

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE 2011 ANNUAL REPORT



The mission of the Marin Conservation League is to preserve, protect and enhance the natural assets of Marin County



I am pleased to present the 2011 Annual Report of the Marin Conservation League summarizing the year's activities, financial status and supporters. It is because of you, our members and

supporters, that we were able to do as much we did and end the year in a financially stable condition.

Governments at all levels are slowly recuperating from a crippling recession, and the need to continue to economize will impact our highly valued natural resources. Short cuts to planning and loss of enforcement personnel on public lands have taken their toll. It is imperative that MCL remain engaged in the public process. Our Issue Committees continue to monitor local actions. The Land Use and Transportation, Water and Watershed, Parks and Open Space and Climate Action committees are active in their respective areas of interest. At the end of 2011, the threat of closure of China Camp and Olompali State Parks was looming. MCL continued working toward efforts to keep these parks open.

As you review the activities throughout 2011, keep in mind that all the issues committees are run by volunteers and provide stimulating interaction. The committees are open for participation by any member, so please drop on in! If you do not see a committee covering a topic you feel is important, you can take an active role in developing and maintaining a new group.

I would like to thank you, our members and supporters, for your continuing interest in providing the needed backing to the dedicated and talented members of our Board of Directors and staff. Together we can provide the stewardship to keep our county the sanctuary it is for humans and wildlife for years to come.

I hope to see you at the Picnic on the Porch on Saturday, July 28, from noon to three.

Susan Stompe
Susan Stompe, President

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31, 2011 (PREPARED FROM MCL RECORDS)

	<u>Unrestricted</u> (Operations)	<u>Temp. Restricted</u> (Projects/Dedict'd)	<u>Board Restricted</u> (Legacy of the Land)	<u>Total</u>
SUPPORT AND REVENUE				
Support				
Membership	\$79,352			\$79,352
Contributions	\$50,306	\$11,309		\$61,615
Special Events & Miscellaneous	\$21,932			\$21,932
Total Support	\$151,590	\$11,309		\$162,899
Revenue				
Interest & Dividend Income	\$10,466		\$29,590	\$40,057
Sales of Inventory less costs	\$96			\$96
Miscellaneous Income	\$23			\$23
Total Revenue	\$10,585		\$29,590	\$40,175
Transfers				
LOL Support for Operations	\$57,489		(\$57,489)	
Transfer Donations to LOL	-\$250		\$250	
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	\$17,935	(\$17,935)		
Total Transfers	\$75,173	(\$17,935)	(\$57,239)	\$0
Total Support, Revenue & Transfers	\$237,349	(\$6,625)	(\$27,649)	\$203,075
EXPENSES				
Program Services	\$168,483			\$168,483
Management & General	\$34,374			\$34,374
Fundraising	\$33,519			\$33,519
Total Expenses	\$236,376	\$0	\$0	\$236,376
Results from operations	\$973	(\$6,625)	(\$27,649)	(\$33,301)
Investment Gain, Realized & Unrealized	\$4,187	\$0	\$40,652	(\$36,465)
Change in Equity	\$5,160	(\$6,625)	(\$68,301)	(\$69,766)
Total Equity, Start of 2011	\$320,079	\$69,637	\$1,324,177	\$1,713,893
Total Equity, Year End 2011	\$325,239	\$63,012	\$1,255,876	\$1,644,127

The Statement of Activities above summarizes MCL's financial results for the 2011 calendar year for each of the funds maintained by MCL and for the organization as a whole. The figures are from MCL's books and records and are unaudited.

The financial data is organized in three funds: The Unrestricted (Operations) Fund supports the income and expense for MCL's environmental advocacy and education programs. The Temporarily Restricted (Projects) Fund records MCL's management of more than seven separate funds which are dedicated to specific projects or uses. The Board Restricted (Legacy of the Land) Fund records the income and expenditures of MCL's endowment fund. The income from this fund provides ongoing support for MCL's programs.

MCL's results in 2011 were adversely affected by declining investment values and reduced support for projects. This year MCL recorded \$36,465 in investment losses compared to a gain of \$175,058 in 2010. Similarly, support of the project funds in 2011 was \$11,309, compared to \$26,260 in 2010.

Your support of MCL's environmental work has helped make MCL's 78 years of success possible and we thank you for it.



JANUARY

☼ Recommended that flights over Tomales Bay below 1,000 feet be restricted in amendments to **National Marine Sanctuaries** regulations, and supported adding Tomales Bay to the Gulf of the Farallones Sanctuary sensitive habitat zone.

☼ Noted the Final EIR failed to offer an environmentally superior alternative on the controversial proposal to develop 13 very large residences on the **Alta Robles** site, Paradise Drive in Tiburon.

☼ Raised questions about a project proposed in the **Richardson Bay flood plain**, an opportunity to encourage the county to begin planning for areas vulnerable to sea level rise.

☼ Urged both California Senators to support new EPA **Clean Air** standards.

FEBRUARY

☼ Expressed concerns that the Final EIR for rehabilitation of **Sir Francis Drake Blvd.** through Samuel P. Taylor State Park failed to fully prevent runoff from polluting Lagunitas Creek or loss of and damage to mature redwood trees.

☼ Hosted a Business-Environment Breakfast featuring a presentation on the California State Budget by **State Senator Mark Leno**.

☼ Supported Bay Conservation and Development Commission's proposed climate change amendments to the **Bay Plan**, and applauded the Commission's efforts to educate the Bay Region on the need to plan for sea level rise.

☼ Urged the **SMART Board** to use its shift in management as an opportunity to reevaluate the commuter rail project and funding, and to assure greater transparency in procedures.

☼ Led a walk into the conservation history of **Hamilton Field**, former Air Base, heard about its successful conservation efforts by local activists, and learned about the extensive marsh restoration project.

MARCH

☼ Requested the County to deny the application to waive Design Review for subdivision of **Rocking H Ranch I** in Lucas Valley to build four new homes; and critically reviewed a pre-application proposal to subdivide the adjacent Rocking H Ranch II for 34 home sites.

☼ Urged Senator Mark Leno and Assemblyman Jared Huffman to oppose SB 241 and other measures that would roll back environmental protections under the **California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)**.

APRIL

☼ Conducted **MCL's Annual Meeting**, featuring keynote speaker Dr. Peter Gleick, President of the Pacific Institute and a leading expert on global water resources.

☼ Led a walk into the conservation history of **Ring Mountain** to learn how the area was saved from urban development and to experience the geology, flora, fauna and views of this unique Open Space Preserve.

MAY

☼ Criticized the Draft EIR for the Belve-

dere-Tiburon Library expansion for failing to adequately mitigate impacts on **Railroad Marsh** and for reducing the Town's wetland buffer policy to allow expanded parking.

☼ Co-sponsored a **public forum on affordable housing issues**, moderated by Supervisor Susan Adams, with the Marin Environmental Housing Collaborative and the League of Women Voters.

JUNE

☼ Communicated to the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) MCL's concern about the lack of opportunity for meaningful input by Bay Area communities into ABAG's Initial Vision Scenario for the **Sustainable Communities Strategy**.

☼ Requested the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers deny a permit application for a dredge material offload facility proposed at **Port Sonoma** on the Petaluma River until completion of a full EIR.

☼ Opposed TAM's withdrawal of **\$8 million** from future local transportation funds to reduce SMART's funding shortfall, in view of local needs for bus, bicycle, pedestrian and road project funding.

☼ Held a Business and Environment Breakfast forum featuring **Superintendents of Marin's two national parks**—Point Reyes National Seashore, and Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

☼ Objected to the California Department of Parks and Recreation about its deficient public notice and inadequate EIR on its proposed Change of Use and Improvement Project on **Bills' Trail** at Samuel P. Taylor State Park.



JULY

☼ Testified in support of California Coastal Commission staff recommendations and conditions of approval for **Lawson's Land-ing** Master Plan, to limit camping areas, remove fixed trailers, protect red-legged frog habitat, and provide additional protections for the Tomales wetland-dune complex.

☼ Provided advice to Marin Municipal Water District on its plan to establish a non-profit **Friends of Mt. Tamalpais** in support of educational programs, habitat restoration, and other watershed activities.

☼ Questioned the adequacy of the Draft EIR for the **Hanna Ranch** hotel and office development, placing particular emphasis on the need to protect the adjoining wetlands.

☼ Urged Representative Woolsey and Senators Boxer and Feinstein to reject any amendments to **HR 2584**, the 2012 Interior and Environment Appropriations Bill that would gut environmental protections.

AUGUST

☼ Supported the Tiburon Planning Commission's recommendations that the number and size of residences in the **Alta Robles** plan on Paradise Drive be reduced, and urged conditions minimizing impacts to sensitive plant species, wetlands, and important ridgelines.

☼ Led a walk into the conservation history at **Tomales Bay State Park**, guided by Carlos Porrata, retired State Park Ranger.

SEPTEMBER

☼ Recommended to the State Water Resources Control Board that its proposed revisions to the **Statewide General Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit** provide flexibility for jurisdictions to comply according to specific local needs.

☼ Supported BCDC's revised climate change amendments to the **Bay Plan**, but recommended stronger acknowledgment of environmental benefits and clarity in addressing sea level rise.

☼ Urged Governor Brown to sign **AB 42**, allowing the State Parks and Recreation Dept. to enter into operating agreements with local non-profit entities to keep local state parks open.

☼ Supported the State Coastal Conservancy's contribution toward acquisition of the 20-acre **Morrison property** by Marin County Parks as an addition to Giacomini Open Space Preserve.

☼ Sponsored four sites for **Coastal Clean-up Day**: Mahon Creek and Starkweather Shoreline Park in San Rafael, Sausalito shoreline, and Novato's Scottsdale Pond.

☼ Urged Senators Boxer and Feinstein and Assembly Member Huffman to oppose **HR 1837**, the San Joaquin Valley Water Reliability Act amending the Central Valley Project, as irreversibly damaging to the S.F. Bay and Delta wildlife and fisheries.

☼ Held a Business and Environment Breakfast forum featuring **County Supervisor Kate Sears** and a panel on green job skill training and related programs that promote sustainable businesses and jobs in Marin.

☼ Participated in the public scoping for the **Americas Cup 34** Environmental Assessment for the National Park Service, Presidio Trust, U.S. Coast Guard, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

☼ Successfully argued in favor of the City of Novato joining **Marin Energy Authority**.

☼ Identified wildlife and neighborhood disturbance as issues to be addressed in an Environmental Assessment concerning **Air Tour Management Plans** being developed by FAA and National Park Service and covering airspace over Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), Muir Woods and other federal park lands.

OCTOBER

☼ Requested additional time for the County Planning Commission to complete its recommendations on the extensive Draft **Local Coastal Plan** documents.

☼ Convened environmental groups in Marin and Sonoma Counties in an appeal to the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

What the Annual Report Doesn't Tell You

As you read through the list of activities in this Annual Report for 2011, you may notice that an important piece is missing. Throughout you will find active verbs like "urge," "recommend," "support," "critique," and so on. How does MCL actually carry out these verbs? That is, what actions do we take to relate MCL's views of support, advice, recommendation, opposition, or other positions, such that they will influence public decisions and benefit the environment?

Well, we write letters—endless letters—to decision makers; we follow-up by appearing and testifying at council, commission, and board hearings and other public meetings; we meet with supervisors, legislators, and other officials behind the scenes in small groups or as individuals; we lobby in whatever form that might take; we write op-ed columns to local papers; we cover important issues in our Newsletter in some depth and send out "e-blasts" to our members to encourage

action on important topics; and we read, analyze, and discuss massive planning and environmental documents and submit comments, for example, on the scope of EIRs, on the alternatives that should be considered, on whether all significant impacts have been identified and adequately mitigated (too often the answer is "No"!); and on the sufficiency of the responses we get to our comments. In voting season, we pass out petitions and leaflets. And occasionally, if we need to, we hire a lawyer—that is, if all other, more conciliatory approaches aren't working.

So behind each term of support, recommendation, or opposition in this list lie many possible actions, all of which take time and commitment by relatively few individuals, supported by MCL's history and tradition. We do this out of a deep conviction that citizen action can be effective in shaping our world.



of the county zoning board's approval of an offloading dredge material facility at **Port Sonoma**, with disposal on Carneros Ranch.

- Submitted a list of environmental issues to be addressed in the EIR for the **Marin General Hospital** Replacement Project.

- Met with Congresswoman Woolsey's staff to elicit support in requiring an EIR on the **Port Sonoma/Carneros Ranch** Project.

- Successfully persuaded Marin County Parks and MMWD to work with mountain bikers in rerouting the annual **Thanksgiving "Appetite Ride"** to avoid multiple crossings of San Anselmo Creek and damage to threatened steelhead habitat in Cascade Canyon.

- Commented on the Negative Declaration for the proposed **Stafford Lake Bike Park**, voicing concerns about erosion, dust, water quality, and related issues.

- Identified deficiencies in State Parks and Recreation's Recirculated Draft EIR for the **Bills' Trail** Change of Use and Improvement Project in Samuel P. Taylor Park.

NOVEMBER

- Contested the completeness of the Final EIR on the **Hanna Ranch** project in Novato and challenged the City Council on its intent to vacate a floating easement on the property that would retain a possible future connection between Rowland Blvd. and Highway 37.

- Supported Representative Woolsey's bill **HR 192** to expand the Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries.

- Commented on the GGNRA and Muir

Woods National Monument **Draft General Management Plan** and EIS, reaffirming MCL's preference for the "Preserving and Enjoying Coastal Ecosystems" Alternative, which places greatest emphasis on protection and restoration of ecosystems.

- Criticized the Final EIR for the **San Rafael Airport Recreation Facility**, before the San Rafael Planning Commission, for failing to consider a less environmentally damaging alternative.

- Requested that the Board of Directors of **SMART** seek voter reaffirmation of a redefined project with numerous changes since 2008: e.g., shorter route, smaller ridership, delayed starting date, eliminated stations, and altered quiet zones.

- In hearings before the Novato City Council, identified numerous inconsistencies between city policies and the **Hanna Ranch** project.

DECEMBER

- Donated \$1000** to Marin County Parks for acquisition of the Morrison property to protect rare manzanita species and habitat of northern spotted owl.

- Supported the Point Reyes National Seashore EIS Alternative that would extend the oyster farm permit in **Drakes Estero** for ten years at the current footprint, while seeking to reduce impacts to the ecosystem.

- Identified deficiencies in the Draft Supplement to the **Grady Ranch/Big Rock Ranch** Final EIR before the Planning Commission, and requested imposition of effective mitigations to reduce impacts on the neighboring community and on downstream resources of Miller Creek.

- Encouraged the Board of Supervisors to adopt amendments to the **Development Code**: (1) calculate densities at the low end of the range for the Ridge and Upland Greenbelt and Baylands Corridor, consistent with the Countywide Plan; and (2) provide an interim ordinance reducing the number of trees to two that can be removed annually without a permit.

- Aided by legal advice and in partnership with Marin Audubon Society, Sierra Club Sonoma Group, Sonoma Environmental Action, and Black Point Improvement Club, requested the Sonoma Board of Supervisors to require that an EIR be prepared for the **Port Sonoma/Carneros Ranch** dredge material project.

- Supported alternative B, option 2, of the **GGNRA Marin Equestrian Stables Plan** and Environmental Assessment, which would allow three existing stable facilities to remain if managed to protect natural resources.

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 C. Delos Putz
 Slide Ranch
 Spinnaker
 Sue and Bob Spofford
 Upper Crust Pies
 West Point Inn
 Greg Zitney

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MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE 2011 ANNUAL REPORT



Marin Conservation League (MCL) works to preserve and protect the natural resource values and assets of Marin, focusing its action on issues of county-wide significance or issues which may prove to be precedent-setting.

MCL places particular emphasis on those issues having important land use implications or impacts on Marin's environment and quality of life.

MCL looks for effective solutions through its own advocacy efforts as well as through working in close collaboration with other organizations to address major environmental challenges and concerns in Marin.

MCL is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. All donations and dues are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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