

Susan Kirks for Petaluma City Council 2020

Communication Specialist & Conservation Consultant

“My approach is practical, and my experience deep in areas that support quality of life and affordable living. Climate change awareness, impacts and our needed actions for Petaluma are parts of my organizational and personal lives. A vote for me is a Voice for You in our community.”

--- Susan Kirks, Petaluma City Council Candidate 2020.

Experience

Community/Professional

Chair, Board of Directors, Paula Lane Action Network (PLAN) – conservation nonprofit that saved the Paula Lane open space property in West Petaluma. **Twelve** years of advocacy, **six** opposing a proposed residential development and **six** advocating for Open Space Matching Grant program funding. PLAN created with Open Space District staff all documentation governing the \$1,000,050 grant awarded in 2012 to PLAN and the City of Petaluma, agreement terms, baseline documentation and terms of the Conservation Easement. Susan created the Project design and Management Plan for implementation, education and volunteer programs. This High Use-Low Impact Project design (HULI) is forward thinking and assures balance in public open space with sensitive habitat, wildlife and birds, and public access and enjoyment. HULI relates to cultivating sensitivity to our natural environment, to enjoy Nature and retreat a bit from excessive and often unintended excessive human encroachment. This model replaces an impactful, people-dominant model of the 1990s and early 2000s. Think planning and implementing in a coordinated and caring way to support our ability to address species extinction threats locally and regionally.

President, Madrone Audubon Society (3rd term), Sonoma County Chapter of National Audubon Society. Approximately 3000 total members in Sonoma County with 800+ local Chapter members. Serving on Madrone Audubon Board of Directors since 2008, some of Susan’s achievements for our environment and County:

- Co-Chair, Renewable Energy Committee (helped craft Sonoma County Renewable Energy Ordinance).
- Created and manage annually nesting support project (in 8th year) for large Heron and Egret nesting site in SW Santa Rosa. This project supports Bird Rescue Center of Sonoma County volunteers. Manage encroachment permit with City of Santa Rosa, interface with local community, CA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife and City of Santa Rosa Staff and Community Safety.
- Board Member 2008-present, incl. Membership Chair and Vice President roles.
- Representative to Bay Area Audubon Council (all Bay Area Audubon Chapters).
- Recipient, Bowen Award, from Madrone Audubon Society for outstanding service to the Chapter.
- Oversee Petaluma Phenology Project, citizen science research initiated in 2016. Observing and collecting data on mammals, birds and plants at 2 locations; part of the National Phenology Project. Provided

background and information to add American Badger to the National Phenology Project and consult nationally for questions/information.

- Coordinated application of City of Petaluma for Ramsar Wetland of International Importance for Petaluma Wetlands 2014, followed up for 4 years to ensure official designation would occur, designation became official in 2018.

- Led organizational advocacy for Measure M – Parks for All – for 2 nonprofit organizations.

- Led organizational advocacy for AA Parcel Tax measure, establishing San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority and grant funds to restore San Francisco Bay Estuary, Petaluma wetlands and River being the northernmost part of the estuary.

-Petaluma Wetlands Alliance Docent, first class 2006, active 2006-2008.

-Representative to environmental litigation for Madrone Audubon Society: Petaluma River Bridge Migratory Cliff Swallows, 2013-2016, Dutra Asphalt Plant-Save Petaluma Wetlands, 2010-2014.

Naturalist, American Badger (Taxidea taxus), Field Study & Observations, 20+ years. Advise property owners, organizations/agencies on habitat protection, species conservation and human coexistence with badgers. Guest Naturalist, Bay Nature.

Wildlife Corridor Documentation. Identified and documented 3 wildlife corridors in West Petaluma.

Member, Board of Directors, Rebuilding Together Petaluma, 2008-2012.

2nd District appointee, 2008-10, Citizens Advisory Committee, Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District.

Member, Board of Directors, Sonoma County Conservation Council, 2009-2011.

Volunteer and donor, El Dia de los Muertos, Petaluma, 2011-2013.

Environmentalist of the Year Nominee, 2008, Sonoma County Conservation Council.

Advocate with Friends of Tolay for Cardoza Ranch open space acquisition to become Tolay Lake Regional Park, early-mid 2000s.

Participant in all City of Petaluma and Sonoma County General Plan update meetings for General Plan 2025.

Member, statewide Wildlife Corridor Work Group (nonprofit organizations in California examine and advocate for legislation, policy and funding for wildlife corridors and wildlife crossings).

Participant, *Leave No Trace* program, Pt. Reyes National Seashore Assoc. – CA National Parks.

First Environment Blogger, Argus-Courier Newspaper, Petaluma.

Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) certificate.

Petaluma Bounty, earliest group of volunteers 2008-2010 who helped implement and sustain the farm in its first two years with the first Farm Manager.

Acupuncturist, California 1999-2014.

Past: Adjunct Professor, Undergraduate Business School, Golden Gate University; Management Training, Westinghouse Broadcasting Co., Massachusetts; Associate Producer, WBZ-TV, Boston; Medical Language Specialist/Technical Writer, Communication Consultant.

Education

Master of Science, Communication, Syracuse University

(Teaching Assistant, Newhouse School of Communication)

Master of Science, Traditional Oriental Medicine, Emperor's College, Santa Monica

Summa Cum Laude. (Graduate study-American College of Traditional Chinese Medicine/San Francisco, two Graduate Colleges in Hawaii-Maui and Big Island.)

Bachelor of Science, Speech-Communication, North Carolina State University, North Carolina.

(Honors Graduate, Outstanding Senior Woman, Student Commencement Speaker)

Participant, Inaugural Leadership Academy, Center for Ecoliteracy, Berkeley

Martial arts: 2nd degree Black Belt, Aikido; 1st degree provisional black belt, Go-Ju Kai Karate Do.