

UPDATE ON THE MILL BEND PROPERTIES

For the first time in more than 60 years, the strikingly scenic Mill Bend property on the curve of the Gualala River is up for sale, providing a rare opportunity for our community to acquire and preserve this beautiful land in the heart of the Gualala Estuary.

As you have probably heard, Mill Bend is being sold as part of a package that also includes the Lower Mill site, which runs along the bluff east of Highway One down to the river on the east side of the bridge. The asking price for the two properties is \$2.475 million.

In a recent community forum sponsored by the Gualala Municipal Advisory Council (GMAC), more than 70 local residents gathered to learn more about both riverfront properties and to discuss the opportunities and constraints for their potential use.

Forum participants included representatives from GMAC, Sonoma County Regional Parks, RCLC, Friends of the Gualala River, Sonoma Land Trust, the Gualala River Watershed Council, Gualala Arts, and many other advocates for various potential uses of the two properties.

People attending the forum expressed a strong interest in preserving the natural habitat and scenic views of Mill Bend and providing public access to the river. Several ideas for the Lower Mill site were also discussed, including an ecology center, a network of trails, a permanent Gualala Arts parking area, and a possible site for a reservoir.



The Gualala River makes a wide curve at Mill Bend on its way to meet the ocean.

Next Steps

While the forum demonstrated a definite community interest in planning for the future use of these parcels, there are some major obstacles to overcome. The asking price of \$2.475 million will be difficult to raise in our local community, and initial inquiries have not yet identified any funding from government agencies or foundations willing to help acquire these parcels for community use.

RCLC is working with other groups to explore further the possibility of acquiring the Mill Bend properties and has committed an initial \$5,000 from the RCLC Opportunity Fund to help with the cost of appraisals, surveys and other preliminary expenses.

Although it is too early to know whether major funding can be found to purchase them, RCLC shares and appreciates the community's enthusiasm for acquiring the Mill Bend properties. We are now accepting contributions toward the RCLC Opportunity Fund to

support this early exploration stage.

If you would like to help explore the possibility of acquiring the Mill Bend properties, you can donate through our website at www.rclc.org or send your contribution to:

**Redwood Coast Land Conservancy
P.O. Box 1511
Gualala, CA 95445**

NOTE: As part of our exploration for acquiring these unique properties we will need to identify residents in our local area who would be interested in pledging a major lead gift of \$50,000, \$100,000 or more toward this once in a lifetime community purchase. If you are considering making such a gift or know of someone else who is, you can contact..... for further information. All inquiries will be handled in confidence.