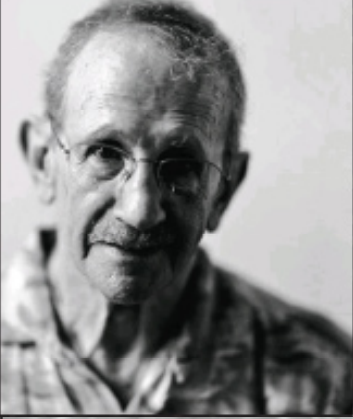




Tehipite Topics

April-June 2012 ♻ Vol. 58, No. 2

www.tehipite.sierraclub.org



JOIN US AND HEAR
NATIONAL POET LAUREATE

PHILIP LEVINE

At 84, Philip Levine has been writing poetry for the voiceless since he worked in Detroit's auto factories when he was a young man.

“
*This is
what
happened
to me
and this
is what
I am.*

”

Sunday
March 25

At 2:00 PM

FOLLOWED BY
BOOK SIGNING

Newman Center

1572 E. Barstow in Fresno

Doors open at 1pm

for ticket sales, book sales & refreshments.

Tickets \$20

Students \$5

*Tickets available
only at door*

SPONSORED BY THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF FRESNO AND THE TEHIPITE CHAPTER
OF THE SIERRA CLUB TO RAISE FUNDS TO SUPPORT FRIANT RANCH LITIGATION

Tehipite Chapter



SIERRA CLUB
FOUNDED 1892

Tehipite Chapter
of the Sierra Club
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Tehipite Chapter News

Sugar Pine Trail Defended

On March 7, several members of the Tehipite Chapter, though not officially on behalf of the Sierra Club, joined other local activists raising their voices to protect the Sugar Pine Trail from the encroachment of a local restaurant.

Developer David Fansler had applied to the city planning department to extend the Yosemite Ranch Restaurant (corner of Shepherd and Cedar) into the green space of the 60 foot wide strip, known as the Sugar Pine Trail, which local volunteer groups had helped plan and landscape. The strip includes a ten-foot bike, jogging, and walking path.

Most of the 15 opposing the encroachment did not necessarily oppose businesses interfacing with the trail so long as the interface is tasteful and non-intrusive and developers work throughout the planning process with groups who have invested their time and effort into designing and building the trail. Some opined that properly designed interface could help to build community in the area

As it was designed, Fansler's preferred option would have intruded 34 feet into the trail and been separated from the trail by heavy sound-

proof walls, preventing any interaction with the trail except for a trail-side entrance. This fortress-like plan suggested to many that the real intent was to seize public greenspace for private use.

The Planning Commission rejected the proposal, but said Fansler could reapply.

Sierra Club members commenting included Bob and Diane Merrill, Connie Peterson, Mary Savala, Judy Swick, and Chip Ashley

Local Activism in our National Forests

by Rich Kangas

Tehipite Chapter boundaries surround the Sierra National Forest, the Hume Lake Ranger District portion of the Sequoia National Forest and the northern part of the Giant Sequoia National Monument (GSNM). It is an enormous job for environmental activists to watch over that much land. But a handful of Tehipite Chapter activists are currently engaged, as is the national Sierra Club's Resilient Habitats Campaign. With U. S. Forest Service planning changes afoot, we will need more activ-

See "News" page 9

Tehipite Chapter Meetings

Conservation & Executive Committee Meetings

Second Wednesday of each month, except July and August ~ Open to the Public

January 11 February 8 March 14 April 11 May 9 June 13 September 12 October 10 November 14 December 12

The Conservation Committee meets at 7 PM The Executive Committee meets at 8 PM
University of California Center 550 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno

General Meetings

FREE AND OPEN TO GENERAL PUBLIC UC Center, 550 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno

General Meeting Schedule and Programs for 2012:

April 18, Gardening in a Warming Climate, with Bonnie Bladen of Intermountain Nursery.

May, no meeting

June 20, Shane Krogan of High Sierra Volunteers

July and August, no meetings

September 19, Gene Richards, Travels to the Middle Kingdom and Lessons for Life.

October 17, Brandy Anglen, FCC Science Instructor, Study Abroad Programs at FCC, some tidbits from past trips and highlight the upcoming travel to Madagascar in 2013.

November, no meeting

December 19, Helen Gigliotti will present her photographs.

April 18 General Meeting Program

Gardening with Native Plants in a Warming Climate

Bonnie Bladen of Intermountain Nursery in Prather will present a slide show of California native plants and talk about gardening for drought conditions and future warming, to improve wildlife habitat and to grow your own food. Her Nursery specializes in California Native Plants and low water use plants suitable for a Mediterranean Climate. (See: intermountainnursery.com)



June 20 General Meeting

Shane Krogan will present High Sierra Volunteers

From TrailCrew.org: In 1995 Shane Krogan discovered the Forest Service "Adopt-a-Trail" program. This program enables individuals, business and special interest groups to adopt and maintain trails within the National Forest. Shane then adopted a 12.2 mile segment of the California Riding and Hiking Trail in the vicinity of Huntington Lake. In the summer of 1997 the US Forest Service approached him and presented (him with) a challenge.

Due to budget restraints, they needed additional volunteer help maintaining over 400 miles of trail This included 27 miles of the famous Pacific Crest / John Muir Trail. His response was the formation of the High Sierra Volunteer Trail Crew in the spring of 1998. During the first season, a small but very dedicated group contributed ten days of trail work which amounted to 800 hours of volunteer time.

Merced Group

Merced Group

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Charlie Magneson . . (209) 394-7045

Membership open

Publicity

Rod Webster (209) 723-4747

Population

. open

Conservation and Executive Committee Meetings

The first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM 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.

Merced Group General Meetings

Usually the third Thursday of each month (except April and December)

Starts at 7:00, usually over by 8:30 or so.

Merced United Methodist Church, 899 Yosemite Parkway (that's Hwy 140 to Yosemite)-Merced
Group General Meetings--Other events often going on so park in the lot along Cypress Ave. and enter there to find us easily.

April meeting

NOTE: It is sometimes difficult to have finalized info for some meetings at the time of publication. April and May coming up are good cases in point. We do try to run an item in the local papers the week of, but that is an imperfect communication at best. Some 50-60 folks are on my "friends of Merced Sierra Club" email list so I can reach them in case of late developments or changes. If you would like to be added to that list just email me at <rwebster@elite.net> I promise to be very discreet in its use. Usually that means a notice or reminder once or twice a month. No email?- a phone # works too. Mine is (209) 723-4747.

TBA- a weekday close to Earth Day. We are still working on coordinating with the Engineers for a Sustainable World, a student group at UC Merced, to co-sponsor a speaker. The event will be held on campus in conjunction with other Earth Day week events.

Annual Picnic, Saturday, May 5, 11:00 ish

Magneson's home on the Merced River

10235 El Capitan Way, Ballico

Charlie and Sally Magneson are once again sharing their picturesque home along the Merced River with us. This is a relaxed, casual time to hang out, eat a bit, and jaw with some fellow enviros and outdoor enthusiasts. Come as early as 11:00 but certainly not too much after



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
 Cardholder Name _____
 Card Number _____
 Exp. Date ____/____/____

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Special Offer	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47
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.

12:00 when we'll dig in. It's pot luck- bring a salad or main dish- (dessert provided). Also bring your own table service, and maybe a lawn chair. Ice tea and water provided but if you'd like something else it's BYOD.

Charlie and Sally live on the southwest corner where Santa Fe and El Capitan intersect. Coming from the south on Santa Fe you'll cross the Merced River and hit El Capitan on just the other side. Turn right, they are the first drive on the right. From the north it will be a left onto El Capitan just before you hit the bridge to cross the river.

Always a nice way to usher in the spring outdoor season. Hope you can join us.

May Meeting

“Bonus” meeting in May? TBA

June Meeting

Thursday, June 21, 7:00 P.M.

“Giant Sequoias, Icons of the Sierra National Parks”

Steve Veirs, retired Park ranger
Merced United Methodist Church



William Pettee sculpture of John Muir
Sierra Club photo

We will celebrate Sierra Club founder John Muir's 174th birthday on April 21, 2012

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, 2012

3-Day, Live-Aboard, Multi-Island Cruises May 6-8; July 8-10; September 9-11

Explore the wild, windswept islands of Channel Island National Park. Enjoy the frolicking seals and sea lions. Train your binoculars on rare sea and land birds. Hike trails bordered by blankets of wildflowers and plants found in no other place on earth. Kayak or snorkel the pristine waters--- or just relax at sea. All tours depart from Santa Barbara aboard the 68' twin diesel Turth. Fee for all tours, \$590, includes an assigned bunk, all meals, snacks, beverages, plus the services of a ranger/naturalist who will travel with us to lead hikes, call attention to items of interest and present evening programs.

To make a reservation mail a \$100 check, payable to Sierra Club to leader: Joan Jones Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732. Contact leader for more information (626-443-0706; jholtzhln@aol.com)



Clearing the Air

with Kevin Hall

Heart Attack. The valley air board held its most recent meeting a little after Valentine's Day last month, and it was a massacre – of logic, of truth and, eventually, of lives. The core issue under discussion was this year's mandatory cleanup plan for "fine" particulates.

These are the fall and winter solids suspended in the atmosphere that are small enough to bypass the lungs and directly enter the bloodstream. They reach the heart in less than two seconds and the brain less than two seconds after that. From there they spread throughout the body's bloodstream wreaking havoc wherever they land, often triggering heart attacks, strokes and more.

As mentioned in an earlier column, the latest research shows permanent, inheritable damage being done to our very genetic makeup, resulting in lower T-cell counts in the children studied. People with low counts of this critically important regulator of the immune system end up with severe allergies, asthma, G.I. disease and diabetes type I. In short, this is deadly serious stuff. It needs deadly serious attention.

Sadly, the transparent public process that should accompany the development of such a critically important plan has already been severely undercut. The air board was scheduled to first discuss the plan back in October, but things ran too late to get around to it at that meeting, because apparently the officials occupying the seats on this governing board allot only half a day a month for their duties. It was lunch time. They were done here.

So the item was tabled and didn't resurface for four full months, eliminating nearly half of the plan development schedule. The original version of the plan included a window for public forums in January and February, but the air board staff buried the document long enough to suffocate that effort. Advocates hoping to shape the cleanup efforts were effectively shut out of the most important phase of the process. The real work was begun behind closed doors.

Unprincipled Principles. This is where a sense of irony comes in very handy. For example, contained within this policy document, euphemistically labeled an action plan to develop cleanup plans, one can find a set of guiding principles. Note: people with high blood pressure or anger management issues are encouraged to read no further.

Let's just look at a few. Principle No. 1 says "public health [is] our number one priority," but nowhere in the document is there any mention of the real impacts of air pollution on people's health. There is plenty of emphasis on considering the economic impacts of regulation, but no plans to conduct a comparable analysis of health outcomes.

Principle No. 5 can be termed The Big Lie. It says "80% of the Valley's emissions originate from mobile sources." Not even close. The air board staff and industry authors of this fiction are referring to one type of pollutant only, nitrogen oxides. Fine particulates are made by five different chemicals. Of these, nitrogen oxides from mobile sources contribute less than 30%.

Meanwhile, the largest, fastest growing and least regulated source of particulate-causing pollution is ammonia from dairies and feedlots – confined animal feeding operations. Currently, a few hundred factory farms in the San Joaquin Valley emit more ammonia than all the NOx coming from every mobile source imaginable. A relatively handful of businesses pollute more than the hundreds of thousands of vehicles of every imaginable kind, from cars, trucks and earth-movers to planes, trains and tractors.

No. 11 calls for public participation. That's been covered already, but it's worth quoting a little: "Provide ample opportunity for public participation and feedback in the design and implementation of these plans." Yeah, right.

Despite all that, given the lives at stake here it's not possible to simply walk away. It's what they want. Just as conservative political forces pour on the negative advertising

to suppress voter turnout, the air board and its executive staff do everything they can get away with to discourage public participation. Stay tuned for the call to action. It's coming soon, and your presence, your voice and your concern will be needed. It's what in your heart that counts.



Kevin Hall is director of the Central Valley Air Quality Coalition based in Fresno, online at www.calcleanair.org and on Facebook. CVAQ is a partnership of more than 70 community, medical, public health, environmental and environmental justice organizations representing thousands of residents in the San Joaquin Valley unified in their commitment to improve the health of Californians. Contact him at kevin@calcleanair.org.



Chipmunks affected by Climate Change

Researchers at UC Berkeley have discovered that climate change has forced alpine chipmunks, *Tamias alpinus*, in Yosemite National Park to higher elevations. The move has also affected the species' genetic diversity, according to an article published in February 2012 in the journal *Nature Climate Change*. Researchers compared specimens collected in the 1920s with modern chipmunks. In 1914 and 1920 Joseph Grinnell and colleagues from UC Berkeley sighted *Tamias alpinus* at 7,800 feet. Now these chipmunks have moved up to about 9,400 feet.

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.

OutingsLeaders may post their own trips on the web page or send them to Marcia@BigBaldy.com.

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.

Would you like to be an Outings Leader?

Being an Outings Leader can be very rewarding. Basic qualifications include a desire to lead outings, basic first aid or the ability to devote time to getting qualified in first aid, and reading the Sierra Club Outings Leader Handbook. The Tehipite Chapter would like to offer outings to people of all abilities and ages. If you are interested, phone Marcia Rasmussen (559) 332-2419 or email her at Marcia@bigbaldy.com

Outings Schedule

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.

Saturday, March 24, 2012 - 8:00am

Dayhike 2B, Mt. Diablo State Park: the less-often visited south side.

Leader: Randall Brown

Rating: Intermediate Distance: 8.00 miles Elevation Gain: 1,800 feet

Includes a visit to the unusual "Rock city" area. Bring lunch, snacks, raingear, and extra layers depending on the weather that day. Meeting time: 8:00. Please call for details of the Turlock & Modesto meeting locations. For further information, contact trip leader.

Contact: Randall Brown - (209) 632-5994

Saturday, June 2, 2012 - 7:30am

4-Mile Trail to Glacier Point

Leader: Karen Hammer

Type: Day Hike **Rating: Difficult** Climbing Elevation: 3,000 feet

Maximum Elevation: 7,000 feet Distance: 9.00 miles Elevation Gain: 3,000 feet

We will take the 4 Mile Trail from Yosemite Valley and climb 3,000 feet to Glacier Point. This hike involves a strenuous sustained climb, but the scenery is fantastic and includes views across the valley of Yosemite Falls. After enjoying lunch and the views from Glacier Point we'll descend back to the trailhead and to our cars. As we leave the park we have the option of stopping at the Wawona Hotel for their sumptuous barbecue on the lawn.

Bring layers of clothing, rain protection, sun protection, good hiking boots or shoes, hiking poles if you use them, minimum 2 quarts of water, snacks, lunch, \$ for carpool \$ for park entrance fee \$ for barbecue (optional). Call leader to ensure you have the proper conditioning for this hike and to find out carpool meeting place.

Contact: Karen Hammer (559)298-5272

Sunday, July 1, 2012 - Friday, August 31, 2012

Mt. Whitney Day Hike - tentative, date to be decided

Leader: Marcia Rasmussen

Type: Day Hike Rating: Difficult Climbing Elevation: 6,000 feet Descending Elevation: 6,000 feet

Maximum Elevation: 14,500 feet Minimum Elevation: 8,500 feet

Distance: 22.00 miles

Description: Mt. Whitney trips are tentative, date(s) unknown. All depends on the Inyo National Forest lottery system. We will go whenever permits are available.

When we announced the Whitney trip in 2011, the trip filled quickly with a long waiting list. In the end, the mountain itself canceled our hike with a massive storm. This summer, we hope to run 2 separate Whitney trips, each limited to 10 people. This is a long, difficult hike. Participants will be screened for appropriate fitness/experience. We may not know the date(s) until March/April. Sign up now if you would like to be placed on the list early. As soon as dates are announced, you will be asked to pay a \$15 permit fee to reserve your place.

Check this website frequently for updates.

Contact: Marcia Rasmussen: Marcia@BigBaldy.com or (559) 332-2419

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN TEHIPITE TERRITORY

Carolyn Raffensperger, Executive Director of the Science & Environmental Health Network will be speaking on April 21, 2 P.M., Forum Hall at Fresno City College. The topic will be:

Becoming Beloved Ancestors: Leaving a Healthy World to Future Generations

The pressing problems of our day call us to new policies, innovative institutions, and imaginative solutions if future generations are going to inherit a habitable planet. The legacy of climate change, extinct species and toxic sites threatens generations for thousands of years. We can rise to the challenge and invent new approaches to systemic problems. The precautionary principle, legal guardians for future generations, and protections for the commons are some of the emerging ideas that have practical applications in government today. Join us for a visionary talk and conversation about a way forward.



Carolyn Raffensperger, photo from tedxmaui.com

Co-sponsors for this event include

Women's International League for Peace & Freedom, Fresno Branch ~ Tehipite Chapter, Sierra Club ~ Revive the San Joaquin Sustainable Actions Club, Fresno City College ~ Fresno Chapter, League of Women Voters

Earth Day at the Unitarian Universalist Church
Please join us in celebrating Earth Day in Fresno.

When: April 14, 2012, Saturday at 11:00am-4:00pm

Where: Unitarian Universalist Church of Fresno at 2672 East Alluvial Avenue, Clovis, CA 93611 - between Chestnut and Willow (Click for map)

Fresno Earth Day is open to everyone, FREE, and kid-friendly!

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A donation of \$25 or more is requested to cover costs. Make checks payable to the Tehipite Chapter of the Sierra Club.. Send to PO box 5396 Fresnc, CA 93755

“News” from page 2

ists, Sierra Club staff members, and more funds to commit. Tehipite Chapter is already contracting with an attorney to provide expertise on GSNM matters.

With nationwide National Forest Planning Rule changes about to be put in place time commitments for Sierra Club (read that “Tehipite Chapter”) activists will increase. We currently have members participating in two major collaborative groups (Dinkey and Willow Creek) on the Sierra National Forest. There are other such groups in which Tehipite is NOT participating. We just do not have enough activists. On top of that, both the Sierra and Sequoia National Forests are in the first tier of forests that will be going through forest-wide planning under the New Rule. The current Land Resource Management Plans (LRMPs) for Sierra and Sequoia are far beyond their 15 year revision times.

The new Planning Rule from the Obama administration will implement even more collaboration with what is called landscape planning—even already at the project level. Yes, current project planning on the Sierra National Forest already includes so many different aspects that we need expertise in everything from timber management to watershed developments to climate change to wildlife habitat protection to meadow restoration to power production and MORE. This comes at a time when the Forest Service is increasing timber production in order to provide jobs.

The consensus-driven collaboration process is advertized as more transparent. Collaboration meetings allow members of the interested public (industry, Tribal, local agency, environmental, community, consulting, etc.) to meet together to share their various interests, perspectives, and desires as a planning process goes along. That requires a new dimension of time and labor beyond our traditional analysis of and comments on plan documents. The Forest Service knows this. They have already shifted their own work responsibilities as consulting firms (many employing retired Forest Service members) are under contract to write project plans. In current plans there is more emphasis on jobs and economics even while the forests in all their components supposedly are to be protected AND restored. Then there is hope that the collaborative planning process will reduce controversies and subsequent litigation.

As the Sierra Club goes forward in many collaboration groups, we don’t want to be bowled over by consensus, especially since the Forest Service is ramping up timber production which continues to degrade old-forest habitat ecosystems. We also do not want meadows to be severely altered by heavy equipment in the name of meadow restoration. Tehipite Chapter led passage of a California/Nevada Regional Conservation Committee (CNRCC) meadow resolution to that effect. That resolution is posted on Tehipite website.

Last October Alan Carlton, chair of the CNRCC organized a listing of Sierra Club Forest Policy. That listing is also posted on our Tehipite website. Those policies are wide-ranging and protective in promoting old-growth forest characteristics, wildlife habitats, and watersheds.

Regardless of what collaboration might produce in plans for forest projects, the Club and Tehipite Chapter together, could still find reasons to disagree with plan content and perhaps even to litigate. For that reason, now more than ever, Tehipite Chapter needs more activists and more funds to support our efforts to protect and restore our National Forests.

Funding is especially important. Please donate during the March funding window.

SB 375 Attacked at Fresno COG

SB 375 (Steinberg 2008) is the strongest legislation passed so far in the California Legislature to address the critical issues of land use and greenhouse gas emissions. Known as the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act, SB 375 requires county and regional planning agencies to develop land-use and transportation plans (i.e. general plans and regional transportation plans) so as to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by passenger vehicles and light trucks and thus reduce also greenhouse gas emissions, which contribute to climate change.

Each regional planning agency is charged under SB 375 with developing a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Secondary benefits include reductions in criteria air pollution also present in fossil emissions and reduced urban sprawl.

Unfortunately, on March 9th, at the meeting of the Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) of the Fresno Council of Govern-

ments (COG), COG staff transportation planner Kristine Kai recommended that the TTC vote for a motion requiring COG Director Tony Boren to sign a letter supporting the San Diego area COG (SANDAG) in a lawsuit filed originally by the Cleveland National Forest Foundation, the Sierra



CA Attorney General Kamala Harris,
Photo from Wikipedia

Club, and the Center for Biological Diversity, which was recently joined by California Attorney General Kamala Harris.

This letter is the product of the Self-Help Counties Coalition (SHCC), a group of 18 COGs pressuring AG Harris to withdraw from the lawsuit.

When a motion was made to have Boren sign the letter, TTC member Chip Ashley, who represents the Tehipite Chapter, said he would have to abstain from any vote since the Sierra Club is a party to the suit. Ashley then joined members John Donaldson, of the League of Women Voters, and Dennis Manning of Fresno Area Rail Consolidation in arguing that this was a serious matter that the TTC had not yet had enough time to consider. Several others also questioned the necessity of an immediate vote, including Darrell Unruh of the City of Fresno. After some debate the TTC agreed to table the motion.

Unfortunately, later the same day, the body which the TTC advises, the Policy Advisory Committee, did not follow the TTC’s advice to table the letter till next month’s meeting. After public comments from Elizabeth Jonasson of the Coalition for Clean Air, nursing professional Inga Minton, Camille Russell of Peace Fresno, Dennis Manning, and

Chip Ashley, the PAC debated the motion to sign onto the letter, with Bruce Rudd, Assistant City Manager of the City of Fresno, arguing that the motion should be tabled. However, Kingsburg's Don Pauley and several others argued that the letter did not actually support SANDAG, that it is really just about talking with the AG, and that the AG should mind her own affairs and stay out of the counties' business. The result was the motion passed 10-4 in a rollcall vote.

All is not lost, however. The main body of the COG, the COG Policy Board must still agree to have Director Boren sign onto the SHCC letter. The issue will be on the agenda of the Policy Board's next meeting on March 22 at 5:30 PM.

The subtext of all this is that while Fresno COG staff know Fresno County has to meet the letter of the law of SB 375, staff and local policy deciders (i.e. the Board of Supervisors) want to avoid having to do more than the minimum, which is what SANDAG did in submitting their flawed SCS. The reason behind all this is the local powers that be who hold the financial strings are climate change deniers and don't want to have to change their business model, as they know a strong SCS would require.

SANDAG met the letter of the law on GHG, but their transportation and land use modeling is based on smoke and mirrors. Their plan is front-loaded with road building and highway construction, and there is no way it will bring about the GHG reductions it claims to be able to do. Moreover, SB 375 is about more than GHG. It is also about public health and housing, especially in poverty-stricken environmental justice communities, where air pollution is disproportionately impacting. This is why Harris is joining the suit. This is why SHCC and the Fresno COG don't want her in it. It's all about money, and it's all about having poor non-white communities pay the hidden costs of air pollution and climate change.

Those who support a strong SCS are asked to study the issue and comment publicly at this meeting on March 22..

FUNDRAISER REMINDER

March is fundraising month. We need help doing the kind of work you are reading about here. So please write a check and send it to Tehipite Chapter of the Sierra Club, PO Box 5396, Fresno CA 93755-5396

Tehipite Awards Banquet

Ron Mackie

The Tehipite Chapter of the Sierra Club held its annual awards Banquet Friday, March 9th, at the Park Inn in Fresno. The banquet was well attended and quite enjoyable. Our Tehipite Chapter Chair, Mr. Bill Fjellbo, introduced our agency guests including both the Chief Ranger of Sequoia/Kings Canyon National Parks and the Forest Supervisor of the Sierra National Forest.

Marcia Rasmussen, the chapters Awards Chair, conducted an outstanding awards presentation to some of most active members. Heather Anderson was recognized for her service both in handling chapter awards for so many years and the myriad of responsibilities Heather continues to perform. Wayne Dill was thanked for his exceptional service in maintaining the chapters treasury. Rich Kangas was recognized with the Chapters Conservation Award for years of effort working on Sierra and Sequoia National Forest issues. George Whitmore received the Chapter Yosemite Award, new this year, and named for George for his 55 plus years of working on Yosemite issues.

Notable guests included journalist and historian Gene Rose and former Sierra Club President Joe Fontaine. Long-time member Vicky Hoover also joined us. Vicky publishes Sierra Club's Words of the Wild., and she was Edgar Wayburn's assistant.

Joann Clark was the Doug Harwell award recipient. We cannot thank Joanne enough for her service at the Chapter, State and National level of the Sierra Club. The banquets keynote speaker was Mr. Don Neubacher, Superintendent of Yosemite National Park. Don's presentation was both inspirational and quite educational. The chapter must thank Karen Hammer for her excellent work on organizing and keeping track of the logistical details of this fun and delightful evening.



Gener Rose and Joe Fontaine enjoying a conversation



Marcia Rasmussen congratulates Joanne Clarke who received the Doug Harwell Award



Heather Anderson was recognized for her many years of service



Keynote speaker Yosemite Superintendent Don Neubacher edified banqueters with an inspiring speech on Yosemite National Park



Tehipite Chapter members enjoy dinner and conversation

New Years Celebration in Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument

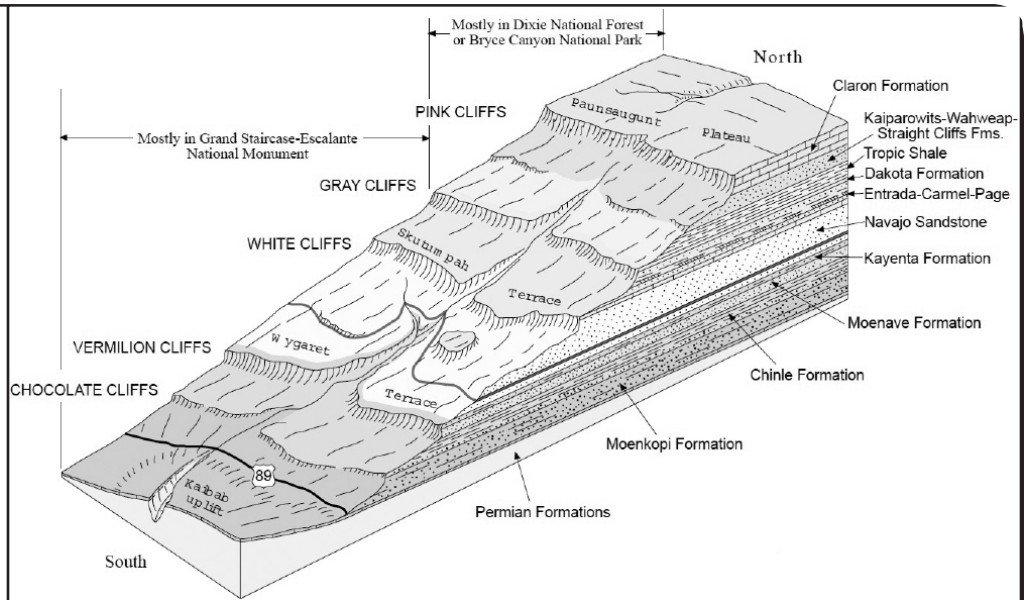
Heather Anderson

It took two driving days to get to Boulder, Utah on the edge of the monument. I had heard about this area when President Clinton designated it as a national monument in 1996, all 1.9 million acres of it. The monument includes stretches from the towns of Glendale, and Kanab on the southwest to Escalante and Boulder on the northeast. Three important facets of the area are new to me: the Grand Staircase, Kaiparowits Plateau, and Canyons of the Escalante. I soon learned the definition of these names on the land, but digesting, visualizing, and understanding this topography will take longer. My friend, Vicky, who tossed off names like Calf Creek, Escalante River, Straight Cliffs, Kaiparowits Plateau, and Hole-in-the-Rock left me mentally trying to fit together this eco puzzle of watersheds, canyons, cliffs, plateaus, pinnacles, buttes, and mesas.



Heather's painting, "Lower Calf Creek," provides a good visual of the topography of the Escalante. Too bad it has to be in black and white

We met up with our varied group of about ten celebrants who had been ringing-in the New Year at Boulder each year for the last twenty. Most were Sierra Club trip leaders and activists from Utah. Most participated in the preparation of the tasty potluck meals we enjoyed. We topped off our social eve-



This simplified graphic provides some idea of the structure and geology of the Escalante, which of course means "staircase."
Graphic from *Geology of Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument* by Doelling et al

nings with a brief walk in the frosty night air under an inky sky filled with stars. By nine o'clock each morning, we were on our way to the day's trailhead, to walk over the land I was learning about.

On day one, we started out on the Burr Trail, a 68-mile old, backcountry trail stretching from Boulder to Bulldog Utah in Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. It had been formerly used to move cattle to and from winter and summer ranges. Later, we cut cross-country through low sparse vegetation of stunted juniper and pinyon, desert shrubs, and dry wildflowers, then up and over slick rock. It was called slick rock when early immigrants worked to lower their wagons over the slick oily sandstone surface of the cliffs, while crossing the Colorado en route to their future Mormon community of Bluff in southeastern Utah. To me it was not really slick but perhaps it would be with sand, oil, rain or thawing snow. It is actually layered, colored sandstone, rounded by slow desert erosion over millennia. The trick for me was to see how steeply my boots could grip without slipping.

Lunch is most often on top of a promontory for the best view. On that day the Straight Cliffs, along the Kaiparowits Plateau, and the Monument were spread out beneath the bluest sky I had ever seen. I relaxed, enjoyed the silence, and gave thanks for this incredibly unique and subtle desert landscape.

Hearing about the Grand Staircase is one thing, but where is it, and to where does it ascend and descend? The Grand Staircase

is a layered sequence of sedimentary rock stretching south from Bryce Canyon National Park, through Zion National Park and into the Grand Canyon. You can think of it as a huge staircase ascending northward out of the bottom of the Grand Canyon through a series of cliff-edge layers which form giant steps. The five steps can be labeled Pink, Gray, White, Vermillion, and Chocolate Cliffs, or they can be divided into individual, more scientific rock formations representing two hundred million years of earth's history.



Escalante Medicine Man Photo by Thomas Hertel, from Wikimedia

This time we never saw the Colorado River, but we saw the Paria and Escalante tributaries which drained the land as they emptied

See "Escalante" page 12

into the big Colorado. The River itself rises from its source in Colorado, flows with the Green River from its beginning in Wyoming, runs the entire length of Utah, and along the state line between Arizona and California before it empties into the Gulf of California. The entire Colorado watershed sculpts and drains five states. Calf Creek is an offshoot of the Escalante River. In an earlier year, I had stayed at the campground, walked up to Lower Calf Creek Falls, waded in its pool, sketched, and later turned that sketch into a painting. At a different trailhead, I had walked into Upper Deer Creek Falls.

This red-rock country with its colors, cliffs, arches, and pictographs is worth exploring. Spring or Fall it invites you. On our day of departure, we had planned to investigate Hole-in-the-Rock, but the road was too muddy for the jeep. It is a narrow, steep, rocky crevice in the 1200' sandstone cliff leading to the river below. According to history, in 1879, the leaders of the Mormon migration to the sought-after promised land selected this shorter, more direct path for crossing the Colorado instead of a longer, easier route. Hardy pioneers worked for five months to blast and hand chisel a trail down over slopes close to 45 degrees, then built a ferry, and blasted a road to ascend the cliff on the other side of the great river.

Thankfully, our two-day trip home was much easier over paved roads in Vicky's trusty Toyota. Although a late shower washed away the sand, the shapes of red rock and colored sandstone remain etched on my inner eye.

NEEDED: A WATER ETHIC

David Cehrs

If you haven't noticed, things have been dryer than normal this winter. Our annual water inputs will be below normal, stressing our water resources for the coming year. This means we will depend on our groundwater resource to make up for a lack of surface water.

Due to increasing societal demands for water, our groundwater tables have been declining since 1945 and, statistically, we use all available surface water 3 out of every 4 years. Our use of water is unsustainable: the demand for water is greater than the long term supply. Until we address and lower our demands for water to match our limited, finite water sup-

ply we will not solve our water problems. We need a societal water ethic.



Photo by Alex Anlicher from Wikimedia

The increasing demand for water comes, principally, from population growth demanding more water for domestic use and increased food production. Sadly, the largest domestic use of water is for landscaping. For Fresno this is 70%, which is one of the highest,

state-wide. The main landscaping waste is lawns. If we can get over the desire for green grass in a desert environment and transition to native or xeric landscaping we will reduce our societal water demand considerably.

More generally, as a society we undervalue water. What are we willing to pay for water? We complain about the cost of municipal water, which is available any time and is potable. Municipal water in Fresno County costs, at most, \$0.004 per gallon, which is cheap for a resource that our lives depend on. Why do we pay \$3-\$4 per gallon for gasoline but get upset when the cost of municipal water begins to approach \$0.01 per gallon? Because we grossly undervalue water and how we use it in our lives.

The cost of municipal water includes water



Water is used for irrigation

USDA Photo

delivery and treatment, plus infrastructure operation and maintenance. In many cities, pipeline maintenance and replacement has been deferred for over 50 years and there is no money budgeted for this. Why? Because we do not want to pay for water. We want it for free or at little cost, and we will vote out politicians who do not toe the line on water costs. So what happens when pipelines break

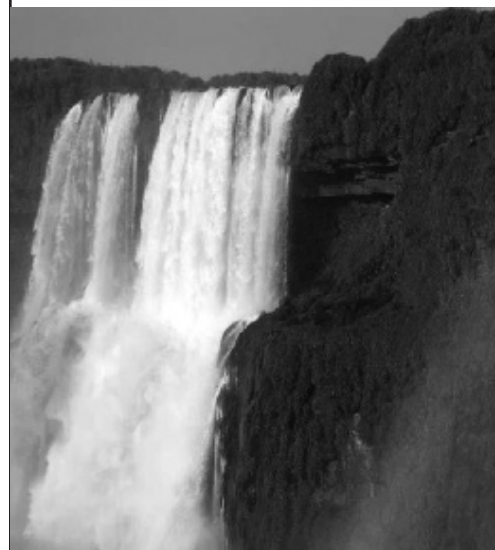
or leak? The supply is disrupted and the cost to repair the pipes can triple the maintenance costs. In the future, as the population grows and competition increases, we will all have to use less domestic water and the cost of that water will increase. This will make voters livid, but the reason for the increase will be that our current societal water use is unsustainable due to increasing water demands on a finite water supply.

Our lifestyles are greatly influenced by readily available, unlimited, unpolluted, potable water. We can safely drink and cook with municipal water, which is invaluable! From a health and sanitation standpoint we use water to wash (shower, teeth, laundry) and dispose of wastes (sewage, food). We use water for beauty in our landscaping and for recreation in our pools. If you do not think this is invaluable, try living on 5 to 10 gallons of water per person per day as many people in the third world do! You would hardly ever bathe, there would be no sanitation, you could have no garden, most of your water would have to be used for cooking and drinking; and to avoid getting sick you would have to boil your water.

We need a societal water ethic that realizes water is a precious, valuable, limited resource. We must conserve water for our, and future generations', use. We must keep it clean for our, and future generations', health. We must realize that our lives depend upon water.



Source: Wikimedia by Ionut Cojocaru



Waterfall in Brazil

photo by Angelo Leithold

Electric Cars:

Is Driving Green Becoming Practical?

Chip Ashley

Tom Cotter's op/ed in the Fresno Bee (January 26, 2012) got me thinking about electric cars. The specific point that piqued my curiosity was that his new Nissan Leaf is much less expensive to operate than either a hybrid or a conventional fossil fuel run automobile.



Nissan Leaf photo from Wikipedia by Tennen-Gas A c -

According to Cotter, who makes his living selling solar for the local Real Goods Solar operation, "I figure I'm saving about \$3,300 in annual gas and oil change bills compared with the average Ford Expedition driver. The average electricity cost to power my Leaf cuts about \$870 off what my Prius driving friends spend at the pump."

Cotter is probably overly optimistic if he believes Ford Expedition owners might trade in for a Leaf—whose green name is an acronym for "Leading, Environmentally friendly, Affordable, Family car"—since owners of ostentatious gas-guzzling vehicles like Expeditions and Hummers, for example, often seem to be saying, "Look at me! I am rich and can afford to gas-up this behemoth, and I don't believe that hoax about climate change anyway." It's a little like snorting cocaine through a rolled-up thousand dollar bill and then burning the bill to light a crack pipe—which tells you more about what I think of Expedition and Hummer drivers.

In any case, if Cotter's claims about the economics of his leaf are true, maybe we're getting much closer to solving problem of climate change than I believed before I read his op/ed. So I took a closer look at not only at the fuel economy of the Nissan Leaf, but that of the Chevrolet Volt and the Toyota Prius.

According to Consumer Reports, the energy-cost of driving a Leaf at 11 cents per kilowatt hour (a little lower than PG&E rates locally) is 3.5 cents per mile. The Volt, which has a

fossil-powered generator to extend range, comes in at 3.8 cents and 12.5 cents when the generator takes over when the battery runs down to a predetermined level. The Prius comes in at 8.6 cents per mile. These compare with the Toyota Corolla, which costs 11.9 cents per mile. So energy economy looks very good for both the Leaf and the Volt.

For many the crucial question may be range. Many believe, as I did, that electric vehicles don't have the necessary range to make them practical. Actually, for in and around town driving for the San Joaquin Valley, both the Leaf and the Volt have the necessary range for daily trips to work and errands. According to Forbes Magazine, under ideal cruising conditions, the Leaf has a range of 138 miles. But even in heavy stop-and-go traffic, the Leaf achieves 47 miles, which is plenty for



2011 Chevy Volt photo from Wikipedia

Fresno and the other larger Valley cities.

Range will certainly improve over the next few years, as battery storage improves. Actually, the Tesla Roadster already has a range of over 200 miles. The problem, of course, is that it also has a price tag of over \$100,000. But the Tesla proves that batteries are already where they need to be, and it is just a matter of reducing cost. I recall the first handheld calculator I bought back in the 1970s, which cost me several hundred dollars. Now better calculators come free in the mail as promotional gifts. Something similar will almost certainly take place in the cost of batteries, probably in the next five years.

Once range gets a little better and prices come down some, people are going to be dumping their gas guzzlers since the electrics will cost less than 1/3 the cost of driving a fossil vehicle.

The other variable is availability and cost of electricity. As it comes down and distributed generation begins to compete increasingly with the big utilities, allowing owners

Pyrolysis: A Better Way To Deal with Biomass

Chip Ashley

Tehipite Chapter has been offered an opportunity to participate in an emerging energy technology. Some folks from North Fork (Madera County) came to us a few months ago and asked us to send a letter of support for the proposed North Fork Combined Heat and Power (CHP) Demonstration Project's WBUG application. WBUG stands for "Woody Biomass Utilization Grant."

I know—that's a mouthful. But the project is not as complicated as its name might suggest, and it has many co-benefits besides merely the production of electrical energy. This is a very promising environmentally friendly technology in several ways: It can supply relatively clean energy—much cleaner than coal and natural gas. It is also ecologically sustainable and it has benefits for the forest.

The technology to be used in the proposed North Fork Project uses Biomass-Pyrolysis. Biomass-Pyrolysis supplements the return fire as a natural and necessary part of the Sierra forest ecosystem. It provides an economically sustainable means of removing small diameter trees up to 16 inches to prepare the forest for the restoration of low intensity fire. It utilizes the biomass that is mechanically removed to produce electrical energy at a cost of about 20 cents per kilowatt hour, which when compared to the actual cost of utility produced electricity, which carries hidden public health costs, may be less expensive.

Biomass-Pyrolysis creates biochar, which if returned to the forest ecosystem, enriches and stabilizes forest soils as well as improving water quality. It is thus a relatively inexpensive means of carbon sequestration since, in contrast with conventional biomass to energy, it does not turn biomass into smoke and gas and release it into the atmosphere, but instead returns it to the soil in a very stable form. It does not "incinerate" biomass. There is no crude steam engine that burns biomass to heat water. Instead WBU uses pyrolysis (heating without oxygen) to extract bio-oil (a rich fuel) from the biomass while turning the biomass to biochar (essentially charcoal), some of which can be restored to the forest whence it came. Since the process

produces charcoal more efficiently than low intensity wildfire, some of the biochar can be sold off as a soil additive. Finally, the process provides an inexpensive but effective means of carbon sequestration since the biochar is very stable and in fact can remain in the soil for hundreds of years enriching it all the while, which is what makes it a valuable commodity. So you get lots of bang for your buck.

The Mother Lode Chapter to our north (based in Sacramento) has already established a policy friendly to this technology because they believe it helps protect communities from catastrophic wildfire while at the same time promoting healthier forests. The chapter's policy is based on Sierra Club's national policy, which Mother Lode helped shape:

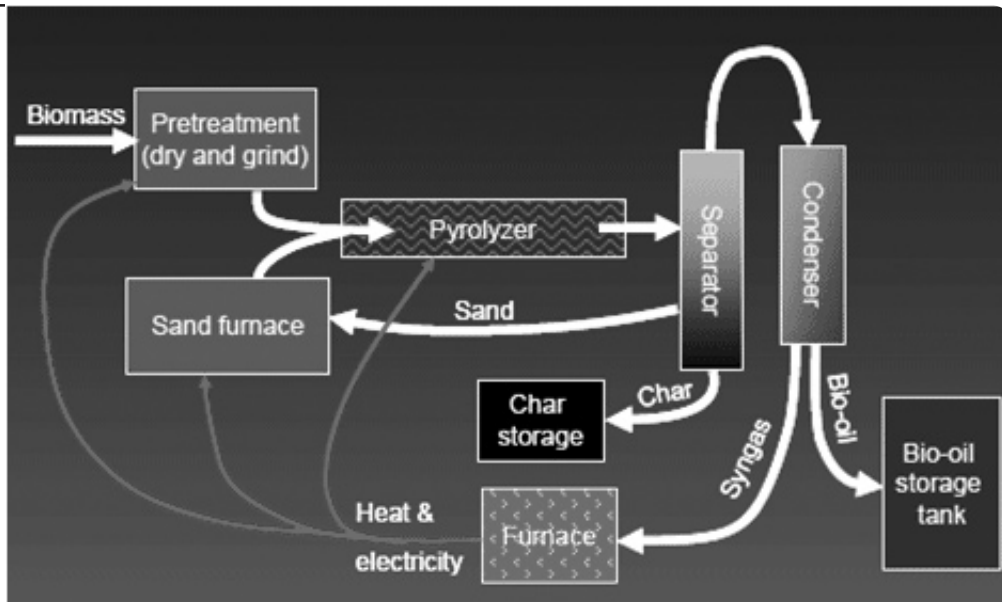
"The Club will oppose bioenergy proposals which reduce total carbon storage on large landscapes with the promise that these will later be replaced. Bioenergy is only acceptable if it produces net carbon gains in the short term as well as the long term. A bioenergy proposal whose purpose is to encourage carbon storage in a more stable state could be supportable, such as removing accumulations of highly flammable small-diameter wood from a forest, thus protecting and encouraging the growth of large fire-resistant trees which provide more sustainable long term carbon storage" (Energy Resources Policy, page 16).

The demonstration project proposed for North Fork meets all these requirements.

Prescribed Fire in Yosemite

By Ron Mackie

For the last three summers, I have had the opportunity to work as a Fire Information and Education Officer (Trainee), for the Yosemite Park Fire Management Office. It is an "emergency only" appointment, but it has been both rewarding and educational. My interest in prescribed fire goes back to 1960, when I was employed as a seasonal trail laborer for the National Park Service in Yosemite. At that time, many local Native American men worked in the Trails department, and it was interesting to hear them relate their passed down heritage concerning fire in the park. Because of these conversations, and while attending college at University of California, Davis, I enrolled



USDA graphic

in a course taught by Dr. H.H. Biswell, on fire ecology in the Sierra. Being a student of Dr. Biswell's, and having worked with both the Native Americans and other "old timer" forestry people, early on I became an advocate for the role of "Fire as a Natural Process" in our National Parks. I received my permanent appointment as a Park Ranger with the Park Service in 1967. As both a Supervisory Park Ranger, and then for 25 years, the Wilderness Manager for Yosemite, I was involved in the many discussions relating to the changes in NPS fire management policies. Gradually, the debate revolving around one of total fire suppression to stressing managing fire as a natural process evolved. Needless to say these discussions were often contentious, with many strong opinions on all sides of the issue. There were many obstacles to overcome, including both funding issues and agency outreach and educational programs.



NPS photo

Looking back on over 50 years of wildland fire experience, much has changed. In the early sixties, fires were generally reported by lookouts. Crews would be notified and dis-

patched to the incident. Often these fires would be a snag, with burning duff and bear clover, or brush, with fire creeping into the cat faces of the mature trees. Standard operating procedure was put in a fireline –fall all burning trees and stay on the scene until the fireboss was satisfied that the fire was dead out. This was important then as your end of the season evaluation was less than desirable if a crew had to be sent back in on a re-burn. One such fire, the "Half Dome Fire", on the trail between Little Yosemite Valley and Half Dome itself, was roughly five acres when we arrived. The fire had crept into a couple of catfaces of some beautiful, mature Jeffery pines. We were ordered to drop those trees. We thought that was a waste, but that is how things were done. Its quite different now, wildland fires are evaluated on weather man caused or lighting caused, wilderness classification, wildland/urban interface and other factors. Crews are dispatched to size up the fire potential and if favorable burning, terrain, weather, smoke, structures and public safety issues are manageable, the fire is allowed to restore its role as a necessary process in maintaining a healthy ecosystem. Fire personnel now represent all skills and disciplines from tree fallers to resource management personnel. These people train firefighters both in minimum fire suppression techniques but also in the importance of resource values including plants, animals and cultural and historic resources. One outstanding Resource officer I have had the pleasure to work with, a woman employed by the Stanislaus National Forest, is not only an expert in her field, but a certified "Dozer Boss". This was something you simply did not see 50 years ago.

Firefighting personnel have changed too. Nowadays fire personnel come from all dis-

ciplines, from tree fallers to resource management personnel, and are called on both to train and brief firefighters on the importance of resource values including threats to both plants, animals and historic and cultural resources. One outstanding Resource Officer I know, a woman from the Stanislaus National Forest, is not only an expert in her field, but a certified Dozer Boss. This was something you simply did not see 50 years ago.

According to the National Interagency Fire Center, "Fire is one way nature maintains a landscape. Without the culling, recycling and regenerative contributions of fire, a dynamic ecosystem becomes a stagnant garden, with less plant and animal diversity. Fire turns dead plant material into soil nutrients. Nitrogen from ash fertilizes the soil, encouraging new seeds to sprout. Fewer trees, brush and mature plants means more sunlight reaches seedlings, allowing them to grow." As our readers know the benefits of ecological fire are too numerous to mention; however, the agencies continue to study the effects and continuously improve the fire management programs. Research in smoke impacts, fire effects, rehabilitation and monitoring are a very high priority. Yosemite National Park employs a full-time Fire ecologist, Mr. Gus Smith, a Ph.D. from the University of New Hampshire, along with a well trained cadre of fire fighters in an integrated fire management program. The chapter was delighted to Gus Smith as our keynote speaker at last year's banquet. Much work still needs to be done, and mistakes may still happen, but I think the National Park Service Program in Fire ecology is on sound footing.



NPS crew works 2009 Yosemite Big Meadow fire
NPS photo

Giant Sequoia National Monument Update

Joe Fontaine

Sequoia National Forest is working on a new management plan for the Giant Sequoia Monument that is expected to be released early in the summer of 2012. The Monument was created by President Clinton on April 15, 2000 and has been without a management plan for nearly 12 years. Sequoia National Forest tried to adopt a plan a few years ago but the court told them to do it over again as a result of a lawsuit brought by the Sierra Club, the State of California and several other environmental organizations. The judge agreed with our assertion that the plan did not conform with the requirements of the Proclamation that created the Monument. We are hoping the management plan that will be released later this year will conform to both the letter and the intent of the Proclamation.

The Club's Sequoia Task Force has been meeting with the Forest Service at the local level in Porterville, the Regional Office in Vallejo, and the Chief of the Forest Service in Washington D.C. We have been trying to make sure the Forest Service understands what we regard as the shortcomings of the initial management plan.

*We believe the sequoia groves and the surrounding forests should be managed like those in Sequoia National Park. The National Park Service has been using prescribed fire as its primary management tool for over 40 years to create healthy resilient conditions in the groves and forests. They have a proven record of success. The first plan the Forest Service released called for logging using timber sale contracts to restore the forests from a century of fire exclusion and environmentally destructive logging practices. The Proclamation prohibits commercial logging in the Monument.

*The Proclamation prohibits removal of trees from the Monument without clear ecological needs or for public safety. We are asking the Forest Service to create an objective and easily understood protocol based on science and ecological need to justify removing any trees from the Monument.

*The Proclamation calls for the creation of a Science Advisory Board to provide scientific guidance into developing a management plan. We have asked that a new Science Advisory Board be created to provide guidance in using science to develop the new management plan.

The Forest Service has called for a science review process to be used in meeting that requirement. We will see if the required process for scientific guidance has been met when the latest plan is released in a few months.

The Sierra Club's Sequoia Task Force is closely following the development of a management plan for the Monument that is consistent with the requirements of the Proclamation. We will not hesitate to recommend legal action again if that goal is not met. Stay tuned!

In Memorium, Peggy Dowell

According to obit in the Bee, Peggy Dowell was born Peggy Hittle on a farm in Patterson California in 1928. She loved living and playing on the farm and from the beginning was an outdoor girl.

According to Legacy.com, when her husband, Charles, passed away in 1975, Peggy joined the Sierra Club to help cope with her sadness. "She quickly rose to the level of hike leader. She had found her niche. In 1980 she became Program Coordinator. While in the Sierra Club she met her best friend, Barbara Henderson. She and Barbara would later purchase 10 acres in the foothills where they helped contractors to build their dream homes. They spent over 20 years in the mountains."

Sierran Pauline Harrison speaks fondly of Peggy. "I knew Peggy Dowell well, having taken many hikes in the mountains with her. She was a fantastic hiker and a great leader. To take a hike with Peggy was joy as well as a learning experience. She knew many of the flowers and plants of the Sierra. As soon as I took a hike with Peggy, I wanted to do more. She was enthusiastic and passed her enthusiasm on to all members on the hike. I will think of Peggy whenever I hike in the mountains."

Per Peggy's final wishes, those who wish to donate in her memory can give to the Sierra Club or Hospice Foundation of America.

FUNDRAISER REMINDER

March is fundraising month. We need help doing the kind of work you are reading about here. So please write a check and send it to Tehipite Chapter of the Sierra Club, PO Box 5396, Fresno CA 93755-5396



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Your (members') articles and photos are welcome!
 Deadline for *Tehipite Topics* is the 15th of each month. Please submit your work to wattsvillepreservation@gmail.com.

THE WILDERNESS ACT NEARS ITS 50th BIRTHDAY

Vicky Hoover

Put 2014 on your calendar for a big birthday celebration. The Wilderness Act will turn 50 on September 3, 2014, and celebrations around the country will mark this major American cultural and environmental achievement. Let's make all of 2014 America's year for wilderness.

Already, Sierra Club, other wilderness groups, and the four federal wilderness managing agencies are organizing to get ready for the 50th anniversary. We invite you to get involved and be part of this big national celebration.

Signed into law in 1964, the Wilderness Act established our National Wilderness Preservation System. There are now over 100 million acres Congress nationwide in the system has --added by Congress over the years -- with more to come. Wilderness designation is the strongest and most permanent protection from development that our laws offer for wild Federal public lands.

Volunteers in the Sierra Club along with dedicated Club staff have convinced Congress to add 14 million acres of our state's Federal lands to the national system—that is 14 percent of California's lands—a higher percentage than any other state outside of Alaska. Wilderness areas include wild places in National Parks, National Forests, wildlife refuges, and western lands of the Bureau of Land Management. In California we are proud of preserving wilderness areas such as South Warner Wilderness in Modoc County to the Little Picacho Wilderness in Imperial County and many, many more in between.

During 2014, we plan to have our own local celebrations in the Bay Area -- events -- such as concerts, lectures, a fairs and certainly outings -- walks in the local parks and hikes in nearby Wilderness areas. We will keep you posted in the Chapter newsletter as plans for 2014 develop. But, to make it all happen, we need lots of volunteers to help, so, if you care about wild places, you can be part of the action!

If you can help in organizing or conducting anniversary celebration events in the Bay Area, or have ideas about ways we can pro-

mote and publicize wilderness during 2014. Please contact Heather Anderson, 681-6305, or heather.andersosn8@comcast.net. And join the Sierra Club Wilderness50 team at http://connect.sierraclub.org/project/Wilderness_Act_50th_Anniversary

-- Vicky Hoover, co-chair, Wilderness50 National Planning Team

