



Tehipite Topics

January 2006 ❧ Vol. 52, No. 1a

www.tehipite.sierraclub.org

A Golf Course Only a Logging Company Could Love

by Owen Bailey

The fate of one of California's last remaining coastal Monterey pine forests could be decided when the California Coastal Commission meets this March in Monterey. The Monterey pine, grown round the world, survives in its original habitat in only three intact forests, and developers have proposed cutting down 17,000 threatened trees to add to their golf empire on the Monterey Peninsula. The Coastal Commission hearing could represent one of the last opportunities for opponents to stop the project from moving forward.

Sierra Club has been one of the major groups involved in fighting this latest mega-development scheme, facing off against the Pebble Beach Company, a highly influential and well financed development company, whose principal shareholders include Clint Eastwood, Peter Ueberroth and Arnold Palmer. The Pebble Beach Company already owns or manages four golf courses, and several resorts and restaurants in the area.

The company's contentious plan has shaped up to be one of the biggest coastal protection battles in many years. Twenty-two appeals have been submitted to the Coastal Commission against the project, making this the most appealed coastal development project since the creation of the Coastal Commission. (The previous record was nine.) The destructive project has been appealed by conservation organizations, concerned Californians and even by two members of the Coastal Commission, including Commission Chair, Meg Caldwell.

The forest's designation as Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA) should place restrictions on forest development, but the issue has been confused by a local initiative passed last year under the guise of "forest preservation." Development partner Eastwood appeared in ads for the initiative which spoke of "Measure A" as a means to curtail unwanted development.

Now the Coastal Commission could represent the last stand for coastal protection advocates interested in protecting one of the few remaining places where you can still see California's wild coast. "These trees are icons of California's coastal legacy, and they are slated to be lost for more golf," says Sierra Club's Coastal Director, Mark Massara. "There are seven other places to play golf within a few miles, but if you want Monterey pine forest, this is it."

See *Monterey*, page 6



Photo courtesy of Kenneth Edelman and www.CaliforniaCoastline.org

January General Meeting

January 18th at 7:00 P.M.
University of California Center
550 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno
(across from Fashion Fair)

“Wild Utah: America’s Redrock Wilderness”
presented by *Bob Brister*

Please join the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA) for a breathtaking journey through the famous redrock country of Southern Utah. Presented by SUWA’s National Organizing Director Bob Brister, *Wild Utah: America’s Redrock Wilderness* is a multi-media slide show, featuring stunning images by noted wilderness photographers and the voice of Pulitzer Prize winning author Wallace Stegner.



Dinner Date with the Speaker

Meet at the Imperial Gardens Restaurant at 5:15 for our monthly no-host Dinner Date with the Speaker, an opportunity to interact with fellow Sierrans.
6640 N. Blackstone, east side, just south of Herndon.



**SIERRA
CLUB**
FOUNDED 1892

Tehipite Chapter

P.O. Box 5396

Fresno, California 93755-5396

Copyright © Tehipite Chapter, 2006

Chapter phone(559) 229-4031

Web . . . www.tehipite.sierraclub.org

Officers

Chapter Chair

Gerald D. Vinnard. . (559) 431-5780
. gvinnard@cvip.net

Chapter Vice-Chair

JoAnne Armstrong . .(209) 726-0636
. sierrafer@peoplepc.com

Chapter Secretary

Aimee Leyva (559) 438-8670
. aimee_leyva@yahoo.com

Chapter Treasurer

Joe Ruff (559) 436-4880
. 2tehipite@sbcglobal.net

Executive Committee Members

Tom Eliason. (559) 439-7195
. tomeliason@comcast.net

William Fjellbo (559) 642-4511
. jbfjellbo@sierratel.com
Don Gaede. (559) 434-5138
. gaede80@sbcglobal.net
June Gill (559) 432-5344
. juneg21@sbcglobal.net
Ron Mackie (559) 683-0293
. rmackie@sierratel.com

Chapter Committee Chairs

Awards

Gerald Vinnard (559) 431-9606

Hospitality

Rae Marx. (559) 641-7589

Tehipite Topics Editors / Website

Marcia & John Rasmussen.
. (559) 332-2419
. Rasmussen@BigBaldy.com

Membership

Marian Orvis (559) 226-0145
Ione Scott. (559) 665-0460
Rae Marx. (559) 641-7589

Newsletter Distribution

Marian Orvis (559) 226-0145

Outings and Outings Leader Training

Richard Sloan (559) 696-2971
. RiverRich1509@aol.com

Political Committee

Emily Templin. (559) 486-3138
. emtem79@hotmail.com

Programs

Heather Anderson . . (559) 434-2510
. ha062@cvip.net

Conservation Committee

Conservation Chair

Heather Anderson . . (559) 434-2510
. ha062@cvip.net

Air Quality / Transportation /

Global Warming

Kevin Hall. (559) 227-6421
. hallmos@aol.com

Kings Canyon National Park /

Giant Sequoia National Monument /

Sequoia Forest
John Rasmussen. . . . (559) 332-2419
. John@BigBaldy.com

Sierra National Forest

Tom Eliason. (559) 439-7195
. tomeliason@comcast.net

Water

Chris Acree (559) 709-4913
. chris.acree@comcast.net

Wilderness

Ron Mackie (559) 683-0293
. rmackie@sierratel.com

Yosemite National Park

George Whitmore . . (559) 229-5808
. geowhit1954@comcast.net

Merced Group

Sierra Club
Box 387
Merced, CA 95341

Group Chair

JoAnne Armstrong . . . (209) 726-0636
. sierrafer@peoplepc.com

Group Vice-Chair

Rod Webster (209) 723-4747
. rwebster@elite.net

Group Treasurer

Dave Tucker. (209) 384-1354

Group Secretary

Annette Allsup (209) 723-5152

Member-at-Large

Jule Biesiada. juleb13@msn.com

Conservation Chair

JoAnne Armstrong . . . (209) 726-0636
. sierrafer@peoplepc.com

Publications

Rod Webster (209) 723-4747

Agriculture

Charlie Magnuson . . . (209) 394-7045

Membership

Linda Lagace (209) 384-1354

Publicity

Rod Webster (209) 723-4747

Population

Tammy Johnson. (559) 665-5507

Merced Group

Conservation and Executive Committee Meeting

Thursday, January 12th at 7:00 P.M at Rod Webster's home, 345 E. 20th St., Merced.

Conservation meeting is first, and usually lasts 30-40 minutes. Anyone with an interest in local, state or national conservation issues is welcome. Come just to get informed or get as involved as you wish.

Footsteps in Time, a Poetry Event

Wednesday, January 18th, 6:00-7:00 P.M.

Merced County Courthouse Museum, 21st and N Streets, Merced.

An opportunity to support and encourage the next generation in their commitment to care for our planet.

Student poets involved in the Valley Voices Poetry Program from the Merced Union High School District will present their poems from the 7th annual Poet Tree Project at the Merced County Courthouse Museum on January 18th. Poems exploring the theme, Footsteps in Time, have been written on over 360 footsteps. The poems reflect the students' environmental and ecological concerns, and areas of the Merced River Watershed the students have explored. This year's theme was inspired by the curator of the Sierra Club's LeConte Memorial Lodge in Yosemite National Park, Dr. Bonnie Gisel, and her Green Shoes Project. The focus of Green Shoes and this year's poetry projects is to help remind everyone to care for the natural world and be a steward of our wilderness. Environmental historian, educator, author and John Muir scholar, Dr. Gisel will be the keynote speaker. Valley Voices Poetry Program director and River of Words teacher of the year, Ocean Jones, will introduce the students and teachers from Atwater, Golden Valley,

Livingston and Merced High Schools involved in the project. The event will begin at 5:00 with docent tours of the museum, followed by the poetry reading from 6:00-7:00 in the courtroom. The event is open to the public and is sponsored by the Merced County Courthouse Museum, the Valley Voices Poetry Program and the Merced High School Writers' Club. Contact Sarah Lim at the museum at (209) 723-2401 or Ocean Jones at (209) 723-9600 for more information.

General Meeting

Thursday, January 19th at 7:30 P.M.

Sierra Presbyterian Church, 3603 M St.

(M St. and Yosemite Ave., across from Merced College)

"Wild Utah: America's Redrock Wilderness"

*presented by Bob Brister
of Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance*

Bob Brister will take us on a journey to "one of the world's most unique landscapes, where towering buttes, sweeping plateaus, and intimate canyons are enveloped by a rare and breathtaking silence."

This multi-media slide show documents citizen efforts to designate portions of southern Utah's spectacular canyon country as Wilderness. Initiated by Utahns, the effort has gained national prominence in the form of America's Redrock Wilderness Act. This would use the 1964 Wilderness Act to protect these special public lands in perpetuity and to eliminate current damaging practices, such as use by off-road vehicles. The proposed legislation seeks to have over nine million acres of Utah federal lands added to the National Wilderness Preservation System. The hope is to encourage California Senator Dianne Feinstein to cosponsor America's Redrock Wilderness Act and help make this a reality. Senator Barbara Boxer is already a cosponsor.

See Merced Group, page 6

SAVE OUR WATERWAYS!



photo/Ryan Peek

While the Clean Water Act has been instrumental in keeping millions of tons of sewage and toxic chemicals out of our waterways each year, we are still a long way from cleaning up ALL of the nation's water bodies. The goals of the Clean Water Act are still achievable — all that's missing is the will of our leaders to achieve them. We need to strengthen the enforcement of the Clean Water Act. And we could use your help to do it. **Join the Sierra Club today.**

Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!



My Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____
Phone # _____
email _____

Check enclosed, made payable to Sierra Club
Please charge my MasterCard Visa AMEX

Exp. Date ____/____/____

Cardholder Name _____

Card Number _____

Membership Categories	INDIVIDUAL	JOINT
INTRODUCTORY	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
REGULAR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47

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

Tehipite Chapter Annual Awards Banquet

February 25th, 6:00-9:00 P.M.
California State University, Fresno
Dining Hall on Cedar, North of Shaw

Giant Forest

Dr. William Tweed, Chief Park Naturalist for Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, will share with us the encouraging story of how the Giant Forest of Sequoia National Park, the home of the world's largest trees, was rescued from decades of congestion and commercial overdevelopment and restored to its rightful place as the park's crown jewel. This amazing project took twenty years and over \$70 million to carry out, and is now essentially complete. We'll explore how the problem developed, how the park built support for restoring the grove, and what lessons have been learned during this very prolonged project.

Tweed, who has been on the staff of Sequoia and Kings Canyon since 1978, played a major role in the Giant Forest project, serving as design coordinator for the Park Service as the grove was redesigned to become once again a wild place, albeit one with 600,000 visitors each year.

A native of Central California, Tweed holds degrees in history from the University of the Pacific and Texas Christian University, and has held the position of Chief Naturalist at the two southern Sierra national parks for the past ten years. Prior to that, he held positions as a park ranger and as manager of the parks' planning and concessions management functions. He has been a Sierra Club member since 1969.

For tickets, send \$24 per person, payable to "Tehipite Chapter Sierra Club."

Ron Mackie
1617 Hwy. 49 South
Ahwahnee, CA 93601
(559) 683-0293
rmackie@sierratel.com

Please indicate meal choice(s) of Tri-Tip, Chicken or Vegetarian.

Alaska Wilderness

by Heather Anderson

Our Alaska trip was slated for the Ambler River, just south of the Gates of the Arctic National Park. But, after flying to Fairbanks and taking the 250 mile Dalton Highway to Coldfoot (near Wiseman), and waiting a precious day for the weather to clear for bush plane takeoff, we were rerouted.

We arrived late in Fairbanks and the next morning were driven by a young German woman whose husband had gotten hooked by the “far north,” and carved out a home and a living in Wiseman, a village in the Arctic Circle wilderness. A few trappers and prospectors had moved there in the thirties and built a store and a dancehall. A few other historic buildings still remain. Our hosts were in the process of turning the hall into a home, digging a large cold cellar, raising greenhouse vegetables, hunting their own meat, building a play yard for two youngsters, and home-schooling. They had also built a guest cabin (complete with German comforters) and advertised their Arctic Getaway Igloo #8 online. We enjoyed a comfy overnight and hotcakes and coffee breakfast before driving the few miles back to our Coldfoot airstrip to wait.

Bad weather prevented takeoff that day, so we tented nearby, hoping for clear skies the following day. Since the rain was westward and toward our Ambler River cabin destination, we decided to fly east toward sunshine and the Wind River in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, on the south slope of the Brooks Range. The sky did, in fact, open up with scraps of sun, blue sky, and clouds. I have great admiration for these young savvy bush pilots, finding their way through a maze of rambling ridges and wide valleys, over passes, through mountain notches, and along roads or rivers to set down on a somewhat level strip of land. We pitched tents in our new home midst the willow tundra next to a sleepy stream. (Tundra denotes a treeless area between the arctic treeline and ice cap with frozen subsoil, supporting low-growing vegetation of mosses, lichens, stunted shrubs of willow, birches, and berries. Taiga indicates subarctic evergreen forests.)

There are, of course, no trails, so hiking requires going through or over the brush. The hardest walking was over tussocks which twisted or turned when stepped on, or through bogs. But fall color was just beginning and the foothill berries and birches were transforming the landscape into swaths of reds and yellows. The taluses of tangled willow were a contrasting yellow green. Thank heavens, mosquitoes were minimal. Although it was not quite 24-hour daylight, the hoped-for Aurora Borealis did not show itself. We did, however, see a couple of caribou stragglers, part of the Porcupine or Central Arctic Herd moving toward winter range. Dall sheep, one grizzly, some ptarmigan,

See *Alaska*, page 8





Elana has spent her whole life around the beautiful Monterey pines. Golf course developers plan to cut down 17,000 trees just like this one, despoiling one of the last remaining Monterey pine forests anywhere in the world.

Monterey, from page 1

Even though cutting 17,000 trees would not immediately wipe out the entire forest, experts believe that cutting this many trees could threaten even those trees left standing. Pine Pitch Canker disease is a constant threat to Monterey pines, and by opening up the forestland, you expose the remaining trees to increased risk. Those trees standing alone, exposed to humans or on the edges of forests are far more susceptible to the disease that has can be fatal to Monterey pines.

You can help Sierra Club protect the Monterey pine forest. Please visit www.sierraclub.org/ca/coasts/hotbox/pebble.asp or email savethecoast@sierraclub.org for more information on how you can take action. ✨

Merced Group, from page 3

The program being presented was made possible through generous donations of photos, music, and words from concerned Utahns, and includes a special reading by Pulitzer Prize winning author Wallace Stegner from his famous Wilderness Letter.

As Interregional Outreach Coordinator of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, Bob Brister will include an update on the status of other issues on the Utah wilderness movement's agenda. To those who have traveled in the canyon country of southern Utah, this program should be a great revisiting of a unique and inspiring landscape, and to those who haven't, you're in for a treat. It will also be a great opportunity for those who would like to help make a difference in this tremendous American public lands conservation effort. Check out the website at www.suwa.org if you'd like a sneak preview or to learn more.

Sierra Club Hikes to Save the Pines

Monterey County is one of California's great coastal places, offering something for everyone—surfing, hiking, quiet and relaxation. The county also boasts at least 20 golf courses where golfers can enjoy a day on the links, as well as acres of rare and undeveloped forestland where nature lovers can experience California's rapidly disappearing "wild coast." But this balance, delicately preserved for decades, is at risk with a proposal to cut down 17,000 threatened Monterey pine trees to build what they have ironically named "The Forest (Golf) Course."

Sierra Club, starting with John Muir himself, has worked for over 100 years to protect the Del Monte Forest—the largest natural forest of Monterey pines left in the world—and all the endangered plants and animals which call the forest home. Final decisions are expected soon, as the California Coastal Commission has scheduled a hearing on this development this spring.

Sadly, at risk here is more than the loss of one grove of trees—more even than the loss of one of the last stands of a tree which once covered so much of our coastline. The threat here is one of statewide precedent. By allowing a developer to cut down of 17,000 threatened trees, decision makers could well be helping to cut down one of California's strongest environmental protection laws.

The California Coastal Act is unique among conservation laws because it respects Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA). According to this law, it is not just the frog, or the bird or the flower that is worthy of protection, but the area in which the critter or tree lives. Our coastal protection laws are designed to protect the area, and in this case that means the forest.

The Del Monte Forest has long been considered as Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area, as the Monterey pines are threatened not only in themselves, but also as protection for the wildlife that depend on the trees for survival.

There is still time, however, to save this forest. This is why on Saturday morning, February 18th, Sierra Club's Coastal Director, Mark Massara will join outings leaders and Sierra Club members from throughout California to hike in this beautiful and threatened forest. With this fun and easy hike, Sierra Club hopes to raise awareness of the importance of this forest. Join us and learn the simple things that people can do to help protect this forest for future generations.

For more information on this hike and California's coastal protection laws, call (831) 659-7046 or write to savethecoast@sierraclub.org.

Outings Schedule

January 10th - Tuesday

There will be a no-host dinner at House of Kebab on January 10th, starting at 6:30 P.M. to discuss outings for the year. Bring your list of proposed hikes. If you have not led Tehipite Chapter hikes but want to, please come and talk with the folks who have. If you have been an Outing Leader in the past few years, please share an outing experience with us. I will have copies of the new Sierra Club Outing Program to hand out.

Richard Sloan (559) 696-2971
RiverRich1509@aol.com

February 4th - Saturday

Day Hike (1A)
Uneven footing. Wade across San Joaquin River in two places about 1½ feet deep. Follow unimproved trail along Fresno and Madera sides of San Joaquin River. Non-aggressive dogs on leashes welcome. Riverside Golf Course area.
Richard Sloan (559) 696-2971
RiverRich1509@aol.com

Some outings leaders are waiting for snow. Check www.tehipite.sierraclub.org/outings once winter sets in, for more fun and frolic.



Built by Sierra Club members in 1934, this rustic, hostel-style lodge stands atop historic Donner Pass, just an hour and a half from Sacramento. Expect convenient access to all mountain activities, excellent family style meals, a friendly staff and a casual atmosphere.

FEATURED PROGRAMS

JANUARY 6-8, FEBRUARY 10-12, MARCH 24-26 Bay Area Ski Bus Trips Ride in comfort from Oakland to Clair Tappaan. Price: \$175 members, \$200 non-members, \$140 children (includes lodging/meals).

JANUARY 6-8, MARCH 10-12 Kids Ski Weekends Start kids off right with lessons and short trips on CTL trails. Price: \$125/child (includes equipment rental/lodging/meals).

JANUARY 22-27 Snowshoe & Cross Country Ski in the High Sierra A Sierra Club National Outing: call 415-977-5522.

FEBRUARY 17-19, MARCH 24-26 Snowshoe Ecology Tours Enjoy guided snowshoe day tours and broaden your knowledge of alpine ecology. Price: \$145 members, \$170 non-members (includes lodging/meals).



For more information about these programs or to receive a full schedule and description of Clair Tappaan programs please visit our website at www.ctl.sierraclub.org or call (800) 679-6775.

Trip 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 Richard Sloan (559) 696-2971 RiverRich1509@aol.com. Please contact him 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.

Would you like to be an Outings Leader? Do you have a favorite hike you would like to share with fellow outdoor lovers? Being an Outings Leader can be very rewarding. Basic qualifications include a desire to lead outings, basic first aid or the ability to devote a day 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, email Richard Sloan at RiverRich1509@aol.com or phone (559) 696-2971. Current Outings Leaders please contact Richard with your proposed hikes.



SIERRA
CLUB

TEHIPITE CHAPTER

FOUNDED 1892 P.O. Box 5396 • Fresno, California 93755-5396

No Profit Org
U. S. Postage
P A I D
Fresno, Calif.
Permit No. 150

Inside *Tehipite Topics*

A Golf Course Only a Logging Company Could Love.....	Cover
Chapter Events.....	2
Merced Group	3
Chapter Awards Banquet	4
Alaska Wilderness	5
Sierra Club Hikes to Save the Pines.....	6
Outings	7

Did you know that *Tehipite Topics* is available online, approximately one week before you receive it in the mail? *In color!*

See www.tehipite.sierraclub.org.

February *Tehipite Topics* deadline January 13th.

Alaska, from page 5

and only a few birds were seen. On our walks up and down the valley, we came across *aufeis*, German for “ice on top,” a phenomenon I had never experienced; a shallow area of ice made up of millions of crystalline sticks formed when spring or river water freezes on top of older ice. One day, we followed a willowy creek back to a closer view of the mountains demarcating our valley. Another day took us hard hiking up a creek on the opposite side of the valley. Smoke blew in on the last day from the burning bogs in other parts of Alaska, making photo-taking obsolete. So I sketched and waited for the pilot to have clear enough vision to fly in and pick us up. I loved skimming the mountains on the way out. The aerial view of valleys, ranges and watersheds, colors and shapes is stunning. So much to explore in Alaska; I plan to go back.

(Try Bob Marshall’s *Alaska Wilderness* and *Arctic Village* (Wiseman), and Debbie Miller’s *Midnight Wilderness*. You will like them.) ❧

