



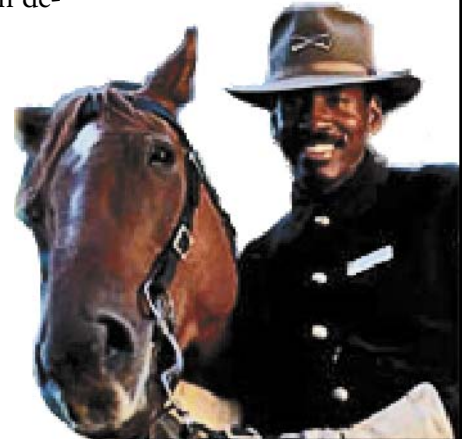
Tehipite Topics

January 2005 ♣ Vol. 51, No. 1

www.tehipite.sierraclub.org

The Buffalo Soldiers from Yosemite National Park

At the turn of the last century more than 400 African-American soldiers patrolled Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks. The Buffalo Soldiers were African-American cavalrymen who in 1903, shortly after their return from the Philippines and the Spanish-American War, found themselves garrisoned at San Francisco's Presidio with no assignment. This turned out to be the right place at the right time, for Yosemite had been declared a national park in 1890. The government decided to use the Army to protect Yosemite and the people who used the park from each other. The 9th Cavalry drew the assignment and history was made. In the Sierra Nevada, the Buffalo Soldiers regularly endured long days in the saddle and encountered racism and estrangement from family and friends. As military stewards, the African-American cavalry and infantry regiments protected the park from illegal grazing, poaching, forest fires, and timber thieves. In 1903, these soldiers built the first trail to the top of Mt. Whitney, in Sequoia National Park. In 1904, in Yosemite National Park, they built the first marked nature trail in what would eventually become the National Park System, in Yosemite National Park. However, the pivotal role these soldiers played in the early history of the national parks became yet another forgotten story. That is, until Yosemite Park Ranger Shelton Johnson realized that an historic



photograph depicting several African-American soldiers on horseback was actually taken in Yosemite. Additional research turned up other information, including Army Muster Rolls from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These documents confirmed that African-Americans had served in the Park in far greater numbers than was originally thought.

Park Ranger Shelton Johnson

Shelton Johnson, a native of Detroit, Michigan, has served as a U.S. park ranger since 1987. His work assignments have included Yosemite National Park, Great Basin National Park, Yellowstone National Park, and park areas within and around Washington D.C. He served with the Peace Corps in Liberia, West Africa, and attended Graduate School at the

University of Michigan, majoring in Creative Writing. Shelton has won several writing awards, including a Major Hopwood Award in Poetry from the University of Michigan in 1981. More recently, he graduated from Yosemite's Mounted Horse Patrol School in 1996 and was selected as a member of a National Park Service delegation to mainland China during the summer of 2000. He

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Tehipite Chapter Annual Banquet

Yosemite Park Interpreter *Shelton Johnson* will present a program from the standpoint of an African American soldier in the 9th Cavalry patrolling Yosemite Park at the turn of the 20th century.

Fresno State Student/Faculty Dining Facility
Wednesday, February 23, 2005, 6-9 P.M.

Send \$23.00 per person, payable to
"Tehipite Chapter Sierra Club" for tickets.

Ron Mackie
1617 Hwy 49 South
Ahwahnee, CA 93601

Please indicate meal choice(s) of Chicken Piccata,
Baked Lasagna, or Vegetarian Baked Lasagna.



GOING, GOING... GONE?



Sea turtles date back nearly 90 million years and are among the Earth's oldest surviving species. Yet the Kemp's Ridley sea turtle is quickly fading away—it is losing its habitat at an alarming rate. At the Sierra Club, we've mounted a major campaign to defend the Endangered Species Act and preserve threatened habitats before their inhabitants are gone forever.

Please join the Sierra Club today and help protect threatened and endangered animals.

Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!



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Membership Categories **INDIVIDUAL** **JOINT**

INTRODUCTORY \$25

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Contributions, gifts and dues to the 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 \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

Enclose check and mail to: **F94Q W1300**¹
Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Join!

(2)



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Secretary will be determined at January

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Gerald Vinnard. . . . (559) 431-9606

Johnson, from page 1

personally represented the Director of the National Park Service while riding in an equestrian unit in the 2001 Tournament of Roses Parade. In 2002, he was chosen as the Pacific West Regional recipient of the Freeman Tilden Award, the highest award given by the National Park Service for interpretation, and in 2003 served as keynote speaker at the National Interpreters Workshop in Reno, Nevada. He was then asked to accept a resolution passed by the California Legislative Black Caucus honoring the contribution made to Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks by the Buffalo Soldiers, an event held in the California State Assembly on August 28, 2003. Ranger Johnson has presented this program at venues across the United States,

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including the Oakland, Fresno, and Haggin Museums in California, and public schools in Cleveland, Ohio. Most recently he has performed at the Department of Interior's Yates Auditorium in Washington, D.C., the National Conservation Training Center in West Virginia, and the International Storytelling Center in Tennessee, all in 2004. His living history program about the Buffalo Soldiers was also selected by Sunset Magazine as one of the best interpretive programs in the western United States.

Ranger Shelton Johnson can be reached by phone at (209) 372-0644. His e-mail address is Shelton_Johnson@nps.gov.

A videotape has been made of "Yosemite through the Eyes of a Buffalo Soldier". This video captures Johnson's performance as Sgt. Elizy Boman, Troop "K", 9th Regiment of Cavalry. It may be available upon request. Information about the Buffalo Soldiers of the Sierra Nevada is also available on line at <http://shadowsoldier.wilderness.net>.

Recent News!

The Yosemite Fund recently presented Ranger Johnson with an award to finance the Sierra Nevada Buffalo Soldier Genealogical Research Project. The goal of this Project is to find descendants of the Buffalo Soldiers who served in Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks. The Project will then hold a family reunion in Yosemite Valley, which will feature historians and experts on this forgotten story, who will speak about the contributions of the 9th Cavalry and 24th Infantry to the preservation of Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks. A private researcher and former employee of the National Archives has been hired to find as many of these descendants as possible.

African-Americans constitute an underrepresented population in the national parks, but if the contributions of the Buffalo Soldiers of the Sierra Nevada were better known, perhaps this would lead to a greater sense of ownership of public lands among African-Americans, not just in California, but nationwide. ❧

Merced Group

New officers for the Merced Group

- Chair: JoAnne Armstrong
- Vice-Chair: Rod Webster
- Treasurer: Dave Tucker
- Secretary: Annette Allsup
- Member-At-Large: Jule Biesiada

Conservation and Executive Committee Meeting

Thursday, January 13th
Rod Webster's home, 345 E. 20th, Merced

General Meeting Thursday, January 20th

Unity Church
305 West 26th Street, Merced

"More noise, more traffic, more pollution—who needs it!"

There will be a very important panel discussion concerning the negative aspects of the proposed Motorsports Park in Atwater. The EIR will be released soon and there will only be a 45 day period when we can protest this terrible development. Come and hear why it is so important to defeat this project. Topics covered will be the detrimental effects of the billion dollar boondoggle that will effect our environment, our health, and the quality of our lives in the Central Valley. Panelists will include Judy Doucette, Lisa Kayser-Grant, Tom Grave and Dale Hoover. The discussion will focus on the Motorsports Park's potential impact on health, air quality, traffic, and noise. We will also have materials and ideas available for you to draft letters to our local Board of Supervisors and the Merced Sun-Star.

Don't miss this important meeting!!!!!!

Outings: None planned for January.

Merced Group

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Merced, CA 95341

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Population
Tammy Johnson (559) 665-5507

Wilderness Scores as 2004 Ends

by Vicky Hoover

Wilderness got top billing in Congress for our California/Nevada region as 2004 drew to a close. Not only did Congress pass and the President sign into law major new wilderness protection for Nevada, but the Senate passed the Northern California Coastal Wild Heritage Act (S 738), which would preserve key areas on and near the northern California coast.

Senate passage of the Coastal Bill championed by Senator Barbara Boxer and vigorously supported by Senator Dianne Feinstein came as a grand last-minute surprise in the closing hours of the Senate on December 7, just before adjournment. The bill, packaged with several other lands bills from other regions, passed "by unanimous consent", which means that with no senator objecting. It was ushered through without an individual vote count.

Although the last-minute Senate nod to California wilderness wasn't matched by action in the House of Representatives, the positive act boosts the momentum for the bill for nearly 300,000 acres in Representative Mike Thompson's First Congressional district of California, and should grease the skids for action when Representative Thompson and Senators Boxer and Feinstein reintroduce the bill early in 2005.

As Senator Boxer stated, "The House had an opportunity to approve a package of bills, including this one, in the closing hours of their session, but unfortunately failed to do so. I intend to introduce this bill again on the first legislative day of the 109th Congress, and I am very optimistic of its passage."

The Northern California Coastal Wild Heritage Wilderness Act would give wilderness protection to nearly 300,000 acres and 21 river miles of Northern California's remaining untouched federal public lands and streams. It includes remote and beautiful portions of Mendocino National Forest and Six Rivers National Forest, as well as a long stretch of undeveloped beach and coastal bluffs in Humboldt and Mendocino counties.

The bill never got a hearing before the House Resources Committee, whose chairman is Representative Richard Pombo, R-Tracy. But the bill's House sponsor, Representative Mike Thompson, D-St. Helena, is optimistic he can work with Pombo to move forward next year. "The bill continues to be Representative Thompson's top priority," said spokesman Matt Gerien.

In the Senate, the bill's sponsors, Subcommittee Chairman Larry Craig (R-ID) and members of the committee

worked together since the bill's Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee hearing in July to resolve outstanding issues. During that hearing, Subcommittee Chairman Craig praised Senators Boxer and Feinstein and Representative Thompson for addressing local concerns and seeking out and talking to affected constituencies. While it was Senator Boxer who originally championed the bill, Senator Feinstein, a member of the Energy Committee, deserves credit for assuring the bill a hearing and devoting staff time and pressure to moving it forward to passage.

While we credit our legislators, we know that the enormous progress toward wilderness protection resulted mainly from the enthusiastic and relentless hard work of countless Sierra Club and California Wild Heritage Campaign volunteers and staff, whose detailed field work, positive wilderness education in farflung communities, and patient D.C. lobbying set the stage for action in Congress. Thanks to all our volunteers and may you celebrate wilderness mightily!

Nevada Wilderness expanded; Bill Raises Concerns

When President Bush signed the Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2004, on November 30, Nevada led the nation in amount of wilderness designated, for the third Congress in a row. The bill designates 768,000 acres of wilderness in eastern Nevada. Once again, Senator Harry Reid led the fight for huge new Nevada wilderness additions, and he deserves thanks for this leadership.

However, this bill is far from a plus overall. Because of its serious potentially damaging provisions facilitating water transfers from rural eastern Nevada to feed the already out-of-control sprawl growth around Las Vegas, the Sierra Club did not support the bill. As Toiyabe Chapter chair, Ellen Pillard testified in last summer's Congressional hearing in Washington D.C., "The Sierra Club and its Toiyabe Chapter oppose the Lincoln County bill as currently written, but acknowledge that despite our opposition, common ground exists on several fronts, and Sierra Club supports many of the goals encompassed in this legislation." Sierra Club worked hard to improve the bill, and several provisions will give us future opportunities to ensure no damage is done to Nevada's fragile desert ecology through land or water development.

Wilderness activists applaud the new wilderness protection, while at the same time decrying and warning against the effects of dewatering eastern Nevada and encouraging more rampant growth around Las Vegas.

In the 107th Congress, in 2000, President Clinton signed the Black Rock/High Rock Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area bill with associated wilderness areas (some inside the northwest Nevada NCA, some outside) amounting to 755,000 acres. At that time, this was the largest amount of wilderness designated in one bill since the California Desert Protection Act of 1994.

Then, on November 6, 2002, President Bush signed the Clark County Conservation of Public Land and Natural Resources Act, which brought 452,000 more acres of wilderness to southern Nevada, in the magnificent and dramatic surroundings of Las Vegas; the bill included Forest Service, BLM and National Park Service lands.

The November 30, 2004 signing came nearly fifteen years to the day since George Bush I signed the first Nevada Forest Service Wilderness Act on December 5, 1989.

Next Easter, March 25 to 29, the Club's CA/NV wilderness committee will conduct a five day trip to the largest of the new wilderness areas in southern Lincoln County, the Mormon Mountains. The rugged desert area is one of the "Big Four", four large new wilderness areas separated only by narrow dirt roads that together provide a significant, nearly half-million acre block of excellent wildlife habitat. Contact Vicky Hoover (425) 977-5527 or vicky.hoover@sierraclub.org after January 15 for more details.

TAKE ACTION!

Please help us give our Congressional wilderness champions the praise they deserve. Thank you cards and letters are in order! Please take a few minutes to write Senator Boxer,

Senator Feinstein, and Congressman Thompson, and let them know that you appreciate their hard work to protect California's last wild places. Since they'll be back in-district during the holiday recess, please send your cards and letters to the following district offices:

Senator Barbara Boxer, 1700 Montgomery Street, Suite 240, San Francisco, CA 94111

Senator Dianne Feinstein, One Post Street, Suite 2450, San Francisco, CA 94104

Congressman Mike Thompson, 1040 Main Street, Suite 101, Napa, CA 94559

Real card or letters are best, but if you're not able to send a note or card in the mail, please drop each of our champions an e-mail, using the links below. Thanks!

Senator Boxer
<http://boxer.senate.gov/contact/webform.cfm>

Senator Feinstein
<http://feinstein.senate.gov/email.html>

Congressman Thompson
<http://mikethompson.house.gov/contact/email.asp>

Vicky Hoover, Sierra Club Chair,
CA/NV Regional Wilderness Committee
85 Second St., 2nd floor
San Francisco, CA 94105-3459
(415) 977-5527
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Keep It Wild! 🌿



Upcoming Chapter General Meeting Presentations

- January 12 Gene RichardsHow to Get Used To a Foreign Culture
—Further Experiences in China
- February 9 Mark Keppler.....Master Urban Parkway Plan
- March 9 Keith SauerNorth Slope to North Fork
- April 13 John & Marcia Rasmussen.....A Trek to the Top of Mt. Rainier
- May 11 Heather AndersonAlaska and ANWR

Unitarian Church
4144 N. Millbrook

Fresno

7:00 P.M.

*More information at
www.tehipite.sierraclub.org*

Hikers and California newt along the trail to Garlic Falls, Kings River.

ECOVIEW *a Melange of Items for the New Year*

by *Marin Orvis*

Outgunned: For every dollar the World Health Organization spends on improving nutrition and access to food, the global food industry spends \$500 to promote refined, processed products that contain large quantities of fat, sugar and salt. (No kidding!)

Things Grow Better With Coke: Farmers in India have found a new use for Coke, as well as for Pepsi and other soft drinks. They are spraying them on their cotton and other crops. The theory is that the sugars in the drinks attracts red ants, which feed on insect pest larvae. The drinks are much cheaper than toxic sprays, too—66 cents for 1.5 liters of locally produced Coke, compared to \$220 for a liter of pesticide.

Fade Out: Experts warn that New England's fabled fall colors could vanish within a century if global warming remains unchecked. The autumnal forest leaf display was disappointing for the fifth year in a row, and researchers say climate-related factors are already putting a crimp in such traditional industries as maple syrup production.

Designer Bugs: Silkworms that produce pharmaceuticals instead of silk? Mosquitos that can deliver vaccines instead of disease when they bite? Those are just two of the genetic oddities in the pipeline. And while these innovations may be five years away, regulatory agencies have not even begun to consider how to monitor such projects, or even which agencies have jurisdiction. For a report on the implications of gene-altered insects, go to <http://www.pewagbiotech.org/research/bugs>.

Thanks to *ECONews* 1204 for the above info.

And from *In Balance* No.30, Winter 2004/05:

The Bad: Infants die in polluted neighborhoods. An analysis by the San Francisco Chronicle shows that babies born in farming regions of California's Central Valley plagued by smog, agricultural waste, and other pollutants are more likely to die before their first birthday. Recent studies link

pesticides, carbon monoxide, and tiny airborne particles with birth defects, premature births, low birth weight, and respiratory ailments. (This is no surprise, but what's being done about it?)

The Good: After much wrangling and attempts to derail it by the auto industry, California air quality regulators finally adopted the nation's first-ever rules to reduce car emissions linked to global warming. The new rules will require auto makers to cut emissions up to one quarter by 2009 and up to one third by 2016. Some northeastern states, including New York, have indicated they may follow the California rules when crafting their own pollution reduction plans.

The Truly Ridiculous: Squeezy says, "I Want My CXT." Prior to the California Air Regulatory Board's historic adoption of regulations to curb globe-warming car emissions, an auto industry-backed PR firm launched radio and newspaper ads starring "Squeezy the Climate Clown," to assert that the new rules would squeeze poor Californians into tiny (shudder) fuel-efficient vehicles that would, well, kill them. Never mind a study that found occupants of sport utility vehicles in 2003 nearly 11 percent more likely to die in accidents than people in all those tiny clown cars.

More Truly...: Yes, we all saw it coming. Enough with the puny, girlie-man Hummer. Navistar is rolling out a new personal assault vehicle that dwarfs the former king of bloat. Introducing the CXT (short for "commercial extreme truck"), basically a tractor-trailer cab spliced onto a truck bed. The CXT towers two feet over the Hummer, weighs in at seven tons, and gets a whopping 6-10 mpg on diesel!

And to End This New Year's Column: "I thought it was ironic because in another room there was a picture of a bare breast with milk squirting out of it called the 'Milky Way.'" Experienced by C. Goode who was asked to stop breastfeeding her infant daughter at the National Gallery in London (which features at least 49 paintings of topless women). ↗

We sadly say goodbye

to longtime Sierra Club member *Martha Froelich*, who for many years served on the *Topics* labeling committee each month. She died on November 24, 2004, after an automobile accident.

Martha, a retired teacher, continued to hike in her beloved mountains even after having a hip replacement (due to a broken hip when she fell while playing volleyball on her 83rd birthday.) She was a real activist and a familiar figure at Tehipite Chapter meetings.

She fondly remembered her treks to Heather Lake and other high destinations over the years. We will sorely miss her.

Trip Schedule

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 New Tehipite Chapter Outings Chair is Carolyn Ordway (559) 449-7780 jbord606@yahoo.com. Please contact her 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.

January 9th - Sunday

Cross Country Skiing
Beginners' Lesson
Location to be determined, weather and snow permitting.
Walt Taguchi (559) 435-2818

January 15th - Saturday

Day Hike (1A) Easy
A nice route along edge of Millerton Lake from Winchell Cove on first section of San Joaquin River Trail. Keep an eye out for eagles!
Don Redmond (559) 268-1537

January 15th - Saturday

Beginners' Snowshoeing (1B)
We will hike on the Coyote Trail that overlooks Shaver Lake. Maybe a snowball fight or build a snowman. It's like a winter wonderland! Come play in the snow and have fun.
Carolyn Ordway (559) 449-7780

January 22th - Saturday

Day Hike (2B)
Deadwood Peak overlooking Oakhurst. Meet at Raley's coffee shop in Mariposa. If snow, there will be an alternate hike.
Paul Weiss (209) 966-6605

January 22th - Saturday

Cross Country Skiing - Intermediate
Location to be determined, weather and snow permitting.
Gerald Vinnard (559) 431-5780

January 23rd - Sunday

Trail Running
Location and difficulty to be decided.
Marcia Rasmussen (559) 332-2419
Marcia@BigBaldy.com

January 29th - Saturday

Cross Country Skiing - Intermediate
Location to be determined, weather and snow permitting.
Steve Fretz (559) 439-6673

January 29th - Saturday

Day Hike (1A) Easy
Lewis Fork Fresno River. Hike this historic lumber flume patrol trail above Oakhurst.
Don Redmond (559) 268-1537

February 5th - Saturday

Cross Country Skiing
Beginners' Lesson
Location to be determined, weather and snow permitting.
Walt Taguchi (559) 435-2818

February 6th - Sunday

Annual Snowshoeing Bowl.
A perfect antidote for the Supper Bowl. Location to be determined.
Dave Wallace (559) 284-2586

February 12th - Saturday

Angel Falls (1A) 4.8 miles
A wide cascade that looks like angel wings. It's located on the northeast end of Bass Lake near Oakhurst.
Carolyn Ordway (559) 449-7780

February 19th - Saturday

Day Hike (2A/2B)
Fremont Peak is 20 miles North of Mariposa. Meet at Mariposa Fruit & Nuts in Mariposa. If snow, there will be an alternate hike.
Paul Weiss (209) 966-6605

February 19th - Saturday

Day Hike (2B)
San Joaquin River Gorge
Aimee Leyva (559) 438-8670
or (559) 301-3977

February 19th - Saturday

Cross Country Skiing - Intermediate
Location to be determined, weather and snow permitting.
Gerald Vinnard (559) 431-5780

February 26th - Saturday

Day Hike (2A) Moderate
Goat Mt.
Let's hoof it up to the fire lookout above Bass Lake.
Don Redmond (559) 268-1537

February 26th - Saturday

Cross Country Skiing - Intermediate
Location to be determined, weather and snow permitting.
Steve Fretz (559) 439-6673

March 5th - 7th Saturday to Monday

Adopt-A-Cabin Tour. (1C)
Friday meet at the Jawbone Ranger Station (Bureau of Land Management) on Highway 14 near Red Rock Canyon State Park at 10 A.M. From there we will visit Bureau Schmidt's Tunnel and Cabin, 3 cabins near the Garlock Road and make car camp at the Minnietta Cabin in the Panamint Valley. Saturday hike (1C) to the lookout, ghost town and Stone Canyon Cabin. Depending on road conditions, we will make camp at the hot springs in the Saline Valley and visit Buckhorn Cabin, Lower Beveridge Cabin and waterfalls. Or if the pass is closed at China Garden, visit mining activity on

See **Outings**, back page



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Outings, from page 7

Zinc Mountain, Darwin Falls and almost ghost town of Darwin. Five dollar deposit required (refunded if you go on the trip) for this trip to handle mailing, maps, detailed itinerary, etc. High clearance vehicles required; 4wd not required. Dogs OK if non aggressive and capable of 12 mile (very rocky) hike. Extension of trip in north part of Saline Valley for those interested on March 8 and 9. You will learn about the environmental geography and history of the area. Please sign up early for this one.

Richard Sloan, 1509 E. Fallbrook Ave., Fresno, CA 93720 (559) 696-2971, RiverRich1509@aol.com

March 13th - Sunday

San Joaquin River Gorge to Sky Harbor. (4A)
Visit scree slope cave and see progress on the new bridge. Dogs OK on this trip if non aggressive and capable of 16 mile hike. You will learn about the environmental geography and history of the area.

Richard Sloan, 1509 E. Fallbrook Ave., Fresno, CA 93720 (559) 696-2971, RiverRich1509@aol.com

July 31th - Sunday

Dinkey Lakes loop trail with dog leg to Island lake. (2C)
Dogs welcome if non aggressive. Short swim in one of

the lakes (the water is COLD!) You will learn about the environmental geography and history of the area.

Richard Sloan, 1509 E. Fallbrook Ave., Fresno, CA 93720 (559) 696-2971, RiverRich1509@aol.com

October 7th - 10th Friday to Monday

Car Camp and Day Hike. (3D)

Leave Friday evening and meet at Ballarat and camp out. In the morning hike 6 miles to Panamint City ghost town located in a juniper/pinon pine forest. We have seen bighorn sheep three times in a row on this hike! Saturday night we will have steaks at Panamint Springs (if it hasn't sold yet). Sunday we will explore either the lookout, ghost town, or go to the hot springs in the Saline Valley, and water falls in Beveridge Canyon, depending on what the group wants to do. Five dollar deposit required (refunded if you go on the trip) to handle mailing, maps, detailed itinerary, etc. High clearance vehicles required; 4wd not required. Possible extension of trip in north part of Saline Valley for those interested. You will learn about the environmental geography and history of the area. Please sign up early for this one.

Richard Sloan, 1509 E. Fallbrook Ave., Fresno, CA 93720 (559) 696-2971, RiverRich1509@aol.com