



Environmental Protection Information Center
Annual Report 2013



Keeping Northwest California Wild Since 1977



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EPIC Board of Directors

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Dian Griffith, *Vice President*
Noah Levy, *Treasurer*
Josh Brown, *Secretary*
Bruce Edwards
Mitra Abidi
Robert Shearer
Hezekiah Allen

Cover Photo, "Butler Fire on Salmon River,
August 4, 2013," by Scott Hildring
Staff photos by Roger Tunn

Mission Statement

The Environmental Protection Information Center works to protect and restore ancient forests, watersheds, coastal estuaries, and native species in Northern California. EPIC uses an integrated, science-based approach, combining public education, citizen advocacy, and strategic litigation.

Hello EPIC friends and supporters,

It is a great honor to share with you the Environmental Protection Information Center's 2013 Annual Report. This yearly effort to gracefully and professionally present to you, our member, a recounting of EPIC program and organizational accomplishments over the past year is an important expression of the phenomenal respect that our board and staff have for our members and donors.

We are immensely appreciative of your dedication to our organization. The seriousness with which we approach the task of putting together the Annual Report reflects how important your commitment to EPIC is, to all of us with responsibilities in the organization. We want you to be informed and we want you to know that this organization belongs to you as much as it belongs to any of us working on a daily basis at EPIC to defend the web of life on the North Coast of California from degradation and abuse.

We also want you to be involved with EPIC! In these pages you will find some information on efforts that we are making to strengthen the governance of our organization and to enhance your ability to be involved with selecting the individuals who make up the EPIC Board of Directors.

EPIC is a leader not only because of the high quality, innovative, and ground-breaking work that we are doing to protect human and natural communities in Northwest California, but also because of our goal of building an active constituency that is involved with the organization, that helps guide the development of our political actions, and that believes and supports the work we are doing every day to improve the manner in which human kind relates to the natural systems that sustain us.

Please, take a close look at the information relating to changes in the Bylaws of the organization that will enhance the ability of members to be involved with electing the members of the Board of Directors that make up the governing body of EPIC.

The information regarding the business end of the organization can be both exciting – and sobering. In many regards, EPIC continues to defy all odds, maintaining an independent and aggressive grassroots voice that is not beholden to mainstream political interests. And at the same time, it is clear that the perpetual battle to secure the revenue that we need to keep the organization alive is very far from over. That is why we are so thankful for your support in the past year – we would not be able to do any of this without you! We will continue to request that you make generous donations, and that you assist us in connecting with the donors who can make the financial contributions that allow us to remain a vital force in fighting for the wild and sustainable human economies in our region. We thank you profoundly for your dedication and support, and we implore you to help us keep that support growing. Your generous donations make all the difference!

Note that support for EPIC is growing, both from individuals and foundations. We are honored to announce that EPIC just this year was named a new grantee of the Lisa and Douglas Goldman Fund, marking a new and exciting chapter of institutional development for our community based organization. At the same time, EPIC has retained support from several nationally respected institutions, such as the Firedoll Foundation, Environment Now, the Weeden Foundation, and the Patagonia Environmental Grants Program, amongst others. Combined with our expanding membership and major donor base we have the fundamental elements in place for building a long lasting and resilient organization – but we will need your assistance in 2014 like never before to be sure that EPIC continues to thrive and stay vibrant as your voice for a Wild California!

Please enjoy our 2013 Annual Report, and thanks for staying with us and being a generous member of our organization and community. Everything we accomplish is due to your dedication and commitment. Thank you!

For the wild,

Gary Graham Hughes



Epic Year in Review



"The key to conservation is a well connected landscape. In this rapidly changing climate we need wild places and must protect our forests, water and wildlife."

Kimberly Baker, EPIC's Public Land Advocate, monitors 5.2 million acres of National Forests in Northern California. These wild and rugged watersheds are globally significant and home to a stunning variety of rare and threatened species.

Old growth forest ecosystems are vital to life itself; however, the US Forest Service consistently proposes projects that; harm quality habitat, remove forest canopy and target big old trees. Road building, poorly managed grazing, trespass marijuana agriculture, fire suppression and multiple other stressors all come with significant ecological costs.

EPIC's Public Land program uses science and law to inform policy and to protect wild places. We submit substantive project comments, collaborate, educate, appeal and litigate.

Wildfire is one of the hottest topics we face today. Kimberly is joining forces with communities and stakeholders to develop resilient, fire-adapted communities and ecosystems across Northern California. Because fire is so beneficial and inevitable we are creating strategies that incorporate Traditional Ecological Knowledge and prescribed burning so as to allow fire to return to a more natural cycle.

The Gray Wolf (*Canis lupus*) will be returning to California and they need room to roam. EPIC is actively preparing for their return by:

- Working on a Gray Wolf Management Plan with the CA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife Stakeholder Working Group;
- Petitioning to list the Gray Wolf as a California Endangered Species;
- Seeking to maintain Federal Endangered Species Act protection;
- Reforming grazing practices on public lands; and
- Promoting the establishment of wildlife corridors.



"The redwood region is suffering from over 150 years of intensive forest management that has depleted this irreplaceable resource and has undervalued the ecological, social, and economical significance of this ecosystem."

Rob DiPerna, EPIC's California Forests and Wildlife Advocate, works to reform privately owned industrial forests by monitoring projects and engaging with California agencies and legislators.

In 2010, EPIC launched its Northern Spotted Owl Self-Defense campaign. The campaign strategy includes: educating the public and regulators to the plight of the Northern Spotted Owl, monitoring, commenting on, and challenging logging projects that may affect the owl on private lands, engaging with the California Board of Forestry to improve rules regarding owl protections, and launching a campaign to end the use of "super-toxic" rat poison in agricultural operations.

In September 2012, EPIC filed a petition with the California Fish and Game Commission to list Northern Spotted Owls as either "threatened" or "endangered" under the California Endangered Species Act. In August 2013, the Commission accepted EPIC's petition to list the owl. Throughout 2014, Rob will be fully engaged in the status review process, with the Commission making its listing decision sometime in early 2015.

This action is parallel to EPIC's petition with the Fish and Wildlife Service requesting that it "reclassify" or "up-list" the owl from a "threatened" to an "endangered" species under the federal Endangered Species Act. To date the Service still has not issued the initial 90-day finding on our petition.

The health of the Northern Spotted Owl is indicative of the health our forests and watersheds. EPIC will continue its multi-faceted approach to owl protection and conservation; with the goal of seeing larger, older trees on the landscape, an elimination of the use of "super-toxic" rat poisons in our communities, and a return of more owls in the forest.

Clean Water and Healthy Rivers

Climate change and drought has intensified the competition for California's scarce freshwater resources—resulting in political conflict and degradation of aquatic systems. Northern California's forests provides about 80% of the state's freshwater resources, critical habitat for fish and wildlife, recreation, and of course, water for drinking and agriculture. At EPIC we work to protect clean water and restore healthy forests, both of which are vital for quality of life.

EPIC represents your conservation interests as policies and laws are developed regarding the management of Northern California's rivers and forests; we know that clean water and healthy rivers originate in healthy forests.

Highlights of 2013:

Protected wild salmon and steelhead via a successful initiative to reform North Coast fish hatcheries on the Trinity and Mad River; advocated for sufficient river flows to prevent late-summer Klamath salmon kills; developed educational campaigns to promote rainy season water storage in order to reduce negative impacts resulting from ground water diversions in the "dry season;" and collaborated with conservation allies across the state to prevent long-term and irreversible damage from giant water projects such as the Shasta Dam expansion, Bay Delta Conservation Plan, and hydrolic fracking.

Rein In Caltrans

Caltrans is seriously out of step with the times. In the era of climate change, Caltrans continues to advance the car-centric paradigm, perpetually seeking to build bigger, faster highways while failing to look at sustainable alternative movements for people and freight. We as citizens deserve an honest, transparent, and open discussion about the impacts of highway development on our irreplaceable natural treasures.

EPIC continues to advance initiatives that challenge unnecessary, wasteful, and environmentally harmful highway development projects proposed by Caltrans. Highlights from 2013:

Highway 199/197: In 2013, EPIC and allies challenged Caltrans' approval of the Smith River Project in Federal and State court. Spring 2014, attorneys are seeking an injunction to halt project construction.

Richardson Grove: In 2014, the California State Appeal Court unanimously found that Caltrans failed to follow the law in assessing impacts to ancient redwoods and providing mitigation measures to reduce potentially severe harm to the trees.

Willits Bypass: In December 2013, a federal judge ruled that Caltrans' environmental review and permits for the Willits Bypass were adequate and the agency can continue construction of a four-lane freeway around the community of Willits in Mendocino County. The disappointing ruling comes despite the fact that construction has destroyed sensitive wetlands, salmon-bearing streams, oak woodlands and endangered species habitats.

Public Education, Citizen Advocacy and Environmental Democracy

EPIC is a grassroots organization that works to protect the public interest and uphold environmental laws put in place to protect land, air, water and wildlife. We educate the public about projects, policy and legislation that affects our natural resources, and work to increase citizen participation by mobilizing our members to take action and engage decision makers. We seek to positively influence project outcomes in the name of conservation by using the best available science and insisting on government accountability and transparency. One of EPIC's biggest, yet least talked about goals, is our desire to inspire, educate and build a community of people who want to work to help the environment that connects us all. We do this through events, radio programming, speaker series & panel discussions, providing college internship opportunities, and striving to always be available to our membership with open doors and friendly voice on the phone.

•In 2013, we built our network of citizens advocates by nearly 20% through improved social media engagement--and sent more than 10,000 public comments to decision makers!

Proposed Change to the EPIC Bylaws

Spring 2014

What does it mean to truly be a membership organization? For EPIC governance, it means that we value your involvement in our internal grassroots democracy. We want to enhance our connection with you, our members, and provide an effective means for you to give us input about the actions that the organization implements to protect human and natural communities on the North Coast.

Nomination and Election of the EPIC Board of Directors:

EPIC is growing. We have members and supporters from all over the state of California and beyond. Currently, the only way for our membership to nominate and elect EPIC's Board of Directors is to attend an annual in-person meeting held in southern Humboldt County in November. This method limits participation to only small portion of our member base. In order to increase participation and open up decision-making processes we want to change to a vote-by-mail election for EPIC's Board of Directors.

To vote on this bylaw change, please return the enclosed return envelope by June 15, 2014 and check the appropriate box: "yes" to approve or "no" to refuse the bylaw change. To read the specific changes to the bylaws, please go to: www.wildcalifornia.org/about-us/bylaws/

Please VOTE! Your participation makes EPIC's membership strong—thank you!

This map illustrates the distribution of EPIC Members across the United States. Our members are pillars of their communities, like trees, they are ever-giving and their legacy is ever-living.



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION INFORMATION CENTER

Annual Report

Fiscal Year January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

REVENUE & SUPPORT	
Membership & Donations	\$137,293
Foundation Grants	\$ 44,500
Fundraising Events	\$ 24,195
Interest Income	\$ 422
Legal Fees & Awards	<u>\$ 43,966</u>
TOTAL REVENUE & SUPPORT	\$250,376

EXPENSES	
General & Admin.	\$ 41,613
Fundraising & Development	\$ 52,474
Industrial Forestry Reform	\$ 50,843
Public Lands Program	\$ 76,290
Biodiversity Projects	\$ 47,552
Clean Water Program	\$ 21,643
Outreach & Education	<u>\$ 34,756</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$325,171

Increase (decrease) in Net Assets (\$74,795)

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS (\$74,795)
 NET ASSETS @ Beginning of Year \$219,463
 NET ASSETS @ End of Year \$144,668

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS	
CURRENT ASSETS	
Checking/Savings	\$151,822
Accounts Receivable	\$ -0-
Other Current Assets	<u>\$ 3,569</u>
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	\$155,391

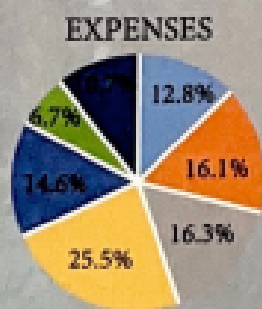
FIXED ASSETS (net) \$ 1,991

TOTAL ASSETS \$157,382

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	
LIABILITIES	
Accounts Payable	\$ 5,432
Credit Cards	\$ 50
Other Current Liabilities	<u>\$ 7,232</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ 12,714

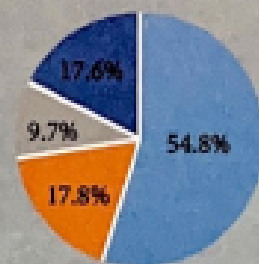
NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$189,301
Temp. Restricted Net Assets	\$ 14,411
Restricted Net Assets	\$ 15,750
Net Income	<u>(\$74,795)</u>
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$144,668

TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS \$157,382



- General & Admin.
- Public Lands Program
- Outreach & Education
- Fundraising & Development
- Biodiversity Projects
- Industrial Forestry Reform
- Clean Water Program

REVENUE & SUPPORT



- Membership & Donations
- Interest Income
- Foundation Grants
- Legal Fees & Awards
- Fundraising Event

Thank You!

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks and deepest gratitude to all of our supporters, from the largest foundation to each and every individual member, partner organization, business supporter and volunteer. Thank you for working with us in 2013, and for making us strong and resilient for the work ahead.

Contributing Foundations

Environment Now, Firedoll Foundation, Guacamole Fund, Humboldt Area Foundation, Norcross Wildlife Foundation, Patagonia Environmental Grants Program, Sperling Foundation, Weeden Foundation, Wild Woods Foundation & William C. Bannerman Foundation



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Leave a Legacy for the Planet

EPIC has been working to protect the environment in northern California for more than 36 years. But it is only through our member's support year after year that we are able to continue our record of success. If you have a will, you can easily add a codicil (an amendment) to include a bequest—a gift in your will—to EPIC. If you don't have a will, this is the time to prepare one. Your will is fully revocable while you live—you retain control and can easily make revisions should your circumstances change. Your bequest to EPIC will help build a solid funding base to support our work far into the future.

Besides strengthening our community, improving the environment for years to come and creating a personal legacy, charitable bequests may also provide tax benefits for your estate. Ask your estate planner.

We hope that you will consider leaving a legacy to the coastal areas, forests, and native species of northern California through a bequest to EPIC. Please contact us if you would like assistance at (707) 822-7711.

Sign up online at wildcalifornia.org

