

## The Changing of the Guard

Kris Beall, who recently retired from the Executive Director position she held since 2007, has been replaced by Craig Breon, the new Watsonville Wetlands Watch Executive Director. Kris, however, will stay on in a volunteer capacity as the new President of the Board of Directors, a position she recently was voted into upon the retirement of prior Board President, Bob Culbertson.

The Watch will be forever grateful to Kris for her unwavering dedication and professionalism during her four-year tenure as Executive Director. During one of the worst economic downturns in history, Kris was instrumental in the growth of the educational, restoration, volunteer, and outreach programs, creating a solid base for sustainable future growth. As further evidence of her achievements, in 2010 Kris was honored as a "[Community Hero](#)" by the Community Assessment Project of Santa Cruz County in the Natural Environment category. Said Kris; "I have been fortunate to be able to blend my love of wetlands, wildlife, and open space through my work at The Watch, supporting the programs that teach youth and the community about the wonder and value of wetlands."



*Kris Beall*



Replacing Kris as Executive Director is Craig K. Breon. Craig served as Executive Director for the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society prior to joining the Watsonville Wetlands Watch. At Audubon his work focused on preservation of creeks, wetlands, open spaces, and habitats for rare and endangered fish and wildlife species. Before this he taught Environmental Law and Environmental Activism at Santa Clara University and served on the Portola Valley Planning Commission for ten years. Craig also worked for the Environmental Defense Center in Santa Barbara, the California Coastal Conservancy, and the California Environmental Protection Agency. He graduated from Williams College in Massachusetts, U.C. Davis Law School, and attended Exeter College at Oxford University.

"Like most conservationists, I started as a volunteer, writing and editing for The Nature Conservancy's California newsletter", said Craig. "I realized my passion was to advocate for environmental issues and decided to attend law school as the best way to influence meaningful change." As to his new role, he said "I am excited about working for the Watsonville Wetlands Watch. Since leaving the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, I have been looking to join an organization with a strong sense of place and mission – I believe I have found that within this fine organization and the Watsonville community."

"We are extremely fortunate to have a person of Craig's caliber as our incoming Executive Director," said Kris. "We are all looking forward to working with him on our many initiatives in the coming years."

As mentioned earlier, Kris will continue to serve the Watsonville Wetlands Watch in a volunteer capacity as the new President of the Board of Directors. Kris was unanimously voted in by the Board of Directors to replace Bob Culbertson, who retired from the in January. "We owe Bob a huge debt of gratitude for his many years of service and his passion for the cause," said Kris. Bob will continue to serve on the Planning and Conservation Committee, the Personnel Committee, and the Board Nominations Committee.



*Bob Culbertson and student*

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