

STANDARD
Presort
US Postage Paid
Melo Mail

An environmentally sensitive stewardship organization protecting river, tributary and watershed property rights.

Russian River Property Owner's Association
PO Box 2124
Healdsburg, CA 95448

Phone: 707-857-3513
Fax: 707-857-3513



Russian River Property Owner's Association

An environmentally sensitive stewardship organization protecting river, tributary and watershed property rights.

Inside this issue:

<i>Salmonid Coalition</i>	1
<i>Salmonid Coalition</i>	2
<i>Annual Dinner</i>	2
<i>President's Message</i>	3
<i>Things to Watch Out For</i>	4

Salmonid Coalition

Sonoma County Salmon Coalition Water Resource Protection for Salmonids and Vineyards
Marc Kelley
Carolyn Wasem

The Salmon Coalition was formed nearly two years ago with the assistance of Russian River Property Owners Association Board Members Al Cadd, Pete Dayton, Harry Black, Allan Nelson, Dave Fanucchi and Richard Rued. One of the stated goals of the coalition is to address water resource demands relative to federally protected salmonids in the Alexander Valley in a manner that also protects continued agriculture viability in the region.

Since the first meeting in March of 2006, the Salmon Coalition has grown to include individuals from National Marine Fisheries Service, California Department of Fish and Game, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, the Sonoma County Water

Agency, Natural Resources Conservation District, the Resource Conservation District, representatives from the University of California, Davis, the University of California, Berkeley, eight local jurisdictions and agriculture. Today the Salmon Coalition is focusing its energies on the ecologically sensitive and fiscally responsible management of our river system. This management program will focus on several components:

A comprehensive and collaborative analysis of the stream flow requirements within specific watersheds in Alexander, Dry Creek and Knights Valleys – Based upon this analysis, a comprehensive plan will be crafted to ensure that we collectively address the needs of the salmonids within these Valleys and secure ongoing water access and future water rights for the Ag community.

Dr. Adina Merenelender of the University of California Extension Office in Hopland has developed a spatially

explicit model for identifying potential locations for storm water storage facilities (off-stream reservoirs) within these water basins. Her work will assist in identifying trade-offs and solutions to water demands for the spring and summer growing season and also reduce impairment to stream flows needed to support salmon populations in key tributaries.

A comprehensive and collaborative draft Conservation Program - This program is based on the efforts of the Resource Conservation District, National Marine Fisheries Service and private landowners in Alexander and Dry Creek Valleys that will conserve habitat in 15 crucial streams. Based on field research, current conditions were assessed and recommendations made to *(continued Page 2)*



Officers of Russian River Property Owner's Association

President — Al Cadd
Vice President — Pete Dayton
Secretary — Johanna Vanoni
Treasurer — Lee Gunnerson

This newsletter is published by:

RRPOA
PO Box 2124
Healdsburg, CA 95448
www.russianriverpoa.org

Editor — Wendy Dayton, Vista Designs, LLC

Things To Watch Out For

General Plan 2020 - The next meeting is scheduled for April 1st. The issue of well monitoring and metering has been dropped; saving 40,000 wells in Sonoma County from controls and licensing fees. The revenue stream created by the fees though will probably be revisited as it could provide the county with approximately \$4 million annually based on a yearly fee of \$100 per well.

HR2421/S1870 - Keep an eye out for more information regarding House bill HR2421 and Senate bill S1870. If these bills pass every drop of water in the US will be under the Army Corp of Engineers jurisdiction. These bills will remove state and county rights to manage their water, but

also private property rights to all surface water. The bill written by Rep. Orberstar is an end run around 2 US Supreme Court decisions that the US Army Corp of Engineers was in violation of the 5th amendment by trying to take control of minor waterways not under their jurisdiction of "navigable waters". 450 predominantly environmental organizations are backing this bill as well as Mike Thompson, Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein. The bill called the Clean Water Restoration Act of 2007 has little to do with water quality and much to do with the takeover of private property. Contact Gloria Ball at the Sonoma County Lands Rights Coalition for more information –

SCLR@sonomacountylandrights.com.

Prop 98 - The petition for a state initiative to protect private property rights received enough signatures and will be on the November ballot. Prop 98 or the California Property Owners and Farmland Protection Act will help protect our state from outrageous eminent domain takings and will make California the 43rd state to pass some restriction on the unjust takings. Prop 98 also has provisions to help fight the "regulatory" takings that are happening on rural land that we are essentially facing with GP2020.

Annual Dinner
General Membership Meeting
5:30 pm
Wed. March 26th, 2008
Villa Chanticleer Annex
Keynote Speakers
SEE PAGE 2

SONOMA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN UPDATES

Information on upcoming General Plan update meetings can be obtained at :

<http://www.sonoma-county.org/prmd/gp2020/index.html>

STAY INFORMED!

Salmonid Coalition (continued)

enhance and conserve salmonid habitat. The factors assessed include: substrate quality, riparian vegetation quality, artificial passage barriers and channel complexity.

Dr. Greg Horton of National Marine Fisheries Service completed his draft plan in November of 2007. The Draft Conservation Plan is part of a larger effort that addresses the needs of the salmonids and the regulatory implications for private landowners associated with those needs by identifying measures that will contribute to the recovery of salmon populations in the Russian River Basin. A copy of the report is available by contacting Carolyn Wasmem at 707-326-0876.

Development of Best Management Practices specific to land uses - The National Marine Fisheries Service and the Resource Conservation District have collaborated on a "draft" of practices that when implemented would further protect salmonid populations and add to the regulatory certainty for agriculture and urban water users alike. The

"draft" will be made available to the Salmon Coalition in March of 2008. Landowners and agriculture representatives will participate in drafting the "final" version of these practices.

River Management program specific to water quality - The Salmon Coalition recently formed a committee to address water quality issues relative to land use activity and river management issues. The committee will seat representatives from the County of Sonoma, private landowners, agriculture representatives, National Marine Fisheries Service, the Department of Fish and Game, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Development and implementation of a watershed management approach to assist in the administration of water rights - Concern over the recovery of salmon in our watersheds is partially responsible for the lack of water rights permitting. A watershed management

approach will allow our region to address water rights looking at cumulative impacts to salmon and watersheds and the cumulative needs of the agriculture producers. This approach is given a "carve out" in the State Water Boards AB 2121 Watershed Guidelines.

The Salmon Coalition is one of many collaborative approaches around the country. Cooperation and collaboration are increasing in popularity as decision makers are gaining an increased understanding of the importance of property owner buy-in for implementation of plans to protect and enhance natural resources.

Together we are working towards solutions that will indeed protect our natural resources and our economic viability. We intend that these efforts will assist in providing regulatory certainty and assist in resolving the challenges over requests for water rights.

up to date on current water resource issues. Don't miss it!

Call Lee Gunnerson at 707-433-4305 or Johanna Vanoni at 707-857-3513 to sign up.

Don't Miss the Annual Dinner

This years Annual Dinner and General Membership meeting promises to be fun and interesting. Lots of delicious food, good wine and a chance to catch up with other members. This years keynote speakers are Mitch

Swanson of Swanson Hydrology and Geomorphology. Mitch will talking about "The Truth About Sediment in the Russian River". Matt St. John from the North Coast Regional Quality Control Board will also be speaking, bringing us

Become a Member of the RRPOA, Sign up a friend or renew your membership!

Name _____
Parcel Address _____
Mailing Address (if different) _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____

- Amount Enclosed:
\$45 small parcel/Homeowner
\$90 large parcel/Commercial
\$25 Associate Member (non-voting)

Mail to: RRPOA, PO Box 2124, Healdsburg, CA 95448

Message from our President - Meandering River

Dear Members and Friends,

A short time ago I asked a young reporter if she would like to do an article on the Russian River. I wanted to show her the gravel buildup and explain the threat in case of a major flood event. Her reply was, "Oh no that's too controversial and besides rivers are supposed to move".

When I finished fuming the thought occurred to me that we very often hear this or something similar, but how often do we ask them to explain how. There is so much false information out there that it is time that we as individuals start reacting to it.

When you hear someone saying something that you doubt, politely ask them to explain how that is true. If you don't buy their answer tell them where they are wrong. But don't spoil the evening by getting into a big argument. There is no question that if man were to leave the watershed the watershed would be better off, but that rational will not solve today's problems.

When someone tells you that it's good for a river to meander, ask them if the river is healthier in Alexander Valley where it meanders than it is at Squaw Rock where it is contained in a canyon and can't meander.

We have been fortunate enough not to have any major

floods for quite a few years and I doubt that there are many of us that have witnessed a real meander. Believe me, when a river changes course it is not a pretty sight!

When the Eel River floods it generally raises hell with Fernbridge and Ferndale.

Dairies are flooded, livestock lost and tons of silt are deposited in the river. Does that make the Eel healthier than some of the rivers farther north that have almost no flood plain?

Recently I heard a young biologist state that some of the tributaries are ok upstream but are channelized when they reach the valley floor. He also complained that they were denied their flood plain. He didn't stop to think that upstream where they seemed to be in pretty good shape, they are in a canyon and are completely channelized by nature. As for being channelized, if these streams are left to nature they would meander onto adjoining farmland, deposit gravel, and braid into the field and never reach the river. What kind of a run of fish would that result in? Their flood plain is also the river's flood plain and they are completely over run during a flood.

Some claims are true but distorted. For example, a recent publication brags about stopping a gravel company from discharging water containing mercury into a pond. The company did

not add the mercury through their process. Mercury is naturally present in the Russian River water and gravel. It comes from the heavy cinnabar deposits in the Geysers area. But it makes a great tool if you want to pick on a gravel company.

Another example is: "Gravel bar skimming causes siltation". True, when gravel is disturbed surface fines are released, This also occurs during high flows. Bedload migration is a natural process. They are very good at using distorted facts to prove a point. By the time they are finished, you want to believe that unwanted silt is actually dumped in the river.

Our organization needs to start a TRUTH CAMPAIGN immediately. When you hear something that's not right, challenge it! If we don't, I fear we will be overrun by distorted truths and exaggerations.

Hope you all are having a great year!
Regards, AL



Al Cadd, President RRPOA