



Protecting Marin Since 1934

2015

ANNUAL REPORT



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



I'm proud to present Marin Conservation League's 2015 Annual Report. In it you'll find our financial results, a compilation of our actions and activities, and a list of MCL's supporters. (We wish we had room to include everyone who contributed in 2015.)

Throughout the year, in the effort to fulfill MCL's mission to preserve and protect Marin's natural assets and to impact local outcomes, we've advocated at stakeholder meetings, studied local issues, and tracked and commented on local plans, applications, proposed projects, and environmental impact reports. An equally important purpose of MCL is to provide conservation education to our members and the public. This is accomplished, in part, through our Water and Watershed speaker program. Last year's topics ranged from water storage to planning for sea level rise. At MCL's Business and Environment Breakfasts we hosted compelling presentations by pesticide research scientist Dr. Susan Kegley, and by our legislators State Senator Mike McGuire and Congressman Jared Huffman.

2015 also included a continuation of MCL's Walks into Conservation History—hikes in local landscapes accompanied by the stories of human persistence and funding needed to conserve the once privately-owned properties as public lands. In 2015, MCL adapted this popular series to add a Senior Walks into History program, similarly designed to foster environmental awareness while serving the needs of Marin's older population. MCL regularly continues to offer a variety of educational opportunities.

MCL's best-kept secrets, though, were the engaging presentations and collaboration that typically occur at our committee meetings. In an effort to break down silos and foster communication, MCL committee chairs actively seek and bring together environmental leaders, scientists, and directors from local government and public agencies. To view future committee agendas, minutes from previous meetings, or MCL's communications, positions, and policies, visit marinconservationleague.org.

MCL's mix of veteran and new Board members kept, and continues to keep, the organization anchored, vibrant, and strong. But Marin Conservation League would not thrive without the support and participation of its partners and all of its contributors. Thank you!

Kate Powers

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31, 2015 (PREPARED FROM MCL RECORDS)

	Unrestricted Operations	Temp. Restricted Special Projects & Dedicated Funds	Board Restricted Legacy of the Land Endowment (LOL)	TOTAL
SUPPORT AND REVENUE				
<u>Support</u>				
Membership	\$95,661			\$95,661
Contributions	\$47,367	\$6,253	\$500	\$54,121
Grants Received	\$0	\$5,100		\$5,100
Special Events & Miscellaneous	\$19,260			\$19,260
Total Support	\$162,288	\$11,353	\$500	\$174,142
<u>Revenue</u>				
Interest & Dividend Income	\$19,133		\$33,308	\$52,442
Sales of Inventory less costs	\$27			\$27
Miscellaneous Income	\$956			\$956
Total Revenue	\$20,116	\$0	\$33,308	\$53,425
<u>Transfers</u>				
LOL Support for Operations	\$76,173		(\$76,173)	\$0
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	\$29,316	(\$29,316)	\$0	\$0
Total Transfers	\$105,489	(\$29,316)	(\$76,173)	\$0
Total Support, Revenue & Transfers	\$287,894	(\$17,963)	(\$42,365)	\$227,566
EXPENSES				
Program Services	\$201,021			\$201,021
Management & General	\$22,042			\$22,042
Fundraising	\$51,094			\$51,094
Total Expenses	\$274,157	\$0	\$0	\$274,157
Results from Operations	\$13,737	(\$17,963)	(\$42,365)	(\$46,591)
Investment Gain, Realized & Unrealized	(\$17,779)	\$0	(\$37,796)	(\$55,575)
Change in Equity	(\$4,043)	(\$17,963)	(\$80,160)	(\$102,166)
Total Equity, Year End 2014	\$410,176	\$62,099	\$1,658,241	\$2,130,516
Total Equity, Year End 2015	\$406,134	\$44,136	\$1,578,080	\$2,028,350

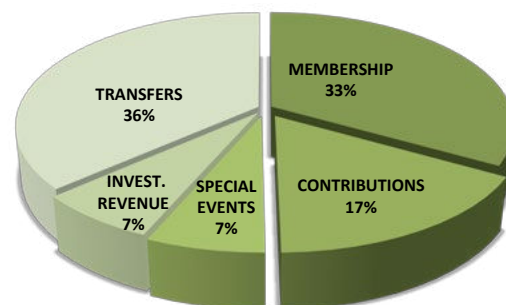
The above Statement of Activities summarizes MCL's 2015 financial results for MCL as a whole and for each of the separate funds maintained by MCL. The figures are from MCL's books and records and are not audited.

MCL maintains 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 the Legacy of the Land (LOL) endowment. The income from the LOL provides ongoing support for MCL's operations.

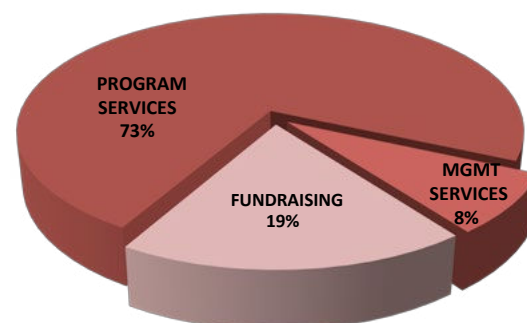
Exclusive of changes in value of its investments, MCL's operating revenue exceeded the cost of MCL's operations during the year. However, the Temporarily Restricted Fund, the LOL and MCL had a loss because the payments from these funds and MCL as a whole exceeded their receipts and investment income and gains during the year. Over half of the loss was due solely to a decline in the market value of MCL's investments.

In 2015, as in prior years, MCL relied importantly on the continued support of its members. We thank you for this support.

2015 Income—Operations



2015 Expenses—Operations



JANUARY

☼ Participated in stakeholder meetings convened by **Congressman Jared Huffman** to consider solutions to crowded and hazardous visitor parking outside **Muir Woods National Monument** and the resulting impacts on salmonid habitat in Redwood Creek.

☼ Recommended that the scope of the upcoming Draft EIR for the **Corte Madera Inn Rebuild Project** analyze impacts on pond habitat, storm water management and flood control, and traffic.

☼ Convened a stakeholder meeting of environmental and agricultural interests with Coastal Commission staff in an attempt to resolve outstanding agricultural issues in the **Marin Local Coastal Program Update**.

☼ In MCL's Water Program Series, hosted speaker **Scott Callow, Marin County Environmental Health Service Officer**, who outlined the health-related regulatory and permitting process for existing and new well development in Marin County.

FEBRUARY

☼ In a letter to Marin Clean Energy (MCE), recommended that MCE's **Draft 2016 Energy Efficiency Program Designs** build wider community support to encourage energy efficiency projects and measures.

☼ In a letter to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regarding Larkspur Marina maintenance dredging, advocated that dredged material be applied for beneficial use in upland or marsh restoration rather than disposed of at the Alcatraz Island Disposal Site.

☼ Presented **Dr. Susan Kegley, Director of Pesticide Research Institute (PRI)** in Berkeley, at a Business-Environment Breakfast, who described PRI's research into the role of neonicotinoid pesticides in the **die-off of bee colonies**.

☼ Hosted a Water Program with engineers Scott Lyle and Russ Eberwein of the County's Department of Public Works Flood Control Division, who gave an update on the controversial **Ross Valley Flood Management and Watershed Program**.

☼ Submitted letter to the Novato City Council reiterating MCL's request that creek policies with **stronger creek protections be included** in the general plan update and not be deferred to a later CEQA document.

MARCH

☼ Developed a **MCL Trail Policy** applicable to all public lands and open spaces in Marin that would minimize the adverse impacts of recreation, protect the natural environment and wildlife habitat, and assure visitors of their safety and well-being.

☼ Submitted a letter to California Coastal Commission staff with suggested revisions of the staff's changes to Marin's proposed **Local Coastal Program Update**.

☼ Urged San Rafael Parks and Recreation Commission to use a portion of Measure A's funding for local parks to control invasive weeds in **San Rafael Open Space** lands.

☼ Hosted MMWD Director Armando Quintero, representing the California Water Commission, in a MCL Water Program Seriestalk on the Commission's role in ensuring that **Proposition 1 Water Bond** funds for water storage projects fulfill public benefits.

☼ Led a Walk into Conservation History at Rush Creek **Open Space Preserve and Rush Creek Marsh**, relating the history of local activists who prevented development from covering uplands and saved the adjoining marsh from being filled.

APRIL

☼ Submitted a letter to Congressman Jared Huffman supporting his efforts to transfer former Coast Guard residential property in Point Reyes Station to the County of Marin for **affordable housing (HR 1402)**.

☼ In a letter to the CPUC Energy Division, urged denial of applications by PG&E and other utilities to install, own, and operate **electric vehicle charging stations** in California.

☼ Recommended that the Marin County Community Development Agency include the

position of **Urban Streams Coordinator** in the County's FY 2015-2016 budget.

☼ Celebrated 81 years at MCL's Annual Dinner and heard keynote speaker **Debbie Raphael, Director of San Francisco Department of the Environment**, (dubbed the "Architect of San Francisco's Precautionary Principle") espouse the importance of partnerships in successful local sustainable practices.

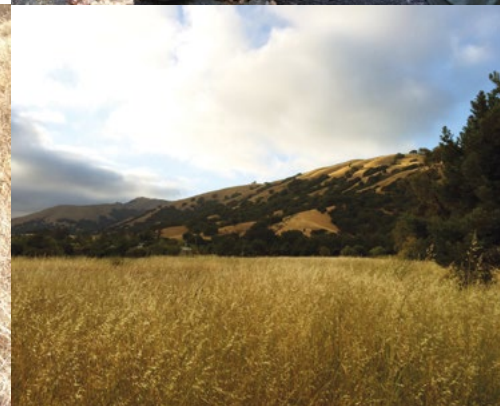
MAY

☼ Sent a letter to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service advocating for its support in acquiring land to expand the **Corte Madera Ecological Reserve** (also known as Madera Bay Park).

☼ Endorsed Congressman Jared Huffman's Draft MOU between the National Parks Service and County of Marin to ease **parking outside Muir Woods** and thereby protect the Redwood Creek habitat.

☼ In a letter to Marin County Community Development Agency concerning amendments to the **Binford Road Development Plan**, voiced concerns over possible runoff of fluids from stored vehicles into the adjacent wetlands.

☼ At a Business-Environment Breakfast, featured **State Senator Mike McGuire**, who gave a wide-ranging overview of his work in the legislature on environmental issues in his district.



☼ Featured a presentation in the Water Program Series of the State Coastal Conservancy's **"Living Shorelines Project,"** in which oysters and eelgrass are utilized to protect Bay habitat and combat sea level rise.

☼ Continued to track progress of the **Point Reyes National Seashore Ranch Comprehensive Management Plan/Environmental Assessment** process and associated elk management issues.

JUNE

☼ Urged Senator Mike McGuire to support the dedication of **Cap and Trade funds** to programs in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and improved land management practices, including soil carbon sequestration.

☼ Sponsored a tour of the **Giacomini Dairy and Pt. Reyes Farmstead Cheese** operation on Tomales Bay to observe operation of a methane digester and learn about sustainable dairy ranching and cheese-making practices from rancher Bob Giacomini.

☼ Launched the **"Slow & Say Hello"** campaign in collaboration with Marin Horse Council and Marin County Bicycle Coalition Off-road Program, to improve trail behavior and reduce conflicts among users.

☼ In a Water Program presentation, heard LAFCO chief Keene Simonds review conclusions and recommendations on the **supply/demand relationships of Marin's water providers.**

☼ Co-sponsored with Marin County Watershed Program a presentation on the **historic ecology of Novato Creek**, along with studies of current conditions and future projections.

JULY

☼ Submitted comments on **Marin Clean Energy's Draft 2016 Energy Efficiency Program Implementation Plans**, recommending greater outreach to dairy, commercial, multifamily and single family sectors.

☼ In a letter to Mark Reed, CEO of the Martha Co., encouraged the Reed Family to consider

allowing acquisition of all or part of their 110-acre property on Tiburon ridge by a non-profit entity as **an alternative to development.**

☼ Encouraged the MMWD Board of Directors to complete its long-dormant **Wildfire Protection and Habitat Improvement Plan and EIR**, and include measures for effective control of invasive plants.

☼ Advocated that the Board of Directors, Marin County Open Space District, support **integrated pest management practices**, including herbicide where justified, on open space preserves to protect native plant species from invasive weeds and to reduce wildfire risk.

☼ Encouraged Marin Clean Energy to consider funding dairy energy audits and incentives to take advantage of opportunities for **clean energy and carbon reduction in local dairies.**

☼ Supported Marin County Parks and Open Space District staff's **vegetation and biodiversity management plan**, and urged the Board of Directors to support staff's existing invasive weed control programs.

☼ Entertained over 100 members and guests at MCL's annual summer **Picnic on the Patio.**

AUGUST

☼ Responded to a Bay Area Air Quality Management District Public Notice, noting concerns about PG&E's remediation plan to excavate the site of the former San Rafael Manufactured Gas Plant on Third Street.

☼ Urged the San Rafael Planning Commission not to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for San Rafael Corporate Center projects until the **migration off-site of polluted groundwater** had been clarified.

☼ Testified before California Public Utilities Commission urging its approval of MCE's **2016 and Beyond Energy Efficiency Portfolio.**

☼ Conducted a Walk into (Conservation) History at **Roy's Redwoods Open Space Preserve.**

☼ Featured **Congressman Jared Huffman** at a Business-Environment Breakfast, who outlined the challenges of trying to accomplish an environmental agenda in a Republican-controlled Congress.

SEPTEMBER

☼ In a letter to Coastal Conservancy, supported Trout Unlimited's grant request for \$250,000 to **improve habitat in Millerton Creek** under

Spotlight on Climate

A quick scan of MCL's activities and actions in 2015 reveals the diversity of environmental issues that kept MCL volunteers and staff busy throughout the year. Whether it was advocating for better control of invasive weeds that threaten rare plants, evaluating impacts of new trails in open space, analyzing the impacts of a proposed new development on sensitive habitat, confronting ongoing traffic challenges, urging coordinated planning for impending sea level rise, or tracking a vital piece of state legislation – MCL took it on and followed through with education, analysis, advocacy, and action.

Particularly noteworthy in 2015, was the continued role of MCL's Climate Action Working Group, an MCL Group that was formed in 2014. In 2015 the CAWG continued to grow as a clearinghouse and forum for MCL members and other organizations engaged in varied issues of climate change. The Working Group has benefitted greatly from the experience and collaboration of other organizations that have brought climate change to the forefront of environmental action in Marin.

As a clearing house CAWG's monthly meetings brought together activists from Sustainable San Rafael and Marin, Resilient Neighborhoods, Main Street Moms from West Marin, Organizing for Action, and others, culminating in support for the County's updated Climate Action Plan 2015 Update, which was approved by the Board of Supervisors in November. With CAWG's guidance, MCL co-sponsored with more than two dozen other organizations a forum **"Time to Lead on Climate – CA:US:UN."** The well-attended meeting was timed as a local "kick-off" to the UN Climate Conference in Paris and its call for global action.

As a forum for education, the CAWG engaged monthly speakers who are working on every facet of this vitally important issue, to keep the committee current on both state and local programs and strategies to meet California's ambitious greenhouse gas reduction goals, and on progress toward coordinated planning for sea level rise.

The CAWG in 2015 exemplified MCL committees' continued ability to act on the significant issues of the day.

Phase 1 of the Restoration Plan.

☼ Urged Assembly Member Levine to support SB 32, which sets pollution reduction target for 2050, and SB 350, which sets "50/50" goals for 2030 for **renewable energy and increased energy efficiency** in existing buildings.

☼ Led a **Senior Walk into History** at China Camp State Park and Santa Margarita Island Open Space Preserve.

☼ Urged the County to mow **Pacheco Valle open space meadow** in Novato within 10-foot road maintenance buffer only, so as to protect habitat for ground nesting birds while reducing fire hazard.

☼ Organized volunteers and led **Coastal Cleanup** at sites in Novato and Sausalito.

OCTOBER

☼ Submitted a letter to California Coastal Commission supporting agricultural provisions in the revised **Marin County Local Coastal Plan Update**.

☼ Developed MCL Policy for the use of **Integrated Pest Management** methods to control invasive plants, protect the biodiversity in native habitats, protect human and natural communities from catastrophic wildfire, and maintain healthy rangelands and pastures.

☼ In a letter to Marin County Board of Supervisors, encouraged better coordination among design elements in Civic Center Improvement plans along **Civic Center Drive**.

☼ Led a Senior Walk into History at **Rush Creek Open Space Preserve**.

☼ Honored **MCL Leaders Circle** members at a luncheon at McNears Beach Park in San Rafael.

☼ Participated in a weekend celebration of the **first anniversary of One Tam**, a collaboration made up of four public land management agencies and the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy.

☼ In the Water Program Series, heard **Warner Chabot, Executive Director of the San Francisco Estuary Institute** speak on "Finding creative solutions to the long-term challenge of rising sea level."

NOVEMBER

☼ Urged the California Public Utilities Commission to reject PG&E's proposed **Power Charge Indifference Adjustment (PCIA)**, an exit fee imposed when a utility customer departs



from PG&E and for which PG&E requested an increase.

☼ Submitted comments to Golden Gate National Recreation Area, supporting, in concept, a **reservation system for Muir Woods National Monument** to reduce parking on Muir Woods Road and its associated impacts.

☼ Adopted a **MCL Agriculture Policy** that updates former policies and incorporates natural resource conservation, agricultural land use, and Marin's agricultural heritage.

☼ In a letter to Mt. Tamalpais State Park, opposed the proposed change-in-use of **Easy Grade Trail** between Bootjack Camp and the Mt. Theater to accommodate shared use by mountain bikers and hikers.

☼ Taught **riparian restoration using native willows** at a hands-on willow-staking workshop at Chileno Valley Ranch in partnership with Marin Resource Conservation District.

☼ Co-sponsored a large public forum at Dominican University with more than two dozen other organizations: **"Time to Lead on Climate: CA: US: UN."**

☼ Testified in support of the **County's Climate Action Plan 2015 Update** before the Board of Supervisors.

DECEMBER

☼ Submitted comments to Marin County Parks requesting additional clarification as to which preserves and trails would be included in the **Inclusive Access Plan**.

☼ Submitted comments to the Corte Madera Planning Dept. on the **Corte Madera Inn Rebuild Project Final EIR**, supporting retention of the existing pond for its flood detention benefits and habitat values.

☼ Entertained members and guests at the annual **MCL Holiday Party**.



2016-2017

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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.

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