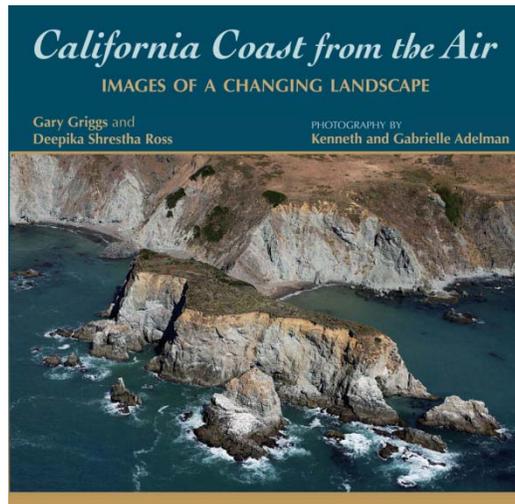


**Our Ocean Backyard — *Santa Cruz Sentinel* columns by Gary Griggs, Director, Institute of Marine Sciences, UC Santa Cruz.**

**#159 May 31, 2014**

**The California Coastal Records Project**



*The California Coastal Records Project- Images of a Changing Landscape.*

As Californians we have 1100 miles of coastline as our own ocean backyard. If we divided up the state's coast equally between our 38 million residents, we would each have less than two inches. Residents of Nevada and Arizona have a lot of sand but no coastline. Along the central coast you can drive along Highway 1, look out the car window, and see almost the entire coast from Morro Bay to San Francisco.

But there is much of our coast that is nearly impossible to see firsthand; large sections of Humboldt and Mendocino counties come to mind. Places like the Cape Mendocino and the Lost Coast are very difficult to get to due to the lack of roads.

There is a partial solution, however, thanks to two county residents who took it upon themselves to document the entire coast in photographs. Twelve years ago, they were listening to a conversation about the difficulty of monitoring change along the shoreline, such as unpermitted construction or other land use modifications.

Kenneth and Gabrielle Adelman happened to own a helicopter and decided in 2002 to fly and photograph the entire coast from the Oregon border to Mexico, realizing that their photographs would form a permanent record of what was there at that moment in time. While Gabrielle flew, Kenneth took thousands of high-resolution digital images of the entire coastline and then put these up on a publically accessible website (The California Coastal Records Project).

While the site might have gone unnoticed for a while, it received attention very quickly. Barbra Streisand, who lived on a cliff top in Malibu and who liked to be thought of as an environmentalist, objected that one of the 12,000 photographs on the site, happened to include her house. She decided to file a lawsuit against Kenneth and Gabrielle claiming they were invading her privacy.

Streisand lost the case but the media coverage caught my attention and I clicked on the site to see what the big deal was. I immediately realized what an incredible resource this was, not only for someone studying the shoreline, but also for anyone with an interest in California's coast.

I also happened to have in my office nearly 14,000 35mm color slides taken of the entire coast by a state agency in 1972 and 1979. I contacted the Adelmans, who expressed interest in adding these to the site. This initiated a wonderful collaboration and led to their assistance in scanning each of these slides and posting them on the site.

They have now flown the California coast 7 additional times, in 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2013, and also obtained several other sets of older photographs, which they have scanned and added to the site. There are now nearly 110,000 high-resolution digital images of the coast of California, extending in some places back to 1928 that can be easily viewed by anyone, anywhere in the world, thanks to their dedication.

We decided to pull together some of the best of these photographs, write a brief description or some history about each of the locations selected, and put these together in a book. *California Coast from the Air- Images of a Changing Landscape*, was just published and is now available at the Seymour Marine Discovery Center, and on-line.