



Tehipite Topics

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California Smog Check Gets a Facelift

by Jude Lamare

California's smog check program is becoming more thorough and more effective. The latest changes—low pressure evaporative emissions testing and smoke testing—will be implemented in late 2007 and early 2008. On February 16, Bureau of Automotive Repair Chief Sherry Mehl and a team of experts briefed Sierra Club California lobbyist Bill Magavern, Air Quality Committee Co-Chair Irvin Dawid, and former Air Quality Chair Jude Lamare about the new changes.

The two new tests are remarkably different. The smoke test is a simple visual test to determine whether the vehicle is smoking from the tailpipe or the crankcase. Smoke from a light duty gasoline burning vehicle is a sign of serious trouble and is a health hazard. The evaporative emissions test requires new testing equipment.

Sierra Club and environmental and public health allies have championed a suite of smog check improvements over the last six years. In each case, cleaner air has won. In 2002, the enhanced smog check was implemented in the Bay Area, yielding nearly a 40 percent increase in the state's smog check emission reductions. At the same time, local air districts expanded the number of zip codes in their regions where motorists are required to do enhanced smog check. The next big loophole closure was to eliminate the 30 year rolling exemption to smog check requirements. The Legislature approved the change so that now year 1976-2001 vehicles are required to have biennial smog check. The first six model years and pre-1976 model years are exempt. Last year the smoke test was added to smog check by AB 1870 (Lieber) at the urging of Sierra Club and allies. In addition, the Bureau of Automotive Repair decided to move ahead with long promised evaporative emissions testing late in 2007.



Bill Magavern (r) and Irvin Dawid (l) with Paul Hedglin (c), Air Quality Engineer for the Bureau of Automotive Repair.

“The new chief, Sherry Mehl, appears to be moving clean air to the forefront, after years of foot-dragging by the Bureau of Automotive Repair,” said Bill Magavern. “We’re going to see some significant emission reductions statewide from these changes.”

Irvin Dawid noted that “evaporative emissions are a much bigger part of the hydrocarbon inventory than I ever imagined. Evaporative is now a larger source of mobile source hydrocarbon than tailpipe emissions.”

The next big change to smog check is expected to be annual inspection for older vehicles required to have smog. (Pre-1976 vehicles are exempt.) “Older vehicles have much higher failure rates because smog control equipment wears out and must be replaced,” said Jude Lamare, now acting Chair of the California Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance Committee. “Since older vehicles have much higher emissions than newer ones, it is essential that they be kept in good repair.”

For vehicles that are not cost-effective to repair, California has a car scrappage program that pays consumers to dismantle the car. For more information, visit www.smogcheck.ca.gov. ❧

April General Meeting

“Sex and the Single Toad, and Other Problems in the Conservation of Sierra Wildlife”

presented by David Grubbs

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

For thirty years Dr. Grubbs, his agency colleagues and students have studied the ecology of Sierra wildlife from fishers to Yosemite toads to understand their status and encourage their preservation. Field work, supplemented by telemetry, modeling, acoustic analysis and other technological approaches, have greatly contributed to his research.

Dr. Grubbs is Associate Dean Emeritus of Science and Math and Professor Emeritus of Biology at California State University. His current research focuses on physiological adaptation, animal behavior, and conservation. A graduate of UC Santa Barbara and UC Irvine in ecology and evolutionary biology, he has been involved in wildlife education

See General Meeting, page 5

Conservation & Executive Committees

Wednesday, April 11th at 7:00 P.M.
University of California Center, 550 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno



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Merced Group

Conservation and Executive Committee Meeting

Thursday, April 5th at 7:00 P.M.

Thursday, May 3rd at 7:00 P.M.

at Rod Webster's home, 345 E. 20th St., Merced.

Conservation meeting is first and can last 30-40 minutes. Anyone with an interest in local, state or national conservation issues is welcome to attend. Come just to be informed or become as involved as you wish.

April General Meeting

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

Sierra Presbyterian Church, 3603 M St., Merced

Antarctica

presented by Kara Middlebrooks and Tom Grave

Kara Middlebrooks and Tom Grave will present a program about their recent trip to Antarctica. The couple departed Merced on December 28, and, following two days in Buenos Aires, took a three-hour flight to Ushuaia, the southernmost city in the world. From there, they boarded the Marco Polo for an eight-day cruise of the Antarctic Peninsula. The Antarctic Peninsula is characterized by abundant wildlife, including marine mammals and many species of birds. On several occasions they had the opportunity to take Zodiac craft and land on various islands, mainly to observe gentoo and chinstrap penguins. Please join us!

No General Meeting in May

Outings

Please see the Tehipite and Yokuts (Modesto area) chapter listings. Phone Rod Webster at (209) 723-4747 if you would like to coordinate carpooling with others from your area.

Annual May Picnic

Saturday, May 5th at 11:00 A.M.

at Sally and Charlie Magnusen's
10235 El Capitan, Ballico

Bring a pot luck item to share, your place setting, a chair, and, if you wish, meat or fish to barbecue.

Valley Voices Poetry Festival

Students and teachers from Atwater, Golden Valley, Livingston and Merced High Schools will present their poetry in celebration of National Poetry Month at the Eighth Annual Valley Voices Poetry Festival. Mark your calendars now for April 27th at the Merced Multicultural Arts Center. Poetry about the Central Valley—our people, cultures, and environment—will inspire and inform you through multilingual student voices. You won't want to miss this!

The festival is part of the Valley Voices Writers' Clubs Project, which fosters, encourages and promotes creative and thoughtful multicultural and multilingual writing through observation, process, reading and study. Students and teachers have explored and written about this year's theme, *convergence*, and *the Merced River watershed*. As part of this place-based learning project, they have studied the Upper and Lower Merced River, vernal pools, and the San Luis National Wildlife Refuge. Author David Mas Masumoto and Heyday Books publisher Malcolm Margolin are actively involved in this project.

Project director, Ocean Jones, says, "Our motto, *let your voice be heard*, has been deeply embraced by these poets. They have developed a strong, personal relationship with our community and our environment." The fourth annual Valley Voices poetry book will be available during the festival. We look forward to seeing you there!

See Merced Group, page 7



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



Bear in mind the consequences.

The Yellowstone grizzly bear is an irreplaceable part of America's natural heritage, a symbol of the independence that defines the American character and an icon of all that is wild and free. The Bush administration set forth a proposal that would remove federal protection for the Yellowstone grizzly bear. Help Sierra Club protect our forest friends; they prefer the woods than being on display.

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Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
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Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32

Contributions, gifts and dues to 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 for your Chapter newsletters.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968 or visit our website www.sierraclub.org

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It's Your Club!

by Gerald Vinnard

I am frequently surprised to discover that people I have known for years are also members of the Sierra Club, but have never attended a meeting, participated in an outing, or taken advantage of their membership in any other way. Perhaps I shouldn't be surprised. Like so many others, I was a dues-paying member of the Club for several years before I picked up the telephone and called someone about a scheduled outing.

We, of course, welcome all of our members, including those who choose not to participate actively. However, if you are one of those people, I would like to extend an invitation to you to become involved, and to share some information about our activities.

Our primary activity is our General Meeting, which takes place at 7:00 P.M. on the third Wednesday of every month at the University of California Building, located at 550 E. Shaw Ave. These meetings are open to the general public and feature speakers on a wide variety of subjects. Recent meetings have included audio-visual presentations on travel to destinations both near and far, global warming and the relationship between international trade and the environment. We see newcomers at nearly all of these meetings and we encourage all of our members to attend regularly.

Anyone interested in environmental issues is welcome to attend the meetings of our Conservation Committee, which is chaired by Heather Anderson. This committee meets on the second Wednesday of each month, also at 7:00 P.M. at the University of California Building. These informal meetings offer the opportunity to discuss a wide variety of conservation and environmental issues with Chapter leadership. They also offer information on how to make contact with our legislators via telephone, snail-mail or e-mail on important environmental issues. Members who are aware of issues they believe the Chapter should address are welcome to attend and to propose agenda items, but we do ask that those who wish to bring matters up for discussion let us know in advance.

Our Chapter is governed by the Executive Committee, which I chair. It meets immediately after the conclusion of the meetings of the Conservation Committee at the same place, generally about 8:00 P.M. The Executive Committee deals with Chapter administration and finance, and formally votes on matters that have been considered by the Conservation Committee. Meetings of the Executive Committee, unlike General and Conservation Committee Meetings, are open only to Chapter members.

Many of our members join because of an interest in outdoor activities. For these members, we offer an extensive outings program. Nearly every weekend, our very experienced and capable Outings leaders offer hikes of various lengths and levels of difficulty. In season, we also offer regular cross-country skiing and snowshoe trips. Several times a year, we offer overnight trips to a variety of locations. Our outings are free, except for shared expenses, and offer an unparalleled opportunity to enjoy the outdoors surrounding our community.

I know there will be many readers of this column who, for one reason or another, have never quite "gotten around" to attending their first Chapter meeting, or making that first call to an outings leader. To those members, this is an invitation to let us hear from you. After all, it's your club! 🐾

Fresno Joins U.S. Mayors

Climate Protection Agreement

by Franz A. Weinschenk

Though it's taken a quite a while, Fresno has finally joined 405 other cities from all over the country, representing 59 million Americans in the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement. The agreement is non-binding, but challenges member cities to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions in a way similar to the Kyoto Protocols—seven percent of 1990 levels by the year 2012.

Fresno has begun to do things to reduce its emissions of greenhouse gases, but, as a large and growing community, there is much more that we can and should do. Having made this commitment, we hope that the city will follow the example of other cities in the Agreement, to achieve—and maybe even to exceed—the above stated goal. ❧



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Rally in the Valley

Hopefully for the last time, Peace Fresno and a coalition of valley and foothill peace and justice organizations will again hold the annual march and “Rally in the Valley for Peace and Justice: Bring the Troops Home Now.” We insist that our government end this unjust, immoral, and illegal war against the Iraqi people, which has already claimed the lives of 3,163 American military personnel, 256 military from other countries, an estimated 655,000 Iraqi civilians and an unknown number of American civilians.

The Rally is scheduled to take place at the new Eaton Plaza at Mariposa and ‘N’ Streets in downtown Fresno, near the historic Water Tower on Sunday, March 18, from 1:30 to 5:00 P.M.

Green Machine will supply music along with Lonesome Jem. Michael O’Gorman of ‘Farms Not Arms’ will introduce Dolores Huerta of the UFW, who will be the leadoff speaker. She will be followed by David Swanson of afterdowningstreet.org. Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey, Representative from the Sixth Congressional District north of San Francisco, has tentatively agreed to address the Rally as the third speaker.

A really large turnout at rallies around the country on this fourth anniversary of the war will help convince the 110th Congress to end this war. We are working to get more than 1000 people to participate in The Rally in the Valley in Fresno. Put it on your calendar now! The American People shall overcome!

For additional information, see Peace Fresno’s website: www.peacefresno.org or leave specific questions on our voicemail, 487-2515. ❧

General Meeting, from page 2

and environmental affairs for more than 35 years. He was a life scientist in the aerospace industry, working on Biosatellites I and II and on the Apollo Project, prior to coming to CSU Fresno. He has been active in the art and music communities, science education, the zoological gardens, and in biomedical research. Dr. Grubbs grew up in southern California and has worked on habitat preservation and expanding access to public resources. Dr. Grubbs is married with children and grandchildren. He and his wife Linda enjoy traveling. ❧

Outings Schedule

Outing Ratings

Distance	Elevation Gain
1) up to 6 miles	A) under 1,000 feet
2) 6 to 10 miles	B) 1,000 to 2,000 feet
3) 10 to 15 miles	C) 2,000 to 3,000 feet
4) 15 to 20 miles	D) 3,000 to 4,000 feet
5) over 20 miles	E) over 4,000 feet

Our Tehipite Chapter Outings Co-Chairs are Carolyn Ordway (559) 449-7780 or jbord606@yahoo.com and Richard Sloan (559) 696-2971 or RiverRich1509@aol.com. Please contact them 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.

Some of the outings listed are sponsored by other entities of the Sierra Club. Contact the trip leader for information about their policies and procedures.

April 7th - Saturday

Cross Country Skiing—Intermediate
Location to be determined.
Walt Taguchi (559) 435-2818

April 13th - 16th (17th) Friday night to Monday or Tuesday night

Car Camp and Backpack (3D)
Panamint City ghost town. Located at 7,000 ft. elevation in the Panamint Mountains, it is an 11 mile bushwhack, sometimes in a stream bed with flowing water. The rewards of this difficult hike are worth it. Historic remains of the town, Indian pictographs, wild animal encounters. 2wd vehicles should be OK.
Richard Sloan (559) 696-2971

April 14th - Saturday

Day Hike (1A)
Big Baldy in Sequoia National Park
This trip takes you to a striking 360-degree view of Kings Canyon and Sequoia National Parks from the summit of Big Baldy. A great place for lunch.
*Aimee Leyva (559) 438-8670
or (559) 301-3977*

April 15th - Sunday

Day Hike (2B)
Goat Mountain lies just 2 miles southwest of Bass Lake. If the weather stays warm, there should be beautiful wildflowers in bloom.
Beth Leacox (559) 446-1825

April 21th - Saturday

Day Hike (3B)
Alder Creek
The trail climbs gently but steadily along what used to be a railroad bed. After 6.1 miles you will see Alder Creek, which pours over a cliff as a 60-foot waterfall.
Walt Taguchi (559) 435-2818

April 22nd - Sunday

Day Hike (2A)
Hite Cove
We will follow the South Fork of the Merced at Savage Trading Post to the ruins of an old mining camp. Some sections of the trail have steep dropoffs.
John Flaherty (209) 742-4668

April 28th - Saturday

Day hike (2A)
Temperance Flat
If the stay warm, there should be beautiful wildflowers in bloom.
Syd Bluestone (559) 439-8233

April 28th - Saturday

Day Hike (2A)
Lewis Fork of the Fresno River
Visit two nice waterfalls on this trail known as Lewis Creek.
Don Redmond (559) 268-1537

April 29th - Sunday

Day Hike (2B)
Walk a mile on the Table Top.
This is a loop hike to the Foothill Conservancy's McKenzie Tabletop. We will explore its length and width, and visit several vernal pool sites.
7 miles, 1,200 feet, 75% off trail.
Steve Cosner (559) 281-5983

May 5th - Saturday

Yokuts Group of the Motherlode Chapter
Day Hike (2A)
Lake Chabot
This 8.5 mile east bay hike features sandy beaches, waterfowl, oak chaparral, canyons and creeks. Modestans meet at N. Modesto Park 'n' Ride on Sisk Rd. (near Vintage Fair Mall) at 8 A.M. Others call/email for alternative meeting place. Bring lunch, beverage, \$ for carpool, rain gear, and other essentials. Probable dinner stop.
*Elaine Gorman, (209) 524-7630
or goford@sbcglobal.net*

May 12th - Saturday

Day Hike (1A)
Muir Grove
Hike to a nice redwood grove in Sequoia. Bears usually seen.
Don Redmond (559) 268-1537

May 13th - Sunday

Day Hike (2D)
Yosemite Falls
Possible change due to late Snow.
John Flaherty (209) 742-4668

June 2nd - Saturday

Day Hike (2B)
Redwood Canyon. This is an annual event through this great Sequoia area. Goodies supplied afterward.
Don Redmond (559) 268-1537

June 2nd - 10th

National River Cleanup
San Joaquin River
RiverTree Volunteers, in conjunction with many other organizations and

groups will be helping to clean up parts of the river, from Friant Cove, near the base of Friant Dam, to Kerman—almost 58 miles away—safe river flow permitting. Something new for this year is that RiverTree will offer a very early morning cleanup by canoe on June 2nd, from Friant Cove to Fort Washington Beach. If we can get an early sunrise start there is a high probability of seeing animals, as well as doing some good for the river. You must be quiet for this particular activity. Later in the morning, we will be doing some other cleanup float trips and cleanups from the shore as well, if you are not an early riser. Please call for more details and free reservations. Space is limited. You are welcome to bring your own canoe or kayak.

Richard Sloan (559) 696-2971

June 17th - Sunday

Day Hike (2C)
Stanford Point

An uphill walk to one or two wonderful viewpoints of Yosemite Valley from Wawona Tunnel on hwy. 41. Possible change due to late snow.

John Flaherty (209) 742-4668

July 15th - Sunday

Day Hike (2A)

Pothole Dome and Tuolumne River
An exploratory stroll on the edge of the meadow to various points along the river.

John Flaherty (209) 742-4668

July 20th - 21st Friday night Car Camp, Hike Saturday (2B)

Dinkey Wilderness

Trailhead at 8,200 ft. Flowers should be nice, with mosquitoes disappearing by now. Hike by 6 lakes. Non-aggressive dogs welcome.

Richard Sloan (559) 696-2971

August 19th - Sunday

Day Hike (3C)
Chilnualna Falls

John Flaherty (209) 742-4668

September 16th - Sunday

Day Hike (2B)

Gaylor Lake

Walk up to silver mine ruins near the Tioga entrance station in Yosemite.

John Flaherty (209) 742-4668

October 14th - Sunday

Day Hike (2B)

Lewis Creek

Route to be determined by group interest.

John Flaherty (209) 742-4668

The Merced Birders would like you to know some of the activities that they are planning. Feel free to contact Carolyn at (209) 722-2104 for more information about these trips.

- Snelling (Henderson Park and Cathy's place)—winter
- Magneson farm—winter
- Cosumnes River Preserve—?
- Copperstown Road—spring
- Arena Plains—?
- Pinnacles National Monument—fall/spring
- Santa Fe Grade—?

Your Articles and Stories Wanted

The *Tehipite Topics* is your newsletter. It is produced by volunteers and most of the articles come from volunteers. We need you to be an environmental news reporter; photographer; write a story about an outing; submit an article about bears, trees, or peaks. Or submit an article about how people interact with bears, trees and peaks. Afraid of dangling participles? Marcia can help. Please send your articles to Topics@BigBaldy.com. Submission deadline is the second Friday of the previous month. Let us know if your article is time critical or if it can wait to be published. 🦋

Teach the River

San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust and California Department of Fish & Game

April 2007

4/7 (Sat.) Weekend Nature Walk

4/7 (Sat.) River Workdays

4/13 (Fri.) Field Biology Walkabout

4/14 (Sat.) Weekend Nature Walk

4/17 (Tues.) Project Learning Tree/
Exploring Environmental Issues:
Places We Live

4/21 (Sat.) Children and Nature:
Awakening a Sense of Awe and Wonder

4/22 (Sun.) It's for the Birds—Fourth Annual Birdhouse and Birdfeeder Contest

4/24 (Tues.) River Restoration Forum

4/26 (Thurs.) River Restoration Walk

May 2007

5/1 (Tues.) Educator Appreciation Afternoon at the River Center

5/5 (Sat.) Weekend Nature Walk

5/5 (Sat.) River Workdays

5/12 (Sat.) Weekend Nature Walk

June 2007

6/7 (Sat.) National River Cleanup

6/9 (Sat.) Celebrate California's Free Fishing Day

Space is limited. For more information or to register, please call (559)433-3190 ext. 3# or go to www.teachtheriver.org.

Merced Group, from page 6

The Merced Union High School District and a grant from the James Irvine Foundation help make Valley Voices possible. For more information, contact Ocean Jones at ojones@muhsd.k12.ca.us.



SIERRA CLUB

TEHIPITE CHAPTER

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The *Tehipite Topics* is available, in color, on the Chapter website at <http://tehipite.sierraclub.org>.

Deadline for *Tehipite Topics* is the second Friday of each month—April 13th for the May issue. Submit articles to Topics@BigBaldy.com.

Desert Debris

by John Flaherty

Imagine piles of garbage, not in the local dump, but spread out around primitive campsites too numerous to count in our southwest deserts. This is the focus of ongoing weekend cleanups staffed by many groups, the Sierra Club included. When I walked into our first site and saw the thousands of pieces of stuff left by waves of our fellow humans, my first thought was, "Impossible." But in only a few hours, the volunteers had transformed the chaos into an acceptably clean area and filled the trucks to overflowing. We spent about half the day in the warm winter sun with our garbage bags and ongoing critique of the wide choice of civilization's refuse. Then, on to a full weekend of hiking and potlucks around the camp circle. The hikes are very different from those in the Sierra. We enjoyed random flowers in this drought year, unusual canyons and rock formations. Scrambling over barely visible trails and rocky dry washes leading to impressive views, we were filled with a growing familiarity of a desolate, remote and beautiful ecosystem. If you haven't tried one of the desert adventures described on the club Web site, I totally recommend it. I hope to return again and again. Thank you, Craig Deutsche! 🌿



clair tappaan *a lodge close to nature*

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.

Springtime in the Sierra is a magical time. In early spring you can take advantage of longer and warmer days with extended ski and snowshoe tours or using the Lodge's own groomed trails. Later in the spring you can experience the explosion of wildflowers as you hike miles of trails behind the Lodge or on the Pacific Crest trail just 1.5 miles from the Lodge.

Guests enjoy excellent family style meals, a friendly staff and a casual and communal atmosphere.

See you on Donner Summit...



For more information about our special 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.