

February 1, 2026

The Westport Wave

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Representatives from California State Parks and Caltrans lead a group of citizens and First Nations guests along the newly hydroseeded Dehaven Beach to Abalone Point segment of the ongoing Westport-Union Landing State Beach trail project.

State Park & Caltrans Reps Host Coastal Trail Public Input Tour at WULSB ~ Text and Photos by Ed Truthan

At 11 a.m. on January 27th, at the Abalone Point campground, Mark Ernst, the California State Parks Roads & Maintenance Chief for the Sonoma-Mendocino Coast District, along with State Parks environmentalist Terra Fuller, hosted a tour of the ongoing coastal trail enhancements underway at Westport-Union Landing State Beach. Several Caltrans representatives, over a dozen members of the public, and several First Nations guests were in attendance.

The group toured the trail development area from Abalone Point to the Dehaven Beach parking area and back, during which time the plans for, and the considerations about, the design and the long-term sustainability of the trail were shared and openly discussed. Those in attendance were encouraged to voice their questions, concerns, and suggestions.

Last summer, the old Highway 1 pavement, abandoned since 1964, much of which had fallen in the sea in the intervening years, was removed and a wide swath of vegetation and brush was cleared along the entire corridor from Dehaven Beach to Howard Creek with two rows of straw wattles for erosion control extending along the entire length. The first hydroseeding applied in October last year for temporary soil stabilization did not take in many areas and was reapplied with a sterile wheatgrass mix on January 26th, just a day before the meeting. Caltrans, in association with various contractors, have performed the bulk of the pavement removal and brush clearing.

Based on the information shared at the meeting, the general plan for the trail is to create a 7-foot wide walking/biking trail, surfaced with gravel to extend along the bluff top from Dehaven Beach to Howard Creek. The primary challenge of deciding the trail's exact path is balancing the scenic aspects of the trail (i.e. closer to the cliff edge has better ocean views) with the estimated erosion rate of the cliff itself modeled with the USGS Coastal Storm Modeling

System. The intent is to build a trail that will last for the next 50 years.

A 12-page document with more information including assessments of the erosion rate and the proposed trail alignment based upon that rate were handed out to those in attendance. At the two areas where small gullies current block the cleared path, Mark Ernst shared that the decision was made to divert the path slightly inland at these points. Small seasonal streams flow in these locations and culverts had originally existed under the old Highway 1 pavement. These culverts have been removed so the small streams will henceforth flow freely over the cliff edge. This will prevent unsightly culverts from being exposed as future cliff erosion ensues. The trail will turn inland for a short distance at these spots, and small bridges will traverse the shallow streambeds before the trail returns more seaward. Efforts will be made to slow the erosion of these streams by armoring the channels and planting native species like willow and wax myrtle.

Other topics of conversation included the possibility of improving access to Dehaven Beach by adding graduated stairs from its parking area, and the possibility of providing seasonally placed bridges across both Dehaven and Howard creeks, thus providing a continuously walkable trail between the south side of the newly acquired Dehaven headland northward past Howard Creek and beyond. Low double rail wooden safety fences along the cliff edge at the Abalone Point campground area were also mentioned to be a part of the plan. Members of the public voiced a desire for at least a few periodically placed benches along the trail to serve as resting points and all agreed this was a good idea.

The timeline for constructing the trail depends on gravel being transported up from the Blues Beach road stabilization project after the revetment of boulders at the base of the slide is completed, a process currently slated to wrap up around mid-March. Work can then begin in earnest on the trail. Revegetation of the currently cleared areas on either side of the finished trail with native grasses and shrubs will begin this fall and may extend into spring of 2027 before they are fully completed.



View of the January 26th, 2026 hydroseed application containing a sterile wheatgrass mix to assist in erosion control.



One of two gullies previously containing Old Highway 1 culverts. These drainages will be stabilized and left open. The trail will briefly turn inland at these crossings.

Vegetation management will continue for five years to ensure natives are well established and invasive plants are controlled.

For more information, a full color PDF copy of the 12-page pamphlet handed out to attendees of the event may be downloaded here:

https://www.westportvillagesociety.org/Data/WULSB_TrailUpdate_2026-01-28.pdf



The body of an adult Sperm Whale lies on the beach north of Westport. Now in a state of advanced decomposition, the tides have dislodged a variety of skeletal parts. The skull of this majestic creature, some 15 feet or more in length, can be seen at far left.

Deceased Sperm Whale Washes Ashore Near Westport

Text and Photos by Ed Truthan

Whale beaching's are not uncommon on the California coast, but Sperm Whale beaching's are relatively rare. The Ocean Conservancy estimates that only 17-18 Sperm Whale beaching's have occurred on the California coast during a 40-year span from 1975 to 2015.

In late January the carcass of an adult Sperm Whale washed up on the shore north of Westport. Under advisement from the Noyo Center for Marine Research, based upon the preferred protocols of the Humboldt State University stranding coordinator (the jurisdiction of which the Westport area falls under), we've chosen not to divulge the exact location of the stranding, though many locals either already know of it or have visited the site.

Researchers from HSU, assisted by individuals from NCMR visited the site shortly after stranding and performed a necropsy in addition to other prescribed observations of the corpse. By all indications, based on the state of decay when first observed, this individual may have been deceased and drifting on the currents for an unknown period of time before washing up here.

WVS president Thad Van Buren visited this site at a time when researchers were on site and was able to glean from them that this whale was a fully grown male, 53 ft. long, and just under 50 years of age at the time of his death, indicating he began his life's incredible journey when Jimmy Carter was president.

Sperm whales live an average of 60 or even 70 years, roaming the vast oceans in search of their preferred prey, deep sea squid, and the Ocean Conservancy estimates that they may travel up to a million miles within their lifetime, roughly equivalent to two trips to the Moon and back. At almost 50 years of age, it's safe to assume this individual made the equivalent of at least one lunar excursion in his lifetime.

Since the beaching, many parts of the skeleton have detached and drifted away from the carcass onto the beach, shifting with the tides, including the skull itself. The upcoming full moon tides will undoubtedly continue to scatter these remains around and about the location.

For those who may visit the site it's important to be respectful and leave all remains of this magnificent leviathan where they lie. The Endangered Species Act currently lists Sperm Whales as endangered and they are fully protected, as all marine mammals are, under the Marine Mammals Protection Act (MMPA) as well. Even in death, removal or possession of any of their parts is strictly against Federal law.



A California State official snaps a photo of the enormous skull.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) donates to Westport Volunteer Fire Department

by Carla Thomas Westport CERT

Since 1994, The Community Emergency Response Team Program gives residents training to plan and prepare for emergencies at home for yourself and family, as well as in your neighborhoods until Emergency First Responders arrive.

On January 27, Dennis Burke, Mendocino and Lake County Counties CERT Coordinator, and Jasmine Roper, Americore / California Emergency Response Corp presented Chief Daniel Maxey Westport Volunteer Fire Department with 3 new Stryker

Chairs, 7 large crow bars for cribbing and a ham radio base station (valued over \$22, 530). The Stryker chairs are used to transport immobile patients up or down stairs, since gurneys do not work well on stairways. The ham radio is important to reach out to others farther away, for situational awareness or assistance requests when other communications systems are not functioning.

“We are building our CERT Program here on the Coast. We understand how vital emergency preparedness for disasters and emergencies caused by fire, severe weather, earthquake, flood, and tsunami risk here. Islanding (isolation) due to bridge and road closures is a major concern here on the coast” said Dennis Burke, CERT Coordinator. Chief Maxey explained that this equipment will be used frequently in our responses each month as well as during disasters, since many of our calls are domestic medical or accident related.



Westport Volunteer Fire Department Chief Maxey receives a donation of a new ham radio, 3 stryker chairs and 7 large prybars from Dennis Burke CERT and Jasmine Roper CERC Americore on Jan. 27, 2026

Mendocino Coast CERT Training



FOLLOW THESE STEPS

- ATTEND ZOOM ORIENTATION
- COMPLETE VIRTUAL TRAINING MODULES
- ATTEND TWO 'HANDS ON' SKILL DAYS
- PASS A BACKGROUND CHECK
- JOIN A TEAM!**

REGISTER USING THE LINK OR QR CODE



<https://bit.ly/38pWhJm>

SCAN



For more information contact:

Dennis Burke: (707) 998-8643

or

Carla Thomas: (707) 272-1994

ncocert@ncoinc.org

JOIN OUR TEAM!

UNDERGO TRAINING AND COLLABORATE WITH YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND FIRST RESPONDERS DURING DISASTERS

CERT TRAINING WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

- MODULE 1: DISASTER PREPAREDNESS**
- MODULE 2: THE CERT ORGANIZATION**
- MODULE 3: DISASTER MEDICAL OPERATIONS PART ONE**
- MODULE 4: DISASTER MEDICAL OPERATIONS PART 2**
- MODULE 5: DISASTER PSYCHOLOGY**
- MODULE 6: FIRE SAFETY**
- MODULE 7: LIGHT SEARCH AND RESCUE**
- MODULE 8: CERT AND TERRORISM**
- MODULE 9: FINAL TEST**

New Hybrid CERT training Opportunity

On Zoom: 6:30am to 7:30pm,

Tuesday, February 10, 17, 24 & March 3

In Person: 8:30am to 5:00pm,

Saturday, March 14 & Sunday, March 15

At Fort Bragg High School



MENDOCINO COAST CERT HYBRID BASIC TRAINING SCHEDULE FEBRUARY AND MARCH 2026

- ZOOM MEETING #1..... Tuesday, February 10, 6:30pm to 7:30pm

Introduction of Trainers and Trainees. Overview of the CERT Basic Training program. Instructions on registering for the virtual modules and moving on to **Module #1 Disaster Preparedness, and Module #2, the CERT Organization**. These 2 modules will need to be completed by ZOOM #2.

- ZOOM MEETING #2..... Tuesday, February 17, 6:30pm to 7:30pm

Review and discussion regarding Modules #1 and #2. Instructions to **complete Module #3, Disaster Medical Operations Part 1, Module #4, Disaster Medical Operations Part 2, and Module #5, Disaster Psychology**. These three modules will need to be completed in time for ZOOM Meeting #3.

- ZOOM MEETING #3..... Tuesday, February 24, 6:30pm to 7:30pm

Review and discussion regarding Modules #3, #4, and #5. Instructions to complete **Module #6, Fire Safety, Module #7, Light Search and Rescue, and Module #8, CERT and Terrorism**. These three Modules will need to be completed in time for ZOOM Meeting #4.

- ZOOM MEETING #4.... Tuesday, March 3, 6:30pm to 7:30pm

Review and discussion regarding Modules #6, #7, and #8. Instructions to **complete Module #9 and Final Test**. Discuss IN-Person Training Procedures. When you have completed your Virtual training, you will be able to download a copy of your Certificate of Completion. Please forward a copy to Dennis Burke at ncocert@ncoinc.org.

**THE HANDS-ON-IN-PERSON 16 HOUR
TRAINING DATES ARE
SATURDAY, MARCH 14 & SUNDAY, MARCH 15
From 8:30am to 5:00pm
AT
FORT BRAGG HIGH SCHOOL**

WESTPORT HOTEL & OLD ABALONE PUB

Late winter 2026

**WE ARE EXCITED TO WELCOME YOU BACK
TO THE OLD ABALONE PUB.**

**STARTING FEBRUARY 5TH, PUB HOURS:
THURSDAY-SATURDAY 5-8:30PM**



A CALL FOR ART FOR OUR “ART FROM THE HEART” SHOW.

February is the month of love and we want to cover the walls with art that reflects that theme, If you have art to add to please contact Tabby 707-367-0010

TRIVIA NIGHT AT THE OLD ABALONE PUB

Thursday February 19th sign up by 6:00pm with your team name/members \$10 to play, trivia starts at 6:30 pm. One round each Media, Science and History with surprise bonus round. Winning team takes the pot!

VALENTINE’S DAY SATURDAY FEB 14TH

Treat your sweetheart to a romantic evening with a 5 course meal and the soothing sounds of Sean Hawthorne.

Seating is limited call 707-964-3688 to reserve your table.

Join us Saturday February 21st for our first afternoon tea of 2026. Afternoon tea includes: our world famous scones, a variety of finger sandwiches, fruit, dessert of the day, chocolate and loose leaf organic teas



**SWEETHEART TEA
SATURDAY FEB 21ST
3:00- 5:00 PM
BY RESERVATION ONLY**



WESTPORT HOTEL'S

Valentines' Dinner

5 courses, \$100 per couple + tax & gratuity
with Music by Sean Hawthorn

START WITH A FLUTE OF NAVARRO SPARKLING WINE

1ST, OYSTERS ROCKEFELLER OR MUSHROOM PUFF PASTRY

2ND, CREAM OF SORREL & SPRING ONION SOUP

3RD, CITRUS & POMEGRANATE SALAD, AVOCADO,
BUTTER LETTUCE, MINT & PENNYROYAL LYCHEE

4TH, FILET BOURSIN CRÉMEUX CHAMPIGNON DORÉS SAUCE,
GOLDEN MASHED POTATOES & ROASTED ASPARAGUS
OR
CHANTERELLE & ASPARAGUS HOUSE MADE PASTA ROLLS,
WHITE WINE GARLIC CREAM, PAN SEARED PETITE TOMATOES
OR
CIOPPINO, SCALLOPS, DUNGENESS CRAB, PRAWNS,
TOMATO WHITE WINE GARLIC BROTH, CROSTINI

5TH, RASPBERRY ROSE DRAPED CHEESECAKE
OR
CHOCOLATE CHERRY MOUSSE CAKE
OR
RASPBERRY SORBET & GF LEMON SHORT BREAD COOKIE

call 707-964-3655 for reservations



Babaji

Vibrations of Positivity

The power of positive thinking is immense. What you are thinking at any given moment creates a chemical reaction in your body, and the ripples coming out of your being affect the environment around you. Our thoughts affect the whole world.

In this day and age, it's important to look at the company you keep. Not only in the form of the people with whom you spend time, but the thoughts you entertain and the words you speak. Paying attention to your thoughts, actions, and speech is a spiritual practice in itself.

We are all interconnected.

We may have different bodies, and different stories, but what we do, how we think - it affects us all collectively. As I always say - Stop. Take a step back. Take a deep breath. Look at yourself. What kind of vibrations are you putting out into the world?

We all experience moments when a sweet or inspiring thought enters our mind. Pay attention to what's happening within when you are inspired to create something or make something or some place a little bit better. How beautiful it feels inside in those moments. When you engage in the world in that way, vibrations of peace and harmony are going out into the world.

There are also times when thoughts of disappointment, anger, fear, jealousy, a feeling of being wronged, and guilt come into the mind. Those vibrations affect the environment around us too. The sooner you can free yourself from that kind of negativity, the better off both you and the environment around you will be.

Look for those moments in your day when there is not even a trace of darkness inside. If you set out to look for them, you will find them. It's because of our preoccupation with negative thoughts, we have very little time for seeing the good.

When we can devote a little time to meditation, bringing our heart to that place of peace we get a glimpse of our interconnectedness and can experience that we are not separate.

Yes, you will have your challenges, you will have your struggles - that's being human. But do find some time to take a step back and connect with the beauty and the mystery that we are all a part of.



Babaji's mission is to help people experience fullness in life through simple spiritual practices and meditation. He divides his time between the Sonoma Ashram in Sonoma and Upasana Hilltop Sanctuary here in Westport. He is currently in India at his Ashram in Varanasi to check in on the many social service projects serving impoverished communities nearby. For more information, please visit www.sonomaashram.org or reach out by email at info@sonomaashram.org. We'd love to hear from you!

February 2026 Westport Calendar

Sunday, February 1st – Full Moon, 2:09PM PST

Monday, February 2nd – Groundhog Day

Wednesday, February 11th – Westport Volunteer Fire Department Monthly Meeting, 6:00PM, Westport Firehouse.

Thursday, February 12th – Bookmobile, 9:00AM-9:30AM, Westport Store.

Thursday, February 12th – Westport County Water District Monthly Board Meeting, 7:00PM, Zoom. Call Kayla Cooper at (707) 367-1057 for information on attending by Zoom.

Saturday, February 14th – Valentine's Day

Monday, February 16th – Presidents Day (Federal Holiday, Post Offices Closed)

Sunday, February 17th – New Moon, 4:01AM PST

Thursday, February 26th – Bookmobile, 9:00AM-9:30AM, Westport Store.

The Westport Wave is a free monthly community newsletter published by the **Westport Village Society**, a non-profit community-benefit organization.

Internet subscribers to *The Wave* receive their **COLOR** copies on or before the first day of every month by e-mail. Printed (black-and-white) copies of our current newsletter are also available for free at the Westport Community Store. Both the current *Westport Wave* and 14 years of monthly back-issues are also on the Newsletter page of our WVS website www.westportvillesociety.org.

Contributions for our March 1st, 2026 issue of *The Westport Wave* are due by Wednesday, February 25th, 2026 (or earlier if possible) and should be sent to editor Ed Truthan at thewestportwave@gmail.com
Thanks!

**Westport Resident Seeking
Yard Maintenance Worker:**
Contact Vicki Patterson at
patterson.victoria2@gmail.com

Support the Westport Volunteer Fire Department...

Our Department depends on
your donations!



Your support and contributions will enable us to meet our goals and improve our equipment and training. Any amount helps... and helps keep our community safer.



**To
Donate
Today**

www.westportvfd.org