



The CSPRA

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CALIFORNIA STATE PARK RANGERS ASSOCIATION

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SPEAK OF *el DIABLO*



Bay Sector, Diablo Vista District, pages 3-11



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COVER PHOTO: the vista half-way
up Mt. Diablo, looking southwest.
Photo by David Carle

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



RON BREAN
CSPRA President

Old Guys Rule

I think the shirt was worn by **Dana Long**. Adorned with surfboards and approximating the uniform of the day for the campground at Turlock Lake SRA, the shirt I'm remembering proudly proclaimed "Old Guys Rule." I think it may be true.

Last year I dropped in on the Retiree's Rendezvous with other board members, but I was unable to stay. I was still working. So this year, as a new retiree, it was my first real rendezvous experience. These old guys (and I use the term "guys" in the non-gender-specific form) rule! I now wish I'd showed up earlier... years earlier, and been able to stay longer at previous events. (Yes, young guys -- even younger than I -- are welcome too).

These are people who worked for the Division of Beaches & Parks. {How many re-organizations ago was that? } and who truly understand the phrase "park family". They helped raise each others kids, keep each other fed, nursed each other, encouraged each other, and worked hard everyday side-by-side to make sure parks were protected, understood, and enjoyed. These are people who WERE the Park Movement. They are, in fact, awesome.

We arrived on Friday afternoon, September 29th. The Rendezvous

generally takes place in the middle of the state. Usually it's at McConnell SRA but this year a scheduling problem moved the event to the edge of the Tuolumne River at Turlock. We pulled in to the group camp area and got out to look around before we set up camp. People were milling around chatting, cooking, laughing, telling stories, and getting re-acquainted... and everywhere I looked was someone I once found intimidating. These were the veterans when I was a rookie.

Herman Schlerf was telling a story that included the phrase "...some big-shot came down from Sacramento..." I looked around the group listening to the story and realized that when I came into DPR, all of these people were big-shots to me. After spending the weekend with them, I realized they still are. There is no place I know of where more park knowledge, integrity, enthusiasm, history, and fun shows up in one place at one time. Not Asilomar. Not the Resources Building. Not the annual parks conference. Not retirement parties. Not anywhere.

In August, the CSPRA Board spent a weekend "visioning," planning, and deciding areas of focus for the organization for the next couple of years. After spending time with the retirees, I think we're on the right track. Our attentions will be directed toward enlivened membership recruitment activities, numerous professional development initiatives, greater use of regional contacts and regional opportunities for member development, and improvements to procedures relative to administrative detail. All of these (and the specific means of getting them done) are designed to capture and enhance that same dedication and enthusiasm that has always characterized California State Park professionals.

CSPRA will continue to modernize to meet the changing needs of our membership and of the parks and recreation profession. There is no better validation of your direction,

OH, BY THE BAY

by **Brian Hickey**, Sector Supt >>

The bay referred to in the “Bay Sector” of the Diablo Vista District is San Francisco Bay, which places our four Sector parks in one of the most heavily urbanized areas in California. **Candlestick Point State Recreation Area, Eastshore State Park, Mount Diablo State Park** and the **John Marsh House/ Cowell Ranch** park properties are all urban parks to varying degrees. All share the intense pressures and problems associated with being located in densely populated areas and share the benefits that parks provide to an urban populace.

Mount Diablo was first established in 1921 and was originally comprised of the 721 acres at its summit. At the time the closest towns were at the foot of the mountain over ten miles away. Since then the park has grown to over 20,000 acres, and the once small towns of San Ramon, Danville, Alamo, Walnut Creek, Concord and Clayton have grown together to form one continuous megalopolis of over a million residents. Now surrounded on three sides by urban sprawl, Mount Diablo has become a haven from urban life and the focal point for Bay Area outdoor recreation enthusiasts. Many of our park visitors come to Mount Diablo to simply “get away”, to sit quietly and enjoy the calm of nature at a secluded picnic site or take in our world famous view from the Summit Visitor Center. For these park visitors the value of Mount Diablo is that it offers serenity fifteen minutes from downtown. For the more adventurous and energetic Mount Diablo is their own personal training ground. With nearly 200 miles of fireroads and trails and another 20 miles of paved road that lead to its 3849’



summit, Mount Diablo provides exceptional recreational opportunities to road cyclists, mountain bikers, hikers, runners and equestrians. For these park visitors, the value of Mount Diablo is that it provides secluded high quality outdoor recreation close to home. In the eighty-four years since its creation, Mount Diablo has become a wilderness retreat out the back doors of its new urban neighbors.

While urban sprawl slowly encircled Mount Diablo, Candlestick Point SRA and Eastshore State Park were created out of the last open space in their urban settings: the local dumps. Both parks have been built on top of bayfill



Ranger **Jeremy Olson** and Park Aide **Chris Tasik** at the summit

dumpsites. Where Mount Diablo preserves the last vestiges of its natural setting, Candlestick and Eastshore strive to reestablish nature in an urban environment. While small by park standards, both parks are less than 300 acres, these parks receive intense visitation. Candlestick is adjacent to the 49er’s stadium, currently called Monster Park, and the Hunter’s Point and Bayview communities. “The Stick” has a dedicated group of visitors who come to the park to fish, walk their dogs, walk, run, bike or windsurf. As the only park and open space in the area along the bay, it receives daily visits from hundreds of local residents. Eastshore State Park, currently operated and co-managed by the East Bay Regional Park District, is comprised of segregated parcels of landfill along an eight and a half mile stretch along the east shore of San Francisco Bay within the city limits of Oakland, Emeryville, Berkeley, Albany and Richmond. Though development of this park has just begun, the park already attracts over one million visitors annually, demonstrating just how hungry city dwellers are for open space to recreate in.

Our newest “urban park” is the John Marsh House/Cowell Ranch property near the City of Brentwood, one of the fastest growing communities in California. In the case of these properties, urban development is currently advancing on park boundaries giving Parks a chance to minimize the impacts and take advantage of the opportunities this development creates. In November of 2002 State Parks acquired almost 4000 acres from the Cowell Foundation. Adjacent to the 14 acres Parks previously owned with the John Marsh House, this new park property was preserved as a result of a “re-drawing” of the urban limit line, placing the property outside the limits for urban development. While saved from development, this new property will be heavily impacted by a new

See **DIABLO**, page 7

ON A CLEAR DAY, YOU CAN SEE FOREVER

by *Carl Nielson, Ranger*

Mount Diablo State Park's old brochure proudly boasted, "In fact, it is said that the panorama visible from the top of Mount Diablo is unsurpassed in extent by any other in America or Europe, and is second only to that visible from 19,000-foot Kilimanjaro in Africa." Similar claims appear in various publications still on

viewshed of 18,000 square miles for Mount Diablo.

His calculations for some other North America peaks are provided below:

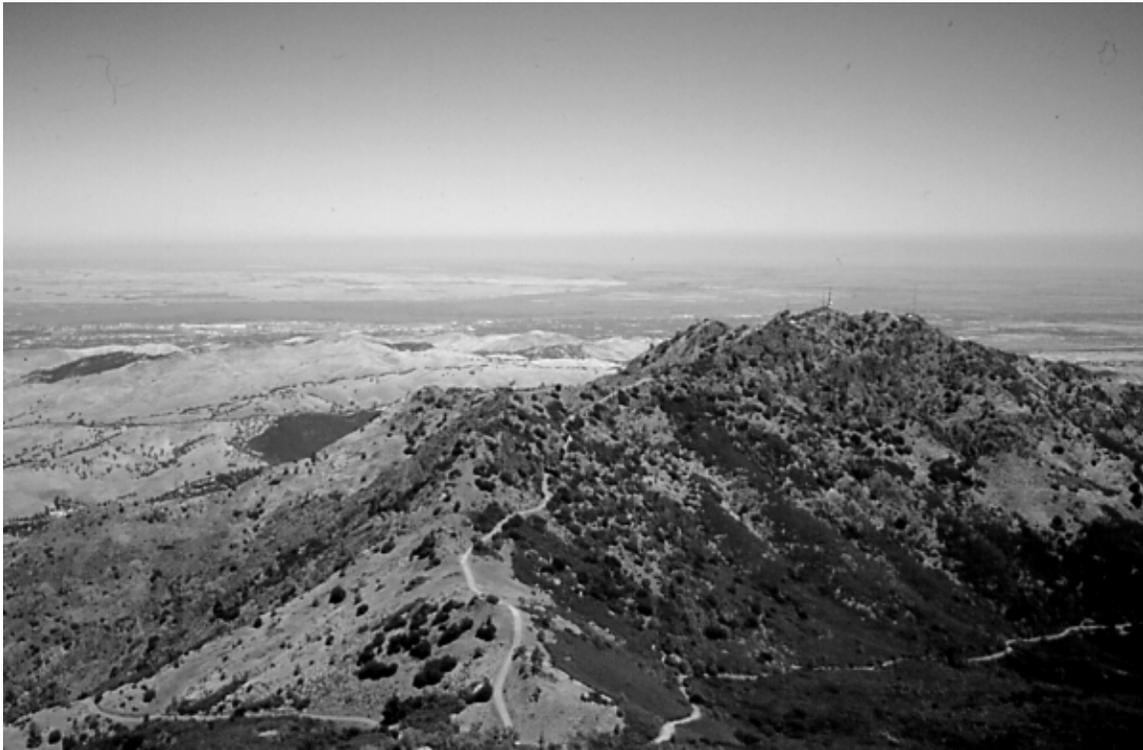
Mount McKinley, Alaska: 72,000 square miles;

Mauna Kea, Hawaii: 59,000 square miles;

Pikes Peak, Colorado: 28,000 square miles.

San Francisco, the Golden Gate, and the Farallon Islands are all visible. The much lesser peak (no apologies to Marin) of Mount Tamalpais is 35 miles out as the crow flies. To the east, the Sierra rises above the Central Valley. Pyramid Peak in Desolation Wilderness is quite distinct.

Great visibility days encourage high visitation, especially if they overlap on



*View from the summit of Diablo, looking northeast to the Delta, August 2005.
By **David Carle***

the market. Some sources claim a viewshed of 40,000 square miles for Mount Diablo.

A number of years ago, I received a letter from Edward Earl of San Diego, a self-proclaimed "professional scientist with knowledge of the geometrical principles that enter into the determination of mountaintop viewshed areas." Earl estimated a

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Though not second best in the world, the viewshed from Mount Diablo's summit is indeed impressive, especially for a peak that's just less than 4,000 feet in elevation. The best time to come up for a view is the day following a winter storm with a strong, chilly north wind howling. Snowcapped Mount Lassen is evident 165 miles to the north. To the west, the skyline of

a weekend or holiday. I encourage members of the State Park family to come up on such a day. The invitation especially applies to those stuck in cubicles at Headquarters, with the summit of Mount Diablo about two hours away. The crown jewel of the California State Park System awaits you. Don't forget to bring a jacket! And remember this: the view from Mount Diablo is the best in the world for a peak that measures 3,849 feet.

WOULD YOU VOLUNTEER FOR THE DEVIL?

by **Ryen Goering**, Ranger

Here at Mt. Diablo State Park we have a modest volunteer program. I am the park's VIPP coordinator and have had the great opportunity to meet, train, and work with dedicated docents, many of whom put in hours of labor and love to "their" mountain.

Our volunteer program consists of several varied opportunities for many local Diablo regulars. The volunteer Trail Sign Committee inventories, orders, and installs hundreds of trail signs throughout the 20,000 plus acre park. For those that like manual labor (I do!), there is the Mt. Diablo Trail Crew. They meet monthly and do outstanding work to clear brush, install and refurbish the miles of trails on Mt. Diablo.

Interpretive docents staff the Summit Visitor Center and the Mount Diablo Interpretive Association's new Visitor Center at Mitchell Canyon Day Use Area. Backcountry patrol units include Mounted Assistance Units (horse patrol), Hiking Assistance Units, and the newly forming Bicycle Assistance Units (although I think there used to be a large program in the 70-80's).

The Trash Removal Project (TRP) (article on page 9) is a fairly new program and has already removed tons of old barbed wire, fence posts and other rubbish throughout the park. The two coordinators of that program (one is retired Ranger **Burt Bogardus**) put in hundreds of hours a year. It is back-breaking work!

The Mount Diablo Astronomical Society has public star nights once a month at the top of the mountain (weather permitting of course!), often attracting over 100 participants. Docents are involved in parking control and telescope sharing.

Attendees also have the opportunity to view the 16" computer controlled telescope in the newly established Observatory.

Our resource volunteers are instrumental in counting and documenting the hundreds of flora and fauna throughout the park. A long-time volunteer also helps with the feral pig eradication program. GPS work is also being done by a few volunteers to assist our resource staff.

In addition to the "regular" volunteers, we utilize many Scout groups and other occasional volunteers. Our Earth Day event usually attracts around 200 people who help with planting native vegetation, removing evasive species, removing barbed wire fencing, and working on the trails.

In all, our volunteers contributed well over 8,000 hours for the 2004 season. That equates to well over \$58,000 in savings at minimum wage

comparisons! Our staff here at Mt. Diablo recognizes this awesome contribution by our volunteers each year. We have a huge BBQ at the end of every season to thank the tireless efforts of all our volunteers.



Volunteer trail crew with Park Maintenance Worker **Jeff Beach** (second from left, back row) and Maintenance Supervisor **Sue Schwartz** (sixth from left, back row)

BICYCLE ACCIDENTS

by *Carl Nielson, Ranger*

With the help of Park Aid **Clay Heckmann**, I had the opportunity to look at our many bicycle accidents that occur at Mount Diablo State Park. Heckmann plotted the statistics for a GIS project as a student at Diablo Valley College. We looked at reported accidents that occurred within the park between 2002 and 2004. The accidents covered road accidents as well as backcountry accidents. Bicyclists, both road and mountain, make up an important user group at the park. The reported accidents covered forty-five incidents. The information is worth sharing.

Those familiar with the park know that there isn't much flat at Mount Diablo. It's dominated by either up or down, some of it quite steep. 100% of the accidents involved a bicyclist going downhill. Pavement accidents accounted for 78% of the accidents. It's likely that park staff don't learn about a good number of accidents, especially in the backcountry.

Eighty percent of the accidents involved a solo bicyclist, 16% involved a bike vs. car, and 4% involved a bike vs. bike. Most bicyclists [89%] were riding with helmets. Sadly, 22% were transported



Ranger Carl Nielson with cyclists at the Junction Ranger Station

by a medical helicopter to a hospital – an indication of the seriousness of injuries.

Cause of the accidents as defined by PCF (primary collision factor): 47% unsafe speed, 18% mechanical failure (i.e. flat tire).

When did they occur? 64% occurred on weekends and holidays, 55% occurred during the months of May through September, 89% involved dry conditions.

The average age of the bicyclists was 39 years old. 89% of the bicyclists were males.

What can we learn from the study? Well, if you're a 39-year-old male bicycling downhill on a weekend in the summer, make sure you have good medical insurance! Seriously, there is a safety message here. Downhill travel and unsafe speed are hazardous to a bicyclist's well being. I've posted a synopsis of the study at the Junction Ranger Station, a popular rest stop for bicyclists. It gets a lot of attention. I've also provided the synopsis to a number of local bike shops. Hopefully by getting the safety message out, we can reduce the number of bicycle accidents at Mount Diablo State Park.

CARL'S DIABLO QUIZ

1. Diablo Vista SPR Vince Anibale is quite the gullible fellow. Identify the true statements:

a. Vince believed that ghosts haunted a ranger residence located near the Junction Ranger Station.

b. Vince believed that Elvis Presley was seen at Juniper Campground during the summer of 2003.

c. Vince believed that two of his fellow rangers contacted a suspicious demon-worshipping subject on

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Blackhawk Ridge who spoke backwards.

d. All of the above.

e. Both a and c.

2. Mount Diablo State Park has had an alcoholic beverage ban since 1987. People have been creative in methods of hiding their contraband. Identify the factual incident.

a. On a night contact, a stash of beer was located in an ice chest suspended from a tree branch.

b. A bottle of vodka with a twelve-

foot hose was placed within a ground squirrel hole.

c. A foamy, amber-colored liquid with the odor of an alcoholic beverage filled a porta-potty.

d. All of the above.

3. What is the former name of a sandstone rock formation within the park along South Gate Road?

a. Flintstone Rocks

b. Devil's Playground

c. Mick's Stones

d. Garden of the Jungle Gods

e. Mighty Rocks

See QUIZ, page 12

MAINTENANCE MATTERS

by Sue Schwartz

Park Maintenance Supervisor

Mount Diablo, what an incredible place to spend the work day. This 20,000 acre park rises above the San Francisco Bay Area with world famous views. Get up close and you will see an incredible natural world with species specific to Mount Diablo and found nowhere else on earth.

The maintenance duties here are as diverse as the ecosystems that enhance this beautiful park. It has always amazed me that all the water provided to campgrounds, restrooms with showers, hose bibs, day use restroom facilities, and residences comes from springs at various locations on the mountain. The water is treated with chlorine and piped to holding tanks, mostly with gravity feed. Maintenance and testing is a full time job; and we thank **Steve Radwanski**, Worker 1, for providing clean, safe water. During the winter it seems that almost as much water flows up from the ground as it does down from the sky. When many maintenance workers are looking for indoor work during a storm, we are out removing downed trees, shoveling silt, debris, and rocks from roads, ditches and culverts. It's kind of impressive how quickly we can lose a section of road if we don't keep the culverts clear. The mountain is constantly trying to reclaim itself.

Equipment Operator **Jason Duke** does a great job shaping up the 75 miles of fire roads and the curvy asphalt roads that lead to the Summit and in or out of the park.

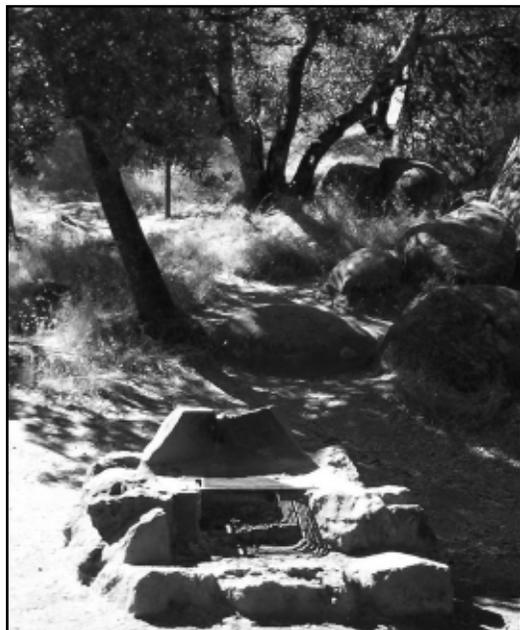
We balance the maintenance of historic structures and furniture built by the CCC's and the typical upgrades to developed facilities.

Although the park is within the footprint of the densely populated San Francisco Bay Area the visitors seem to appreciate the natural beauty and the park stays relatively litter and vandalism free. Mostly we end up cleaning up after raccoons and coyotes who take the trash out of the garbage cans.

Many groups and individuals have a special interest in Mount Diablo State Park. Maintenance staff works with volunteers on trail crews, trail signage, and barbwire and fence removal. There are approximately 100 miles of single track trails in the

park. We also work with Eagle Scouts on projects. Time consuming as it can be we feel we get a lot back from the volunteers. **Jeff Beach**, Worker 1 has recently been assigned to the Trails Coordinator position and will begin the Trails Class series offered by our department.

Big park, small crew... We have all heard that before. What does it



mean when four out of the six permanent positions (two were recently filled) add up to 50 years in place? It means that we like where

we work! Pay comes in more ways than just a check... The mountain reveals something different, something unique to the lucky individuals who seek this reward.

DIABLO, from page 3

1200 unit housing development that will come within 200 yards of John Marsh House and be surrounded on three sides by the newly acquired park property. In a partnership with the City of Brentwood, developer fees and community facility assessment funds will be made available to State Parks to fund the General Plan for this new state park, help restore the John Marsh House, and provide long-term funding for State Park positions. In this case, the City, the

developer and State Parks are working together to realize our mutual goals while minimizing the impacts on public lands.

As sprawl expands out from our cities and towns, more state parks will be faced with the issues of urbanization, edge effects, and becoming backyard parks. These changes will give us opportunities to develop new alliances, realize our urban park potentials, and attract a new generation of park visitors.

PRESIDENT from page 2

however, than to take a look back and see where you've come, and who got you there. When I'm 90+ years old, maybe some of the younger CSPRA members will show up at a Retirees Rendezvous, help me to my camp chair, and ask me about the good old days. I look forward to it.

A PERSONAL VIEW

by **John Werminski**

*Regional Interpretive Specialist
Interpretation and Education Div.*

Mount Diablo has long enjoyed a reputation as one of the “crown jewels” of the State Park System. To me, though, it’s always been the brightest jewel in the crown. What follows is an attempt to explain why.

I first became aware of Mount Diablo the way many Bay Area residents did in the 1960s—as a looming presence on the horizon and as the subject of



Ranger/Manager **Bob Stewart**’s radio broadcasts on KCBS. Stewart would drive up to the summit early in the morning and phone in a descriptive commentary about the scene. Through his reports, thousands of people were able to vicariously witness the mountain’s ever-changing wonders: the riotous springtime wildflower show . . . the silent ebb and flow of summer fog . . . and, on the clearest days of winter, a grand view embracing three hundred miles of snowy Sierra crest, backlit by the rising sun.

The prospect of observing these spectacles for myself first drew me to the mountain, but a more pragmatic reason kept me coming back. I wanted to learn about California’s natural history, and Diablo seemed to be a perfect place to do just that. The park contains an amazingly rich assortment of plants, and anyone who gets to know the vegetation there will also feel at home in many other parts of the state. In addition, the peak’s geology is unusually revealing; between Diablo’s base and

summit, a rock record spanning more than a million centuries is exposed to view. As if all this weren’t enough, I discovered that the peak is a grand atmospheric theater, too, where one can probe inversion-layer boundaries, become a connoisseur of storms, or encounter strange spectral shadows in the haze or mist.

I gradually came to regard that solitary mountain as a microcosm of the natural world, with an inexhaustible store of lessons for a budding naturalist. For years I visited it at every opportunity. In the course of exploring, photographing, and identifying things I got to know the park staff pretty well, and I was offered an interpretive job. My career with State Parks began as a seasonal at Mount Diablo, and it’s no exaggeration to say that my life changed direction because of a fascination with that place.

Much has changed around Mount Diablo in the intervening decades.



Wildfires have periodically scorched its slopes. Orchards and ranchland have given way to housing tracts, and the pace of life has escalated along with property values in the towns that skirt its base. The two-thousand-acre state park I knew has grown to twenty thousand acres now, thanks to the vision and perseverance of others who’ve recognized that the mountain plays a necessary role in their lives.

Today, Mount Diablo is an ancient, wild feature of an increasingly urban landscape. Its profile still dominates the skyline, beckoning the imagination. And more significant than what has

changed, I think, is that a certain essential quality endures. You might call it “recreational opportunity” or “ecological integrity” or “regional identity,” or all of these combined. But I suspect this special quality also relates to the human spirit. It has something to do with the way our parklands help us individually achieve a new perspective, and the way that mountains can “broaden our horizons” in both senses of the phrase. Josiah Royce, a nineteenth-century historian/philosopher, summed up this sentiment nicely:

That one realizes the greatness of the world better when he rises a little above the level of the lowlands, and looks upon the large landscape beneath, this we all know; and all of us, too, must have wondered that a few feet of elevation should tend so greatly to change our feeling toward the universe.

Every day, for countless numbers of us, Mount Diablo does precisely that.

TRASH REMOVAL PROJECT

by **Burt Bogardus**, Retired Ranger

I worked as a State Park Ranger on Mount Diablo from 1975 to 1993. During those eighteen years, I developed a genuine love for this unique treasure. While patrolling the fire roads and hiking the trails, I was often disturbed by the abundance of man-made intrusions which detracted from the esthetic enjoyment of the mountain. I thought to myself how wonderful it would be to recruit some volunteers and clean up the seemingly endless number of eyesores, but the task seemed overwhelming.

Shortly after retiring, I volunteered to work with the Trail Signage Project, the objective of which was to post directional signs at every trail intersection within the park. It was through this project that I had the good fortune to meet **Rich McDrew**. I soon found that Rich had also been keeping his own mental list of eyesores, and to my delight, was just as enthusiastic about getting rid of them as I was.

BIRTH OF THE TRASH REMOVAL PROJECT (TRP)

When Rich and I combined our efforts, we compiled a list of more than a hundred cleanup sites. As a former government employee and supervisor, Rich had a far greater aptitude for organizing and paperwork than I did. He established the Trash Removal Project, complete with charter, mission statement, project list, ranking system, authorization forms, etc. etc. (It reminded me of why I was content to remain a Ranger I instead of promoting!) We met

with the park staff and sought input regarding any possible historical value of any specific sites. As the saying goes, "One man's trash is another man's treasure." Rich and I are sensitive to the fact that some objects on our list of "junk" might be considered by others to be priceless artifacts!

TYPES OF PROJECTS

About half of the projects (55 sites) are old barbed wire fences and gates. Many were old boundary fences which became



Burt Bogardus winding up barbed wire on the Summit Trail

obsolete as new parcels were acquired. Others were strictly for cattle control, but since grazing was restricted to a limited area of the park almost two decades ago, they too are obsolete. Many old fences have fallen into disrepair, with loose strands trailing off into the distance. Others have been totally engulfed in chaparral or in poison oak thickets. Unsightly as well as hazardous, we have yet to encounter anyone arguing for retaining them.

Old water tanks, pipes, culverts, troughs and bathtubs (for watering cattle) are the next largest category (39 sites). Those in working condition are being retained for now-but most have long since rusted into uselessness.

The park contains five abandoned dump sites dating from a time when environmental awareness hadn't evolved to today's level, and old junk was simply thrown into a nearby canyon. Three of these sites have been completely cleaned up or substantially reduced.

A fourth category (structures) includes 7 sites. There are remnants of a residence which was deliberately burned down, as well as lean-tos, tree houses, etc. Finally, in the "miscellaneous" category are vehicles, appliances, and assorted junk (12 sites).

VOLUNTEER HELP

Our greatest source of volunteers has been the Boy Scouts. Many years ago, when scouts came to the park looking for projects, they always wanted to build something-a trail, picnic area, bridge or sign. Fortunately for us, as there has been an increased focus on ecological awareness, the Scouts have accepted removal of barbed wire fencing as qualifying for Eagle Scout Projects. They typically remove about 2,000 feet of fence over a weekend. We emphasize that unlike picking up litter, once the barbed wire is gone it's not coming back! Nine scouts have earned their Eagle Scout rank by clearing barbed wire from Mount Diablo.

See TRASH, page 10

JUMPING OVER TO CANDLESTICK

by *Ann Meneguzzi, Sup. Ranger*

Twice a day the nearby Hwy 101 clogs with cars that jam multiple lanes of slowly moving traffic. Most drivers there do not know (nor care) that just a long football toss away is the tranquil haven of Candlestick Point State Recreation Area. In a part of San Francisco not otherwise known to attract nature lovers, the park's 250+ acres along the San Francisco Bay shoreline give visitors many opportunities to enjoy the outdoors.

Since arriving at Candlestick Point last year, I've learned that the park is a minor Mecca for diverse and numerous visitors. Located in a part of San Francisco that has a reputation for being less safe, less fashionable, and less "rich" than other city neighborhoods, Candlestick Point gives those who visit a wonderful place to experience a natural setting. Each day regulars come to walk and bike on paths that offer sweeping views of the South Bay, San Bruno Mountain, and the hulking relic of the WW II gunnery crane at Hunter's Point. Because San Francisco is a city with densely populated neighborhoods and high rise skylines, the chance to savor the feeling of being in wide open spaces is a precious gift.

Paved and unpaved trails wind past developed picnic areas, wide lawns, wooded dunes, and along the bayside edges. Each day the park faithful as well as foreign tourists from the neighboring RV campground come in

surprising numbers to take advantage of these paths. Rabbits, squirrels, and many shore birds delight observers with their antics. A occasional fox sighting may excite the early morning visitor.

Two piers attract fishermen who also may try their luck from shoreline spots. On many afternoons the winds pick up and churn the shallow bay waters by Candlestick Point. These



park new tidal marsh lands, and upland habitats for increased wildlife habitat. New trails will connect with the San Francisco Bay Trail network so that more people will be able to enjoy and appreciate a revitalized bayside setting.

The Yosemite Slough Wetland Restoration is an exciting goal. The Foundation still needs many generous donors for the \$12 million target. The fact that the Restoration Project exists is exciting to park's visitors. People who enjoy the beauty in the presently developed area, eagerly anticipate exploring new vistas and wildlife close-ups in what are now fennel-choked fields.

Historically, Yosemite Creek descended from its headwaters in the McClarran Park hilltops. The creek flowed down the southern slopes and through the flats where it met the bay. This vestigial watershed still exists beneath the houses and asphalt of the present. When the restoration is complete, visitors will be able to enjoy a re-creation of what has been a lost wetland.

◀◀ *Yosemite Slough wetland*

strong breezes can make the fishermen pack up their gear and call it a day. But these same wind tunnel-like conditions create whitecaps that are like Powerbait to the wind-surfers. By mid-afternoon on the gustiest days, dozens of wind-surfers skim across the bay's frothy surface. It is spectacular to watch this awesome group who are all obviously well past the beginning stages of the sport.

In many ways, Candlestick Point is a typical state park with happy visitors who enjoy opportunities for high quality outdoor recreation. But not all its 250+ acres are developed as of yet. A Wetlands Restoration project is being funded by the State Parks Foundation and will give the

TRASH, from page 9

Several local schools have also accepted barbed wire removal as qualifying for "environmental improvement" projects, a good project for young people because it doesn't require great physical strength. To make the job easier, I invented several special tools—a wire winder and fence post pullers made from old auto jacks.

STATUS OF THE PROJECT

As of October 2005, we have completed 36 of the original 112 projects. A total of 4,334

See TRASH, page 11

WILDERNESS ISLAND

by *Cyndy Shafer*

Associate Resource Ecologist

Towering over the rapidly expanding East Bay, Mt. Diablo is home to countless unique species that live in a 20,000 acre wilderness surrounded by a sea of urban and suburban development. Viewed from a distance, Mt. Diablo is characterized by rolling hills covered in grassland and chaparral, broken by woodland-lined canyons. However, the mountain contains at least 14 different types of vegetation communities (also called associations, or societies), including mixed oak woodlands, riparian woodland, coulter pine stands, small wetlands around springs and ponds, and the "rock societies." Rock society is a term used by Mary Bowerman in her 1944 book *The Flowering Plants and Ferns of Mt. Diablo, California*, and is used to describe the unique plant communities associated with rocky outcrops found higher on the mountain. Mt. Diablo's location as an isolated peak of the California coast range is ideal for supporting extremely high biological diversity.

The park is home to a number of rare, threatened, and endangered species. The infamous Alameda whipsnake (or Alameda striped racer) is a threatened species whose entire range is limited to the hills of the East San Francisco Bay Area. More than half of the entire population of this rare snake lives on Mt. Diablo. Often found in the chaparral habitats of the park, the Alameda whipsnake also ventures far into adjacent habitats such as oak woodland, grassland, and riparian woodland. This snake, best known for being the fastest snake in the west, hunts small prey such as western fence lizards, but has also been known to climb high up into the branches of trees where it devours less common prey,

such as small birds.

Mt. Diablo is also home to a number of protected bird species, such as the golden eagle and peregrine falcon, one of the fastest birds in the world. As many as 200 species of birds have been recorded on the mountain, including residents and those that pass through during their annual migrations. The oak woodlands in the park support species such as the oak titmouse and acorn woodpecker. Riparian woodlands provide a haven for birds such as the western screech-owl and orange-crowned warbler. California thrashers and wrentits can be seen skulking amongst the shrubs of the chaparral. Although not seen as often, mammals are also present in the park in high numbers. From the smaller bats and ground squirrels, up to larger bobcats and coyotes, mammals frequent all the varied habitat types.

In addition to wildlife, Mt. Diablo



Alameda whipsnake

supports a number of endemic plants (those found nowhere else in the world), including one species thought to be extinct, and recently re-discovered after nearly 70 years. The Mt. Diablo buckwheat was found in the park last May by a UC Berkeley graduate student, after evading botanists for decades. This diminutive buckwheat with delicate pink flowers has inspired conservationists all over the country, who now have hope that

other species thought to be extinct may be discovered to still be in existence. The Mount Diablo jewel flower and Mount Diablo bird's beak are two other rare plants that grow only on exposed rocky outcrops on the upper slopes of the mountain. As many as 20 plant species listed as rare by the California Native Plant Society can be found both along trails and in the more remote areas of the park.

Mt. Diablo State Park is the heart of the East Bay's network of open spaces, and connects to parkland owned by the East Bay Regional Parks District. These connections provide important movement corridors for large wildlife such as mountain lions, and add to the value of Mt. Diablo as habitat. This island of wilderness is not only a treasure of biological diversity, but is also a symbol of the increasing value of open space in rapidly growing urban areas.

TRASH, from page 10

volunteer hours have been expended. We have removed 4,548 fence posts and 362,605 feet of barbed wire--more than 68 miles. Rich and I are completely dedicated to this project, intending to keep working at it as long as we're still physically able. We joke that we could stay fit by joining a gym and lifting iron weights, or go up to Mount Diablo and lift old pipes, barbed wire coils and fence posts!

If you are in the Contra Costa County area and would like to help, contact Burt at (925) 820-2347 or burt.bogardus@sbcglobal.net

RETIREES RENDEZVOUS, October 2005



Marie and Kirk Wallace and Jim Neal set up the chow line at Turlock Lake SRA. Photo by **Jeff Price**.



CSPRA Past-presidents at the Rendezvous, l to r: Herman Schlerf, Ron McCall, Wes Cater, Jeff Price, and Bud Getty. Photo by **Peggy Price**.



Carl Lonnecker, Herman Schlerf, and Les McCargo completed a boat lane striping project during the Rendezvous. Photo by **Dave Donahue**

QUIZ, from page 6

4. Name the famous person memorialized at a picnic site near the Summit.
 - a. FDR
 - b. Abraham Lincoln
 - c. Rachel Carson
 - d. John Muir
5. What name change is being considered by USGS, currently, for Mount Diablo?
 - a. Werminski Peak
 - b. Heavenly Peak
 - c. Mount Blackhawk
 - d. Mount Kawukum
6. The beacon light on the Summit is turned on once a year. Name the commemorative event.
 - a. The date the park was established
 - b. Pearl Harbor Day
 - c. New Year's Day
 - d. International Surveyor's Day
 - e. Independence Day
7. Knowledge in wildland fire behavior can be quite useful as an employee of Mount Diablo State Park. Select the best description of wildfire behavior in recognized terms:
 - a. Smoldering/creeping/spotting/running.
 - b. Luke warm / warm / hot / very hot / hotter than hell.
 - c. Nasty / gnarly / wicked / boss.
 - d. Wow / ooh / hmmm / sheeet!
8. Identify the trail name that actually exists within Mount Diablo State Park.
 - a. Zigzag Trail
 - b. Zippitydodah Trail
 - c. Zippe Trail
 - d. Zonk Trail
9. I live in a "manufactured home" on a state pad surrounded by very expensive mansions in the community of Alamo. A neighbor recently used what term to describe my home?
 - a. Ranger Bungalow
 - b. Park Shack
 - c. Mini-mansion
 - d. Ranger Shed

Answers:

1. e 2. a 3. d 4. d 5. d 6. b
7. a 8. c 9. d

BOARD MINUTES

August 22, 2005

Present: Ron Brean (President); Angy Nowicki (President Elect); Pam Armas, (Secretary/Treasurer); Directors, Joe Mette, Joe Rogers, Gail Sevrens; and Laura Svendsgaard (Executive Manager). Absent: Val Bradshaw, Jill Dampier.

· Ron suggested that the Board consider automatic life memberships to members who have been loyal CSPRA members for 10 years following retirement. Discussion and analysis will continue and the issue will be further considered at the next Board meeting.

· Angy asked the Board to consider a new membership category specifically for seasonal workers. Such a request requires an amendment to the By-laws and a vote by the General Executive Council at the March '06 Conference. Ron will develop the wording.

· Ron raised concerns about the State's reluctance to allow Parks to acquire new properties. While agreeing that new properties must be accompanied by increased operating funds, a "no growth" stance for Parks ignores the public's obvious increased demand for park and recreation services. Ron will discuss the issue with CSPRA's lobbyist, Monica Miller, and report back at the next Board meeting.

· Gail discussed the location for the 2007 Parks Conference. Yosemite's Tenaya Lodge is a serious contender, however some potential obstacles need to be researched.

· Laura reported that while the FY 2004-05 was somewhat short in anticipated revenues, reduced expenses essentially balanced out the revenue shortfall. The shortfall is largely the result of membership changes from Active to Retired. Joe Mette, Ron and Laura will analyze the information, consider means for making up the funds, and report to the Board at the next meeting.

· Angy reported that over 75% of the CSPRA District Representative



positions have been filled and utilization of the Reps as liaisons between the Board and members has begun.

· Lobbyist Monica Miller advised that the two Parks/resources bond bills (SB 153 and SB 1024) are being monitored and "nudged" as appropriate.

· Pam reported on progress in the planning of the Mar. 2006 Parks Conference in Laughlin, NV. Several exciting activities related to Laughlin's access to the Colorado River are planned. It was agreed that scholarship funds not expended in FY 2004-05 would be added to the FY 2005-06 scholarship budget in order to help offset the conference costs, specifically the cost of registration.

· The next meeting of the CSPRA Board was at the Retiree Rendezvous on Sat., October 1, 2005. Copies of the entire minutes can be requested at executivemanager@cspra.com

CALIF. PARKS CONFERENCE
March 6 - 10 in Laughlin, NV
Mark your calendar!
Information at www.CSPRA.com

BOARD NOMINATIONS

Openings will exist for Secretary/Treasurer, 2 Board Members, and President-Elect in the next election. Please contact **Angy Nowicki** with nominations at angy@cspra.com.

DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES

Several reps have agreed to serve: **Frank Padilla**, Angeles; **Jeri Zemon**, Colorado; **Carl Nielson & Ann Meneguzzi**, Diablo Vista; **Matt Cardinet**, Gold Fields; **Natalie Lohi**, Mendocino; **Pat Clark Gray**, Monterey; **Karen Broderick**, North Bay; **V. Nixon & R. Schenone**, No. Buttes; **Jenny Donovan & Robert Simoneaux**, Orange; **Nick Franco & Greg Martin**, SLO; **Susan Grove**, Sierra. If you are interested in serving for your area, contact the CSPRA president: Ron@cspra.com.

INTERPRETING TO DIVERSE AUDIENCES:

Jan. 23-27, 2006 in Pacific Palisades, \$300. Contact **Wes Chapin**, 805-585-1845 or wchap@parks.ca.gov for more information

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City State Zip

Job Classification

Social Security #

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Phone: Home

District, Section, or Park:

Membership type (Circle one):

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Active Retired \$36/year

Supporting \$36/year

Organization \$50/year

Benefactor \$1,000/life

I hereby authorize the State Controller to
deduct from my salary and transmit as
designated an amount for membership
dues in the California State Park Rangers
Association. This authorization will
remain in effect until cancelled by myself
or by the organization. I certify I am a
member of the above organization and
understand that termination of my
membership will cancel all deductions
made under this organization.

Signature

Date

Update from Sacramento

by *Monica Miller, CSPRA Lobbyist*

The 2005 legislative session ended on September 8, 2005, having done very little compared to the goals expressed in January. The Governor began the year by attempting to tackle many difficult issues such as teacher tenure, redistricting and public pension reform for public employees. There were 2,892 bills introduced by the legislature with many focused on trying to fix the housing and infrastructure crisis in California, but only 961 actually made it to the Governor's desk. As the year progressed the Governor realized he was going to be unsuccessful at achieving his goals and decided he needed to go to the voters with his reform proposals.

The year quickly changed courses when the special election was called. That decision focused both the Republicans and the Democrats in the Legislature on posturing for most of the year but galvanized both parties to pass a nearly on-time budget.

Three bonds that were introduced this year, all of which had no traction with the legislature or the Governor. However, as Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast, it made California take a step back and reevaluate our infrastructure. In early September we began discussions on how best to move these bonds forward to allow California to be protected. We expect the coming year to be focused on taking steps to secure better infrastructure for the state and how best to pay for it.

Want a CSPRA scholarship?

Contact **Fred Jee** at
(760) 767-4651
jeeology@yahoo.com

Nominate an Honorary Ranger

by *John Mott, Hon. Member Chair*

The Honorary Member committee is accepting applications for CSPRA's highest award, the Honorary Ranger Award. Traditionally this award is given to people who have had a statewide impact in their efforts to defend, promote and champion the mission of the California State Parks and/or the profession of being a California State Parks employee.

Only written nominations will be accepted. The committee will review the nominations and forward suitable nominations to the CSPRA Board of Directors for final approval. The award will be presented at the 2006 CSPRA Convention in Laughlin, Nevada.

Past recipients of the Honorary Ranger award are posted on the CSPRA website and include **Susan Smartt, Huell Howser, William "Bill" Lane, Clare Schlotterbeck, Phil Frank, William Penn Mott, Jr.** and **Walt Disney**. The nomination process is not complicated, however the **deadline for nominations is December 31, 2005.**

In order to nominate and Honorary Ranger, follow these three steps:

1) Prepare a brief (1 page or less) nomination describing why or how you feel this person has had a statewide or major impact on the mission of California State Parks and/or the park profession. Sign the nomination or attach a cover note of support. Other members may sign the nomination as well, but this is not required.

2) As soon as possible, submit your nomination to CSPRA Honorary Member Committee, c/o John Mott, 95 Breckenwood Way, Sacramento, CA 95864, or via email mottfour@surewest.net, or fax (916) 654-9048.

3) People who submit nominations will receive a response and will be notified as to whether or not their application has been forwarded to the Board.

humor in unicorn



Mixed Metaphors and Malaprops

by **Jeff Price, retired**

Brand name performance.

Behavior is part environment and part generics.

Trodden and soaked.

Hurricane Katrina continues to beat a path on our doorstep.

Is this war now becoming a birth control issue?

Enough of our guys getting blown up! I want to see some Iraqi troops out there looking for those IUD's.

Lucky we have those curb cuts!

We are overspent and have to curb it down a little.

Ten to the Third Power

We should ask the Governor to explain this bill, since he is the primary exponent.

GET CONNECTED

CSPRA Online: Catch up on CSPRA activities, contact your District Reps, Board or Officers, get latest information www.cspra.com

EXECUTIVE MANAGER



by **Laura Svensgaard**
CSPRA Executive Manager

The past couple of months have provided sweet reminders of why those who dedicate their lives to California State Parks are so special. Three days at the Board Retreat in mid-August, and I witnessed a small group of your peers (who, like you, face a range of frustrations in the course of their careers and aspirations) struggle with how to further the CSPRA mission. Despite the long days and intense discussions, they never, ever wavered in their commitment and aspirations for the organization, state parks and Parks staff they serve. We spent three days filling pages of things we'd like to accomplish, and agonized over priorities and how best to utilize available resources in order to further the CSPRA mission.

And then there was the Retiree Rendezvous. I'd never heard of or met most of those at the gathering in

early October, but it became clear within a couple of hours that, in many ways, I had known all of them for some time. The faces and names were different, but the integrity, the conscientious nature, the compassion, good humor and camaraderie were all there. Quickly, even for me (technically an "outsider"), it felt like a gathering of old friends. It was a time to share meals, and laughs, a little sorrow, and just to revel in each others' company for a few days.

Retired or not, if you haven't been to a Retiree Rendezvous, I'd encourage you to join us next year. It is inspiring. It is energizing. It leaves you with a feeling similar to having your favorite comfort food on a cold rainy day, just to enjoy the company of some pretty wonderful folks that we all have a lot in common with. What a treat!

THIS CUP COULD BE YOURS!

All contributors to the WAVE receive a stainless steel CSPRA travel mug in appreciation. Send articles to wave@cspra.com



GRAYBEARS



Attention retired members! Want to keep in touch after you leave DPR? Join the GrayBears list server. It is FREE and EASY to use. Just send your name and email address to: graybears@cspra.com

Do you know someone who is retiring?

CSPRA provides a plaque for each member when they retire. Contact us at (800) 749-8749, or email executivemanager@CSPRA.com, or write to CSPRA, P.O. Box 2132, Newport, OR 97365





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Mission Statement

The California State Park Rangers Association is an organization of park professionals dedicated to advancement of the highest principles of public service, and established to support, protect, and defend the integrity of State Parks for present and future generations.



Founded 1964