



# Sierra Uplift

Newsletter of the Sierra Club, Sierra Nevada Group

**Friday, September 16 General Meeting • Seaman's Lodge, Pioneer Park**

## Environmental crises: litigation & management



Terry Davis

It's been called "the most litigious chapter in the Sierra Club." The Mother Lode Chapter, which covers most of northern California, has eleven local Sierra Club groups; the Sierra Nevada Group is one.

Terry Davis, the chapter's Conservation Coordinator and only full-time staffer, will describe some of the many challenges that a complex organization has in dealing with varied environmental crises (both large and small) over a broad geographic landscape. He will be accompanied by his wife (who helps maintain his sanity), singer Nancy Blue. As a musical interlude, she will perform a couple of songs for nature lovers.

Before Terry's talk, Lorna Dobrovolny, Project Manager, will summarize for us the recently completed South Yuba River Management Plan. In a model collaboration between the BLM, US Forest Service, California Department of Parks and Recreation, Nevada County, and users of the river, participants met regularly for over a year to work out consensus. The result is a plan covering publicly-owned lands and public services along the 39-mile stretch of river between Spaulding Reservoir and Englebright Lake.

Please join us at 6:30 for a potluck dinner before the 7:30 program.

**Friday, October 21 General Meeting & Annual Awards • Seaman's Lodge, Pioneer Park**

## Jim Brobeck: Forest management wisdom

A thirty-year resident of the Sierra-Cascade mixed conifer forest who has spent thousands of hours climbing conifer trees, pruning and collecting seeds, Jim Brobeck will make a presentation on Industrial Forest Management and the value of black oaks in strategic fireescapes.

Regarding management and fires, Jim knows whereof he speaks. He was a seasonal wildland firefighter working with volunteer company 21 (Cohasset) for over ten years. He currently serves on the Board of the Butte County Fire Safe Council where he coordinates his community chipper program and designs shaded fuel breaks. He monitors forest management activities on Lassen National Forest for the Sierra Nevada Forest Protection Campaign. And Jim is also the co-chair of the Sacramento Valley Environmental Watershed Caucus with a special interest in preserving northern California groundwater from exploitation by the southern California water market.

Also this evening will be the annual presentation of Sierra Nevada Group awards to long-term members and community leaders.

Please join us! Share autumn supper at the 6:30 potluck; the program begins at 7:30.



Jim collects sugar pine cones at Blodgett Exp. Forest

## Sierra Uplift

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### Web Connections

Find national and local Sierra Club  
news by visiting these web sites:

<[www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org)>

<[www.sierraclub.org/ca](http://www.sierraclub.org/ca)>

<[www.motherlode.sierraclub.org](http://www.motherlode.sierraclub.org)>

<[www.motherlode.sierraclub.org/sierranevada](http://www.motherlode.sierraclub.org/sierranevada)>

SNG is a member of the

Sierra Nevada Alliance, a

regional coalition of groups. See

<[www.sierranevadaalliance.org](http://www.sierranevadaalliance.org)>



### Barbara Rivenes: Chair Chat

## Setting priorities was a picnic

I think everyone could agree that making hard choices for conservation priorities was made much easier by the ambience of the Goar's lovely wooded picnic area. The trees helped cool the very high foothill temperature and a

cool something in everyone's hand helped get folks thinking about how they want the Club to focus their resources. The Group voted for three of a possible eight choices:

**Build a New Energy Future** was the top choice, garnering 36 votes out of the possible 69. The vision is to create a new energy future based on efficient and renewable energy technologies that bring an end to oil dependence, global warming, toxic air emissions and environmental damage in sensitive areas. This will be accomplished by breaking the hold of big energy companies on our government and solving our energy needs cleanly and safely with dramatically improved efficiency and renewable energy sources.

We voted that the most urgent category calling for national leadership and action was here, specifically to improve fuel economy.

**Defend Federal Lands and Public Waters** was second choice with 28 votes. The vision is to restore and protect our great natural heritage of federal lands and public waters for all time by engaging people to defend our federally-managed national parks, forests, lands and waters.

We voted that this area likewise needs national leadership and action, specifically to reform federal management of public waterways, dams, wetlands, coasts, and off-shore waters. And we voted as well in favor of local action, to restore damaged ecosystems in federally managed areas.

**Protect State and Local Places** was the third choice with 18. The vision is encouraging citizen action to protect the natural character and native species of areas before it is too late. The work will be to protect local open spaces and habitats for wildlife, outdoor recreation, plus city parks and green spaces that keep nature nearby in our lives.

We voted that local action is needed in two aspects: in protecting local and state fish and wildlife habitats for biodiversity; in stopping development that damages habitat and ruins open space.

Many, many thanks to the members who took time to think about the conservation issues of our time. I will be transmitting your thoughts

SNG priority  
votes go to  
the Sierra  
Summit  
in San  
Francisco,  
Sept 8-11

to the larger Sierra Summit 2005 gathering in San Francisco in September. By the way, it's not too late—you can still decide to come!

### Calendars for 2006

Impossible you say, but true. Our beautiful Sierra Club calendars will once again be available through the Group. We will have them at our *Run Through the Colors* event, Sunday, October 23 and meetings in the late fall. Please contact Phyllis Porteous, 265-9041, or Barbara, 478-0117, for more information.

### Uplift now accepting biz card ads

In an effort to defray newsletter and other escalating costs the Management Team, for the first time, has agreed to accept business card size advertisements in the Uplift. We are soliciting those ads now from members who would like to reach out to other Sierra Club members via our publication six times a year: a one-time cost of \$120. Where else can you reach approximately 1400 discerning and caring households for such a reasonable amount?

We will require that the ad be business card size, able to be scanned or already in electronic form. Our space will be limited, so interested advertisers should contact us immediately. Please call me at 530/478-0117 or email <rivenes@infostations.com>. A sample ad appears below. ■



**The license to  
protect the places  
you love.**

The pictured plate is a sample.  
It does not represent the actual plate.



Help preserve the Sierra  
by reserving your Sierra  
Nevada Conservancy  
license plate today.

[www.sierralicenseplate.org](http://www.sierralicenseplate.org)

## 7500 signups needed for new Sierra Nevada plate

The California State Assembly offered tremendous bipartisan support in favor of Assembly Bill 84, voting 73 to 4 to create a new Sierra Nevada License Plate. When implemented the measure will generate more than \$2 million in annual revenues for acquisition, conservation and restoration of the Sierra Nevada.

Assembly Bill 84 now moves to the State Senate.

AB 84 continues the bipartisan approach to resource issues in the Sierra Nevada that led to successful legislation creating a Sierra Nevada Conservancy in 2004. Assemblymembers Tim Leslie (R-Tahoe City) and John Laird (D-Santa Cruz) last year forged compromise legislation in the form of Assembly Bill 2600, signed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger on the banks of the Bear River in September.

Leslie and Laird are the co-authors of this year's Sierra Nevada License Plate bill as well.

The Sierra Fund—legislative sponsors of both AB 2600 and AB 84—has teamed up with hundreds of agencies, corporations and non-profit organizations to pre-register more than 7500 Californians who commit to the \$50 cost of changing to the new Sierra Nevada License Plate next year.

In fact, that show of commitment turns out to be crucial, as the new plate will only be created if the 7500 pre-registrations are received. The Sierra Fund's goal is to see that number come in by New Year's Eve 2005.

For complete information—and to pre-register for free for the Sierra Nevada license plate—visit us at <[www.sierralicenseplate.org](http://www.sierralicenseplate.org)> or <[www.sierraconservancy.org](http://www.sierraconservancy.org)>. ■

## Tahoe National Forest sued over Cottonwood Herbicide Project

A broad coalition of conservation groups has sued the Tahoe National Forest (TNF) over its decision to spray 13,500 acres with herbicides to accelerate conifer growth in an area near Loyalton burned in 1994. The spraying is unnecessary, the coalition points out. The trees planted after the burn are out-competing the shrubs and other vegetation.

“Herbicides are not necessary for this purpose, as evidenced by the success of conifer regeneration in the ten years since the burn,” said Don Rivenes, spokesperson for the Forest Issues Group (FIG), a member of the coalition that includes California Indian Basketweavers Association, California Native Plant Society, Mother Lode Chapter/Sierra Club, Sierra Foothills Audubon Society, and South Yuba River Citizens League. “Use of herbicides now will set the clock back just when the area is becoming the most beneficial for deer, songbirds, and a variety of other animals and plants.”

Studies have shown that the use of herbicides for this purpose puts the health of native plant communities, wildlife, and humans at risk.

Herbicides have not been used so broadly on native plants in the TNF since 1984.

The Forest Service’s FEIS was the latest response to a court ordered analysis of the potential significant effects from the use of herbicides, resulting from a successful lawsuit of the original project. In the final decision, the

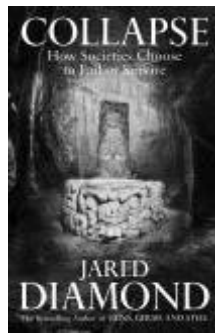
Forest Service increased the acres to be treated by 2,600 and have also increased the concentration and pounds of glyphosate that will be applied to the lands. Rivenes said that both he and FIG biologist Steve Benner were surprised at the unsound science used in the analysis.

“The Forest Service has very little real knowledge about what the impacts to this area will be from herbicide use at this scale,” said Steve Benner of FIG. “Our field work shows that conifers are successfully competing with native vegetation without the use of herbicides. Public funds should be used on the Tahoe National Forest to enhance natural resource values, and to restore diminished ecosystems and natural

ecological processes, rather than for risky herbicide spraying of undemonstrated value.”

For site photos and more information visit <[www.forestissuesgroup.org](http://www.forestissuesgroup.org)>. —Don Rivenes

## Book Review *Collapse* by Jared Diamond



Who hasn’t wandered through ruins and asked, “How could this have happened?” Environmental damage, climate change, hostile neighbors and trading partners, plus a society’s responses to environmental problems are factors that determine whether a society is doomed, according to

Pulitzer Prize author Jared Diamond. For example, the Maya, Anasazi, Easter Islanders and the Greenland Norse squandered their resources and blundered into self-destruction.

The scope of *Collapse* is huge (525 pages) with extensive acknowledgments. It is well indexed and includes maps and photographs. Diamond writes in a fluent style, carefully documenting his data, explaining concepts that might appear arcane. It’s thrilling to “accompany” archeologists and palynologists (those who study pollen) as they meticulously bore through ancient pack rat middens in Arizona to determine dietary irregularities in bone mass and environmental changes in pollen layers.

Diamond discusses problems that face us today in Rwanda, Haiti, China and Australia. To help the reader comprehend the magnitude of these issues, Diamond uses Montana as a focus. A state once known for mining, cattle and timber, Montana now faces the challenges of toxic clean-up, the invasion of spotted knapweed, overcoming past logging practices and the break-up of ranches and farms.

*Collapse* is an eye-opener and one you will have to read in increments, but it’s well worth the effort. Diamond concludes with a section titled “Practical Lessons” in which he discusses Chevron, the seafood industry, big business and environmental groups. Why do some societies avoid catastrophe while others make disastrous decisions? Jared Diamond provides some answers. If we’re smart enough, we just might pay enough attention to survive.

—Donna Foote







## The 14th Annual Run Through the Colors

**Sunday, October 23rd, 2005**

- Where:** Pioneer Park, Nevada City  
**When:** 7:30 a.m. Registration Begins  
 8:30 a.m. Races Begin  
**Prizes:** Sierra Club Calendars two deep  
**Course:** Fairly hilly loop courses on  
 mostly paved roads through  
 the fall colors of Nevada City.

### For Information about Nevada City:

Please contact the Nevada City Chamber of Commerce for more information about where to stay, things to do, etc. Their telephone number is: (800) 655-NJOY or (800) 655-6569. Their website is at: [www.nevadacitychamber.com](http://www.nevadacitychamber.com) and the email address for the Nevada City Chamber of Commerce is: [info@nevadacitychamber.com](mailto:info@nevadacitychamber.com).

### Contact and Volunteers:

If you would like to volunteer or have questions about the run, please call Richard or Theresa at (530) 265-2666 or email [randthomas@sbcglobal.net](mailto:randthomas@sbcglobal.net).

One entry form per person, please make photocopies as necessary. Participants receive custom quality T-shirts. Note that we will not mail shirts.

Run Through the Colors Graphic: David Wehner 265-3147  
 Brochure Layout and Production: Christine Krugler

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NEVADA CITY  
 SIERRA NEVADA GROUP  
 SIERRA CLUB  
 2005

## The 14th Annual Run Through the Colors Entry Form

### Participant Information: (Please print clearly.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender:  Male  Female

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

T-shirt\* Size:  X-Large  Large  Med  Sm

\*Please Note: We will not mail shirts.

### Please check event:

5K RUN  10K RUN

Run entry is \$20 if received before 10/13, \$25 after 10/13  
 Under 18 or 65+ entry is \$15 if received before 10/13, \$20 after 10/13

5K Fun Walk (no prizes)

5K Fun Walk entry is \$15 if received before 10/13, \$20 after 10/13 • Under 18 or 65+ entry is \$12 if received before 10/13, \$15 after 10/13

Total Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Send Entry Form, with a check payable to Sierra Nevada Group, to: SNG, 10066 Rob-King Road, Nevada City, CA 95959.

### Run Through the Colors - Runner's Release and Waiver (the small print)

I agree that running a road race is a potentially hazardous activity. I should not race and race unless I am properly advised. I agree to attend the race without reliance on any advice or information from any other person. I assume all risks including high heat and winter weather, traffic and the condition of the road, all such risks being known and appreciated by me. Having read this waiver and knowing the date and its modification of my accepting my entry. I hereby and forever release the Sierra Nevada Group, Sierra Club, the City of Nevada City, the County of Nevada, and all sponsors, club representatives and members from all claims or liabilities of any kind arising out of my participation in this event, even though that liability may now or hereinafter be asserted against me in this matter. I grant permission to all of the foregoing to use my photographs, motion pictures, recordings, or any other material that may be taken or captured in this event.

Participant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Include Parent's or Guardian's Signature

for Participants Under 18: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Karen Cox** Conservation Report



### **Auburn Dam**

Once again talk of an Auburn Dam has revived because of recent U.S. Army of Engineers cost estimates for flood-control improvements to Folsom Dam. The original estimate was \$215 million and now it could be \$650 million. There are those who think that if it's going to cost that much to raise the Folsom Dam by 7 feet and make other improvements you might as well spend the money on building the Auburn Dam. And then there are those who think turning 20 miles of the free-flowing American River into a reservoir and building a dam with its potential environmental damage is a lousy idea.

### **Forest issues**

U.S. District Court Judge David F. Levi halted four logging projects and forced the withdrawal of two others on our nearby national forests. The logging projects on the Lassen and Shasta-Trinity national forests were suspended because Forest Service officials failed to give the public enough data to make informed comments before announcing their decisions. On the Tahoe National Forest, two logging

projects were withdrawn because the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board denied a timber harvest waiver because of inadequate public notification.

### **Valle Vidal**

Earlier this summer I was fortunate to discover this beautiful and remote area of Northern New Mexico. The Valle Vidal is a 100,000 acre unit of the Carson National Forest, east of Taos. The land was given to the federal government in 1982 by Pennzoil Corporation who had used it for cattle ranching. I attended an event sponsored by the Great Old Broads for Wilderness because the Valle Vidal is under threat of coalbed methane development. Although the Valle Vidal is not wilderness only one main road (unpaved) gives access to it. The land looks a lot more like Colorado than New Mexico with rushing streams, huge meadows, a bristle cone forest and a large elk population. It is one of the most beautiful areas I have ever visited and the people we met who work for the Carson National Forest seem to want to keep it that way.

However, the areas all around it are being developed for coalbed

methane which is a natural gas trapped within a coal formation. The coal seams are saturated with water and then the gas can be extracted. As you can image, the process requires a lot of water, a lot of roads and a lot of well pads and has a huge negative impact on the land. El Paso Corporation wants to lease the eastern 40,000 acres of the Valle Vidal for coalbed methane extraction. Even Ted Turner who owns thousands of acres adjoining the Valle Vidal had to allow coalbed methane development on his land because he doesn't own the mineral rights to his property.

The Forest Service is accepting comments on the Valle Vidal amendment to the Carson National Forest management plan until September 15. For more information and some beautiful pictures see <[www.vallevidal.org](http://www.vallevidal.org)>.

### **Yuba cleanup**

SYRCL's eighth annual cleanup will take place on September 17, 9 am to noon. We will be cleaning up Lang's Crossing as usual. You need to sign up with Kalye Martin at SYRCL, 265-5961 or [Kayle@syrcl.org](mailto:Kayle@syrcl.org). Tell her Karen sent you. ■



*October speaker Jim Brobeck embraces the largest known manzanita tree*

# Sierra Uplift

THE SIERRA NEVADA GROUP  
*of the* SIERRA CLUB  
PO BOX 1042  
NEVADA CITY CA 95959

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## 2005/2006 Season

We are organizing a varied and interesting program for the 2005 / 2006 season — we hope you can attend!

### General meetings

Friday evenings  
Seaman's Lodge, Nevada City  
6:30 Dinner potluck  
7:30 Program

#### September 16

Terry Davis:  
Environmental Crises Large & Small  
Lorna Dobrovlny:  
South Yuba River Management Plan

#### October 21

Jim Brobeck:  
Forest Management Wisdom

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## Reserve the dates!

**November 18**

**January 20**

**February 17**

**March 17**

**April 21**

**May 19**

For details see our web page  
<<http://motherlode.sierraclub.org/SierraNevada>>.

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## Run through the Colors

### Sunday October 23

5K and 10K footraces and a 5K walk, beginning at Pioneer Park in Nevada City. Get a great T-shirt and help support the Sierra Club, Sierra Nevada Group. To participate, use the entry form inside this newsletter. Also check <<http://motherlode>>.

## Regular Committee Meetings

- **Conservation & Management Committee** Meets every fourth Monday, 6:30 p.m. at the SYRCL office, 216 Main St, Nevada City.

## Local Outings

- A group meets Wed and Sat mornings at 9:00 am on Sutton Way just up from the Coldwell Banker office. They decide that morning where they are going and their hikes are easy to moderate (5-7 miles). Contact Clarence Motter at 274-3697 or Helen Kelly at 273-7309 for more information.
- Another group whose hikes are longer and more strenuous (6 to 12 miles) meets on Tues and Fri at 8:45 am on Sutton Way just up from the Coldwell Banker office. They also decide that morning where they are going to hike, Contact Robin DeNegri at 274-7985.
- And there is also the **Nevada County Hiking Club**. See <[www.ncws.com/akh/hike/](http://www.ncws.com/akh/hike/)>