



The mission of the Humboldt Trails Council is to serve as a unified voice to support development, maintenance and use of trails for recreation and transportation throughout Humboldt County

VIRTUAL!
TRAILS SUMMIT

Trail updates with local experts and Senator Mike McGuire



Saturday • June 5, 2021
9:00 am - 11:00 am

Tune in via Access Humboldt or register for Zoom link at humtrails.org or HTC on Facebook

Submit questions to TrailsSummit@humtrails.org

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Volunteer Focus: Stan Wong

by Rees Hughes



Stan and his faded blue Ford Taurus are fixtures at virtually every Eureka workday. His car serves as a mobile tool shed typically filled with plastic bags for green waste, water jugs for the thirsty plants we are trying to keep alive, weeding tools, a shovel, gloves, and more. I generally found that if I needed something for a VTS workday task, the solution would often be in that Taurus.

In the early 80s, Stan moved north from Los Angeles to attend HSU but it wasn't until 2008 when he responded to an article in the Times-Standard about a Keep Eureka Beautiful tree-planting that his local volunteering found focus. "At the end of the day," Stan remembers, "I asked if there was someone to water the trees through the summer. Next thing I know I had a brand new 100-foot hose and a water key." When the Hikshari' Volunteer Trail Steward program began Stan attended. "It was cold and damp. I kept coming back for more," Stan told me (those that know Stan will recognize his dry sense of humor). Since then, he has joined the Wharf Trail group and is a regular Waterfront Trail North and WIGI wetlands volunteer. But Hikshari' remains his favorite. In particular, the copse of trees planted along that trail between Truesdale and Hilfiker.

When I asked Stan about what he gets from his volunteer efforts and why he would encourage others to join, he told me that, "the Volunteer Trail Stewards have a lot less arguing and 'one up-manship' than other community volunteering groups. I go for the activity, the exercise, the nice people on the trail (and the stories they share), and the satisfaction of seeing progress at the end of a couple of hours of work."

We ended our conversation with a lightning round of questions. I've underlined his answers: High tide or Low tide. VTS Vest or VTS Hat. Rain or Wind. Donuts or Fig bars.

Thank you, Stan, for all that you do.

Rees Hughes walked his way through some of the most stunning regions on Earth — from the top of Kilimanjaro to the arid interior of Australia, from the pilgrimage route up Sri Pada in Sri Lanka to the picturesque Cornish coast, from the Himalayas to the Andes — but has found little that compares with the magic of the Klamath Knot. Co-editor of The Pacific Crest Trailside Readers and author of a guide to Humboldt County walks, Rees serves as a volunteer trail steward coordinator, and an advocate for the Humboldt Bay Trail.

Rees retired from a career in higher education after more than three decades at Humboldt State University, Seattle University, and the University of Kansas.

Toddler Bike Trailer Outing

by Jonathan Maiullo

First thing in the morning, the bike trailer is a bit clunky coming down the apartment stairs, but they're making bike trailers lightweight these days so it's really more awkward than tiring to get everything set up. My daughter is surprisingly interested in getting in. Normally, at two, she resists anything my wife and I suggest, but today she climbs in the trailer with her stuffed animals, ready for the road. My wife leans over to stuff a few snacks and a drink in with the stuffed animals. We're only going a mile or two from here, but with two-year-olds, well, it's best to be sure all bases are covered.

That's the great thing, though. In Arcata, no matter where we start from, there's a trailhead nearby and all these trailheads lead to quite different landscapes and, with a toddler, conversations.

That's the best thing about two-year-olds, they might not sleep, but they're curious about everything.

When we go downtown, we have to stop and inspect every water meter—I made the mistake showing her that they open once and now every one could potentially hold another salamander, so we have to check. When we go to the forest, we have to climb up every stump and look down into it. Every fallen tree is a bridge that must be crossed. And in the dunes, well, in the dunes, my daughter likes to just sit down and play in the sand thank-you-very-much. We usually have to coax her down to the ocean. Of course, once there, she's content to investigate every piece of flotsam that drifts up to her.

This morning, we're biking through the marsh and the light is on the ponds that the upper portion of the Humboldt Bay trail wends through. All is quiet in the trailer behind me and I can't tell if this is because my daughter is appreciating the view as much as I am or if she's discovered those snacks—probably a little of both.

It's early so, apart from a few joggers, the marsh is empty of people, but there are birds out everywhere and the wild radish along the path is blooming, coming alongside South G St., the view opens up and we have the low coastal mountains before us, partially subsumed in bands of fog. Out along the bay, the birds are louder. I wish I knew what they were; I keep meaning to go on one of those Audubon walks, but, well, with a two-year-old, I think we'd

all be hearing more of her than the marsh wren or the Virginia rail.

I'd like to ride all morning, but when we arrive at the viewing platform, I know it's time for a break. Somehow, my daughter has managed to kick off a shoe and we have to secure that before she gets out. At some point my wife or I made the mistake of showing her that fennel was edible and within a few minutes, she's got half a plant in her mouth and the other half in her hand. You couldn't get that kid to eat greens at the table if you covered them in chocolate, but out here, it's different. Luckily, a strong will for independence has some good qualities. Without really thinking, I rip off some fennel and munch away, too. It doesn't go half bad with the coffee we brought.

We have our requisite bridge walking and throwing rocks into the water. "Someone dropped a shoe in there!" my daughter exclaims. We jump from bench to bench and go back for more fennel. Even with the traffic behind us, it's quiet. We're surrounded kind of landscape that's so varied in features, it's hard to stay with one; our views glance from object to object, feature to feature.

After a while, it seems we'll leave. The sun has risen over the mountains. We've taken off our layers and other bikes on the trail have become more numerous, but still we linger on, waiting perhaps until we've exhausted the richness of the scene, but each time I begin to feel ready to get back on the bike, my daughter finds something, my wife picks up the conversation or my eyes snag on some other feature between mountains and bay and, like my daughter in the dunes, must be coaxed away.

It's not until the snacks are exhausted and the sun high overhead that we consider returning home, even then, I joke, there's plenty of fennel to sustain us.

The ride back, as you could expect is drowsy, languorous and the bike trailer is heavy with the weight of a sleeping two-year-old. My wife and I exchange looks, we turn back and take the opportunity to ride down to the end of the trail.

Jonathan (Jonny) Maiullo realized the utility of bike trails at the young age of 11 when riding to the mall for the first time in his hometown of Jackson, Michigan. After nearly being run off the road on busy street, the young Maiullo stopped into the township offices and requested a bike path be put in. While this plan never reached fruition, Maiullo has made extensive use of trails elsewhere. In Armenia, he hiked the janapar trail in the Artsakh region; in Thailand, he followed a trail on the island of Koh Tao to discover an abandoned resort hidden in the jungle and in the US he through-hiked the Appalachian Trail in 2016.

Maiullo is currently an associate English Professor at The College of the Redwoods. When biking from his Arcata home to work, he makes use of the Humboldt Bay Area's extensive trail network and eagerly anticipates the conclusion of the Bay Trail.

Great Redwood Trail (GRT) Update

by Bruce Silvey



Now that the State review of the North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA) has been completed, and the California Transportation Commission has signed-off on NCRA's plan to pass the southern part of their line to SMART for rail-with-trail, and the northern part to a new Great Redwood Trail Agency, things are starting to pickup speed.

Senator Mike McGuire introduced SB 69 this year to mandate these transfers and close the NCRA by July 1, 2022. This Bill recently passed the Senate Transportation Committee without opposition, and now heads to the Senate Appropriations Committee. HTC provided a letter of support for this first hearing and will continue to support its progress through the legislative process.

NCRA hired a nationally known railbanking attorney, Charles Montange, and voted on February 18, 2021 to begin the process to railbank the NCRA corridor from Willits to Samoa and Korbel. On March 9, 2021 Mr. Montange filed the preliminary Environmental and Historic Reports with the federal Surface Transportation Board (STB) for the NCRA.

These extensive reports, more than 100 pages in total, include substantial documentation in support of the STB finding that they still have jurisdiction over the Annie & Mary line to Korbel. If the STB concurs, and grants NCRA's railbanking request that will be filed this May, all of the NCRA corridor north of Willits, including branches to Korbel, Samoa, and Carlotta, will be protected for future rail use and available for interim trail use.

HTC was selected as one of three nonprofit agencies, along with thirty federal, state, and county agencies to review these reports. Friends of the Eel River (FOER), and the national Rails-to-Trails Conservancy both filed supportive comments with the STB regarding the NCRA reports and upcoming railbanking request. FOER believes that railbanking the corridor, especially through the Eel River Canyon, is the best chance to clean up a century of environmental damage that has been done to the river by the railroads.

Two local trail projects on the NCRA right-of-way need the railbanking to be granted in order to proceed. The first is a Humboldt County project referred to as the Final Four (miles) that will close the gap between Arcata's Humboldt Bay North Trail at Bracut and the Eureka Waterfront Trail at the Eureka Slough trestle behind Target. The second is an extension of the Waterfront Trail across the Elk River trestle to Humboldt Hill. Currently the only access to Humboldt Hill for bicyclists and pedestrians is on the Highway 101 freeway.

On Tuesday May 11 the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors will address the staff request from the Department of Public Works to send a letter supporting the railbanking of the NCRA corridor in Humboldt County to the NCRA for them to include in their STB request. This letter will also include the concerns the County expects the new trail agency to address if the railbanking request is granted.

If railbanking is granted, development of the GRT connecting Blue Lake, Arcata, Eureka, King Salmon, College of the Redwoods, Loleta, Fortuna, Rio Dell, and Scotia are expected to be in the first phase of construction. Please let your Supervisor know how important this railbanking and Great Redwood Trail is to you personally.

Bruce Silvey is a mostly retired Marriage and Family Therapist who has lived on a small working sheep ranch an hour east of Eureka for forty years. For the last twenty years he and his wife Leslie have traveled around the US riding rails-to-trails. Captivated by the history, tunnels, trestles, and virtually flat trails that take you from town to town, Bruce joined the HTC Board in 2018 to help convert our unused railroad corridor to a trail everyone could enjoy. His current passion is the development of the Great Redwood Trail.

His favorite local trails are the Eureka Waterfront Trail and the Bay Trail North, both of which will become part of the Great Redwood Trail if all goes well.

Ted Humphry's Trail Notes From Redwood National and State Parks Pure and Unfiltered Observations From the Trail

Bald Hills, Lyons Ranch Home Place, Long Ridge Sheep Shed

Good Morning . . .

I parked at the Lyons Ranch Trailhead and walked to Home Place, then to the Long Ridge Sheep Shed, and back up to the parking area. Then I drove up to the Schoolhouse Lookout, before returning to SOC.

Bald Hills Road, beyond Williams Ridge, where it is gravel and dirt roadbed, is drivable in any vehicle, but it is best with 4 wheel drive due to moderate washboarding on inclines. I encountered a couple dozen vehicles with people visiting the lupine bloom.



The **trails (roads)** at **Lyons Ranch** to Home Place and the Long Ridge Sheep Shed are easily passable.

What else is blooming on Lyons Ranch? Miniature lupine, of course.



A new iris I first noticed this trip.



Fernald's Iris is only a foot tall. Also, one of the apple trees was in bloom.



And there were a bunch of tiny specimens, like these johnny-tuck flowers, only 2 inches tall at the most.



Most of the afternoon there was some Air Force dude (or dudette) high in the sky, silently flying (to us on the ground) in curved linear patterns.



Wonder how many tons of CO₂ were released into the troposphere this afternoon.

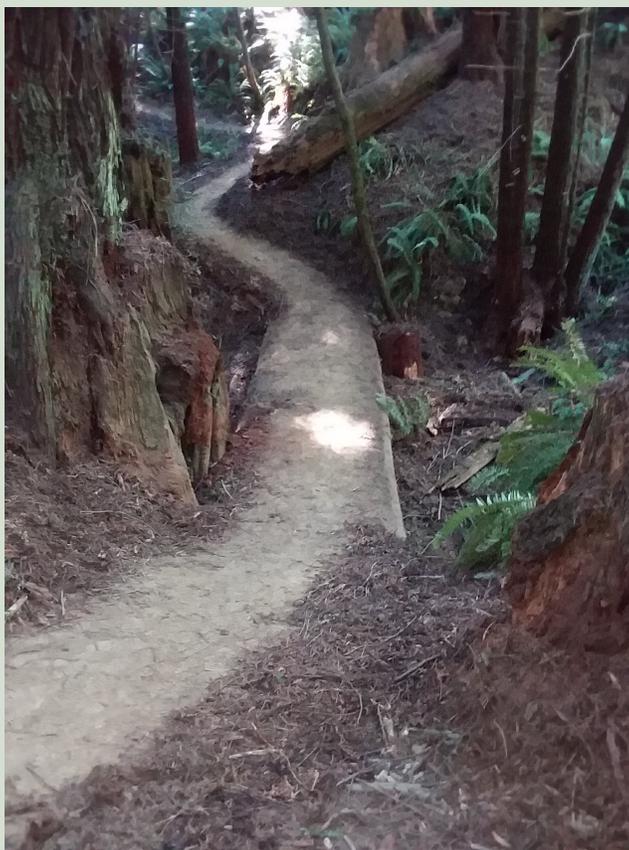


Looking east from Schoolhouse Peak, I was surprised to see this much snow on the Trinity Alps in this dry year.

Ted

Ted is a retired pediatrician who volunteers at Redwood National and State Parks. See and hear Ted talk about the new Centennial Trail at our Trails Summit on June 5th!

McKay Community Forest Call for Volunteers



Thank you for your interest and enthusiasm in supporting trail development for the County of Humboldt's McKay Community Forest. This summer the County plans to commence trail construction and to mobilize a McKay Volunteer Trail Crew to directly support the development of the community forest trail network.

The County will be forming **volunteer trail crews starting in mid-July to work Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays throughout the summer.** Workdays will be from 9am to 2pm (including lunch). **If you have prior trail experience and availability, please let us know your interest and relative availability** (a couple days a month, every other Tuesday, three days a week, etc). Please contact Dennis Houghton at dbhedm@gmail.com with your interest. All Covid precautions will be in place with [logistical details to come soon.](#)

More information about the McKay Community Forest can be found at the County's webpage at <https://humboldt.gov/org/1808/McKay-Community-Forest>.

Thank you again for being a part of shaping the McKay Community Forest to benefit our community for generations to come.

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OUR MISSION

The mission of the Humboldt Trails Council is to serve as a unified voice to support development, maintenance and use of trails for recreation and transportation throughout Humboldt County

OUR VISION

The Humboldt Trails Council envisions a well-maintained network of accessible community pathways traveled by walkers and riders of all abilities, ages and means in the pursuit of unfettered kinetic joy. We are advocates, educators, and coordinators working to enhance the county's active transportation and recreation options, community wellbeing, economic vitality, visitor captivation and appreciation of open spaces.



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