



**Shasta  
Environmental  
Alliance**

P.O. Box 993777 • Redding, CA 96099 • [ecoshasta.org](http://ecoshasta.org)

## **September 2023 Newsletter**

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Donate if you can!

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# UPCOMING SEA EVENTS

## **California's Biodiversity Day Species Identification -**

### **Redding**

*Sunday, Sept. 10th at 9 a.m.*

*Meet at South Diestelhorst Bridge Trailhead*

## **Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup (Horsetown-Clear Creek Preserve)**

*Saturday, Sept. 16th at 9 a.m.*

*Meet at the HCCP parking area on Clear Creek Rd*

## **Native Plant Identification & Leaf Morphology**

**Saturday, Sept. 16th at 9:30 a.m.**

*Meet at the Camden House parking lot, Whiskeytown National Recreation Area*

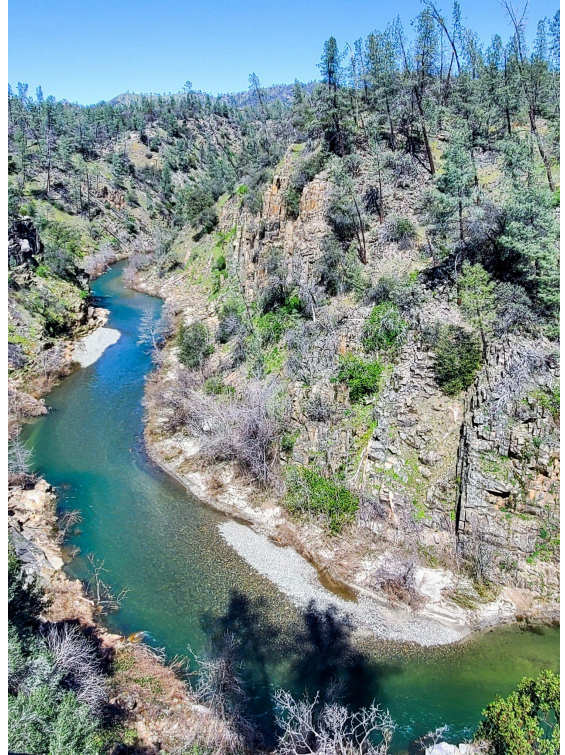
*\*A list of native plants on the trail will be provided to participants*

## **SEA's Public Lands Clean-Up Day**

*Saturday, Sept. 23rd at 9 a.m.*

*Meet at Clear Creek Gorge parking lot*

*\*BBQ by Horsetown-Clear Creek Preserve and BLM to follow at HCCP Amphitheater*



*For more info about any of SEA's upcoming events, contact [david@ecoshasta.org](mailto:david@ecoshasta.org)*

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## **SEA to Adopt a Trail on the Clear Creek Greenway**

SEA has adopted a two-mile section of the Clear Creek Trail from the Clear Creek Gorge parking lot to Horsetown-Clear Creek Preserve (HCCP) and we will be doing our first day of work on the trail on National Lands Clean Up Day, September 23rd from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

If you'd like to join us for this first clean-up of our newly adopted section of this trail, you can meet us at the Clear Creek Gorge Overlook Parking lot or if you wish, help out HCCP by starting at their parking lot at the Clear Creek Bridge on Clear Creek Road.

The work will include trash cleanup with light brush trimming and some weed whacking. Wear long pants and closed-toe shoes and bring water and gloves.

For more information, contact David Ledger at [david@ecoshasta.org](mailto:david@ecoshasta.org)

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## **Sacramento River Trail Inducted into Rails-to-Trails Hall of Fame!**



The votes are in! Our very own Sacramento River Rail Trail and Sacramento River Trail will be inducted into the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's (RTC) Hall of Fame. Thanks to 21 miles of multi-use trail, beautiful landscape, and exceptional accessibility for the community, the trails have been chosen for this high honor!

Quoted from RTC's press release, the trails were chosen because they "provide opportunities for the community to be active, access the outdoors, and connect to neighborhoods and destinations in and around the City of Redding, including the Shasta Lake Recreation Area and the Whiskeytown National Recreation Area. The trails also serve as a backbone for a developing regional trail system that encompasses more than 250 miles and will eventually stretch from the Shasta Dam to Redding's southern neighbor, Anderson, and beyond."

Once an indigenous trade and travel route as well as, later, a railroad line for a Central Pacific Railroad subsidiary, the Sacramento River Rail Trail and the Sacramento River Trail are now used by tens of thousands of visitors each year! To read the RTC's full press release, [click here](#).

How do YOU enjoy using the Sacramento River Trail? [Let us know on our Facebook page!](#)

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## Action: Take Shasta Land Trust's Survey



Our friends at the Shasta Land Trust would like to know what matters to YOU in our area. Please join this community effort and provide input on important lands to protect, climate change strategies for the future, and your conservation vision for the future. Survey entries are anonymous, and will be used to gather feedback on conservation goals and strategies in our area, among other Shasta Land Trust initiatives. To take the survey, please visit [bit.ly/shastalandtrustsurvey](https://bit.ly/shastalandtrustsurvey)

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## Riverfront Specific Plan Update



*Picture from a short section of the Riverfront Trail near Cypress Street bridge. This section of the trail is only 10 feet from the riverbank and provides almost no wildlife habitat. The office buildings along this section of the trail are only about 45 feet from the riverbank. Photo by David Ledger.*

The City of Redding had an open house to discuss the proposed Riverfront Specific Plan which will develop a master plan for the area along the west side of the Sacramento River from the Cypress Street Bridge to the boat ramp behind the Redding Rodeo grounds. There was a turnout of about 100 people for each of the two open-house meetings.

It was interesting and informative to hear the outlook and desires for the area from various commentators at the meeting. There seemed to be two starkly different points of view. To put it simply, there was the pro-development outlook and the conservationist outlook with many shades of opinion in

between. On the development side, many speakers wanted to bring the amenities of metropolitan areas they had left previously to come to Redding, a few stating there was nothing to keep medical professionals and young people in town without “big city” activities and cultural offerings.

On the conservationist side, most wanted the riparian areas preserved for wildlife, the health of the river, and for the area to be preserved for people to enjoy nature. And of course, there were many varying views in between.

SEA President David Leger did have a 45-minute private meeting with Daniel Iacofano, CEO of MIG, the consulting firm the City has hired to develop the plan. He discussed a number of river restoration projects his firm had developed plans that did not involve paving over a riverfront. Ledger emphasized the concerns SEA had in preserving riparian areas for wildlife habitat but did not oppose development along the north end of Park Marina Drive that already had been severely degraded and was set back from the riverfront.

The City plans to have an advisory group from all stakeholders in the areas provide input to MIG. Iacofano was emphatic that Populous would not be developing part of the Riverfront Specific Plan. The plan will take up to 18 months to develop.

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## Oak Seedling Updates



*From left to right: Terry Swanson, Derle Gilliam, Lisa Ross, Ray Pfister, Yo Sadohara. Photo by David Ledger.*

The blue oak acorns that Shasta Environmental Alliance (SEA) has planted near the Westside Trail complex over the last three years have been a success! We have about 50 seedlings growing, some as tall as three feet, and last year's rains really helped get them there!

While black oak and interior live oak are re-sprouting profusely along the trail, few of the blue oaks have done so except for those SEA planted. The five volunteers pictured here watered the plants on August 27th and have helped out many times since we started this program. Thank you to our volunteers for giving life to these blue oaks!

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## Hawes Ranch Amusement Park Expansion



*By David Ledger*

The popular Hawes Ranch, which has an agriculture-related entertainment center at the corner of Deschutes and Dersch Roads just south of Hawes Ranch and Supply, had a contentious hearing at the Shasta County Planning Commission on August 24. Many neighbors complained about lights, noise, and traffic.

Greg and Nikola Hawes have applied for a zoning change of 137 acres to Commercial Recreation (C-R). The zoning change will ultimately make almost all of the property Commercial Recreation from Dersch Road to the water of the Sacramento River. It will include their traditional fall festival pumpkin and corn maze as well as many permitted and unpermitted activities including go-karts, an amusement

park, bands on the back of a flatbed truck, and a Ferris wheel, all of which create considerable noise for neighbors in the rural residential neighborhood.

During October they have a harvest festival with a pumpkin patch and a corn maze. Unfortunately, there have been many violations of zoning codes, building codes, and health and safety codes, as well as their use permit. In 2017, the County finally sent Hawes a letter stating they had to bring their operation into compliance. In 2021 Hawes applied for a zoning change.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife objected to the lack of any survey for sensitive species or habitat especially considering the zoning allowed activities up to the water of the Sacramento River in an oak woodland. The Planning Department declared they didn't need to do a standard biological survey because the habitat had already been severely degraded by extensive agriculture. Several Bald Eagles have nests in the area and there are many raptors in the area according to Marily Woodhouse a licensed raptor rescues and rehabilitation specialist.

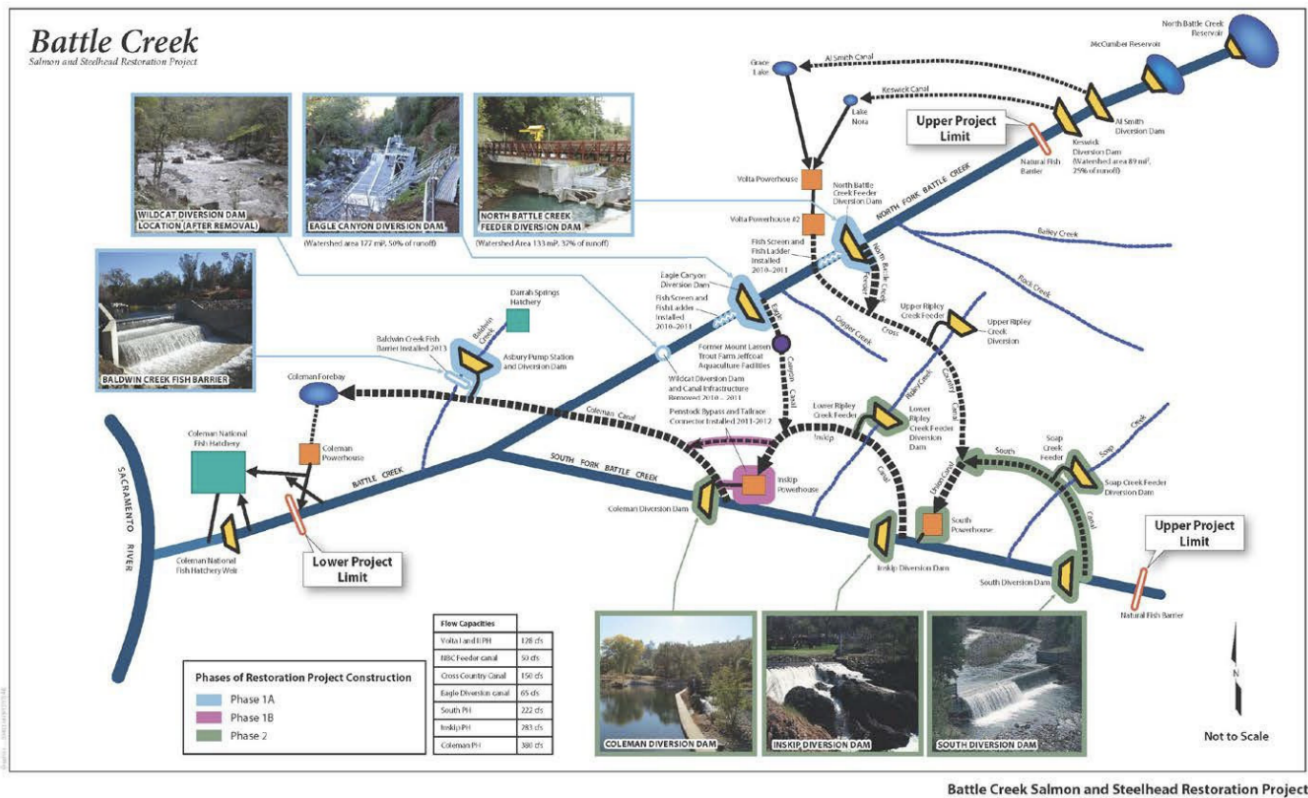
While the agricultural land has degraded the natural habitat, it is unfortunate that the Planning Department did not require a biological survey, particularly in the riparian areas, and that they included this important biological area as part of the Commercial Recreation zoning. While Hawes cannot build permanent structures in the floodplain and riparian areas, they can have temporary structures, trails, mud runs, wedding parties, boat launches, or other activities that would be disruptive to wildlife.

Shasta Environmental Alliance has not taken a position for or against this proposed zoning change and expansion of amusement activities.

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# SEA Joins the Greater Battle Creek Watershed Working Group



By David Ledger

The Greater Battle Creek Watershed Working Group (GBCWWG), while long in name, has many members and a strong goal to restore the Battle Creek watershed to its previous conditions over 100 years ago - when it was an important habitat for salmon and steelhead trout. The Creek had five small hydroelectric dams (one having been removed), and many canals and pipelines to transport water to different hydroelectric plants on both the South and North Fork of Battle Creek.

The ultimate goal of this group is to remove the remaining four small dams that are blocking the migration of fish, remove water ditches, and build a few fish ladders.

Battle Creek has the unique geology, hydrology, and habitat suitability to support threatened and endangered Chinook salmon and Central Valley steelhead. The Battle Creek Salmon and Steelhead Restoration Project, located in Shasta and Tehama Counties near Manton, California, is among the largest cold-water anadromous fish restoration efforts in North America. The Project is restoring approximately 42 miles of habitat on Battle Creek and an additional 6 miles of habitat on tributaries to Battle Creek, while continuing hydroelectric power production at Pacific Gas and Electric Company's

(PG&E's) Battle Creek Hydroelectric Project - Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Project No. 1121.

The GBCWWG is composed of almost 50 different members, many are agency people such as those from the USFWS, CDFW, USBR, CalFire, CVWQB, Western Shasta RCD, and private groups such as CalTrout, Golden State Salmon, SPI, PGE, Battle Creek Alliance, and now SEA among many others. They have a good policy: as a member, you must attend four meetings before you can become a voting member. There is a lot of talent in this group and I am learning a lot.

In other news, the Manton School and its 16 acres have been purchased by a local nonprofit group and the next meeting of the GBCWWG will be held there in November. Several other nonprofits will have offices there. Details to come.

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## Shasta Land Trust Protects Additional Hat Creek Habitat



With partnerships between Shasta Land Trust, Pacific Forest & Watershed Lands Stewardship Council, Pacific Gas & Electric, 1,750 acres of property around Hat Creek has recently purchased and permanently protected, joining two other parcels that they have protected that now is a total of 4,267 acres!

According to Shasta Land Trust's website, "The property contains precious water resources, including 2.9 miles of Hat Creek, the entirety of Baum Lake and Crystal Lake, portions of the Rising River and Rock Creek, and expansive wet meadow habitat. These riparian habitats are an essential conservation zone for aquatic species like blue heron and osprey, as well as a variety of endangered and threatened species like bald eagle, bank swallows, Shasta crayfish, rainbow trout, and sculpin. Additionally, the biodiverse property's Montane hardwood, conifer, ponderosa pine, grasslands, and sagebrush habitats support a variety of native wildlife species."

There are very important ecological habitats on the property and this purchase (with the others) has led to restoration projects by a variety of agencies that have and will continue to support threatened and endangered species in the area.

To learn more about this purchase and the incredible work by Shasta Land Trust, [click here!](#)

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## Still Seeking Environmental Champions!



*Photo by Don Owen - SEA Environmental Awards event: from left - John Livingston, Awardee Peggy Rebol, Kim Niemer, and David Ledger*

Whether it be through education, advocacy, or legislation, SEA wants to honor individuals who have made a positive impact on our local environment.

There are three categories you can nominate an environmental champion for:

- **Citizen champion** - anyone in our community over the age of 21 who has advocated for the environment through both words and actions
- **Youth/Student champion** - anyone under the age of 21 who stands out as excelling in advocating for the environment
- **Agency champion** - someone who works or has worked in a government agency and has gone above and beyond their job to effect positive change for our environment

If you'd like to recognize someone for the positive work they're doing for our local environment, please send us a letter explaining the work that person has done, why they should be recognized, and a note on how you interpret the impact they're making on our environment. Please send your letters/emails to [david@ecoshasta.org](mailto:david@ecoshasta.org)

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## Reusable Water Bottles Save Plastic AND Money



As plastic production and use continue to rise, community members sometimes have little choice in how to help manage the issue directly. Luckily, doing something as simple as using a reusable bottle and tap or filtered tap water can limit everyday plastic use but can help save you money!

Plastic bottled water is everywhere and can be convenient to grab and go. But did you know that most bottled water IS filtered tap water? Or that it takes 1.39 liters of water just to make a bottle of water?

And, according to the Container Recycling Institute, more than 60 million plastic water bottles are thrown away by Americans every day. Most of them end up in gutters, landfills, and waterways.

You can also save money by filling up a reusable water bottle with your own tap water about 4,800 times for just \$2.10. In contrast, buying individual bottles of water in plastic for around \$1 each means you would pay nearly 2,300 times the amount for the same amount of water!

Most American towns and cities (including those in our area!) have access to clean and safe drinking water straight out of the tap. For the city of Redding, we're lucky enough to have most of our water drinking water coming from Whiskeytown Lake during the summer!

There are so many perks to using tap water vs. plastic bottled water, especially living in northern California and SEA encourages you to choose a reusable water bottle whenever you can!

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## Several FREE Shade Trees Remain! Get Yours This Fall!



If you live in the City of Redding and would like a free shade tree planted for FREE in your front yard this fall, don't hesitate to fill out the interest form on our website.

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## **We Couldn't Do This Work Without YOU!**

### **Please consider donating to SEA!**

**You can go to [ecoshasta.org](http://ecoshasta.org) to donate!**

***If you prefer to send a check, our mailing address is:***

***Shasta Environmental Alliance***

***P.O. Box 993777***

***Redding, CA 96099-3777***

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## **Thank you to our donors!**

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**\$1000 & Up**

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