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Sierra Uplift

Newsletter of the Sierra Nevada Group of the Sierra Club
September - October 2003

Issue 7, Number 5

General Meeting

The Sierra Nevada Group of the Sierra Club

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Friday, Sept. 19 - 6:30pm, Seaman Lodge

Joe Fish, Air Pollution Control Specialist with the Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District will join a representative from the American Lung Association of Sacramento at our monthly potluck. They will present a program entitled "What's in Our Air?".

Saturday, Sept 20 - GREAT YUBA CLEAN UP

The Sierra Nevada Group has chosen Lang's Crossing again this year as our area of the Yuba to spruce up. The Clean Up takes place from 9:00am to noon and all volunteers are invited to a thank you celebration afterwards from 12:30 to 2:30 at Memorial Park featuring food, music and fun. Meet at the Rood Center at 8:15am. Call Barbara Rivenes to sign up, 478-0117

Friday, Oct. 17 - 6:30pm, Seaman Lodge

Nancy Weber, NID Director, Ron Nelson, NID General Manager, Jeff Twitchell, Engineering Consultant and Robert Shibatani, Environmental Consultant will tell us about NID's long range plans at our monthly Potluck and Program

Sunday, October 26 •• RUN THRU THE COLORS

Beautiful fall colors line the course of our annual fundraiser in Nevada City. This 5K/10K attracts a big crowd of runners every year. We still need volunteers to help conduct this enjoyable activity. Call Carolyn, 477-1320 or Karen 265-3265 if you can help

Friday, Nov 21 - 7:00pm, Yuba County Library

Our monthly potluck and program will be held in Marysville this month. Michael Painter of Californians For Western Wilderness will be our guest speaker. Did you know the Sierra Nevada Group has 169 members in Yuba and Sutter Counties?

Chair Chatter

by Carolyn Hinshaw

RECALL THE ULTIMATE DEPLORABLE IDEA

Sierra Club California has joined a coalition of organizations in opposing this expensive and misguided recall effort. Other members of the coalition include the California Federation of Labor, the League of Conservation Voters, and the Consumer Attorneys of California.

This recall is trying to overthrow the administration that is responsible for the:

- Three largest-ever environmental bond measures (Propositions 12, 13, and 40)
- First law in the nation to substantively address global warming and greenhouse gases
- First Greenhouse Gas Monitoring Registry (Climate Action Registry)
- Greatest-ever investment in urban parks (6,200 acres)
- First comprehensive program to clean up coastal pollution (Clean Beaches)
- First non-point source program to clean up and prevent runoff from inland and urban sources
- Finalized the largest water supply and ecosystem restoration program (CALFED)
- First environmental justice law in the nation
- Toughest standards for toxic mold, lead, arsenic, Chromium 6 and perchlorate
- Toughest water quality enforcement laws
- Most ambitious commitment to renewable energy in American history
- Largest ever investment in energy conservation programs
- Toughest energy efficiency standards in the nation

Not only will this recall be too costly in terms of dollars, but the environmental costs could be enormous if the recall succeeds.

The Ultimate Vote

While walking down the street one day, a female head of state is tragically hit by a truck and dies. Her soul arrives in heaven and is met by St. Peter at the entrance.

"Welcome to Heaven," says St. Peter. "Before you settle in, it seems there is a problem. We seldom see a high official around these parts, you see, so we're not sure what to do with you."

"No problem, just let me in," says the lady.

"Well, I'd like to but I have orders from higher up. What we'll do is have you spend one day in Hell and one in Heaven. Then you can choose where to spend eternity." "Really, I've made up my mind. I want to be in Heaven," says the head of state.

"I'm sorry but we have our rules." And with that, St. Peter escorts her to the elevator and she goes down, down, down to Hell. The doors open and she finds herself in the middle of a green golf course. In the distance is a club and standing in front of it are all her friends and other politicians who had worked with her, everyone is very happy and in evening dress. They run to greet her, hug her, and reminisce about the good times they had while getting rich at expense of the people. They play a friendly game of golf and then dine on lobster and caviar. Also present is the Devil, who really is a very friendly guy who has a good time dancing and telling jokes.

They are having such a good time that, before she realizes it, it is time to go. Everyone gives her a big hug and waves while the elevator rises. The elevator goes up, up, up and the door reopens on Heaven where St. Peter is waiting for her.

"Now it's time to visit Heaven." So 24 hours pass with the head of state joining a group of contented souls moving from cloud to cloud, playing the harp and singing.

They have a good time and, before she realizes it, the 24 hours have gone by and St. Peter returns.

"Well then, you've spent a day in Hell and another in Heaven. Now choose your eternity." She reflects for a minute, then the head of state answers: "Well, I would never have said it, I mean Heaven has been delightful, but I think I would be better off in Hell."

So Saint Peter escorts her to the elevator and she goes down, down, down to Hell.

Now the doors of the elevator open and she is in the middle of a barren land covered with waste and garbage. She sees all her friends, dressed in rags, picking up the trash and putting it in black bags. The Devil comes over to her and lays his arm on her neck. "I don't understand," stammers the head of state. "Yesterday I was here and there was a golf course and club and we ate lobster and caviar and danced and had a great time. Now all there is a wasteland full of garbage and my friends look miserable.

The Devil looks at her, smiles and says, "Yesterday we were campaigning. Today you voted for us!" --

Author Unknown

Conservation Committee Report

by Karen Cox



In a recent interview with the Sacramento Bee, former Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt summed up my mood perfectly, "it is not a particularly optimistic time". "Hopefully we will see some renewal of the environmental movement, but it has to come from the grass roots. It will not come from the top". I think the grass roots (us) had better get to work.

Locally we're watching the Deer Creek Park II development which is currently at the Draft EIR stage. Our major concern is about the possible impact on Nevada City's water supply. Nevada City obtains 60% of its domestic water supply from Little Deer Creek. The health and safety of Nevada City water users could be in jeopardy because the current plan calls for a 193 unit combined leach field 100 feet from Little Deer Creek. Other significant impacts which cannot be mitigated include: traffic and construction, air pollution, and traffic impact on the intersection of Boulder, Nevada, Sacramento and Broad Street. It is also not yet clear what type of open space is envisioned (ie. is a heavily logged forest still open space?)

Sierra issues.

Sierra Nevada Framework. As I reported in my last column you have until Sept. 12 to urge the Forest Service to maintain existing protection for old-growth areas.

Pacific Fisher.

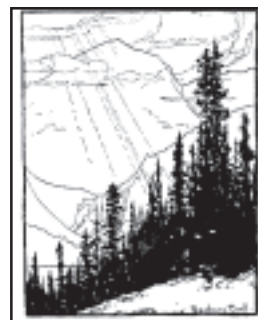
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service wants public comments on its preliminary finding that the Pacific Fisher may require protection in California, Oregon and Washington. Unless you are lucky you have probably never seen a Fisher. They are very shy critters. The Pacific Fisher is a mink-like predator which inhabits dense, old forests in the Sierra Nevada and Cascades. Originally they were wide-spread throughout the forests. Now there are only 3 small isolated populations remaining. Currently roads, logging of old growth forests and the resulting fragmentation of our forests are endangering the survival of the Pacific Fisher. You can help by sending a brief comment supporting the positive finding for the listing petition and asking for full Endangered Species Act protection for the fisher. Write by September 8 to U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA 95825-1846.

Good News.

Local John Muir Project attorney, Rachel Fazio won a short-term victory by persuading a federal judge to halt salvage logging on a small part of the Red Star Fire area. The area temporarily protected from logging is a 700 acre portion of the Duncan Canyon Roadless Area in the Tahoe National Forest in Placer County. The judge ruled that the logging could leave behind enough "slash" to create a severe fire risk.

This is a call to arms We need your help!

With George Bush in the White House, Arnold Schwarzenegger as a possible Governor and Drew Bedwell a County Supervisor, what is a poor environmentalist to do? Some of us are worn out!



Your energy, your ideas, your activism, and your organizational skills are sorely needed by your Sierra Nevada Group. Several Management Team members who have been active for the last six or seven years are not expected to continue in leadership roles. That means we must find other members willing to serve and share the responsibilities and the rewards.

The Sierra Club name has great power and can be counted on to frame and defend many of the coming issues in our county, but we truly need more of our members to help with the tasks. Those tasks can be as simple as volunteering to help manage set-up and clean-up at our tasty pot-lucks or a commitment to run as a candidate for a Management Team position.

There is a serious need for you to step forward.

Please call and discuss the possibilities with Barbara Rivenes, 478-0117, rivenes@infostations.com, or Carolyn Hinshaw, 477-1320, carolynhinshaw@sbcglobal.net.

**"All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing."
Edmund Burke**



SNG Outings

Sunday, October 12, 2003
Bike Ride – American River Parkway

If enough people are interested (4 minimum), we will bike along the American River for about 20-25 miles starting out at Negro Bar. This relatively flat route is free of cars which makes for a pleasant ride.

Call Jean (477-7902) before 10/9 for details and to sign up.

"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 chose 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."

Outreach to Schools **Ernie Malamud**

An informal coalition of people from the Audubon Society, SYRCL and the Sierra Nevada Group have been meeting during the summer to develop ideas for an interactive environmental education display. Once the concepts become more specific, this coalition would seek grant funding. We have narrowed down the focus to an exhibit that could travel to area schools and designed to target 4th to 6th grades. Of course, when not booked at a school, the exhibit could be used at community events.

Themes we are exploring in our meetings are the Watershed, the Forests, and the life (including humans) that live in them. Ideas and participation is very welcome.

Contact Ernie Malamud, 470-8303 or Carolyn Hinshaw, 477-1320

Winter Caretaker - Kit Carson Lodge **on Hwy 88 at Silver Lake**

Kit Carson Lodge has an opening for a caretaker (could be a couple) for all or even part of the coming winter. The Lodge is closed except for one other cottage. Spectacular lakeside or backcountry skiing and snowshoeing right outside the door of your own cozy cottage. Five miles from Kirkwood's groomed tracks and downhill slopes. Treat yourself to an incredible winter in the High Sierra. (209) 258-8500



GOT IDEAS ? **... FOR A GREAT OUTING ????**

Any special place you'd like to go? Anything special you'd like to learn about our wonderful natural resources?

Call Jean (477-7902) or Carolyn (477-1320) and share your thoughts.

Preservation of the PG&E lands

For those of you interested in the preservation of the PG&E lands:

If you are interested in commenting on the PG&E settlement and protection of Sierra Lands, you can send written comments. The original alert is below which describes this in more detail - but for the quick info on how to submit comments without attending the hearing, here is what John Moore has to say:

"I phoned the CPUC Public Advisor's Office to inquire about submitting comments without attending the hearings. Comments on the bankruptcy settlement may be sent by mail to the Public Advisor's Office, California Public Utilities Commission, 505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco CA, 94102-2398 - or they may be e-mailed to public.advisor@cpuc.ca.gov."

Colleagues:

Please forward this alert to your members interested in land conservation in the Sierra Nevada.

As many of you know, PG&E and the California Public Utility Commission (CPUC) recently announced a proposed settlement of PG&E's highly contested bankruptcy proceeding. Between now and December, 2003, the CPUC is conducting a formal review to determine whether the proposed settlement is in the public interest. As part of that review, the CPUC will conduct formal public participation hearings around the state.

Paragraph 17 and Appendix E of the proposed settlement (attached) provides for the protection of 140,000 acres of PG&E watershed lands through donation or conservation easement, and \$70 million over ten years to provide enhancements to those lands. These are the lands many of us have been working to protect over the last five years, and include key parcels in 16 watersheds from the Pit River and Hat Creek in the north to the Kings and Kern in the south.

CHRC is working alongside others to clarify some ambiguities in the settlement language, but is very supportive of the concept of protecting these lands. If you are, too, you can help by attending one of the CPUC's public hearings and voicing your support for Paragraph 17 and Appendix E. Note that we have not taken a position on the settlement as a whole at this point, which includes controversial financial and ratepayer provisions. We do however support a settlement outcome to the bankruptcy proceeding, which is otherwise mired in legal gridlock at enormous public expense. Our hope is the CPUC review this fall will shed light on the contested ratepayer issues and the land protection provision will remain part of a viable settlement.

Let the CPUC know that you strongly support permanent protection of PG&E's 140,000 acres of watershed lands! If you have any questions, contact me by email or at the numbers below. Thank you!

Stephen Wald, Director
California Hydropower Reform Coalition
2140 Shattuck Avenue, Suite 500
Berkeley, CA 94704
510/644-2900 ext. 105
510/644-4428 fax

The Run Through the Colors - 2003 Sunday morning, October 26th

The Run Through the Colors is the Sierra Nevada Group's main fundraiser and the 12th annual edition will hit the streets of Nevada City on Sunday morning, October 26th. Over 60 club members help with the run in some capacity and scores more register and participate in the 5k and 10k run and 5k walk. This is an easy and fun way to help our local group raise operating funds and help maintain our positive, public profile.



In past years we have averaged about 325 runners winding their way through the neighborhoods and downtown Nevada City. We are anticipating a much larger turnout this year due to increased publicity efforts by club volunteers Sharon and Curtis Bailey-Bok. We need additional volunteers to do everything from baking post race snacks to directing runners through the turns.

Do not hesitate. Mark your calendars for the morning of October 26 (finished well before noon) and call Richard and Theresa Thomas at 265-2666 (or email to: randtthomas@sbcglobal.net) to volunteer or to receive a registration form for the event (save \$\$ by registering early). The form is also available as a PDF file from the SNG website at <http://motherlode.sierraclub.org/sierranevada>



Great t-shirts for all.

You know what happens to those who hesitate.



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of the Sierra Club
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NonProfit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 8
Grass Valley, CA

Monthly Meetings

Conservation and Management Committee

Meets every 4th Monday at 6:30 p.m.
at the SYRCL office at 216 Main St.,
Nevada City.

Address Changes

Send old and new addresses to
Sierra Club Member Services
P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80328-2968

Web Connections

Find national and local Sierra Club news by visiting
these web sites:
<http://www.sierraclub.org> and
<http://www.motherlode.sierraclub.org/sierranevada>

Sierra Uplift

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