THE SEA RANCH
Soundings

A Quarterly Newspaper for The Sea Ranch Association Members   No. 79   Winter, 2003

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Reservoir Ready to Fill

"On time and within budget," said Community Manager Jim Carruthers in his fact sheet on The Sea Ranch Water Company Reservoir Repair Project. He gave credit to Randy Burke, Director of Facilities and Resources, for "his wisdom, know-how, and management skills" in overseeing the project so that it was completed in 14 weeks.

Rain prevented Sea Ranchers from viewing the completed site on a proposed tour November 15. But had they been able to visit the 14-acre site on the ridge at the very north end of Sea Ranch, they would have seen a gigantic crater with little water in it. Once permits are approved, it will take about two months to fill the reservoir with 300 acre-feet — or 97,777,000 gallons — of water. Depending on the flow in the Gualala River, the Company should start filling the reservoir in December.

Repair of the reservoir resulted from an out-of-court settlement of litigation after a number of defects were discovered in the dam in 1999. The original design engineers and contractor agreed to pay for design and reconstruction of the dam, and development and implementation of a monitoring program. Ghilotti Engineers completed their work on October 17. A Sea Ranch Water Project Oversight Committee monitored the repairs.

Carruther's fact sheet said the repair project had two components. First, was to control erosion from wind and wave action by covering the interior face of the reservoir with rip-rap (rock), and at the north end concrete. In addition to providing greater capacity, the rock and cement lining may impede plant growth, thus improving water quality. The rock is held in place by a six-inch-deep Geocell web, the concrete is embedded in a three-inch Geocell web.

The second component was to control seepage through the face of the reservoir. "All earthen dams leak to some extent," said Carruthers. To monitor and manage the seepage, trenches were placed on the outside southeast portion of the reservoir and six monitoring wells were dug.

In all, 4,500 tons of rip-rap, or 225 transfer truckloads, were used on the inside face of the dam. There were 96,918 square feet of Geocell filled with rock and 41,000 square feet of Geocell filled with concrete, also 23,000 square feet of rock rip-rap only. The rip-rap budget was paid by The Sea Ranch Association.

On the outside slope, 5,500 tons of permeable rocks were used in the five-foot-deep joint trench toe drain (614 lineal feet) and the 17-foot deep bench trench drain (890 lineal feet). The trench budget was paid by the original contractor's insurance settlement. Some additional engineering and legal fees are anticipated to close out the project.

MacIntyre Sounds Alarm re: Blufftop Trail

Question: What once had 15 feet and could be walked on, but now has two feet and no longer can be walked on? Answer: The public trail easement in a part of Unit 28. Bluff erosion has eaten away the land containing the rest of the easement.

At the October meeting of the Board of Directors, Chair Kate MacIntyre called the erosion to the Board's attention: "The land is continually changing and we've seen the Bluff Trail erode, in particular along the Unit 28 bluff edge. What has happened is that the trail in that area has been temporarily closed because there is no longer any public access way." Her purpose is "to awaken our sensitivities to the Bane Bill, to make sure that the Bane Bill requires that we not give any additional adjustments to accommodate public access, and to be mindful of the fact that the county is looking at solutions for the Unit 28 bluff area and is submitting a report regarding bluff erosion. My feeling is that we need to affirm that the Bane Bill should determine the public use of Sea Ranch trails and access ways. We should review the draft report when we have it, and respond to all suggestions and inquiries about additional public land use. We should reject any request for

additional use of Sea Ranch lands. Specifically, we should ask the Community Manager to work closely with the county at this time on whatever they are proposing."

MacIntyre's memo to the Board said the Bane Bill provided five vertical accessways from Highway One to the ocean bluff and a blufftop trail along the undeveloped most northern 3.5 miles. "The northern blufftop was surveyed, and a clearly defined 15-foot-wide trail was established along a specific routing." She also quoted the section of the Bane Bill saying, "… no additional public access requirements shall be imposed at The Sea Ranch pursuant to this division…."

Community Manager Jim Carruthers reported, "The county is doing a study from Gualala Point Park down to Walk-On Beach on bluff erosion. We have supplied them with a fair amount of documentation. It is a draft report, which would eventually go to their staff, and I believe to the Coastal Commission. I have certainly advised them and said don't even send a report out here if it doesn't address these issues. Our assumption is they listen. That report was due the first of October."

John McChesney was on the negotiating team for public access in 1981. "Beyond the cold language in the Bane Bill, as we were doing that negotiating, we reached places where everybody knew in their minds that if the bluff eroded there would be no public access. It was never stated by anybody, but it had to be obvious."

"I don't think County Parks is going to give up that easily in terms of abandoning this trail," said Susan Clark, whose property is threatened by the encroachment. "Taking a strong position when the time comes is important. They need to know there's no wiggle room, that they only have their 15 feet and that's that."

Another owner whose property is impacted by the erosion, Bea Baldouf, was happy that the issue had come before the Board. "My concern is that they're not going to bother about the Bane Bill, they'll just build a great big bridge. Who's going to watch over that and who will determine whether the construction will be geologically sound?"

Advising Counsel Dan Taaffe observed that the Association entered into an agreement 20 years ago and the agreement should be adhered to today. The Bane Bill legislation is an interesting hybrid in that it was passed as an offer to the Association, which the Association was entitled to accept; thus, it has some of the components of a contract as well as legislation. Taaffe felt it would be extremely difficult for the state or a local entity to exercise eminent domain in the face of the Bane Bill.

The bluff erosion study, according to Mark Cleveland of Sonoma County Parks Department, is being reviewed by county departments, and then would be sent to state agencies and interested parties like The Sea Ranch Association for review and comment. The report is not just dealing with the erosion at Walk-On Beach, but also surveying the entire public trail in Sea Ranch, "and how we might cooperatively keep the trail open." He did not anticipate the report would be available to the public until after the New Year.

The issue will be brought before the Board as "Old Business" at its December 13 meeting.

Dogs Love Dog Park

Room to run, shade and sun, a picnic table, water, toys and lots of playmates: What more could a dog ask for? Now that the Sea Ranch Dog Park is finished, all the angst that went into its approval has faded into the past. Dog owners are as happy as their dogs.

The site, next to and behind the burn pile off Deer Trail just above the intersection with Highway One, is ideal, with parking for a number of cars. Nick Makris, leader of Dog Park proponents, says, "I can't imagine having the Dog Park anywhere else. Everybody I've talked to loves it." At one time, two or three other sites were considered, but Makris is sure they wouldn't have worked as well as the present site. He reported around $8,000 in volunteer contributions, including Jim Docker's backhoe work. Volunteers also turned out to limb trees and prepare the site so that the total cost came in under budget. The Sea Ranch Association built the fences, gates and parking area.

Sheep and Goats Work

"Our" sheep have become a major interest for Sea Ranchers, as evidenced by the large turnout at the Forum on The Sea Ranch Association's grazing program moderated by Sandra Bush on November 1.

Bill Wiemeyer, Environmental Planner for The Sea Ranch, explained how we happen to have sheep on The Sea Ranch. In the 1840s, Europeans realized there were good grasslands here; so, for some 150 years, the ranch supported sheep or cattle grazing. Well before that time, for perhaps thousands of years, the terraces were grasslands. The Native Americans were known to have burned the terraces as part of their grazing program.

When The Sea Ranch began, the first thing the developer did was to remove the sheep. That started a new process of natural succession that went from overgrazed grasslands to coastal scrub like coyote brush, coffee berry, ceanothus, and domination by two nonnative grasses: sweet vernal grass and velvet grass.

The Association recognized the trend of succession to more woody species in the 70s and 80s and tried programs that

were not too successful: mowing, a little grazing and burning. More recent studies confirmed the domination of the meadows by nonnative species. In the Comprehensive Environmental Plan, the Natural Resources Management element examined the need to do something to maintain the coastal prairie. One guideline says the Association shall maintain its grasslands as primarily open landscapes. Another says it should use environmentally sound practices to maintain the meadows as coastal prairie.

Staff was given the task of devising management tools to support those policies. The most cost-effective and environmentally sound were prescribed burning and grazing. (See SOUNDINGS, Fall 1997, Spring 1998) The Board approved proceeding with those management tools. Unfortunately, the preferred season for prescribed burns comes when the California Department of Forestry, which manages such burns, is busy fighting wildland fires. That program never got off the ground.

Several sheep ranchers were contacted but there were more problems than solutions. Jack Richardson, who owns a ranch just south of Sea Ranch told Wiemeyer he thought the idea of grazing on Sea Ranch was the silliest idea he'd ever heard of. Wiemeyer didn't know the sheep on that ranch actually belonged to Charles Richardson.

Charles Richardson said when he first heard of the proposal to run sheep on the Sea Ranch, he laughed. However, about two years ago, during shearing of sheep at Stewarts Point, Richardson heard that another sheep rancher was bringing his sheep to the ranch. He thought, "Why would they go way out of the area?"

Richardson got in touch with Bill Wiemeyer. After several negotiating meetings, a contract was presented.

Richardson thought, "Hey we're into this, we've got to come up with some sheep!" After searching all over the U.S., they decided on a flock of about 300 sheep and lambs from Washington plus a few from Stewarts Point.

Richardson doesn't cull the herd, but eventually may sell some of the sheep for meat. His number one concern is the grass, followed closely by getting qualified help. "The most challenging part about the flock at Sea Ranch is dealing with the people and their different ideas. Most ranchers get into ranching to try to get away from people. Here, we have had some wonderful opportunities to meet people. I appreciate all who stop by and want to learn more about the program."

There were no models to go by when they started the grazing program. Sea Ranch grass turned out to be not very nutritious for the sheep. At any given time, Richardson would get a phone call from a well-meaning citizen thinking the sheep are out of water. "We want people to know we are managing these things and watching out for them." Often he may be holding back on water because the sheep are being moved. Also sheep drink less water in irrigated areas than they do in the dry areas. Richardson chose to use the electric fence to enclose the sheep and keep them from predators and there have been no known dog intrusions to date. The electric fence is really psychological and once the sheep gets a good zap right off the bat they won't touch the fence again.

Randy Burke, Director of Facilities and Resources, said, "We wanted to set up a contract where we wouldn't use Association forces to maintain the sheep." However, where the Association can coordinate the fuel management efforts with the grazing program — like mowing and clearing dead wood under the trees — it makes it easier to erect the fences. Where the

mower goes in first, the sheep eat the sprouts.

The contract calls for around 600 head of sheep and now goats that were introduced four months ago. Richardson keeps a balance sheet day-by-day to show how many acres are covered. Some 400 acres were grazed last year and there are about 450 acres total. Right now the sheep are on a northward track until they get to the Golf Links; then they will cross over Highway One and work their way south past the white Barn.

The cost per acre for sheep, said Burke, is $248 an acre or 42 cents a head per day. In the Bay Area it may be from $500 to $600 an acre. The sheep run 24 hours a day and cost about $10.50 an hour per 24 hours to reduce the biomass and flammables. "Sheep are real good fire preventers." As a comparison, Burke sent a hand crew out to see how much they could do in one hour. To cut and rake by hand would cost $1,400 an acre.

Questions from Audience

What is the deal with the grass? Richardson said he generally supplements the sheep's feed. Humans have enzymes for digestion and sheep have bacteria, and the bacteria are less efficient in digesting larger stems. The grasses had been wild for so long that it became heavy thatch and the sheep couldn't digest it. "I didn't think it was going to be that bad." This year there is a decided improvement in the quality of the grass. Wiemeyer added that sweet vernal grass is very poor nutritionally. As the grazing program goes on, there will be more nutritional grasses. This year, Richardson has been able to hold off the alfalfa supplement longer because the sheep are in better condition.

Does The Sea Ranch water quality have deficiencies? Richardson replied, "I want to be very clear on that. The sheep are very susceptible to copper

and can only tolerate a very little." Last year, the sheep were behind the Equestrian Center where there were copper pipes. That led to copper toxicity problems in the sheep. Once they were moved the problem went away.

Why have goats been mixed with the sheep? In retrospect, said Richardson, "I would have liked to see all goats to start with. Goats eat more brushy plants and will sustain longer on less nutrition. But if we left the goats in the penned areas it would look like the moon, so we move the flock when the sheep are ready and that gives us a nice balance most of the time." The goats stand on their hind legs eating the tops of the coyote brush and some seedling trees, while the sheep eat at the base.

Would sheep come on private property if the owners want it? Richardson said he assumes people don't want sheep on their property, but if the owner will let him know ahead of time, he will try to accommodate them. As the program continues Wiemeyer thought it would be a good idea to establish a list of people who want sheep to graze areas of their property.

What happens to thistle? Sheep will eat it early in the year. Goats have preferences for different plants at different times of the year — sometimes thistle, sometimes bull pines.

What species of goats and sheep are there? The goats are Spanish goats, which don't get fat and have a little smaller frame. The sheep started with Targees from Washington, then Richardson's own Dorsets and Suffolks and a commercial cross, but basically they are all a meat sheep.

What are the effects on wildlife? Richardson is very careful about where he fences up to screen out sensitive areas. The program will enhance wildlife because the grasses are shorter and more nutritious. "One of the

beauties of the electric fence," said Wiemeyer "is we are able to screen off riparian areas and protect habitat and species simply by locating the fence in the proper place." Fencing also allows some comparison between grazed and ungrazed areas, and to learn whether grazing enhances species or not.

How is the number of lambs? Richardson remarked, "I was very pleasantly surprised at the conception rate and how well the lambs did on the old mothers."

Who studies the effect of the grazing? A botanist is doing sampling and analyzing the changes. One reason is to find out if the grazing program is meeting its objectives and to get a handle on the breadth of the diversity, the change from nonnative species to native species. The purpose is to provide some good science and to contribute to the body of knowledge about coastal prairies.

How often do you shear the sheep and to what extent does it affect your profits? "We shear the sheep once a year," said Richardson. "We try to adjust the shearing time to when we are by the Barn. As far as profits, it costs us more to shear than we ever make with the wool. It costs some ranchers $50 to $100 just to get rid of the wool. Synthetic fibers have really impacted the wool industry. Shearing is not an option, you have to deal with it at least once a year because of the stickers. The Sea Ranch yarn is more of a hobby thing."

How many ewes have twins? That's a genetic trait. In the range, Richardson would prefer ewes to have just one lamb because it's hard to keep track of the lambs. A ewe may not take care of the second lamb or may not have enough milk for two.

If we see sheep out, whom should we call? Richardson said call him at his house and leave a message. "We really try to watch, and in our 18 months

there was only one time when sheep were scattered all over Highway One. That's the one time we needed the calls."

Do you use sheep dogs? The sheep are so accustomed to the electric fence and our moving them around we don't rely on the dog as much as we first did. That's a problem because if we don't use the dog all the time, he'll start going soft. So we try to use the dog at least once a week.

Will the Fuels Management Plan avoid fires like the ones in Southern California? The Fuels Management Plan does not address catastrophic fires; it is meant to reduce the biomass and make fires more manageable. The plan is predicated on the need to stop a fire from laddering up into the trees and to keep the flame lengths short. In combination with the grazing program, crews are doing a lot of limbing and brush removal in forested areas.

Have you had any problems with mountain lions or other predators? Yes, there was one instance when a mountain lion compromised the fence on Longmeadow Trail and killed five or six sheep. It was never caught and it will come back. The state trapper was contacted and the trail was kept closed for a week-and-a-half longer. Bobcats can be a problem with baby lambs. However, the electric fence keeps the animals from coming back.

Do llamas keep predators away? We have some llamas at Stewarts Point but don't know how effective they would be with a mountain lion. They're more for canines: dogs, foxes and coyotes. Some rumors say the llamas will try to mate with ewes in heat and crush them. Richardson may experiment with a llama with 10 or 20 ewes.

Forum Presenters

Bill Wiemeyer, The Sea Ranch Environmental Planner; is responsible for overseeing the land management and fuels management activities of the

Facilities and Resources department. He holds a B.A. in Biology from Sonoma State and a M.A. in Landscape Architecture from Cal Poly, Pomona.

Charles Richardson holds a forestry degree from Humboldt State, is a licensed forester and has been ranching for most of his life. He is a fifth generation Sonoma County resident on his father's side and sixth generation on his mother's side. He is currently running 900 head of sheep and goats between Sea Ranch and Stewarts Point and 50 cow/calf pairs on his ranch.

Randy Burke, head of Sea Ranch Facilities and Resources Department, holds a B.A. in Biology from St. Mary's, M.A. in Public Health and Environmental Health from Loma Linda University, is a registered Environmental Health Specialist, and maintains a General Engineers' Contracting license.

New Owners Meet

A second New Owners Meeting on October 11 was necessary due to the influx of new members to The Sea Ranch. Arranged by the Nancy Carter of the Communication Committee, the meeting welcomed new owners to the Ranch, and briefed them on The Sea Ranch Association organization as well as the many opportunities for them to participate.

Dick Whitaker, Director of Design Review, told members, "We live in the most beautiful spot on the coast of California. Its beauty has more to do with the environment and the natural setting than with anything you put on it." That is a hard call for architects, he said, who complain their creativity is being limited. "But look at a forest: the number of variables is limitless."

Famed Sea Ranch architect Charles Moore once gave this advice to architectural students: "What we ought to be dealing with is ordinary architecture. Not out of ordinariness,

but allowing a building to do what it was meant to do by ordinary means." Whitaker interpreted that to mean homes should be designed for the way the client wants to live in them. "You don't have to engage in structural or shape-making gymnastics which require a lot of huffing and puffing and spending a lot of the client's budget to have good architecture. Some of the most wonderful houses in the world are plain and ordinary on the outside. You get inside and there's a wonderful use of space and light and views and all kinds of things that are important to us. After all, how much time do you spend on the street looking at your house?" He was reminded of a favorite saying, "Architecture is like a geode: on the outside its plain and simple and ordinary in a good sense of the word, and on the inside all kinds of wonderful things are going on."

Before their home is built, most homeowners stand on their site and look out at the Pacific Ocean, said Whitaker. "I like to see the ocean, but day in and day out, you don't sit there and look at it for hours. I'm looking out in all directions and see the meadows with their trees and grasses, the hills with their trees, the hedgerows — these are all views from your site. It has to do with organizing your thinking about your house relative to what's there and where you are. Not only do we have to start thinking in 360 degrees but you have to start thinking in three dimensions." This is what the Design Committee and staff are geared to do.

A number of volunteer organizations from The Sea Ranch Volunteer Fire Department to the Posh Squash community garden introduced themselves and invited members to get involved.

Longtime Sea Rancher Jer Skibbins has given the keynote speech at the past few New Owners meetings; however, he was sidelined by illness.

Rob Elder read from one of Skibbins earlier speeches:

"Being a volunteer here means that you are discharging part of your citizenship duties. We have no government here. TSRA's large and competent staff takes care of buildings, sports facilities, beaches, roads, common lands and water. Volunteers do all the rest. Since I arrived in 1967, an entire community infrastructure has been built, mostly by volunteers. If you choose to integrate into the mainstream of our coastal community, the magic secret is to volunteer for whatever activity you prefer. You'll find a wide-open welcome because the work is really necessary for the public welfare.

If, however, you seek quiet, no involvement and the concentration of your study or studio, that too is perfectly acceptable and many have done that before you. You have choices galore — in space and quiet and pure air — in the beauty of this coast to en- rich your soul, clean your lungs and reward your days."

The new owners then adjourned to visit the tables for the various volunteer groups and get acquainted with their neighbors.

A Sea Ranch History

Ed. Note: The next four pages are a record of The Sea Ranch History Forum, responding to the many requests of Sea Ranchers.

PRE-SEA RANCH: Susan Clark

Picture The Sea Ranch at the turn of the last century: "After 60 years of intensive ranching and several decades of logging, the property was overgrazed — there wasn't a green stick that stuck up out of the ground anywhere. Hedgerows hadn't been planted yet and the wind whipped fiercely through the Ranch. The little farmhouse that stood on the hill above Knipp-Stengel Barn had a tenant because Knipp and Stengel had sold

the Ranch in 1903." So Susan Clark, Sea Ranch's architectural historian, described the Ranch at a Forum about the history of The Sea Ranch on September 6. An environmental consultant and design consultant to architects, Clark is chair of the Sonoma County Landmarks Commission on which she has served for the past eight years. Her Master's thesis was on the history of the Del Mar Ranch from 1845 to 1965.

In 1898, Bender Brothers built the mill at Del Mar and a little settlement began to grow around the mill. The brothers were able to purchase the 5000-acre ranch in 1903, but as soon as they bought it they went bankrupt. All the timber around the ranch had already been cut. The population at Del Mar had risen to 500 between 1900 and 1910 but it dwindled as people gradually moved away and abandoned their houses. The mill continued to operate until 1910 when it burned.

At the end of 1911, a second wave of Russians immigrated to California. (The first came in 1905 and another came in 1912.) The leader of this group of Russian Baptists was Emile Noshkin. Their route from Siberia took them to Japan where Mrs. Noshkin gave birth to their 14th child. A shrewd San Franciscan entrepreneur named Walter Frick read a story about the Russians printed in the *San Francisco Examiner*. Frick had been buying and selling parcels in this area for logging since 1907 and, knowing the Russians would be looking for land, bought the Del Mar Ranch the month they arrived in San Francisco. He then rented it to them.

Through June and July of 1912, the Russians planted peas, potatoes, beets, carrots, watermelon and hay. They used steam tractors and whenever they ran out of steam, they would just pull up a fence post and throw it into the burner. Many of the fences that had been part of the Del Mar Ranch were burned by the Russians, plus some of the buildings at Black Point.

The Russians ordered two more steam tractors and the freight was delivered to Point Arena. As three young men, one of whom was Nicholas Podzakoff, were bringing the tractors back, they missed the turn at Schooner Gulch and Podzakoff was killed. The last Del Mar Ranch owner, the late Ed Ohlson, told Clark that Podzakoff was buried on the ranch, his grave marked by a circle of stones. With some effort, Clark was able to locate and photograph the stones.

The Russians built new houses and converted the Del Mar Saloon into a schoolhouse. Sonoma County sent out the Grays, a husband and wife team who spoke Russian and English. They taught 19 children during the day and the adults and 13 children in the evening.

By December of 1912, the colony had grown to about 250 people and the Russians began looking for land they could own. They had no experience in knowing what land should cost, or in dealing with an unscrupulous person like Frick. They bought the property for $250,000 plus two mortgages Frick had taken out on the property while the Russians were growing crops on it. The price was six times the assessed value on the property. Payments were so high no money was left for subsistence. The Russians left the ranch in September 1913, leaving all their machinery and their crops behind. After they left, the property went into foreclosure and Frick bought it at auction in 1913.

SEA RANCH ORIGINS: Al Boeke

Former Vice President for Community Planning and Development for Oceanic Properties Inc, architect Al Boeke described how he happened upon the Del Mar Ranch and persuaded Oceanic to buy it and develop it as The Sea Ranch. He also told of the planning that went into the creation of The Sea Ranch. Oceanic Properties Inc., later to become Oceanic California Inc. (OCI), was a wholly owned subsidiary of the parent company Castle and Cooke.

In 1963, Boeke was in an airplane flying around the Bay Area looking for a several thousand-acre new town site and frustrated in not finding anything that met the requirements. The third morning the real estate agent/pilot told him of a new listing of 10 miles on the ocean in Sonoma County. Boeke resisted, saying he was looking for a site for first homes, but the pilot said "I'm not charging you for this flight, let's take a look at it." Once he saw it, Boeke was so impressed he went back to Honolulu and convinced Oceanic's Board of Directors they should option the property for a one-year period to study the feasibility of developing a second-home community.

Returning to the ranch, Boeke walked the property for five days — only the ocean terrace, because access to everything across the highway was blocked 10 to 12-feet deep by brush and forest debris. Stripped by 3,000 sheep, dry grass was a quarter of an inch high, the bluff edge was badly eroded, and small mountains of windblown sand piled up around the ends of the cypress hedgerows. The hedgerows themselves were beautiful, mature, 40-50 feet high, absolutely lush, dense, green and reaching all the way to the ground.

It was spring and the wild irises were in full blue-purple bloom. Boeke remarked on their beauty and asked Ed Ohlson if they ever covered the ground. Ohlson said, "The damn things keep the grass from growing, I pour oil on them and I burn them." At that, the two men looked at each other and realized they were coming from different places. They both laughed.

The Ranch enjoyed a southwest prospect that invited more sun than fog, the soils perked inches of rain in a

few hours. There was a natural ocean-river border at the north end, and a warm sunny river valley to the east where the San Andreas Fault parallels the shore and dives into the ocean. "I became enchanted and that's not too much of an exaggeration," said Boeke.

First thing, Boeke went to Santa Rosa to meet the county supervisor. When Boeke got there, the supervisor had assembled the whole planning, engineering, public works staff, and four people from the state. He asked, "What is it you want to do with Ed's ranch?" Boeke explained his concept of a quiet, meditative community and that he wasn't interested in building a resort.

At the end of Boeke's presentation, the supervisor asked the planning director for comments. He declared, "We'll have to have a dirt road from the highway to the bluff a quarter- to a half-mile on center for the whole 10 miles. At the end of which would be a turnaround, trash barrel and a Porta Potti. He called it a "parklet." Boeke said, "That's 20 parklets! We can't live with that — I'm out of here!"

The supervisor asked the state people, "Why are you guys here?" They said they wanted to acquire the land. The supervisor asked them if they had the money. They said no. The supervisor said to Boeke, "I like what you are talking about." He told the planning director, "I'm going to go with Boeke."

Boeke returned to the Del Mar Ranch and talked to Ed Ohlson who said, "I'm eager to sell it to you, but I only want to sell it if you will do something I can be proud of." Boeke interviewed consultants, including the names of architects recommended by Larry Halprin. A baker's dozen of impressed and excited consultants came to the Ranch to test the viability of the 5,200 acres for development by Oceanic. Each had his or her own assignment and they met every three or four weeks for the next year, at various times

throwing everything on the table that had to do with building a community: geology, architecture, landscape, sales, public relations, economics, the market, etc.

Here was a 5,200-acre site three-and-a-half hours from the city and two hours from suburbia. The 5,100 acres would have visual identity and ownership control. It was naturally beautiful and hardy but not harsh, readily adaptable to new use. Old-timers confirmed the rumor of a "Banana Belt" climate. The river promised domestic water. The forests had to be thinned and treated for insects to avoid potential fires. Sheep were immediately removed to allow regeneration of the landscape and wildlife on the ocean terrace. The planners intended to keep the scattered historic buildings that enriched the site and use them sympathetically.

The existing small town of Gualala would help provide daily services and contribute to the opportunity to create community. The planners found the site ideal for the private, quiet, meditative, non-resort they intended. Its remoteness at first seemed a problem, but they concluded that was possibly an advantage. In fact, a positive sales program selling the qualities of the ranch would attract the kind of people who would become emotionally involved with the land and would be perfect candidates for a self-governing private community.

Because of the narrowness of the ocean terrace, the highway had to be the collector and stub-outs for local neighborhoods. Their idea was to maintain a green site that would dominate modest man-made structures. (Boeke repeated the word "modest.") Advertising and sales would be aimed at the schoolteacher, artist, the author, the builder and other just plain folks who could perceive the wonders of the site and understand the opportunity for local voluntary stewardship and local control. It was agreed to devote 50

percent of the land to Commons, and establish an undivided interest for all members without property-line fences, in order to respect the rural site and evolving community.

At the end of the year, the planning group presented to Oceanic the viability of a preliminary plan and the concept that was to become The Sea Ranch. Oceanic Properties, Inc. and its parent company Castle and Cooke both agreed to take the developer risk role and purchased the land over seven years.

Oceanic created an association of members for governance, and established a Design Committee with viable member-helpful practices. "The architects among us were so excited they could hardly wait to get to the drawing board and find appropriate contextual design solutions." Oceanic hired a professional Association staff and subsidized costs until the Association became viable. The CC&Rs were created for the members as protections for and from each other, avoiding negative dos and don'ts — a "community constitution." Oceanic avoided putting anything in the CC&Rs having to do with the future community, as they felt that was the job of the members as the Association evolved.

A sigh went up from the audience as Boeke described lot prices, which began at $6,000; two-bedroom condos were $25,000, three-bedroom condos and five ocean-point lots were $35,000. The top price was $10,000 for the remaining lots. Publicity just boomed and sales were far beyond their imagination. Sea Ranch was healthy and growing.

Then in 1972, the coastal revolution began. Development at Sea Ranch was virtually shut down. Left behind were a multitude of other opportunities that didn't happen. "We were stuck with only The Sea Ranch," said Boeke, "it is, however, still the best place there is

to live."

EARLY SETTLERS AND VOLUNTEERS: George Rathmell

George Rathmell, noted author and Sea Rancher, graciously stepped in for Jer Skibbins who was temporarily incapacitated. Rathmell is the author of two books based on history, *Realms of Gold, the Colorful Writers of San Francisco from 1850 to 1950*, and *A Passport to Hell, the Mystery of Richard Realf*.

As a Sea Rancher for half of his life, Rathmell said he'd seen a lot of changes from the developer's beachhead to the current invasion. In the early days, Sea Ranch was not seen as a residential development, but as a second-home development because it was too remote, too hard to get to. There were no medical facilities, the local store had survival food at best, there was no drugstore, originally no television, and no entertainment. "Unless you were a lumberjack or a fisherman, there was no work."

In spite of all the reasons not to live here, said Rathmell, a few hardheaded people decided they wanted to live here. So, they — working together — developed a community. A lot of the community-building activities took place under the aegis of Oceanic, such as meetings at the Barn, followed by spaghetti feeds or wild-pig barbecues, hay-bale piano concerts in the Barn with Gunnar Johanssen, tennis tournaments, kite days, etc. But little-by-little, the people who built here in the early days learned to provide for their own needs — physical and recreational.

Rathmell told of the "Great Gualala River Run" in the early 70s. It consisted of people dressed up in costumes and floating in inner tubes from the Hot Spot down the Gualala River. "Sort of 'blue-water rafting' followed by considerable celebration."

The Community Garden was another early volunteer project. Marion Gates and Sally Skibbins decided there should be a place off the Ranch, but adjacent to it, where people could raise vegetables — particularly raspberries. "It's one big communal garden, where all the members share equally in the work and produce."

In one of the first volunteer efforts, Bill Milligan gathered up square nails from the burned-out Ft. Ross site and sold them at the Lodge to raise money for Ft. Ross' reconstruction.

The CC&Rs have volunteerism built into them, Rathmell observed. "We are self-governing. We have a Board of Directors. That means people have to volunteer to run for the Board and if they win, they have to volunteer their time to serve." As things became more complicated and the population grew, the Board formed standing committees to advise its Directors. "They do the grunt work, report to the Board, and pray that the Board will listen to them." In addition to standing committees there are task forces set up temporarily to deal with specific problems or projects — all volunteers.

Probably the most important volunteer group on The Sea Ranch is the Volunteer Fire Department. "If it weren't for them, we would have all burned down long ago." But the largest and most ambitious volunteer project was that of restoring the Knipp-Stengel Barn. "When we were looking for a community center long ago, the Barn was considered. But when we found out it was going to take more than a million dollars to bring it up to code for a meeting place, the Board dropped it." Nevertheless, in 1989 Chris Beach, who was a contractor and president of the Board, volunteered to do the job with volunteer labor. "A crew of inexperienced and over-aged volunteers rapidly — in 12 years — provided a 78,500 square-foot meeting place that is a historical monument and the centerpiece of The Sea Ranch." A

spin-off of that project was the restoration of the century-old Del Mar Schoolhouse done by volunteers under the direction of Dick Soule. Rathmell declared one of the best examples of volunteer effort to be the Del Mar Ranch House Garden. "A thing of beauty and a joy for as long as the volunteers continue to work on it."

"What attracts us to this place is, of course, the natural beauty. But what keeps us here is the teamwork and fellowship of working with other volunteers to enhance and maintain the quality of life in this remarkable place," Rathmell concluded.

EFFECTS OF THE COASTAL ACT: Kathi Gordon

Kathi Gordon, Editor of SOUNDINGS, reported on the changes imposed on The Sea Ranch by the Coastal Act of 1972.

Prop 20 was an initiative called the California Coastal Zone Conservation Act. Mary Allen, Oceanic's project manager, said, "We all voted for Proposition 20. No one wanted another Malibu. We were naive to think that a law to protect the coast would not be used against us. At Sea Ranch we had done things right!"

In 1972, The Sea Ranch was a planned community of 5,200 homes on as many acres. Oceanic had sold over 1,700 individual home sites, and 308 homes were completed or under construction. That year, the Environment League gave its award to The Sea Ranch for both land use and architecture, saying "… the dream of a simple, beautiful Whole Earth kind of place for people to thrive in will never be achieved, but the Sea Ranch thinking and building come pretty close."

Earlier in 1968, a group of environmentalists based in Santa Rosa, formed Citizens Organized to Acquire Access to State Tidelands, COAAST. They contended developments like Sea Ranch and Bodega Harbor would

block public access to the tidelands and they placed an initiative on the Sonoma County ballot to create a countywide system of coastal access ways. The initiative was defeated.

COAAST then joined forces with other environmental groups around the state to create an active state lobbying group: the Coastal Alliance. In 1971, the group sent a coastal protection bill to the Assembly. In it were a number of compromises to make it more palatable to the legislators but even then it got bottled up in committee. Hedging their bets, the Alliance also had written a companion piece: an initiative to go on the state ballot in case their bill failed to pass. Thus, the more pro-conservation, more stringent Proposition 20 went on the ballot.

In November 1972, Californians overwhelmingly voted in favor Proposition 20. The act established a state Coastal Commission plus regional Commissions that had permit authority over land use for four years until a Coastal Plan was drafted and submitted to the legislature. The Coastal Zone in The Sea Ranch was generally west of Highway One.

COAAST and those opposed to further development at The Sea Ranch found a receptive audience in the newly formed Coastal Commission. From the first, the Commission demanded donation of public access throughout The Sea Ranch, even though Oceanic had donated 125 acres of oceanfront land to Sonoma County in 1969, forming Gualala Point Park. Oceanic and the Association were equally as adamant that Sea Ranch was to remain private.

The Commission imposed a moratorium on the issuance of building permits. Sea Ranchers found themselves holding lots upon which they could not build and which they could not sell. Tension grew amongst the members and between the Association and the developer. Various advocacy groups were formed. A

number of lot owners refused to pay their dues because they couldn't use their lots.

The Association sued the Commission in federal court, claiming that the Commission's denial of individual permits was an unconstitutional taking of property without compensation. The Association's position was that the state could acquire any or all parts of The Sea Ranch by eminent domain. The Coastal Commission, however, had no power to condemn property. Instead it denied permits to individual lot owners in order to compel the Association to give property without compensation. The suit would remain in federal court for the next eight years.

In 1973, the Commission lifted the moratorium in favor of a set of conditions to address the issues raised by the new coastal law. The "Overall Conditions" mandated new public access, the creation of view easements, limitations on the height, size and bulk of buildings in scenic areas, and new standards for septic tanks and water supply facilities. These conditions required lot owners to donate land owned in common with the Association. Individual lot owners were powerless to get the Association to comply and thus could not get permission to build.

The Coastal Commission next proposed a compromise by which they would approve permits with the same "overall conditions" but giving owners the option of depositing a $1,500 fee in lieu of complying with the access conditions. The deposit would be used to mitigate the effects of development if the Association were unable or unwilling to comply with the conditions. From 1974 to 1977, approximately 80 permits were issued under this system. In all, 118 deposits were collected.

In 1976, the legislature approved the Coastal Act of 1976, making the Coastal Commission permanent and

moving the coastal boundary to the ridgeline. In March 1978, the Commission adopted a final set of Overall Findings and Conditions that ignored any efforts by the Association to compromise. It included all the previous conditions and limited Sea Ranch to 2,029 homes. The Association would be required to grant the deeds for public access without being compensated one cent. There were 530 houses on Sea Ranch at that time.

Strong pressure from Sacramento was being exerted on both the Coastal Commission and The Sea Ranch Association to find a legislative solution.

Oceanic, bleeding money by the millions, parted ways with the Association and supported the Calvo Bill, which would require an "in lieu" fee from those who applied for a permit. Senator Barry Keene asked the Association to support the Calvo Bill. They did not. The bill was withdrawn.

Assemblyman Tom Bane introduced AB 1706 to resolve "the lengthy and bitter dispute involving development of existing legal lots within … the Sea Ranch." The Bane Bill appropriated $500,000 as a one-time payment to the Association upon conveyance of the specified easements for public access within a three-month period. The $1,500 Environmental Deposits would be returned to the homeowners. It exempted single-family homes on existing lots from the Coastal Act with certain requirements. However, the bill also included all of the overall conditions.

Because it included the access conditions, the Board at first voted to oppose the Bane Bill. They asked Bane to withdraw the bill but he replied, "If you want the bill killed, you can do it yourselves. There is no need for me to do it." The legislature was running out of patience with The Sea Ranch.

The Association went to the members with a referendum on whether to comply with the Bane Bill in January of 1981. Eighty-four percent of the members voted by a two-to-one margin to wait until the federal suit was decided rather than accept the Bane Bill. On May 21, 1981, a three-judge panel of the Federal District Court rendered a devastating decision against TSRA, dismissing its action on the ground that the Coastal Act, as applied, was constitutional. The Association then filed an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

In May, the Association's Legal Committee concluded the best interests of the Association would be served by accepting the Bane Bill. By an almost unanimous vote, the Board officially declared its intent to comply with the provisions of the Bane Bill. By July of 1981, escrow was complete and the easements were handed over to the Coastal Commission. In November, the Supreme Court rendered the Association's appeal moot in light of the enactment of the Bane Bill.

After 10 years of turmoil, Sea Ranchers could build their homes again.

Al Boeke showed a few slides of the early Sea Ranch. Fires swept this whole coast from 50 to 100 miles within the last 100 years. Then some areas were deliberately burned off for grass and sheep. The forests were diseased because the trees couldn't get to the light. Oceanic employed the crews from the shutdown mills to clean the entire forest.

The Esherick Houses, the original demonstration houses, illustrated the concept the Planning Committee had in mind. Some wanted to legislate it but Boeke resisted, realizing houses couldn't be built in any orderly process unless the developer became a merchant-builder and built them all at once.

The Oceanic Board of Directors twitted Boeke for saying Sea Ranch was in a banana belt, so when he invited them to Sea Ranch for a first visit, they left in San Francisco's tule fog all bundled up in their coats. When they passed Stewarts Point, the sun came out and there was no wind. At The Sea Ranch, picnic tables were set on the lee side of the hedgerow. The men shed their coats and rolled up their sleeves. Curious, some found their way through the hedgerow only to dart back to the leeward side, grabbing for their coats.

QUESTIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Ron Limbaugh asked about the tree planting, "I've heard there were 100,000 bishop pines." "Not true," said Boeke, "It was 400,000!" They cost two cents apiece in two-by-two containers from the Forest Service. They were intended to reforest the areas that had been logged.

About the naming of the Gualala River, Rob Elder asked, "Is there any chance the name came from the word 'Valhalla' and perhaps was named that by the Russians?" Clark said there was some controversy over the name and suspected that the Indian word "Gualala," meaning "water-coming-down place," got adapted into the language of the various settlers. What they heard was probably what they wrote.

"What happened in the time period between Mr. Frick and the Ohlsons?" Clark responded, "Frick died in 1937, and the property he sold to the Russians for $250,000 plus two additional mortgages just sat around until 1941. Again, it was sold on the steps of the County Courthouse to the Ohlsons for $85,000, and then they paid $15,000 for the sheep that were on it. The Ohlsons sold it to Oceanic in 1963 for $2,700,000 paid over seven years."

Ann Harriman said it was her impression that Mrs. Frick started the gardens and Mrs. Ohlson kept them up. Clark responded, "There were a series of Mrs. Fricks." Ed Ohlson's first wife was Alice Ohlson and she wasn't really a gardener. Ed's second wife Dorothy had been married to a nurseryman, and when she married Ed she brought along many plants to what is now the Del Mar Center Garden. Elmer Ohlson, Ed's brother, lived in the center of the Ranch with his wife, Bertha who planted many flowers around the Ohlson Ranch House.

Asked about the "Walk-In Cabins" and the "Cluster Homes" and why there weren't more demonstration projects like them," Gordon responded the Bane Bill removed the financial incentive to build more demonstration projects. Boeke said there just isn't a chance there will ever be another Sea Ranch. There is no economic viability in carrying land and investing millions in it up-front to reach a point of gradual payoff. Government on several levels wouldn't allow it to happen again.

John Williams asked if Castle and Cooke's investment in Sea Ranch paid off? At the end of seven years when it paid for the last piece of land, said Boeke, Oceanic was in a profit position. Within the next two or three years, Sea Ranch became hostage to the Coastal Commission. Within that period, parent company Castle and Cooke was paying interest on the loans while losing the opportunity to realize a return on its investment. David Murdoch of Flexi-Van took over Castle and Cooke and sold off most of its assets, including selling The Sea Ranch timber preserves to Traveler's Insurance. Travelers, in turn, sold the north parcel to Gualala Redwoods. The Association bought the central portion and one person bought the south parcel and built a house on it.

R.C. Vasavada observed, "It seems to

me we owe a lot to the CC&Rs for what The Sea Ranch is today. Who was involved in preparing them?" Boeke replied, "I kept a collection of CC&Rs from various places in my files in Honolulu. I spent about a week cutting out sentences and paragraphs and pieces of pages, and then lined them all up by titles. We pasted the whole thing together and that's what I handed to Reverdy Johnson, Whit Budge and the legal staff. We really paid through the nose and worked hard for a document that would absolutely stand up in court. So far it has."

Akiko Docker wondered if Oceanic named "The Sea Ranch?" Boeke said the Planning Committee of 13 came up with about three names, one of them was "The Sea Ranch." "I was for one of them and two-thirds were for "The Sea Ranch" and that's what it became. The advertising agency Foote Cone & Belding named all of the streets. At the beginning, they had "Honeysuckle" and "Merryberry" and I said 'no way.' I wanted names like Hot Spot and Rams." (Rob Diefenbach cheered, "Hooray for Al!")

How did the unit numbering system develop? Boeke said that's the prerogative of the County Planning Department; the developer had nothing to say about it. It's mostly chronological in terms of when the parcel comes in.

In the past year, all the red gates have been painted and numbered — how did that come about? Boeke said, "They were red when we inherited them and Larry Halprin felt very strongly they should remain red." The gates go back to the Frick ranch and they indicated the numbers of the fields, added Clark. The gates' numbers were the way to find one's way off the highway because there were no street names.

Restaurants

Bodega Bay Lodge and Spa
103 Coast Highway One
Bodega Bay
707-875-3525

The morning started innocently enough. I had in front of me three full days alone. Time enough, if I stayed the course, to tackle dirty windows, a looming pile of ironing, a project-strewn desk and blinking computer. Oh yes, and the ankle-deep redwood duff that's threatening to bury our deck and front path. It promised to be a glorious fall day. The bright sun shone seductively on our view of distant whitecaps even through the grimy windows. Just one more cup of coffee and a look through the Press Democrat and alas, I would begin my chores.

I quickly scanned the pages, planning a more in-depth read later. My eye caught on "Best Bites in Bodega Bay," an ad proclaiming the newly opened Seaweed Café. I read that the two owners/chefs cook and serve only the bounty of surrounding fields and sea. Their approach sounded fresh and innovative and my mind started wandering. I tore the ad out to save. Then my eye caught on the words "Day Spa — massages, facials, aromatherapy treatments" in an ad for the Bodega Bay Lodge. My shiny housekeeper/writer halo started to both slip and tarnish, and a delicious and giddy feeling of escape came over me.

Some 20 minutes later, massage time confirmed, lunch reservation made and gear bag packed, I was in the car heading down Highway One. I opened the sunroof, turned up the volume of my favorite Gypsy Kings' tape, basked in the beauty of the roaring surf, used the turnouts to let the hurried cars go by, and 90 minutes later I was approaching Bodega Bay. I picked up my Spa Bag (slippers and robe) from the front desk of the hotel, and followed the path to the pool and spa

building. The spa attendant/masseuse was waiting for me and I could tell from her handshake a good strong massage was ahead. The Spa offers a full menu of services with massages at $100.00 for 50 minutes. Facials are $95.00, and assorted body treatments including a "kelp mask" and a "warm, marine mud-mask" range from $95.00 to $153.00.

Then 50 minutes later I emerged shiny with oil, well-kneaded, completely and utterly relaxed, and feeling pampered. I admit to being a bit of a massage junkie so I can pass judgment with some degree of experience on the quality of a massage. This was a 10. The therapist's expertise led her right to my knots and kinks and in no time she had them smoothed and soothed. She told me there are over 20 massage therapists on call and, even the same day if it is early enough, you can usually get an appointment.

Since most patrons are guests at the Lodge and have rooms to go to, the shower and dressing room facilities are lacking. I recommend bringing a bathing suit for the whirlpool and the shower, as it is open to men and women with no privacy. There is also no hair dryer. The massage room itself is private and the overall set up is very clean and professional. The Spa hours are from 9 am to 8 pm daily.

Seaweed Café
1580 Eastshore Road
Bodega Bay
707-875-2700
www.seaweedcafe.com

Having worked up an appetite with all this hooky playing, I looked forward to the Seaweed Café. It is located in the Blue Whale Building on Eastshore Road just off Highway One on the north end of town. In quirky small-town fashion, it is tucked between a bait shop (complete with billboard for "pile worms") and an art gallery. An artistically hand-painted sign hangs in front, along with a stylized fish scale.

Outdoor tables and chairs line the sidewalk.

Walking through the front door, diners are greeted with a homey, woodsy, yet classy interior. Rich ochre and terra-cotta colored walls set off exquisite black-and-white photos, works done by Melinda Montanye, one of the owners and chefs. A cushioned bench stretches along one whole wall of the dining area along with neat butcher-block tables. The kitchen is mostly out in the open with grill, stove, sinks, dishwashers and beverage-dispensing area in full view. It's a little like being in a friend's cozy home, watching them cook.

Melinda and Jackie Martine, business partner and celebrated chef, opened in July of 2003. Jackie, French-trained from Paris and Melinda, American-born and trained, run this smart little café serving locally raised food at its best of simplicity and freshness. Open Thursday through Monday, they use their days off to seek out the best that ranches, organic farms and fisheries have to offer. Their wine list features only wines from west of Highway 101, and are served by the bottle or glass in the $6.00 range, with a selection of Anderson Valley and North Coast brews. They do not serve farm-raised fish, wanting to make use of what is fresh and locally caught, and therefore the lunch a la carte menu changes often.

While they have an extensive list of wines, I settled for an iced black tea with mango. The lunch menu presents a generous variety. There is a daily soup offering, innovative-sounding salads, fresh seafood sandwiches, halibut with potato cakes, gravlax salmon, roast duck, and a glittering display case of tempting desserts that bewitch everyone who walked past.

Soon after I ordered a bowl of pureed delicata squash soup was brought to my table. Thick and savory, it was at once very flavorful but light. Served

with French bread from Della Victoria bakery in Petaluma, and a huge patty of European style butter, it could have been a meal in itself. My entrée was a composed salad of lentils, fennel and beets. It was stylishly presented on grape leaves and perfectly prepared. The lentils were not mushy but not too firm and lightly dressed in an olive oil/lemon/garlic dressing, with some other intriguing seasonings of which I can only guess. The beets were firm and tasty; the fennel sliced paper thin and dressed in a lemon vinaigrette, pairing perfectly with its subtle licorice flavor.

A look around at other diner's tables confirmed that I couldn't have gone too wrong with any of the offerings. In fact, breakfast was also still being served and those platters too looked abundant and delicious. Service was "unhurried." Melinda waited on all the tables gracefully but she had a full house.

I was content to linger (knowing what waited at home!) and enjoyed watching the kitchen/dining room action, but it was a little slow. Breakfast items include scones, cereals, omelets, French toast and other egg dishes. They range from $4.25 to $9.95. Lunch entrées range from $5.75 to $15.95. I did peek at and was tempted by the desserts — fresh fruit tarte with crushed cashews, scones, cookies, and brownies to name a few. They change daily according to the seasonality of fruits and other ingredients, and are prepared by chef Melinda on the premises.

Dinner menus change weekly with two prix fixe offerings. A sample three course dinner from a menu dated a few weeks earlier featured rabbit terrine, mussels marinieres, and for dessert a tarte tatin and was priced at $36.00. A four-course dinner at $48.00 offered corn and clam chowder, a choice of braised albacore with celery root or quails Andre Pic, or stuffed delicata-

squash blossoms; third course was Cowgirl Dairy fromage blanc, garden salad, and pumpkin torta for dessert. A small but growing selection of a la carte items are also being added.

Jackie and Melinda have had extensive experience in the Bay Area restaurant scene. Their professionalism and savvy shows and is being rewarded by full tables and locals singing their praises. Most definitely I want to go back for lunch and maybe dinner for a special occasion.

My ride home was wonderful and quiet. and the sun warmed me through the window all the way north. A secret little smile came over me and my heart was light from the whole experience. And you know what? After tripping up to the front door of our home through ankle-deep redwood duff, I found the ironing still there, the windows still foggy, the computer still blinking. But I was in a much better mood to take it on. Playing hooky is a good thing now and then.

Housing Trends Bring Projections for Future

What does the future hold for The Sea Ranch? No one knows, but it's possible to make educated guesses about some aspects of what's to come. This is one of the tasks assumed by the Planning Committee to guide the update of The Sea Ranch Comprehensive Environmental Plan (CEP).

To project the future is to understand yesterday and today well enough to identify trends. Then, assuming continuation of the trends, planners look at the results at some future date. The basic projections involve numbers — numbers of houses and people, for example. With reasonable projections of house construction and population, planners can estimate the needs for services, recreation facilities and infrastructure improvements — all

fundamental to community planning. The sections below describe projections for The Sea Ranch of the number of houses and population in 2010 and 2020.

Houses

Is Sea Ranch in a building boom? It sometimes seems so when driving around and observing the number of new houses under construction, but the answer is "no." Construction at The Sea Ranch has actually slowed in the last decade. Table 1 shows the number of new housing starts each year since 1982 when building resumed after passage of the Bane Bill.

Table 2 shows the projections of total house starts at TSR applying these assumptions about future construction.

In December 2002, TSR had a total of 2,293 lots — down from 2,337 as a result of 44 lot consolidations over the years. TSRA can expect to continue to lose at least 1 lot a year from consolidations. At this rate, TSR will have 2,282 lots in 2010 and 2,275 lots in 2020. By 2020, 164 vacant lots would remain — enough to last until about March 2029, if building continued past 2020 at the rate of 20 housing starts per year.

One factor that could affect these projections is development of Unit 39B, part of the former "Transfer Site." This 23-acre parcel (now counted as 1 lot) is the last un-subdivided residential parcel on TSR. The average housing density at The Sea Ranch is about one house per acre including both private and common lands. At this density, Unit 39B could accommodate 23 units, although with exceptional design, the Design Committee could approve a higher density. The projected house numbers would be higher if this parcel is developed. For example, if 40 housing units were constructed before 2010, the housing start rate would increase to 35 housing starts per year for a total of 1,901 housing units by 2010.

Another factor that can affect these projections is the difficulty of finding acceptable septic leachfields for some TSR lots. At the end of December 2002, TSR had 672 vacant lots of which about 437 (65 percent) required septic systems. Most of the lots that perc well are already developed.

Over these 21 years, housing starts averaged 49 per year. The building boom at TSR occurred during the 5-year period from 1988 through 1992 when an average of 81 houses were started each year. This construction spurt followed the opening of several new units in 1986 and '87 (34B, 34C, 35E, 35F and 36A). In the 10 years after 1992, the rate of new housing starts dropped to an average of 34 per year. And from 1996 through 2002, construction has held at a rate of 30 houses per year. This seems to be the approximate capacity of the local construction industry, including architects, designers, building contractors and subcontractors. The last 4 years have seen a slight increase to an average of 32 houses per year, but with the declining number of lots available and signs of a softening real estate market, it seems reasonable to expect new house construction at about 30 houses a year through 2010. After that, the dwindling supply of lots should dictate a slower rate — say 25 houses per year through 2020.

Thus, a disproportionate number of those remaining lots have problems that often require owners to invest a great deal in septic systems. Such lots are being developed, but at a slower rate. This is one reason for reducing the assumption of annual housing starts to 25 from 2010 to 2020.

Population

Because The Sea Ranch contains a mixture of full- and part-time homes, population is difficult to estimate and project. The number of people at TSR fluctuates seasonally and from weekday to weekend, with peak population occurring on long holiday weekends.

The best data on full-time population come from the U.S. Census. (see the Spring 2002 SOUNDINGS for 1990 and 2000 Census data for TSR) According to the Census, TSR had 637 full-time residents in 1990, increasing 81.6 percent to 1,157 in 2000. At the same time, the number of houses increased 50.7 percent from 1,030 to 1,552. The percent increase was greater for population than for houses because a higher percentage of the houses were primary residences in 2000 and the number of persons in each house increased from 1.94 to 2.01 during the decade.

Full-time population can be projected easily if assumptions are made about the percentage of houses that will be primary residences and the number of persons per house. These figures increased during the 1990s and are expected to increase, although not as much, in the 2000s and 2010s. Table 4 projects full-time population at TSR in 2010 and 2020, assuming 40 percent of the houses are primary residences by 2010 and 43 percent by 2020. The number of persons per house is assumed to increase slightly to 2.05 in 2010 and 2.1 in 2020.

What about the houses that are not primary residences? Some are vacation rentals managed by local rental agencies, and the rest are second homes used part-time by their owners and guests (who may be renters). According to a telephone survey of the 6 rental agencies that manage most of The Sea Ranch vacation rental houses, there were 386 rental houses on The Sea Ranch in August 2003. This number has been approximately the same for several years. The number of houses available for rental programs is limited because more new owners are choosing to live at Sea Ranch full-time

(or for significant parts of the year). Also, with the recent sharp increases in real estate prices, many new owners are affluent enough to maintain a second home without the help of rental income.

Table 5 projects the number of houses used as primary residence, on rental programs, and used part-time by owners and guests. The key assumption is that the number of houses in rental programs will stay at about 400.

On a holiday weekend, with 90 percent of the rental and part-time houses occupied by an average of 2.3 persons, the total number of people at TSR would be 3,175 in 2000, and projected to be 3,837 in 2010, with 4,397 in 2020. These are the numbers needed by the Association to plan for recreation and security needs at peak times.

Time will tell if these are reasonable projections. The most critical factors are the increase in houses and, secondarily, the percent of houses occupied full-time. If the houses are here, the people will come. The "Baby Boomer" generation is now 43 to 58 years old. This very large group is at the prime age for buying at Sea Ranch. So, for the foreseeable future, lack of demand for Sea Ranch houses is not expected to be a constraint to growth at TSR.

Lines From the Library: Kinds of Love by May Sarton

The real news from a library is from the books. Therefore, from time to time this space will be devoted to a review written by a library patron who has been particularly impressed by a book taken from The Sea Ranch Library and has thought others might enjoy it, too. Anyone who has been inspired by any book from the Library, or who has simply had a thumping good read, is invited to submit a short review by e-

mail to inisfree@mcn.org.

Kinds of Love
by May Sarton
Reviewed by Lee Kosso

Kinds of Love, a novel written in 1970, is set in Willards, a New Hampshire village about to celebrate its bicentennial. We meet the people of the town as they begin gathering information about Willards' past. There is a clear distinction between the year-round natives, who are simple working folk, and the "summer people" — affluent families from the city who come for vacations.

The main character is Christina Chapman, a 75-year-old woman from Boston who, with her invalid husband, is spending the most recent of many summers in the family mansion in Willard. She has agreed to research the women in the town's history. Renewing a relationship with her longtime friend, a town native, as well as other members of the community, Christina comes to realize she is enjoying the simple, uncluttered life of the small village. She and her husband decide to remain in Willard for the year and become "winter people."

The winter proves harsh for Christina as she copes with the weather, caring for her husband, and dealing with her own aches and pains. But the experience awakens in her a new awareness of the natural world, a deeper appreciation of her neighbors, a closer relationship with her friend, and a renewed joy in her marriage. She discovers things about herself as well: even though she feels a certain sadness in growing old, she can also find great happiness in the simplest pleasures, such as working in her garden and watching a pair of nesting bluebirds.

May Sarton's novel explores many "kinds of love" and the novel touches the lives of the local townspeople as well as members of Christina's own family. But for this 75-year-old reader,

it was Christina's story that was the highlight and a special reading pleasure.