

"Plight of the Redwoods" presented on road tour

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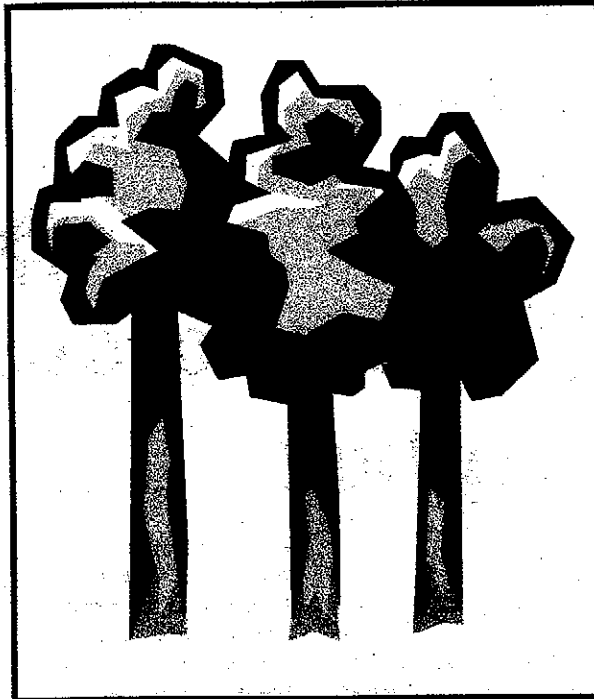
Northern California forest defender "Redwood Mary" (Mary Rose Kaczorowski) took the Plight of the Redwoods "on the road" in partnership with Julia "Butterfly" Hill (via her cell phone). "Redwood Mary" traveled to New York city, New Jersey and Greensboro and Raleigh-Durham Triangle area, N. C. from Dec. 29 to Jan. 14 presenting "A Forest in Crisis--The Northern California Redwoods".

The fight to save the last of the temperate redwood rain forest in Northern California has drawn these two activists together. They are asking the world to join with them and other Northern California Forest Activists in the defense of a redwood forest ecosystem that had once extended from California's Big Sur up to the Oregon Coast. Only a small remnant of this vast forest still exists.

One year ago, on December 10th, 1997, Julia "Butterfly" Hill climbed 180 feet up an ancient redwood named "Luna" and has not come down. In the American tradition of civil disobedience, she is conducting her courageous vigil on behalf of one of the last wild places left in our country, the remaining 3% of our magnificent old growth forests.

Julia Butterfly and Redwood Mary discuss the parallels of the battle to save "Headwaters Forest" and "Save The Redwoods/Boycott The Gap Campaign" -- and how the impact of this forest destruction has affected local communities, the ecology, and the extinction of salmon. They call attention to the new corporate paradigm that has moved in on the "logging" industry and how this is contributing to the inability for these forest ecosystems to recover.

The "Plight of The Redwoods Tour," the big picture presented in a mosaic of the history, the background, personal stories, and video clips includes a "Live" speaker phone talk by Julia



Butterfly. All combined, it gives a powerful education on this issue.

Both women discuss an economics that needs to be based in preservation and respect for life and not an economics whose value is based on extraction and exploitation. "We are asking people to take back our dollars from corporations that are creating destruction and to tell them so. We cover a series of consumer actions and solutions. And, most important, speak of a revolution based on coming from a heart place rather than anger or apathy. The worst of our environmental destruction has been the result of our vain persistence to ignore our interconnectedness with nature. These wondrous life systems keep giving and giving but there is a point where ecosystems break down. We are now losing keystone species and habitats. We have a chance to make a difference, but we must take action."

Redwood Mary is taking a sabbatical from her studies in Environmental Science this semester to continue to do this work and bringing back the "Plight of The Redwoods Tour" to the East Coast this coming April. She will also be attending the 17th U.N. Commis-

sion on Human Settlements in Nairobi as a part of a U.N. Commission delegation where Julia (via Cell phone) and she will be addressing a Non-Governmental Organizations side event; and if all goes well as planned, will be meeting with Wangarri Mathai, Greenbelt activist from Africa who was recently beaten by police for her work with replanting trees.

The "Plight of The Redwoods" is a crisis BASED in Economics--an economics that has lost the respect for the value of life and communities. We are talking about a civil rights movement for the environment, and we are taking back our economics from the institutions and theories that are leading us on a path to destruction and moving it to an empowering paradigm that places "value" on life.

Highlights of the 20 day tour included WBAT's Radio Show "Walden Pond", Manhattan Neighborhood Network studio taping with West Harlem Youth Environmental Inner City Groups, 100+ pot-luck dinner event hosted by Earth Save in Westchester County NYC, and a stint as guest lecturer at North Carolina's Elon College "Current Issues in Biology Class".

Therese Chorun of the Wetlands Preserve (her home # in NJ: 201-435-5169) in NYC has offered to help organize East Coast Bookings for the next phase of the "Plight of The Redwoods" Tour!

The tour includes video footage of the press conference held by forest activists following the death of David "Gypsy" Chain and also focuses on the now institutionalized use of pepper spray in Humboldt County by law enforcement on non-violent demonstrators and shows video footage of the most recent pepper spray used on activists in October 1998 off Highway 36.

A year before, on October 16th, 1997 several young protesters staged a non-violent sit-in at Pacific Lumber

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Company offices in Scotia, California. The protesters were locked together and apparently were no threat to law enforcement or others. The protesters were held down by Humboldt county sheriffs, had their eyelids pried open, and pepper spray was swabbed into their eyes.

Susan O'Neil, an attorney for the demonstrators stated that the "policy and practice of pepper spray to peaceful unresisting demonstrators constitutes the excessive use of force in violation of the Fourth Amendment and unlawfully restrains the exercise of First Amendment rights to freedom of political expression." Amnesty International has condemned U.S. Law Enforcement agencies in general for blatantly violating international law and breaking the United States' solemn obligation to uphold the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and degrading Treatment or punishment.

In Mendocino County, California, the Fisher Family, founders and executives of the Gap clothing store empire (worth a reported eleven billion dollars) purchased 235,000 acres of cut-over Redwood forest from Louisiana Pacific who gave up their western holdings last year. The Fishers' logging company, Mendocino Redwood Company (MRC), is now clear cutting, spraying herbicides and "high grading" (taking the biggest trees). They also intend to log during the winter months, which is especially harmful to endangered Coho salmon. The Fishers stated that they want to be "good stewards of the land." Timber Harvest Plans filed by their logging company, Mendocino Redwood Company, with the California Dept. of Forestry indicate otherwise.

According to Redwood Mary: "To clearcut this land again will only compound the problem -- not to mention the devastating impacts from clear cutting on other resources such as the Coho salmon that are on the verge of disappearing. Spraying garlon upstream from drinking water wells and kids' swimming holes, and where dogs and animals run loose, is not my idea of a good neighbor. There has to be limit. We owe it to future generations to say, "No more clear cutting! No more garlon spraying! No more logging of old growth! There is a better way."

"After many folks in this community had their fill of meetings and letters and phone calls and all the lengthy effort that we made to plead with the Fishers and with MRC's COO Sandy Dean to stop these forest practices--and after they said "no" to our simple and reasonable request that they stop damaging our watersheds, and refused to consider a conservation and restoration plan that would employ loggers and fisher folk, the "Save The Redwoods/ Boycott the Gap Campaign" was born. We decided to take this to the folks who helped build the Gap fortune...the consumer," stated Redwood Mary.

Three Bay area cities' GAP and Old Navy Stores were targeted for pickets on November 27th, the day after Thanksgiving (for some, the "biggest shopping day of the year," for others, "National Buy Nothing Day"). According to Redwood Mary: "We announced the kick-off of a nationwide boycott in three cities--San Francisco, Berkeley and Santa Rosa--through word of mouth and grassroots e-mail, and, before we knew it, folks from over 40 cities and towns across the U.S. in 28 states contacted us wanting to set up their own pickets

and actions! We heard their shock and outrage that the Fishers have entered into the Redwood logging business. They visited our websites (<http://www.elksoft.com/gva>) and learned what was happening to these already damaged forests, and immediately wanted to help. What is happening in Mendocino County is no different than what is happening in Humboldt County with Charles Hurwitz and Maxxam, except the destruction of old growth redwood habitat in Mendocino County seems to be at a crisis point."

Julia "Butterfly" Hill addressed the rally at San Francisco's Union Square via cell phone on Nov. 27th and has been equating the parallels of corporate devastation that is happening in both bordering California counties with corporate ethics devoid of ecological consequences.

Federal law does not allow approval of Habitat Conservation Plans that jeopardize a species' chances of survival and recovery. In Humboldt County, California, clearly, the Headwaters deal (on which there are voluminous well-documented scientific studies on the Habitat Conservation Plan/Sustained Yield Plan plan) falls into that category, and federal scientists have developed numerous recommendations that they believe would avoid this outcome. Predictably, Hurwitz and Maxxam company are balking at any provisions requiring less intensive logging, and are now demanding that they be compensated for simply bringing their plan into conformance with the most minimal legal requirements under the Endangered Species Act.

There is a massive volume of public comment against the (HCP/SYP) of the Headwaters agreement. Many reputable scientists, and EPIC and the Sierra Club, raised concerns that the intensive logging detailed in the HCP/SYP may push coho salmon, marbled murrelets and other rare creatures over the brink of extinction.

According to Redwood Mary: "It is not an exaggeration to say that the politics of consumption has driven an entire ecosystem to the brink of collapse."

For more information on the "Plight of the Redwoods" campaign, or how you can help to further this effort contact "Redwood Mary" c/o Mary Rose Kaczorowski, email redwoodm@mcn.org, or write her at P.O. Box 2856, Ft. Bragg, CA 95437. Julia Butterfly's Website: www.lunatree.org

