



Manuel Alonso-Martinez
35894 Seaward Reach
The Sea Ranch, CA 95497
510-213-4921
manuel.alonso@gmail.com

Why I'm Running for a Second Term

I am running again for a position on The Sea Ranch Board of Directors because I believe the experience acquired during this term will prove valuable in building upon what has worked and providing the stability and continuity we need to secure our many gains of the past three years. The challenges we face are great opportunities that can make Sea Ranch thrive as a unique community in this country, an example of determination to maintain our original values and to adapt to new ways.

We are a vibrant and growing community living on a beautiful, rugged stretch coast at the edge of a warming-up Pacific Ocean, which covers 30% of the Earth's surface and shapes global climate. We all have seen the impacts of the recent storms. My neighborhood near the airstrip was without power for ten days. Hundreds of trees have fallen as our aging pine plantations die naturally, and the landscape evolves into new conditions. As a community, we helped each other and supported the courageous staff during these storms. It was an opportunity to see that our demographics are changing, modifying the social fabric we rely on and the opportunities this offers.

The Role of The Board

Together, these socio-ecological changes in motion require new adaptive strategies, smart investments, and carefully planned resource allocations. Now is the time for solid planning and building the policies for resilience we need.

During my tenure as a board member, I have maintained my original commitment to make environmental priorities a reality. And I will continue to do so. To build socio-ecological resilience, we need to double down on environmental stewardship. Our future depends on us changing our relationship with Nature, working with it and not against it. To anticipate and respond to all this, we need a board that sharply focuses on creating high-level policies that can maintain the thriving Nature that we love here and the safety and diversity of our members. We

need a board that does not get distracted with things that can be and should be handled by our very capable staff.

I have been on the board during difficult times, building alliances, promoting healthy debate, navigating a problematic management transition, and hiring a top-notch Community Manager who is leading the modernization of our association and an impressive increase in productivity and efficiency across all departments, while keeping the trains on time. The staff response to the storms was exemplary.

Given our natural resources, the wealth of talent available here, the spirit of volunteerism, and the highly unusual Covenant that prioritizes the community over the individual in most decisions, the TSRA Board has the foundational assets it needs to promote healthy governance and play its role as a community-based policy-making body.

About Me

For the ones of you who do not know me, I have lived here full-time with my wife Martha for five years. We own a small sod-roof house west of the airstrip. Martha was a community nurse in New York and has worked helping elders with cognitive difficulties at Sea Ranch. We have two sons and one daughter.

I am a cultural anthropologist. We have lived in Spain, the Canary Islands, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, New York, Seattle, Costa Rica, Colombia, and California. I worked as a communications engineer in the military, as an archaeologist tracking ancient Phoenician colonies across the Mediterranean, and as a college professor for eight years teaching humanities and social sciences.

We have a 75-acre farm in southern Spain with mixed oak and pine forests, meadowlands, and olive and almond trees. There, I worked with local neighbors, ranchers, and shepherds to collaborate with the government's national park objectives while maintaining farm productivity via management strategies that enhance biodiversity. Before that, we lived in a tin-roof shack in the tropical rainforest for eight years, working with the TUVa Foundation and 70 national and international organizations to build an alliance of illegal loggers, gold miners, farmers, and conservation landowners. We succeeded where others had failed: saving 5 million trees in the Osa Peninsula, the most biodiverse place on Earth, on the southern Pacific coast of Costa Rica. We developed co-management plans with the Ngabe indigenous peoples, introducing solar energy and pioneering the payment for environmental services incentives. We worked with the team of US-based foresters that started Smart Wood, the world's first sustainable timber certification alternative.

I have worked for over 30 years in executive management positions in several nonprofits. I understand organizational dynamics and the importance of fiscal transparency and sound budgeting. I have consulted with many nonprofits to promote lean management practices and cost-effectiveness. I have worked as a computer programmer and know the latest technologies in the business space. Nonetheless, I also understand its limitations and the need to adapt modernization to sociocultural factors.

I work now as the Executive Director of Earth Team, serving disadvantaged high school students at 20 public high school campuses via a hands-on paid internship program that is restoring degraded watersheds in the Bay Area. I am a consultant for an international human rights organization, providing services to achieve financial, operational excellence, and fiscal transparency. I am professionally well-connected with the Coastal Commission, Coastal Conservancy, California Natural Resources Agency, CA Department of Education, NOAA, EPA, National Science Foundation, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and many others.

I am grateful every night to lie in my bed under the earth-sod roof above and brilliant stars beyond. I am thankful to be here and to have good neighbors. After decades of wondering, I have found my place in the world here, and I want to give back, to give my time and best effort to work together with all of you who either live here full time or come and go to lightly inhabit this place and who, like me, have gladly accepted the invitation to have a conversation of gratitude with Nature and in kindness with each other.