

“It’s the Water.” So advertised a certain brand of beer some years ago. Really? The water is what makes your beer better than others? If it’s the water, why not just skip the beer and drink the water --- nature’s elixir in its most pristine form? Today, I think they advertise: “It’s the water and a whole lot more...” Which is... never mind. . .

Originally, it was a job that brought me to Humboldt. Perhaps in my subconscious there was something more. ^{on glass lake.} Was it the water? I love the sight of rivers flowing, waves crashing and raindrops falling. I love the briny smells of the beach and Humboldt Bay, and the cool aroma of the Trinity River on a hot summer day. Even the sound of water entices me: a gently babbling Elk River as it winds its way toward the Bay; the waterfalls of the Trinity Alps; the pitter patter of rainfall ^{the} on the roof, the sound of waves crashing on the shoreline or against the jetties: these are the sounds of the North Coast that soothe my soul.

Water has always been a hot topic in California, but, especially during our recent drought. Today, many dams throughout the west are historically low; other places are seeing wells run dry, aquifers recede, and tap water getting brackish. A few miles from where my daughter lives they are trucking water into neighborhoods—kind of like they do on the parched coastline of Peru. There are places in the Great Central Valley where farmers are pulling out their fruit trees, others are not planting crops. Why? There’s not enough water. Water is the elixir of life, without it, there’s no food and, of course, no life.

On the other hand, the abundance of water is part of what makes living in Humboldt very special. The Rivers, lakes, bays, lagoons and mighty Pacific Ocean surround us with waters of almost every type. If you are looking for a place to paddle, I’d recommend going online. Just Google, Kayak and Rafting, Humboldt County. On the web sites are many beautiful pictures of people going down our rivers in rafts and kayaks, others parking their kayaks on the docks along the bay, or paddling along the seashore. ^{the} The heading is “California’s North Coast region offers some of the finest kayaking and rafting opportunities in the west.” ^{the} The article highlights our water ways: Humboldt Bay, Humboldt Wildlife refuge, The Lagoons, Trinity River, the estuaries and sloughs on the Eel and Mad Rivers, and the coastline around Trinidad. If you like water, not just drinking it, but getting into it, Humboldt County is a great place to quench your thirst for an aquatic adventure.

Water is a precious resource; and as clean water becomes more scarce, I think we need to give some careful thought and attention to how to protect ^{the} the waters from pollution and water poachers both near and far. After all, “it’s the water” that makes this a good place to live.

Oh, speaking of water. Please be cautious around the open ocean. This week, and many times throughout the winter ^{waves} there are surprisingly big and powerful; give those waves a wide and respectful berth.

This has been Dan Price for Community Comment