



The Humboldt Trails Council serves as a unified voice to support development, maintenance, connection to, and use of trails for recreation and transportation throughout Humboldt County, California.

Volunteer Profile: Rachael Garcia

By Rees Hughes

We wanted to make sure that trail supporters and users throughout Humboldt County were introduced to Rachael Garcia, who serves as the Volunteer Trail Steward (VTS) Coordinator. Since late summer, Rachael has been a regular presence at volunteer workdays as well as working behind the scenes in her office at the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center.

But Rachael's interest in trails and the outdoors long predated her involvement with the VTS program. As a youngster growing up in rural San Diego County, she remembers helping her father construct a trail on their 8-acre property. In high school she served as a regular volunteer at nearby Cuyamaca Rancho State Park in addition to being a docent at the Chula Vista Nature Center. When she headed off to college it was to study Environmental Science, a journey that brought her to the College of the Redwoods and eventually to HSU where she completed her degree.

I was struck in my conversation with Rachael just how passionate she was about Humboldt County and our access to nature. "I love it all so much," she exclaimed when I tried to pin her down to a few favorite Humboldt County places. Among them were Bull Creek, Strawberry Rock, Sue-meg State Park (formerly Patrick's Point), and the Arcata Community Forest that she frequents with her 5-year old daughter, Elynoir.



She brings that same commitment to trails and to the natural world to her vision for the VTS program. It is her goal to see the program expand its volunteer base and ensure that everyone in the community feels welcome. “All trail users should feel like they are trail stewards,” she observed. “It is more important than ever in these challenging COVID times that we all feel that sense of connection and empowerment.” In her first three months in the role of VTS Coordinator it has been “remarkable to see just how many people have banded together around love of the outdoors and community,” Rachael observed. She noted just how

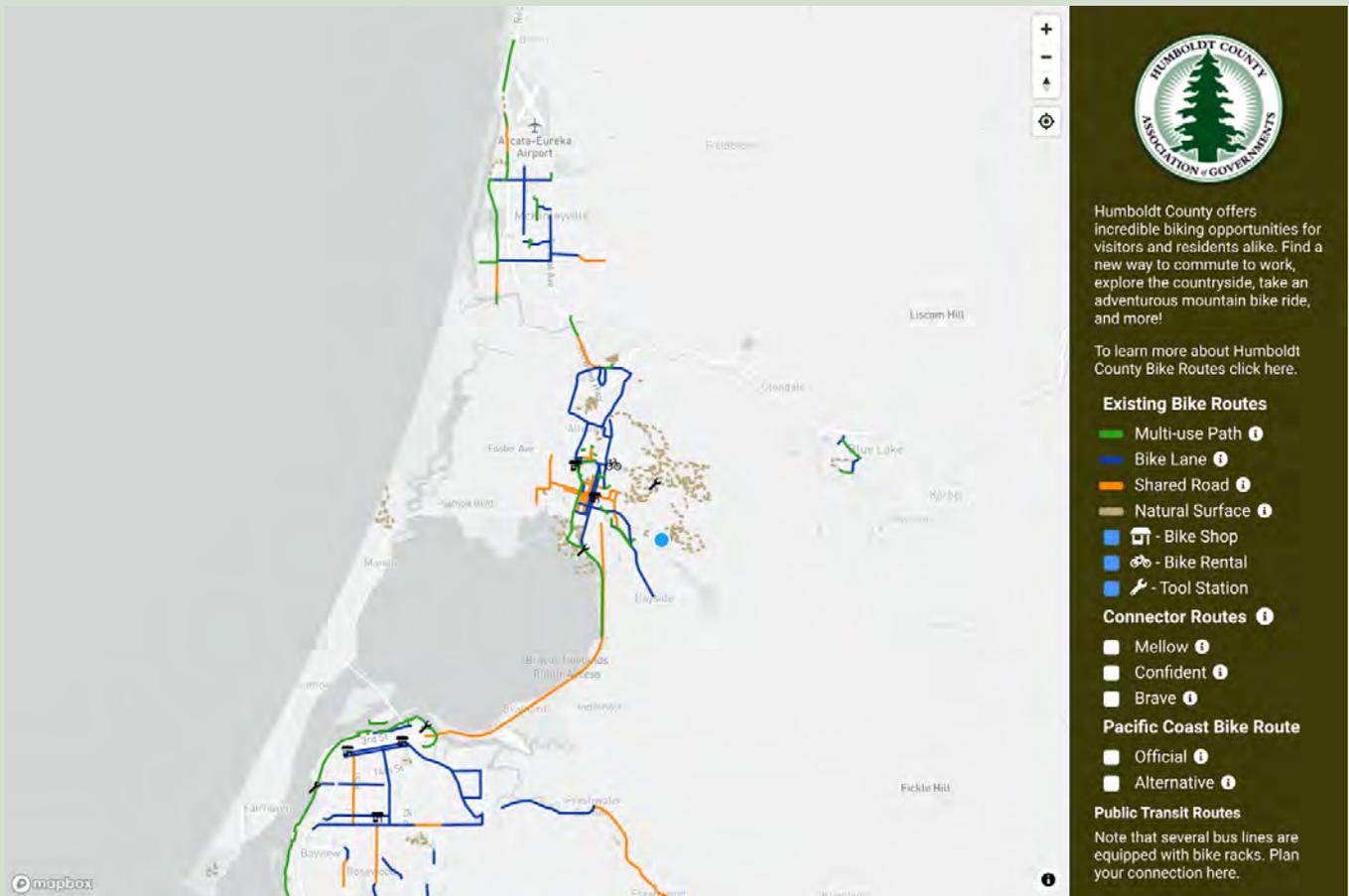
important it was to acknowledge the incredible contributions of the many devoted volunteers.

We are so grateful to have Rachael playing the lead role with the VTS team. My own observation is that she brings a wonderful positive, can-do spirit to her position and is quickly defining the role with her upbeat and responsive approach. Welcome Rachael!

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.

New Humboldt Bay Area Bicycle Map

The Humboldt County Association of Governments has put out a new online interactive and mobile-friendly bike map! Linked [here](#) with a screenshot below:



HUMBOLDT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

Humboldt County offers incredible biking opportunities for visitors and residents alike. Find a new way to commute to work, explore the countryside, take an adventurous mountain bike ride, and more!

To learn more about Humboldt County Bike Routes click here.

Existing Bike Routes

- Multi-use Path
- Bike Lane
- Shared Road
- Natural Surface
- Bike Shop
- Bike Rental
- Tool Station

Connector Routes

- Mellow
- Confident
- Brave

Pacific Coast Bike Route

- Official
- Alternative

Public Transit Routes

Note that several bus lines are equipped with bike racks. Plan your connection here.

Coal Trains Threaten Great Redwood Trail

By Karen Underwood



Photo by Karen Underwood

Would you like to be walking on the trail beside Humboldt Bay smelling the salt air and enjoying the fine view, or would you like to be walking on the same trail and have 100 rail cars releasing toxic coal dust pass you by? You can have an impact on this outcome. Visit [No Coal In Humboldt](#)

This summer the Humboldt Trails Council joined a growing coalition of business, community, environmental, faith, and health groups across the North Coast that believe in the power of clean energy and the value of clean water. The coalition opposes restoration of freight traffic through the Eel River Canyon because of its unique combination of geological instability and biological sensitivity. Coal is the only commodity with sufficient volume to repay the multi-billion-dollar expense of restoring the rail line. This would be the end of the Great Redwood Trail.

For the last four years the Humboldt Trails Council has been strong advocates of the Great Redwood Trail sponsored by Senator Mike McGuire. The Senator and his allies have spent years transitioning the North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA) into a trail agency. Recently, after much preparation, the NCRA requested

that the Surface Transportation Board (STB) support the railbanking of the corridor north of Willits and approve the construction of an interim trail, the Great Redwood Trail. Railbanking is the only way to keep this right-of-way intact without an active railroad.

The brakes were put on this process when the newly formed North Coast Railroad Company, LLC (not to be confused with the NCRA) filed with the STB on Aug 16 in opposition to the railbanking. Instead, they want to run their toxic trains from the Bay Area through the Eel River Canyon to a terminal on Humboldt Bay. This new railroad company is associated with the coal companies in Utah, Montana, and Wyoming. According to the documents filed by their law firm with the STB, they have \$1.2 billion in funding behind them, and they expect to have “high-volume shipments”. Their goal is to ship the coal to Asia out of a terminal in Humboldt Bay.

Why Humboldt Bay, which would require major dredging and retrofitting to accommodate a bulk transfer terminal to load coal onto huge ships? These same coal shipments have been blocked by six ports on the west coast between Coos Bay, Oregon and Bellingham, Washington. Their last appeal was against the Washington State Department of Ecology permit denial for an export dock on the grounds that it would cause “irreparable and unavoidable” harm to the environment. The appeal of this denial was dismissed by the US Supreme Court in June of this year.

We need to take action!!! Please visit [No Coal In Humboldt](#), scroll down to “Take Action” and sign up to receive updates and opportunities to stand up against coal and its health effects in your community.

Karen Underwood is a Humboldt Trails Council Boardmember. Her bio is found [here](#).

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

10/22/2021 - Mill Creek Trail to the Grove of Titans, Nickerson Ranch Trail, and Klamath Overlook

Hello -

My sister, Carol, visiting from Malawi, wanted to walk in the redwoods. We parked along Howland Hill Road close to the Mill Creek Trail, and walked to the Grove of Titans (GOT), around the new elevated "boardwalk", and back to the vehicle. Then we drove to the Nickerson Ranch Trailhead and walked to Mill Creek and back. Then drove to the Klamath Overlook.

Howland Hill Road remains passable in any vehicle. We were surprised, coming from the Hiouchi end of

the road, to find significant water standing on the bridge over Mill Creek



However, a couple of hours later the water was gone, and there were shovel marks in the thin mud on the deck around the low spot on the left side near the center of the span. I suspect there was a clogged drain that was cleared.

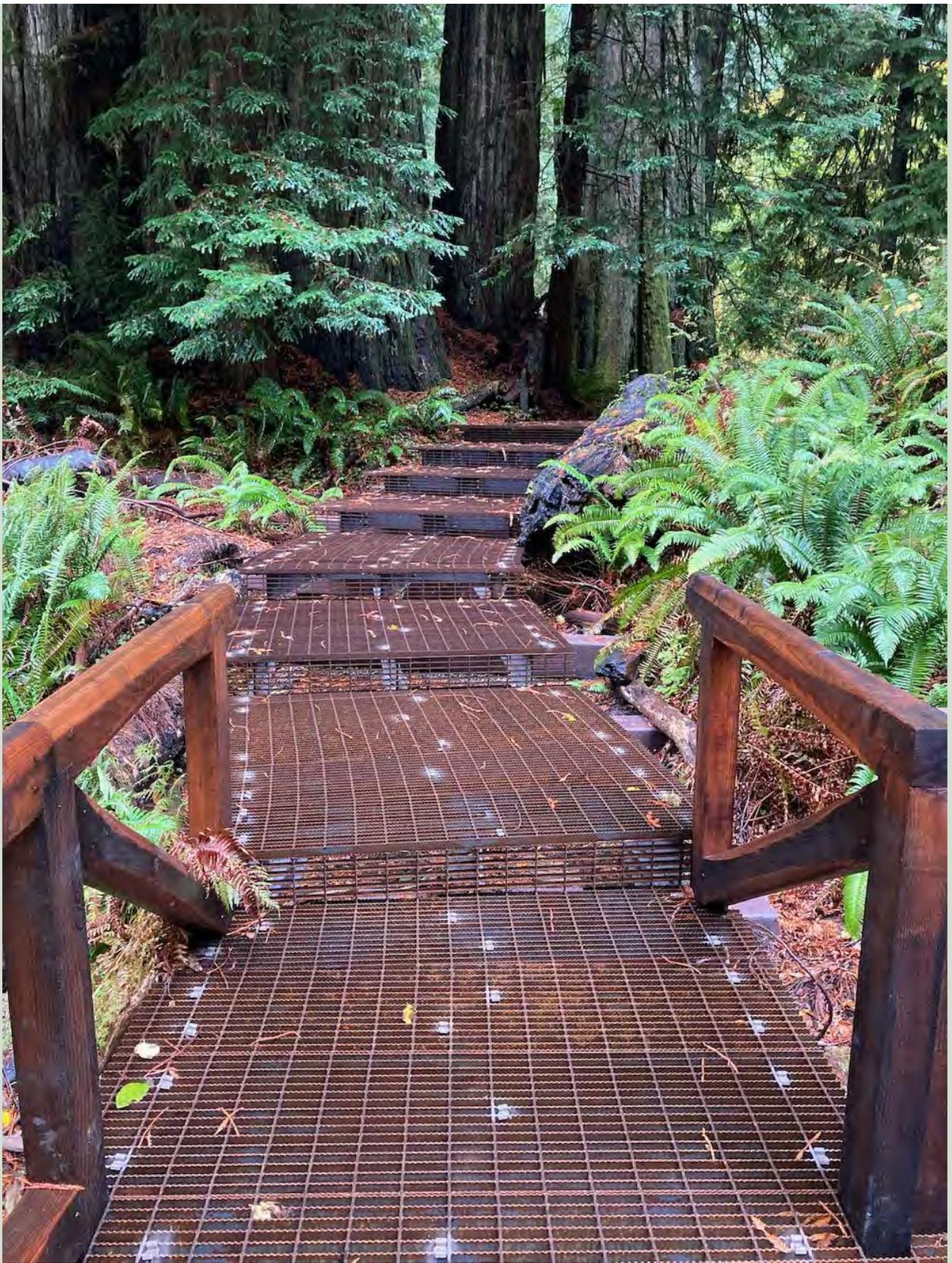
The NEW! Mill Creek Trail from Howland Hill Road to the GOT is beautiful and easily passable.

The Nickerson Ranch Trail is passable with a couple of step-over or around obstructions.

If you haven't been to the GOT yet, you have to go. The trail going in is aggregate tread all the way and features the newest , recycled plastic cribbing and beams, and slip proof metal deck bridge design.



And in the GOT there is nothing slippery or wooden about the 1300 foot "boardwalk".



And the trees in the GOT are, of course, spectacular.





The upgraded Mill Creek Trail from GOT to the Hiouchi Trail and summertime bridge to Jed Smith Campground has yet to be completed.



Hopefully, it will be done by next summer. No wonder this is a multi-million dollar project.

On the trail and in the grove we encountered perhaps a dozen other parties on this drippy Friday in October.



On the Nickerson Ranch Trail there is a walk along tunnel log.



if you are less than 36 inches tall.



On this hazy day at the Klamath Overlook, it was hard to find the river outlet across the sandbar.



It's at the very southern end of the sandbar, where the surf looks like it touches the bluff.



11/11/2021 - Tall Trees

I parked at TT trailhead, walked to the grove, around the loop a couple of times, onto the gravel bars at the north and south edges of the grove, and back to the vehicle.

The TT access road remains drivable in any vehicle with short sections of mild or moderate washboarding. There are a few chuckholes in the 6 mile dirt/gravel road.

The TT Trail is passable with a single step-over/around obstruction.

The TT Loop is passable, but with a significant bigleaf maple on the trail.



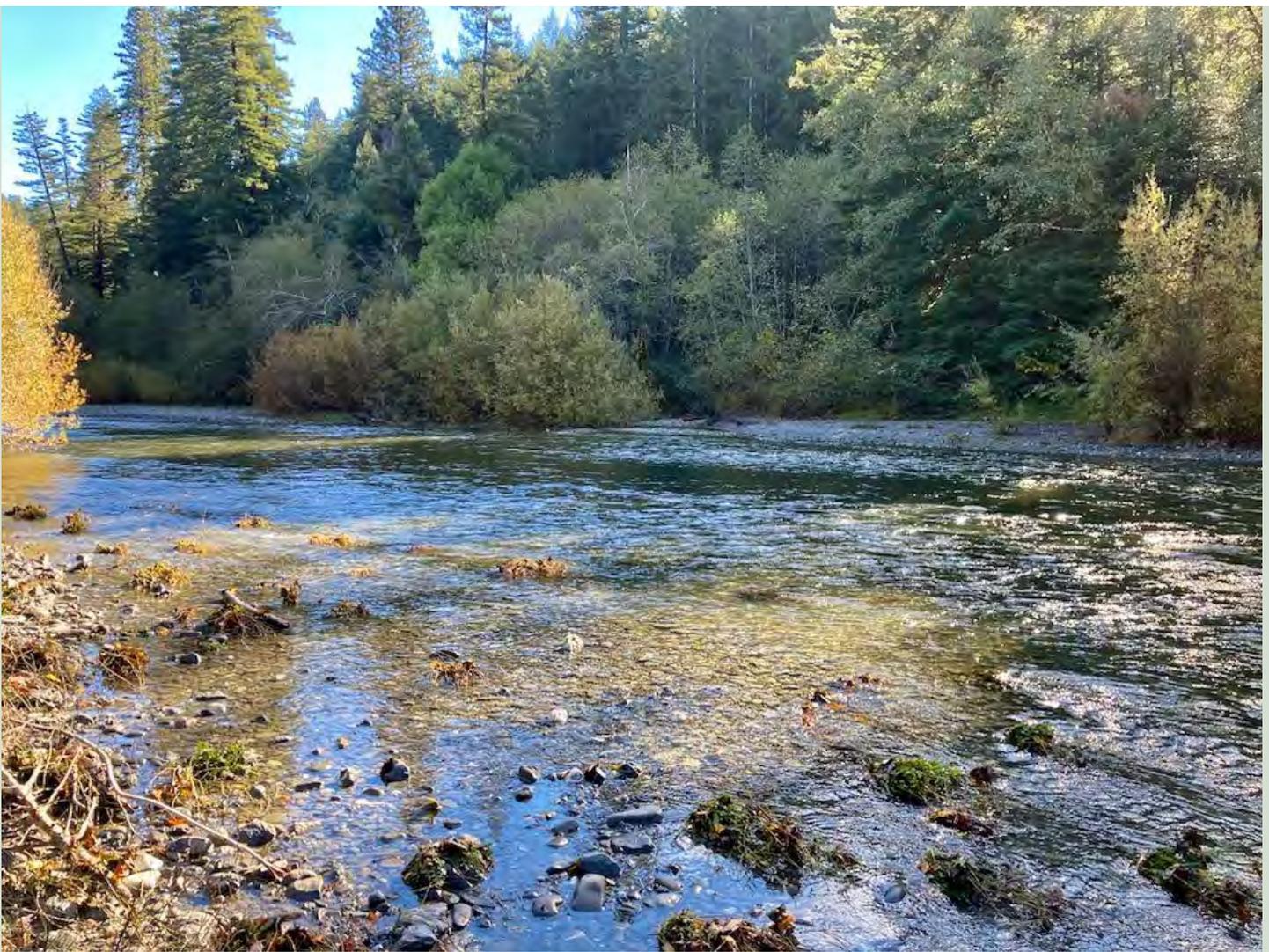


Anyone who signed up for the TT walk should be able to climb over or scoot under and around and through this obstruction lying on the trail.

In the coarse sand along Redwood Creek at the downstream end of the grove, I found a set of large bear tracks







Tom McDonald Creek enters Redwood Creek on the far bank in the center of this photograph.

Ted is a retired pediatrician who volunteers at Redwood National and State Parks.

Volunteer Stories

Here, in their own words, are tales of two of our Volunteer Trail Stewards.

Setting

How the Humboldt Trails Council and volunteer trail stewards, along with Redwood Community Action Agencies Natural Resources Services Division helped the county and the community move beyond the Hammond Trail to a county wide trail network

Story

For years it was difficult to get the counties support for new trails for one very good reason. Lack of funding for Operation and Maintenance (O&M). When RCAA and other community volunteers worked to form that council a light at the end of the trail began to appear. The Trail Stewards program was that light.

By providing the organizational support for the stewards and needed liability coverage, the volunteers are able to donate their time to help the county, cities, and land trusts to help maintain the many trails all over the county. This has changed everything, and with an impressive track record of dedicated volunteers hours and hours of valued work is getting done.

The number of trails in Humboldt are growing every year and that is in no small part due to the dedication of the Humboldt Trails Council and its cadre of volunteers. Keep on trekking volunteers! You are making it possible for the completion of many more trails for our communities. Happy Trails. Sunnome

Steve Madrone

County of Humboldt

I have been working as a VTS on the Hammond Trail since the very first work day. I still walk the trail most every day and continue to clean up graffiti, mow, trim etc. not only on the 1st Saturday of the month but often in between. I am regularly cleaning graffiti and my rough count is over 1,000 tags removed or covered in the last decade. It could be more. A couple summers ago, there were taggers that tagged the kiosk and several trail signs every night. I cleaned them the next day. They finally tagged the kiosk at the head of the Hammond Trail at Murray Road with a huge tag that said "WE WILL NOT BE STOPPED." As I was turning the corner off Kelly Avenue on my way to work at 7 a.m. and was in my coat and tie, I saw that tag, I stopped and went back to my home and went back and wiped that tag out. There were no new tags for more than a month after that.

Unfortunately, tags continue and on my walk this morning at 6:30 a.m., I saw at least 7. They will be cleaned up this afternoon, August 21.

Regards

Tom Schallert

Humboldt Trails Council's Annual Report

This year we're presenting our Annual Report as a web page! Please click [here](#) to read the report:



Time-Standard Article on the Volunteer Trail Stewards

[Enhancing local trails – Times-Standard](#)

Read about the Volunteer Trail Stewards and last month's celebratory events in our local daily newspaper!



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You will have the opportunity to choose the direction of your charitable donation by entering an organization's name in the lower right box. Type in Humboldt Trails Council and AmazonSmile will support our trails work with their contribution.

OUR MISSION

The Humboldt Trails Council serves as a unified voice to support development, maintenance, connection to, and use of trails for recreation and transportation throughout Humboldt County, California.

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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