



Viva la Tortuga!

NEWSLETTER OF TURTLE ISLAND RESTORATION NETWORK

SEATURTLES.ORG



Meet our New Hawai'i Program Director

EXCITING NEWS! Turtle Island Restoration Network has brought on board our first Hawai'i Program Director, Cheryl King, a marine biologist who has been working with sea turtles for more than two decades and has dedicated her life to ocean conservation.

Throughout her career, Cheryl has worked in multiple government, NGO and ocean tourism-based settings around the world, and brings a variety of experiences to this position. She completed her marine biology Master's thesis studying the sea turtles within the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve in 2007. She focuses on sea turtle nesting, in-water surveys, rescues, photo-ID, and marine debris research and cleanups. Cheryl is also a long-time member of

the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's large whale entanglement response team and its marine mammal strandings team. She also enjoys supporting other conservation projects.

Along with a dedicated team of community volunteers, state and federal agencies and other NGOs, Cheryl has been working on many complex conservation topics for 18 years in Hawai'i. There are solutions. It all starts with saving sea turtles one at a time.

Building on Turtle Island Restoration Network's historic work to protect animals in the Pacific Ocean, Cheryl, based on the island of Maui, will be leading our efforts to:

- ◆ Document and reduce the threats to the survival of Hawaiian sea turtles and other ocean animals;
- ◆ Further strengthen research and protection for these animals and their habitats;
- ◆ Assess and address the impacts of fishing gear, plastic pollution and other trash on reefs and beaches; and
- ◆ Build and unite a strong community of ocean stewards in Hawai'i.

Help us build this program! You can learn more at seaturtles.org/hawaii. If you live in Hawai'i, contact Cheryl at cheryl@tirn.net. Or donate by visiting seaturtles.org/donate.

Update: TIRN Supporters Stood Up for National Monuments

SINCE THE BEGINNING of this year, ocean lovers have been on the defense to protect the species and habitats that we love.

As was feared, this spring President Trump issued two Executive Orders that called for a review of protections for marine national monuments and sanctuaries.

At risk were five national marine monuments: Papahānaumokuākea, Marianas Trench, Pacific Remote Islands, Rose Atoll, and Northeast Canyons and Seamounts.

continued on page 4



COURTESY OF USFWS PACIFIC REGION

Letter from the Director

SAVING TURTLES AND SHARKS BY CREATING THE COCOS–GALAPAGOS SWIMWAY



COURTESY OF GEORGE DUFFIELD

“The Cocos–Galapagos Swimway went from a concept promoted by Turtle Island Restoration Network executive director, Todd Steiner, to a full-fledged strategic alliance that will help protect migratory species in the Eastern Tropical Pacific. We are delighted to be partnering with MigraMar, Pacifico, the governments of Costa Rica and Ecuador, Turtle Island Restoration Network and others to promote sound science and policy changes in the region.

—Zdenka Piskulich, executive director of Costa Rica Forever

I AM WRITING to you from the Galapagos Islands where we have just completed the first inter-governmental workshop on the Cocos–Galapagos Swimway, a concept Turtle Island Restoration Network originally began promoting to protect critically endangered Pacific leatherback sea turtles from the ravages of industrial fishing during their long migrations each year.

While the work is far from over, I am delighted to report that we are well on our way to creating the first known bilateral marine protected area. This area is designed to protect the pathways of highly migratory species. Highly migratory species have complicated life-histories and require more protection than they receive from simply protecting them at a single location in one country.

We’re working with government officials from Ecuador (Galapagos Islands) and Costa Rica (Cocos Island), as well

as our partners MigraMar (a scientific organization whose board I serve on as secretary), Costa Rica Forever, Pacifico, and others from the region. We met to map out a path to a bilateral agreement that will protect the Pacific leatherback sea turtle, the largest marine turtle in the world that migrates thousands of miles between nesting and feeding grounds, and at least four other endangered species: the green turtle, scalloped hammerhead shark, whale shark and silky shark.

A significant portion of the migration of the Pacific leatherback occurs along an underwater mountain range that connects the Galapagos Islands and Cocos Island, two World Heritage sites separated by 400 miles of ocean. This data was published by our sea turtle colleague, Dr. George Shillinger, who years earlier also proposed a similar marine protected area corridor. Since that report, other scientists I work with from MigraMar have discovered similar

movements by the other endangered species mentioned before.

It has been an incredible month for Turtle Island Restoration Network on several endangered species fronts. In addition to our international work for marine species, we have also helped to protect and restore habitat for the critically endangered coho salmon of California in its most important watershed (also where our headquarters is based). The acquisition of a 157-acre golf course, which will be rewilded back to forest and floodplains, has been a vision of mine since our Salmon Protection and Watershed Network (SPAWN) program was created 20 years ago. This vision is on the verge of becoming a reality. Read more about this on our website seaturtles.org/salmon.

Many thanks to Turtle Island Restoration Network members and our foundation supporters that are helping us work to protect the Pacific leatherback turtle, salmon and sharks using all the tools in our conservation toolbox including lobbying and diplomacy, conservation research, and targeted litigation.

Sincerely,

TODD STEINER, Executive Director
Turtle Island Restoration Network

Redwood Forests: A Vault for the World's Carbon Dioxide

FIRST OFF, what do forests and oceans have to do with each other?

When we burn fossil fuels, the oceans take a big hit from our actions, absorbing roughly one-third of that additional carbon dioxide. This process ends up making the seas more acidic, reducing the ability of reef-building corals, crucial habitat for many marine species.

Forests play a major role in reducing the negative effects of ocean acidification, by absorbing and tying up carbon.

Located just north of San Francisco, four-inch tall redwood seedlings are transplanted from small, narrow pots, into gallon-size deep pots. These trees grow in Turtle Island Restoration Network's native plant nursery and will eventually fight climate change and protect an endangered species. The redwoods are planted under the 10,000 Redwoods Project, which helps individuals, schools and businesses directly engage in the climate change challenge through the simple act of planting trees to sequester carbon. Our goal is to plant 10,000 redwoods to create a local carbon sink.

Redwoods are important trees. They shade the creeks and streams of Marin County in California where endan-

gered coho salmon are clinging to life in the urban fringes of the Bay Area. They protect streambanks from erosion, and create complex habitat in the form of log "jams" that coho salmon and other wildlife depend on. Redwoods also store carbon, seemingly tremendous amounts of carbon.

Carbon dioxide is increasing the Earth's average temperature and warming the planet. A warmer planet means more intense rainfall, more floods and droughts, ocean acidification, and sea level rise. Redwoods however, are an incredible carbon "sink". They store more above and below ground carbon than any other terrestrial tree on Earth.

Carbon is stored in all parts of a redwood tree, including the roots, bark, branches, and growing tissue, but most of all in the dense inner layers of the trunk, also known as "heartwood". Year after year, mature redwoods pack on the pounds, storing more and more carbon. As the tree gets older, that layer becomes dense and entombed within the tree, locking up the atmospheric carbon in rigid cells. That carbon is only released when the wood decomposes or burns. Luckily, redwoods are incredibly resistant to rot, fire, and insects, making them perfectly equipped at storing carbon and holding onto it for centuries.



COURTESY OF DAVE J. STRUTHERS

According to foresters, the old-growth redwood forests of Northern California can store on average 48 tons of carbon per acre, per year. With nearly two-million acres of redwoods between California and Oregon, that's nearly 97 million tons of carbon per year!

A lot of the old growth redwoods have been logged, but many areas, including where our headquarters is in Marin County, still have old-growth ancient trees that are fighting climate change every day.

The 2,000 tiny redwood seedlings we started earlier this year in our native plant nursery will someday be hundreds of feet tall, fighting climate change by sequestering carbon, all the while providing critical habitat for salmon and countless other wildlife that reside in their shade.

To learn more about the 10,000 Redwoods Project or to adopt a tree of your own, visit our website: 10000redwoods.org.

To get involved and help us grow and plant thousands of trees, please contact Preston Brown, preston@tirn.net.



Boycott Swordfish to Save Ocean Wildlife!

TURTLE ISLAND Restoration Network recently launched a swordfish boycott to protect ocean wildlife from deadly commercial fishing methods. Swordfish has become a popular food offered in restaurants and markets, and ocean wildlife is dying as a consequence.

Most swordfish is caught by drift gillnet and longline fisheries. Drift gillnet ships use mile-long nets, and a single longline vessel uses tens of miles of line and thousands of hooks. In addition to swordfish, they catch sea turtles, whales, dolphins and other marine wildlife. These wasteful fisheries can discard more animal life than they use. Some of these wasted animals are endangered species, such as humpback whales and Pacific leatherback sea turtles.

Swordfish are also high in mercury and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration warns women of childbearing age and

children not to eat it. Learn more about this and check your mercury-seafood levels by visiting our mercury calendar at seaturtles.org/mercury.

By selling swordfish caught by longline and drift gillnets, restaurants and markets inadvertently support the destruction of ocean ecosystems. By the same token, these businesses have the opportunity to be ocean protectors by only offering products that do not threaten ocean wildlife. Turtle Island Restoration Network is calling for restaurants and markets to help end the slaughter of marine wildlife and pledge to stop selling unsustainably-caught swordfish.

Businesses are beginning to feel the pressure; already, several restaurants have made the pledge.

Customers value sustainable products and companies that make the switch to provide sustainable products. A study of

all ages found that 84 percent of consumers globally say they seek out responsible products whenever possible.

Turtle Island Restoration Network is calling on consumers to help protect ocean wildlife by not buying unsustainably-caught swordfish personally and also by taking individual action to pressure businesses not to sell unsustainably-caught swordfish.

Customers are beginning to apply pressure; already, thousands of people have pledged not to buy unsustainably-caught swordfish.

Join us in calling on restaurants and consumers to do their part to protect, not harm ocean wildlife!

Please visit seaturtles.org/take-action/swordfish-boycott/ to sign the pledge and see steps you can take to help save ocean wildlife.

National Monuments *continued from page 1*

These monuments are home to:

- ◆ More than 7,000 marine species, including Kemp's ridley sea turtles, monk seals, and sperm whales;
- ◆ The deepest place on Earth;
- ◆ 5,000 year old coral; and
- ◆ Important nesting sites for sea turtle species.

With your help, we responded to this threat to ocean species and habitat by:

- ◆ Mobilizing thousands of people to send comments and sign petitions,
- ◆ Convincing more than 30 organizations to sign onto our letter, and
- ◆ Securing press pieces and op-eds to raise awareness.

But despite our actions and the actions of millions of Americans across the country, Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke issued a draft memorandum that

was leaked to the public, and it was not good news for the oceans. The memorandum calls for two things:

- ◆ Reducing the size of Rose Atoll and Pacific Remote Islands, and
- ◆ Proposing to allow industrial fishing inside the boundaries of the monuments, effectively gutting some of the most meaningful protections that the species have.

We are not giving up. We are committed to the continued defense of our national monuments and sanctuaries, and in addition to continuing to mobilize resistance, we will also explore regulatory and legal strategies to maintain strong protections for the oceans and the species we care about.

Help us defend our national monuments by making a tax-deductible donation on our website seaturtles.org/donate.

Leave a Legacy for Ocean Wildlife

Through a bequest to Turtle Island Restoration Network in your will and other estate plans, you can leave a legacy of protection for sea turtles, sharks, salmon and the oceans.

Visit seaturtles.org/bequestgift to find exact language to add Turtle Island Restoration Network to your will or by adding a simple codicil without changing your existing will. You'll also find information on other ways to give through your estate.

Contact us at info@seaturtles.org or 1-800-859-7283 to discuss your commitment to ocean animals and your estate plans confidentially. A professional financial advisor may also be able to help you identify additional ways to provide you with tax benefits, as well as help protect the earth's oceans and wildlife. Thank you for considering this important way to give.



Cocos Island Dive Research Expedition

Are you a diver? Be a part of Turtle Island Restoration Network's long-term conservation study of sharks and sea turtles at Cocos Island.

TURTLE ISLAND Restoration Network leads primary research with volunteer dive research assistants at Cocos Island National Park, Costa Rica, an oasis of ocean life. Hundreds of sharks and rays, schools of fish numbering in the tens of thousands and endangered sea turtles surround the island.

Volunteers help conduct tagging and tracking research that is setting the basis for better protections at Cocos Island and for a "Protected Swimway" to save sharks, sea turtles and other migratory animals as they swim throughout the region.

Visit seaturtles.org/expeditions or contact info@seaturtles.org to learn about our upcoming 2018 expeditions. We have successfully operated Cocos Island Dive Research Expeditions for more than a decade, in partnership with Undersea Hunter, a leading dive operations company with beautiful working research yachts.

DATES:

August 9-19, 2018 Cost: \$6,785
Full—join the waiting list!

December 7-17, 2018 Cost \$5,785

Help Us Protect Sea Turtle Nests in Texas

THE KEMP'S RIDLEY is the official sea turtle of Texas and a critically endangered species. Beginning in late spring, sea turtles will be coming ashore to nest on beaches along the Texas coast, facing a range of threats from predators to people.

Turtle Island Restoration Network, in cooperation with Texas A&M University at Galveston, organizes nest patrols on the upper Texas coast, and we are recruiting dedicated volunteers to ensure that the world's smallest sea turtle has the best chance of survival on our shores.

Our mission is to patrol the beaches from Bolivar to Surfside for nesting sea turtles.

We are seeking nesting patrol volunteers for the 2018 season. Volunteers will undergo training to learn how to properly identify, locate and protect sea turtle nests along the upper Texas coastal areas, and have the satisfaction of helping protect a beloved endangered species. Volunteers are needed for patrol routes beginning April 1, 2018 and ending in mid-July, 2018. If you'd like to get involved, you must complete one of three mandatory training sessions and be available to volunteer for the entire nesting season.

Increases in the turtles' nesting success is in large part due to the ongoing efforts of the patrols, residents and visitors who volunteer. We are so fortunate to share the Gulf of Mexico with such a magnificent, long-lived creature, and with your help we will be able to protect the Kemp's ridley for many years to come.

Want to help count sea turtle nests next year? Email turtlepatrol@tirn.net. We patrol over 72 miles of beach. And in addition to looking for evidence of nesting turtles, our volunteers find stranded turtles, injured birds, dolphins, and other coastal wildlife.



Shop at seaturtles.org/shop

Shop at the Turtle Island Restoration Network store. We offer high-quality, eco-friendly clothing jewelry, books and fine art. Your purchase will help fund our campaigns to save endangered sea turtles, salmon, sharks, whales, and other marine wildlife species. Visit seaturtles.org/shop to start shopping!



You can also **Adopt A Nest** of adorable sea turtle hatchlings for yourself or a loved one. Give the satisfaction of helping these ancient creatures survive into the future in spite of the threats they face. Visit seaturtles.org/adopt.

Galveston Gal Has Arrived



Donna Howe, our board chair, with the Galveston Gal.

our state sea turtle, the Kemp's ridley, was recognized when a bronze sea turtle sculpture was placed on the Galveston Seawall in Galveston, Texas.

This sculpture was the dream of long time sea turtle activist and TIRN board member, Carole Allen. She too recognized it was not a race you would win alone.

To everyone who attended the dedication, thank you for being part of this special day in sea turtle conservation on the upper Texas coast, and for those of you who were not able to attend please stop by the 4600 block of the seawall and visit the Galveston Gal.

WORKING TO SAVE an endangered species is not a sprint but a marathon, with long uphill sections, into a strong blue northern cold front with no shoes on. But it is a marathon worth running.

Last month, the effort of individuals, organizations, foundations and city, state and federal governments to save

New Gold Seal Rating from Guidestar

WE WERE RECENTLY recognized for our transparency with a Gold Seal on our GuideStar Nonprofit Profile. In order to get the Gold Seal, Turtle Island Restoration Network shared important information with the public using our profile at guidestar.org/profile/91-1818080.



We already hold a top 4-star rating from Charity Navigator in financial health, accountability and transparency. The Guidestar Gold Seal is a powerful demonstration of our donors support for programs that create real protections for endangered sea turtles, dolphins, whales, sharks, wild salmon and more.

Major Victory for Endangered Coho Salmon!

WITH YOUR HELP we have achieved the most significant land purchase for endangered coho salmon in our generation.

Last month, in Northern California, the Marin County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the purchase of a failing golf course with the intention of returning this land to protected public lands and habitat for critically endangered coho salmon.

We want to thank everyone who has sent letters and supported our work to protect salmon over the decades—from those who have helped us plant redwoods saplings to those who have made donations to those who have rescued baby fish from tributaries that were drying up.

While we are celebrating and optimistic, we know that the hard work, the real work, is about to begin, and we need your support to ensure that this land is, in fact, returned to the salmon.

If you can, please make a tax-deductible donation today to celebrate this victory and allow us to make sure that this land is protected for one of America's most endangered species by visiting: seaturtles.org/donate.



An elementary school student speaks to the Marin County Board of Supervisors' about how endangered coho salmon habitat should be protected.

The Butterfly Effect

THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT is a concept that explores the idea of small causes having much larger effects.

Obviously, Robert Redford's line isn't rooted in science, and even Edward Lorenz, the "inventor" of the butterfly effect commented at a 1972 meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, "If the flap of a butterfly's wings can be instrumental in generating a tornado, it can equally well be instrumental in preventing a tornado."



Nature is complex, and who is to say which butterfly did what. Global warming, on the other hand, isn't (weirdly enough) as complex as nature. The industrial revolution gave rise to an increase in carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere, and we've been tipping the carbon scales ever since. We've seen the effects of climate change for decades, and disasters are increasing on a global scale. This year alone we've had rapidly developing hurricanes slam the Caribbean and the Gulf coast, wildfires raging out of control along the west coast from Canada to Chile, and flooding and monsoons in South Asia.

It is easy—normal even—to feel paralyzed by everything that is happening in the world right now. We could, and many do, just sit back and say "the world is doomed," or . . . we could plant a tree.

Here at Turtle Island Restoration Network, our headquarters is nestled in the Lagunitas watershed, one of few remaining spawning grounds for

"A butterfly can flutter its wings over a flower in China and cause a hurricane in the Caribbean."

—Robert Redford's character
in the film *Havana*

endangered coho salmon. As we fight to defend sea turtles, whales, sharks, and other marine species and their rapidly deteriorating habitats around the globe, we think it's important to defend what exists close to us as well.

We're taking steps, in our own backyard, like planting redwood trees (the rockstars of carbon sequestration).

Not only does the capture of carbon in the grand scheme of things help endangered sea turtles survive rising oceans, disappearing nesting beaches, and deteriorating coastline ecosystems, but it requires us to put our hands in the dirt, to feel the earth, to know that as interconnected as we all are, that yes, times are tough, the future sometimes bleak, but still—our actions matter. Putting good intentions into reality, nurturing creekside habitat right here to help protect our salmon nurtures far more than the forests.

And while Lorenz was referring to the wind generated from a butterfly's wing and the effect that might have on atmospheric currents, humans aren't butterflies. And we can't in good conscience say that waving your hand might or might not generate a tornado in Texas, but we one-hundred percent believe that one small human action on one side of the world can be instrumental in positively affecting change on the other side of the world.

If you happen to come through northern California, we'd love for you to join us on a creekwalk this winter to look for spawning endangered coho salmon. If you're far away, take a moment, and let us know—what are you doing where you are to feed the groundswell of hope that is arising as we fight climate change?

TIRN Supporter: Ocean Health is Vital for Our Own Survival

Pontus Alenlöv is a Turtle Island Restoration Network (TIRN) supporter and a diver from Stockholm, Sweden. We asked him why he supports TIRN's ocean conservation work.

Why do you believe in ocean conservation?

My love for the ocean has always been a driving force towards a will to do something more than just telling people how I feel about it.

How did you find out about Turtle Island Restoration Network?

I'm not completely sure. I think that I found your Facebook page [facebook.com/seaturtles.org](https://www.facebook.com/seaturtles.org). I like to browse the web looking for institutions or networks who are involved in ocean conservation to learn all I can and also see how I can support ocean conservation projects.

Why are you interested in supporting our ocean conservation work?

I think that ocean health is vital for our own survival. I don't think it's right for humans to decide which animals go extinct and which don't. So any organization that is doing their part to make sure that the oceans will be healthy and full of life when my children grow up is one I want to support. The work you do is extremely important.



COURTESY OF PONTUS ALENLOV

Pontus Alenlöv scuba diving in the Red Sea

Turtle Island Restoration Network
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About Turtle Island Restoration Network

TURTLE ISLAND RESTORATION NETWORK, a leading advocate for the world's oceans and marine wildlife, was founded in 1989 and was originally called the Sea Turtle Restoration Project. Over the years, we have expanded our work to protect marine mammals including whales, dolphins and monk seals and dugongs, as well as sharks, salmon, and seabirds.

Our work is based on science, fueled by people who care, and effective at catalyzing long-lasting positive change that protects the likes of green sea turtles and steelhead trout.

Our mission is to mobilize people in local communities around the world to protect marine wildlife and the oceans and inland watersheds that sustain them.

We accomplish our mission through grassroots empowerment, consumer action, strategic litigation, hands-on restoration, environmental education, and by promoting sustainable local, national and international marine policies. Learn more at seaturtles.org.

in this issue:

Meet Our New Hawai'i Program Director

**TIRN Supporters Stood Up
for National Monuments**

**Redwood Forests: A Vault for
the World's Carbon Dioxide**

Boycott Swordfish to Save Ocean Wildlife!

The Butterfly Effect

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Donna Howe (Chair),
Carole Allen, Barb Andrews,
Brendan Cummings, Julie
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Debbie Sivas,
Todd Steiner
(Executive Director).

DESIGN: DANIELA SKLAN
HUMMINGBIRD DESIGN STUDIO

Viva la Tortuga!

Fall/Winter 2017 — Newsletter of:



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