



# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

NOYO CENTER FOR MARINE SCIENCE

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All thumbs up for marine science at the Crow's Nest

*Photo by [allandroyanphotography.com](http://allandroyanphotography.com)*



# OUR MISSION

To inspire ocean conservation  
through education, exploration,  
and experience.

A student connects to blue whale through similar "hands"  
*Photo by Sheila Semans*



# Greetings from the Noyo Center!

We are pleased to present the first annual report for the Noyo Center for Marine Science, an independent non-profit organization. This report highlights just a few of our accomplishments in 2016.

The Noyo Center finally has a home on the coast! This past summer, we opened the Crow's Nest- a small, cozy structure with a stunning coastal view adjacent to Fort Bragg's new Coastal Trail. An endless stream of visitors allows us to show our community and visitors what marine science means to the Mendocino coast. Classroom and field education, citizen science, coastal stewardship, and critical research are all integral programs delivered by the Noyo Center.

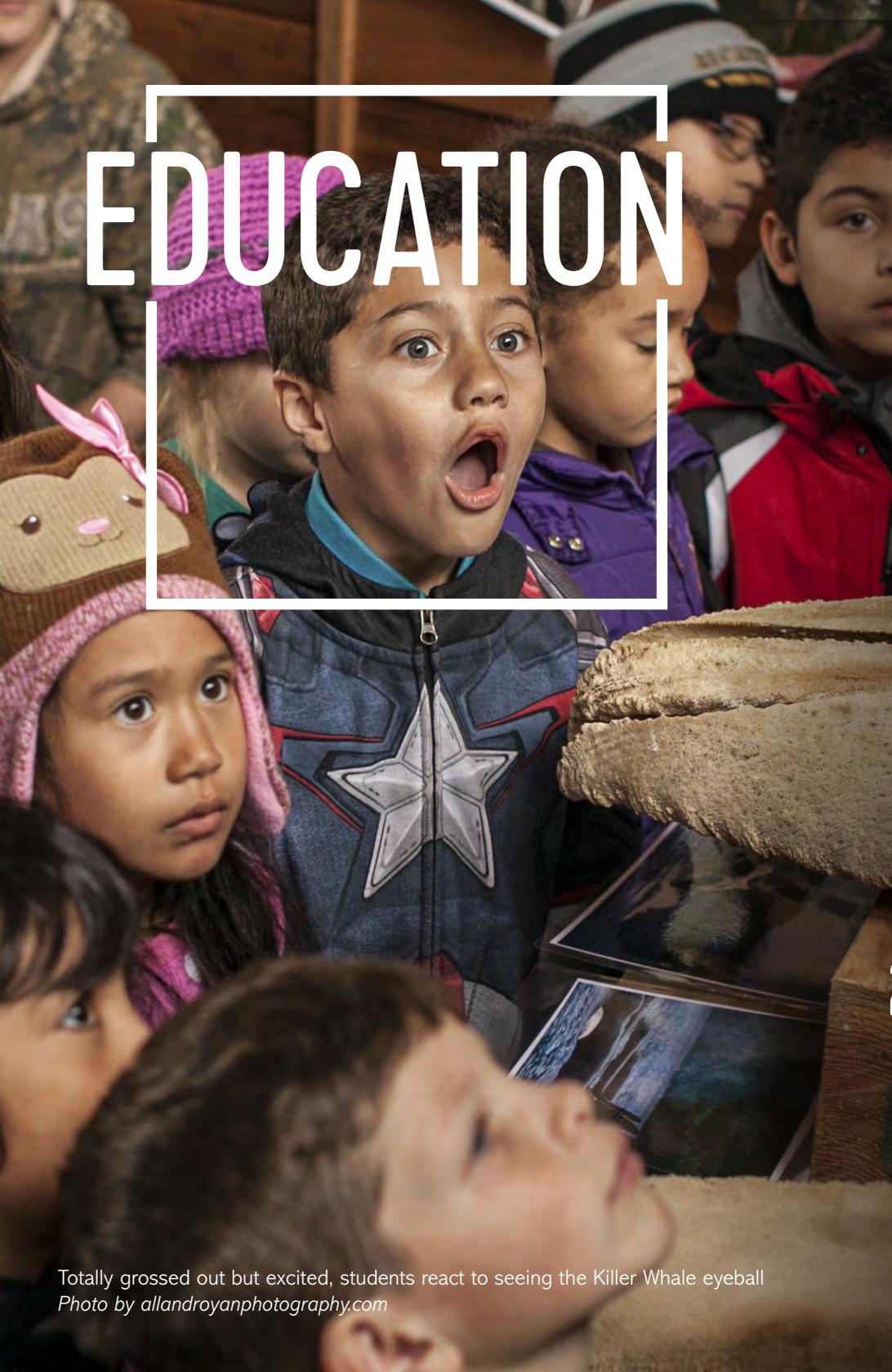
The people behind the Noyo Center include a highly-skilled and devoted professional staff, an enthusiastic and knowledgeable board of directors, and a growing cadre of passionate volunteers. Their dedication is a reflection of our community at large. The people of Fort Bragg and the Mendocino coast established the vision for the Noyo Center and it's clear they are determined to carry this vision forward. Recently, Fort Bragg voters chose to support the Noyo Center through an increase in the Transient Occupancy Tax- that's commitment! Business leaders have also committed, including the North Coast Brewing Company, which recently introduced Steller IPA, a tasty beer crafted in support of marine mammal research. We hope to continue cultivating and growing our local support over the coming years.

There's no denying that climate change is real and we face significant challenges to ensure healthy and sustainable oceans in coming years. We believe it is more important than ever to commit to local efforts to build resilient communities, increase ocean literacy and contribute to a growing body of research about our changing ocean and climate.

Every dollar counts.  
Every connection matters.  
Every hand offered is welcomed.

Respectfully,  
Peter O'Donohue, Noyo Center Board President  
& Sheila Semans, Noyo Center Executive Director

# EDUCATION

A group of diverse children are gathered around a display case. The central focus is a large, textured, brown object, which is a killer whale eyeball. The children exhibit various reactions: one boy in the center has a wide-eyed, open-mouthed expression of shock or excitement, while others look on with curiosity and concern. The boy in the center is wearing a blue and red superhero costume with a large white star on the chest. The display case is made of wood and glass, and the background is slightly blurred, suggesting an indoor educational setting.

Totally grossed out but excited, students react to seeing the Killer Whale eyeball  
*Photo by [allandroyanphotography.com](http://allandroyanphotography.com)*



14 .....  
TRIPS  
TO  
SEA

2000+ .....  
STUDENTS  
TAUGHT  
THIS YEAR

# Sparking excitement in science

*Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.* - Nelson Mandela

Whether in the classroom, in tidepools, on a boat, or in the community, education is the foundation of the Noyo Center for Marine Science. As we confront challenges brought on by a changing ocean and climate, through growing gyres of marine trash, through plummeting fish stocks - we believe arming our kids with knowledge to face an uncertain future is nothing short of vital to their survival. Here are a few highlights of our programs:

## MARINE MAMMALS IN THE CLASSROOM

We expanded our successful 1st and 5th grade hands-on curriculum that we offer in the Fort Bragg and Mendocino Schools by heading inland to Willits, Potter Valley, and Ukiah, as well as down the coast to Point Arena and Manchester, nearly doubling the number of students we reached. Complete with a week of field trips to “the bone yard” and Crow’s Nest on the Fort Bragg Coastal Trail, we taught over 2000 kids. We hosted kids and families that have never seen the ocean before, and even saw a few offshore whales!

Our classroom program culminated with our annual Marine Art and Science Fair, which focused on ocean trash this year. Temple, a home-schooled 5th grader with abounding enthusiasm, built a prototype trash skimmer for the ocean, capturing the grand prize. Way to go Temple!

## ON THE WATER

Getting kids and adults out on the coast is a big priority for us here at Noyo. The *Noyo at Sea* program, a partnership with the Telstar, ran twice a month from spring to fall with our amazing crew of Noyo Naturalists leading the adventures. Waves tossed, and sometimes so did we, but squeals of delight were common as we saw humpback whales, mola mola fish, sea birds, dolphin, sea lions, rockfish and more. Thanks to a generous partnership with the Mendocino Coast Children’s Fund, we were able to offer scholarships to kids who needed them.



Adventures at sea.



# EXPERIENCE

The Crow's Nest perched on the Noyo Headlands  
*Photo by Ron LeValley*

# A unique marine experience at the CROW'S NEST

*In every outthrust headland, in every curving beach, in every grain of sand there is the story of the earth.* - Rachel Carson

Crow's Nest [kroh-z-nest] 1. A small lookout platform.

The Noyo Center has a new home on the southern portion of the Fort Bragg Coastal Trail - our repurposed and refurbished visitor's center provides a glimpse of what is yet to come. A visit to the newly opened Crow's Nest reveals our roaring California Sea Lion skeleton, atop a beautiful rocky habitat created with the help of local artist Ed Moore. Our Steller Sea Lion skeleton swims gracefully overhead, against the backdrop of the ocean. Thanks to a generous donation from a family in our community, we are adding our first aquarium; a touch tank that will be filled with life from the near shore sea. Used also as a small classroom and event space, the Crow's Nest adds to our educational capacity.

We pack a lot of WOW in this little building, so stop by for a visit.

## NOTES FROM OUR DOCENTS:

"Being at the Crow's Nest is the convergence of serving the community and helping the community visualize the future of the Noyo Center while sharing knowledge about our ocean and its marine life with excited visitors. It's about appreciating what is now just a tiny beginning (in a tiny building) that is so full of energy and possibility - not to mention history. You can feel it all when you're out there!"

– Susan Piercy

"I LOVE being at the Crow's Nest because it is so beautiful and peaceful. Every time I am there I learn something new about oceans, marine mammals, or Fort Bragg. I love meeting new people. I can't think of a more fulfilling place to volunteer."

–Kathy Jackson

Open Thursday-Sunday from 11am - 3pm. Sign up to become a docent. The more people on the team, the more hours we can be open for the public!

Soon we hope to offer visitors the convenience of driving out to the Crow's Nest. In the meantime, if you need assistance with a visit, please call (707) 733-NOYO.

1240 .....  
VOLUNTEER  
HOURS

114 .....  
STUDENT  
INTERN  
HOURS

# EXPLORATION

A group of scientists in protective gear, including gloves and aprons, are gathered around a large whale carcass on a beach. They are performing a necropsy, with one person in a red shirt and white beanie leaning over the whale's head. The scene is outdoors, with other people and equipment visible in the background. A white rectangular frame highlights the central area where the necropsy is taking place.

Science team performs necropsy on MacKerricher Orca  
*Photo by Sheila Semans*

# What hidden world lies beneath that vast blue surface?

*Exploration by real people inspires us.* -Stephen Hawking

Through partnerships and community participation, this year we've expanded our marine mammal and beach clean-up programs, and launched new research initiatives focused on understanding the health of our near shore communities.

675.....  
LBS OF TRASH PICKED UP

31.....  
DEAD MARINE MAMMALS RESPONDED TO

460.....  
MILES OF BEACH CLEANED UP

## NEMO

Because we believe exploration is the essence of life, the Noyo Center has now added the capability to take us into the ocean deep with NEMO, the Noyo Educational Marine Observatory. Developed and built by volunteers and Fort Bragg High School students, NEMO is a remote controlled underwater camera and instrument platform that can operate at depths up to 300 ft. Deployed from a boat, NEMO will transmit in real-time the sights, sounds and scientific measurements of the undersea world to the surface. Students will be able to observe ocean life, listen to whales, study the underwater landscape, take quantitative measurements of ocean conditions and discover answers to some of the mysteries of the deep blue sea.

## CITIZEN SCIENCE

We want to bring out your inner scientist too! We have grown our Citizen Science program to include monthly beach clean-ups along a 40-mile stretch of coastline, marine mammal response, and intertidal monitoring. "The Noyo Center has helped me become meaningfully engaged with important problems we face here on the Mendocino Coast," says one citizen scientist.

We have grown our collaboration with the California Academy of Sciences by hiring a Marine Mammal Stranding Coordinator and responding to over 31 deceased marine mammals in 2016. Another "unusual mortality event" brought many starving Guadalupe fur seals to our beaches. Understanding the ocean conditions that are causing these pups to travel much farther north than normal has been a fascinating aspect of the program this year. With funding secured for next year, we will continue to contribute much needed science relating to the Mendocino Coast. Look for more marine mammal identification trainings to be offered in 2017.



NEMO takes his first dive.

# SUSTAINABILITY

WE COULDN'T DO ANY OF THIS WITHOUT YOU.

To all our donors, from those who have dropped a few bucks into the donation box at the Crow's Nest to those who have opened your homes to fundraisers, or given to specific programs -

**THANK YOU FROM THE  
BOTTOM OF OUR HEARTS.**

EVERY DOLLAR COUNTS.

EVERY CONNECTION MATTERS.

EVERY HAND OFFERED IS WELCOMED.

## Critical Infrastructure

Funding the operating costs of a nonprofit is essential to its sustainability. Two significant new funding sources are helping the Noyo Center achieve a sustainable future:

### **Voter approved Transit Occupancy Tax measure**

The City of Fort Bragg and the voters supported the Noyo Center through an increase in the TOT this November. The anticipated revenue from the TOT measure to the Noyo Center will be \$50,000 annually.

### **North Coast Brewery Steller IPA**

This delicious new beer from the North Coast Brewing Company supports marine mammal research and will provide the Noyo Center with an estimated \$15,000 in its first year. So drink up!



# 2016 INCOME

\$284,484



# EXPENSES

\$212,231



## Foundations and Grants

Our core programs are supported by the following:

- City of Fort Bragg
- Community Foundation of Boulder Colorado
- Community Foundation of Mendocino
- State Coastal Conservancy
- CA Coastal Commission
- CA Academy of Sciences/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association

## Business Sponsors:

- North Coast Brewing Company
- Flobeds
- Headlands Coffeehouse
- Campbell LLC
- Subsurface Progression
- Diane Harris, MD
- Coast Hardware



## Help Noyo Center continue to grow:

1. Tell at least three new people about the Noyo Center each month.
2. Sign up to be a Noyo volunteer. It takes all of us.
3. Become a member or consider an increase in your financial gift.
4. Host a Noyo Center fundraiser
5. Like us on Facebook and Instagram

Assessing intertidal habitats



Orca skull

## 2017 Look Ahead: Orca Articulation Workshop

We have a very exciting year ahead. In summer, we plan to reassemble our 26-ft Orca skeleton, which will be the largest on display in the United States. Bringing our “dream team” master articulators, Lee “the boneman” Post, Michi Main and Mike deRoos together once again, we will invite experts - and you - to participate in this very rare and exciting event. Look for more details coming soon.

## Noyo Center Team

**President:** Peter O’Donohue    **Treasurer:** Dave Turner    **Secretary:** Doug Hammerstrom  
**Board Members:** Pilar Gonzales   David Alden   Ginny Feth-Michel   Robby Bruce   Mark Ruedrich  
**Executive Director:** Sheila Semans    **Administrative Assistant:** Natalie Henderson  
**Educators:** Sarah Grimes   Sue Coulter   Sloane Lofy   Kylie Galliani  
**Stranding Coordinator:** Sarah Grimes    **Volunteer Coordinator:** Susan Piercy  
**Collections Manager:** Richard Millis   **Technology Specialist:** Crans Squire  
**Science Advisory Chair:** Ron LeValley