



Tehipite Topics

October 2010 ☞ Vol. 56, No. 8

www.tehipite.sierraclub.org

Gravel Mines - No End?

By David Cehrs

There seems to be no end to the applications for gravel mine permits in Fresno County. As the San Joaquin River aggregate resource is mined out the industry and entrepreneurs are jumping to provide the county and region with new sources of aggregate. Currently, there are two working gravel mines and one permitted mine in the Kings River floodplain east of Sanger: Santa Fe Industries and Vulcan Materials with the CMI mine permitted but not open. CEMEX is applying for a mine on Jesse Morrow Mountain east of Sanger, just north of Highway 180. This month Gerawan Farming is in the process of applying for a 900 acre aggregate mine on the east side of the Kings River floodplain east of Sanger, to be called the Carmelita Mine.

The first question is why do we need so much sand and gravel? During the housing bubble, when there seemed to be no end to the construction boom and houses were sprouting up faster than asparagus, all the construction required lots of aggregate for streets, curbs, house slabs, and concrete block walls. Construction is now dead. The only thing currently being built is the Highway 180 extension to Academy Ave. When

WANTED: New Executive Committee Members

Dear Members - Our annual election for executive committee members is fast approaching, and we are looking for energetic, hardworking members interesting in playing an active role in Tehipite Chapter of the Sierra Club. If interested, please contact Jeremy Clar no later than October 12 at 559-681-0517 or jjclar440@gmail.com to discuss your interest in running for an open position!

Celebrating 60 Years in the Sierra

by Heather Anderson

It started with a wedding in Crescent Meadow, Sequoia National Park, and was followed by my first ever traverse in the Sierra. Both sets of our parents weren't pleased to travel so far for our service and picnic/reception, a somewhat untraditional wedding for those days. Our hike started from the trailhead at Wolverton: we camped at Pear Lake and Moose Lake and dipped in their chilly waters, crossed over Elizabeth Pass, hiked down through Deadman Canyon along the Roaring River coming out literally at Roaring River Falls, and jumping off a 12' ledge to complete our trip. Although it was a difficult first taste



Heather Anderson enjoys a Sierra vista

of cross-country hiking, I was hooked, and in intervening years hiked hundreds more trail-miles.

Years later, I am just back from seven glorious days in the High Sierra, seven miles up to Bishop Pass (almost 12,000') from South Lake (about 9500'), and two miles down to camp at Upper Dusy Basin. Above ten thousand feet is my favorite part of the Sierra: mostly rock, a few alpine meadows, brilliant blue lakes, magnificent glacial carved peaks, sparkling streamlets, all dotted with a few stunted pines. A landscape architect couldn't

continued this page

Book Review: Heather Anderson's *Art Education and Eco Awareness*

Longtime Tehipite leader Heather Anderson has produced a superb resource book for art teachers. This book is about more than art. It brings art and environmentalism together organically and teaches art in a way that develops the student's eco awareness and teaches environmentalism in a way that develops the student's ability to see the environment in his or her own unique way. The book is based on the theory that to create art, the artist must focus intensely on the subject—in this case, the environment.

Heather is, of course, a working artist herself, as well as an art educator. The book is full of colorful examples from well known artists like Grant Wood, local artists like Rollin Pickford, and many excellent student artists. This wonderful book will serve to inspire other students preparing to make their own art. Heather's book is arranged around different aspects of the environment: land, water, sky, plants, and wildlife.

Sixty Years in the Sierra

compete. Add to that a slight Sierra breeze, the feel of granite rock, and so many stars at night that I am unable to locate the Big Dipper among them.

This trip, my friend and I scrambled up to a small, emerald gem of a lake, enjoyed our bread and cheese lunch, and I took my celebratory dip. Going in is cold, but coming out is incredibly exhilarating. Evenings, we watched as alpenglow colored the peaks from gray to orange, to bright pink, and back again.

But, there have been many changes in the Sierra since 1950: problems between cougars and people, a huge decrease in fish, amphibians, songbirds, and an increase in acid rain and acid snow. The

Continued page 4

Chapter Meetings

General Meeting

October 20 at 7 p.m.

550 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno

October Program:

Summer 2010 on the John Muir Trail

Dan Saunders and two Norwegian friends; father and son Oslo residents, Ole Petter and Erlend Bratlie, completed a three week long modified variation of the 211 mile John Muir Trail this summer. Beginning their trek July 18th at Horseshoe Meadows, near the Golden Trout Wilderness, 21 miles south of Mt. Whitney, the three completed their journey on August 7th at Tuolumne Meadows in Yosemite's high country. The trio was joined by other friends and family at various stages of their High Sierra odyssey. Come and enjoy beautiful photos of their journey through John Muir's "Range of Light" with an international perspective of our beloved local mountains and this world class trail.

See Sierra Club Voting Recommendations on
California Ballot Propositions

--Pages 6 and 8.

Conservation & Executive Committee Meetings

October 13th

The Conservation Committee meets at 7 PM

The Executive Committee meets at 8 PM

University of California Center

550 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno



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Tehipite Chapter
of the Sierra Club
P.O. Box 5396
Fresno, California 93755-5396

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Chapter phone (559) 229-4031
Web www.tehipite.sierraclub.org

Officers

Chapter Chair

Jeremy Clar (559) 681-0517
..... jclar440@gmail.com

Chapter Vice-Chair

Gary Lasky (559) 790-3495
..... data.nation@earthlink.net

Chapter Secretary

Richard Kangas (559) 896-5337
..... rkangas02@comcast.net

Chapter Treasurer

Wayne Dill
..... wd@whcpafirm.com

Executive Committee Members

Chip Ashley (559) 855-6376
..... wattsvalleypreservation@gmail.com
David Cehrs (559) 875-9495
..... dcehrs@juno.com
Brian Cohen (559) 227-6028
..... afgetsalocal1@yahoo.com
Richard Kangas (559) 896-5337
..... rkangas02@comcast.net
Ron Mackie (559) 683-0293
..... rmackie@sierratel.com

John Rasmussen (559) 332-2419
..... John@BigBaldy.com

Merced Group Appointee:

JoAnne Clarke (209) 726-0636
..... jo_clarke@att.net

Council of Club Leaders ExComm
JoAnne Clarke (209) 726-0636

Council of Club Leaders Delegates
Jeremy Clar (559) 681-0517
Gerald Vinnard (559) 431-5780

Chapter Committee Chairs

Honors & Awards

Heather Anderson (559) 434-2510
..... heather.anderson8@comcast.net

Hospitality

John Flaherty (209) 742-4668

Tehipite Topics Editors

Chip Ashley (559) 855-6376
..... TehipiteTopics@gmail.com

Tehipite Topics Website Editor

John Rasmussen (559) 332-2419
..... John@BigBaldy.com

Membership/Hospitality

Karen Hammer (559) 298-5272

Membership/Newsletter Distribution

Marian Orvis (559) 226-0145

Outings and Outings Leader Training

Marcia Rasmussen Marcia@bigbaldy.com
..... (559) 332-2419

Political Committee

William Fjellbo (559) 642-4511

Programs

Heather Anderson (559) 434-2510

Conservation Committee

Conservation Chair

Heather Anderson (559) 681-6305

Energy, Global Warming, Population

Chip Ashley (559) 855-6376
..... wattsvalleypreservation@gmail.com

Sprawl, Air Quality

Gary Lasky datanations@gmail.com

Kings Canyon National Park /Giant Sequoia National Monument /Sequoia Forest

John Rasmussen (559) 332-2419
..... John@BigBaldy.com

Sierra National Forest

Richard Kangas (559) 896-5337
..... rkangas02@comcast.net

Water, Kings River

David Cehrs (559) 875-9495
..... dcehrs@juno.com

San Joaquin River

Chris Acree (559) 709-4913

Wilderness/Desert

Ron Mackie (559) 683-0293
..... rmackie@sierratel.com

Yosemite National Park

George Whitmore (559) 229-5808
..... geowhit1954@comcast.net

CNRCC ExComm

Gerald Vinnard (559) 431-5780

CNRCC Delegates

Heather Anderson (559) 434-2510
Chip Ashley (559) 855-6376

CNRCC Alternates

Richard Kangas (559) 896-5337
Brian Cohen (559) 227-6028

Publicity

Karen Hammer (559) 298-5272
..... ecuagirl45@yahoo.com

Merced Group

Merced Group

Sierra Club
Box 387
Merced, CA 95341

Group Chair

Rod Webster (209) 723-4747
. rwebster@elite.net

Group Vice-Chair

Jon Hawthorne (209)723-5152

Group Treasurer

JoAnne Clarke (209) 726-0636

Group Secretary

Annette Allsup (209) 723-5152

Member-at-Large

Jule Biesiada juleb13@sbcglobal.net

Conservation Chair

JoAnne Clarke (209) 726-0636
. Jo_Clarke@att.net

Publications

Annette Allsup (209) 723-5152

Agriculture

Charlie Magneson . . . (209) 394-7045

Membership open

Publicity

Rod Webster (209) 723-4747

Population

. open

Conservation and Executive Committee Meeting

Thursday, October 7th, 7:00 P.M.

Rod Webster's home
345 E. 20th St., Merced

Conservation meeting is first and can last 30-40 minutes. Anyone with an interest in local, state or national conservation issues is welcome to attend. Come just to get informed or get as involved as you wish.

Merced Group General Meeting

Thursday, October 21st 7:00 p.m.

Sierra Presbyterian Church 3603 M Street in
Merced, corner on M and Yosemite, across from
Merced College

Program: "Merced in the Year 2030"

Kim Espinosa, Planning Manager for the City of
Merced
Bill Nicholson Asst. Director of Development Ser-
vices for the County

Both Merced City and County are in the process of completing their General Plan Updates (GPU's). These documents are intended to be the guidelines that direct growth and development in the region for the next several decades. Ms. Espinosa and Mr. Nicholson will share where each government agency is in their individual process. It will also be of inter-

est to see how they overlap, interface, and coordinate. Will we have a unified vision and direction for our community?

GPU's look at various areas including: urban expansion, land use, circulation and transportation, open space and conservation, economic development, agriculture, and water resources. The Merced Sierra Club has been very involved in the County Update with representatives currently serving on four of the six focus groups. For the City's Update process we have been "monitoring" but have been less involved in the specifics of its drafting. That process is further along at this juncture. In fact in late August the City released its Draft Environmental Impact Report for public and agency scrutiny. The 60 day period for comments to be submitted ends on October 22nd.

The County's GPU has been 'inactive' for over a year but is scheduled to start up again this fall. There will be six focus groups meeting (open to the public) and community meetings as well before its Draft E.I.R. is released. Our October meeting should be a great opportunity to get involved or to reengage and get back up to speed.

So what will our City and our County be like 20 years from now? Come find out how to "weigh in" on the kind of community you would like to live in. Or . . . you can let someone else make those decisions for you.

FYI- both the City and County websites have extensive information about their GPU's if you would like to do a little homework on your own.

For more information call Rod Webster at 723-4747.

Please vote "No" on Prop 23,
The dirty energy, anti-AB 32 proposition

Please Vote "No" on Prop 26
Corporate Polluters support Prop 26 because
it protects them from having to pay to clean up
their pollution messes.



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



Bear in mind the consequences.

The Yellowstone grizzly bear is an irreplaceable part of America's natural heritage, a symbol of the independence that defines the American character and an icon of all that is wild and free. The Bush administration set forth a proposal that would remove federal protection for the Yellowstone grizzly bear. Help Sierra Club protect our forest friends; they prefer the woods than being on display.

Get grizzly and JOIN Sierra Club.

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____
 Zip _____ Phone (____) _____
 Email _____

Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!



Check enclosed. Please make payable to Sierra Club.
 Please charge my: Visa Mastercard AMEX
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 Card Number _____
 Exp. Date ____/____/____

Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
Special Offer	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
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Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32

Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1 for your Chapter newsletters.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968 or visit our website www.sierraclub.org

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Gravel Mines, continued

will housing and building

recover? No one knows and the prospects for a swift recovery seem to be evaporating.

The current open and permitted mines in the county, including the extant mine west of Coalinga in the Coast Range, have an aggregate source that will last for 50 years at least, but with demand down the currently available resource will last much longer. So why all the new permit activity? Rumor says Gerawan Farming is in massive debt and if they could permit the Carmelita Mine they could sell it for a huge profit and recover from debt. The Jesse Morrow mine is still riding on the housing bubble with the need for unlimited amounts of aggregate for all those new houses. Rumor also says the CMI mine, which has been permitted is not going to open any time soon, as CMI is not making money on its currently open mines in other locations and there is no current demand in the Central Valley.

There is an internecine battle between some of the different mine opponents. Some of the Jesse Morrow opponents, trying to preserve the mountain, say that the Carmelita mine would be a better location for a gravel mine. The Carmelita Mine would be out of sight, behind a 500 foot tree fruit barrier, compared to the Jesse Morrow site which is hard to hide. The Carmelita Mine would take out some 900 acres of prime farm land that could not be replaced and it would have an impact on the Kings River riparian ecosystem. The better option is to fight both mines as we surely don't need either aggregate source for our areas current and future demand.

Remember that it is impossible to have infinite growth on finite resources. Some of these resources that will limit Malthusian growth include: water (which will limit domestic growth and production of food), cheap energy (which will limit the extraction and transport of aggregate), soil (for the growing of food), and some select minerals and elements critical to our industrial and technological society.

Sixty Years in the Sierra

ten year Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project (SNEP), funded by Congress and carried out by a team of scientists in 1996, found that the Sierra Nevada had been severely degraded. The issues included loss of old growth forests, particularly on the east side,

and loss of western-foothill woodland and riparian habitats. Also noted were "damage from logging, overgrazing, dams, roads, placer mining, and ozone." Their conclusions urged a need for regional planning to preserve water and free flowing rivers, a need to restore fire to its natural role in old-growth ecosystems, a need to reduce air pollution, the impact of humans on the ecosystem, and the need for forest reserves connected by habitat corridors.

Today, the biggest threat to our Range of Light is posed by climate change. Sadly the Sierra could lose 90% of its snow pack, and 100% of its glaciers, as well as 30% of its native species including iconic species such as the giant sequoia and the pika. We who love our snowy serrated range must help prevent this loss. To reduce the vulnerability of the Sierra ecosystem and other ecosystems nationwide, the Sierra Club has launched a Resilient Habitats Campaign. After enjoying and exploring our Sierra, I can help protect it by working with the Sierra Club on this campaign and support it with my time and/or contributions. I can also become a better informed activist; I can write Letters to the Editor (Fresno Bee and other papers), and to Assembly and Congress persons. Like the First Inhabitants of this land, who fitted into the food chain and left only a small footprint on the land, I can work to live more sustainably and reduce my ecological footprint.

On the last morning, cold, cloudy and windy, as the dark clouds began to disperse, gorgeous reds, oranges, and yellows streaked the western sky, and the 7:40 sun came up through the clouds, between Mt. Agassiz and Mt. Winchell. What a celebration!

(Johnston, V. (1998). *Sierra Nevada, The Naturalist's Companion*. Berkeley, University of California Press.)

To find out more go to www.sierraclub.org/habitat

Editorial: Teacher Beware

by Chip Ashley

Shortly before I sent this newsletter to print, a fellow energy activist asked if I could attend a "teacher training, called the PG&E Solar Schools Program" in Bakersfield. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend, but I decided to take a closer look. PG&E Solar Schools is part of the NEED (National

Energy Education Development) project, sponsored by many large energy corporations, including British Petroleum. On the face of it, this program looks like a good program with an excellent curriculum.

However, after Prop 16, the ballot measure sponsored almost singlehandedly by PG&E to preempt competition from local publicly owned utilities formed under California's community choice aggregation law, and after the San Bruno gas pipeline explosion and BP's disastrous Gulf of Mexico oil spill, I find something deeply troubling about corporations like BP and PG&E using programs like NEED to insinuate themselves into our public schools and government. It is simply inappropriate.

The list of NEED's sponsors and partners (available on Wikipedia) includes the American Power Association, the American Petroleum Institute, the American Solar Energy Association, Chevron, Conoco Phillips, Duke Energy, Commonwealth Edison—and literally dozens of other companies in the energy sector. The list also includes Albuquerque Public Schools (and many other school districts), the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. EPA, the University of Nevada Las Vegas, the U.S. Department of Energy. The list shows how Big Energy is infiltrating the public sector.

But, hey, corporations are people too, right? And they have a right to participate in the public sector, don't they? One can certainly make this argument, as the U.S. Supreme Court recently did. A 28-year PG&E employee argued thus in a conversation with me recently as she politely complained about last month's article about Prop 16 and the PG&E rate hike case and defended PG&E's program of donating and encouraging employees to donate to charities and, yes, schools.

I certainly have nothing against PG&E employees and their company loyalty. Nevertheless, this program still reminds me—and I am reminded of this more and more often lately—of how our government is getting more and more corporatized. I can't help recalling that Mussolini's name for fascism was "corporatism." Our government representatives are more and more beholden to the corporations, who hold the big purse, and less and less to the voters. Call me naive, but I just believe in a strict separation between Big Business and government. Ideally, the primary purpose of government is to protect citizens from exploitation, from attacks of any sort, from without and within,

and this includes insidious propaganda attacks sponsored by Big Business.

This program is a lot like the slick ads PG&E, BP, Chevron, etc. pay for slick ads in the media that represent them as environmentally responsible—to greenwash themselves. The PG&E employees who present the program keep the PG&E logo front and center. I'm sure they are nice people, carefully chosen to be PG&E's public face. Yet we know what happened in the Gulf of Mexico. We know the Erin Brokovich story. We know what happened in San Bruno last week, where PG&E had received a \$5 million rate hike to maintain this natural gas line, but spent the money elsewhere. Could it have been spent on Prop 16 or maybe the School Solar Program?

According to Barbara George of Women's Energy Matters, the PG&E "program provides a really dinky solar array, scarcely enough for a single classroom, but for that small outlay, PG&E gains access to school administrators, teachers, students and community for some great greenwashing opportunities. Critical opinions may be stifled. Schools receiving such largesse might frown on teachers or administrators saying anything negative about the utility—and might provide free PR value for the utility far beyond the value of anything that the utility provided to the schools."

A story in today's Fresno Bee (Sept 20) on the fallout from the San Bruno disaster quotes a Fresno School District official as saying PG&E inspects the lines every 15 months. "The line by Ewing Elementary was inspected in June and no problems were reported," she said. Maybe this is merely factual information, but did this official leave out any concerns? The official is not reported to have expressed concern about gas mains running near Fresno schools even after San Bruno, where lines were also inspected.

The purpose of a corporation—BP, PG&E, Chevron—is to profit for its stockholders. There is no question that the PG&E Solar Schools Program and the NEED project are part of the profit motive. Our schools are suffering financially now, and this makes it even easier for wealthy corporations to "come to the rescue." This program also comes to schools in the northern San Joaquin Valley, and I hope when it does, our teachers and school administrators remember to exercise their critical thinking skills.

Great

San Joaquin River Clean-up

Please contact Richard Sloan at 559-696-2971, riverrich1509@aol.com, Steve Starcher, 559-289-8874, sastarcher@gmail.com or Steve Haze, 559-970-6320 re opportunities to help clean up the San Joaquin River.

Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park

New Dates:
Oct 17-19

CA's Channel Islands are Galapagos USA! Marvel at the sight of whales, seals, sea lions, rare birds & blazing wildflowers. Hike the wild, windswept trails. Kayak the rugged coastline. Snorkel in pristine waters. Discover remnants of the Chumash people who lived on these islands for thousands of years. Or just relax at sea. These 3 & 4-day "live aboard" fundraiser cruises benefit Sierra Club's political program in California & depart from Santa Barbara aboard the 68' Truth.

The fee (\$590 for Oct) includes an assigned bunk, all meals, snacks & beverages, plus the services of a ranger/naturalist who will travel with us to lead hikes on each island and point out interesting features. To make a reservation mail a \$100 check payable to Sierra Club to leaders: Joan Jones Holtz & Don Holtz, 11826 The Wye St, El Monte, CA 91732. Contact leaders for more information (626-443-0706; jholtzhln@aol.com)



A Backpacker with a Light Heart

by Chip Ashley

My recent backpacking trip to Evolution Valley was a great trip for the usual reasons—well, maybe not so great in one way: I had lots of trouble sleeping and spent the long sleepless hours watching the stars and moon move inexorably across the sky. Thank heavens for the airplanes and meteors now and then breaking the dreamless monotony. I only had four nights on this trip, so I never quite adapted to my somewhat constraining sleeping bag (I am a wide-body) and foam pad. But the rest of the trip was great—beautiful mountains, streams, meadows filled with wildflowers. But the last day brought the most interesting experience of this trip.

At a stream crossing near the Muir Trail Ranch—which used to be the Diamond D Ranch, I stopped to fill my water bottle. As I pumped water through the filter, a lone woman stopped on the other side of the stream and asked if this was the way to Florence Lake and the ferry. I simply answered “Yes,” and she crossed the stream and continued walking.

Ten minutes later, bottle filled, I headed out too, and walked the remaining five miles, arriving at the ferry launch a little after noon. I had a good hour’s wait in the tiny spot of shade offered by the single boulder on a wide expanse of diorite before the ferry arrived somewhat late. It was a hot clear day for 7600 feet up in the Sierra Nevada, and the white rock reflected the bright sunlight painfully into my sleep-deprived eyes. About a dozen passengers disembarked and unloaded their gear. All this done, I boarded. The boat—the size of a small commercial fishing vessel—seemed far too big for just me. I was the single passenger for the trip back to the west end of Florence Lake and the parking lot, from which would drive post haste to Huntington Lake and a cold milkshake.

I lugged my pack over the boat ramp and up the granite slab past the little store, and then on up to the parking lot. I leaned the pack against the back of the vehicle, and as I fished around in it for my car keys, a woman spoke from behind me with just a little trepidation in her voice, “Sir, can I get a ride with you?” I don’t generally think of myself as a sir, but since there seemed to be no one else in the lot but me and the woman whose voice I heard, I turned. It was the same woman I had encountered at the stream a few hours earlier. I was more than a little surprised that a lone woman, maybe fifty, would be asking for a ride with a grungy bearded reprobate like me, but I couldn’t bear to leave her there in that lonely parking lot. Who knows whom she might have eventually caught a ride with? So I

said, “Sure, throw your pack in here,” pointing to the open rear door of my dusty SUV.

My trip had started at the store parking lot when I had helped another lone woman break into her rental vehicle where she had locked her keys. Carla, store clerk and sometime ferry captain, supplied the wire hanger. It was only fitting now that a similar episode should end the trip. My passenger, Judy Gross, is from Ashville, North Carolina. Well, how did a lady from 3,000 miles away get way up to Florence Lake?

She had started out with three friends to hike the John Muir Trail, starting in Tuolumne Meadows. But the old bugaboo of different hiking styles and speeds got to this ambitious group, and one friend went into her “mule mode” and just

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Sierra Club California Lobby Days Aug. 15-16,

by Elaine Gorman

Alexandra Hoffman and I represented the Yokuts group at the recent Lobby Days event in Sacramento. We joined with SC Calif. staff members Jim Metropulos, Bill Magavern, and Annie Pham, plus about 35 SC volunteers. We met our Tehipite Chapter partner, Chip Ashley, and had four hours of training about two bills currently in the California Legislature. SB 722 concerns renewable energy portfolio standards (RPS). This bill will mandate that public and investor-owned utilities have at least 33% of their electricity come from renewables by 2020. There will be intermediate benchmarks and enforcement of what is considered “eligible renewable energy resources”. The SC supports this bill because it will create new green jobs and displace 13 million metric tons of global warming pollution in 2020.

We also received information about AB 1998, the single-use plastic bag ban. Supermarkets, convenience stores, and pharmacies that have over 10,000 square feet of retail space will no longer give out single-use plastic bags. Paper bags will be available for a small charge, and customers will be encouraged to bring their own reusable bags. The SC supports this bill because of the damage that plastic bags cause to the environment and wildlife and because of the money and energy that is wasted by governments in litter abatement. Californians use about 19 billion single-use plastic bags each year, and less than 5% are recycled. Many of these bags end up in the ocean.

On Monday, we visited San Joaquin Valley representatives or their staff. Chip is well-versed on energy issues, so he tackled SB 722. With Alexandra’s experience working as the Recy-

cling Coordinator for Waste Management, she expertly presented the arguments in support of AB 1998. I concluded the sessions with reasons for legislators to follow normal legislative process and not allow “midnight” CEQA exemption bills. Sadly, many of our valley legislators, such as Bill Berryhill, Tom Berryhill, Mike Villines, had already voted “no” or had “no vote recorded” on earlier versions of the two bills.

Unfortunately, the two bills we lobbied on did not fare well. AB 1998 failed on the Senate floor on the last day of the session, August 31. SB 722 passed after being amended and weakened so as to allow PG&E, SCE, and SDG&E to get out of meeting the requirements of the Renewable Portfolio Standard if the Public Utilities commission finds that conditions beyond the utilities control prevent them from complying. To learn more about California legislation and the efforts that Sierra Club California is making to improve the environmental quality of our state, go to <http://www.sierraclub.org/ca>.

Sierra Club Recommendations on California Propositions

Sierra Club California Opposes Proposition 23: Proposed Big Oil Initiative

Big Texas oil companies are trying to buy their way out of cleaning up their California refineries and fuels. Companies like Valero and Tesoro recently announced that they plan on fully funding a November ballot initiative that would halt clean energy efforts and pollution control standards aimed at cleaning up our air and atmosphere for our kids and future generations.

For more information: www.StopDirtyEnergyProp.com

Sierra Club California Opposes Proposition 26: Polluter Protection Act

According to Bill Magavern, Director, Sierra Club California

“Big Oil and Big Tobacco have spent the decade since then looking for an opportunity to bring this Big Ugly Initiative back.

“Prop 26 would reclassify many fees as taxes, so that they would require a two-thirds majority of each house of the Legislature, or, at the local level, a two-thirds vote by the electorate. The oil, tobacco and liquor industries want to make it virtually impossible to require polluters and other creators of nuisances to pay to clean up their own messes. Their measure would overturn the unanimous 1997 decision of the California Supreme

Outing Ratings

Distance	Elevation Gain
1) up to 6 miles	A) under 1,000 feet
2) 6 to 10 miles	B) 1,000 to 2,000 feet
3) 10 to 15 miles	C) 2,000 to 3,000 feet
4) 15 to 20 miles	D) 3,000 to 4,000 feet
5) over 20 miles	E) over 4,000 feet

Our Tehipite Chapter Outings Chair is Marcia Rasmussen, Marcia@BigBaldy.com, 559-332-2419. Please contact Marcia with any questions concerning our outings program. Contact the trip leader directly if you are interested in one of the listed trips.

Tehipite Chapter outings are free and open to the public. All leaders are unpaid volunteers assuming responsibility for a good trip, and your cooperation is mandatory. Please review additional trip and participant requirements at www.tehipite.sierraclub.org/outings.

Steve Cosner (559) 281-5983, email: stevec@sfsu.edu maintains this webpage.

CST #2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California. California has established a Travel Consumer Restitution Fund (TCRF) under the California Seller of Travel Act. The TCRF is not applicable to these Outings. The law requires us to advise you that you would not be eligible to make any claim from the TCRF in the unlikely event of default by the Sierra Club. California law also requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. The Sierra Club has such a trust account.



Sierra Club California Needs Your Help

You have great people in Sacramento lobbying to protect the Sierra and on other critical issues like climate change. Bill Magavern, Jim Metropoulous, and Annie Pham do a terrific job, and they need our help. Please go to the terrific Sierra Club California web site at www.sierraclubcalifornia.org and donate generously.

Required Liability Waiver

All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read the Liability Waiver before you choose to participate on an outing, please go to: <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/>, or contact the Outings Department at (415) 977-5528 for a printed version.

Annual hike to Twin Lakes and George Lake, 2A

October 3rd - Sunday Last year we hiked during a snow storm, but this year we hope to enjoy fall colors among the aspens and spectacular mountain vistas. Karen Hammer (559) 298-5272 ecuagirl45@yahoo.com

Giant Sequoia Walk, Giant Forest (1A)

October 16 Saturday An easy walk through the Crescent Meadow area of Giant Forest. One of our most magnificent sequoia groves, this area gives visitors just a little of the feeling of being off the beaten path. We will talk about giant sequoia conservation and how you can play a part to preserve the big trees. All ages welcome. This walk will be slow paced, with plenty of time to enjoy the trees, so bring your camera. John Rasmussen 332-2419 or 288-9239.

Day Hike, Mitchell Peak (6 mi round trip, 2000 ft elev. gain)

October 23 Saturday We will climb Mitchell Peak, elev. 10,365. This trail is almost entirely uphill, but not intensely steep. The reward? A startlingly beautiful 360 degree panorama of high peaks. If smoke conditions are bad, we will plan an alternate destination. Marcia Rasmussen 332-2419 or Marcia@BigBaldy.com.

Day hike (1A) San Joaquin River National Wildlife Refuge (Yokuts)

November 6th Saturday The Yokuts Group will be joined by Julie Rentner, Restoration Ecologist from River Partners on a stroll through a restored riparian forests along the San Joaquin River--an easy 3 mile (~2 hour) hike. Please bring good walking shoes, jacket/raincoat, water, a bag lunch, and \$\$ for carpool. Meet at Modesto Library parking lot at 8am. Children welcome, but no dogs. Heavy rain cancels. Elaine Gorman, 209.524.7630 or goford@sbcglobal.

Lighted Hearted Backpacker left the Judy and her other friend

in the dust. The air was just a little too thin for Judy, who, faced with nearly 12,000 foot Muir Pass, decided to opt out and take her chances on catching a ride back to civilization, which led to our meeting in the Florence Lake parking lot.

Judy said she is used to hiking the Appalachians, where it's not so high. She is an experienced outdoorswoman, which explains why she was so neat and clean—unbelievably neat and clean to have just finished two weeks in the Sierra—so neat and clean that I was embarrassed for her to see the unkempt interior of my vehicle and for her to have to be in the presence of my sweaty grunginess. She explained how she used wild sage as a deodorant, which made me yet more nervous about my odoriferousness. But she seemed glad to have the ride anyway.

I noticed that Judy doesn't have a Southern accent, and she said she was originally from New Jersey, and had got to North Carolina only recently after raising a family as a single mom in Houston, Texas. She recently gave up a career in nursing to start a business making backpacking tents. She is an accomplished seamstress and has been a dressmaker and designer for years.

She has been making tents of her own design now for over a year, and her business is already profitable. She makes a 14 ounce single person tent, which sounds frankly magical to the ears of this aging backpacker. Judy has an impressive web site (shameless plug), where you can see and order these ultra-light wonders online at <http://lightheartgear.com/>

Judy and I had a terrific conversation till we said good bye and good luck at the counter of a car rental business in Fresno. She was headed to visit a son who recently landed a job teaching in Southern California. I hurried off to stuff my face with a juicy hamburger and then off home to jump in the shower. A few days later I got a package in the mail containing Lawrence Kephart's *Our Mountain Highlanders*—about the mountain people of the central Appalachians—with a very kind note from Judy on the title page in which she said I am an angel. Well, maybe sometimes. Why Kephart's book? We had discussed my interest in linguistics and ancient English, and this got us to my Scots Irish heritage and the language of the Southern Mountaineers. Thanks so much, Judy! Hope to see you again on a mountain trail.



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Deadline for *Tehipite Topics* is the second Friday of each month. Please submit material to TehipiteTopics@gmail.com.

Court, Sinclair Paint Company v. Board of Equalization, which upheld the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Act of 1991. In that case, the paint company tried to avoid its responsibility for having put toxic lead in its products, and the Court upheld the Legislature’s ability pass mitigation fees by majority vote.

Fees assessed on polluters provide vital funding for essential programs that safeguard Californians’ health and environment. These charges save taxpayers money and put the costs of environmental protections on those who have created the problems.

Prop 26. For more information, please go to <http://www.stoppolluterprotection.com>.

Vote YES On Prop 25 to Ease Budget Gridlock and Curb Anti-Environmental Schemes

Sierra Club supports Proposition 25, which would allow state budgets to be passed by a simple majority of each house of the Legislature. The anti-democratic two-thirds requirement for passing budgets has created opportunities for anti-environmental mischief. One of the most egregious examples

came in 2007, when 14 Senate Republicans held the budget hostage to their demand for non-fiscal legislation weakening the California Environmental Quality Act’s application to global warming.

In addition, the budget gridlock that is in part caused by the two-thirds requirement has damaged our air, water and resources. The empowerment of a minority of legislators has resulted in slashing funding for public transit, raiding recycling and clean-air funds, and starving important agencies like the Coastal Commission.

Prop 25 would move us closer to fiscal sanity and remove one avenue for anti-environmental legislative schemes.

Sierra Club California Supports Proposition 21: California State Parks Initiative

Sacramento — Sierra Club California endorsed Proposition 21, the State Parks and Wildlife Conservation Trust Fund Act of 2010, a statewide initiative slated for the November 2010 ballot, that would provide a stable, reliable and adequate source of funding to protect state parks and conserve wildlife.

“With our state parks facing an insurmountable funding crisis and irreparable damage, it is essential we provide our parks with a sustainable and reliable funding stream,” said Jim Metropulos, Senior Advocate of Sierra Club California. “For years California’s 278 state parks have been an integral public asset that residents and visitors alike enjoyed, and it is imperative we maintain these priceless assets for our children and future generations.”

Proposition 21 would ensure a dedicated and reliable funding stream for state parks through an \$18 annual State Park Access Pass surcharge and, in return, would provide vehicles subject to the surcharge free, year-round admission to state parks.

Sierra Club California now joins a strong coalition including –California State Parks Foundation, The Trust for Public Land, Save the Redwoods League, Defenders of Wildlife, Surfrider Foundation, California State Park Rangers Association, Audubon California, California State Lifeguard Association and Ocean Conservancy.

For more information on Proposition 21, please visit www.yesforstateparks.com.