



REDWOOD COAST LAND CONSERVANCY

Dedicated to conserving open spaces and the natural environment along the Mendonoma Coast

Cooks Beach Access and Bonham Trail – Looking Good

On your next trip to Cooks Beach, you'll likely notice a much improved entry. The access to the overlook and trail, with limited parking on the County Right-of-Way on CR526, received some much needed treatment in July. Mendocino County approved a NO-FEE Permit to place and compact base rock to match the pavement. Bed Rock, Inc. and owner, Bill Hay, delivered, placed and compacted eight yards of base rock, while the County Roads Staff provided traffic control. Kudos to Bill and his crew for an excellent job. Stewardship funds are used for this type of work and the general maintenance of the overlook and trail. Volunteers are helping us to replace stairs,



change the rise/run, and gradually move the trail east at the top to relieve pressure on the culvert outlet. The addition of a short section of fence at the top-west of the trail above the culvert should help prevent trespass on private property adjacent to the trail. Please stay on the trail and stairs when accessing the beach and, as always, Pack it In and Pack it Out. Please help keep our beaches pristine for everyone.

Beach Fires Are Discouraged at Cooks Beach

As of June, both California State Parks and Mendocino County have prohibited wood fires and open flames on beaches. The public access management agreement for Cooks Beach does not provide for fire rings or permanent grills to accommodate beach fires. Additionally, RCLC has a policy prohibiting using the public access to carry-in or collect material to be used in building beach fires.

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Keep Cooks Beach Dog-Friendly

We want to avoid conflicts and mishaps along the trail, since it is impossible to see the beach from the upper trail. The first concern is dogs racing excitedly down or up the trail and the possibility that a trail user will get sideswiped. Another concern is for the leashed dogs vs. roaming dogs; dogs leashed can be more intimidated and aggressive when encountering an unleashed dog and the fight can begin even with otherwise friendly dogs. Perhaps the greatest concern is the dog that races freely onto the beach where wildlife can't be seen from above.

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We envision a protected and restored Mendonoma coast conserved for public enjoyment and appreciation of its natural beauty, abundant diversity of wildlife, and rich cultural history.

November 2015 - June 2016 Memorial and Commemorative Gifts

Gifts to RCLC in memory of friends, family members and colleagues or to honor significant events in people's lives provide a wonderful legacy for those who wish to preserve the beauty of our natural environment

In Memory of

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Katrina Van Walterop
Anne Hendricks

**Gualala Bluff Trail Volunteers
& Ruben Villagomez**
Mary Sue Ittner

Beach Fires Are Discouraged at Cooks Beach

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Cooks Beach is a very dangerous cove beach for fires. There are multiple concerns and multiple unintended consequences from open flames on this beach. Drought conditions are certainly the main concern, but so is the dense foliage surrounding the beach and the possibility of igniting the bluff face where fire will most certainly race to the top. Cooks Beach is often windy and even a light breeze can blow embers into the foliage (a beach fire south of us at Stillwater Cove in July, ignited by blowing embers from an abandoned fire, started at the base of the cliff and burned to the top of the bluff.) There is limited visibility to the entire beach and bluff face of Cooks Beach. Fire could easily reach the homes above the bluff face before any fire could be seen, reported and extinguished. It may seem prudent to bury burning embers to extinguish a fire, but covering with sand may only lengthen the time until embers cool. In that case, dogs and people are in danger of stumbling upon a very hot, buried fire as they walk the beach. The use of driftwood already on the beach or alternate fuels, such as coal or propane, is not an answer to the issue. There is still far greater reason to prohibit any fires/ open flames on the beach than to risk the consequences to vegetation and homes in the immediate vicinity.



Smoldering Beach Fire at Cooks Aug 2016

Photo by: Harry Lutz



Keep Cooks Beach Dog-Friendly

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PLEASE check the status of the beach before unleashing a dog. There are more instances this year of seals using Cooks Beach as a haul-out and pupping area. We don't know why the increase in pups and possible strandings but it is primarily important that wildlife on the beach not be hassled. This includes birds, deer and other creatures, including us humans, who like to spread a blanket near the bluff. Unleashed dogs, even friendly unleashed dogs can startle others and ruin a perfectly good picnic. Please keep your dog leashed on the trail and to/from the parking area on County Road 526 until you know for sure who and what is on the beach ahead of you.

Remember: Any beach user can ask you to leash your dog, at any time, for any reason. You must comply per the leash laws. If you do allow your dog off-leash, it must be reliably under voice control at



all times and be close enough to control. Also Remember: Nobody likes your dog as much as you do!



Thistle Eradicators: Jon Thompson, Frank Bell, Fred McElroy, Susan Moon, Bob Rutemoeller. Photo by Linda Bell

Stewardship – Volunteers + Donations

We had a successful volunteer work party day at Hearn Gulch in June with volunteers who helped to remove three truck-loads of invasive weeds, mostly thistle. Work parties on all of our public access properties are an invaluable way to help defray costs associated with stewardship, however, every year our stewardship funds are tapped for contract work, permits, materials, refuse fees, insurance, fire protection, permits and other necessary expenditures. Stewardship requires a combination of volunteer support and donor funding (see related article Cooks Beach – Looking Good) to complete volunteer’s trail maintenance at Cooks Beach alongside the contracted services for placement of base rock at the entry from the road.

RCLC works on a lean annual operating budget of \$45,000 to \$50,000 which includes management and maintenance of our current conservation and public access projects, a large portion from stewardship funds. We couldn’t do this important work without the dedication and expertise of our many volunteers, advisors and the continuing support of our donors. Please consider a donation to support your favorite coastal public access and know that your stewardship donations are used, when necessary, with local/regional contractors and services for circulation within the local economy.



Hearn Gulch

Photos by Bob Rutemoeller

Gifts from October 2015 to June 2016

RCLC wishes to thank the following people
and organizations for their contributions.

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LAND CONSERVANCY**

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As an environmental organization, we want to reduce direct mail and paper waste as much as possible. We will continue to share our newsletter by direct mail a couple times each year.

Send us an email at rclc@rclc.org with the email address you prefer and the names attached to that email. If your mailing address and phone have changed, please send that along as well.

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Art In the Redwoods Award – August 2016

Each year, RCLC presents an Environmental Award for a work entered in the Art In the Redwoods Festival that captures the beauty and spirit of our local natural environment. This summer the award was presented to Carole Garcia, of The Sea Ranch, for her textile art in the category of Quilts - fabrics, ink, thread. The quilt is Carole's depiction of Salal



Creek, a public access trail at The Sea Ranch. The title of the piece is "Almost to the Ocean – Salal Creek" and is inspired by a photo that Carole took while hiking the Salal Trail. Carole is an active member of the Pacific Piecemakers Quilt Guild, with whom she makes comfort quilts for distribution



to a variety of local assistance organizations and Quilts of Valor for injured veterans. She enjoys sharing her own art quilts and traditional quilts with family and friends. This was her first entry to Art In the Redwoods. The RCLC panel found Carole's quilt to be a beautiful representation of our coastal area.