

Help the Sierra Club fight the Cortina Landfill.

Background

The proposal for a landfill on 443 acres of the Cortina Band of Wintun Indians' land on Cortina Ridge is moving forward. Cortina Ridge, a beautiful place of oak woodlands, chaparral and deep wooded valleys, is about to be trashed. Sierra Club is fighting to protect this pristine area.

This project will fill four canyons with garbage. Water from these canyons flows into several creeks and ultimately into the Sacramento River. Pollution from the landfill threatens these waters.

The landfill will be on a highly unstable soil type and within 200 feet of known earthquake faults. Federal regulations prohibit landfills in seismically active areas. There are also stringent requirements for liners and covers for landfills. The landfill developer is asking for waivers from all these requirements. Landfills eventually erode and leak. The developers propose no funding for long-term monitoring, maintenance and mitigation for the landfill after its closure.



View of the Cortina Ridge

A Faulty NEPA Process?

The landfill, because it is on sovereign ground, would be exempt from local and state regulations and laws that normally govern projects of this type. It would only be subject to certain federal regulations administered by the Environmental Protection Agency, and under the oversight by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).

The BIA initiated the Environmental Impact Statement process required under the National Environmental Policy *(Continued on page 2)*

Moonlit Nights at Clair Tappaan Lodge

Hikes, Auction, Food and Fun at the 4th Annual Clair Tappaan Lodge Fundraising Weekend

Watching a full moon rise over the shadows of pine trees at 7,000 feet is worth the drive. Join us August 15-17 at the Clair Tappaan



Lodge for the August Fund Raiser and take a hike under the light of the full moon. This year our astronomical theme

will be the moon, including a talk on fascinating aspects of the moon by Dr. Paul Guttman (see page 4 for details).

In this issue:

- ◆ Help the Sierra Club Fight the Cortina Landfill
- ◆ Moonlit Nights at Clair Tappaan Lodge
- ◆ Wild and Scenic Festival
- ◆ Conservation Musings
- ◆ Sierra Club author on book tour

Contribute to the campaign against the Cortina Landfill (see inside)

(Cortina Landfill, continued from page 1)

Act (NEPA) in 1995. In 1999, the draft EIS was released for review. The EIS analyzed the project at a very early stage when many specific details were unknown. Colusa County submitted extensive comments regarding inadequacies in the EIS. The County sued in federal court contesting findings, impacts and mitigation measures, but was forced to drop the lawsuit due to cost.

In response to concerns regarding the adequacy of the EIS, it was argued that the BIA had used a "tiered" NEPA process and that a more detailed environmental analysis and consideration of mitigation measures would be performed at a later date as more specific project details became known. Inadequacies in the EIS were to be addressed in these later analyses. Pursuant to NEPA, subsequent environmental review was to take place prior to issuance of permits from federal agencies, such as the EPA.

However, despite the County's concerns and the requirement to perform further environmental review, no further NEPA analysis of the project has occurred. Considerable new information regarding potential impacts of the landfill has become available since the original analyses. The BIA must evaluate this new information, prepare the next NEPA document in the "tiered" process, and propose measures to mitigate for these impacts. Nonetheless, the project is moving forward on several fronts, including requests to the EPA for waivers.

On April 21, 2008, the EPA received three site-flexibility requests for the Cortina Integrated Waste Management Facility: one for seismic stability demonstration, one for alternative liner, and the third for alternative final cover. EPA will be reviewing these requests for compliance with EPA regulations governing landfills.

TAKE ACTION!

This landfill is a bad idea! It will not only destroy this pristine area, but it could also set a precedent for trashing tribal lands all over the country. The Sierra Club has joined with the Colusa County Citizens for Safe Water, Colusa County and Lake County Boards of Supervisors, Colusa County Farm Bureau, Family Water Alliance, Tehama-Colusa Canal Authority, Congressmen Wally Herger and Mike Thompson, and many others to oppose this landfill.

HELP STOP THIS PROJECT. You were asked to contact EPA previously on this issue. It is important that they hear from you again at this critical juncture. Time is running out for the Cortina Ridge.

Contact Elizabeth Forsyth at USEPA, Region IX, Waste Management Division, 75 Hawthorne Street, WST-7, San Francisco, CA 94105; 1-415-972-3380; forsyth.elizabeth@epa.gov.

Ask EPA to:

- ✍ Require the new NEPA environmental studies and a new public review process prior to issuance of permits from any federal agency.
- ✍ Require that the landfill developer/operator provide long-term bond funding to cover maintenance, monitoring and mitigation after the landfill is closed.
- ✍ Deny any waivers from the liner or cover requirements.
- ✍ Deny waivers from their own seismicity requirements for landfills.

For more information, see www.savesacvalleywater.com or contact Pam Nieberg, chair of the Yolano Group Sierra Club at pnieberg@dcn.davis.ca.us or 530-756-6856.

The Wild and Scenic Film Festival Returns!

Mark your calendars now! For the second year the largest environmental film festival in North America is coming to Davis, California. **Join Tuleyome and the Sierra Club Yolano Group as they host the Wild and Scenic Environmental Film Festival Tour at the Veteran's Memorial Theater at 7 p.m. on Saturday, October 18, 2008.**

The Wild and Scenic Environmental Film Festival Tour brings together award-winning environmental films in a spirit of inspiration and education. The Patagonia sponsored Festival features films that bring greater awareness of the natural world and humanity's role in that delicate balance.

The Sierra Club Yolano Group and Tuleyome are co-hosting the October 18 event to highlight each organization's local campaigns: Designating a regional National Conservation Area, addressing climate change, protecting agriculture and open space, and providing wilderness experiences for underserved youth, among others. "We are more than thrilled to be able to bring this festival around again this year," commented Yolano Group Co-chair, Pam Nieberg.

The Wild and Scenic Film Festival was started in 2003 by the South Yuba Rivers Citizen League (SYRCL), one of the nation's most successful grassroots activist groups. The home Festival is a three-day event held each January in

Nevada City. After five years, it features 110 films with 60 guest speakers and over 3000 attendees. When the home festival began touring the nation, it was "because we realize it's a social obligation to bring the message of these films to a larger audience" (Kathy Dotson, Festival director). "Film is a powerful medium and is a common ground that everyone enjoys. When placed in this setting, environmentally conscious films can foster an open forum where people of different opinions can start finding solutions."

Wild & Scenic partnered with the like-minded clothing company, Patagonia, to find environmental groups interested in this project. Patagonia gives 1% of their annual net sales to environmental groups, including grants that enable the SYRCL to make the film festival affordable for local environmental groups. "By joining forces, we can use the strength of our common goals to bring this motivating film festival to as many viewers and potential activists as possible," says Rick Ridgeway, VP of Environment and Marketing at Patagonia.

There will be several films ranging from 1 minute to 50 minutes shown during the evening. The films are appropriate for all ages.

For more information on the films and the festival, contact Debra Chase at 350-2599/ Dchase@tuleyome.org or Pam Nieberg at 756-6856/pnieberg@dcn.davis.ca.us or see www.tuleyome.org and <http://motherlode.sierraclub.org/Yolano>.

TAKE ACTION AGAINST THE CORTINA LANDFILL!

The Sierra Club is fighting to protect hundreds of acres of pristine landscape in southern Colusa County from tons of garbage. The Cortina Ridge is a beautiful place of oak woodlands, chaparral and deep wooded valley, and it is about to be trashed!

The proposal for a huge landfill on 443 acres of the Cortina Band of Wintun Indians land is moving forward.

The landfill will fill four pristine canyons with garbage and threaten contamination of ground and surface waters throughout the watershed. These waters eventually empty into the Sacramento River. Trash for the landfill will be hauled hundreds of miles from other jurisdictions, including Napa, Sonoma, and Mendocino Counties.

⊗ The landfill would be sited on sovereign territory, making it exempt from local and state regulations and oversight. It is subject to limited federal regulation from agencies such as the USEPA.

⊗ It would be within 200 feet of known earthquake faults and on unstable soil.

⊗ The developer/operator is asking for waivers from liner and cover standards and from EPA requirements that prohibit landfills within 200 feet of a fault.

⊗ All landfills leak eventually. The developer provides no long-term funding for maintenance, monitoring and mitigation after the landfill is closed.

⊗ The NEPA process was faulty. The initial EIS analysis was performed early in the process when many specific details of the project were unknown.

⊗ Colusa County submitted extensive comments regarding inadequacies in the EIS. In response to concerns, it was argued that the BIA had used a "tiered" NEPA process, with the provision that subsequent environmental analysis would take place as more specific project details became known.

⊗ Additional environmental review was to take place prior to issuance of any permits by federal agencies, such as EPA. This review has not taken place, and the developer has requested waivers from EPA in order to begin construction!

This landfill is a bad idea! It could not only destroy this pristine area, but could set a precedent for trashing tribal lands all over the country!

We need your help.

As part of our campaign to stop the landfill, we are doing mailings and other outreach to Sierra Club members in the counties whose trash would be hauled to Cortina Ridge. We are asking members to sign letters of opposition that we will present to EPA to show massive opposition to the project. (EPA fully considers public concern in evaluating projects. There will be a public review period after EPA considers the waivers.) We are also asking members to sign cards to their supervisors urging them to exclude the Cortina Landfill as a destination for their garbage and to specifically exclude the Cortina landfill from any consideration in the bidding process for waste haulers.

Please help us with a donation for this campaign.

If you would like to help, please take a moment and fill out the form below and to write a check to help us with this effort. For more information, see the landfill article in this issue of the Flame, www.savesacvalleywater.com or contact Pam at 530-756-6856 or pnieberg@dcn.davis.ca.us

Yes! I want to help with the campaign to stop the landfill. Enclosed is my check for: \$ _____

Make checks out to: Sierra Club Yolano Group.

Mail checks to: Sierra Club Yolano Group, PO Box 2220, Davis, CA 95617.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

email _____

Yolano Group supports Clair Tappaan Fundraising Weekend

In May, the Yolano group agreed to make a \$250 contribution to support the summer Fund Raiser for Clair Tappaan Lodge (CTL).

The Fund Raiser will benefit the bottom line of the Lodge that is facing a September 30th deadline from the Sierra Club board to break even or face being sold. This deadline is the result of a long running problem with large deficits at the lodge. The SC Board challenged the volunteer Committee that advises the Lodge to do something to increase income.

The committee has made several changes, including providing outdoor education programs for school children and entering into a contract with Elder Hostel. This year there are three Elder Hostel groups that will bring grandparents and grand kids to stay at the lodge for a week. Look at the activities page on the CTL webpage at <http://ctl.sierraclub.org/outings/lodges/ctl/activities.asp> to see the variety of events happening at the Lodge.

The Committee is very grateful to the Yolano Group for being one of the first Sierra Club groups to make a donation to help support and sustain the Lodge.

Olivia Diaz

Moonlit Nights at Clair Tappaan Lodge 4th Annual Clair Tappaan Lodge Fundraising Weekend

Join us August 15-17 at the Clair Tappaan Lodge for the August Fund Raiser and take a hike under the light of the full moon. This year our astronomical theme will be the moon, including a talk on fascinating aspects of the moon by Dr. Paul Guttman.



We will follow the same formula of the previous three successful August Fund Raisers – live music, hikes with a theme, an outdoor silent auction in the yard on Saturday afternoon with a wine and cheese reception, a wild fish

dinner on Saturday night and a raffle for a Peak Adventures rafting trip. All proceeds will go to help the

Lodge meet the September 30 deadline to break even.

So far, we have Don Rivenes for a bird walk, Sue Graf for a native plants hike, Jeri Merrit for a Summit Lake hike/swim. On Saturday afternoon there will be a Silent Auction with items gathered from the region, and themed hikes on Saturday and Sunday. Throughout the weekend there will be opportunities to get to know each other.

Won't you join us, starting Friday August 15 until Sunday noon to enjoy a summer weekend, the air perfumed with warm pine tree resin and the sunshine and breezes at Donner Pass? The full weekend stay including 6 meals, a wine and cheese reception, live music, a lecture on the moon cost only \$150 per adult. Check the website for the cost of single day stay and for children. And in addition you will be contributing to the well being of the Lodge.

For details, click on: <http://motherlode.sierraclub.org/sierranevada/moon.html>. Last year the Lodge filled up and we stopped taking reservations a week before the event, so don't wait too long to reserve your spot.

Hope to see you there. The Lodge is located at 19940 Donner Pass Road in Norden, CA. To make a reservation, or to volunteer for the event, call the Lodge at (800) 679-6775 or (530) 426-3632.

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Thank you to F&F Multiprint!

The Yolano Group would like to thank Jon Lindo and F&F Multiprint of Woodland for working with us to get our Cortina Landfill mailing out to more than 6000 Sierra Club members in Napa, Sonoma and Mendocino Counties. The Yolano Group is asking Sierra Club members in those counties to take action to oppose having their garbage hauled off to trash the Cortina Ridge. F&F Multiprint helped make the mailing possible and took the extra effort to facilitate the process for the Yolano Group.

Thank you Jon and F&F Multiprint!

Conservation Musings

Don't trash Cortina Ridge.

That is the theme for articles and a fund raising appeal in this issue of the Flame. I urge you to please write a letter and make a contribution for this fight against a landfill project that would fill four pristine canyons with garbage hauled hundred of miles from other counties.

The Cortina Ridge in Colusa County is a northern extension of the Blue Ridge located in western Yolo County. It is separated by the deep Cache Creek canyon between Fiske Peak and Glascock Mountain. Steeply dipping sandstones and shales of the Great Valley Sequence hold up the rugged ridges. In quiet valleys and hills Tule elk, black bear, mountain lion and deer roam while raptors hang on the rising thermals above the ridge.

You can hike to the ridge from Highway 16 on BLM public lands up the Billy Goat Hill trail (steep!) More info on the hike can be found at www.yolohiker.org but wait until the cooler days of fall.

Over the past year I have had the privilege of visiting Cortina Ridge on several occasions. It is a special place that the local farmers and ranchers take great pride in protecting. It is a part of both our wild heritage and our agricultural heritage.

Local Colusa County residents are leading this fight and information on their efforts can be found at www.savesacvalleywater.com. They have brought together an

impressive group of folks made up of ranchers, farmers, environmentalists and public decision makers to oppose this landfill. Recently, Congress members Mike Thompson and Wally Herger wrote a joint letter to US EPA requesting environmental updates and a most rigorous environmental review of this dump.

There are several key issues in this fight:

1. Cortina Ridge is a special pristine area that deserves protection and should not be trashed.
2. We should not allow a precedent to allow the trashing of Native American lands while evading California environmental protection laws.
3. We should be extremely careful when foreign companies are involved that can shield those responsible from liability for future landfill failures.
4. All landfills should have long-term monitoring and extensive bonding to protect the environment and tax payers should not have to pay for future pollution cleanup costs.
5. Garbage producing areas must make every effort to attain zero waste standards.
6. We have a responsibility to assist Native Americans in environmentally safe economic development. (Not all have casinos.)

Let's help the Colusa County folks who have taken the lead on this fight. Write a letter to the EPA today and contribute to the Yolano Group's Stop Cortina Landfill Campaign.

Email *Bob Schneider* at verve2006@comcast.net or call 530-304-6215.



One of the canyons to be filled with garbage

Sierra Club Outings

Led by local leaders

Tuesday, July 22

Lake Winnemucca (Seniors)

A scenic wildflower hike at the top of Carson Pass. Hike starts above 8,000 feet and has a 420 foot elevation gain. Trail is rocky, rough in spots. There is a parking fee or use your Golden Age Passport. Have lunch, water, rain gear; boots highly recommended. Limited to 14 hikers. Contact

Day Hike, 1A

leader Sue Barnette after July 16 (530) 753-5855 or sbarnett@dcn.davis.ca.us for meeting times & places.

Other Outings

The Yolano Group is part of the Mother Lode Chapter. To find out about other Sierra Club outings, find them listed at: www.motherlode.sierraclub.org/ and click on "outings". There are outings for people of all ages and at all levels, including hiking, backpacking, kayaking, paddle trips, etc.

Our friends at Yolo Hiker have a hike schedule at: <http://yolohiker.org/>

Yolano Group management committee

- ⚙ Pam Nieberg, co-chair; pnieberg@dcn.davis.ca.us; 530-756-6856
- ⚙ Stacie Hartung-Frerichs, co-chair; raftingcrafter@yahoo.com
- ⚙ Carolyn Hinshaw, Conservation co-chair; aaagh@comcast.net; 530-757-2830
- ⚙ Bob Schneider, Conservation co-chair; verve@dcn.davis.ca.us; 530-758-4315
- ⚙ Alan Pryor, ozone21@att.net
- ⚙ Rodney Robinson, rodney@yolo.com
- ⚙ Marc Vayssières; marc@dcn.davis.ca.us

The Management Committee meets on the second Thursday of each month. The public is invited to the meetings. Watch for announcements in the Enterprise for location or you can call Pam at 530-756-6856 for information or to get on our email list.

- ⚙ Treasurer: Marc Vayssières
- ⚙ Secretary: Pam Nieberg
- ⚙ Newsletter editor and webmaster: Marc Vayssières
- ⚙ Flame Distribution and membership: Ida Bryan

<http://motherlode.sierraclub.org/Yolano/>

Sierra Club Author and World Cyclist on Book Tour in Davis

Sierra Club members typically head for the hills, but Jim Malusa headed in the opposite direction. With plenty of sunscreen and a cold beer swaddled in his sleeping bag, Malusa bicycled alone to the lowest point on six continents, a six-year series of “anti-expeditions” to the “anti-summits.” Malusa’s first trip took him to Lake Eyre in the arid heart of Australia. Next he followed Moses’ route from the valley of the Nile to the Jordanian shore of the Dead Sea, and then raced against winter through Russian farm-



lands, from Moscow to the Caspian Sea. Later journeys found him pedaling across the Andes to Salina Grande in Argentine Patagonia, and around tiny Djibouti to Lac Assal in the Horn of Africa. He polished off the “pits” by riding from his Tucson home to Death Valley.

Malusa will read from his new book, *Into Thick Air* (Sierra Club Books), and show slides of the land and people along the way to the world’s great depressions, on **Saturday 12 July, at 7:30 PM, at The Avid Reader, 617 Second Street, Davis, CA. 530-758-4040**

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Mother Lode Chapter, Sierra Club
Yolano Group
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