

# Marin Independent Journal

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## Tire dump cleared out



IJ photo/Jeff Vendsel

**FINISHING UP:** Jesus Uc (right) and Victor Gomez join fellow Marin Conservation Corps workers as they stack the last of 2,000 tires that have been removed from a decades-old tire dump on a hillside, behind the Buckeye Roadhouse, on property bordering Marin City homes. Marin City official Hazlitt Krog said the removal eliminates a breeding ground for mosquitoes and thus the potential spread of West Nile Virus.

### Hillside near Marin City was fire hazard, haven for mosquitoes

By Carla Bova  
IJ reporter

More than 2,000 tires have been removed from a decades-old tire dump on hillside property bordering Marin City.

The area was infested with mosquitoes, which used water-filled tires as a breeding ground, and the mass tire removal means a reduction in the potential for spread of disease, according to Hazlitt Krog, Marin City Community Services District board member.

"Now that the mosquito-borne West Nile Virus has recently reached Marin, the removal of the ... tires will provide three benefits: significant reduction in

the risk from infection of West Nile Virus in the immediate area, elimination of a potential fire hazard and elimination of a potential source of groundwater contamination," Krog said in a statement.

The tires were strewn across a steep site behind the Buckeye Roadhouse, bordering property of the Headlands Homeowners Association.

The Headlands complex in Marin City consists of 139 wood-shingled townhouses. Krog sits on the association board.

The California Integrated Waste Management Board approved a \$60,000 grant for the tire removal. The

state grant includes funding for a second tire cleanup project in West Marin, Krog said.

It took the Marin Conservation Corps six days, finishing Wednesday, to remove more than 2,000 tires.

"People have been rolling tires down the hill for years," said Paul Cramer, natural resource crew coordinator with the Conservation Corps. "The tires were scattered all over the hillside. Some were buried in mud. We stockpiled them, then brought them down one by one."

Officials estimated the tires had accumulated over 30 to 50 years.

"There were some really old tires with

a few looking like they came from classic cars, but there were also modern tires as well, a mix of ages," Conservation Corps crew leader Diony Gamoso said. "There were five tires we could not remove because it had been so long, trees had grown through them — 25-foot saplings had grown through the tires."

The Conservation Corps used a licensed recycling company to haul away the tires. Cramer said the tires are considered hazardous waste and cannot be disposed of without a permit.

Contact reporter Carla Bova via e-mail at [cbova@marinij.com](mailto:cbova@marinij.com)

## EDITORIAL

# Tire cleanup deserves applause

**T**HE RECENT CLEANUP effort on a Mill Valley hillside belongs in the "It's about time" file.

An effort led by Marin City community activist Hazlitt Krog and the Marin Conservation Corps removed more than 2,000 old tires that had been dumped over decades on the hillside behind the Buckeye Roadhouse.

The dump was covered with brush, but Krog said the area had become a breeding ground for mosquitoes and with the spread of West Nile virus it was time to take this environmental affront seriously.

Krog and the corps managed to win a \$60,000 grant from the California Integrated Waste Management Board to tackle the task.

One by one, corps crews removed the tires, some that may have been there for as long as 50 years. They pulled tires out of bushes, dug them out of mud and hauled the heavy rubber hoops down the hill for a recycling company to pick up.

The corps' crew of Marin youth removed all but five tires. Those had been there so long that trees had grown through them.

Krog and the corps deserve credit for taking on the project and building county and state support for the effort.

Getting rid of old tires is one of the biggest environmental headaches facing the state, but leaving them strewn on a hillside is not the right solution, with or without the risk of West Nile virus.

Krog and the corps saw a problem, a job that needed to get done, figured out how to do it and accomplished the task.

A blight has been removed. Congratulations and thanks to those who tackled this task.

## READERS' FORUM

### A Marin 'treasure'

Congratulations to the members of the Marin Conservation Corps (MCC) who cleaned out more than 2,000 tires behind the Buckeye Restaurant, adjacent to the Headlands complex above Marin City.

Imagine the amount of incredibly hard work over that six day period that it took to remove those tires.

The Marin Conservation Corps is such a treasure in our county. This organization does so much to teach and develop job-related skills to young people who may otherwise not have an opportunity to learn them. Thanks to the crew members of the MCC for making that part of our community a safer and better place to live.

Thanks, too, to the California Integrated Waste Management Board for the substantial grant that sponsored this project.

*Joan Murray, Mill Valley*