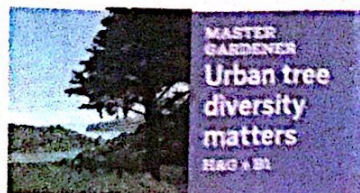




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SUNSHINE

High: 61 Low: 40 » PAGE 8

# Marin Independent Journal

Saturday, November 18, 2017

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## HOUSE TAX BILL IMPACT

# Marin biotech firms fear setback

## BioMarin, Ultragenyx among local companies concerned

By Richard Halstead  
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[@HalsteadRichard](https://twitter.com/HalsteadRichard) on Twitter

A Novato biotech company celebrated federal approval this week of its first drug that will treat an ultra-rare disease, just as a new

tax reform bill clouded the future for development of such drugs.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration on Wednesday gave Ultragenyx Pharmaceutical approval to begin marketing the drug Mepsevii to treat an enzyme deficiency that stunts growth.



Kakkis

The approval came the day before Republicans in the House of Representatives passed a tax reform bill that would eliminate a key tax credit for the development

of such drugs. If a final tax bill is ratified by both the House and the Senate, it is uncertain if the provision will remain in the bill.

Loss of the tax credit would be a major blow to biotech companies that specialize in developing treatments for rare diseases. Marin County's largest employer, BioMarin, is one such company, along with Ultragenyx. San Rafael-based BioMarin has approximately 1,700 employees in Marin County and more than 2,400 employees globally. Ultragenyx, which is Marin's second-largest biotech company, has more than 450 employees, most of whom

work in Marin.

Under the 1983 Orphan Drug Act, companies that create drugs to treat rare diseases are eligible for a tax credit equal to half the cost of their clinical trials and all of their costs during regulatory review.

"The House proposal to reform the orphan drug tax credit is bad for patients with rare diseases," said Debra Charlesworth, a BioMarin spokeswoman. "The total

**BIOTECH » PAGE 2**

## SANTA ROSA

# FIRE HERO HONORED



## SAN RAFAEL

# Police: Drugs sold to teens at home in Terra Linda

By Gary Klien  
[gklien@marinij.com](mailto:gklien@marinij.com)

A Terra Linda man who leads a youth mentoring organization was arrested on suspicion of selling drugs to teens from his home.

Daniel Saint-Amans, 51, was booked into Marin County Jail



from extinction.

So instead, take a look at the top of the article in Wednesday's IJ.

The headline ignores what this decision was actually all about and instead says only that the golf course will "close." Imagine all of the alternative heads they could've run with.

The photo accompanying the story only shows the folks opposed to the purchase — which leads one to believe that "the people" rose up (in support of the IJ, of course!) but were ignored by the big mean government bureaucrats, etc. Not true, of course.

And the first paragraph of the story speaks of "one fewer golf course ... as a result of action taken by the Board of Supervisors." It's a consistent narrative framing with the

You couldn't make this stuff up!

SPAWN did a masterful job of pulling the wool over the eyes of the public and then managed to con the five supervisors in the Civic Center into going along with them.

Now, after losing a wonderful golf course, we get to sit back and watch the county spend millions of dollars to destroy what they purchased.

This is a massive misappropriation of public funds.

— John McGeough, Greenbrae

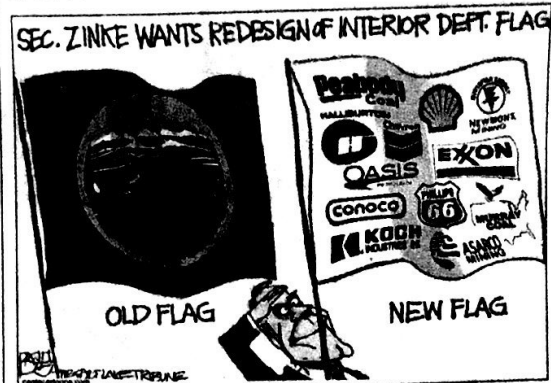
### Supervisors voted for a 'healthier environment'

SPAWN was joined by over 25 government agencies, elected officials and Marin, California and national organizations in supporting the acquisition of the San Geronimo

executive director,  
Turtle Island and SPAWN,  
Olema

Attending the Board of Supervisors' meeting Tuesday in

## Cartoonist's take



PAT BAGLEY — SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

when she stated, "Supervisors must prioritize the county's \$555 million annual budget before asking for a new tax to pay for a basic service."

Lavaroni's grassroots campaign, with the help of many people such as Toni Shroyer, who went door to door, proves that a tax can be defeated in Marin when the voters are well informed — even when outspent by over five to one.

How nice that Bill Long, head of Novato's Zone 1 Flood Control Advisory Board, has gotten over his initial shock and concluded that there is a strong anti-tax sentiment brewing.

Now, it's time for our other elected representatives in Marin to wake up as well.

— Basia Crane, Kentfield

## Marin Voice

# Trump threatening national Marine monuments

By Kelly Martin

Last month, at the Our Oceans conference in Malta, the nations of Chile, Niue and Mexico announced the creation of four massive marine protected areas; Mexico's Revillagigedo marine reserve is now the largest in North America.

As countries around the world strive to create a network of marine protected areas covering 10 percent of the oceans by 2020 to meet UN Sustainable Development Goals, announcements like these demonstrate a global commitment to marine conservation.

With the creation of the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument and the expansion of Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument last year, the United States has been a leader of this movement — until now.

In April, President Donald Trump signed an executive order directing Department of the Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to review 27 national monuments.

During public comment periods for both this review and another performed by the Department of Commerce, hundreds of thousands of people submitted comments, and an analysis performed by Marine Conservation Institute showed that 99 percent of those comments supported the marine national monuments and sanctuaries.

In September, a memo detailing Zinke's findings and subsequent recommendations was leaked to the Washington Post. Despite the almost unanimous public support for marine protected areas, the proposals include eliminating a ban on commercial fishing in three marine monuments, effectively removing the "protected" nature of these reserves.

The ocean is already facing threats that have inevitable repercussions for human health, food security and global economies. Removing protections for the few areas that could sustain the health of our oceans and mitigate some of those impacts is a mistake our country cannot afford to make.

### Whether the Trump administration realizes it or not, all life on Earth is inextricably connected to the oceans.

Whether the Trump administration realizes it or not, all life on Earth is inextricably connected to the oceans. Take three deep breaths. Done? Now thank the ocean for two of those breaths, because tiny marine organisms produce over two-thirds of the oxygen on our planet.

Unfortunately, if you've read recent news from the world's marine biologists, things aren't looking good: plummeting fish populations, rapidly increasing temperatures due to climate change, high rates of plastic pollution — the list goes on.

However, in the midst of all this doom and gloom, there is still hope: a recent study published by the director of National Geographic's "Pristine Seas Program," Eric Sala, shows that marine protected areas that don't allow fishing, or "no-take zones," are incredibly

effective at helping ecosystems recover. However, in spite of the science backing the importance of no-take zones, these are the exact protections the Trump administration is threatening to undo.

After a series of appalling anti-environment policies and appointments in the Trump administration, opening our marine monuments to commercial fishing would be another embarrassing step in the wrong direction.

Though the initial public comment period has ended, it is not too late to make support for our national monuments heard. If the Trump administration moves forward with these recommendations for marine national monuments in the way it has with land-based monuments in Utah, any new regulations proposed by the Department of the Interior would require open-

ing a second comment period during which the public can express support for the monuments.

Many organizations, states, and tribes are threatening to sue if the Trump administration follows through on Zinke's proposals; supporting the organizations behind these suits would help prevent these dangerous recommendations from coming to fruition. Finally, the organization Monuments For All is directing supporters to use the president's favorite social media platform against him by tweeting at the administration using the hashtag #MonumentsForAll.

Regardless of your methods, it is important to make our voices heard before it is too late for our marine national monuments and our oceans.

*Kelly Martin grew up in Corte Madera and is a 2011 graduate of Branson School. She is a graduate student at the University of Washington School of Marine and Environmental Affairs.*

**How to have your say:** Confine letters to 250 words. Letters are edited for length, grammar, spelling, clarity, style, libel and civility. We do not publish form letters, "open" letters, petitions, individual consumer complaints or letters published elsewhere. Letters must include the writer's name, address and daytime phone number so we can verify authorship.

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