, and insurance costs.

#### **Cha-GAH-Cho (CGC)**

In February, the Capstone report by Annie Allen, who studied the thinned areas of CGC, is complete. Another Capstone group met with Emily T and Nancy for a tour of CGC. The group plans to do a biological resources evaluation there.

There was an Ivy Bash, April 15 in collaboration with the Watershed Stewards Program which brought out two dozen volunteers. Trillium, fairy bells and Claytonia were in bloom.

Leonel proposed a prescribed burn in the grassland area, to be revegetated with native grassland plants. The burn was postponed because of weather conditions, to be scheduled next fall.

In December, Steffen encouraged us to join Humboldt Trail Stewards; he plans to designate 3rd Saturdays for work at CGC & MRB.

Most of the work, however, consists of patrols almost every week to pick up trash and empty the trashcan. Camping is still a problem, but in addition to trash at abandoned campsites, it appears that household trash is also being deposited, sometimes thoughtfully right beside the trashcan! Tom and Lori have done most of this work, as entertainment for Leila, but Nancy & Richard, Greg & Joyce, Leonel & Laura, Emily S. and Steffen also tackle the piles. The most impressive camp lasted for 2 months, in spite of frequent warnings to leave, and left behind a full pickup load of trash. Both Kmart and Humboldt Sanitation have been wonderful in accepting all this trash without fee.

CGC is frequently enjoyed by local residents, often walking their dogs or just enjoying the views.

### **Mad River Bluffs (MRB)**

#### EXPENSES in 2017

- \$773 for dogipot refills for MRB, CGC, and MCSD at the end of February
- \$110 for materials to repair South Stairs
- \$42 for volunteer badges

### CAMPING & TRAILS

Patrols took place approximately monthly, with more during the summer and fewer in winter. About 5 abandoned camps and only 1 active campsite encountered this year, requiring minor cleanup. In order to discourage subsequent camping in freshly cleaned sites, we are experimenting with not cleaning up immediately as long as there are no hazards, and no visual blight from established trails, until rainy season starts. Disposing of human litter and dog feces are ongoing tasks, along with cleaning graffiti from benches and signs. Litter is usually found on social trails, which have been barricaded repeatedly and breached.

6 fallen trees were removed from trails after winter storms

Repairs were made to North and South Stairs. Vegetation was removed to restore viewshed at Overlook 4. Signs were posted on kiosks in winter to warn visitors of falling limbs, but signs posted in summer at bluff faces to prevent incursions and social trails disappeared within the first few weeks.

A project to remediate erosion at Goodyera Glade/North Stairs in April drew more than 30 McKinleyville community volunteers who placed downed wood on eroding bluffs, built a split-rail fence to deter trails down bluff faces, and planted native shrubs on bluff tops for stabilization. This project was headed by the California Conservation Corps Watershed Stewards and supported by volunteers from Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and contributions from several local businesses.

## INVASIVE SPECIES

English Ivy was removed adjacent to Bluff Trail and Shore Pine Trail by volunteers and CCC crews. Signs were posted to identify and differentiate wild cucumber from English ivy, to stop people from mistakenly removing it.

## FIREARMS

After several reports over the year of nuisance hunting along the stretch of Mad River adjacent to MRB, it was found that a county ordinance prohibiting firearms on the lower Mad River from the Hammond Bridge to Clam Beach is not getting compliance or enforcement. Game wardens seem to think it legal hunt up to the high water mark on any waterway and 100 to 150 yds from houses. Signage and action by the McK Municipal Advisory Committee will be sought.

## 2018 GOALS

- 5-year adopt-a-patch campaign to eliminate ivy
- Dog owner education program
- Maps & visitors brochure

## THANKS TO OUR MRB VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPORTERS IN 2017

Jamie Bellerman, Randle Lundberg, Vicki Ozaki & Duncan McNeil, Chris Heppe, Kate McClain, Debbie Marshall, Meighan O'Brien, Molly Berry, Randy Turner, Jennifer Wheeler, Emily Moloney, Stephanie, Mark, Briana, Chelsea, and CCC work crews, Sam Flanagan, Zia Shatz, Arcata Scoop, Coop, Ray's, Eureka Natural Foods, Mill Yard, Miller Farms, McKinleyville Community Services District, Humboldt Sanitation & Recycling, Starbucks, Sweet Spot, Wildberries

## **Dows Prairie Educational Wetland (DPEW)**

With Dow's Prairie School in attendance, Humboldt State University Natural Resource Capstone interns planted 24 plants (osoberry, ninebark, and maple) at the MLT Dow's Prairie Educational Wetland on Arbor Day in June. A variety of watering devices were installed (cost \$350) that enabled the new plants to survive the summer drought. The interns utilized their research and experience for their final HSU Capstone project and presentation. However, the interns did not plant the new plants according to mapped instructions.

The sheriff's SWAT team pulled Scotch broom in June and again in December (at no cost), and added greatly to our burgeoning burn pile. We replaced a rotting post at the gate in June. We weed-whacked the trail and pulled more broom in July.

The Humboldt Wildlife Care Center made a raptor presentation at the school, for which we donated \$50.

## **Property easements**

We successfully monitored all six of our easements.