



CALIFORNIA GROUPS IMPROVE HABITAT IN MENDOCINO NATIONAL FOREST

The Mendocino National Forest recently agreed to a project with the Mendocino County Blacktail Association (MCBA) and the Mule Deer Foundation (MDF) in a 600-acre area that has been the focus of wildlife habitat improvement and hazardous fuels reduction. Large portions of the Baseball Wildlife Habitat Improvement and Fuels Reduction project, located on a site east of Covelo, Calif., adjacent to Atchison Campground and in the headwaters of Black Butte Wild and Scenic River, fall within key winter and summer deer ranges.

The area's oak trees and their acorns are an important source of forage for deer. Mechanically thinning conifers and mixed hardwoods allows the more desirable oaks to prosper, and reduces the oaks' susceptibility to insects and

disease. Controlled burns help reduce wildfire threats.

"We share common goals with the MCBA and MBF to improve forest health, enhance wildlife habitat, increase recreation and hunter opportunities and decrease the risk of destructive wildfires," said Hinda Darner, Mendocino National Forest fuels specialist. —Don Vachini

POOL RECEIVES HALL OF FAME HONORS

Salmon conservationist Dick Pool was recently inducted into the 2019 California Outdoors Hall of Fame at the International Sportsmen's Exposition at Cal Expo in Sacramento. Pool has been actively involved in the conservation of California salmon and steelhead for more than 30 years, and his contributions to the state's fisheries are immeasurable.

During the late 1980s, he served for five years on the California Fish

and Game Upper Sacramento Salmon and Steelhead Advisory Committee, scoping improvements for the upper Sacramento River. In 1990, he served two years on a National Marine Fisheries Service advisory committee working to avoid a listing of the winter-run salmon. In 2010, Pool assisted in the founding of the Golden Gate Salmon Association, a Northern California non-profit organization dedicated to the restoration of the Central Valley salmon. Currently, he is heavily involved in the California coalition working to find ways to restore the severely depressed Central Valley salmon runs. —Don Vachini

TOLAY LAKE REGIONAL PARK OPENS

Tolay Lake Regional Park, Sonoma County's newest and largest regional park at 3,400 acres, recently opened to visitors on a daily basis. Supervised tours were previously offered on weekends only since 2009. Visitors are now free to explore a network of trails, beckoning to hikers and offering views of San Pablo Bay, Mount Tamalpais and much of southern Sonoma County.

The former 1,737-acre Cardoza Ranch was acquired in 2005 for \$18 million by the county's Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District. A second property, the 1,665-acre Tolay Creek Ranch, was bought by the Sonoma Land Trust for \$13 million in 2007 with support from the Open Space District and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation. Both parcels were later transferred to the county, which is co-managing the park with the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria. The tribe's ancestors lived in the area and its involvement in the development and stewardship is meant to ensure tribal interests are protected.

Located off Lakeville Highway about 8 miles from Petaluma, the park is open from 7 a.m. to sunset. For more information, go to parks.sonomacounty.ca.gov. —Don Vachini

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