



Forest Communiqué

The Voice of Forest Unlimited

Winter 2017

Tragic Fires

It was with great sadness that we watched our forests and woodlands go up in smoke, and unfathomable to think that so many friends and supporters lost property, pets, family, and peace of mind. Forest Unlimited sends our sincerest condolences to all who have lost property or loved ones in the widespread blazes that rushed through our counties in November of 2017.

The Future

As we grapple with these losses, it is natural to begin to start thinking about the future.

How should we respond? If you visualize a teeter totter with two 45 pound kids on it, the teeter totter stays relatively balanced—like our ecosystems generally were before climate change and other modifications of the natural world.

With climate change, the teeter totter is off balance as if a fifty pound boulder was placed on one side. Will making modest changes to building materials or codes while at the same time removing even more trees bring back the balance we need to reverse climate change and thus protect us from future devastating fires? Of course not. That would be like adding a ten pound boulder to each side of an uneven teeter totter perpetuating a system that is still very out of balance.

In an effort to do something, we are hearing more and more about vegetation removal, removal of dead and dying trees, fuel reduction, creating a 100 or 200-foot tree-free buffer between structures and "natural" areas, salvage logging, "thinning" by private companies, etc. Notwithstanding the fact that many times, fires are caused by accidental, negligent, or intentional acts, trees not only don't cause fires, they trap the destructive gas carbon dioxide—CO₂—which can make fires worse.

*"95% of California's wildfires caused by people! One Less Spark means One Less Wildfire" - Cal Fire 2017 **

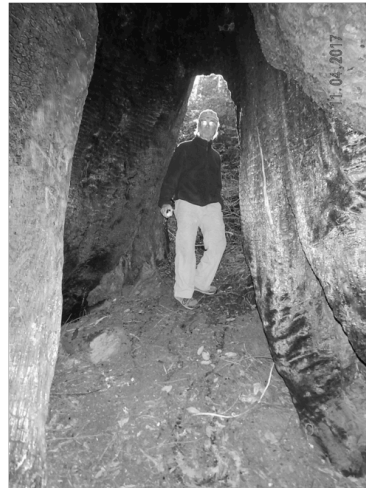
Before we flatten the landscape in an attempt to make it fireproof, we should put these harmful fires into perspective.

More and older trees will reduce the risk of massive fires by capturing fog and moisture from the air, shading grasses and soils from penetrating heat of the sun, restoring micro climates,

and jump starting a cooling effect that will help prevent the devastating dehydration of plants.

Older trees cannot be replaced in a meaningful time frame although they are the most fire resistant. Not only does preserving trees cost nothing, but this can be enhanced by smarter building codes, using fireproof building materials, appropriately sited development, and prevention of human caused fires. Mature woodlands, forests, and trees are key to reducing risks, preventing the severe heating of vegetation making it ripe for any

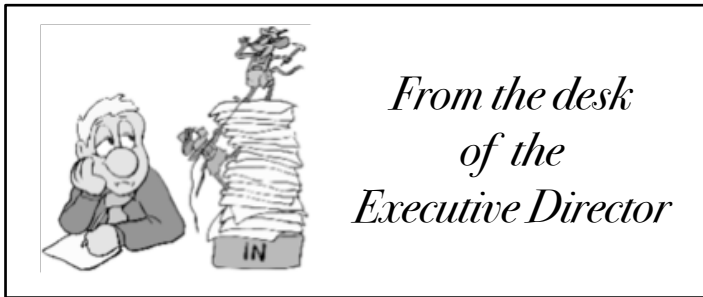
spark to ignite, and key to a diverse and resilient landscape. To regain the balance we need, new woodlands and forests must be planted to replace those that have been removed in the past thus contributing to the impacts of climate change.



Redwoods trees resist fires. The inner core can burn, but the bark and other live parts of the tree resist fire and live on for hundreds of years. - Richardson Grove, CA

What is Inside

- ✓ Our annual redwood tree planting: Volunteers can now sign up for early January planting at Ocean Song
- ✓ Cal Fire approved the Felta Creek logging plan
- ✓ Dogwood logging plan in Gualala River is back
- ✓ Renewed Napa Initiative to protect woodlands
- ✓ Urban forestry in the Roseland Neighborhood



Above Ground Electrical Wires?

What I am about to write should in no way demean the brave and hardworking PG&E employees who worked under terrible conditions to restore power to our citizens. The fires were certainly not their fault. They are heroes and "sheroes".

Critics are blaming PG&E management, however, for several of our devastating fires. If PG&E started the Tubbs fire, it would not be their first such fire in Sonoma County. A down wire started a fire near Bodega Bay and electrocuted a Sonoma County fireman working to put it out. The last large fire on the Jenner Headlands is officially known as the PG&E Fire!

PG&E was not directly responsible for the terrific winds that whipped the fires into fast moving infernos. But we do know that global warming enhances the frequency and severity of winds. We also know that the burning of fossil fuels is the cause of global warming. And we know that PG&E still sells electricity generated by burning fossil fuels. Indeed, it also sells a fossil fuel: natural gas.

Critics are quick to blame PG&E for a "lack of maintenance" of power lines. Their solution to the danger posed by power lines is to trim and cut trees near the lines. But we have seen many fires started when lines are blown down by high winds even when there were no trees nearby. Remember, these trees absorb the excess carbon dioxide which causes global warming. Do we really want to make global warming worse? Cutting more trees to protect aerial lines has never worked.

Who will monitor a corporation like PG&E to make sure they keep limbs away from power lines and replace rotting poles? History has shown that we cannot depend on the Public Utilities Commission to make PG&E behave. The Commission failed to require proper inspection of gas pipelines. The PUC actually tried to minimize the cost to PG&E when their poorly maintained pipeline in San Bruno blew up, burning homes and killing people.

Additional "maintenance" doesn't address the other social and monetary costs associated with poles. They are a traffic hazard and a target for drunk drivers. They are vulnerable to wind and lightening. They are a hazard to

construction crews.

It is time to realize that power lines strung on poles are unreliable, dangerous and inherently ugly. **The real solution is clear: power lines should be safely put underground.**

PG&E will, of course, scream that it is too expensive to underground lines. In the short term maybe, but in the long term, PG&E may save money on maintenance, insurance, lawsuits and PUC fines. But PG&E's expenses are but a tiny fraction of the full costs.

Who is accounting for the lives, homes, jobs and billions of dollars lost by the public due to fires? Who pays the cost of limited communication and interrupted power when fires burn down poles and melt power and telephone lines? Who is calculating the costs of decimating whole forests for power poles? What about those lightening strikes on transformers perched atop those poles, you know, the one that fried your phone machine or computer. There are even less tangible costs to property values when ugly wires mar the view.

PG&E's corporate management routinely offloads costs to the public that rightfully belong to PG&E. Why? In order to increase short-term profits for its investors and its CEO's salaries. The corporate system has been designed that way over time. **Why indeed, should a**

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www.forestunlimited.org

Forest Unlimited is a 501 (c)(3) organization whose purpose is to protect, enhance, and restore forests and watersheds.

Forest Unlimited educates the public about logging plan review, forestry law, and regulation.

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Felta Creek Plan Approved!

The Healdsburg area logging plan through which the biologically critical Felta Creek flows, was approved by CalFire. Logging has not commenced.

PLEASE call the County Board of Supervisors at 707-565-2241 and urge them to kick the conservation alternative into high gear. The landowners have the land on the market for resale.

The public should own this important acreage or at least own the development and timber rights.

Avoiding illegal TAKE of listed species requires fully protecting their last remaining habitat. Felta Creek Road is a small one lane road with incoming and outgoing residential traffic and an elementary school at the bottom of the road.



Felta Creek Road, a narrow, one lane road will be used by large logging trucks if the plan is not stopped.

Please contact the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors to tell them to move quickly on a conservation solution to this problem. They have had ample notice, and now it is time to protect this last little stream from big logging. Refer to logging plan: 1-17-017SON.

Thank you.

To access all Supervisors, call: 707-565-2241

SAVE THE DATE!

Join Us for Our Summer BBQ Dinner
Saturday, June 30, 3-6 pm
Anderson Hall, Camp Meeker

Dogwood Logging Plan is Back!

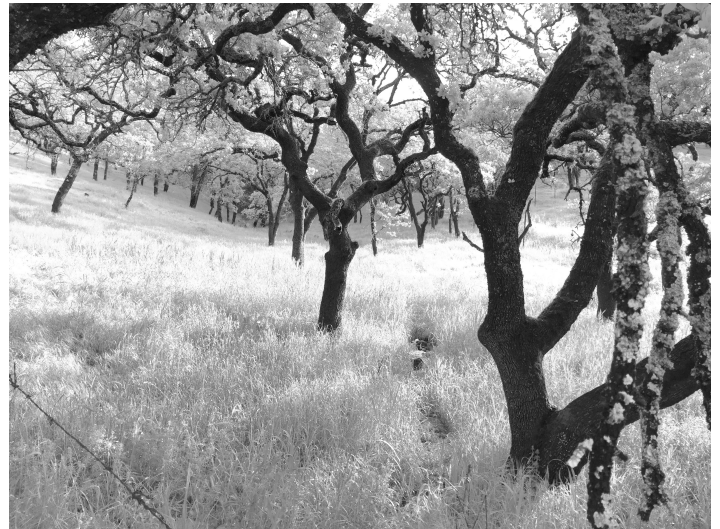
At the time of this writing, public comments are being accepted until November 27. If public comments get extended due to public pressure, please visit Friends of the Gualala River (www.gualalariver.org) where you can get details on what and how to comment to the record. This summer's victory in court forced Gualala River Timber, Inc. to take into account the cumulative impact of Dogwood and other logging plans along the river. This and other issues like climate change will be addressed by legal staff.

Napa County Watershed and Oak Woodland Protection Initiative

The initiative will establish "no-cut" buffer zones for forests along streams and wetlands.

It will strengthen existing standards to require a 3:1 ratio for replacing or preserving oak trees when oaks are lost to development. This is better for the ecosystems that depend on these trees, and better for the climate, too! (because healthy forests sequester carbon dioxide and lock away carbon in woody biomass.

The initiative will establish an Oak Removal Limit. The limit takes effect when 795 additional acres of oak woodlands have been removed. This acreage limit takes



Napa County oak woodlands

into consideration the historic rate of local woodland removal associated with new vineyard development, in accordance with the General Plan's projection of 10,000 acres of new vineyards to be developed by 2030.

Please note that tree removal in accordance with federal, state and local agencies is allowed for fire protection and other hazards.

Our 2018 Tree Planting

It's almost time for Forest Unlimited's January, 2018 Reforestation Redwood Tree Planting. If you were one of the more than 100 volunteers who planted with us last January (see "2017 Redwood Planting" below) , thank you once again! By late summer, we had a nearly 100% seedling survival thanks to your work and helped by more than a bit from the rains last winter.

In this 21st year of tree planting, we will add hundreds more redwood seedlings to the nearly 30,000 trees planted in protected areas across Sonoma County through the last decades.

We're inviting you to come reforest and restore the land with us, either for the first time or as a valued volunteer through the years. As always, training will be provided so no experience necessary. This is a fun event; individuals, groups and families are encouraged.

When: Early January. Exact dates will be determined and sent to all interested volunteers.

Please contact Elaine Wellin at action@norcalearth.org or call 707 523-1415 to be put on the list. We have had to turn away volunteers in the past for this popular activity. Please reserve by December 15, 2017.



One of 1200 redwood seedlings planted and growing, 2016

We'll send a confirmation of your response and get back to you with the dates and details of the planting at Ocean Song located outside of Occidental.

Elaine Wellin, for the Forest Unlimited Reforestation Committee



Excited volunteers on their way to the planting sites

Volunteers sign up now

Forest Unlimited's
2018 Tree Planting
Contact Elaine Wellin
action@norcalearth.org
or call 707-523-1415

2017 Redwood Planting a Success!

In early January, 2017 about 100 Forest Unlimited, SRJC and St. Dorothy's Rest volunteers planted 1,300 one year old redwood seedlings at St. Dorothy's in Camp Meeker.

So, how did we do? Great! Seedling survival rate by mid-August was a phenomenal 98%! A crew of six surveyed 815 seedlings from differing planting areas and found virtually all of them green and vigorous, standing inches taller, even within the year. With a substantial 63% sample, 98% says the 2017 planting was a clear success.

Thanks to everyone who participated and supported the effort to reforest Sonoma County, one seedling at a time.

Urban Forestry: Roseland 2017

Over 20 people from Roseland helped on the “Make a Difference Day” efforts for the Roseland Neighbor Wood and Roseland Creek held in October of 2017. They were part of a larger Roseland Beautification effort held in collaboration with the Community Action Partnership and Land Paths. They worked for two hours on a nice day to help clear trash and debris which had been collecting in the creek bed since the first rain of the season. They also helped in the Neighbor Wood to make it as nice and clean as it has been all year.

It was one of the larger Make a Difference Day efforts in Roseland going back to the late 1990s into the turn of the century when Roseland residents first organized to protect the Roseland Neighbor Wood from destruction.

At the Roseland School campus, there had been a discussion to take out the Redwood trees lining the school yard along Sunset Avenue due to construction. After discussions at the Roseland School Board, only some trees were slated to be removed for new driveways to be put into place for the million dollar project.

Previously in September of 2017 in the Roseland Library, there had been a meeting of the Santa Rosa Recreation and Parks Department planning staff to talk with Roseland residents about the fate of the Roseland Neighbor Wood. At the time of the meetings there were a number of people there in favor of keeping the area as a Nature Preserve, though city staff want a dog park there. Also the staff want to take out the proposed Pomo Indian Interpretive Village first proposed by local community residents over a decade ago. This did not sit well with some members of the local Sonoma County Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) who attended the meeting.

The group also held a recruiting event the same day. It was called “Remedies for Roseland”. There they talked of how “the Roseland Community” should have an opportunity to plan for parks and name parks for the people in the community who have helped Roseland in the past. Petitions were passed around for gathering signatures to support naming the new park to be built at Paseo Vista in honor of Joe and Ray Lazinni who lived nearby for over 50 years. Also there is a petition to name a park in honor of Platt Williams one of the founders of the local NAACP chapter and longtime Roseland resident and community activist before the turn of the century.

Pomo Park is another name people are seeking to have put on to the Pomo Interpretive Village at 1400 Burbank Avenue on Roseland Creek because it is easier for kids to say and remember. Now with the entire Roseland neighborhood fully in the city limits of Santa Rosa, there may be a chance to influence some of these decisions. Local residents are urged to contact the city Recreation and Parks Department as well as other departments you may have questions for.

Here is a website about the completed annexation <https://srcity.org/371/Roseland-Area-Annexation>. Also there is an ongoing effort about the final plan for Roseland Creek Bikeway and Greenway which local residents can try to be better informed about. Currently the director of the Recreation and Parks Department position is unfilled so Roseland Review will find more news from the city about this which you can use to participate in the ongoing meetings.

Duane Dewitt

Celebration at Grove of the Old Trees

Landpaths will be celebrating the addition of 15 more acres of redwoods to the existing Old Growth ridgetop grove. Forest Unlimited donated money to help with the acquisition.

The land helps with buffering the old trees, helps with connectivity of habitat and natural landscapes, buffers for fire protection, maintaining a tranquil grove, etc.

As Forest Unlimited members, you are largely responsible for supporting us all these years in preserving old and new trees.

It will be held on Sunday, December 12, 10 am at the Grove on Fitzpatrick Lane outside of Occidental.

PG&E *Cont'd from p. 2*

private, for-profit corporation hold a monopoly on infrastructure so vital to the public?

Perhaps it is time for public ownership of the grid. Let PG&E rent the lines just as Sonoma Clean Power does. With the rent money, start a program to underground old power lines. And make sure all new lines are placed underground.

Please contact your State Legislator and ask him or her to require that California's utility company underground their power lines.

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Save the Date: Summer Dinner under the Redwoods, Sat., June 30

Sign up for eScripts! at Olivers Market in Santa Rosa and Cotati, Fircrest Market in Sebastopol, and Lucky markets. Ask them to direct donations to Forest Unlimited.

Or go to this link and sign up: <http://www.escrip.com/wheretoearn/merchantsearch.jsp>

Clip and mail back with your check in the envelope provided. Thank you!

Become a Member of Forest Unlimited

Your tax-deductible contribution will help fund forestry education programs and forest preservation, protection, and enhancement projects. Members receive newsletters and notification about special events, workshops and logging in their watersheds.

YES! I would like to join Forest Unlimited to further your work! (Dues are tax-deductible as permitted)

__ \$200 __ \$100 __ \$50 __ \$35 Other \$ __

Name _____

Email (for alerts & treeless newsletters) _____

Your watershed _____

Your address _____

City, State, Zip _____