

# Sierra Club YODELER

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY CHAPTER ♦ FALL 2021



- ♦ TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW FOR 11TH ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY ♦
- ♦ BAY REFINERY EMISSIONS RULE PASSES IN A LANDSLIDE ♦
- ♦ NEW ADVENTURES AWAIT WITH RESTART OF OUTINGS PROGRAM ♦
- ♦ POINT REYES TULE ELK ARE DYING BY THE HUNDREDS ♦

## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Someone told me just recently, "Sustainability is now mainstream." Is it? What do you think?

Within the Sierra Club, we do a lot of work concentrating on things that have large impacts like: preserving vast areas of natural habitat; stopping new coal plants from being built or closing existing ones; advocating for electrification; making sure that workers are treated with respect and receive training needed to work in green industries; stopping gas pipelines from devastating our native lands; and many other effective campaigns.

However, until we walk into any store and see only products that are healthy for the planet as well as our bodies — without palm oil and sugar that come from destroying tropical forests; that don't contain harmful ingredients masking under names we can't even pronounce; until we use only sustainable packaging with no plastic bags in sight — only then can we say that sustainability is mainstream. Until we all are practicing and demanding sustainability from businesses and our government every day, and in every sphere of our lives, sustainability is just an elusive dream.

In 2009 when I went back to my home city of Saint Petersburg, Russia, after a nearly ten-year absence, I was struck by the explosion of the consumer culture. When I was growing up in Russia, composting, recycling, conserving, and re-using was a way of life. That culture crumbled in the late 1990s, almost instantly giving way to "convenience" and access to everything that people felt "deprived" of. Today, in Russia as in the United States, corporations spend enormous amounts of resources to convince us all that we need things that we really don't need.

Sustainability and environmental protection start with awareness about our personal choices and actions. We must ask ourselves: what products are we buying and why? What are the life cycles of these products? What are the effects of these products on the natural environment and the human beings producing them? If we slow down a little and think about what we take off the store shelves and why, I believe we will make different choices. Because ultimately, what is not good for our planetary environment is not good for us and vice versa. Sustainability is going to become mainstream only when we individually and collectively start having awareness and courage to make non-mainstream choices.



**Olga A. Bolotina**  
CHAPTER CHAIR

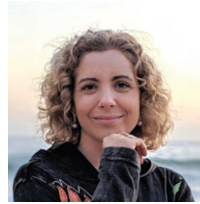
## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

*Chapter News & Events* ♦ 3 - 5, 7, 12 - 13

*Educational Programs* ♦ 8 - 9

*Outings Calendar* ♦ 18 - 19

*Campaign Updates* ♦ 5 - 6, 10 - 11, 14 - 17, 19 - 23



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### Cover Photo

A gray fox in Coyote Hills  
Regional Park by Jerry Ting.



# FALL 2021 CHAPTER NEWS

## Join the Challenge to Reduce Your Water Use Amid California's Drought

With counties across the Bay Area suggesting or mandating that households ration water throughout California's fire season, there is no greater time than now to join the Sierra Club Climate Solutions Challenge. Our partners at BrightAction have over a dozen water-saving steps you can take to reduce your home's water usage, including washing clothes wisely, collecting rainwater, and installing affordable low-flow showerheads and faucets. Over 40 households have taken our challenge and collectively saved almost 18,000 gallons of water! You can join today at [brightaction.app/sierraclub](http://brightaction.app/sierraclub) and discover over 90 climate-friendly and sustainable actions. Check out our tutorial video to learn how the platform works and how to get started at [bit.ly/climatechallengevideo](http://bit.ly/climatechallengevideo).

## Northern Alameda County Group Seeking Treasurer

The Sierra Club's NAC Group Executive Committee (ExComm) is seeking a volunteer who can provide oversight of the finances for the group, including reviewing invoices and grants, preparing annual budgets, and submitting year-end financial reports. The Treasurer is encouraged but not required to join the regular NAC Group ExComm meeting on the last Monday of each month to report on Group finances (currently on Zoom).

Treasurer training and ongoing support is provided by the Sierra Club's Offices of Chapter Funding and Finance. Professional experience in finance or accounting is not required. To apply: write to NAC Group ExComm chair Igor Tregub at [igor.tregub@sierraclub.org](mailto:igor.tregub@sierraclub.org) stating why you're interested in this position and what your qualifications are.

Lastly, we thank Anna Robinson for her hard work as the NAC Group Treasurer for the past eleven years!

## Outings Calendar Returns to Yodeler With Restart of Program!



Our Activities Committee has kicked off the restart of our outings program with a variety of outdoor adventures, exploring Castle Rock, Point Reyes National Seashore, Mission Peak, and more over the past few weekends. Check out pages 18 and 19 of this issue for even more outing opportunities in the coming weeks, including a hike along the ocean's edge at Tomales Bluff, a sunset kayaking trip in Elkhorn Slough to search for seals and sea otters, and a trek through the Forest of Nisene Marks. All new opportunities will also be posted to our Activities and Events calendar at [sierraclub.org/sfbay/activities](http://sierraclub.org/sfbay/activities).

## Green Friday Speaker Series Looking for Volunteer Coordinator

Are you interested in getting more involved in Chapter activities? You can help organize our educational speaker series, Green Fridays, held on the second Friday of every month! The position requires about three hours of work per month finding speakers, coordinating with Chapter staff, and setting up meetings (on Zoom for now), along with attending the monthly two-hour presentations. To learn more about Green Fridays, see pages 8 - 9 of this issue.

If you'd like to help bring interesting and informative speakers to our members, please contact Joanne Drabek at [joanne1892@gmail.com](mailto:joanne1892@gmail.com). We'd like to extend a huge thank you to Elizabeth Dodge for all of her hard work as our Program Coordinator the past few years! If you have any questions about the position, you can contact her at [liz.dodge@icloud.com](mailto:liz.dodge@icloud.com).

# THE 11TH ANNUAL Awards Ceremony



JOIN US TO CELEBRATE OUR AMAZING HONOREES



COUNCILMEMBER  
KATE HARRISON



COUNCILMEMBER  
EDUARDO MARTINEZ

THURSDAY  
SEPTEMBER  
23RD  
6PM, ONLINE



SUNRISE BAY AREA



BRUCE HAMILTON

Tickets and sponsorships available now!

[sierraclub.org/sfbay/2021-awards-ceremony](https://sierraclub.org/sfbay/2021-awards-ceremony)

The San Francisco Bay Chapter of the Sierra Club will be holding its annual Awards Ceremony on the evening of Thursday, September 23rd, at 6pm. Join us online in celebrating the brilliance and bravery of local activists who are laying the groundwork for a green future! Tickets and sponsorships are available now at [sierraclub.org/sfbay/2021-awards-ceremony](https://sierraclub.org/sfbay/2021-awards-ceremony).

On September 23rd, we'll honor local leaders in the environmental movement with an exciting evening of inspirational talks, social networking, and award presentations, including our inaugural Community Defender Award. This year's honorees are:

**Councilmember Eduardo Martinez** — Community Defender Award: Since winning his seat in the Richmond City Council in 2014, Councilmember Martinez has been a tireless advocate for environmental justice, holding Chevron accountable for its community health hazards; championing the Richmond coal ordinance; and developing Just Transition plans. He continues to defend the land, air, and water that belong to all of us.

**Councilmember Kate Harrison** — Trailblazer Award:

We're honoring Berkeley Councilmember Harrison's decades-long career in the public sector. She has been a champion for the environment: establishing a climate equity fund to assist low-income residents; instituting building electrification incentives for existing gas buildings; and authoring first-in-the-nation legislation phasing out natural gas in new buildings, paving the way for similar initiatives across California.

**Sunrise Bay Area** — Rising Voices Youth Award: This youth movement is building an army of young people to make climate change an urgent priority across America. They've advocated for Green New Deal legislation at the local, state, and federal level that addresses climate change while ensuring that communities on the front lines of this crisis, including fossil fuel workers, are not left behind.

**Bruce Hamilton** — Ed Bennett Lifetime Achievement Award: Bruce has dedicated his entire career to advocating for the environment and fighting for the Sierra Club's mission. He has served in many crucial roles across our organization, including as the Club's Deputy Executive Director and Director of National Conservation Policy and Internal



## THANK YOU TO OUR EARLY SPONSORS:

ARTHUR FEINSTEIN & RUTH VOSE  
VIRGINIA REINHART & JAMES KEALEY  
SIERRA CLUB NORTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY GROUP  
MATT & MOIRA BIELBY  
NORMAN LA FORCE



Governance. His leadership has left a lasting impact, greatly expanding the Club's network and organizing capacity.

Our annual Awards Ceremony is our biggest fundraising event of the year. Your attendance supports our work to promote healthy and sustainable communities and protect the natural splendor of the Bay Area. Sponsoring the event is another great way to show your support for the Sierra Club's

mission, and sponsors receive event tickets, acknowledgement at the event and in Sierra Club materials, and other benefits. You can find more information about the event, our honorees, and the benefits of sponsorships at [sierraclub.org/sfbay/2021-awards-ceremony](https://sierraclub.org/sfbay/2021-awards-ceremony). We hope you'll gather with us for an evening of celebration and connection with inspiring environmental leaders in the Bay Area!

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## Victory for Public Health! Refinery Emissions Rule Passed By Air District

JACOB KLEIN

On Wednesday, July 21st, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) Board of Directors voted overwhelmingly to impose a new regulation on local refineries to curtail harmful emissions. Once the refineries meet the newly approved standard, particulate matter (PM) from refineries is expected to reduce by 75 percent.

Particulate matter has been linked to all manner of adverse health impacts including asthma and other respiratory illnesses, cardiovascular disease, cancer, developmental disorders, and more. Especially harmful, PM 2.5 is small enough to enter the bloodstream when breathed. These emissions

disproportionately affect Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) communities who are more often located near refineries and face further environmental burdens.

This is a huge win for environmental justice communities in the Bay Area that have been working hard to get this regulation passed for years. Organizations like Communities for a Better Environment, Asian Pacific Environmental Network, Sunflower Alliance, 350 Bay Area, Climate Health Now, and many more worked to hold fossil fuel companies accountable and carried this campaign over the finish line.

The rule calls for a limit of 0.010 gr/pcf (grains of par-

ticulate per dry cubic foot of exhaust air) from fluidized catalytic cracking units (FCCUs) or “cat crackers” which break down crude oil so it can be refined into usable petroleum products. Cat crackers are the single greatest source of particulate matter emissions from the refineries.

The technology currently available to meet this standard is called wet gas scrubbing, which is in use in a majority of refineries in the county; Valero in Benicia already employs this emissions-reducing machinery. Of the remaining Bay Area refineries, the rule would apply to Chevron in Richmond and PBF (formerly Shell) in Martinez. Since Marathon in Martinez idled last year, it does not have to meet the standard, especially if its “renewable diesel” transition goes through since renewable diesel does not use crude oil as a feedstock.

However, the rule calls for this standard to be achieved in five years, which may allow time for innovative new technologies to achieve the required goal. Nonetheless, refineries pushed back on this rule, instead trying to bring back a less strict version, or in other cases, making promises

of binding agreements outside of the regulation itself. They even threatened BAAQMD with legal suits if they passed the stricter version, to which certain board members replied that the refineries have sued on every rule that BAAQMD has passed, and BAAQMD has never lost.

It was a long process to get to this point. The BAAQMD Board sat through several presentations, heard hundreds of comments both spoken and written, and reviewed thousands of pages of reports. A hearing on this matter on June 2nd, 2021, went for over eight hours with 200 speakers, 110 of which supported the stronger version of the rule.



At their July 21st meeting, we decided to take a different strategy: choosing to focus our comments and urge the Board to vote that day. After another few hours of comments and deliberation from the Directors, the rule passed 19-3 (with two absent) in an unexpected landslide.

We applaud and offer gratitude to the Directors who took a stance for public health and environmental justice: Mayor Margaret Abe-Koga, Mayor Teresa Barrett, Councilmember John J. Bauters, Supervisor Cindy Chavez, Mayor Rich Constantine, Mayor Pauline Russo Cutter, Supervisor John Gioia, Supervisor Carole Groom, Supervisor Erin Hannigan, Supervisor David Haubert, Supervisor Lynda Hopkins, Councilmember Davina Hurt, Director Tyrone Jue, Supervisor Myrna Melgar, Supervisor Nate Miley, Vice Mayor Rob Rennie, Supervisor Katie Rice,

Supervisor Shamann Walton, and Mayor Lori Wilson.

It's also important to note that many Directors, workers, and community members were concerned about potential job loss for refinery workers. Fortunately, we believe that the refineries will be able to cover the cost of meeting this standard without laying off any of their hard-working employees. However, this highlights the need for greater collaboration with workers and a high road job transition that creates good, family-sustaining, union jobs in cleaner and more sustainable economies.

To all the Sierra Club members and leaders who signed petitions, sent letters, called Directors, and showed up — thank you and congratulations on this incredible win!

Jacob Klein is an organizer for the SF Bay Chapter.

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## Help Sierra Club's Legal Effort to Protect Mount Tamalpais Watershed

SUSAN HOPP



When you look across the Bay to Marin, it is the iconic and majestic Mount Tamalpais and its vast watershed that defines a magnificent view. While very popular to hikers, mountain bikers, and nature lovers, few realize how very special Mt. Tam is: recognized globally, it is a United Nations-designated biodiversity hotspot due to its abundance of plant and animal species. The watershed has more plant species than all of Yosemite, and is home to 97 endangered, protected, or threatened species, including the coho salmon, the spotted owl, the California red-legged frog, and the marbled murrelet.

This priceless, rare slice of nature is why the Sierra Club

is ready to become a plaintiff and join Watershed Alliance of Marin (WAM) and Friends of Muir Woods Park in a lawsuit that seeks to protect key ecosystems within Mt. Tam. The proposed "Dipsea Ranch" development, above Muir Woods and subdividing a key parcel of land adjoining Redwood Creek, was approved without the full protection, under the law, of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Rather, Marin County issued a short-circuited approval based on a "mitigated negative declaration". It is the potential for irreparable harm to the critical Redwood Creek ecosystem and habitat that is the Sierra Club's concern.

Surprisingly, the developer has objected to the addition of Sierra Club as a plaintiff in the case, despite there being "no legal prejudice" to the developer. Why would the developer try to exclude a valued stakeholder from participating in this challenge to the County's actions? The Sierra Club's great history of protecting the environment may be a factor. Still, what does the developer have to fear from more community participation?

Regardless, the legal team's motion is underway to appeal directly to the judge. Please add your support to our legal fund either by directly donating to WAM at [watermarin.org/donate.html](http://watermarin.org/donate.html) or by contributing to our GoFundMe page at [bit.ly/MuirWoodsGoFundMe](http://bit.ly/MuirWoodsGoFundMe).

We must fight to conserve this biologically rich natural area and the endangered wildlife within its ecosystem.

Susan Hopp is the vice chair of the Sierra Club Marin Group Executive Committee.

# Our Inspiring Connections Outdoors Youth Program Celebrates 50 Years

LINDA DE YOUNG, ANDREW YOUNG,  
PEGGY HALL, AND DAVE BOITANO

Remember your first exciting trip to the wilderness? And all the outdoor outings that followed that have greatly impacted your life? The Sierra Club SF Bay Chapter's Inspiring Connections Outdoors (ICO) program offers that experience to urban disadvantaged youth year-round and has been doing so for 50 years!

In 2019 alone, the SF Bay ICO took 42 trips with 16 community and school groups totaling 865 youth and 305 adult outing days. In addition to many local day hikes, some adventure highlights included camping at a Mendocino beach, snow trips to Hutchinson Lodge, field studies in Yosemite and backpacking the Skyline-to-the-Sea trail. ICO volunteers help build youth outdoor competence and confidence and together we share the special magic that only a redwood forest or alpine lake can offer.

In the Bay Area we are surrounded by parklands, but many city residents lack the opportunity to explore these natural areas. Barriers can be as simple as lack of transportation, but can also be cultural or systemic. Building famil-



ilarity with nature is what draws us back to it and allows us to be healed by it.

ICO partners with community and school groups looking for an outdoors program. Together we pick exciting and educational destinations, and ICO provides trip planning, gear, transportation, and funding as needed. The goal is to make all outdoor activities, whether a simple day hike or a multi-day backpacking trip, accessible even for busy teachers.

But this wonderful program cannot work without your help. We need you to share your outdoor skills and knowledge, keep our backpacking and camping gear in good shape, and help with planning, shopping, and transportation.

In return, you'll share in our youth's joy and wonder in hiking the peak on Angel Island, catching a hermit crab, seeing snow for the first time, and so much more.

Linda De Young, Andrew Young, and Peggy Hall are leaders of the SF Bay Chapter's ICO program & Dave Boitano is a member of the Chapter.

## WE NEED YOU!

LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS  
PASSIONATE ABOUT  
CONNECTING URBAN YOUTH  
WITH NATURE

- Come hike, camp, backpack and explore nature with us!
- Share your outdoor skills and knowledge of nature
- Keep our camping and backpacking gear in good shape
- Help with trip planning, shopping, transportation, and volunteer events

LEARN MORE AT [SFBAYICO.ORG](http://SFBAYICO.ORG)



# FALL 2021 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

## BAY ADVOCATE TRAINING PROGRAM

SEP 9 - NOV 18 • THUR • 7 PM ZOOM  
SEP 25, OCT 9, OCT 30 • SAT • OUTINGS



San Francisco Bay is a vital buffer against climate change impacts and was once a vibrant ecosystem teeming with wildlife. Now it is under siege as developers rush to fill our remaining bayshore with offices and housing that will be inundated by rising sea levels. The San Francisco Bay, Loma Prieta, and Redwood chapters of the Sierra Club are offering a unique, free program of ten virtual classes and three on-site outings to prepare Bay Area members and affiliates for advocacy work that will be needed to save this critical local resource that should be preserved for the health of local residents and wildlife. This year, we plan to visit the bayfronts along East Palo Alto, Point Molate in Richmond, and Mare Island in Vallejo.

In the Bay Advocacy Program, you will hear from experts about the history of San Francisco Bay, learn about Bay wildlife and habitats, and study nature-based adaptation strategies to sea level rise. Experienced environmental activists, elected officials, and legislators will demonstrate how individuals can create positive change. In the program's

supportive environment, you can learn how to: make public comment; craft social media posts; write letters to public agencies; send letters to the editor of local media; and more! As an advocate, you will build skills and confidence in your ability to influence cities and agencies to adopt policies that improve Bay protection and conservation.

### HOW TO APPLY:

The course is completely free, however an application is required as spaces are limited. Please complete the form at [bit.ly/BayAdvocate2021](https://bit.ly/BayAdvocate2021) to submit your application. If you have any questions, please contact Susan DesJardin at [susan.desjardin@sierraclub.org](mailto:susan.desjardin@sierraclub.org) or Gita Dev at [gita.dev@sierraclub.org](mailto:gita.dev@sierraclub.org).

## GREEN FRIDAYS

SEP 10, OCT 8, NOV 12 • FRI • 7:30 PM ZOOM

The Green Friday speaker series is beaming straight into your home via Zoom! Join us virtually on the second Friday of each month for presentations on some of the most interesting and important environmental issues of our time.

### Sep. 10 – Tales and Trails of California's Mountains

Prepare to be inspired by outdoors writer Matt Johanson's presentation "Tales and Trails of California's Mountains," a motivating tour of Golden State adventures. Matt will share photography, history, and personal experiences from his guidebooks, especially his newest work, *California Summits*. Expect plenty of beginner-friendly trip suggestions and advice on elevating your enjoyment of the outdoors, especially climbing.

Matt Johanson writes about the outdoors for numerous California newspapers and magazines. Matt's outdoor books include *Yosemite Epics*, *Yosemite Adventures*, and *Sierra Summits*. His newest work *California Summits* guides climbers of all abilities atop 50 achievable mountains throughout the Golden State.

### Oct. 8 – Tule Elk in Point Reyes National Seashore

Julie Phillips will share her expertise in nature-based teaching with a focus on the rare tule elk, found only in



California and at the center of a controversial plan to shoot them in the Point Reyes National Seashore. Julie studies current tule elk locations (and compares those locations to established home range data from 30 years ago) to better understand tule elk natural history and the impacts of land use patterns and human disturbance on long-range re-establishment of the tule elk historical range.

Julie Phillips has an M.A. in Biological Sciences from San Jose State University with a focus on wildlife management. She spent seven years studying habitat utilization and acclimation of reintroduced tule elk in areas throughout California, including the Mt. Hamilton region of the Diablo Range, the Gabilan Range, the Temblor Range, and throughout the Carrizo Plains. Julie published *A Citizen's Guide to Tule Elk* in 2013.

## Nov. 12 – How Human Impacts Are Amplifying California Tree Diseases

Matteo Garbelotto will explain how the intersection of climate change, anthropogenic pressure, and emergent diseases is a major threat to California trees. His talk will explore four types of tree pathogens: invasive exotic pathogens recently introduced in California from other regions of the world; invasive pathogens, exotic and not, long present in California that have recently moved into forests from agricultural or horticultural settings; native pathogens whose impact has increased exponentially because of modern forest management practices; and latent pathogens that are triggered into becoming aggressive, deadly pathogens by climate change. Together, these four types of pathogens are capable of reshaping the distribution, composition, and structure of California forests within a single human generation.

Matteo Garbelotto is a Cooperative Extension Specialist and Adjunct Professor at U.C. Berkeley and the director of the Forest Pathology and Mycology Laboratory.

### REGISTRATION & INFO:

Read more about each speaker and register for free via the Activities and Events calendar listings at [sierraclub.org/sfbay/events](https://sierraclub.org/sfbay/events) and we'll send you instructions for how to join the Zoom meeting. Be sure to check the calendar for more upcoming installments in the Green Friday series.

# TEEN ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM AND SELF CARE: FINDING BALANCE FOR THE JOURNEY

SEP 21 - NOV 30 • ALT TUES • 6 PM ZOOM

Co-sponsored by SF Bay Physicians for Social Responsibility & Climate Psychiatry Alliance



Now more than ever, teens have become increasingly aware of the threat posed to the future of our planet. Today's young adults must face the reality of rising sea levels, species extinction, wildfires, floods, and global instability, which for many can lead to feelings of climate anxiety and overwhelm. In order to create lasting and sustainable change as youth environmental activists, it is essential to find tools that can support our well-being throughout these demanding times.

This series, developed by rising high school junior Ella Suring, is designed to give teens these tools through presentations by leaders in the environmental and wellness worlds so that we are rooted in a connection to nature, and an awareness of what we are trying to protect. Topics include: eco-anxiety; connecting with nature; community engagement; developing skills to be an effective voice for change; how yoga and meditation can help promote balance; and much more. Each interactive workshop will be followed by a Q&A and suggested focus so that participants can utilize these skills before the next gathering. Throughout the series, we aim to build a community that supports the work of teen activists now and going forward. Because of this, attendance at all events isn't required but strongly encouraged.

### REGISTRATION:

Check the Activities and Events calendar at [sierraclub.org/sfbay/events](https://sierraclub.org/sfbay/events) for the individual event listings to register for each event and find details on each speaker in the series.

# Jemez Principles for Democratic Organizing: A Column

JACOB KLEIN

*"On December 6-8, 1996, forty people of color and European-American representatives met in Jemez, New Mexico, for the 'Working Group Meeting on Globalization and Trade'. The Jemez meeting was hosted by the Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice with the intention of hammering out common understandings between participants from different cultures, politics and organizations. The following 'Jemez Principles' for democratic organizing were adopted by the participants."*

So begins the Jemez Principles for Democratic Organizing, a guide to grassroots power-building with equity and justice at the center. The Sierra Club Board of Directors adopted these principles in 2014 to guide our work towards greater environmental justice. Yet, these principles remain largely unknown to many of our members. While the Sierra Club still has a long way to go before living up to these standards, that room for growth can be seen as a gift.

The Jemez Principles are more than just a set of values that we can point to when attempting to prove our commitment to justice. They are tools that we can employ for our work to be successful. They offer us the methods to meet our goals, to build our capacity, to strengthen our relationships, and to act with integrity. They are a gift from organizers of color, people who have long felt the brunt of environmental racism, that provide predominantly white groups like the Sierra Club the opportunity to act in solidarity.

In order to increase the visibility of these principles and to train Sierra Club members on advocacy from a grassroots level, I will be writing a series of articles for the *Yodeler* addressing each of the six principles. I will put these principles into contexts that relate to environmental organizing through personal stories. These principles are already fairly accessible — one of their strengths — but I've always found that situating and deepening ideas helps with understanding.

When I first interviewed for my current position at the Sierra Club, I was directed to the Jemez Principles. As I read them in preparation, I was struck by how simply they

sum up the fundamentals of organizing that had been instilled in me in my training as an organizer. In reviewing them, I found succinct and common-sense descriptions of the grand concepts that I endeavored to bring to my work. I was comforted to realize that I had these north stars by which to guide my praxis.

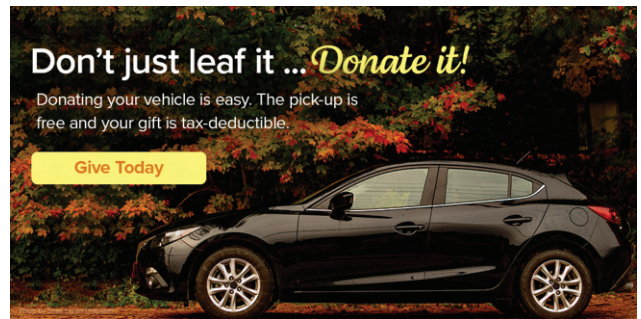
These principles are not a how-to on building a campaign structurally. They are not a rulebook on tactics. Rather, they prioritize self-reflection — How do you work with people? How do you have conversations? Who are you working with and why? What is your tolerance for the discomfort that leads to growth? Thus, a movement can grow.

Advocates need to take these questions into consideration when working on political issues. It's never as simple as the letter of the law or the drafting of policy. What matters is the stance you take, how you listen, who you're able to hear, and who's being placed at the center.

Anyone can be an organizer; that's one of the beautiful things about doing this work. Passion and collaboration are the keys, and the Jemez Principles provide the foundation for practicing.

I hope you'll join me on this journey!

Jacob Klein is an organizer for the SF Bay Chapter.



## FALL INTO THE SEASON OF GIVING

Do you really want to continue to pay insurance, registration, maintenance, and more for a vehicle you leave alone more than you drive? Don't just leaf it and let it keep costing you, instead donate it this fall to the Sierra Club Foundation's SF Bay Chapter! It's easy, the pick-up is free, and cars, boats, motorcycles, RVs, and more are all tax-deductible. To learn more, visit our website at [scfch.careasy.org](http://scfch.careasy.org) or call (844) 674-3772.

# Native Tule Elk Are Dying by the Hundreds in Point Reyes National Seashore

SUSAN HOPP

Visitors to Point Reyes National Seashore (PRNS) enjoy witnessing the magnificent natural sights within its boundaries: rocky headlands, vast sandy beaches, glistening ocean water, and the popular tule elk herds. However, many are blissfully unaware that the endemic tule elk, brought back from the verge of extinction in 1875 through managed repopulation, are a poster child for what is terribly wrong with current conservation management. Within PRNS at Tomales Point, they are confined behind a three-mile-long fence that has become a graveyard for more than 400 elk over the past nine years, many dying from thirst and starvation. Meanwhile, the National Park Service (NPS) prioritizes destructive land and water polluting practices of cattle and dairy ranches, whose operations are effectively subsidized by taxpayers.

The drought situation is dire as water sources have dried up, forage has become deficient in mineral content, and over 152 elk have perished in the last year alone. These physical stressors have resulted in dismal elk reproduction, which could po-



tentially wipe out the Tomales Point herd who are already genetically bottlenecked. NPS's failure to protect captive, suffering animals has garnered the attention of animal rights groups and individuals who are now suing the Department of the Interior. Individual plaintiffs with the Animal Legal Defense Fund, represented by Harvard Animal Law and Policy Clinic, are demanding the park release the elk from behind the fence and give them access to food and water, augmented as needed. Only after clandestine activist groups repeatedly supplied water troughs did the NPS provide temporary water tanks.

There are only around 5,500 native wild tule elk left on our planet — and as many cattle and cows at PRNS alone. NPS is currently considering a General Management Plan Amendment that would extend private ranch licenses for



20 years, expanding livestock and commercial crops, abandoning the native tule elk, and further commodifying public land. The plan not only neglects to include any measure that would help the dying captive elk, but also authorizes NPS to kill healthy elk in the southern free-ranging herds in their quest to “manage the population.” In June, over 50 conservation organizations including the Sierra Club signed a letter asking the Secretary of Interior to adopt an alternative plan that preserves the park for recreational and educational purposes, protects the tule elk population, and phases out ranching in the next five years. Amidst mounting public pressure, the NPS filed for a 60-day extension on their July 14th deadline to present their amended plan and Environmental Impact Statement on ranching. It is imperative to keep up the pressure and let the voices of the public be heard: PRNS is a treasure for all Americans and the wildlife and habitat within its bounds must be protected.

If you'd like to take action, write and call Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland expressing that the current treatment of tule elk in Point Reyes is unacceptable and that private ranching should not be prioritized above conservation.

The Honorable Deb Haaland  
Secretary of the Interior  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C St., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240  
(202) 208-3100 and [feedback@ios.doi.gov](mailto:feedback@ios.doi.gov)

You can learn more about this issue and the current efforts to preserve Point Reyes and its inhabitants at [forelk.org](http://forelk.org) or [restoreptreyesseashore.org](http://restoreptreyesseashore.org).

Susan Hopp is the vice chair of the Sierra Club Marin Group Executive Committee.

# Members Choose, Members Get Involved, Members Vote

PEGGY DA SILVA

Because you are a member of the SF Bay Chapter of the Sierra Club, you receive a quarterly copy of the *Yodeler*. In it — and in other communications from our Chapter — you can learn how our Chapter staff and volunteer activists are working to make our Bay Area greener, healthier, and more equitable. Our club’s mission is to “preserve, protect and enjoy” our environment. A good goal, in general. But what exactly is important to you?

We have eight regional Groups, with leaders who choose priorities for Sierra Club action. We have a Chapter Executive Committee, which oversees all the activities. And we have you — among 33,000 Chapter members — who can be involved in our important work.

While some members get involved in outings and actions, very few participate in voting for our leaders — with only two percent turnout in last year’s election. This makes our chapter less representative of its members (you), less likely to put resources into the causes that you care about, and less likely to be effective with public officials and residents when we say that we are “grassroots.”

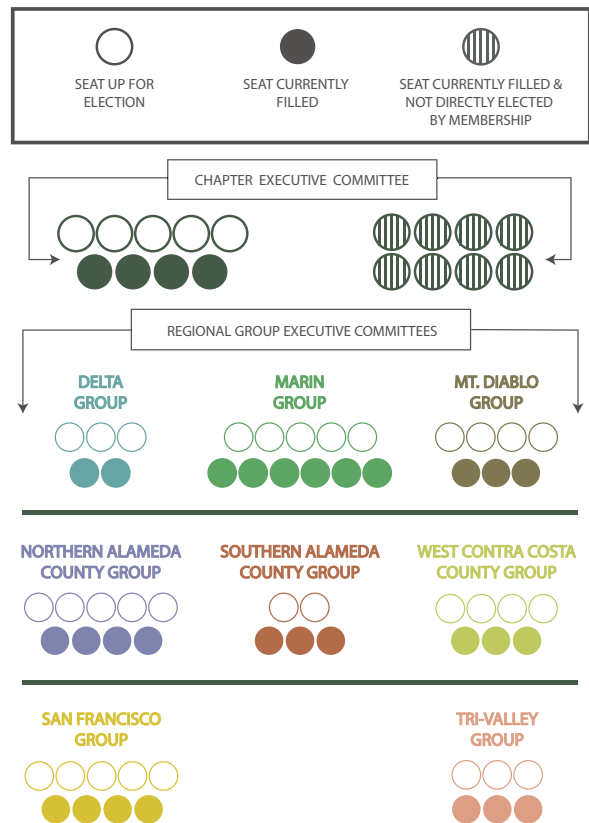
Why don’t members vote? The Chapter Nominations and Elections Committee (NomCom) asked this question in the Spring issue of the *Yodeler*. People answered our questions and here are some top reasons for not voting:

1. I give money to the Sierra Club, along with lots of other organizations. So that’s my involvement.
2. It’s too hard to get changes made — Club leadership is set in their ways.
3. It was confusing to figure out how to vote, and who to vote for.
4. Too busy.

Thank you for your ideas! The 2021 NomCom is working to address all of them. Here are our responses:

1: We very much appreciate your support that empowers our chapter to do our great work. But let’s reclaim the term “member.” Words matter. How many organizations or companies call you “member”? Similar to what has happened to the word “friend,” this word can be cheapened. Our grassroots organization functions through member involvement in our committees, campaigns, and events. Let’s be

## SIERRA CLUB SAN FRANCISCO BAY CHAPTER 2021 ELECTIONS



clear that members have a say in what happens in our club!

2: This can be a long-term challenge, but if members exercise their rights to attend and speak out at group and issue committee meetings, raise awareness about issues they care about, and vote, changes can be made.

3: Our NomCom is working to make the voting process as easy and transparent as possible. See the chart above for seats up for election in 2021, and check out our Chapter Elections webpage at [sierraclub.org/sfbay/chapter-elections](http://sierraclub.org/sfbay/chapter-elections) later in September to find out who’s running this year and learn more about each candidate. The voting period opens on November 3rd, with members receiving their ballot both electronically and in the mail with their Winter issue of the *Yodeler*. Ballots must be submitted electronically or received in the mail by November 30th.

4: We understand! Democracy is messy. We know our members are doing important work across the Bay, and we want to support that work. In order to make your Sierra Club more effective locally and nationally, try to carve out just an hour to vote for your volunteer leaders. They will contrib-

ute more time and resources, including staff time, to help achieve the goals that you and other members have set as priorities.

You have until November to learn more about possible leaders, express your opinions to the candidates, and think about the impact you want our chapter to have. The Nom-Com is hosting virtual chapter-wide Candidate Meet-and-Greets on September 27th from 7:30 to 9pm and 29th from 4:30 to 6pm, with more to be announced soon in our email bulletins, including a designated San Francisco Group event. You can find more details and register on the Activities and Events calendar event listings at [sierraclub.org/sfbay/events](http://sierraclub.org/sfbay/events).

And be on the lookout for your Winter issue of the *Yodeler* which will include candidate statements and your paper ballot.

So why should you vote? So we can build a more vibrant and effective Sierra Club and a healthier and more equitable Bay Area for all the people and living beings who dwell here!

Any questions: please contact us at [elections@sfbaysc.org](mailto:elections@sfbaysc.org) or check out our webpage at [sierraclub.org/sfbay/chapter-elections](http://sierraclub.org/sfbay/chapter-elections).

Peggy da Silva is the chair of the SF Bay Chapter Nominations and Elections Committee.

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## Planned Giving and Bequests Are Vital to Our Local Work

**MATT BIELBY**

Bequests are a vital and continuing resource that strengthens the Sierra Club's ability to preserve our natural heritage for future generations. Most donors plan their gifts in the form of a general-use gift. This general support is the most helpful to us because it allows us to direct funds to our most crucial conservation priorities. However, should you have a specific environmental or programmatic interest, or if you wish to establish an endowment, we would be happy to assist you in planning a gift that meets your interests and the long-term goals of the Sierra Club and the Sierra Club San Francisco Bay Chapter.

Bequests to our local chapter support the conservation work right here in the Bay Area. This funding enables the Chapter to continue to protect the natural splendor of the San Francisco Bay Area and its regional wildlands for years to come. Planned gifts are particularly important to the Chapter as they can provide significant resources to allow for continued advocacy over an extended period of time. Bequests to the Sierra Club San Francisco Bay Chapter are not tax deductible; however, charitable (tax-deductible) bequests can be designated to the San Francisco Bay Chapter through the Sierra Club Foundation.

If you are planning a bequest, you may wish to consider the financial benefits of a life income trust. Many people have realized significant advantages by using a major portion of a

planned bequest for the establishment of such a trust. Please contact us if you would like to see how a life income trust might benefit your specific situation. We can also provide you information on how a Charitable Gift Annuity or Charitable Remainder Trust can benefit both you and the Sierra Club. You can learn more at [sierraclub.org/sfbay/planned-giving](http://sierraclub.org/sfbay/planned-giving).

If you have any questions about planning a bequest for the Sierra Club San Francisco Bay Chapter, or if you are interested in learning more about life income trusts and other deferred gifts, please contact Matt Bielby at [matt.bielby@sierraclub.org](mailto:matt.bielby@sierraclub.org) or (510) 848-0800 ext. 321.

Matt Bielby is the Development Director for the SF Bay Chapter.



### SUPPORT THE CHAPTER BY GOING SOLAR

Thinking of going solar? If you go solar through SunPower, you'll receive a \$1,000 rebate and SunPower will donate \$500 to the SF Bay Chapter. It's a win for you, your local Sierra Club chapter, and the planet. Get started at [bit.ly/sunpowerforthebay](http://bit.ly/sunpowerforthebay) to get your free quote and find out how much you can save.

*This is the second installment in an illustrated series about electrification of residential buildings.*

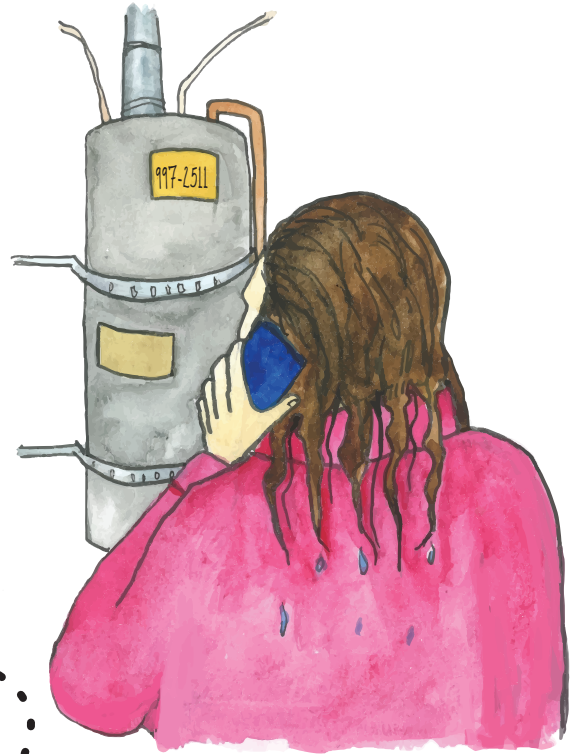
# BUILDING ELECTRIFICATION: HEAT PUMP WATER HEATERS

VRINDA MANGLIK

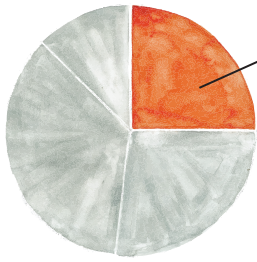
Instagram: @art\_by\_vrinda

We all think about our water heater... when it breaks. You hurry to your water heater, and might just call the number on the side of the tank to try to find someone who can fix it as soon as possible.

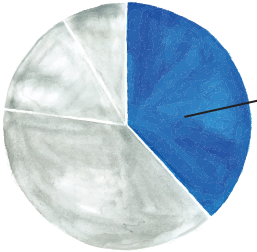
However....



"That 'emergency' type of timing makes it hard to research a thoughtful upgrade. If your water heater is already more than 10 years old, consider proactively replacing it with an energy-efficient, all-electric version."  
-Wei-Tai Kwok (member of the Sierra Club, SF Bay Chapter and owner of a fully-electrified home)



About a quarter of California's greenhouse gas emissions come from buildings.



And water heating accounts for about 40% of on-site fuel use in residential buildings in California.

By installing a heat pump water heater, you can reduce your home's emissions, save money on your monthly energy bill, and prepare your home for the electric future that is coming.



Depending on your home, installing a heat pump water heater might involve electrical work. A contractor will be able to advise; [bayren.org](http://bayren.org) is a great resource.

There are two main types of heat pump water heaters:

**SPLIT (240V)**

**INTEGRATED (240V and 120V)**

If you're ready to install a heat pump water heater, it's a great time to access Bay Area rebates!



<b>REBATES!</b>			
<b>ALAMEDA MUNICIPAL POWER</b>	<b>BAY REN</b>	<b>ELECTRIFY MARIN</b>	<b>PG&amp;E</b>
<b>\$1500</b>	<b>\$1000</b>	<b>\$1000</b>	<b>\$300</b>

# Save Energy With Electric Alternatives to Gas Appliances

MELISSA YU

Gas appliances like furnaces and water heaters in California's homes and buildings are responsible for over 50 million tons of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions annually. Burning gas in homes for heating and cooking produces toxic air pollution like nitrogen oxides (NOx), carbon monoxides, and formaldehydes that are hazardous to our health. In the Bay Area, appliances release nearly three times as much NOx as light-duty passenger vehicles, and over eight times as much NOx as power plants. As a result of this appliance pollution, buildings and homes in California are responsible for over 1,500 premature deaths and over \$17 billion dollars of health impact costs.

Most appliances are replaced every ten to twenty years or more. To meet California's climate targets and protect community health, we must take advantage of equipment life cycles to avoid locking in decades of fossil fuel infrastructure and perpetuating the public health, safety, and affordability risks borne by vulnerable households.

If you choose an electric appliance for your next replacement, you can gain savings on your energy bill over time. Unlike traditional first generation electric water heaters and electric stoves, new technology like heat pump water heaters and induction cooktops are highly efficient. You can also convert your home heating systems and clothes

dryers to heat pump or electric alternatives. Here are some things your Bay Area neighbors had to say about making the switch from gas to electric when participating in the recent East Bay Green Home Tour:

*"One of the biggest learning curves of going to an all-electric home has been learning to cook on an induction stove. My family owns a restaurant and my brother is a chef so cooking on gas is how we came up. We have learned the differences in how we cook certain dishes like how the oil heats up differently. My brother's a chef and even he enjoys cooking on this cooktop because he says it's a lot more efficient with some of his dishes."*

Denaya

*"One of the great things about heat pumps is that we basically got free air conditioning with it because heat pumps work both ways to heat and cool homes so we basically got the air for free."*

Kathy Kramer

If you're interested in learning more about electric appliance options, check out a video tour of 12 converted East Bay homes: [eastbaygreenhome.com](http://eastbaygreenhome.com).

Ready to ditch natural gas and switch to clean energy appliances for a safer, healthier, and greener home? Go to [sierraclub.org/sfbay/building-electrification](http://sierraclub.org/sfbay/building-electrification) for a list of resources to help you plan ahead to make long-term choices that will benefit the climate and your energy bill.

Melissa Yu is an organizer for the SF Bay Chapter.

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## Sierra Club Joins Lawsuit Against State Over Richmond Toxic Waste Site

JACOB KLEIN

As part of a long struggle to prevent housing from being developed on top of toxic waste sites, earlier in August the Sierra Club and other community and environmental justice groups filed suit against two state agencies over a proposed development project in South Richmond. The plan is for 4,000

residential units in a mixed-use development to be constructed on top of the heavily contaminated site of AstraZeneca's former chemical manufacturing plant.

The toxic contamination comes from the Stauffer Chemical Company's occupation of the site from 1897 to 1960. Stauffer primarily manufactured sulfuric acid at the site by roasting pyrite ores, and for decades the company dumped the iron pyrite cinders into the marsh nearby. Additional toxic releases resulted from Stauffer's later manufacturing of fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides.

The Richmond community has sought the highest clean-up level for nearly twenty years. Due to many proposals for development in the early 2000s, a plan for clean-up was





drafted by AstraZeneca and approved by the Water Board, the lead agency at the time. This partial clean-up plan called for ground floor parking and the installation of large fans to disperse the volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that would seep up from the underlying soil. It included restrictions like preventing children from playing in the soil, not allowing any kind of edible gardening, and prohibitions on land use for hospitals, schools, or other community facilities.

Public outcry over the inadequate clean-up plan led to the lead agency being transferred to the state Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), a subagency of the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA). A community advisory group of local volunteers was established in 2005 to discuss the Department’s clean-up efforts, and they have been following the serpentine path of shell companies and remediation plans ever since.

The most recent clean-up plan, approved by DTSC in 2019, ignores both the recent State of California guidance on sea level rise, and CalEPA’s protocol on the risks of VOCs; the plan only calls for removal of two percent of the 550,000 yards of contaminated soil, installation of a concrete cap, and in-situ chemical remediation.

“The site is open on the sides and bottom,” says Faris Jessa of Richmond Shoreline Alliance, “so a concrete cap won’t prevent the toxics from moving inland with sea level rise. We don’t want a carcinogenic toxic soup coming up under our homes.”

In the beginning of July, DTSC approved a prospective purchaser’s agreement with the site’s new owners, HRP Campus Bay Property LLC, without adequate environmental review. In response, the Sierra Club and many other community partners jointly filed a lawsuit against DTSC and CalEPA, contending that both failed to consider current information on sea level rise and the health risks posed by toxic chemicals remaining at the site, and therefore violated the California

Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

“What DTSC has done in Richmond is a travesty,” says nearby resident Lana Bolds of Mothers Against Toxic Housing (MATH), one of our co-petitioners. “We have no confidence that the partial clean-up they approved in 2019 will adequately protect my family, my neighbors, and future residents.”

Over the past two decades, the selected clean-up plan has remained largely unchanged, focusing on a concrete cap as means of protection, despite the fact that more information continues to come to light about the many ways toxins from this site could bleed out into our communities. Meanwhile, the land use restrictions on community facilities remain, which begs the question of why people would be allowed to live somewhere that’s considered unsafe for so many other functions.

“Building housing on this contaminated site would be an environmental injustice,” says our director, Virginia Reinhart. “While Richmond needs more affordable housing, we don’t want to put communities already overburdened by pollution in harm’s way because the responsible agency hasn’t analyzed all the risk factors. If the developer is committed to building residences at this site, the project must include the most rigorous clean-up available, rather than what DTSC has approved.”

Are you a Richmond resident or ally who supports clean-up of toxic land? Contact SF Bay Chapter organizer Jacob Klein at [jacob.klein@sierraclub.org](mailto:jacob.klein@sierraclub.org) to get involved.



Join the shared EV charging network for free! Share your charger or find charging to reduce carbon emissions. We'll donate to Sierra Club for each new signup! Your first charge is on us with promo code:

**CHARGECODE**

Use referral name **SF Bay Sierra Club** at signup



## ABOUT THIS CALENDAR

Activities listed here are abbreviated. For full listings, registration, and waivers visit: [sierraclub.org/sfbay/activities](http://sierraclub.org/sfbay/activities). The online calendar will also include changes, cancellations, and outings submitted after the print deadline.

### Hike and backpack ratings

Hike ratings are based on distance and elevation gain (the sum of all gains in elevation per day):

- |                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. up to 6 miles | A. under 1,000 feet   |
| 2. 6 - 10 miles  | B. 1,000 - 2,000 feet |
| 3. 10 - 15 miles | C. 2,000 - 3,000 feet |
| 4. 15 - 20 miles | D. over 3,000 feet    |
| 5. over 20 miles | E. over 3,500 feet    |

Backpack ratings include a third digit for travel:

T. trail

1. limited/easy crosscountry
2. moderate crosscountry
3. strenuous/difficult crosscountry

### What to bring

For day hikes always bring lunch and enough water. Consider layered clothing, sunscreen, good hiking boots with treads, and hiking poles. Non-service dogs are allowed only if specified in the listing; canine hikers should bring leashes, litter bags, and water for their dogs.

### Liabilities

To participate on a Sierra Club outing, you will need to sign a liability waiver. To read a copy of the waiver form, call (415) 977-5630, or visit [tinyurl.com/outingswaiver](http://tinyurl.com/outingswaiver).

### COVID-19 Protocol

Masks are optional for adults in outdoor areas, but required in indoor close quarters such as vehicles, public transport, restaurants, or visitor centers. Vaccinations are not required, so please be aware you may be on trips with unvaccinated individuals. Masks are required at all times for unvaccinated minors. If you are experiencing any possible COVID-19 symptoms, do not attend the outing and contact the outing leader. Report any positive COVID-19 tests after an outing to the outing leader.

### Carpooling

Carpooling helps the environment and allows people without cars to participate. You can arrange carpools on our Meetup group: [meetup.com/sanfranciscobay](http://meetup.com/sanfranciscobay). Outings will be listed there 2 - 3 weeks prior to the event. Masks are required in carpools.

# FALL 2021 OUTINGS CALENDAR

## AUG 21 • SAT

**Tomales Bluff 2B Hike.** The bells toll as bay meets sea at land's end on a leisurely paced ten miles and 1000 feet elevation gain hike along the moors of the northern tip of Point Reyes. Mellow hikers welcomed. Any rain cancels. BRING: Lunch, liquids, and warm-layered clothing. MEET: 11am at Pierce Point Ranch parking lot. Return to cars approximately 5pm. LEADER: Steve Bakaley, [slbakaley@gmail.com](mailto:slbakaley@gmail.com). (SF Bay Chapter Hiking and Santa Cruz Group)

## AUG 21 • SAT

**Sunset Kayak in Elkhorn Slough with Seals and Sea Otters.** We will search by kayak for seals and sea otter in addition to other wildlife of the slough. On our paddle back, we will enjoy the sunset. We will be using tandem closed-deck sea kayaks which are very stable and easy to use. No previous kayaking experience is necessary. Life jacket provided. High winds or rain cancels. COST: \$63 for Rainbow Sierrans members, \$75 for non-members. REGISTER: [rainbowsierrans.org/event-4405481](http://rainbowsierrans.org/event-4405481). BRING: Long pants, wind breaker or paddling jacket, footwear that can get wet, snack in a compact lunch bag to take in boat with you, change of clothes and shoes for ride home, flashlight or headlamp. MEET: 4pm at 2390 CA-1, Moss Landing. ENDS: 8pm. LEADER: Beth Bittle, [callingu2@gmail.com](mailto:callingu2@gmail.com) or (510) 759-6225. (Rainbow Sierrans)

## AUG 28 • SAT

**Luxurious Walking in Delight Zen Mindfulness 1A Walk.** Slow, luxurious walking designed to relax and balance yourself resulting in deepening connection to your inner nature. Attend either in-person or virtually in your backyard on Zoom! We will check in, walk in luxurious awareness and share. Heavy wind or rain cancels. REGISTER: Registration on the online listing is required with an in-person limit of ten people. BRING: Clothes for the weather. MEET: 11am at 1853 Solano Ave, Berkeley or on Zoom. ENDS: 12:30pm. LEADER: Halley Forest, [sierragreenforest@gmail.com](mailto:sierragreenforest@gmail.com). (Hiking)

## AUG 29 • SUN

**ICO Picnic.** Celebrate SF Bay Inspiring Connection Outdoors's 50 years of getting urban youth outdoors with a light picnic and scavenger hunt to get to know new and reacquaint with old volunteers. Invite friends and community leaders who are interested in learning about ICO. Steady rain cancels. REGISTER: Request e-vite from leader. BRING: Folding chair/tarp/mat if you would rather not sit on the grass. MEET: 2pm at Snow Park, Harrison St & 19th St, Oakland. LEADER: Linda De Young, [lindadeyo@aol.com](mailto:lindadeyo@aol.com) or (650) 224-1978. (ICO Backpacking)

**Forest of Nisene Marks 3B Hike.** A leisurely to moderately paced 14-mile day hike to the Sand Point Overlook via the West Ridge Trail with return via the Loma Prieta Grade Trail. The hike is 95 percent in forest with a couple of spectacular view spots at the

top. Elevation gain just under 2,000 feet. Any rain cancels. COST: \$8 parking. BRING: Yellow jacket medication if you're allergic, lunch, and liquids. MEET: 10am at George's Picnic Area parking lot. ENDS: 6:30pm. Leader: Steve Bakaley, [sbakaley@gmail.com](mailto:sbakaley@gmail.com). (Mount Diablo and Santa Cruz County Groups)

## Now Recruiting: Join Young Adults Fighting Dirty Tobacco

ETHAN KISSOCK AND ADELITA SERENA

The Sierra Club is currently recruiting new members to a Young Adult Advisory Board to lead statewide change and hold big tobacco companies accountable for the environmental destruction that they are causing. Tobacco product waste is the most littered single-use plastic product and releases toxic “forever” chemicals into our living environments. We are looking for California-residing activists between the ages of 18 and 25 to join our movement!

Advocates will have the opportunity to get involved in many events, including annual planning summits to coordinate an Environmental Justice in Tobacco Control conference and Statewide Day of Action. Earn valuable experience and skills in policy change, community organizing, public speaking, public health, environmental justice, social media, coalition building, and communications. Be a part of meaningful and lasting change in the world.

We will collaborate with other organizations and coalitions to fight for our communities' future, environmental justice, and health equity across California. To apply for the Young Adult Advisory Board and find more information, head to [bit.ly/TobaccoYouthBoard](http://bit.ly/TobaccoYouthBoard). You can also learn more about our movement and the Sierra Club's efforts on episode six of the Young Adults Fighting Tobacco podcast titled Gen Green at [anchor.fm/gen-green](http://anchor.fm/gen-green).

If you have any questions, please reach out to Ethan Kissock at [ethan.kissock@sierraclub.org](mailto:ethan.kissock@sierraclub.org) or Adelita Serena at [adelita.serena@sierraclub.org](mailto:adelita.serena@sierraclub.org).

Ethan Kissock and Adelita Serena are the leads for the Young Adult Advisory Board.

### NO IFS, ANDS, OR BUTTS! A Tobacco Product Waste Factsheet

#### The Big Picture



Tobacco is not only a health issue, but an environmental issue! According to a study conducted by the California Department of Transportation, cigarette butts makeup 34% of total waste captured in California.



#### Tobacco Product Waste and the Environment

In 2019, cigarette butts were the most littered item in U.S. beaches.

Tobacco litter is carried as runoff to streams, rivers, beaches, and will eventually reach the ocean.

Nicotine, pesticide residues, and heavy metals are acutely toxic to fish and other aquatic wildlife.

Tobacco product waste doesn't end at cigarettes! Lithium ion batteries found in e-cigarettes have been known to explode and cause fires.

Cigarette filters are made of cellulose acetate, a non-biodegradable plastic. When cigarette filters breakdown they create microplastics which harm aquatic life.

Tobacco product waste is acutely toxic when ingested. As little as two butts can cause nicotine toxicity in a small dog.

#### We need your help!



SIERRA CLUB

Sierra Club is recruiting young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 who are passionate about environmental justice and ending the destructive legacy of tobacco product waste. Young advocates will have the opportunity to get involved in many events, including annual planning summits to coordinate an Environmental Justice in Tobacco Control conference and Statewide Day of Action.

#### To Apply here:

<https://act.sierraclub.org/actions/California?actionid=AR0330721> OR



# Amazon Warehouses in Hayward Won't Help a Just Recovery in the East Bay

MARTHA KREEGER

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY DR. MARLINA

ROSE SELVA

After a year and a half of devastating job losses and health impacts from the pandemic, Hayward is facing tough decisions on which path to take on the road to a just recovery. Nowhere is that more clear than with two proposed Amazon last-mile delivery warehouses near Hayward's sensitive shoreline. Sierra Club has partnered with environmental justice organizations, community leaders and groups, and local labor unions to demand that Hayward officials put safeguards in place to protect its shoreline and vulnerable communities. As proposed, these delivery warehouses would disturb Hayward's wetland ecosystems and significantly increase the amount of vehicle exhaust in the area, worsening air quality, harming public health, and exacerbating healthcare costs, all while providing low-income jobs without employment

protections. The communities that live, work, and play in these neighborhoods already struggle disproportionately from COVID-19 impacts, high air pollution levels, and economic inequality. As a partner in environmental justice movements, we have the responsibility to fight for equitable treatment of all people who live on this planet and the lands we reside upon.

Amazon has purchased two sites within Hayward's industrial zone on West Winton Avenue and Clawiter Road that could provide close to a million square feet of warehouse space to send out last-mile deliveries to Amazon facilities and customers within a six to twenty mile radius. At a recent Hayward Economic Development Division meeting on the Clawiter Road Amazon site, officials stated that 50 Amazon delivery vehicles are scheduled to leave the warehouse every 30 minutes, 24 hours a day to deliver packages on the last leg, or "mile," of their journey directly to consumers' doorsteps.

The two Amazon last-mile delivery facilities are at the center of a network of Amazon sites along the East Bay coastline and will service communities throughout the Bay Area. The hundreds of workers Amazon needs to hire to operate these warehouses will initially come from the already hard-hit neighborhoods in Hayward and unincorporated Alameda County. Wages could be relatively



low, between \$15 - \$17 dollars per hour, and these jobs come without the worker protections and earning potential of union jobs.

## **DANGERS OF LAST-MILE DELIVERY ON ENVIRONMENTAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH**

The Sierra Club has fought to keep the Hayward shoreline protected, clean, and accessible to East Bay residents for decades. The Hayward and East Bay roadways that would be impacted by these projects are within an area that is already disproportionately burdened by pollution, particulate matter (PM), and toxic substances, and has some of the most vulnerable populations in southern Alameda County. Those delivery vehicles will be emitting additional pollution into our neighborhood streets and raising vehicle emission levels, including carbon dioxide and nitrogen dioxide emission levels, unless we require them to be electric. The potential pollution burden into our East Bay neighborhoods is estimated to be between 28,000 and 48,000 miles traveled every single day and would result in increased childhood asthma rates, hitting our vulnerable Hayward communities hardest. When Hayward City Councilmember Aisha Wahab questioned Amazon representatives and developers in June regarding whether or not Amazon could commit to any number of electric vehicles at the two sites, Amazon and developers responded that they did not know if even a single vehicle would be electric.

A recent study from the Environmental Defense Fund shows East Bay communities like Oakland, Castro Valley, Hayward, and Fremont have the greatest health impacts from childhood asthma, highest fatality rates, and larger healthcare costs in neighborhoods where air quality is ridden with vehicle exhaust. Without mitigations and requirements placed on Amazon by Hayward officials, there will be no protections for the residents and children living within the delivery areas of the two last-

mile stations.

“Amazon warehouses have historically expanded around working-class communities predominately made up of households of color,” said Dr. Marlina Rose Selva, a Sierra Club leader and Indigenous environmental activist. “Our vulnerable communities in Hayward already have less access to nature, parks, and open space. Many people cannot get away from the pollution and stress by driving out to hiking trails or regional parks. They have less access to traveling farther to ‘get away.’ Our home should not be a place we need to get away from anyhow. We are meant to live in nature as it is an integral part of

our health and happiness. As Sierra Club literature states, ‘everyone deserves access to nature.’ In addition to air and land pollution and land degradation, light pollution and noise pollution from the activity at these warehouses significantly affects physical and mental health of all living things. Wildlife and plants at or near the wetlands will also be significantly disturbed.” These effects on quality of work life, family life, and the health of the

shoreline species must be understood and respected.

## **PUTTING THIS IN PERSPECTIVE ON DOLLAR AND CENTS**

During the pandemic, while communities like Hayward experienced disproportionate COVID-19 impacts compared to other more affluent Bay Area communities, Amazon’s profits increased by 84 percent over earnings in the year prior, achieving a yearly increase in annual revenue of over \$100 billion dollars. Amazon achieved this in part through a well-documented history of poor working conditions, including impossible delivery schedules, high stress environments, and low wages, along with having a reputation for one of the worst worker injury records in the warehouse and delivery industries.

In contrast, union workers at USPS and UPS delivering Amazon Prime packages during this time were paid fair wages and enjoyed all the protections and bene-

**EAST BAY COMMUNITIES LIKE OAKLAND, CASTRO VALLEY, HAYWARD, AND FREMONT HAVE THE GREATEST HEALTH IMPACTS FROM CHILDHOOD ASTHMA, HIGHEST FATALITY RATES, AND LARGER HEALTHCARE COSTS IN NEIGHBORHOODS WHERE AIR QUALITY IS RIDDEN WITH VEHICLE EXHAUST.**

fits provided with their union jobs — privileges that Amazon workers do not have, even as many of them demand more accountability from Amazon. In the past decade, California communities that house Amazon warehouses often have higher levels of both air pollution and poverty over time, another indication that we need more safeguards put in place in Hayward to protect our most vulnerable communities.

California lost jobs at a rate that was almost 20 percent higher than American job losses overall, with the brunt of those job losses experienced in communities of color where the intersection of low-income workers and people who could not continue their jobs from home was at its highest, like those in Hayward and unincorporated Alameda County. And to make matters significantly worse, it was within these vulnerable communities that COVID-19 hit the hardest, with higher levels of adverse effects from the virus throughout every stage of the pandemic. Across California, we have experienced this pandemic very differently depending on the neighborhood we live in, if we retained employment, and what that job looked like. It is critical that we make decisions moving forward that prioritize a just recovery for our whole community.

The state’s economy is recovering, but our only path to a just recovery is through demanding that gains be equitably shared. For the just recovery California and the planet require, we need a commitment to provide and support good jobs, with fair wages and protections for working families, access to universal healthcare, and a climate stabilization program that first reduces pollution

in neighborhoods where it is highest and then for communities across California. We need Hayward to require these steps from Amazon for all our sakes.

## NEXT STEPS IN ACHIEVING A JUST RECOVERY

When Amazon comes into a community, the burden to negotiate revenues and community benefit agreements that protect neighborhoods falls on city officials and community leaders. This opportunity Hayward has to fight for a just recovery for all our residents is critical to the future of the East Bay — but they do not need to act without our support and guidance. The voices of local leaders, Sierra Club volunteers, labor groups, and our environmental justice partners must advocate for clean air and water, and a stronger, more just recovery because we know that the path to sustainability is narrow and critical to our survival.

To join in this critical discussion of achieving a just recovery in the East Bay, sign up for our community meetings for yourself and/or your organization. We plan to hold our first community meeting in August, with more meetings and action opportunities to come. Please check the Activities and Events calendar at [sierraclub.org/sfbay/events](http://sierraclub.org/sfbay/events) for details on our first meeting and future events and actions.

Martha Kreeger is the chair of the Sierra Club Southern Alameda County Group Executive Committee, Dr. Marlina Rose Selva is a member of the Executive Committee.

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## Make a donation to support your local chapter's work here in the SF Bay Area!

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# Help California's Drought by Preparing to Collect Rainwater This Winter

PETER ANDERSON



Extreme drought tests our assumptions about a predictable climate future, and now that the well is running dry, we must recognize the worth of water. With barely five years since our last major drought, it's becoming apparent that these events now fall within our normal range of precipitation, and they should not serve as an excuse for extraordinary "emergency" measures that further deplete our highly stressed river ecosystems.

This is what we knew in 2015: January of that year was the driest in California's history since record keeping began in 1895. Scientists Daniel Griffin and Kevin J. Anchukaitis analyzed tree ring samples from native blue oaks and reconstructed rainfall further back to the 13th century. Their report, "How unusual is the 2012–2014 California drought?" published in *Geophysical Research Letters*, concluded that that three year period had the highest temperatures and lowest rainfall levels in California's history.

The Western region has been in some state of drought since 2000 — the longest stretch of dryness in the past 1,200 years in what many are calling a "megadrought". And here we are in 2021, with no end in sight. As of August, 99 percent of the U.S. west of the Rockies is in drought, with 95 percent of California in severe, extreme, or exceptional drought, the worst category in the U.S. Drought Monitor's system. Aquifers are being depleted. Our local creeks are drying up. Even drought-resistant

native trees are succumbing to prolonged drought, putting our local forest ecosystems at risk.

Counties and cities across the Bay Area are mandating or highly encouraging citizens to reduce their water usage, with the Marin Municipal Water District passing regulations to reduce consumption by 40 percent. So what can we do to help?

One fifth of electrical output in California is consumed by pumping and processing water. By collecting rainwater, we can reduce our carbon footprint, conserve California's water resources, and decrease our water bill.

While the CDC cautions against using rainwater for drinking, bathing, or cooking, it can be used for other household necessities such as watering gardens or washing clothes. If only 326 people collect 1,000 gallons of rainwater in their barrels or cisterns, that would leave 1 acre foot, or 326,000 gallons of water in our reservoirs. That amount of water could provide 60 gallons of clean drinking and bathing water to 5,433 people.

Various communities around the world are leading the effort towards implementing rainwater catchment. In Bermuda, every residence is required by law to have and maintain a cistern capable of storing enough rainwater to sustain a family of four for a year. The states of New South Wales and Victoria in Australia require all new construction to be plumbed for rainwater catchment and grey water recycling. As of 2017, 26 percent of the homes in Australia capture rainwater.

In the U.S., Tucson, AZ's water utility offers generous rebates to its customers to subsidize the installation of rainwater catchment systems. Data confirms that residential rainwater harvesting has reduced the city's overall potable water demands. Additionally, Tucson is the first city in the U.S. to say that all new commercial properties must be designed to use rainwater.

If you're interested in collecting rainwater, our partners for the Sierra Club Climate Solutions Challenge at BrightAction can walk you through how to get started: [brightaction.app/action/catch-rain](http://brightaction.app/action/catch-rain).

In these times of extreme drought and climate crisis, we must turn to new solutions modeled by cities across the world. Please consider collecting rainwater in your own home, and treat water as a precious resource that must be conserved.

Peter Anderson is a member of the Sierra Club Marin Group.



**#SierraSnapshots** | An Anna's hummingbird resting on a branch in an El Cerrito backyard. Photo by Kiera Hargrove. For a chance to get your snapshots featured in the next issue of the Yodeler, email photos to [yodedit@sfbaysc.org](mailto:yodedit@sfbaysc.org) or share them on Twitter or Instagram with the hashtag #SierraSnapshots. Include your name, the names of any people in the photo, and where and when the photo was taken.

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#### **SIERRACLUB.ORG/SFBAY**

Our website is home to helpful information and resources including:

- Our blog, updated regularly
- The full events and activities calendar
- Group information and leadership roster

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Celebrate our honorees and support the Chapter at our 11th annual Awards Ceremony (p. 4)
- New environmental activism and self-care speaker series designed for teens (p. 9)
- Outings calendar returns to Yodeler (p. 18)

#### **EMAIL**

Visit [sierraclub.org/sfbay/email](http://sierraclub.org/sfbay/email) to sign up for Bay Chapter emails, including monthly bulletins and action alerts.