



**Bay Area Council Meeting
Saturday, January 9, 2016**

**Richardson Bay Audubon Center
Tiburon, CA
76 Greenwood Beach Road
Tiburon, CA 94920
<http://www.tiburonaudubon.org/>**

Attending:

Bill Hudson, Golden Gate Audubon
Tiffany Erickson, Madrone Audubon
Susan Kirks, Madrone Audubon
Barbara Salzman, Marin Audubon
Robin Leong, Napa-Solano Audubon
Ralph Schardt, Santa Clara Valley Audubon
Nelle Lyons, Sequoia Audubon
Janine Kraus, Audubon California
Mike Lynes, Audubon California (via Skype)
Ariana Rickard, Mt. Diablo Audubon/Audubon California
Kerry Wilcox, Audubon California

AGENDA

9:00 am Introductions and finalization of agenda

**9:15 am Conservation Actions for new IBAS
Kerry Wilcox, Audubon California**

San Leandro – IBA – global level for scaups and scoters. 9000 acres, fairly shallow.

Audubon's IBA Program: <http://web4.audubon.org/bird/iba/index.html>

Interactive map on California IBAs: <http://ca.audubon.org/conservation/california-iba-interactive-site-map>

**9:30am Land Acquisition
Barbara Salzman, Marin Audubon**

In mid-1980s, Marin Audubon mapped all of Baylands tidal marshes.

Some big properties have been donated, others have been bought on tax default. One strategy is to ask your tax assessor to give your chapter advance notice about tax default sales.

First land bought by chapter was Triangle Marsh, a tidal marsh. This piece has now been restored.

As a nonprofit, you don't have to pay property tax, but do have to pay parcel tax and are responsible for maintenance, insurance and restoration.

Funding has come from CA Coastal Commission, Coastal Conservancy, Cal Trans, private donations and other sources. Not as much success with big foundations.

The chapter's most expensive purchase was Bahia, 632 acres, \$16 million, acquired in 2003 – 2004. Restoration took place in 2008.

Some properties have been given to county, others to California Fish and Wildlife.

Chapter organizes volunteer stewards and work days. The chapter currently owns 500 acres and has purchased 1000 acres.

Most recent acquisition was five acre Corte Madera Ecological Reserve Expansion Project last August.

Joint benefits of protecting coastal wetlands – sea level rise protection and wildlife habitat.

Tips for dealing with unwilling seller:

- Outlive them
- Sit them out

**10:30am Baylands Parcel Tax
Janine Kraus, Audubon California**

40,000 acres of coastal wetlands are already in public hands. It will cost \$1.43 billion to restore and monitor these parcels.

SF Bay Restoration Authority is a regional government agency, like BART and the East Bay Regional Parks District. The Authority can collect fees like a parcel tax and then regrant funds for restoration. The SF Bay Restoration Authority has a website, governing board, and board of advisors: <http://sfbayrestore.org/>

Materials for the campaign on the Baylands Parcel Tax can be found on the website for People for a Clean and Healthy Bay: <http://peopleforacleanandhealthybay.org/>

The Baylands Parcel Tax will be on the primary ballot on June 7 in all nine Bay Area counties. To pass, there needs to be a cumulative 2/3 approval across all counties, or 553,000 votes to win based on estimate of likely voters.

It will probably be called measure AA, and there will be uniform language across all counties.

The measure would be for a \$12 per parcel tax. This would generate \$500 million over 20 years, 1/3 of what is needed for restoration of coastal wetlands in public hands. The money raised could also be used to leverage other funds for restoration.

11:00 am Legislative Updates
Mike Lynes, Audubon California

Climate change SB 32, an extension of AB32, has been turned into a two year bill.

Audubon California is focused on protecting biodiversity where the state is pushing hard for renewable energy. Currently looking for opportunities to push for distributed generation, so there is less need for giant projects and less transmission lines.

Promote geothermal energy around Salton Sea, and those funds could be invested in restoration and protection.

Another priority is protecting Humboldt Bay. 50% of eelgrass in California is in Humboldt Bay, and 60% of Brant population and 1/3 of Western Sandpipers use Humboldt Bay. Currently there is a proposal to expand oyster farming to 900 additional acres. Currently looking at legislative solutions to protect Humboldt Bay.

Wednesday, June 8 – Another Audubon chapter Lobby Day in Sacramento.

February 9th, 1-2pm, Chapter policy call, will hold every two months. 1-888-585-9008 and enter the room number 731-708-166.

11:15am AB 498 and Wildlife Corridors
Mike Lynes, Audubon California

Voluntary process, says that the policy of the state of California is to protect wildlife corridors. Some thing that should be considered in EIR. Could create mitigation opportunities.

11:30am Chapter Reports

Napa-Solano

Money for scholarships for students from Napa and Solano County junior college to foster careers in biology, ornithology specifically.

2 CBCs for Kids – Napa-Solano, 8 people with parents last year, 45 this year. Solano just started.

2 CBCs. Solano (includes Benicia) – 168 species and Angwin - 135 species. Included feeder watches. Talked to 13 companies in Christmas Count circle and received \$1000 donation from one company.

Chapter will hold a birdathon in April, the first one in a long time to fund interns and scholarship fund.

Now in the 4th year of the Sonoma County Breeding Bird Atlas.

Santa Clara Valley

New collaboration and cooperation with Audubon CA and National Audubon Society.

Ralph Schardt, Executive Director, started in October 2015.

Chapter is really active, but membership had been waning. Went through database and contacted old members who had not paid dues in awhile. Raised \$12,000 in December.

Eight – ten total CBCs, including some in Mount Hamilton, Morgan Hill, Gilroy, and Alviso.

Chapter would like to attract younger and more diverse members.

Golden Gate

CBCs: Oakland Count had the biggest number of participants, 300 people and received lots of press. SF Count – 16 teams, with about 160 people.

Chapter is partnering on bird-safe buildings with the American Bird Conservancy by providing seminars to architects, who receive credit for attending seminars.

Chapter also involved with County board approval process on Altamont Winds, Inc. siting proposal.

Golden Gate National Recreation Area Dog Management Plan will be released in a couple weeks.

Board is experiencing rapid turnover, as some members are terming out in June. Current plan is to amend bylaws to expand board.

Madrone

Petaluma Wetlands Alliance has decided to end its relationship with Madrone Audubon as of January 30, 2016. Madrone Audubon will no longer be fiscally sponsoring PWA. The decision derived from Madrone having addressed policies and procedures that are needed to ensure IRS compliance, and the subsequent vote of the Advisory Board of PWA to separate and pursue an independent path.

CBC in West Sonoma County – 85 participants. 174 species total. Almost the same as last year.

Chapter is co-sponsoring a screening of songbird film the Messenger on February 18 at a local independent theater in Santa Rosa. \$9 tickets, sold 63 tickets. This is not a fundraiser, but chapter will not lose money. Q & A panel discussion will follow the screening, with representatives from various organizations talking about issues that affects songbirds, like feral cats, and collisions (bird safe glass).

Cliff Swallows litigation - 3rd year of settlement - 2016 Caltrans says their only exclusion planned is nest scraping and pressure washing. The undersurface of the bridge and columns will be left open for nesting. But, a platform for worker-walking has been planned to be removed in the middle of a heavy nest construction and nest completion time by the swallows. Legal counsel sent a letter expressing concerns and requesting full exclusion of the new platform structure, independent unannounced monitoring visits by regulators and the Caltrans biological lead to observe the contracted biologists and the contractor, and a confirmation the platform would not be removed until the end of official nesting season. In addition, our legal counsel requested, again, a collaborative meeting at the end of the 2016 nesting season to affirm the actual end of nesting season with no active nests remaining, if any further demolition is planned or other construction activity that could negatively impact active nests. In 2015, Caltrans began demolition activities in the old southbound lane area the day after the planned for end of nesting season in our Settlement Agreement (end date August 16, they began on August 17). The CA DFW did nothing to stop this or cooperate with our protest that it appeared active nests still remained on the bridge and in that area at that time.

Phenology project – hope to being in Spring 2016. 7 avian species, including 3 hummingbird species, one mammal, and several plants are on the list for species to observe. We have 7 volunteers and hope to attract 2 or 3 more for this long-term project at the Paula Lane Nature Preserve, an 11.22 acre conserved property in West Petaluma. Susan Kirks will lead project.

Marin

3 CBCs, Point Reyes - 190 species. Cheep Thrills northern part of county. Southern Marin.

Group in Marin is opposed to the use of herbicides in natural areas.

Bicyclists want more trails in park used by 80 Spotted Owls.

Sequoia

2 CBCs. Crystal Springs - 190 species. Ano Nuevo 166 or 167 species

Popular birding spot Radio Road is open again.

Possibility of land acquisition in Foster City.

Mount Diablo

2 CBCs, East and Central Contra Costa County

Chapter is co-sponsoring a Walk and Talk with Assemblywoman Catharine Baker on February 27.

**12:45 pm Hanging Chads – new and unresolved issues to put a button on
Reminder – Waterbird Festival on February 6
Brown Pelican survey - May 7, 2016 (5:00-7:00 PM)**

Meeting adjourned at 1pm.