

September 2017



# The Bay Leaf

California Native Plant Society • East Bay Chapter  
Alameda & Contra Costa Counties

[www.ebcnps.org](http://www.ebcnps.org)

[www.nativeherenursery.org](http://www.nativeherenursery.org)

## MEMBERS' MEETING: WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 27



Carrizo Plain in the 2017 super bloom. Photo by Dagmar Collins.

**Save the Superbloom: How extraordinary years can help us to save extraordinary places**

**Speaker: Dan Gluesenkamp, PhD**

**Wednesday, September 27, 7:30 pm**

Location: Garden Room, Orinda Public Library (directions below)

This past spring Californians were treated to a spectacular season of wildflowers. While not every part of California experienced a Superbloom, many were blessed with flowers that drew the attention of the world. Newspapers across the nation featured stories about the bloom. Broadcasters ranging from Korean television to Netflix made trips to out-of-the-way California wildflower destinations to document them for their viewers. This excitement was driven by a confluence of events; climatic conditions provided California some beautiful blooms, and political circumstances gave all of us the need to see beauty, resilience, resistance, and hope.

This talk will focus on the 2017 Superbloom, its flowers, the frenzy, and the broader significance. Yes, there will be photos of incredibly beautiful flowers. There will also be pictures of industrial-scale solar farms and pot-growing fields, where flowers once flourished. Finally, there will be a discussion of the CNPS Important Plant Areas (IPAs) project, an ambitious endeavor that deploys scientific data and citizen science to

identify the most important parts of California and ensure that we do everything possible to save them for the future.

Dan Gluesenkamp (shown in the photo below) is Executive Director of the California Native Plant Society and works with CNPS staff and chapters to protect, understand, and celebrate California's native flora. Dan earned his PhD at UC Berkeley, and previously worked as Executive Director of Calflora and as Director of Habitat Protection for Audubon Canyon Ranch's 30 preserves. A co-founder of the California Invasive Plant Council and of the Bay Area Early Detection Network (BAEDN), in 2009 Dan discovered a presumed-extinct Franciscan manzanita plant growing on a traffic island at the Golden Gate Bridge.



East Bay CNPS membership meetings are free of charge and open to everyone. This month's meeting takes place in the Garden Room of the Orinda Public Library at 26 Orinda Way (in Orinda Village). The Garden Room is on the second floor of the building, accessible by stairs or an elevator. The Garden Room opens at 7 pm; the meeting begins at 7:30 pm. Email [programs@ebcnps.org](mailto:programs@ebcnps.org) or call 510-496-6016 if you have questions.

### Directions to Orinda Public Library at 26 Orinda Way

From the west, take Hwy 24 to the Orinda/Moraga exit. At the end of the off ramp, turn left on Camino Pablo (toward Orinda Village), right on Santa Maria Way (the signal after the

## MEMBER'S MEETING (CONT.)

BART station and freeway entrance), and left on Orinda Way. From the east, take Hwy 24 to the Orinda exit. Follow the ramp to Orinda Village. Turn right on Santa Maria way (the first signal) and left on Orinda Way. Once on Orinda Way, go 1 short block to the parking lot on the southeast side of the two-story building on your right. There is additional free parking beneath the building as well as on the street.

From BART (4 blocks): Exit the Orinda station, turn right and cross a pedestrian bridge, then cross a second pedestrian

bridge on the left. Go 1 short block on the sidewalk to the third pedestrian bridge. Go 2 blocks on Orinda Way to the Orinda Library.

### Next Month's Program

Heath Bartosh—Northern California Black Walnut: A tree with many stories  
October 24, 7:30 pm, Garden Room, Orinda Public Library

## STERILIZING POTS FOR REUSE AT NATIVE HERE NURSERY

Re-using nursery containers used to be a simple matter at Native Here Nursery. In fact, in the old days we encouraged recycling and re-use by having a place near the entrance where people could bring their used pots and others could use them.

With the realization that most of the invasive *Phytophthora*, such as Sudden Oak Death (*Phytophthora ramorum*), probably are moved around in the nursery trade via infested soil, Native Here Nursery stopped accepting used containers and began special procedures for sanitizing pots for re-use within the nursery.

Two methods work for killing *Phytophthora* pathogens. One is chemical – immersing the containers in a chlorine or quaternary ammonium bath – and one is heat treatment. We currently soak some odd-sized containers in a chlorine bath; most of our containers are cleaned by dry-brushing, then moistening and heat-treating in a method called “solarizing”. To solarize, the pots are stacked and wrapped in plastic, then set out in the sunniest, warmest place at the Nursery. A data logger documents that the heat reaches the required temperature and duration before the containers are put back in service.

Cleaning pots is an extra step in Nursery production; thousands of pots are sanitized each year. We have held several “pot parties” – complete with munchies – to make the job fast and fun. Want to help out? Our next party will be on Saturday, September 9, 10 am to 2 pm.

Barbara Leitner



Beth Wurzburg, Matthew Arnstein, and Lesley Hunt with a stack of pots about to be solarized. Photo by Barbara Leitner.

## MORE ON ERADICATING STINKWORT

Labor Day is just about the start of flowering for stinkwort, that “red alert” invasive that has spread like wildfire throughout the East Bay. It grows on the edges of trails, roads, and in areas with persistent soil moisture, competing with habitat-friendly plants and causing rashes on unsuspecting humans. Stinkwort is continuing to spread, and new colonies pop up where seeds are spread by tires, shoes, the wind, and movement of contaminated soil and gravel.

It doesn't have to be this way--diligent pulling can greatly reduce or even eliminate stinkwort, especially before it flowers. Once it flowers, you have to bag and dispose of the material,

or at least pile it up to limit seed dispersal. In my part of the Chapter, quaintly known as Lamorinda, I'm seeing much less stinkwort this year, probably the result of several years' efforts to contain it.

If you would like some advice, coaching on methods (including how to prevent rashes), or even a site visit, let me know. If we all take ownership of a portion of our world, we can really make a difference.

Barbara Leitner  
bleitner@pacbell.net

# NATIVE HERE NURSERY SEPTEMBER 2017

## All Plants Have Been Cleared for Sale!

The big news at Native Here is that soil, wood chips and plants sampled by California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) all tested negative for *Phytophthora ramorum*. All nursery stock was cleared for sale, and those that were on hold are now in place and listed on our online list of available plants.

Some desirable species that have just become available: Indian pink (*Silene laciniata* ssp. *californica*) in Bay Hills; chaparral currant (*Ribes malvaceum*), pitcher sage (*Lepichinia calycina*), and scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*) in the Diablo section. As plants become ready, the list of available plants is updated and available in the nursery office and it is posted to the nursery website about once a month. If the date is not very recent, a call can confirm whether a plant is currently available.

The nursery continues to implement phyto-sanitation measures to halt the spread of *Phytophthora ramorum*. We will be tested for all pathogens annually by the County. The nursery's mission is to promote the use of local native plants within Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.

Movement of plants beyond those two counties and a few adjacent coastal counties is restricted by CDFA. A list of plant species that host *P. ramorum* (and the inspectors remind us that soil is also a regulated article) is available:

[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant\\_health/plant\\_pest\\_info/pram/downloads/pdf\\_files/usdaprlst.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/pram/downloads/pdf_files/usdaprlst.pdf)

We are not permitted to ship plants out of state or into parts of the state that are not already infested with *P. ramorum*.

Gina Bizjak has been hired to replace Saige as our inventory assistant. Gina has volunteered at NHN since last winter and

will be working on Saturdays. She is a student at Miramonte High School in Orinda. A midweek assistant will join the staff soon.

We still need volunteers to water, especially on weekends. If you can help with this task, either regularly or occasionally, please contact Ruth Ann Pearsons at [rapearsons1@mac.com](mailto:rapearsons1@mac.com) or show up during Saturday open hours to help as needed.

## Manzanita Day at Native Here- September 23

"When will the manzanitas be available?" The answer is: Saturday, September 23 at 10 am!

We have *Arctostaphylos auriculata* (Mount Diablo manzanita), *Arctostaphylos manzanita* ssp. *manzanita* (common manzanita), *Arctostaphylos manzanita* ssp. *laevigata* (Contra Costa manzanita), and *Arctostaphylos glauca* (big-berry manzanita) from the Diablo area, and *Arctostaphylos crustacea* ssp. *crustacea* (brittleleaf manzanita) from the Bay Hills area.

Bert Johnson will talk at 11 am about caring for our local manzanitas, followed by a question period. Bert has been fascinated by manzanitas, their evolution, habits and habitats, for decades. He worked at the Regional Parks Botanic Garden with Jim Roof, Wayne Roderick and Steve Edwards. If you have heard him talk about manzanitas, you will want to hear him again. If you have not, you are in for a treat on Native Here Manzanita Day, September 23.

We will need an extra person or two to help with sales that day. Contact Ruth Ann Pearsons [rapearsons1@mac.com](mailto:rapearsons1@mac.com). If you have had success growing manzanitas, your help would be especially welcome.

Charli Danielsen



*Arctostaphylos auriculata* in Lime Ridge with hummingbird. Manzanitas will be on sale at Native Here nursery starting September 23. Photo by Brad Heckman.

## SKYLINE GARDENS AND THE GRIZZLY PEAK FIRE

We had some big excitement last week. Because of the Grizzly Peak Fire on Wednesday afternoon, we had to cancel our workday. We did get back to Skyline on Sunday and almost finished with scattergrass in the Bay Grove. Perhaps one more good session will finish that off. We'll be out at regular times this week: Wednesday at 4 pm and Sunday at 9:30 am. Please let me know if you can make it.

On Wednesday, August 2 the Grizzly Peak Fire burned about 20 acres on the west slope of Grizzly Peak (the peak itself), below the road. The fire site was about a mile north of Siesta Gate. The fire started about 1 pm and spread across and upslope for about 4 hours until it was stopped at Grizzly Peak Road. This was on UC property in upper Strawberry Canyon. In several places the fire jumped over Grizzly Peak Road and started smaller spot fires on the north slope, in Tilden Park territory.

At its peak, over 200 firefighters responded from 9 different local agencies. Calfire brought in crews, two fire retardant dropping airplanes, and two helicopters that scooped up water from Lake Anza and dropped it on the fire. No structures were lost, and one firefighter had minor injuries when he uncovered a hornets nest and slipped down a slope. They all did a great job of preventing a larger disaster.



A couple of us visited the fire area on Sunday after our workday. To help orient you, above is Cynthia's photo of the fire's aftermath. This photo looks north from the South Park Drive intersection with Grizzly Peak Boulevard. At the top right, you can see the tower atop Grizzly Peak. The main burn area is on the west slope, below the road.



Here is an aerial view of the fire. This is a screenshot I made from KTVU helicopter footage. I believe this is about an hour

after the fire started, about 2 pm. This photo is looking east, with Grizzly Peak itself hidden above the smoke plume. The trail at the base is the Frowning Ridge Trail, which zig-zags across this photo. Just above the trail is an ash-colored burned area. This was mostly coyote bush. The burned section above the trail is about 150 feet wide. If you look carefully at the lower center where the trail goes under trees you can see a smaller triangular flame area. This small fire section is separate from the main burn and spontaneously ignited about ten minutes into the footage. This is known as 'spotting' - where embers jump from one part of the fire and start new fires. Further up the ridge the fire has burned under a grove of Monterey pines and Eucalyptus, and one large tree there is erupting in fire clear up to the crown.

This KTVU footage is still posted on line. It is over an hour long, but the first 15 minutes show the progress of this section of fire as it burns from a small patch above the trail - to across the slope and up under the trees. The footage is fascinating to watch, and here is the link: <http://www.ktvu.com/news/271737990-story>.

Here is a close up photo of the fire from Berkeleyside as it approached Grizzly Peak Boulevard:



This is a eucalyptus tree in flames. The photo is looking south from the shoulder of Grizzly Peak Boulevard.

While some pines and eucs did fully torch, luckily the fire burned mostly grass and brush under the trees. It never reached the stage of a full 'crown fire' where the fire burns from treetop to treetop and is completely uncontrollable. The Tunnel Fire in 1991 was a huge crown fire that jumped Highway 24 three times, in hot parched October, with 60 plus mph Diablo winds blowing the fire downhill. Although the weather was warm last week the wind was manageable, the trees were still somewhat hydrated from our record rains, and it was August and not October, so the fire stayed low and small enough to be contained by a massive response.

Next are a couple of close ups of the fire damage. This first picture looks uphill from the Frowning Ridge Trail, from the bottom of the helicopter photo.

## SKYLINE GARDENS AND THE GRIZZLY PEAK FIRE (CONT.)



The fire was hot enough here to completely burn the coyote bush and broom; what you see are just stumps and base branches. Further upslope, you can see the grove of trees that the fire burned through. Some are still quite green and others look very roasted from the heat, but did not fully burn. This area will be just fascinating to revisit in the spring, to see what kinds of plants emerge from dormant seeds.



This picture is from above the tree grove in the previous shot. Now we are looking west (downhill) along the Frowning Ridge trail. Here you can see two big trees that did completely torch; around the edges you can see coyote bushes that roasted from the heat but did not completely burn.

Next is a shot looking west (downhill) along this same ridge from Grizzly Peak Boulevard. In the lower left center, there is a 20 ft. bay tree, green on top and roasted on the sides. In the mid-center, there's a grove of live oaks that got roasted brown, but did not burn. Live oaks rarely burn from this kind of fire. My prediction is that all the native trees in this shot will leaf out healthy and green in the spring; I've seen this many times.



I've included many shots from different angles to show the many faces of one fire. A fire doesn't just burn up everything; it is as particular in its details as any landscape: fire burns everything to the tops in some spots, but right next door just burns the grass and singes the shrubs. It all has to do with placement, fuel, wind, slope, and many particulars.

Botanists tend to love a fire, because the aftermath is so fascinating. Seeds not seen in decades may sprout. In the early days of California botany, when Jepson was at Cal in the early 1900's, he and others found scores of interesting natives on the slopes of Grizzly Peak. Will they return? How will UC manage the burn area (let's hope they do nothing besides remove the eucs and pines)?

I have already volunteered to lead a CNPS field trip to the area next April. But please don't wait for that. Gophers are already pushing up fresh mounds of dirt and heat seeking beetles will be laying eggs in the burned trees. Unfolding before us is a new chapter in the ecology of the High Ridge Volcanic Area that extends from Tilden to Sibley. Come see for yourself.

*Glen Schneider*

# POINT ISABEL RESTORATION SUMMER 2017

## Point Isabel Restoration Project – July and August 2017

Restoration work tends to slow down a tad in the summer. At least that's the theory. The weeds have either been removed or gone to seed before we could get to them and are now basically chaff. And the planting is mostly done in winter when the rains return (we hope). Nevertheless, in looking at our work parties and the efforts of our amazing stewards, and stewards-in-everything-but-name, we accomplished an amazing number of tasks.

At the work party on July 1, we planted eight California fuchsia (*Epilobium canum*) grown from Pt. Isabel seed. We spread mulch over a new area. Moved all the weed piles - large and small - to the compost pile. We found three anise swallowtail caterpillars on the yampah (*Perideridia kelloggii*) planted last winter.

- The City of Richmond installed two signs at the Adopt-a-Spot; picked up weed piles; picked up mattresses and tires along Rydin; dropped mulch piles at the Adopt-a-Spot and also all along the medians on Rydin after mowing down the invasive weeds. Enthusiastic thanks go to Greg Hardesty, Shannon Elliott, Israel, and Noe from the City of Richmond for always being so responsive.
- On July 22, a super volunteer crew (including Steve Young who came for the third time all the way from Kokomo, Indiana!) spread the mulch along each median. Rydin Road has never looked so good and we should not have to deal anymore with invasive weeds drifting over from those medians.
- Karen and Jane removed large patches of bindweed from around native shrubs.
- EBRPD provided a stipend of (\$1,000) for plants! Many thanks go to District staff Jeremy Saito and Scott Possin for making that possible.

- We purchased watering cans, a cart, tools, gloves, and soil. Our most sincere thanks to the Contra Costa County Fish and Wildlife Committee for making those purchases possible.
- Gudrun Kleist donated narrow leaf milkweed (*Asclepias fascicularis*) to the project.
- Stewards irrigated all the new plantings.
- At low tide on August 3 and 4, Nancy, Jane, and Tom removed Algerian lavender from within Hoffman Marsh. The native lavender (*Limonium californicum*) is prevalent since our removal work in 2016 and is blooming colorfully throughout the marsh.
- On August 5, a fantastic CorePower Yoga crew joined our work party and helped us remove copious tall stands of oat grass that were obscuring California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*), California wax myrtle (*Morella californica*), and lizard tail (*Eriophyllum staechadifolium*) and they spread mulch on the cleared sections.
- Stewards Nancy and Luciano tackled the pepperweed problem in their area by spreading tarps and covering the tough-to-eradicate pepper weed infestation with mulch.
- We tarped and mulched Bermuda grass on the Adopt-a-Spot and weed-whacked the remaining oat grass and dandelions.
- During these two months, we spotted egrets, willets, long-billed curlews, two flocks of white pelicans, and a beautiful little skunk.

We send our thanks as always to our Ranger Bruce, who is always there when we need him.

*Jane and Tom Kelly*



City of Richmond adopt-a-spot sign, an anise swallowtail caterpillar on a yampah, and (opposite page) the July crew. Photo by Jane Kelly.



# POINT ISABEL RESTORATION CREW



# CONSERVATION ANALYST REPORT

## Successful Advocacy Leads to Improvements in Pallid Manzanita Management Plan (PMMP)

On July 12, 2017, East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) employees met with members of the East Bay CNPS Conservation Committee at Huckleberry Regional Botanic Preserve for a walk and talk discussion about fuel management, pallid manzanita, and maritime chaparral protection. Our goals were to learn the status of the highly anticipated PMMP and to hear the results from recent EBRPD manzanita and *Phytophthora* surveys. We also discussed the fuel removal treatments EBRPD is eager to carry out.

We learned that surveys for pallid manzanita (*Arctostaphylos pallida*, listed as federal threatened and state endangered) were conducted using new methods counting every individual plant. We hope this approach will contribute to an accurate picture of current species and stand health.

We also learned that the Park District will not conduct fuel management at Huckleberry (or other areas with pallid manzanita) until their *Phytophthora* assessment is completed. Importantly, EBRPD assured us that fuel management actions will not create “shrub islands”, will avoid maritime chaparral, and will leave canopy vegetation in place where needed to provide shade for pallid manzanitas and to reduce risk of spreading *Phytophthora*.

Let’s step back for a moment. These statements show that our chapter has achieved dramatic improvement and clarity from EBRPD regarding protections for pallid manzanita and maritime chaparral. Nearly a year ago, we submitted pages of comments for improving the draft PMMP and spent many hours communicating with EBRPD on these points. Our chap-

ter has successfully influenced policy before drastic, harmful management actions could start.

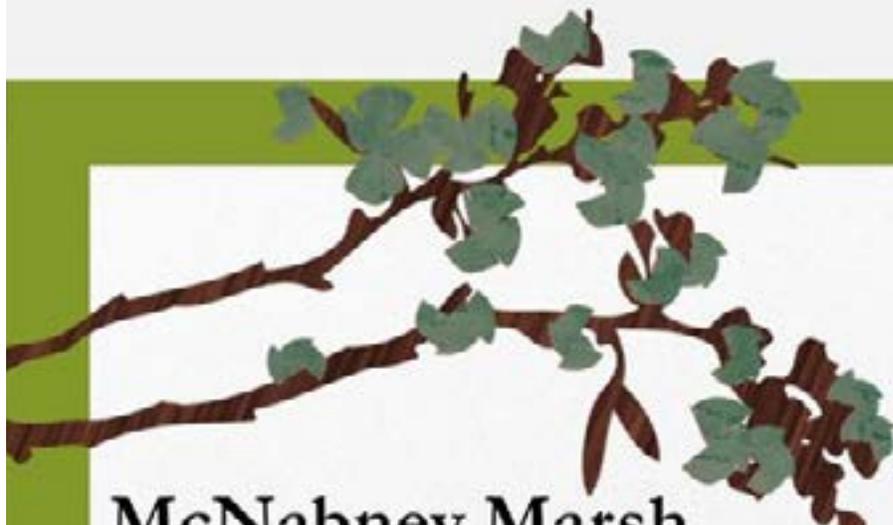
Many thanks to the astounding commitment and effort towards this rewarding outcome to active members of our East Bay Chapter’s Conservation Committee, including Rare Plant Monitor for Pallid Manzanitas Judy Schwartz, as well as Marcia Kolb, Jim Hansen, Peter Rauch, David Bigham, and Jean Robertson. Thank you also to the contributors to the Conservation Analyst position. Additionally, we appreciate EBRPD staff Michele Hammond, Aileen Thiele, Kristen Van Damm, and Matt Graul as well as PMMP author Lech Naumovich. The PMMP is now complete and approved. Many improvements are a direct result of our recommendations. EBRPD is steward of most pallid manzanitas in existence today. The District is tasked with dual responsibility for managing this protected special status species, and for fire hazard reduction in the same areas. Over many years pallid manzanitas have suffered. The PMMP should contribute guidance for halting the species’ decline and will, we all hope, lead the way towards its recovery, in parallel with the other management actions.

We still have outstanding concerns about implementation. We will continue communicating with EBRPD and independently monitoring all activities potentially impacting the beautiful, delicate pallid manzanita and its maritime chaparral home in our East Bay Hills.

*Karen Whitestone*, Conservation Analyst



A vista from Huckleberry Preserve.



## McNabney Marsh

# CALIFORNIA COASTAL CLEANUP DAY 2017

## INVASIVE PLANT REMOVAL

**SEPTEMBER 16 9:30AM TO 11:30AM**

**Please join us to remove invasive stinkwort  
from the edges of McNabney Marsh!**

**IF YOU ARE UP FOR A LITTLE WORK, YOU CAN HELP US MAKE A BIG  
DIFFERENCE IN THE SPREAD OF THIS INVASIVE PLANT!**

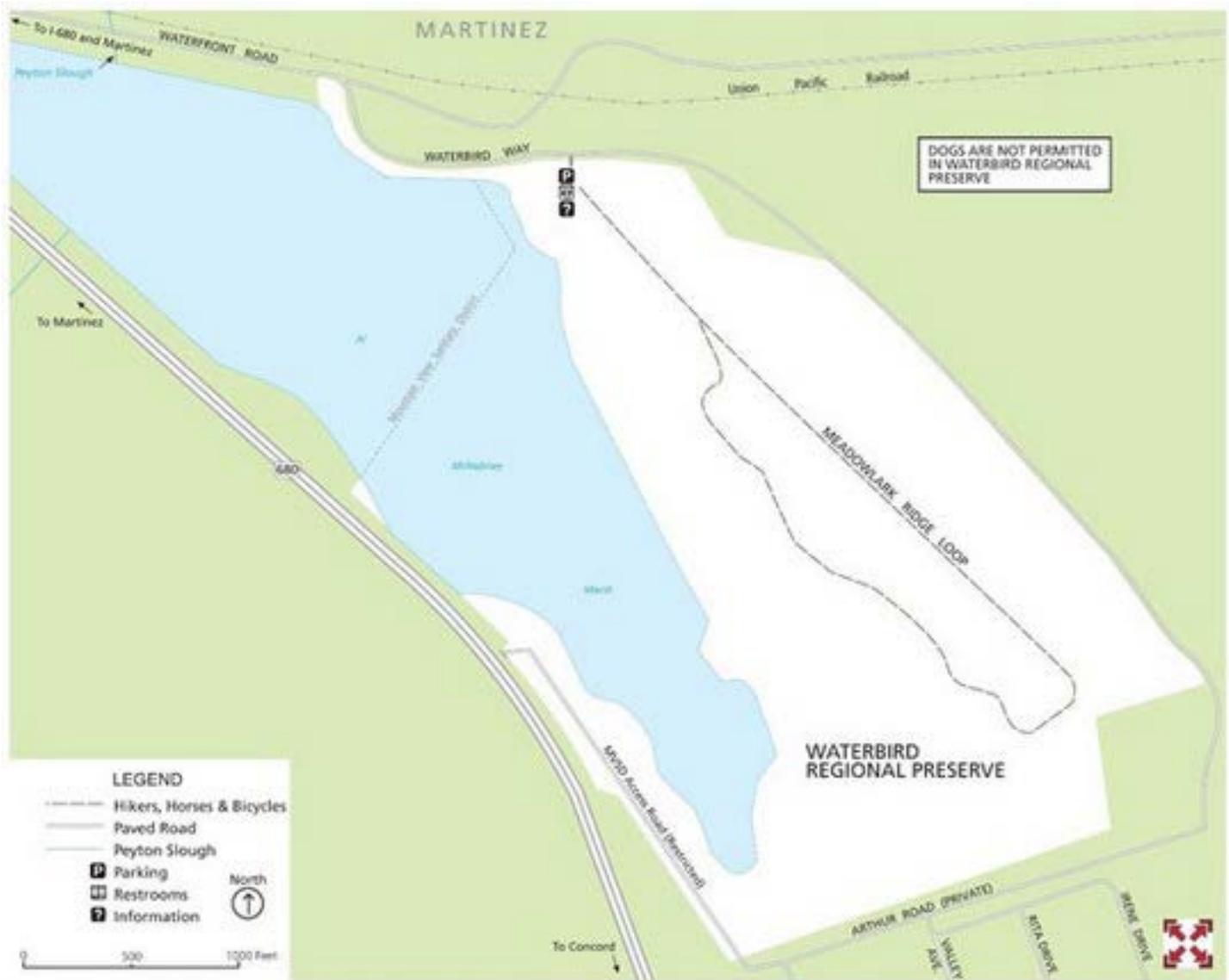
**RESERVATIONS AND SIGNED LIABILITY FORMS ARE REQUIRED. SPACE IS LIMITED!**

**WE WILL PROVIDE: LATEX GLOVES, PLASTIC BAGS, WATER, AND A FREE PIZZA LUNCH AT THE  
END OF THE DAY. PARTICIPANTS BRING: WORK GLOVES, A HAT, AND SUNSCREEN AND WEAR  
LONG PANTS AND CLOSED-TOED SHOES. A MAT OR KNEE PADS ARE RECOMMENDED.**

**LOCATION: EAST BAY REGIONAL PARKS DIST. STAGING AREA  
WATERFRONT ROAD AND WATERBIRD WAY, MARTINEZ, CA  
(SEE MAP ON BACK)**



For more information or to RSVP contact: Heidi Petty at [hpetty@ccrcd.org](mailto:hpetty@ccrcd.org)



Map showing location of the McNabney Marsh cleanup on September 16, 9:30 am to 11:30 am. See page 9.



Conservation group meets at Huckleberry Preserve. See page 8.

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*Officers and Committee Chairs serve on the Board*

*Committees are formed based on chapter needs and the interests of volunteers. Proposals for committees and projects are welcome and will be considered by the Board*

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