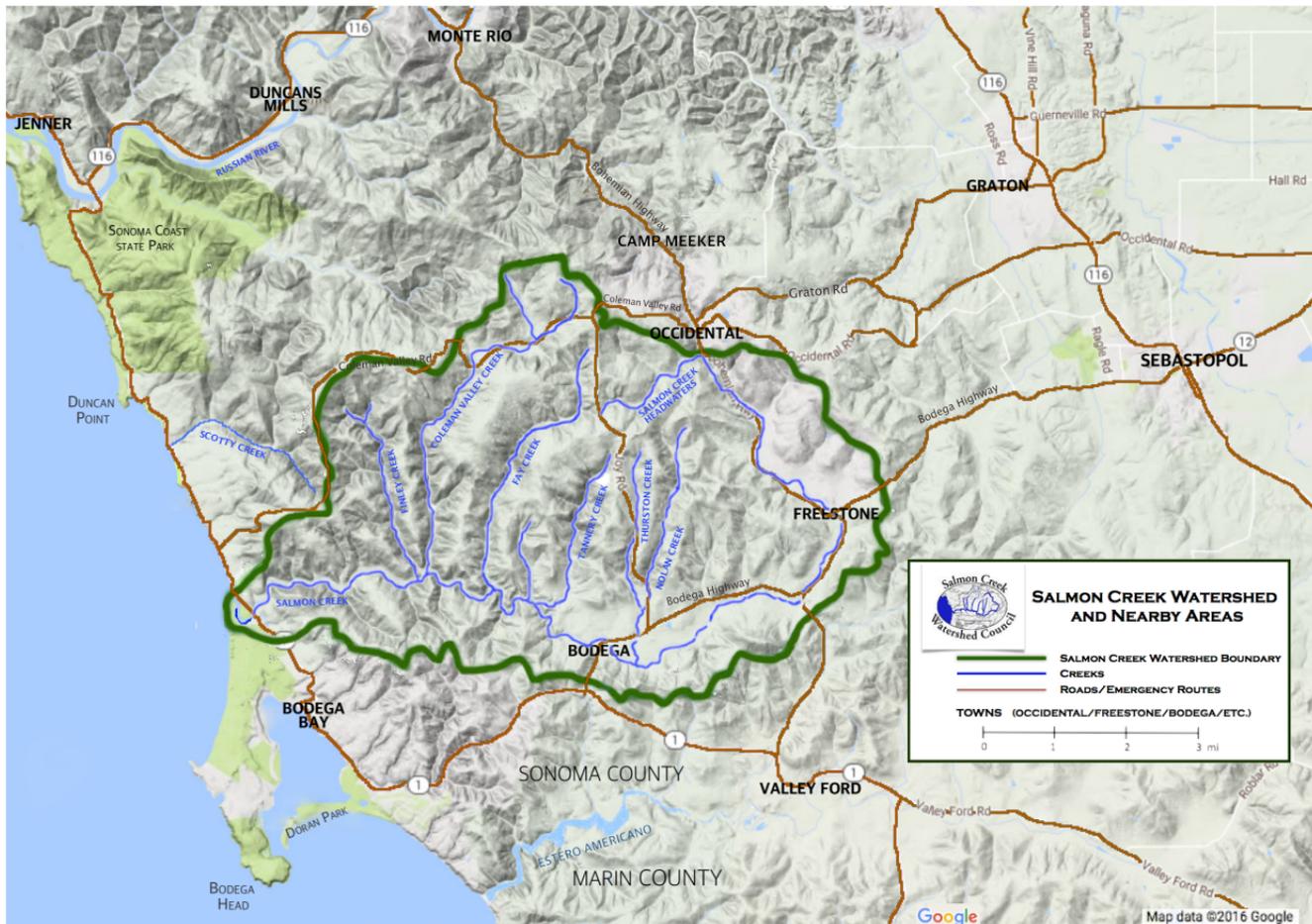


THE SALMON CREEK  
WATERSHED COUNCIL  
WELCOMES YOU



**WELCOME**  
**to the Salmon Creek Watershed**  
**and Nearby Areas**

compiled by  
Noël Bouck, Diane Masura, Bob Fink,  
and members of the Council

This Welcome Packet is available online at  
[www.salmoncreekwater.org/](http://www.salmoncreekwater.org/)

## **DISCLAIMER**

This booklet has been crafted by volunteers who have learned from their personal experience and made every effort to provide accurate information. However, as communities and organizations evolve, information changes. The authors assume no responsibility for errors, omissions, or for any damages resulting from the use of the information contained herein. The authors specifically disclaim any responsibility for any liability, loss, or risk, personal or otherwise, which is incurred as a consequence, directly or indirectly, of the use and application of any of the contents of this booklet.

We are grateful for advice on key portions of this booklet from Alistair Bleifuss and from the Gold Ridge RCD.

Cover Photo by Steve Killey

Graphic layout by Plan/A Design  
[planagraphics.com](http://planagraphics.com)

Printed by Jano Graphics, Ventura, California  
[www.JanoGraphics.com](http://www.JanoGraphics.com)

Printed with environmentally friendly ink.

Printed on recycled paper with at least 20% post-consumer waste content.

Spring, 2018

# CONTENTS

**INTRODUCTION:****PAGE 1**

*History of the area with sources for plant and animal lists*

**SETTING UP YOUR HOME:****PAGE 8**

*What you need to know to do the paper work required to settle in*

**LAND STEWARDSHIP:****PAGE 13**

*How to live gently on your land and sustain its beauty for the future*

**JOINING YOUR COMMUNITY:****PAGE 28**

*Opportunities for volunteering and participating in the arts, sports, and recreation*

**EMERGENCY CONTACTS:****PAGE 40**

*For problems should they occur*

**GENERAL ASSISTANCE:****PAGE 48**

*Aid for when you need help getting on with your life*

## INTRODUCTION

On behalf of all of us who live in this magical far western part of Sonoma County, the Salmon Creek Watershed Council welcomes you. We are a volunteer organization whose overall purpose is to build a vibrant sense of place while learning to live gently on the land. It is our aim to expand the community's knowledge about the forests, creeks, coast, and prairies that we all call home. We want to inspire, support, and engage you in the stewardship of the natural world that makes our homes so special. We have created this booklet to provide information we wish we had had available when we moved here. May it ease your entry, inspire your appreciation of what is around you, and stimulate you to take good care of the part of West County that is now yours.

### Map

Nature organizes her landscapes into watersheds, geographic areas of land within which rainfall is collected and then released into a body of water. The Salmon Creek Watershed, outlined on the frontispiece map, consists of 35.3 square miles of coastal ridges and valleys west of Sebastopol, CA. Here rain from the ridges collects in a series of tributary streams where salmon and steelhead spawn before it flows into the main stem of Salmon Creek that carries it on to the ocean. This booklet is designed for residents of this watershed and its nearby towns.

### A Short History of Our Area

People have lived and prospered on this land for thousands of years. The earliest artifacts date to 6000 BCE. Large Miwok

middens exist from the seashore to the ridge tops; buried metates, arrowheads, and spear heads can still be recovered from disturbed land. Throughout California, the native people carefully managed the land, planting and harvesting and using fire to their advantage. The Coast Miwok met annually at Duncan's Point with the Pomo, whose territory was to the north, to agree on hunting and gathering rights. For century after century the Salmon Creek Watershed and other nearby lands sustainably supported populations close in number to those living here now. We write this booklet in part to urge current residents to adopt practices that led to sustainability in the past.

The first Europeans to attempt farming the area were Russians who arrived in 1808 seeking trade and food as they expanded their sea otter harvesting down the California coast. They built an adobe in Bodega and planted crops including apples in Freestone and along Coleman Valley creek. They also brought smallpox and other diseases that devastated the native peoples whose labor they needed. Ultimately unsuccessful in raising food and having depleted the number of marine mammals, the Russians sold what they could to General Vallejo, John Sutter, and others and departed in 1841.

Logging began in 1834 with a large harvest near Freestone for General Vallejo. In response to growth of the San Francisco Bay Area initiated by the Gold Rush, lumber mills opened. The first was near Occidental in 1859. Potato farms, dairies, and orchards followed. By 1876 a narrow-gauge railroad carried their products from Cazadero through Occidental, Freestone,

and Valley Ford to the ferry in Marin County. In 1882, the Spechter brothers planted some of the first grapes at the top of Joy Road, founding the Indian Mound Winery. In the 1920's Sonoma County was eighth in the nation in farm exports, including eggs, prunes, hops, apples, dairy, and livestock.

Now homes and ranches are scattered throughout the West County forests and prairies. Thanks to the actions of Bodega Land Trust, the Sonoma Land Trust, State and County Park districts, the Coastal Commission, and the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, 14 percent of the central 35.3 square mile Salmon Creek Watershed is now protected from further development.

This means that roughly 86 percent of the landscape we enjoy is in private hands, our hands. It is controlled by those of us who live here. If we wish to maintain the look, the feel, the lifestyle we treasure, it is incumbent upon us to be good stewards of our lands, to live in harmony with the natural world that we moved here to enjoy.

Please use this booklet for sources of information on how you can live lightly, gracefully and sustainably on your land, while maintaining a healthy ecosystem for all West County residents, the plants, the animals, and the people.

## ***Local Histories***

A SALMON CREEK HISTORY AND ORAL HISTORY SUMMARY

BY CATHERINE HARRISON

[www.salmoncreekwater.org/pub/  
Salmon\\_Creek\\_Oral\\_History\\_Project.pdf](http://www.salmoncreekwater.org/pub/Salmon_Creek_Oral_History_Project.pdf)

SONOMA COUNTY HISTORICAL TIMELINE

[www.sonomacountyhistory.org/sonoma-county-timeline/](http://www.sonomacountyhistory.org/sonoma-county-timeline/)

SALMON CREEK WATERSHED TIMELINE

[www.salmoncreekwater.org/timeline.html](http://www.salmoncreekwater.org/timeline.html)

## ***Historical Resources***

WESTERN SONOMA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM  
AND ARCHIVES

261 South Main Street, Sebastopol.

[www.wschsgrf.org/](http://www.wschsgrf.org/)

RANCHO BODEGA HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND ARCHIVES

[ranchobodega.org](http://ranchobodega.org)

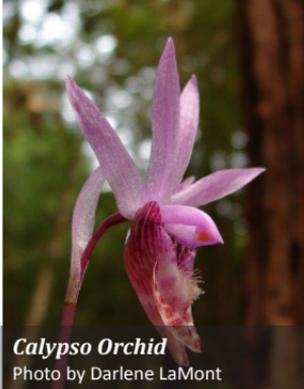
TOMALES REGIONAL HISTORY CENTER

26701 Highway 1, Tomales.

[tomaleshistory.com](http://tomaleshistory.com)

# Flora and Fauna of West Sonoma County

## Plants



From March to June on forest floors and along streams these two - three inch fairy slipper orchids sometimes bloom in profusion.

**For details on local plants and endemic and threatened species see [sonomalandtrust.org/pdf/Biodiversity\\_Action\\_Plan\\_2010\\_reduced.pdf](http://sonomalandtrust.org/pdf/Biodiversity_Action_Plan_2010_reduced.pdf).**

Plants found on the hills around Occidental are listed at [oaec.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Wildlands-Stewardship-Plan-08.17.2015.pdf](http://oaec.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Wildlands-Stewardship-Plan-08.17.2015.pdf), on page 29. Lists of all plants found in Sonoma County can be found at [milobaker.cnps.org/index.php/nativeplants/plant-lists](http://milobaker.cnps.org/index.php/nativeplants/plant-lists) and at [calflora.org](http://calflora.org).

## Birds



These woodpeckers are the size of a crow and perhaps the most striking bird in North America. Often heard before seen, they sound like someone knocking on your door as they drill rectangular holes in dead trees in search of carpenter ants. They are sometimes attracted to suet.

**For information about local birds** see the local chapter of Audubon Society [madroneaudubon.org/](http://madroneaudubon.org/). For details about abundance, seasonal occurrence, and habitats see *Birds of Sonoma County California* which can be purchased from Redwood Region Ornithological Society at [rros.org](http://rros.org).

## ***Fish and other animals***



***Coho Salmon***  
Photo by Sierra Cantor

In the spring, young coho salmon begin to emerge from the gravel of our creeks. These tiny fish spend a year or two growing here in the fresh

water. To survive through the rainless summer months they need cool, shady, oxygenated water and deep pools with logs to hide under. Essential oxygen comes from the trickle of water that seeps down from the surrounding hillsides to run through the almost dry streambeds. When the winter rains come, salmon fry need places to retreat from the fast, silty currents that sweep from the hills to the ocean. After a year or two, the young fish gather in the estuary, and when the rain has driven the creek to open to the ocean, swim out into the sea. At three years of age, they find their way back to the stream where they hatched and in its shallow riffles form gravel nests and lay their eggs, renewing the cycle.

**For information about local animals**, as well as plants, that occur in Sonoma County see [inaturalist.org/places/sonoma-county/](http://inaturalist.org/places/sonoma-county/) or for a specific West County animal list go to [oaec.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Wildlands-Stewardship-Plan-08.17.2015.pdf](http://oaec.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Wildlands-Stewardship-Plan-08.17.2015.pdf), page 37.

### ***Flora and fauna to be wary of***

**Poison oak** is a native plant that bothered the Native Americans just as it does us. All parts of the plant can release a toxic oily resin that causes an itchy rash. The resin is not soluble in water hence hard to wash off so it clings to pets, garden tools, and clothes. The most effective treatment seems to be very hot water that temporarily quells the itch. Topical alcohol may help. Leaves are arranged in three and turn a lovely red in the fall. Learn to recognize and avoid it. Do not burn it as breathing its smoke is dangerous to eyes, nose, throat, and lungs.

**Stinging nettle**, a four-to six-foot-tall leafy summer plant in the rose family, has serrated soft green leaves with fine hairs that come off when touched, imbed in skin, and cause a painful sting that usually lasts about 24 hours. Scratching makes it worse. Baking soda, vinegar, leaves of jewelweed, and even spit help somewhat.

**Large wildlife** are definitely around as our woods are cougar and brown bear habitat. Now and then you may spot one of these animals. They usually keep their distance, but can be attracted to homes by uncovered garbage, pet food, or uncovered compost piles.

## SETTING UP YOUR HOME

As soon as the moving van pulls away, there are a thousand things that have to be done at once. The farther you have come, the more daunting the task. We offer the following tedious information to help you power through the necessities of setting up so that as soon as possible you will be able to sit down, lean back, and relax comfortably into your new life in West County.

***Voter registration.*** Registrar's office, 435 Fiscal Drive, Santa Rosa, is open Monday to Friday 8am-5pm, or register by email at [trov-voterreg@sonoma-county.org/](mailto:trov-voterreg@sonoma-county.org/) or on line at [www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/](http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/). Re-registration is required after change in name, residence or party. You can also register to vote when you obtain or renew your California driver's license.

***Driver's license and car registration.*** Department of Motor Vehicles, 2570 Corby Avenue, Santa Rosa, is open Monday to Friday 8am-5pm. Call **800-777-0133** for appointment or go online at [www.dmv.ca.gov/wasapp/foa/clear.do?goTo=officeVisit&localeName=en](http://www.dmv.ca.gov/wasapp/foa/clear.do?goTo=officeVisit&localeName=en).

An alternate is Petaluma DMV, 715 Southpoint Boulevard, Petaluma. After establishing residence by registering to vote, filing homeowner's property tax exemption, or utilizing in-state tuition, new residents have 10 days to apply for a California driver's license. Vehicles must be registered in California within 20 days after you become a resident or get a job.

**Water/septic hook-up.** If available at your property, inquire at Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department at **707-565-1900**.

**Land line phone.** It may still be useful if a fire or earthquake takes out the towers or cables cell phones depend on. Go to [www.att.com/local/phone/california/santa-rosa/](http://www.att.com/local/phone/california/santa-rosa/) or call **844-723-0252**.

**Cell phone and internet.** Service can be spotty as various providers attempt to cover our diverse area. Availability depends on exactly where you live so asking a neighbor is your best bet.

**Trash.** Several commercial companies collect garbage and recycling and yard waste weekly (see [www.recyclenow.org/disposal/garbage.asp](http://www.recyclenow.org/disposal/garbage.asp)) but it is also possible to handle it all yourself. Plant and food waste can be composted if protected from animal predation. One can haul garbage to either the Guerneville Transfer Station, 13450 Pocket Canyon Drive off Hwy 116, Guerneville (closed Sunday and Wednesday) or the Central Disposal site, 500 Mecham Road, Petaluma (closed Sunday). The central site will recycle reusable household items, also bottles, cans, plastic, paints and scrap metal. They will dispose safely of household toxins on certain days.

Drugs can be safely discarded at locations in the county listed at [www.safemedicinedisposal.org/drop-off-locations/](http://www.safemedicinedisposal.org/drop-off-locations/). A central one in West County is Occidental Health Center, 3820 Main Street, Occidental.

Household items from clothes to furniture can be repurposed in Sebastopol by donating to Sutter Hospice Thrift Store, 748 Gravenstein Highway N, or to The Goodwill, 6826 Sebastopol Avenue.

Wood can be burned but there are strict limits on when and how and a burn permit is required (see below p. 24). Several Santa Rosa companies will recycle wood for a small price. The county has a web site with advice on how and where to recycle almost everything you can think of at [recyclenow.org/recycling/recycling\\_guide.asp](http://recyclenow.org/recycling/recycling_guide.asp).

**Pets.** Your dog will require a license to be renewed yearly and a current rabies vaccination. See [sonomacounty.ca.gov/Health/Animal-Services/License-Your-Dog/](http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Health/Animal-Services/License-Your-Dog/). Throughout West County dogs must be leashed unless on your own property or at a fenced dog park. The law requires that you pick up dog poop in parks and along trails. See [sonomacounty.ca.gov/Health/Animal-Services/](http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Health/Animal-Services/) for more information.

Your cat will not need a license but as even some of the best-fed cats often can't resist killing a bird or two a week, consider an indoor cat or, if yours roams free, a bell or collar can help a bit.

## Places of worship

BUDDHIST GROUPS IN BAY AREA are listed at [www.urbandharma.org/udharma4/nocenters.html](http://www.urbandharma.org/udharma4/nocenters.html).

BODEGA BAY UNION CHURCH (Christian) 1320 Bay View Street, Bodega Bay. Call 707-875-3559. [bodegabaychurch.org](http://bodegabaychurch.org)

CONGREGATION SHOMREI TORAH 2600 Bennett Valley Road,  
Santa Rosa. Call **707-578-5519**. [www.shomreitorah.org](http://www.shomreitorah.org)

ENMANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE 1200 Gravenstein Highway South,  
Sebastopol. Call **707-823-2252**.  
[sonic.net/~enmanji/Enmanji/Home.html](http://sonic.net/~enmanji/Enmanji/Home.html)

FISHERMAN'S CHAPEL BY THE BAY (nondenominational) 1370  
Bodega Avenue, Bodega Bay.  
[www.fishermanschapelbythebay.org](http://www.fishermanschapelbythebay.org)

ISLAMIC, see Islamic Society of Santa Rosa, 545 Mendocino  
Avenue, Santa Rosa. Call **707 525-1144**.

OCCIDENTAL COMMUNITY CHURCH (Christian) 3637 Church  
Street, Occidental. Call **707- 874-3501**.  
[occidentalcommunitychurch.org](http://occidentalcommunitychurch.org)

SAINT PHILIP CATHOLIC CHURCH 3720 Bohemian Highway,  
Occidental  
and

SAINT TERESA CATHOLIC CHURCH 17242 Bodega Highway,  
Bodega. Call **707- 874-3812**. [www.stphilipstteresa.org](http://www.stphilipstteresa.org)

SPIRITUAL GATHERINGS are listed each month at The Sonoma  
County Gazette under 'Faith.'  
[www.sonomacountygazette.com/](http://www.sonomacountygazette.com/)

### **West County school districts**

HARMONY UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT (K TO EIGHT) 1935 Bohemian  
Highway, Occidental. Call **707-874-1205**.  
[www.harmonyusd.org/](http://www.harmonyusd.org/)

WEST SONOMA COUNTY UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
462 Johnson Street, Sebastopol. Call **707 824-6403**.  
[wscuhsd.k12.ca.us/](http://wscuhsd.k12.ca.us/)

SHORELINE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT 1200 Canon Street, Bodega Bay. Call **707-875-2724**.  
[bodegabay.shorelineunified.org/](http://bodegabay.shorelineunified.org/)

### **Survival kit**

In this relatively isolated part of the county that has in the past seen devastating earthquakes and fires, you may suddenly need to take care of yourself, family, pets, and livestock for two weeks or more without any outside help. Details on what you would need are at [occidental-ca.org/oep.html](http://occidental-ca.org/oep.html). As you set up your home complete these four tasks:

- Arrange with someone outside the area to serve as an emergency contact for your family.
- Stockpile enough food, water (1 gallon/person/day), and essential medicines to last for 2 weeks.
- Become aware of exit routes (see map). Should an aftershock overturn a candle, a fire could necessitate evacuation.
- Prepare for an extended electrical outage.

## LAND STEWARDSHIP

As you explore your new home you may find obsidian shards, arrowheads, perhaps a metate, left behind by the Native Americans who tended your land with care for eight to ten thousand years before you arrived. It is now your turn to care for this land before you pass it on to the next tender. The principles of good stewardship are no longer part of accumulated cultural lore as they were in native populations, but often must be learned anew by each land owner. Below are some rules of thumb, some sources for advice and some alerts to dangers that will help you to care for your land and share its resources with the denizens of the ecosystem you have joined by moving here. Many questions you may have, or may encounter as you get settled in, are answered in a summary of best management practices for small rural properties available at: [sonomarcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/SmallAcreagesPublicationFull.pdf](https://sonomarcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/SmallAcreagesPublicationFull.pdf).

### Living with Water Scarcity

In West County water is a precious resource, a commons that we share with all our neighbors, from the people next door to the pumas that roam our woods, from the salmon in our creeks to the redwoods in our forests. For the health and survival of all living things in our part of Earth, keep two things in mind: First, use as little water as you can, both indoors and outdoors. Domestic use can be as low as 25 gallons/person/day if water conservation is taken seriously. We suggest taking short showers and purchasing water saving-appliances, especially toilets and washing machines. Outdoors, hand or drip watering

your gardens and landscaping with less thirsty natives can help immensely. Second, manage with care the surplus that winter rains supply. We have been inspired over the years by our neighbor Brock Dolman's storm water motto: slow it, spread it, sink it, save it. A booklet that explains how to use storm water to protect and replenish surface water and groundwater resources, offset well-water use, reduce erosion and pollution, and provide water security for your property can be found at: [sonomarcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Slow-it-Spread-it-Sink-it-Store-it.pdf](http://sonomarcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Slow-it-Spread-it-Sink-it-Store-it.pdf). For more advice for owners of small properties, visit: [oaec.org/our-work/projects-and-partnerships/water-institute/publications](http://oaec.org/our-work/projects-and-partnerships/water-institute/publications).

## Protecting Your Creek

If salmon and other wildlife in West County are to survive, it is essential that individual landowners, who control over 90 percent of our creek side property, care for their creeks. The Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District ([goldridgercd.org](http://goldridgercd.org)) provides advice and assistance on how best to manage a creek to ensure both healthy habitats for its denizens and safety for infrastructure and people.

A wide undisturbed buffer zone must be maintained along your creek. This riparian, or streamside, corridor prevents erosion, assists with recharge of clean groundwater in your well, and supports wildlife, providing shade to help keep water cool enough for the fish while providing shelter and migration pathways for terrestrial animals. Along the main stem of Salmon

Creek, downstream from Occidental to Bodega, the riparian corridor set back is approximately 200 feet from top of bank, and 50 to 100 feet for most other streams in West County. Visit: [sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Regulations/Riparian-Corridors/](http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Regulations/Riparian-Corridors/).

By law these riparian areas are designated streamside conservation areas in which shade trees and native plants are protected and agriculture and structures are not permitted. Within the creek, rocks, fallen trees, and other large wood pieces provide essential habitat and food for young fish. These should not be removed without a permit. Any work in the creek or within the Riparian Corridor along county streams requires regulatory approval and may trigger a need for the following permits:

**Sonoma County Roiling Permit**

[www.sonoma-county.org/prmd/docs/handouts/drn-003.pdf](http://www.sonoma-county.org/prmd/docs/handouts/drn-003.pdf)

**California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement**

[www.wildlife.ca.gov/conservation/Environmental-Review](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/conservation/Environmental-Review)

**Regional Water Quality Control Board Water Quality Certification**

[www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water\\_issues/programs/water\\_quality\\_certification/](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/water_quality_certification/)

**Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 Permit**

[www.epa.gov/cwa-404/section-404-permit-program](http://www.epa.gov/cwa-404/section-404-permit-program)

If you have questions about which activities require permits, a

helpful resource is the “Guide to Watershed Project Permitting for the State of California”: [www.carcd.org/docs/publications/guidetowatershedpermitting.pdf](http://www.carcd.org/docs/publications/guidetowatershedpermitting.pdf).

Please do not divert water from streams, particularly during the summer and fall. Even if you have a permit to do so (which is required), please minimize your water use.

## Caring for Redwood Trees

Many of our redwoods are 100-150 years old. Although they look like adults, they are in the teen years of their life, so please treat them gently. Be careful not to crush their roots. Redwood roots run outward in the topsoil for up to 100 feet, interlocking with roots of nearby trees to provide stability for these giants that lack a taproot. If limbs overhang your house, hire a tree climber to remove dead branches every few years. But beware of over-pruning as lower branches can break the fall of higher ones, limiting damage. Avoid topping as regrown tops may be less vigorous and more likely to topple on you; also topping may create an entry for disease. Each year about one third of redwood needles brown and fall off, creating duff—a blanket of mulch—that should be left on the ground where it protects the shallow roots and creates the acid soil environment that the redwoods need.

## Keeping Oak Trees Healthy

Because our venerable native oak species are adapted to our dry summers, they do not need and do not tolerate summer

watering. The older, and thus more beautiful they are, the less they tolerate changes in their environment. Root protection zone (half again as large as the drip line) must be protected, so avoid trenching, filling, and paving within the root protection zone. Prune only dead or diseased branches. More extensive advice is on line at: [californiaoaks.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/CareOfCAsNativeOaks.pdf](http://californiaoaks.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/CareOfCAsNativeOaks.pdf).

Many oaks in our county are sick or dying from a fungus that causes Sudden Oak Death syndrome. Dead trees should be removed; live ones can often be treated. To learn more, visit [nature.berkeley.edu/garbelottowp/?page\\_id=117](http://nature.berkeley.edu/garbelottowp/?page_id=117).

## Caring for Grasslands

The native California perennial grassland, or coastal prairie, persists as a strong component in many grasslands across Sonoma County. Throughout history, grasslands have been a source of the staple grains in humans' diets and were key in the domestication of livestock and the development of agriculture. In recent decades, we have come to understand better how the root systems of grasses, particularly long-lived perennial species, hold water in the soil and allow it to percolate into underground aquifers. Recent studies have demonstrated that management of grasslands through periodic, carefully timed grazing can capture CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere and sequester it in the soil. For grasslands to continue these valuable eco-services effectively, they must be protected from overgrazing and also from under-grazing, which supports the encroachment of shrubs and trees. Mowing and weeding can be useful management

tools on small parcels, but if you own a larger parcel it would be good to seek advice from rangeland professionals. For ideas about how to maintain this important resource, visit: [sonoma.edu/cei/prairie/management/index.shtml](http://sonoma.edu/cei/prairie/management/index.shtml) or contact Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District: 707-823-5244. [goldridgercd.org](http://goldridgercd.org)

## Keeping up Your Private Roads

The most serious threat to the fish in our creeks during the rainy winter is sediment that washes into the creeks from dirt roads and poorly placed culverts that have deteriorated. For watershed health it is important that all road surfaces be disconnected from streams. This can be done with a combination of techniques to spread out surface drainage by shaping the road surface or installing rolling dips and other devices that prevent water from concentrating and gathering speed before it drains (see the booklet *Wallet and Watershed-Friendly Roads* at [naparcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Handout\\_May2014.pdf](http://naparcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Handout_May2014.pdf) . The Gold Ridge RCD provides free technical advice to landowners on road drainage improvements ([goldridgercd.org](http://goldridgercd.org)). Best practices advise that roads that are used year round should be paved with permeable material that covers the surface completely. Unsurfaced roads are best left unused during the rainy season and, if not essential, professionally decommissioned.

## Gardening

As you introduce plants to your West County garden remember that native plants place less demands on your well water. Avoid

planting invasive species that are aggressive, competitive, difficult to control or eradicate, or are fire hazards. Invasive species in Sonoma County include shrubs like Scotch broom (*Cytisus scoparius*), various thistles, common gorse (genus *Ulex*) and pampasgrass (*Cortaderia selloana*), trees like blue gum eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus*), black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia* L.), and vines like vinca (*Vinca major*). For a detailed list of invasive species and good alternatives to plant see [www.cal-ipc.org](http://www.cal-ipc.org). To help identify and control those you already have, consult: [www.marinrcd.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/MSWMA\\_Invasive-Weeds\\_eng.pdf](http://www.marinrcd.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/MSWMA_Invasive-Weeds_eng.pdf).

Excellent help on garden maintenance is also available from Sonoma County Master Gardeners. These are volunteers who are trained and certified by the University of California. The Master Gardeners' mission is to provide unbiased, high quality, science-based information to noncommercial home gardeners in Sonoma County. They consult on such topics as soil and plant nutrition, irrigation, weed-insect-disease control, vegetables, trees, berries, shrub, lawns, flowers, home composting, and pesticide alternatives. Visit [ucanr.edu/sites/scmg/](http://ucanr.edu/sites/scmg/). Their Water-Wise gardening site is: [sonomamg.ucanr.edu/projects/Water-wise\\_Gardening/](http://sonomamg.ucanr.edu/projects/Water-wise_Gardening/).

## Day Labor Assistance

Help with chores from gardening to ditch digging to house cleaning can be arranged at the Graton Day Labor Center, 2981 Bowen Street, Graton, CA, 707- 829-1864 or [www.gratondaylabor.org](http://www.gratondaylabor.org).

## Having or Not Having Fences

In West County we share our lands with a rich array of wildlife that must travel to find food, shelter and water. Build the fences you need in such a way as to minimize migration barriers to our local wildlife. Consider hedgerows or moveable electric fences instead of permanent fencing. Consider fencing only a minimal area that does not block wildlife trails or wildlife's access to water. Keep fence of barrier height lower than 40 inches (3.3 feet), maintain a bottom passage of 16 inches, and use boards or smooth wire with no barbs that can impale birds and deer. The local Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District can give personal advice on these issues. Visit: [goldridgercd.org](http://goldridgercd.org). For the succinct *Landowner's Guide to Fences and Wildlife*, see: [prod.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/nrcs144p2\\_045123.pdf](http://prod.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/nrcs144p2_045123.pdf).

On most residential properties in West County, one is allowed to build a fence without a permit up to three feet high in the front of the home and up to six feet tall in the rear so long as the fence does not impinge on a creek's riparian zone. Taller fences may need a use permit, building permit, and/or require a significant setback from the road. Rules vary from property to property depending on zoning. Agricultural properties have their own rules. You can identify your zone by address at [sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Zoning-Information/](http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Zoning-Information/) and from this page you can access the exact development criteria. Or to contact Permit Sonoma call **707-565-1900** with a specific question. They will generally return your call within the day.

## Moving Vineyards towards Sustainability

Sonoma County is focused on becoming the nation's first 100 percent sustainable wine region by 2019 ([sonomawinegrape.org](http://sonomawinegrape.org)). Irrigated vineyards may use 20-90 gallons of water for every bottle of wine produced. In our water-scarce area, saving water is one reason to choose sustainably produced wine and to support the following sustainability certifications. These are, in order of rigor:

SONOMA COUNTY SUSTAINABLE WINE LABEL recognizes wineries certified by CSWA, SIP, Fish Friendly Farming, or Lodi Rules.

CALIFORNIA SUSTAINABLE WINEGROWING ASSOCIATION (CSWA) depends on audited self-assessments and stimulates continual improvement in conserving water and energy and maintaining healthy soil.

SUSTAINABILITY IN PRACTICE CERTIFICATION (SIP) has more rigorous measurements and certification including prohibition of more dangerous pesticides.

USDA ORGANIC prohibits GMOs and sulfites (a common preservative) and requires all additives to be organic.

DEMETER CERTIFIED BIODYNAMIC focuses on low-intervention practices and soil and vine health.

## Repairing Your Home

If you replace windows or doors with others of same size and location or do minor repairs of interior walls or plumbing fixtures that do not involve concealed pipes, traps, vents, or

rearrangements of fixtures, you probably do not require a building permit. Most other changes do require a permit. Rules are updated often and you may be subject to additional regulations beyond those of the building permit involving well, septic, drainage and zoning issues. All work must be done to code. So, before embarking on a project, it pays to check with Permit Sonoma: [sonomacounty.ca.gov/permit-and-resource-management/](https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/permit-and-resource-management/) or call **707-565-1900**.

## Determining Zoning Rules

Zoning provides for orderly and beneficial land use through regulations aimed at protecting scenic, recreational, and natural resources. In our unincorporated coastal area, the Land Use Designations (zoning) are mostly of four types: RR, Rural Residential; RRD, Resources and Rural Development; LEA, Land Extensive Agricultural; and DA, Diverse Agricultural. Each allows many of the same things (like keeping up to 50 chickens), but there are also many differences. Before you embark on any new projects, find out how your property is zoned as this defines usage rules. Look for your zoning designation: [sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Services/Parcel-Report/](https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Services/Parcel-Report/). Then check out the associated regulations for your zone: [sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Planning/](https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Planning/).

## Obtaining a Building Permit

Find out what permits any major house repairs or building projects will require before beginning work by calling PRMD at **707-565-1900**. Although permits are needed for many projects,

others are exempt. A useful guide is available at [www.sonoma-county.org/prmd/docs/handouts/bpc-005.pdf](http://www.sonoma-county.org/prmd/docs/handouts/bpc-005.pdf).

However, if you plan to repair or upgrade a well ([sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Eng-and-Constr/Well-and-Septic/](http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Eng-and-Constr/Well-and-Septic/)) or septic system or to remodel your home or build additional units, a permit is required. Guest houses (granny units) are allowed but must be less than 640 square feet, have no kitchen, and be located less than 100 feet from the primary dwelling. Second units are allowed on properties of more than 2 acres and may be 840 square feet. There are many qualifications and limitations that apply to both of these dwelling types; check the Sonoma County Zoning Regulations for up to date rules. Sonoma County's guidelines for second dwelling units were mandated by the State to help create more affordable housing. Many of the exceptions in the regulations allow for more flexibility and size if you are willing to commit to an affordable housing agreement for up to 30 years. If you run into problems, some help is available from the Customer Service Ombudsman at [707-565-8350](tel:707-565-8350) or [sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Ombudsman](http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Ombudsman).

## Keeping Your Land Fire Safe

Periodic fires are a natural occurrence in our environment. The goal for those of us living in fire country is to keep fire fuels to a minimum and pay special attention to reducing fuels near our homes and exit routes. Cal Fire ([calfire.ca.gov/](http://calfire.ca.gov/)) has a seasonal station in Occidental [707-874-3668](tel:707-874-3668) and a multi-county office in St. Helena [707-967-1400](tel:707-967-1400). Cal Fire urges residents to maintain "defensible space." Keep a greenbelt of low-growing

fire-resistant plants within 30 feet immediately surrounding your home. This area should be clear of anything that could fuel a fire like climbing ivy, stacked firewood, flammable paint, and gasoline. Prune trees to give a 6-15 foot buffer between the trees and your house. Maintain the same buffer area for your propane tank. When mowing, set blade level high enough that it cannot hit a rock to spark a fire. Fell dead and dying trees and remove the very flammable invasive shrubs that can ladder a fire to the tree canopy. Keep your roof free of flammable duff and debris. Cal Fire will send someone to evaluate your defensible space.

Along the road that would be your escape route, be sure to preserve a 25-30 foot fuel break by having trees and shrubs separated by at least two times the height of the shrubs and trees limbed to 8-10 feet above the ground. Complete instructions plus how to prepare for evacuation is at [firesafesonoma.org/main/sites/default/files/living\\_with\\_fire.pdf](https://firesafesonoma.org/main/sites/default/files/living_with_fire.pdf)

## Obtaining a Burn Permit

To burn anywhere in West County requires a burn permit and following the permit rules. For information on your region's rules and an application go to [www.nosocoair.net/permits.html/](http://www.nosocoair.net/permits.html/) or call **707-433-5911**. You may burn only on permitted days and even before the burn begins you must call to report your location to REDCOM, the Sonoma County Dispatch Center at **707-565-1700**. If it is windy or otherwise unsafe, you may be allowed to burn, but you must monitor the fire constantly with hose at the ready and be sure it is extinguished within the allotted time frame.

## Insuring the Preservation of Your Property

There are organizations working to protect the rural scenic character of the land for future generations. They provide conservation easements which are legal agreements wherein you retain ownership of land while they insure that it is permanently protected and preserved. These easements not only sustain the beautiful creeks, forests, and prairies of West County but also may provide the landowner tax savings.

BODEGA LAND TRUST protects land primarily in the 35-square-mile Salmon Creek Watershed. [www.bodegalandtrust.org/](http://www.bodegalandtrust.org/)

SONOMA LAND TRUST conserves scenic, natural, agricultural, and open space for the future of Sonoma County. [sonomalandtrust.org/](http://sonomalandtrust.org/)

SONOMA COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT permanently protects the diverse agricultural, natural resources, and scenic open space lands of Sonoma County for future generations. [www.sonomaopenspace.org](http://www.sonomaopenspace.org)

## Keeping Pollution at a Minimum

For the health of all who live here, please manage pests intelligently without using harmful chemicals, (see [ipm.ucdavis.edu](http://ipm.ucdavis.edu)), minimize fertilizer use, keep grease out of the sink and septic, dispose of pet waste properly so it does not contaminate local creeks, dispose properly of drugs/pharmaceuticals

(drop off at Occidental Health Service lobby, 3820 Main Street, Occidental, or Mecham Road dump) and of household toxics (take to dump). For more information on household waste management, visit the Sonoma County Waste Management Agency's website: [recyclenow.org/index.asp](https://recyclenow.org/index.asp).

## Getting Help with Neighborhood Problems

PROPERTY VIOLATIONS by neighbors that are a safety hazard can be reported to Code Enforcement at Permit Sonoma (707-565-1992) and will be investigated.

VACATION RENTAL COMPLAINTS about units in your neighborhood can be reported to the property manager. The Permit Sonoma website ([sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Regulations/Vacation-and-Hosted-Rentals/Complaints/](https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Regulations/Vacation-and-Hosted-Rentals/Complaints/)) will tell you how to find the manager. Or call the Sheriff's non-emergency number 707-869-0202. If you feel your safety is in jeopardy call 911.

ROAD ISSUES can be reported with accompanying photo via an app called SoCoReportIt. Learn more at: [sonomacounty.ca.gov/Services/SoCo-Report-It/Submit-a-Service-Request/](https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Services/SoCo-Report-It/Submit-a-Service-Request/).

## Seeking Financial Help with Land Stewardship Projects

THE GOLD RIDGE RESEARCH CONSERVATION DISTRICT is only a phone call away. They use grant monies to fund projects that enhance the natural resources of this area. Contact Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District, 2776 Sullivan Road, Sebastopol. Call 707-823-5244 or visit: [goldridgecd.org](https://goldridgecd.org).

THE US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Natural Resources Conservation Service has an Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to plan and implement conservation practices on agricultural land and nonindustrial private forestland. [nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/eqip](https://nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/eqip)

THE SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE DISTRICT maintains a list of agencies that provide advice and grant funds to help maintain county lands at [sonomaopenspace.org/protect-your-land/landowner-resources](https://sonomaopenspace.org/protect-your-land/landowner-resources).

## JOINING YOUR COMMUNITY

Once you are somewhat settled, it is time to investigate your wider surroundings. Here we list ways to discover hidden corners of the landscape, to meet people who may be new residents like you or share your interests, and to join the locals as they exercise and relax and do what needs to be done to keep our community going.

### Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers form the backbone of many local organizations providing services for residents and visitors. A listing of current openings for volunteers appears each month in the Sonoma County Gazette. Pick one up free at stores, restaurants, or post office. Or search online under Volunteer at [sonomacountygazette.com/](http://sonomacountygazette.com/). County-wide volunteer opportunities can be found at [211sonoma.org/volunteering-for-211-2/](http://211sonoma.org/volunteering-for-211-2/). Local opportunities range from gardening to fundraising to ambulance work.

### *Gardening*

**Occidental Arts and Ecology Center** invites workers into their mother garden most Wednesdays from 10 am to 5 pm. [oaec.org](http://oaec.org)

**Burbank Farm** welcomes volunteers to help preserve and restore the Sebastopol farm where Luther Burbank developed most of the over 800 new plant varieties that he introduced to horticulture during his life. The group gardens there one

morning a week and trains docents to give tours.

[www.wschsgfrf.org/luther-burbank-gold-ridge-experiment-farm](http://www.wschsgfrf.org/luther-burbank-gold-ridge-experiment-farm)

**Western Hills Gardens** in Occidental, world renowned for its exotic plants, seeks weeders and trains docents to give tours.

[westernhillsgarden.com](http://westernhillsgarden.com)

**Sonoma County Master Gardeners** are trained and certified to share science-based information to non-commercial home gardeners in Sonoma County on topics from plant nutrition to composting and alternatives to pesticides.

[sonomamastergardeners.org](http://sonomamastergardeners.org)

## *Wildlife*

**Salmon Creek Watershed Council** is a volunteer organization that works to expand the community's knowledge of its watersheds and to inspire, support, and engage people in their stewardship, offering opportunities to monitor local creeks.

[salmoncreekwater.org/](http://salmoncreekwater.org/)

**Wildlife Rescue** in Cotati cares for injured wild animals until they can be released. After an extensive and fascinating free training program, working volunteers are asked to also contribute to the program as sponsors. Call **707-992-0274**. [scwildliferescue.org](http://scwildliferescue.org)

**Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods** offers opportunities for seal and whale watching, citizen science projects monitoring pinnipeds and sea birds, as well as docent duties in parks and along the seashore. Office: 17000 Armstrong Woods Road,

Guerneville. Call [707-869-9177](tel:707-869-9177). [stewardscr.org](http://stewardscr.org)

**Madrone Audubon Society** is an all-volunteer organization that offers bird walks, work in environmental protection, and citizen-scientist projects. [www.madroneaudubon.org/](http://www.madroneaudubon.org/)

### *Preservation of rural land and forests*

**Forest Unlimited** works to preserve the forestlands of the county and trains and supports residents to fight injurious timber harvest plans. Volunteers for this group have planted over 29,000 young redwood trees in the last 20 years. [forestunlimited.org/](http://forestunlimited.org/)

**Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation** enlists volunteers to help restore, conserve, and give guided tours of the Laguna in Sebastopol. [lagunafoundation.org](http://lagunafoundation.org)

**Slow Foods Russian River** is part of a global grassroots organization promoting good, clean, and fair food for all. Locally they work to preserve apple orchards, especially Gravensteins, and to connect people with local food producers. Each fall they run a popular apple press. [www.slowfoodrr.org/](http://www.slowfoodrr.org/)

**The Bodega Land Trust** protects land from development by granting easements and depends on crews of volunteers for yearly inspections of its conservation easements. [bodegalandtrust.org/](http://bodegalandtrust.org/)

**The Sonoma Land Trust** uses volunteer monitors to hike lands throughout the county on which they have easements to ensure

compliance. [sonomalandtrust.org](http://sonomalandtrust.org)

**The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District** runs outings so the public can enjoy and appreciate the lands they have protected. [sonomaopenspace.org/outings-events/](http://sonomaopenspace.org/outings-events/)

### *Charity fundraising and community service*

**The Sonoma County Civil Grand Jury** that investigates local governments and organizations and issues annual reports suggesting change. Call 707-565-6330. [sonoma.courts.ca.gov/info/administration/grand-jury](http://sonoma.courts.ca.gov/info/administration/grand-jury)

**The Occidental Community Council** presents a Craft Fair each year to raise funds for community projects and charities. [occidental-ca.org](http://occidental-ca.org)

**The Salmon Creek Harmony Ark Education Foundation** is a non-profit that raises funds to enhance the educational experience of students at the Salmon Creek grammar schools. [harmonyark.org/home](http://harmonyark.org/home)

**Volunteer Fire Departments** depend on citizen volunteers for their fundraising pancake breakfasts and various dinners. New volunteers for firefighting and ambulance work are welcomed and trained.

Bodega [bodegafire.org](http://bodegafire.org)

Bodega Bay [www.bbfpd.org/](http://www.bbfpd.org/)

FREESTONE Station 3 of Gold Ridge Fire Dept. [goldridgefire.org/](http://goldridgefire.org/)

OCCIDENTAL [www.facebook.com/occidentalfire/](http://www.facebook.com/occidentalfire/)

VALLEY FORD [www.facebook.com/valleyfordfire/](http://www.facebook.com/valleyfordfire/)

**The Red Cross** trains volunteers for community projects as well as for on-call disaster work.

[www.redcross.org/local/california/northern-california-coastal/volunteer#step1](http://www.redcross.org/local/california/northern-california-coastal/volunteer#step1)

**Community Emergency Response Team** training is designed to prepare you to help in a catastrophic disaster when emergency services are not available. [sonomacounty.ca.gov/FES/Emergency-Management/CERT/](http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/FES/Emergency-Management/CERT/)

**The Ceres Project** in Sebastopol uses volunteer youth as the primary chefs cooking organic, nutritious meals for community members with serious illnesses.

[ceresproject.org/volunteerteens.html](http://ceresproject.org/volunteerteens.html)

**Occidental Center for the Arts** hosts musical groups, book launchings, and concerts of all types for which it offers free entrance to volunteers who work at the door, on concessions, and as gallery hosts.

[www.occidentalcenterforthearts.org/](http://www.occidentalcenterforthearts.org/)

## Places to Go and Things to Do

In West County and its environs, you can attend a concert by

artists like Murray Perahia, walk an open-ocean beach, hike a redwood forest, and be on a radio show, often hitting multiple events in single day. Below are hints on how to access these and other delights. County-wide suggestions can be found at [sonomacounty.com/things-to-do](http://sonomacounty.com/things-to-do) and [sonomacountygazette.com/all-sonoma-county-calendars.html](http://sonomacountygazette.com/all-sonoma-county-calendars.html). For Occidental events see [occidental-ca.org/calendar.html](http://occidental-ca.org/calendar.html).

### ***Professional presentations***

**The Redwood Arts Council** presents a series of chamber music concerts that rival those in metropolitan areas yet are on a smaller stage allowing more intimate audience interactions. Many concerts are in Occidental. [redwoodarts.org](http://redwoodarts.org)

**The Occidental Center for the Arts** presents musical programs of all types from guitar to improv to string quartet in an intimate yet professional venue in Occidental. [occidentalcenterforthearts.org/](http://occidentalcenterforthearts.org/)

**The Green Music Center in Rohnert Park** presents world class classical music, jazz, and dance performances, a cabaret series, and summer lawn performances. [gmc.sonoma.edu/](http://gmc.sonoma.edu/)

**Local literary gatherings** such as poetry readings are listed monthly in the Sonoma County Gazette. [sonomacountygazette.com/](http://sonomacountygazette.com/)

### ***Hands on participation in the arts***

Read plays with the **Reader's Theatre Group**, take an art

class, submit art work to juried shows, or launch your book all at the **Occidental Center for the Arts**. Call **707-874-9392**.  
[occidentalcenterforthearts.org](http://occidentalcenterforthearts.org)

**Sing** with the Occidental Choir, a group that gives concerts twice a year, performing music and lyrics written by members.  
[occidentalchoir.org](http://occidentalchoir.org)

**Offer your handcrafts for sale** at the **Artisans' Coop** in Bodega.  
[artisansco-op.com/](http://artisansco-op.com/)

**Host a tour of your art studio** where you can sell your work through:

ART TRAILS OPEN STUDIOS in October.  
[sonomacountyarttrails.org](http://sonomacountyarttrails.org)

ART AT THE SOURCE in June. [artatthesource.org](http://artatthesource.org)

SALMON CREEK ART WALK in May. [salmoncreekartwalk.com](http://salmoncreekartwalk.com)

**Participate in live radio** by appearing on or helping to produce programs at KOWS, a volunteer-run west county community radio station in Sebastopol. Listen at 92.5 FM. [kows92-5.org/](http://kows92-5.org/)

**Read library books** checked out from the Sonoma County library branch in Occidental, 73 Main Street. Open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday, 12 - 5 pm.

**Attend classes** at Santa Rosa Junior College that offers

REGULAR COLLEGE CLASSES requiring tuition. [santarosa.edu/](http://santarosa.edu/)

COMMUNITY EDUCATION CLASSES for a fee.  
[communityed.santarosa.edu/about-us-0](http://communityed.santarosa.edu/about-us-0)

OLDER ADULTS PROGRAMS IN ART, WRITING, FITNESS, MUSIC for free.  
Call **707-527-4533**. [older-adults.santarosa.edu/](http://older-adults.santarosa.edu/)

**Join in the discovery, preservation and dissemination of historical information** about this region with the Rancho Bodega Historical Society. [ranchobodega.org/](http://ranchobodega.org/)

## ***Recreation***

**Use the gym** in Occidental to play basketball or volleyball, do Zumba, Tae Kwon Do, Bootcamp workouts, or strength and stretch all at the Occidental Community Center. For schedule see [www.scfymca.org/clientuploads/PDFs/Occ-Ongoing\\_Classes.pdf](http://www.scfymca.org/clientuploads/PDFs/Occ-Ongoing_Classes.pdf)

**Play tennis** at courts in downtown Occidental or Ragle Park in Sebastopol.

**Bike with a group** through the Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition. [bikesonoma.org/](http://bikesonoma.org/)

**Surf waves** large and small and connect with the surfing community at [sonomacoast.surfrider.org/](http://sonomacoast.surfrider.org/)

**Practice Tai Chi, Qigong, or Yoga** by joining classes that are offered for a fee in many towns — see community bulletin boards.

**Hike with a group** in order to meet people, exercise, and see the county's sights.

LAND PATHS runs group hikes of all types for all different ages throughout Sonoma County. [landpaths.org/events](http://landpaths.org/events)

SONOMA LAND TRUST organizes On the Land Outings of many types. [sonomalandtrust.org/outings/index.html](http://sonomalandtrust.org/outings/index.html)

SONOMA COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT hosts group walks.  
[www.sonomaopenspace.org/outings-events/](http://www.sonomaopenspace.org/outings-events/)

BODEGA LAND TRUST presents Walks and Talks that visit local farms, creeks, and other points of interest. Notices available at [bodegalandtrust.org/](http://bodegalandtrust.org/)

SONOMA COUNTY REGIONAL PARKS organizes guided group hikes.  
[parks.sonomacounty.ca.gov/Learn/Field-Trips/](http://parks.sonomacounty.ca.gov/Learn/Field-Trips/)

### **Enjoy local parks and centers**

SONOMA COUNTY REGIONAL PARKS system includes gems like Doran Beach, Bird Walk Trail, and Pinnacle Gulch/ Shorttail Gulch Coastal access.  
[sonomacounty.com/articles/guide-sonoma-county-regional-park-system](http://sonomacounty.com/articles/guide-sonoma-county-regional-park-system)

CALIFORNIA STATE PARK territory runs from the Russian River south along Willow Creek and down the coast to Salmon Creek

Beach. It includes the loop trail at Bodega Head, Kortum Trail, Pomo Canyon Trail, and Coastal Prairie Trail.

[www.parks.ca.gov/ParkIndex/](http://www.parks.ca.gov/ParkIndex/)

SENIOR CENTERS offer a plethora of activities at Russian River Senior Resource Center in Guerneville, 15010 Armstrong Woods Road, call **707-869-0618**, [www.westcountyservices.org/senior-services/](http://www.westcountyservices.org/senior-services/) and Sebastopol Area Senior Center in downtown Sebastopol at 167 North High Street, call **707-829-2440**. [sebastopolseniorcenter.org/home](http://sebastopolseniorcenter.org/home)

CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUNDS are available when schools are not in session at Salmon Creek School, 1935 Bohemian Highway, Occidental and at Bodega Bay Elementary School at 1200 Canon Street, Bodega Bay.

### **Check out places unique to West County**

GROVE OF THE OLD TREES in Occidental provides a place to walk among ancient giant redwoods and to picnic on the forest floor. [landpaths.org/propertyexplorer/grove-of-old-trees.aspx](http://landpaths.org/propertyexplorer/grove-of-old-trees.aspx)

FISH JUMP OVERLOOK AT SALMON CREEK SCHOOL provides a perch above a waterfall where every winter ocean-going steelhead can be seen trying to jump the falls. At 1935 Bohemian Highway, Occidental.

BODEGA MARINE LAB IN BODEGA BAY is open for free tours most Friday afternoons from 2–4pm. [bml.ucdavis.edu/about/visiting-bml/](http://bml.ucdavis.edu/about/visiting-bml/)

STURGEON'S MILL is a restored steam-powered lumber mill that operates four weekends each year at which time it is open to visitors. Located at 2150 Green Hill Road, Sebastopol. Email for information to [sturgesmill@yahoo.com](mailto:sturgesmill@yahoo.com).

WARM SPRINGS FISH HATCHERY has a museum and gives hatchery tours at 3246 Skaggs Springs Road, Geyserville. Call 707- 433-6325. [wildlife.ca.gov/Fishing/Hatcheries/Warm-Spring](http://wildlife.ca.gov/Fishing/Hatcheries/Warm-Spring)

### Watch for regularly scheduled events and festivals

JANUARY	Chowder Day in Bodega Bay (last Saturday) Bodega Bay Grange Crab Cioppino Feed
APRIL	Fools Parade in Occidental (near April first) Bodega Bay Fisherman's Festival (second weekend)
MAY	Castles and Kites Festival, Doran Beach Bodega Fireman's Pancake Breakfast, Bodega
JUNE-OCT	Bodega Bay Farmer's market (Sundays 10am-2pm) Occidental Farmer's market (Fridays 4pm-dusk)
SUMMER	Chautauqua Series at Occidental Arts and Ecology Center Firemen's Pig Roast, Valley Ford Fireman's Pancake B'fast in Bodega Bay (first Saturday in July) Fireworks in Bodega Bay (near Fourth of July)

Fireman's BBQ in Occidental  
(third Sunday in July)  
Bodega Big Event Fireman's BBQ in Bodega  
(first Sunday in August)  
Bodega Seafood, Art and Wine Festival in  
Bodega (last weekend August)

OCTOBER      Bodega Land Trust Dinner and Auction

NOVEMBER    Bodega Volunteer Fire Department  
Christmas Craft Fair  
(weekend after Thanksgiving)

DECEMBER    Craft Fair in Occidental (second weekend)

## EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Here is what you might need to know about whom to contact in case of an emergency. Whether you face an acute emergency (call **911**), a sudden health problem, abuse issue, or just an infuriating annoyance, there may be a number to call in hopes of information and, possibly, relief.

For Any Emergency that Is

**Acute**

**Life threatening**

**Crime in progress**

**Fire**

**Ambulance needed**

**Call 911**

**for faster service from a cell phone call  
707-565-2121**

For Problems That Are Not Life Threatening

***To report a crime***

Here in West County general policing is done by the Sheriff's Department whose office is in Guerneville but has deputies that live nearby. Highways are the responsibility the CA Highway Patrol.

**You can report a crime to the Sheriff** in several different ways:

BY PHONE at **707-565-2650**.

IN PERSON at Guerneville Substation, First and Church Streets, Guerneville, CA

TO A DEPUTY who will come to your location after you call **707-565-2121**.

ONLINE at [sonomasheriff.org/report-a-crime/](https://sonomasheriff.org/report-a-crime/).

**To report stolen vehicles**, call California Highway Patrol at **800-835-5247** or **707-588-1400**.

**To deal with trespassers** complete a Trespass Action Request and file it with Sonoma County Sheriff's Office (First and Church Streets, Guerneville); then you can ask them to request anyone not having lawful business on your property to leave forthwith or be arrested.

**For identity theft and fraud** call the Sheriff at **707-565-2122**.

### ***Problems with animals***

**Injured animal that is not yours**, call **707 565-7100** or after hours Sheriff at **707 565-2121**.

**Non-emergency problems** like barking dog, and similar issues go to [sonomacounty.ca.gov/Health/Animal-Services/Report-an-Issue/](https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Health/Animal-Services/Report-an-Issue/).

**Lost/found pets** can be reported and photos viewed of those

turned in at [sonomacounty.ca.gov/Health/Animal-Services/Lost-and-Found/](https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Health/Animal-Services/Lost-and-Found/).

**Wildlife that are sick, injured, or orphaned** should be reported to the Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue Hot line at **707-526-9453**. [scwildliferescue.org/](https://scwildliferescue.org/)

**Dead animal removal** in unincorporated Sonoma County can be arranged at **707-565-7100**. If a dead animal is found on a state highway call **707-762-6641**.

## Roads, overhead wires, electrical outages

**To report road accidents** call California Highway Patrol at **800-835-5247**.

**To request pothole repair** call Guerneville Yard **707-869-2024**, or **707-565-5100** to make a work request, or use the app **SoCoReportit** to make request.

**Downed electric wires** are dangerous. Stay away and call **911**.

**To report an electrical outage** call **800-743-5000** or see [m.pge.com/?WT.pgeac=Home\\_Outages#outages](https://m.pge.com/?WT.pgeac=Home_Outages#outages)

**To obtain information about an extended outage** call **888-743-4743**.

## *Food or housing emergency*

Please see ASSISTANCE section of this booklet, page 48.

## ***General town-wide emergency***

In West County you are responsible for yourself. It is crucial to prepare by laying in supplies for you, family, pets, and livestock for at least 72 hours and up to two weeks. To receive local emergency or disaster Information on your phone, sign up at [sonomacounty.ca.gov/FES/Emergency-Management/SoCoAlert/](https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/FES/Emergency-Management/SoCoAlert/) or call **707-565-1369**. Agencies that will help in a generalized emergency are listed below.

**Sonoma County Red Cross:** [www.redcross.org/local/california/northern-california-coastal/chapters/locations](http://www.redcross.org/local/california/northern-california-coastal/chapters/locations)

**Santa Rosa Cope Program:** [srcity.org/directory.aspx?did=52](http://srcity.org/directory.aspx?did=52)

**California Offices of Emergency Services:** [caloes.ca.gov/](http://caloes.ca.gov/)

**Sebastopol Community Emergency Response Team (CERT):** [sebastopolcert.org/](http://sebastopolcert.org/)

**Bodega Bay Cert:** [bodegabaycert.org/](http://bodegabaycert.org/)

**PG & E - Natural Disaster Safety:** [pge.com/myhome/edusafety/naturaldisaster/](http://pge.com/myhome/edusafety/naturaldisaster/)

### **Where to seek disaster shelter and help:**

OCCIDENTAL: Saint Phillip's Catholic Church Annex, Occidental Center for the Arts

BODEGA: McCaughey Hall

FREESTONE: Occidental or Sebastopol

BODEGA BAY: Nine preparedness stations are scattered

throughout coastal neighborhoods.

VALLEY FORD: Occidental or Bodega

## ***Health needs***

### **Emergency Rooms**

SAINT JOSEPH HEALTH - SONOMA COUNTY: SANTA ROSA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL-MAIN CAMPUS, 1165 Montgomery Drive, Santa Rosa, **707-546-3210**.

SONOMA WEST MEDICAL CENTER, 501 Petaluma Avenue, Sebastopol, **707-823-8511**.

SUTTER MEDICAL CENTER: SUTTER SANTA ROSA REGIONAL HOSPITAL, 30 Mark West Springs Road, Santa Rosa, **707-576-4040**.

SUTTER MEDICAL CENTER: SUTTER WARRICK HOSPITAL, 2449 Summerfield Road, Santa Rosa, **707-576-4040**.

KAISER PERMANENTE HOSPITAL (Only for those with Kaiser-Permanente Insurance), 401 Bicentennial Way, Santa Rosa, **707-393-4800**.

**Urgent care facilities** listed online at [www.stjoesonoma.org/our-services/urgent-care/](http://www.stjoesonoma.org/our-services/urgent-care/).

SANTA ROSA, 925 Corporate Center Parkway, Suite A , Santa Rosa, **707 543-2000**. Open 9am-7pm daily except Thanksgiving and Christmas.

ROHNERT PARK, 1450 Medical Center Drive, Rohnert Park,  
**707 584-0672**. Open 9am–7pm every day.

WINDSOR, 6580 Hembree Lane, Suite 270, Windsor, **707 838-2044**. Open 9am–7pm daily.

SUTTER URGENT CARE, 3883 Airway Drive, Santa Rosa,  
**707-521-4495**. Open 8am–8pm daily.

**Health centers** found online at [wchealth.org/](http://wchealth.org/) include:

FORESTVILLE TEEN CLINIC, 6570 First Street, Forestville,  
**707-887-0427**. Free for those under 25.

RUSSIAN RIVER HEALTH CENTER, 16319 Third Street, Guerneville,  
**707-869-2849**.

OCCIDENTAL AREA HEALTH CENTER, 3802 Main Street, Occidental,  
**707-874-2444**.

SEBASTOPOL COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER, 6800 Palm Ave., Suite.  
C-2, Sebastopol, **707 824-9335**.

**Planned Parenthood** office in Santa Rosa at 1140 Sonoma  
Avenue, Santa Rosa, **707-527-7656**.  
[www.plannedparenthood.org/health-center?location=95465](http://www.plannedparenthood.org/health-center?location=95465)

**Mental health resources** include:

NORTH BAY SUICIDE HOT LINE: **855-587-6373** (Spanish  
**855-587-6373**).

NATIONAL SUICIDE HOT LINE: 800-273-8255 (Spanish 888-628-9454).

BEHAVIORAL CRISIS SERVICES SONOMA COUNTY: 800-746-8181 and 707-576-8181.

LOCAL SCREENING/REFERRAL SERVICES: 707-565-6900 or 800-870-8786.

PATIENT RIGHTS ADVOCATE: 707-565-4978.

**Public health information** is available at 707 565-4700. [sonomacounty.ca.gov/Health-Services/](http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Health-Services/)

**Disease reporting** is done at 707-565-4567.

**Tick bites** can be dangerous as ticks here may carry bacterial diseases. To have a tick tested for Lyme Disease, place it in a resealable plastic bag with a damp cotton ball or paper towel and send or take it to Public Health Regional Laboratory, 3313 Chanate Road, Santa Rosa, 707-565-4711. [sonoma-county.org/health/services/tick-test.asp](http://sonoma-county.org/health/services/tick-test.asp)

**Suspected poisoning, call 911** if the individual collapses, has a seizure, has trouble breathing, or can't be awakened. Otherwise call US Poison Control Center 800-222-1222 where confidential advice is offered in multiple languages. [poison.org](http://poison.org)

**Hazmat spills, if dangerous call 911**, if no imminent danger, call the county during day at 707-565-1152, or call state 24 hour line at 800-852-7550.

## ***Abuse of individuals or of substances***

**Confidentially report elder or dependent abuse or neglect** to Adult Protective Services at **707-565-5940** or **800-667-0404**.

**Contact the District Attorney's Office Elder Protection Unit** at **707-565-22311**.

**Child Protective & Child Welfare Service Hotlines** are reached at **707-565-4304** or **800-870-7064**.

### **Domestic Violence**

**IF YOU ARE IN DANGER** call **911** or sheriff dispatch at **707-565-2121**.

**TO DISCUSS WITH A YWCA ADVOCATE WHAT YOU CAN DO** to prepare to leave, especially how to get your children and pets to a safe place before you leave, call the YWCA hot line at **707-546-1234**.

**Legal Aid of Sonoma County** helps with urgent matters (**707-542-1290**), aids residents 55 and older with legal issues (**707-340-5610**), and with non-urgent housing problems (**707-843-4432**). [legalaidsoc.org/](http://legalaidsoc.org/)

**Sonoma County Addiction Treatment Services** offers help through recovery meetings, groups, and resources. [sonoma-county.org/health/services/addictiontreatment.asp](http://sonoma-county.org/health/services/addictiontreatment.asp)

**Sonoma County Intergroup Fellowship (AA)** call hotline **707-544-1300** (Spanish **707-623-6702**). [sonomacountyaa.org/aa-meetings/](http://sonomacountyaa.org/aa-meetings/)

**Narcotics Anonymous** mans a 24-hour hot line (**707-324-4062**) and hosts meetings and events that support those learning to live without drugs. [sonomacountyaa.org/home](http://sonomacountyaa.org/home)

## GENERAL ASSISTANCE

Programs are available in West County to aid both young and old who are in need of assistance in obtaining life's necessities. They may help with what you need whether it is food, housing, rides, or just support in coping with challenges that come with aging. Contact information for government officials from the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors to the U.S. Senate is included at the end.

### Food

#### **Rural Food Program of Saint Philip and Saint Teresa Parish**

in Occidental provides groceries to individuals and families that live within parish boundaries on the second Tuesday of the month, 9-11am. Registration begins at 8:30 am at Saint Philip's Catholic Church, 3730 Bohemian Hwy, Occidental.

[stphilipstteresa.org/rural-food-program.html](http://stphilipstteresa.org/rural-food-program.html)

**Food for Thought** offers food and compassion to those living with HIV/AIDS. Located at 6650 Railroad Avenue, Forestville.

[fftfoodbank.org](http://fftfoodbank.org)

**Interchurch Food Pantry** at Saint Stephens Episcopal Church, 500 Robinson Road, Sebastopol, serves West County, supplying staples and groceries to area residents on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from 10 am to noon.

**Other area pantries** are listed at [suntopia.org/sebastopol/ca/food\\_pantries/php](http://suntopia.org/sebastopol/ca/food_pantries/php).

**Cal Fresh benefits, formerly known as Food Stamps,** are available from the Sonoma County Human Services Department's CalFresh program. The program supplies electronic benefit transfers for groceries to eligible individuals. Located at 2550 Paulin Drive #1, Santa Rosa. Call **877-699-6868**. [sonomacalfresh.org/html/apply.htm](http://sonomacalfresh.org/html/apply.htm) or [mybenefitscalwin.org](http://mybenefitscalwin.org)

**Ceres Community Project** in Sebastopol supports low-income people struggling because of serious health challenges with free or low-cost home-delivered, locally produced meals, nutrition education, and the caring support of the Project. To become a client, call **707-829-5833** or email [clients@ceresproject.org](mailto:clients@ceresproject.org). [ceresproject.org/](http://ceresproject.org/)

**Meals on Wheels**, run by the Council on Aging, delivers meals and bag lunches five days a week to homebound seniors, convalescents 60 years or older, and elders who are homebound and/or unable to shop and cook. To apply call **707-525-0143**. [councilonaging.com/meals-on-wheels/](http://councilonaging.com/meals-on-wheels/)

**Senior lunches** that provide opportunities for socializing are offered every Wednesday noon by West County Community Services at Saint Philip Hall in Occidental. Cost is \$4.00. **707-823-1640 x403**.

## Shelters, Transportation, Drug Discounts, Protection

**Homeless shelters** in Santa Rosa or Petaluma can be found through the Volunteer Center of Sonoma. Call **211**,

707-565-2108 or 800-325-9604. [homelessshelterdirectory.org/cgi-bin/id/city.cgi?city=Sebastopol&state=CACOUNTY](http://homelessshelterdirectory.org/cgi-bin/id/city.cgi?city=Sebastopol&state=CACOUNTY)

**General assistance for the homeless** can be found at [www.sonomacountyhomeless.org/](http://www.sonomacountyhomeless.org/) and [www.westcountyservices.org/](http://www.westcountyservices.org/).

**Voice Mail for the Homeless** provides free voicemail boxes to persons who are homeless and cannot afford phones. [www.icarol.info/ResultDetails.aspx?org=2225&agencynum=8658167&sitenum=4719580](http://www.icarol.info/ResultDetails.aspx?org=2225&agencynum=8658167&sitenum=4719580)

**Free transportation for veterans and college students** is provided by Sonoma County Transport as described at [sctransit.com](http://sctransit.com). Call 707-576-7433.

**Transportation for seniors living in West County** is offered by Sebastopol Senior Center Driver Program at 167 N High Street, Sebastopol. Five business days before the ride is needed, call 707-829-2440.

**Protective services for seniors** are part of Sonoma County Human Services Department which is located at 3725 Westwind Boulevard, Suite 101, Santa Rosa. Call 707-565-5950 or 800-667-0404 (confidential, anonymous).

**Help with prescription copays** can sometimes be arranged through the HealthWell Foundation 800-675-8416 - [www.healthwellfoundation.org/about/what-we-do/](http://www.healthwellfoundation.org/about/what-we-do/). Free and objective advice for medicare patients on how to arrange insurance to minimize drug costs can be found at HICAP-Sonoma County 707-526-5118. [cahealthadvocates.org/hicap/sonoma/](http://cahealthadvocates.org/hicap/sonoma/)

**Sonoma county sheriff crime prevention unit** extends advice on avoiding scams and ensuring public safety. Located at 2796 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa. Call [707-565-7398](tel:707-565-7398).

## If You Don't Know Where to Turn

**Sonoma County Human Services Department** may be able to help. Call [707-565-5900](tel:707-565-5900).

[sonomacounty.ca.gov/Human-Services/](http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Human-Services/)

**Council on Aging** offers help to seniors with financial, legal, and social matters. Call [707-525-0143](tel:707-525-0143), [800-675-0413](tel:800-675-0413).

[councilonaging.com](http://councilonaging.com)

**Sonoma County Community Resource Directory** provides referrals on child/elder care, immigration, food, and shelter.

Call [211](tel:211). [211wc.org](http://211wc.org)

## Government Contacts

**Sonoma County Board of Supervisors.** West County is in District 5. SUPERVISOR LYNDA HOPKINS, Board of Supervisors, 575 Administration Drive, Room 100A, Santa Rosa, CA, 95403. Call [707-565-2241](tel:707-565-2241). [lynda.hopkins@sonoma-county.org](mailto:lynda.hopkins@sonoma-county.org)

**California State Senate.** West County is in District 2. SENATOR MIKE MCGUIRE 1301 Tenth Street, Room 5061, Sacramento, CA 95814, [916-651-4002](tel:916-651-4002).

Contact locally at 50 D Street, Suite 120 A Santa Rosa CA 95404, [707-576-2771](tel:707-576-2771). [senator.mcguire@senate.ca.gov](mailto:senator.mcguire@senate.ca.gov)

**California State Assembly.** West County is in District 2.  
ASSEMBLY MEMBER JIM WOOD, State Capitol, Room 6005, P.O.  
Box 942849, Sacramento, CA 94249. Call **916-319-2002**.

Contact locally at 50 D Street, Suite 450 Santa Rosa CA, 95404.  
Call **707-576-2526**. [a02.asmdc.org/](http://a02.asmdc.org/)

**United States House of Representatives.** West County is in the  
second district. REPRESENTATIVE JARED HUFFMAN, 1630 LHOB,  
Washington DC 20515. Call **202-225-5161**.

Contact locally at 206 G Street Unit 3, Petaluma, Ca 94952. Call  
**707-981-8967**. [huffman.house.gov/contact/email-me](http://huffman.house.gov/contact/email-me)

**United States Senate.** SENATOR KAMALA HARRIS, 112 Hart  
Senate Office Bldg. Washington, DC 20510. Call **202-224-3553**.

Contact locally at 333 Bush Street, San Francisco, Ca 94104.  
Call **415-981-9369**. [www.harris.senate.gov/contact](http://www.harris.senate.gov/contact).

SENATOR DIANNE FEINSTEIN, 331 Hart Senate Office Building,  
Washington DC 20510. Call **202-224-3841**.

Contact locally at One Post Street, Suite 2450, San Francisco,  
CA 94104. Call **415-393-0707**. To email her  
<https://www.feinstein.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/e-mail-me?>

