



Protecting Marin Since 1934

# 2016

## ANNUAL REPORT



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



On behalf of Marin Conservation League, I'm happy to introduce our 2016 annual report. In it you'll find our financial results, a compilation of our actions and accomplishments during the year, and, most important, a list of supporters who continue to make it possible for MCL to

carry out its work. We wish we had room to list everyone who contributed this year.

2016 was a year of renewed focus on how MCL can effectively influence local decision-making and increase public understanding of some of the complex environmental issues that we face locally and worldwide. One complex issue is the acceleration of species extinction and increased loss of biodiversity. Working locally, MCL's advocacy promotes conservation and supports specific actions that work against two of the main causes of extinction: habitat loss and climate change.

Among last year's activities and accomplishments, you'll see that, through the work of our volunteer committees and board members, MCL has supported ballot measures and planning efforts that will protect and restore local wetlands and waterways. MCL advocated for the protection of vegetation and wildlife, with an eye toward habitat restoration whenever possible, by actively participating in the County's Road and Trail Management Plan process, supporting and critiquing local jurisdictions' vegetation and biodiversity management plans, supporting the extension of Novato's Urban Growth Boundary, urging support of a San Rafael open space acquisition, and advocating for environmental criteria, whether in locating ground-based solar installations or in determining whether to install synthetic turf.

MCL advocated for and supports Marin's local ranchers [see insert] and a vital, progressive agricultural economy as a way of continuing conservation and stewardship of natural resources in West Marin. And, MCL advocated for climate actions that support change on a local level to an energy economy that relies increasingly on renewable sources, not fossil fuels.

MCL could not be effective without collaboration, with its partners and other local environmental groups, and through the participation, information sharing, and engagement of local agencies. It is collectively – through listening, sharing, debating, and advocating – that we make informed progress.

As we move forward, we welcome our new MCL members, and sincerely thank our continuing members for your ongoing and generous support. Your contributions and your engagement make it possible for MCL to continue to make a difference. We encourage you to participate in committee meetings that interest you, and to attend upcoming programs and events. We hope to see you at our annual Picnic on the Patio on July 22 and at events throughout the year.

*Kate Powers*

## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31, 2016 (PREPARED FROM MCL RECORDS)

	Unrestricted Operations	Temp. Restricted Special Projects & Dedicated Funds	Board Restricted Legacy of the Land Endowment (LOL)	TOTAL
<b>SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>				
<u>Support</u>				
Memberships	\$86,592			\$86,592
Contributions	\$63,953	\$4,615	\$47,586	\$116,154
Grants Received	\$0	\$5,200		\$5,200
Special Events & Miscellaneous	\$14,467			\$14,467
Total Support	\$165,012	\$9,815	\$47,586	\$222,413
<u>Revenue</u>				
Interest & Dividend Income	\$14,760		\$34,108	\$48,868
Miscellaneous Income	\$619			\$619
Total Revenue	\$15,379	\$0	\$34,108	\$49,487
<u>Transfers</u>				
LOL Support for Operations	\$79,525		(\$79,525)	\$0
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	\$15,934	(\$15,934)	\$0	\$0
Total Transfers	\$95,459	(\$15,934)	(\$79,525)	\$0
Total Support, Revenue & Transfers	\$275,850	(\$6,119)	\$2,169	\$271,901
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
Program Services	\$169,906			\$169,906
Management & General	\$22,187			\$22,187
Fundraising	\$42,346			\$42,346
Total Expenses	\$234,439	\$0	\$0	\$234,439
Results from Operations	\$41,412	(\$6,119)	\$2,169	\$37,462
Investment Gain, Realized & Unrealized	\$15,830	\$0	\$109,661	\$125,491
Change in Equity	\$57,241	(\$6,119)	\$111,830	\$162,952
Total Equity, Year End 2015	\$406,134	\$44,136	\$1,578,080	\$2,028,350
Total Equity, Year End 2016	\$463,376	\$38,017	\$1,689,910	\$2,191,303

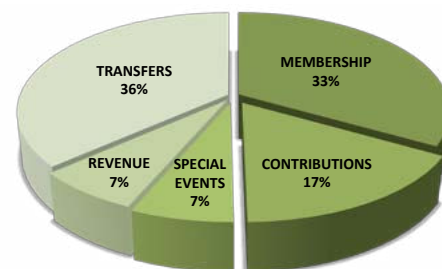
The above Statement of Activities summarizes MCL's 2016 financial results for MCL as a whole and for each of the separate funds maintained by MCL. The figures are from MCL's books and records and are not audited.

MCL has three funds: The Unrestricted Fund supports MCL's operations, environmental advocacy and education programs. The Temporarily Restricted Fund records MCL's management of funds dedicated to specific projects. Finally, the Board Restricted Fund records the income and expenditures of MCL's Legacy of the Land (LOL) endowment. The income from the LOL provides ongoing support for MCL's operations, advocacy and education work.

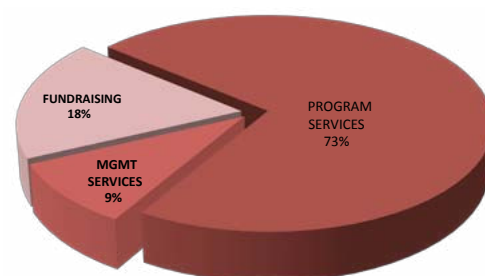
This year both the Unrestricted Fund and the Legacy of the Land had gains. This was a result of a combination of the support of MCL's members, careful office management and a favorable stock market. The Temporarily Restricted Fund showed a small loss reflecting that more was spent on these projects than was received during the year to support them.

As in prior years, MCL thanks its members for their support.

2016 Income—Operations



2016 Expenses—Operations



## JANUARY:

✿ Hosted a Business-Environment Breakfast forum featuring Armando Quintero, member of California's Water Commission and Marin Municipal Water District Board Member, who spoke about the challenges of planning for the \$2.7 billion public benefit piece of the Water Bond designated for water storage projects in California.

✿ Presented talk by coastal restoration expert Stephen Crooks, who outlined the science and the significance of utilizing coastal wetlands for carbon sequestration, also known as "blue carbon."

✿ In a letter to Golden Gate National Recreation Area regarding proposed Realignment of Redwood Creek Trail and the Extension of Dias Ridge Trail, expressed concerns about parking on Shoreline Highway and avoiding conflict among hikers, bikers and horses.

✿ Hosted MMWD Senior Engineer Paul Selli-er's talk on recycled water project alternatives to augment Marin water supplies.

## FEBRUARY:

✿ Supported putting San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority's Measure AA on the June ballot as a Bay Area-wide parcel tax measure to fund wetland restoration, water quality, and flood protection projects.

✿ Authored an opinion piece in the Marin IJ and the Point Reyes Light expressing MCL's support for continued ranching in the pastoral zone of Point Reyes National Seashore.

✿ Submitted letter and testified before the CPUC requesting the Commission to provide opportunity to reconsider fairness of Power Charge Indifference Adjustment (PCIA), a rate applied to customers who choose to receive electric commodity service from third-party service providers, such as community choice

aggregators (CCAs).

✿ Continued to track progress of the Bay-WAVE Vulnerability Assessment, an 18-month study of assets along the Bay shoreline that are vulnerable to sea level rise.

✿ Submitted a letter to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regarding the Corte Madera Creek Flood Control Project EIS/EIR, requesting inclusion of alternatives such as earthen berms and biotechnical measures rather than hard surface retaining walls.

## MARCH:

✿ Proposed a set of environmental and safety criteria to consider when evaluating the use of synthetic turf on school sports fields and other public recreation areas.

✿ Led a Senior Walk to Hamilton Wetlands Restoration project and presented the history of restoring the former 750-acre Hamilton Air Field that was opened to Bay tides in 2014 for the first time in 100 years.

✿ In a letter to the Board of Supervisors and County Administrator, acknowledged the contributions of David Lewis, Marin County Farm Advisor and Executive Director of Marin's University of California Cooperative Extension Office and supported continued funding for the position.

✿ Hosted Water and Watersheds speaker Bill Hogan, recently retired MMWD Chief Ranger, on "The Life of a Watershed Ranger" – a forty-year perspective on the growth of recreational uses on the watershed.

## APRIL:

✿ Conducted MCL's 19th Walk into History to the West Peak of Mt. Tamalpais, with Gary Yost, Mill Valley filmmaker.

✿ Heard presentation by Chris Jones, Program Director of CoolClimate Network, comparing

consumption-based metrics of greenhouse gas emissions with traditional site-based emission metrics and models.

✿ Celebrated 82 years at MCL's Annual Dinner with over 140 members and guests, who heard keynote speaker, Marin author and historian Dewey Livingston, relate the local history of agriculture and its role in shaping Marin.

✿ In a joint effort with Friends of Corte Madera Creek, Marin Audubon Society and California Native Plant Society, urged the Board of Supervisors to launch a campaign to reduce public herbicide use in Marin, while continuing to support its limited use as one tool for controlling invasive weeds on county open space preserves.

✿ Collaborated with other Trail Partners in two "Slow Zone" events on MMWD watershed lands to promote safe trail behaviors by all visitors in popular recreation areas.

## MAY:

✿ Studied cumulative impacts of organized recreational events on the natural resources of federal, state and water district lands on Mt. Tam and Marin Headlands and declined to support a proposed 50K ultra-marathon race event.

✿ Urged the Board of Supervisors to extend the position of Urban Streams Coordinator, a valuable resource in the absence of a County-wide Stream Conservation Ordinance.

✿ Hosted Water Series talk by State Water Resources Control Board member Stephen Moore on the functions and authorities of that board, which occupies a key position in maintaining stream flows and protecting water quality in the state's waterways.

✿ Led a Senior Walk to Roy's Redwoods Preserve, Marin's "other Muir Woods," which will be the subject of careful planning for restoration in coming years.





**JUNE:**

- ✿ Led a Senior Walk to Old St. Hilary's Open Space Preserve.
- ✿ Monitored National Park Service's progress in completing tasks outlined in a MOU between NPS and Marin County and intended to relieve traffic congestion and parking on Muir Woods Road and reduce pollutants entering Redwood Creek.
- ✿ In comments to the Federal Aviation Administration regarding the Extension of Runway 13/31 for Gnos Field Airport, reiterated the need for adequate wetland mitigation to fully offset the loss of wetland acreage and value, questioned the extension investment in light of anticipated flooding from future sea level rise, and supported evaluating a 300 ft. extension as preferable to a 1100 ft. extension.
- ✿ Urged the US Army Corps of Engineers in their permit review to consider the value of retaining the existing pond for the Corte Madera Inn Rebuild, which provides habitat for wetland invertebrates and black-crowned

night heron and can serve as a flood storage basin to protect adjacent homes.

- ✿ Submitted a letter to California Department of Fish and Wildlife supporting the use of Proposition 1 Restoration Grant Funds for Trout Unlimited's project to restore a three-mile reach of Millerton Creek that flows through a salt marsh into Tomales Bay.
- ✿ Hosted Water Series speaker Carl Wilcox, California Department of Fish and Wildlife's policy advisor on the Delta, who presented policy alternatives for the proposed San Francisco Bay-Delta "Water Fix" (also known as the "Twin Tunnels" project).

**JULY:**

- ✿ Endorsed efforts by Marin Clean Energy, MCL, and others to advocate for increasing Marin's utility customers' participation in MCE's Deep Green 100% renewables energy program.
- ✿ Challenged Marin County Open Space District's finding of no significant impact on the

endangered Northern spotted owl that could result from anticipated increase in recreational use following improvements to Fairway Trail in Camino Alto Open Space Preserve.

- ✿ Endorsed Proposition 67 on the November ballot, a measure that would ratify Senate Bill 270, which was passed in 2015 to prohibit plastic single use carryout bags.
- ✿ Hosted a talk on the historic distribution, recovery, and ongoing management of Tule Elk in California and Point Reyes National Seashore, presented by tule elk expert Dale McCullough, Ph.D. and convened by MCL's Agricultural Land Use Committee.
- ✿ Entertained over 90 members and guests at MCL's annual summer Picnic on the Patio.
- ✿ Led a Senior Walk in the 139-acre regional Stafford Lake park.

**AUGUST:**

- ✿ Testified at a hearing convened by Assembly Members Marc Levine and Eduardo Garcia in support of proposed measure AB 2444, a \$3.1 billion general obligation bond measure that would fund a wide variety of state, regional and local park projects, flood control, and habitat restoration projects.
- ✿ Opposed Senate Bill 3205, which would open designated federal Wilderness areas to electric mountain bikes, subject to local district discretion.
- ✿ Requested Marin County Open Space District staff to structure public process and CEQA environmental procedures for greater transparency and efficiency in public review of actions under the Road and Trail Management Plan.
- ✿ Recommended to the County Board of Supervisors that planning and revitalization of the Civic Center campus be better coordinated to ensure safe circulation and protection of creeks and the natural environment, while implementing a permanent Farmers' Market.

**SEPTEMBER:**

- ✿ Co-sponsored with other organizations the third in a series of "Lead on Climate" public forums, featuring Representative Jared Huffman and focusing on the upcoming 2016 Election as a possible "tipping point" for climate.
- ✿ Hosted the first two in a series of four Ranching In The Park workshops designed to increase understanding of ranching on the

## Focus on Ranching on the "Seashore"

In 2016, after two years of tracking the slow progress of the preparation of a Ranch Comprehensive Management Plan to consider long-term leases for ranchers in the pastoral zone of Point Reyes National Seashore, MCL embarked on a plan to bring different perspectives on the Plan together.

The outcome was an extraordinarily successful series of workshops – "Ranching in the Park – Not by Accident." A total of four workshops were held last Fall, alternating venues between East and West Marin. A large and engaged audience heard knowledgeable panelists revisit the history of the formation of Point Reyes National Seashore and review the decades of shifting national priorities since the park's authorization in 1962. Ranchers described the satisfactions that have prompted several generations to manage ranches in the park, with all the daily challenges they face as farmers. Other speakers charted the difficult questions that

confront ranchers today as technologies advance and food markets change, bringing the need for new directions and farming practices. And still other speakers provided the context for the federal park within which ranching has persisted – a park that is endowed with a complex geological history, rich biological resources and a unique cultural heritage and is also bound by a constellation of laws and regulations and a 100-year-old national charter.

MCL's stated objective was to educate and enable informed comment when the NPS completes the Ranch Comprehensive Management Plan and an Environmental Assessment. Given the current indeterminate legal state of the draft Plan, this may take some time. The informal objective, however, was for ranchers and non-ranchers to mingle and exchange points of view, and to learn about ranching and the Seashore. On that score, the workshops exceeded expectations!

pastoral zone in the Point Reyes National Seashore (see Box).

- ✿ Led a Senior Walk on trails in the 558 acre Indian Valley Open Space Preserve.

- ✿ Hosted cleanup teams at the Bay Model on the Sausalito waterfront, and Scottsdale Pond, Novato Creek and Warner Creek in Novato, for the 2016 annual California's Coastal Cleanup volunteer event.

- ✿ Continued to participate in meetings of Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) Citizens' Oversight Committee as representative of environmental organizations in Marin.

- ✿ Urged the San Rafael City Council to accept the offer by local residents of Gerstle Park, San Rafael, to dedicate a three-acre area of undeveloped land at the end of Greenwood Avenue for permanent open space.

### OCTOBER:

- ✿ Hosted a presentation by Howard Penn, Executive Director of the California Planning and Conservation League, on Governor Brown's "Housing By Right" proposal and discussed housing alternatives.

- ✿ Submitted letter to the California Coastal Commission recommending support for the County's proposed Marin Local Coastal Plan Amendment definition of ongoing agriculture and limitations on retail sales, processing plant limits and intergenerational housing.

- ✿ Submitted a letter to Marin County Parks supporting Region 3 Draft Road and Trail Designations, including conversion of redundant fire roads to shared-use trails, and commending the department staff for its public outreach.

- ✿ Hosted an Environment-Business Breakfast panel discussion on Integrated Pest Management, with four local speakers.

- ✿ Voted to support Novato's extension of the city's Urban Growth Boundary for another 20 to 30 years, either in the General Plan or as a future ballot measure.

- ✿ Hosted two 'Ranching In The Park' workshops that focused on grazing practices and conservation projects to improve water quality and protect wildlife habitat, and on the future of ranching by the next generation on the Point Reyes National Seashore.

- ✿ Led a Senior Walk to Deer Island Open Space Preserve.



- ✿ Participated as an Exhibitor in the Tamalpais Lands Collaborative (One Tam) two-day "2016 Mt. Tam Science Summit," a symposium culminating a year of scientific review and research into the ecological health of the Mt. Tam watershed and surrounding public lands.

### NOVEMBER:

- ✿ Testified before the Board of Directors, Marin County Open Space District, urging them to support the ongoing work of District staff on 34 Preserves by adopting the Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Plan and certifying its Tiered Program EIR.

- ✿ Critiqued MMWD's just-released Wildfire Protection and Wildlife Habitat Improvement Plan and submitted scoping comments for the Environmental Impact Report, requesting that an alternative that would utilize herbicides where warranted to protect rare species and reduce wildfire hazard also be analyzed.

- ✿ Urged Senator Mike McGuire to sponsor opportunities to increase public transparency of planning efforts by the State Route 37 Policy Committee, which is considering alternatives to address traffic congestion and impacts of future sea level rise on S.R. 37.

- ✿ In a letter to Corte Madera Planning and Building Department regarding the Restoration Hardware Expansion Project EIR, raised issues such as traffic, impacts of future sea level rise, and the capacity of the new parking lot to filter pollutants before runoff reaches adjacent wetlands.

### DECEMBER:

- ✿ Submitted comments to MMWD supporting conservation as the preferred option in the District's year-long study of additional water supply options that could meet needs in a severe drought or under other emergency conditions.

- ✿ In a letter to State Water Resources



Control Board, commended the State for its efforts to improve the health of San Francisco Bay-Delta estuary by increasing inflows into the Delta, and urged the Board to increase the initial 40% instream flow standard to 60%, as recommended by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

- ✿ Urged Marin County Community Development Agency to develop policies to guide review of proposed ground-based solar installations, including protection of vegetation and wildlife habitat.

- ✿ Entertained over 90 members and guests at the annual MCL Holiday Party.

## 2016-2017

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# MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE 2016 ANNUAL REPORT



## *A Legacy of Conservation*

*MCL played a major role in preserving and protecting many of Marin's most stunning and well-loved landscapes.*

Marin Conservation League (MCL) works to preserve and protect the natural resource values and assets of Marin, focusing its action on issues of countywide 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.

This Annual Report is printed in Marin on recycled paper. Text by Nona Dennis. Design and production by Kirsten Nolan. Photos by Kirsten Nolan, Dru Parker, and Kate Powers. Cover photo by Judy Betz.