



Tear off this postcard and send it in today!

Join us in protecting Tomales Dunes...NOW!

Coalition to Protect Tomales Dunes

- | | |
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| California Coastal Protection Network | Marin Conservation League |
| California Native Plant Society (CNPS) | Ocean Outfall Group |
| Dorothy King Young Chapter, CNPS | Planning and Conservation League |
| Marin Chapter, CNPS | Salmon Protection & Watershed Network |
| North Coast Chapter, CNPS | Save Our Shores |
| Coastal Organizers & Advocates for Small Towns | Sierra Club, Great Coastal Places Campaign |
| Environmental Action Committee of West Marin | Sierra Club, Gaviota Coast Campaign |
| Environment in the Public Interest | Sierra Club, Marin Group |
| Friends of the Dunes | Santa Lucia Chapter, Sierra Club |
| Friends of the Earth US | SLO Coast Alliance |
| Golden Gate Audubon Society | Tomales Bay Association |
| Humboldt Watershed Council | Vote the Coast |
| League for Coastal Protection | Wilderness Society—California/Nevada Office |
| Marin Audubon Society | |



A rare confluence of geologic, atmospheric, and oceanographic conditions has created a singular coastal ecosystem—Tomales Dunes. This dynamic, shape-shifting formation has its own intrinsic beauty and supports a unique community of plants and animals. Tomales Dunes is like no other place on Earth. The opportunity we now have to protect this special place is as rare as the dunes themselves. To fail to act would be a tragedy.

—Jules Evens, biologist and author of “The Natural History of the Point Reyes Peninsula”

Photographs courtesy of Robert Campbell/Chamois Moon, Catherine Caufield, Scott Feierabend, National Park Service, Terry Nordbye, Elaine Straub, Susan van der Wal

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To learn more and for directions to Tomales Dunes, go to www.eacmarin.org and www.sierraclub.org/ca/coasts

eac

The Environmental Action Committee of West Marin

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Tomales Dunes

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Steve Thompson, Chair
Marin County Planning Commission
c/o Coalition to Protect Tomales Dunes
Post Office Box 609
Point Reyes Station CA 94956

Massive dunes, wildlife-rich wetlands, a birder's paradise...

At the mouth of Tomales Bay is the largest unprotected dune system in central California. While most of California's dunes have been lost to development, Tomales Dunes has so far managed to survive. This extraordinary site supports at least 14 listed species and has the richest collection of seasonal dune wetlands in central California. It is also one of the few dune systems in the state that still has a vital population of native dune grasses and some true mobile dunes—completely unvegetated and constantly shifting.

Tomales Dunes is a complex of mature mobile dunes, central dune scrub, dune prairie, and dune wetlands. It is also

part of a rich coastal environment that includes coastal prairie, coastal scrub, salt marsh, tidal flats, bay, and ocean. The dunes help form the unique character of Tomales Bay and the surrounding landscape. They buffer to the prevailing westerly winds and modify the tides, creating a relatively protected bay and providing a safe haven for the more than 40 species of waders and waterfowl that spend the winter here.



And the largest RV campground on the California coast...

Tomales Dunes is not only a valuable, fragile natural resource; it is also the site of Lawson's Landing, a large agricultural operation and the biggest RV campground on the coast of California. Lawson's Landing has 233 permanent RVs and up to 1,000 more RVs each night. Cars and RVs damage the sensitive dune wetlands. On busy weekends, Lawson's Landing is transformed into the biggest town in West Marin.



Lawson's Landing has operated for decades without the required County and Coastal Commission permits. Apart from porta-potties, the campground is served by about 100 primitive, un-permitted cesspits, most sited along a seawall next to Tomales Bay. A sand quarry operated in the dunes for years, but has recently been forced to close due to permit violations. Invasive European beach grass has been planted to protect the campers from being bombarded by wind-blown sand, but it is taking over the mobile dunes, and if unchecked will destroy them within a very few years.

The future is being decided now...

Under pressure to bring the property into compliance with State and County laws, the owners have asked for approval of a Master Plan for Lawson's Landing. The centerpiece of the plan is to put a huge septic leachfield in the threatened mobile dunes and stabilize them by some form of planting. This could damage water quality, wetlands, native species, and the dunes themselves.

If the Master Plan is approved, the dunes could be exposed to even more intensive use. The availability of more water, more septic capacity,

more restrooms, new RV dumps, and a modernized shop, garage, and office—not to mention the need to recoup the cost of those investments—will be a powerful inducement to growth. But first Marin County and the Coastal Commission must approve the plan. Let them know that you want these rare and beautiful dunes to be protected from over-exploitation.

Tomales Dunes is one of California's coastal treasures; let's make sure that future generations can enjoy it!



Tear off this postcard and send it in today!

Please act to protect Tomales Dunes before it's too late!

To: Steve Thompson, Chair
Marin County Planning Commission

Dear Commissioner Thompson,

Tomales Dunes, a complex of mature mobile dunes, central dune scrub, dune prairie, and dune wetlands, is the largest unprotected dune system in central California. It is surrounded by and connected to a rich coastal environment that includes coastal prairie, coastal scrub, salt marsh, tidal flats, bay, and ocean. This extraordinary site supports at least 14 listed species and has the richest collection of seasonal dune wetlands in central California. It is also one of the few dune systems in the state that still has a vital population of native dune grasses and some true mobile dunes—completely unvegetated and constantly shifting.

Tomales Dunes is also the site of the largest RV campground on the California coast. Camping, ranching, and until recently, quarrying, have taken a toll on the dunes. Degraded wetlands and the invasion of the dunes by European beachgrass, an aggressive alien, are just two of the threats facing the dunes. As the commission considers the Lawson's Landing Master Plan, Coastal Permit and Tidelands Permit, we urge you and your fellow commissioners to safeguard this valuable habitat from over-exploitation and ecological degradation.

As naturalist Jules Evens has said, Tomales Dunes is like no other place on earth. Please protect it!

Sincerely,

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____