



The Cypress Cone

The newsletter of the California Native Plant Society
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY CHAPTER

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November - December 2010

Coastal Commission Rejects Arana Gulch Project — For Now

On Oct 14, 2010 in Oceanside, CA the California Coastal Commission (CCC) rejected for a second time the City of Santa Cruz's revised Arana Gulch Master Plan. CNPS asked the CCC to reject the plan because it contained a paved east west bike/pedestrian trail that fragments the coastal prairie habitat and threatens the onsite endangered Santa Cruz tarplant. Brett Hall, our local Santa Cruz Chapter and state Board of Directors President, and Dave Flietner, President of the San Diego Chapter, testified at the CCC hearing.

The Arana Gulch EIR noted "significant and unavoidable" permanent negative impacts from the project which ignores best practices of a science-based reserve design.

However, the fight to protect the genetically-significant Arana Gulch tarplant population is far from over. Santa Cruz County Supervisor Mark Stone has stated that he will ask the CCC for a waiver so the City can reintroduce its Plan yet a third time before the required six months interval since the City is in danger of losing the transportation grant which would fund the project. The damaging project could return to the CCC perhaps as early as December's meeting in San Francisco. If that happens, CNPS will continue to ask members and others to write letters to the Coastal Commission asking that the Commission protect the tarplant and REJECT any east-west alignment that goes through the middle of the state- and federally- listed Santa Cruz tarplant habitat. We need lots of letters from individuals as well as the letter from the Chapter to show the Commissioners that not only is the City's plan not based on the best science, but also that our position has the support of many who want to see the Coastal Act enforced. You do not have to live in Santa Cruz County to write a letter. In fact, letters from friends and relatives who do not live in Santa Cruz can have a positive impact. At the previous CCC meetings, supporters of the paved bikeway entered hundreds of letters into the record. We must do as well when it returns to the Commission. If Commissioners read comments

(continued inside)

General Meeting

Jenn Yost

In Fields of Gold: Goldfields of California

November 8, 2010

7:30 pm lecture

UCSC Arboretum Horticulture Building

Goldfields (*Lasthenia*) are abundant spring wildflowers in California and often carpet hillsides with golden hues. Interestingly, goldfields have much to teach us about plant evolution. The unique nature and diversity of the genus *Lasthenia*, can help to answer questions about how plants diversify. Jenn will address local diversity, plant evolution, and general botany of the Sunflower family in this talk.

Jenn Yost is a Ph.D. student at UCSC working with Dr. Kathleen Kay. She is interested in plant evolution and speciation. Her dissertation focuses on a group of cryptic species in the genus *Lasthenia*. Jenn received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo. She has most recently worked on a treatment of California eucalyptus with Dr. Matt Ritter. Jenn also works with Stephen McCabe on the genus *Dudleya*, and is the current membership chair for the Santa Cruz Chapter of the California Native Plant Society.

Central California Invasive Weed Symposium

The 12th annual event, (once known as the "War On Weeds") takes place Friday November 12th from 8:30-5:30, at Swanton Pacific Ranch in Davenport.

This year's theme is "Remove & Restore", and includes speakers and field excursions that focus on the management of invasive species and ecosystem restoration within distinct habitat types.

For more information see (join into one line):

<http://www.co.monterey.ca.us/ag/pdfs/Weeds/Weed%20Symposium%202010.pdf>

CCC Rejects City Arana Project For Now

(from front page)

mainly from those that want approval of the project, they may think there is little popular support to reject the project and protect the tarplant. Often when I describe this issue to someone new or to a child, the common response is 'why don't they just go around'. Your letter does not have to be technical.

I and many in our Santa Cruz CNPS chapter have worked 12 years (some even longer) trying to protect the Arana tarplant from this project. For the sake of full disclosure I am indeed "in love" with this sweet member of the sunflower plant family. Its wonderfully resinous scent and yellow flowers brighten our summer dry coastal grasslands sometimes well into fall.

It is regrettable that the City chose not to collaborate with CNPS in developing its revised Master Plan for Arana Gulch. CNPS is still willing to work with the City to develop a route that achieves the City's objectives and follows best scientific practices for protecting endangered tarplant habitat.

Stay tuned and check our website for updates on the next hearing date when we will ask members and others to write comment letters asking the CCC to protect the tarplant and enforce the Coastal Act. Comments can be short; but do need to be written — emails don't work as they don't receive the same consideration. Even one simple sentence will make a difference. Can you take the time from your busy lives to pen such a sentence? It can be as simple as "RE: Arana Gulch Master Plan: Dear Staff and Commissioners, REJECT any east west alignment that goes through the middle of the state- and federally-listed Santa Cruz tarplant and its coastal prairie habitat." Our formal comment letter on this page gives the scientific rationale why CNPS rejects any such habitat-fragmenting alignment.

Thanks to all for your time and consideration.
Vince Cheap, Conservation Committee

Does Your Garden Want To Go On Tour?

A collection of businesses and non-profit groups is planning to hold the first annual Santa Cruz California Native Garden Tour. Santa Cruz County native gardens will be featured during this June 12, 2011 not-for-profit event.

They are currently looking for gardens (at least 50% native, with adequate parking) for the tour. Anyone interested can contact Lindsay at lindsaylgoldberg@sbcglobal.net for an application.

Chapter's Comments on the Current Arana Gulch Project

The Santa Cruz Chapter Conservation Committee sent this letter to the California Coastal Commission on October 7, in opposition to the current project and in support of the Santa Cruz Tarplant.

Agenda Item No: Th8a
Permit Number: 3-09-068
CNPS Opposes the Project

Dan Carl, District Director
California Coastal Commission
725 Front Street, Suite 300
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: Revised Arana Gulch Master Plan, Permit Number 3-09-068, October 14, 2010

Dear Staff and Commissioners:

At the March 2010 Coastal Commission hearing, Commissioners requested the City of Santa Cruz consider alternatives that could meet the project objectives while avoiding environmental impacts identified by many experts testifying before the Commission.

At the March hearing the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) displayed a conceptual alternative depicted by an unsurveyed line on a map. The CNPS alternative skirted the periphery of the endangered tarplant habitat to avoid bisecting the habitat of the federally and state listed tarplant.

After the March meeting the City of Santa Cruz did not consult or collaborate with CNPS. Instead, the City interpreted the conceptual plan as literal, hired a GIS consultant to survey the conceptual alignment, and proceeded to discredit what they are calling the "CNPS alternative."

When CNPS asked to view the publicly-funded GIS data (not the consultant's report, just the data points), the City refused to provide the data. CNPS did not have the resources to conduct its own GIS survey. Thus no detailed CNPS alternative was ever developed or evaluated by the City or CNPS.

The result is that the City created a straw man alternative which they then proceeded to discredit. If CNPS had had the GIS data, the conceptual route could have been properly evaluated and adjusted to eliminate the extensive grading (and resultant cost and environmental degradation) attacked by the City in its report.

The revised plan submitted by the City does not meet the scientific and environmental standards of CNPS.

Chapter's Comments to The CCC

(continued from page 3)

- The revised City plan still routes a paved trail through the middle of Arana Gulch tarplant grassland instead of going around the habitat as CNPS recommends.
- The City attacks the conceptual CNPS alternative for traversing some areas of common native grasses (*Danthonia*, *Nassella*), yet the City's revised plan has a paved, multi-use trail which traverses the more fragile and much more rare habitat for the endangered tarplant.
- Although the City's Master Plan contains an unpaved walking path (Coastal Prairie Loop Trail) on essentially the same route as the conceptual multi-use CNPS trail, the City attacks this alignment in its report stating that this alignment would be subject to erosion and meander. The Coastal Prairie Loop Trail would be subject to the same impacts of erosion and meander, (indeed probably greater impacts as it would be unpaved) as a multi-use paved path replacing the Canyon Trail and the Creek View Trails which bisect the habitat.
- Routing a multi-use trail along the more southerly Coastal Prairie Loop Trail alignment would provide a superior experience for interpretation of the coast, harbor and gulch areas, affording better views and an overlook of the coast, especially for visitors in wheelchairs. CNPS urges the California Coastal Commissioners to reject the City's revised Master Plan that ignores best practices of a science-based reserve design. This plan fragments the meadow and introduces long-term edge effects into the center of the tarplant management area. The project as proposed is still a non-resource dependent transportation project. The EIR admits that there is a significant impact to the habitat from the project. The California Coastal Act gives paramount protection to ESHA, preventing any non-resource-dependent development. Access to this greenbelt for all—those in wheelchairs, pedestrians, bicyclists, dog walkers, elders, and children—can be provided with much less impact to the coastal prairie remnant. It is regrettable that the City chose not to collaborate with CNPS in developing its revised plan. CNPS is still willing to work with the City to develop a route that achieves the City's objectives and follows best scientific practices for protecting endangered tarplant habitat.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Vince Cheap for the CNPS Conservation Committee,
Santa Cruz County Chapter

Remember Robert Vernon Bradshaw?

Botanist Robert Vernon Bradshaw (1896-1979) lived the last 50+ years of his life in Santa Cruz. He attended the University of Oregon in Eugene between 1918 and 1922. During that time he discovered several new species of plants, one of which, *Lomatium bradshawii*, is named for him and is now a federally listed endangered species. For some reason Bradshaw seems to have disappeared from the botanical world after he completed graduate school. A brief obituary, which was published in the Santa Cruz Sentinel in July 1979, listed his occupation as "landscape gardener", but otherwise has little information.

Ed Alverson, the Willamette Valley Stewardship Ecologist for The Nature Conservancy, is researching Bradshaw's life. If you have any information about him or his time in Santa Cruz, please contact Ed:
The Nature Conservancy
87200 Rathbone Rd.
Eugene, OR 97402
(541) 343-1010
ealverson@tnc.org

Habitat Restoration Team

We are a volunteer group working to restore native habitat in the parks and protected lands in Santa Cruz County. Our program provides an opportunity for people to learn about the natural systems that surround them while helping to restore special and wild places. No prior work experience is necessary, just show up at the park. We welcome individual volunteers from 8 to 80 years, as well as special group projects. Wear comfortable layered clothing, bring something to drink, and lots of enthusiasm! We work rain or shine, but if things get particularly unpleasant, we call it a day. Tools provided; bring gloves.

Contact: Program Leader, Linda Brodman 831.462.4041, redwdrn@pacbell.net

FUTURE PROJECTS: Stay tuned!

**November 6, 2010 10 am to 1 pm
Sunset Beach State Park**

**November 20, 2010 10 am to 1 pm
Twin Lakes State Park**

**December 4, 2010 10 am to 1 pm
Quail Hollow Ranch County Park**

**December 18, 2010 10 am to 1 pm
Quail Hollow Ranch County Park**

Join the California Native Plant Society!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Chapter (County) Affiliation: _____

Please make your check payable to CNPS and send to: Membership Chair, CNPS, 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816

- Student/Limited Income \$25
- Individual \$45
- Family, Group or Library \$75
- Plant Lover \$100
- Patron \$300
- Benefactor \$600
- Mariposa Lily \$1500

All dues and gifts to CNPS are tax deductible.



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Webmaster: Bill Malone billmalone@pacbell.net

Members at Large: Mary Ellen Irons 426-8410, 207 Archer Dr, Santa Cruz; Kim Hayes monkeyflowerkim@aol.com

CNPS is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of California native flora. CNPS has 31 chapters throughout the state and membership is open to all persons – professional and amateur — with an interest in California's native plants. Members have diverse interests including natural history, botany, ecology, conservation, photography, drawing, hiking, and gardening. Your membership includes *Fremontia*, a quarterly journal with articles on all aspects of native plants; the *Bulletin*, a statewide report of activities and schedules; and the *Cypress Cone*.



California Native Plant Society Santa Cruz County Chapter

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