

# OUR GREEN LEGACY

## The Case for Open Space!

by Michael "Bug" Deakin

**B**e Proud, Sonoma County! You, the resident voters of this county, have just helped add an Emerald Gem in the string of crown jewels that make up the Green Corona of Sonoma!

Sonoma Land Trust has acquired the Jenner Headlands. These 5,630 acres of spectacular coastal property embrace the Pacific Ocean just north of the Russian River. Included are 1,500 acres of coastal prairie, 3,100 acres of Redwood and Douglas fir forest, and three spawning streams for steelhead trout.

The area is a haven for rare species, including northern spotted owls and California red-legged frogs. Peregrine Falcons, Hawks and Ospreys ride the wind over the prairie, and Mountain Lions, Cougars, Coyotes and Badgers call this piece of earthly delight home. There are more than 8 miles of pristine streams gurgling through the Russian and Jenner Gulches.

I recently spent a Sunday with Brook Edwards, Project Manager for Jenner Headlands, touring this dramatic property and identifying the reusable materials to be gleaned from the first round of clean up. Heritage Salvage wants to help the agency prepare the property for Public Access.

In addition to money raised by the Sonoma Land Trust and our Open Space District, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Coastal Estuarine Land Conservation Program, California State Coastal Conservancy, Wildlife Conservation Board, U.S. Forest Service, Forest Legacy Program, Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, Wildlands Conservancy, Save the Redwoods

League and David, Lucile Packard Foundation and individual donors contributed funds.

To inquire or be updated regarding guided hikes to the headlands, email [jennerheadlands@sonomalandtrust.org](mailto:jennerheadlands@sonomalandtrust.org).

Financial support will be needed to maintain the Headlands. Please visit the Land Trust website at [sonomalandtrust.org](http://sonomalandtrust.org) or call 707.526.6930, extension 108.

In the words of the irreplaceable environmentalist Bill Kortum, who has held the positions of County Supervisor, Chairman of California Coastal Alliance and founder of Sonoma County Conservation Action to name a few, "Expressing the voters' green mandate, the Sonoma County electorate has used the ballot box to protect its coast, take control of land use in our community separators, establish voter control over urban growth boundaries around most of the cities, fund SMART rail, express concern for agriculture and our beautiful scenery by creating and twice financing the Open Space District and establish the scenic corridor and its rules below Petaluma. Sonoma County is receiving growing statewide recognition for what the voters' green mandate has accomplished."

In the early seventies, I was fortunate to spend some rambling afternoons and evenings with Chief Dan George. As the Chief shared his First Nation Peoples (that's what we call our Indigenous People in Canada) wisdom with me, there was a common thread amongst his teachings. "We did not inherit this land from our ancestors, we are caretaking it for our children!"

Well, Sonoma County, we have voted those very sentiments, and so far, the County

Supervisors have been diligent in carrying out our Green Voter Mandate, our Green Legacy if you will! We do, though, have a sticky wicket here in Petaluma, where the voters chose to designate a scenic corridor along Highway 101, the entrance to Sonoma County. Now there has been a thrash of wrangling and posturing to put an asphalt plant in that protected scenic corridor. That would take 5 zoning changes, and even though we voted by a supermajority (more than two-thirds) to protect that corridor, the Supervisors are still considering it! You can visit [saveschollenbergpark.com](http://saveschollenbergpark.com) to learn more!

The Asphalt Plant EIR says that we have three times more asphalt production than is needed in Sonoma County. Bill Kortum states that, in essence, the only jobs it would generate would be taken away from the other asphalt companies already present.

Santa Rosa and Petaluma voters can repeat their voter mandate in 2010 when urban growth boundaries will be on the ballot for renewal. Let us keep Sonoma County on the map as the greenest, open space, protected habitat, and careful growth area of this Nation!

Maybe, just maybe, we can figure out how to make jobs while we caretake these jewels in our midst. As the economic stimulus funds make their way around the nation, while CEOs still wheedle Golden Parachutes from companies that we taxpayers bought, and as State Parks start closing because the government has difficulty running their company -- maybe we can figure out how to make those Gems in our midst pay for themselves. I'm working on it -- any suggestions?



Wetlands below Shollenberger Park



Dutra operations



Jenner Headlands, looking southwest at Goat Rock and Russian River

**Open Space . . . Open heart . . .  
Open Tuesday-Saturday**

**1473 Petaluma Blvd S, Petaluma  
707.762.6277/[heritagesalvage.com](http://heritagesalvage.com)**

**Catch Bug on the Green Scene,  
Mondays at 7:30 AM on KRSH95.9**

