



River Otter Habitat, Election Morning 2016 ~ William David Dawson

End of Year Newsletter

Winter 2016

Here and Now

Dear Friends,

Post election, I received many supportive and inspiring letters from you. It's reassuring to know that we're never alone in our determination to continue to protect the earth we love.

We at ROEP have spent a good deal of time thinking about the most effective ways to move forward with our research, education and conservation goals in a political and economic climate characterized by denial of science, greed and disdain for conservation of the natural world upon which the continuation of all species depends.

Last week I headed out to Drake's Estero, along with Terence Carroll (ROEP's President) and good friend Sharon Beals. We occasionally see river otters there, but never expect it. The late afternoon sun

lay gently on our faces and warmed the berm across the stock pond. And there were otters, three of them. Two lay against the fresh green grass, rolling and marking, grooming and nuzzling each

"May places like this continue to be cherished and preserved."

William David Dawson, ROEP Supporter

other, casually placing their large webbed feet on each others' bodies for balance. A juvenile otter hunted the pond, repeatedly diving and coming up with fish, crunching and smacking. Then the youngster got out and squirmed its way between the accommodating adults, rolling to dry and fluff. After an enthusiastic round of mutual grooming, the three settled down and napped in the sun. A simple walk, a simple moment...a lazy afternoon for the otters before the approaching rain.

The joy of watching wild animals rest on a warm afternoon is one of the things we work so hard to protect. All our research, education, partnerships, goal-setting, fundraising, striving to improve, to excel, to succeed, comes down to something close to this walk. This is what keeps me working and trying despite every setback. I want to save our planet for us, for wildlife, and not least for our children and their children, far into the future. It's that simple.

We're depending upon you to to help us uphold science and conservation and never give up on our responsibility to our planet and our environment. It's up to us, and we must be up to it.

With best regards, Megan Isadore
Co-Founder and Executive Director

Donate Now



The Web of Conservation

We are a growing organization. Our partnerships and collaborations make us stronger and more effective. Our ripples spread...

Hands On High School

Partners: Star Academy, Marin Academy, Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District, Mt. View Sanitary District, Marin County Parks, Ross Valley Flood Control District

Our newest educational effort focuses on getting high school students out into the field, learning what a field scientist does, field protocols, recording, otter natural history, otter track and sign and camera trapping. All while contributing meaningfully to our project.

Our first 10 students gained so much from the project that we've partnered with an additional school, Marin Academy, to begin monitoring a site on Corte Madera Creek in 2017. The students will monitor the new site, and begin prey studies using samples collected from Mt. View Sanitary District lands.



Citizen Science

Partners: California State Parks, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District, Marin County Open Space, Marin Municipal Water District, Muir Woods National Monument, Point Reyes National Seashore, Mt. View Sanitary District, Martha and Jerry Jarocki

In 2016 we trained 8 new field volunteers, and sent a total of 16 volunteers into the field to survey ~225 linear km. of coast, bay, marsh, river and lake. Monitoring population numbers and behavior of river otters helps land managers make science-based decisions about the properties they steward.



Our Otter Spotter program has collected over 1900 sightings. In addition to mapping otter presence throughout the Bay Area and beyond, Otter Spotter serves as an educational tool and portal.

Research

Partners: San Francisco State University Genomics & Transcriptomics Analysis Core, Graduate Student Jordan Arce, The Marine Mammal Center, One Tam



Analysis of river otter scat samples is ongoing at SF State University.

As a Science Partner to One Tam, we contributed our work on river otters to the exhaustive endeavor to prepare and publicize a white paper and a [snapshot of the health of our beloved Mount Tamalpais.](#)

For the 4th consecutive year, The Marine Mammal Center collaborated with us to analyze river otter samples for occurrence of *Vibrio* and *Salmonella*. Both organisms can cause human health effects.

This winter we'll compile and post updates on all our research...stay tuned for the big picture!

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Highlights of the Year

And a sneak peak at 2017...

Bay Nature Cover



The return of the river otters is such a compelling story that they and ROEP were featured in [Bay Nature's Fall issue](#).

Kat McGowan did a beautiful job of reporting on otter recovery, why it matters and how we leverage otter charm to support watershed conservation.

Our mission: To support watershed citizen science, research, education

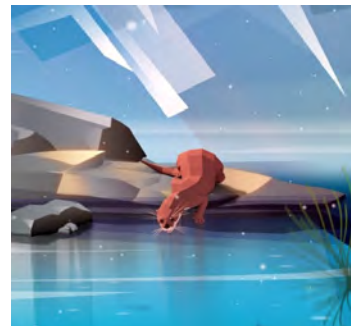
New Partnership



ROEP is proud of our new partnership with the Mt. View Sanitary District, our first study site in Contra Costa County. Using a series of camera traps, we seek population, behavior and habitat use information.

We'll use the data we gather to help MVSD make the best possible management decisions to support this important watershed.

Stunning Animation



Award-winning production studio, Little Fluffy Clouds, specializing in high-end motion graphics and animation, presented us with a remarkable animated showpiece.

Gracing our home page, [As The River Flows](#) distills our message into a poetic and moving short film, narrated by Peter Coyote.

5 Year Anniversary



We're masking details for the moment.....but our 5-year celebration in May, 2017 promises to be exciting. You can participate!

We seek ambassadors to help us spread the Otter Word to potential new friends. Sound interesting? [Email](#) for details!

Care to sponsor this splendid benefit/celebration?

[Email Megan!](#)

Donate Now

conservation and wetland restoration through and collaborative partnerships.

In Appreciation

Thank you for your support ~~ every donation helps us protect watershed health, for river otters, humans and all of nature.

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Special Thanks

Each year a romp of supporters help in ways that can't be counted. Here are this year's River Otter Stars:

Peter Barto, Bay Nature Magazine, Kelly Davidson, Betsy De Fries, Daniel Dietrich, Nicole Duplaix, Sharon Farrell, Jaymi Heimbuch, Karen James, Mary Ellen King, Katherine and Bridger Mitchell, Mia Monroe, Yvonne Provaznik, Dave Schatzki, Emma Sharpe, Diane Valenti, Jerry van de Beek, Jeff Wang



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