

**Why I Volunteer With HNCLT**  
*A message from President Gail Kenny*

I gave some thought recently as to why I am a volunteer with the Humboldt North Coast Land Trust. My thoughts were prompted by the recent loss from the environmental community of a formidable ally in Tim McKay, Director of the Northcoast Environmental Center. Tim's untimely death was a shock to the community. I have been the President of Humboldt North Coast Land Trust for the last three years and was I secretary for two years prior to taking on the President role. This is in addition to working 20 hours per week, being a wife and a Mom, being involved in several other organizations and dealing with a chronic health issue. The message I took away from Tim's memorial was to carry on the work of preserving our environment in his memory and it stressed to me the importance of continuing this work. It gave me a new resolve to continue my involvement with the Humboldt North Coast Land Trust.

Here are some of the reasons I am motivated to be an active member of the Humboldt North Coast Land Trust. I will start with our mission statement: *Humboldt North Coast Land Trust is a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting for the public benefit the natural beauty and character of Humboldt County from Little River to Big Lagoon.* Protecting the natural beauty are the operative words for me. I see the land trust as preserving the natural environment to the benefit of all the creatures that use it and are dependent on it, including humans. The more natural environment we can preserve, the better chance we have of maintaining the ability of the earth to support life in all of its diversity. HNCLT currently has about 40 acres of land it owns outright and about 10 acres of public access easements. It is very small in comparison to other land trusts, but several of the holdings provide public access to beaches, and some without public access preserve trees, views, creeks and other natural resources. Our newest holding, Saunders' Park will provide a City Park, a museum, library and a native plant garden. The City Park will provide an outside gathering place for the community, the museum and library will help provide education about the human and natural history of Trinidad and native plants will be showcased and identified in the garden.

Other reasons to be involved with HNCLT are that it is a service to our community as well as being a community builder. One of the best parts of being involved is getting to know and working with the other Trustees. You get to know people in ways that you would not otherwise as you work towards a common goal. As the time goes on, these people are your friends you get to see them shine in other ways than you would in purely social relationships.

I recently have been reading journals I kept as teenager over an eight year period. The entry I made on May 7, 1974 while a freshman in high school is especially prophetic: "Today went okay. I rode my bike to school. English lecture was boring, Social Studies lecture was okay. It was about what to do with some land. You know, sometimes I wish I didn't live in San Mateo (California). They are building all over the place, new

shopping centers, high rise office buildings, it's sick. Why can't they leave it like it is? I don't think this city needs those things. We need open space. Space where the wild animals can roam free without having human beings ruin their homes. They need homes too. We are not the only animals on this earth. All they think is money, money, money. I know I'm just a typical teenager, but I really believe in what I am saying. I like the wilderness better than the city. I'm an outdoor girl. I have to be near open spaces, I am going to move away from here and live other places for a while when I get older to see just how good this world is. It may be better than I think it is, but I am young. I don't know and I've only just opened my eyes to many things. Things I'm just beginning to understand. I hope I will help this earth to be a better place while I am still here. We have to think of our children. Isn't that why God put me on this earth? I am here for a reason and until I do my duty I will stay."

In September 2007, 32 years later, I still have the same resolve. Let's continue to make sure we have open natural spaces to enjoy close to our homes and continue to educate people on the benefits of this. I hope you will join me.

## **HNCLT Holdings and Activities**

### **Saunders' Park**

This property will have three projects on it. The City of Trinidad has an easement for a park. The Trinidad Museum Society will have a museum building and native plant garden, and there will also be a library building containing the Trinidad Branch of the Humboldt County Library. Questions were coming up about legal issues having to do with the three groups sharing the same property. The biggest question was how we could have the museum and library with buildings on the same property. The build able area of the property is limited and all in the same location. It is limited because much of the area which is now flat originally had a valley running through it which was filled with earth removed during construction of Highway 101. The HNCLT has agreed to give the City of Trinidad an additional easement for a road to service these projects. The City has been awarded a grant to build to the road. Also joining the project is Connie Butler's whale sculpture which was recently immortalized in bronze. It will grace the project until someone comes forward to buy it. We would love to have it be a permanent fixture on the property if a generous donor would come forward and make that possible.

We soon discovered we could not have a ground lease for two different entities owning buildings on the same parcel. A ground lease enables the entity leasing the property to own the building. Another option was subdividing the property, but this is an expensive and lengthy process which would have limited the build able area and would have required two septic systems instead of one. Due to the soils on the property, there is a very limited area for leach fields. We could have done a ground lease with either the museum or the City acting for the library, except that the party with the ground lease would have to own both buildings and one would sublease from the other. Neither party was willing to sublease from the other, nor were they willing to share one building. After much discussion and research we decided that the best option would be for HNCLT to

own the buildings and lease them back to the groups. The plan is for the two groups to build the buildings at their own costs, donate them to HNCLT and then have HNCLT lease them back to the groups. The groups will have full responsibility for maintenance and utilities of the buildings.

In early January we started having joint meetings with the four parties involved attendance. There are two members each from the HNCLT, the Trinidad Museum Society, library building committee, and the City Trinidad appointed to the committee. This group deals with coordination of the projects including joint costs and designs and meets on a monthly basis, or as needed. HNCLT chairs the meetings. We are currently working on trying to integrate the projects so they complement each other and look like one facility instead of three. This has been a challenging year with these projects, but they are moving forward. The Trinidad Museum Society is going first with moving a historic building from next to the Marine Lab to the property and then building the foundation underneath. The next project to break ground will probably be the road. Each of these projects are in the fund raising mode and we are expecting the community will step up to support them.

### **Moonstone Beach**

We own a public access easement on the ocean side of the gravel parking lot at Moonstone Beach. Sam Merryman owns the beach house and the gravel area of the parking lot. Humboldt County owns the paved part of the parking lot. We had some issues with the entire area of the gravel parking lot being reserved for beach house events on several occasions which effectively blocked our public access for parking. We have been in discussion with Sam as well as the people who lease the beach house and the problem seems to have been solved. In the process we learned that we have lost a significant portion of our easement to erosion. Sam Merryman, as the property owner, is responsible for maintaining the parking lot and we cannot do any work there without his permission. We are hoping get his permission to help with grading of the parking lot before the winter rains come this year.

Also, Humboldt County recently approved the final version of the Clam and Moonstone Beach Master Plan. We gave our input on the plan and are pleased with the final version. As part of the plan, the County has agreed that dogs must be on leashes at Moonstone Beach except for the wave slope area (the wet sand). This beach is heavily used and dogs have been problematic there. If you use this beach and are a dog owner, or know people with dogs there, please encourage them to obey this rule and to pick up after their dogs. We especially want to discourage surfers from leaving their dogs unattended on the beach while they go surfing. Dogs off leash on the wave slope must be under the direct control of their owners and that is not possible when one is surfing.

### **Baker Beach and Houda Point**

We inspected the beaches in the spring and made a note to repair the steps at the bottom of the trails. We removed a downed tree from the Houda Point trail. With the changes in the California Conservation Core (CCC) funding and subsequent reduction in work force,

we are having trouble scheduling this maintenance of these trails which have traditionally been done by CCC. We plan on creating a work party to attend to the trails before the winter storms. Also, at Houda Point we took our old weathered sign down, after much struggling with rusted screws, and replaced it with a backup copy we had which is looks better and easy to read. Also we have reported the vandalism to BLM of the interpretative sign they installed there last year.

### **Baker Ranch Timber Easement**

Several items came up at Baker Ranch this year. After a tree fell in the New Year's Eve storm, there was an inquiry into whether that was our tree. It wasn't. We also were notified that not all the owners of property at Timber Ranch knew that HNCLT owed the timber rights to the trees, so we sent a copy of the legal document to the property owners association. Also, a property is being developed there which required two large trees to be cut. We gave our approval for that and if there is any profit after the trees were sold, we will receive it

### **Web Page**

The [www.hnclt.org](http://www.hnclt.org) web page to be moved to a new hosting location and we are working on updating it.

### **Replogle Easement - Wagner Street Trail**

In mid-2005, the California Coastal Commission, The City of Trinidad and John Frame agreed that Mr. Frame who owns the property would keep a four-foot wide unimpeded path on the easement. In fall 2005, three posts appeared in the easement, causing users to have to weave between them. We requested that Mr. Frame remove them. He refused. He said someone vandalized the landscaping on his property in the easement area and the posts represent where the vegetation was and they will remain there until the vegetation grows back. He threatened legal action if we were to remove them. We decided that we did not want to get into any more legal wrangling with him which is very expensive and felt that our best plan of action was not to take any action unless he blocks the public access so that it is not accessible at all. We also sent a letter to the State Attorney General and the City of Trinidad regarding the posts. Both were unresponsive.

Martin Creek Trail – It has been in the works for some time for HNCLT to accept a public access easement for the Martin Creek Trail. Jeannine Martin the owner of the property is subdividing it and has created an environmentally friendly subdivision. She has put much time, effort and money into the project and really cares about the land. This trail is also referred to locally as the Secret Beach and No Hunting Beach and is off of Stage Coach Road. This trail is intended for use as a local neighborhood trail as it is a very small beach and there is nowhere nearby for parking. HNCLT does not plan to make any improvements to the trail and there will be restrictions on its use which will be posted on a sign on the trail. The Coastal Commission required that this public access easement be created as a condition for subdivision of the property. The plan is in the final stages of being approved by the Coastal Commission, and we hope to have the easement conveyed to HNCLT by this October.

### **Strategic Planning**

We had second strategic planning meeting this summer to assess what we have accomplished in the past year and what we want to accomplish in the coming year. It was productive meeting. We are using the Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices a guideline to strengthen or organization. We are members of the Land Trust Alliance, a national umbrella organization for land trusts. One small but significant task we accomplished was to go through the land trust files and create one filing system. We also created strategic plan objectives and reviewed our statement of purpose and goals. Two things we would like to accomplish this year is create a policy for selecting new holdings and to write management plans for each of our holdings.

### **Strawberry Rock**

Strawberry Rock, *not* one of our holdings, in on Green Diamond property north of Trinidad. We were asked by members of the community to inquire about the possibility of Strawberry Rock on being quarried. We talked with Neal Ewald of Green Diamond Timber Company and he has assured us that there are no plans to quarry Strawberry Rock now or in the future and that the community can rest assured that this will not happen. A small rock formation next to Strawberry was quarried which is where the rumors may have started from.

### **Pilot Rock**

We inspected Pilot Rock in spring. This is a property we own which does not have public access. It is above Moonstone Beach to the west. A lot of trees fell during the New Year's Eve storm which have blocked much of the access road.

### **Potential Future Holding**

We had an inquiry regarding a forested property in the area and we are in contact with the land owner regarding the possibility of an easement or donation of the part of the property.

### **Annual General Meeting – Thursday, September 28, 2006, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.**

This year our general meeting is scheduled for a Thursday evening instead of a Sunday afternoon. Jennifer Rice, Program Manager for the Natural Resources Services Division of Redwood Community Action Agency, who is a member of the Humboldt Trails Trust is very involved with active living (HumPAL - Humboldt Partnership for Active Living), She just completed a study about the condition of rural roads in regards to pedestrian, equestrian, and bicyclist safety, and how to design rural roads to make them more alternative transportation friendly. She will talk at the annual general meeting on about HumPAL. We will also review HNCLT activities over the past year and present an annual Treasurer's report. There will be refreshments after the program.