

Tehipite Topics

April 2011 ♪ Vol. 57, No. 4

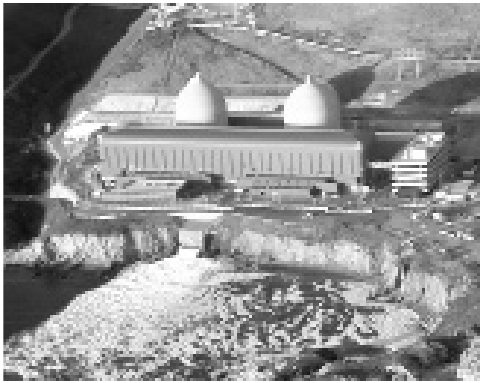
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Japan's (Our Planet's) Nuclear Tragedy

By Chip Ashley

In the earthquake of March 11, 2011, 9.0 on the Richter scale, the fifth most powerful earthquake ever recorded, and the subsequent 30 foot tsunami, Japan suffered, and continues to suffer, a natural disaster of biblical proportions. Cities and villages along the coast have been reduced to scattered debris, with many inhabitants swept out to sea, killed outright, or buried alive and injured under the rubble. One can hardly imagine how terrible all this is.

Unfortunately, the situation is much worse because of the situation of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, the 4.7 gigawatt plant located near the town of Okuma on the east coast of the island of Honshu.



The PG&E Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, on the coast north of San Luis Obispo, has a generating capacity of 2.2 gigawatts, less than half that of the Fukushima Daiichi plant.
Photo by PPLEcke, from Wikimedia

Terrible as this all is, in a few months, most of the debris will be cleaned up. The dead will have been mourned; and, although they will never be forgotten, their loved ones will achieve closure and move on with their lives. One hopes those permanently injured will also come to accept the abrupt changes in their lives, the loss of limbs and mobility, the brain injuries, the blindness. In a

See "Nuke" page 4



A Modest Proposal to Protect Newts

by Chip Ashley

Every winter and early spring in Watts Valley California newts are awakened by invigorating rains and migrate from where they aestivate, shielded against the hot drought of summer under moist mossy logs shaded by live oaks and Ceanothus brush, to cold rain-swollen streams. There they engage in their mating ritual and continue their life cycle, as they have likely done for millions of years.

The California newt, *Taricha torosa*, first became a part of my experience near the cabin my great grandparents built for their summer grazing headquarters at Soaproot Flat, a few miles east of Watts Valley by rugged dirt road and a couple thousand feet higher in the Sierra of eastern Fresno County. I spent many of my salad days wandering brushy mountain deer trails and following Rush Creek and its tributary that originates at Soaproot Flat. That intermittent tributary, which I guess should be called Soaproot Creek since its headwaters are in that place, is where I first saw the rusty orange color of newts as they moved about in crystal clear pools.

Such an incredible thing it seems, as I now look back on it, that newts should be so brightly colored. Evolution has made no effort to camouflage these gentle

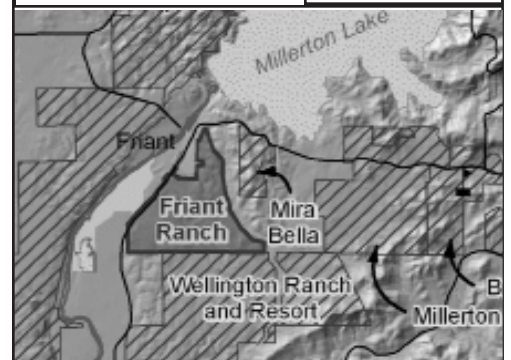
See "Newt" page 4

LAWSUIT AGAINST FRESNO COUNTY CHALLENGES APPROVAL OF FRIANT RANCH PROJECT

By Gary Lasky

Three environmental organizations have sued Fresno County to challenge the County's approval of the Friant Ranch project. The Sierra Club, League of Women Voters Fresno and Revive the San Joaquin filed suit on March 7 in Fresno County Superior Court. The suit challenges

See "lawsuit" page 5



The diagonal lines show other future development projects around Friant Ranch

Volunteer for Earth Day

Now is the time for all good earthlings to come to the aid of their planet! Tehipite Chapter has partnered with the 2011 Fresno Earth Day planning team to create a wonderful Earth Day fest coming Saturday, April 30th. Last year was terrific, with at least 500 attending to browse booths of many green organizations, sample earth-friendly food and drink prepared by green vendors, and just enjoy a beautiful day with friendly people. We are looking at even more fun this year. So if you would like to volunteer to help, please email Fresno Earth Day Volunteer Coordinator Katie Clark at Kates821@yahoo.com.

Chapter Meetings

General Meeting

April 20th at 7 p.m.
550 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno

April Program:

Joe Fontaine and William Tweed present their books on the Sierra

In *Uncertain Path*, former park ranger Willima Tweed, presents a new vision for our Sierra national parks.

Former Sierra Club President Joe Fontaine's book's title is self-explanatory: *The Kern Plateau and Other Gems of the Southern Sierra*.



Joe Fontaine



William Tweed

Upcoming General Meeting Programs:

Conservation & Executive Committee Meetings

April 13th

The Conservation Committee meets at 7 PM

The Executive Committee meets at 8 PM

University of California Center

550 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno



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Merced Conservation and Executive Committee Meetings

(the first Thursday of each month)

Our next conservation and executive meeting is Thursday, April 7, 7:00 P.M. at Rod Webster's home, 345 E. 20th St., Merced. The conservation meeting is first and lasts 30-40 minutes. Anyone with an interest in local, state, or national conservation issues is welcome to attend.

Merced Group General Meetings

(Third Thursday of each month, except Dec. and May)

Our general meetings start at 7:00, usually over by 8:30 or so. New location- the Activity Room at the Hampshire, 3460 R St. (just before Yosemite Ave. when headed north). Through the front door, straight ahead through the lobby, to the room back left. There will be signs to assist. There will be another event going on in the lobby so just pass on through.

Merced Continued right column

Possible Fresno-Yosemite Bus

A Fresno-Yosemite bus route has been proposed in the Fresno Council of Governments. A Study by Fehr and Peers Transportation Consultants was presented to the Technical Transportation Committee (TTC) of the Fresno COG by COG staffer John Downs at the February 11th meeting. According to the Modesto Bee, the study "includes information on economic feasibility and current transportation systems, such as the Yosemite Area Rural Transportation System, which run from Merced to Yosemite Valley."

"Proposed stops include the Fresno Greyhound and Amtrak stations, Fresno Yosemite International Airport, Fresno State, Chukchansi Gold Resort and Casino, Oakhurst's Yosemite Visitors Center, Tenaya Lodge, Wawona Hotel, Badger Pass Ski Area and Yosemite Valley sites" (Modesto Bee).

At the meeting, TTC member Chip Ashley, representing Tehipite Chapter, asked Downs whether the route would help reduce air pollution and greenhouse gases, which cause global warming. Downs said it would probably help a little, but not significantly since cars will still be allowed into the park.

See "Bus" page 8

Next General Meeting is Thursday, April 21, at 7:00 P.M.

New location: at the Hampshire (see above)

This month's program is the film Bag It

Try going a day without plastic. In this touching and often flat-out-funny film, we follow "everyman" Jeb Berrier as he embarks on a global tour to unravel the complexities of our plastic world. What starts as a film about plastic bags evolves into a wholesale investigation into plastic and its affect on our waterways, oceans and even our own bodies. We see how our crazy-for-plastic world has finally caught up to us and what we can do about it. Today. Right now.

For more information contact Rod Webster at 209-723-4747.

The May Picnic is coming!

On Saturday, May 21st, join us for warm sunshine, gentle breezes, yummy food, and stimulating company. Lake Yosemite County Park, a few miles north of town is the place (heading toward the foothills "feels" east). Bring your table setting, food to share, and any special beverages you want- ice tea and water will be provided. We'll start gathering around 11:00 and plan on eating at 12:00.

To get there, take G St. out of town, turn right on Bellevue, when the road dead ends turn left on Lake Rd., past the UC, and on into the park. After entering, park in the lot to your immediate left. We'll gather at the picnic tables to the right of the yacht club building. This grassy area overlooks where the boats are berthed. Note: This takes the place of our normal general meeting for this month.

Tehipite Banquet News

By Karen Hammer

Thank you to all of our members who came out and were part of our successful banquet last month at the 4 Points by Sheraton Crystal Ballroom. The food was good, conversation was stimulating, and Gus Smith's presentation on fire ecology was most informative. We were joined by representatives of the National Parks, National Forest Service and the National Sierra Club who traveled considerable distances to join us in recognizing our special awardees that night. The following individuals were recognized

See "Banquet" Page 8



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.

Get grizzly and JOIN Sierra Club.

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____
 Zip _____ Phone (____) _____
 Email _____

Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!



Check enclosed. Please make payable to Sierra Club.
 Please charge my: Visa Mastercard AMEX
 Cardholder Name _____
 Card Number _____
 Exp. Date ____/____/____

Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
Special Offer	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
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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"Nuke" from page 1

few years the cities and infrastructure will be rebuilt.

Unfortunately, the results of the destruction of the nuclear plant are much harder to put into the past. If we—and by “we” I mean all the creatures on this entire planet—are lucky enough that this tragedy does not result in the release into the environment of a great deal of radioactive material rendering perhaps hundreds or even thousands of square miles around the plant uninhabitable for tens of millennia—if we are so fortunate, one hopes also that we will learn from this terrible experience. One hopes we will learn that it is simply not worth it to compound natural disaster with human tragedy as we have done in being so arrogant as to delude ourselves that there is not an inevitable price to pay once one has agreed to the Faustian bargain of choosing to build nuclear facilities. And it might, and very well could be, much, much worse if indeed significant amounts of radioactive material are spread far and wide.

It is a Faustian bargain in one sense because, at least figuratively, it is making a deal with the devil. The very name plutonium, one of the elements involved in nuclear fission and occurring in at least one of the reactors at the Fukushima plant, comes from the Roman god of the underworld, Pluto, the lord of hell. Like the trickster Satan, symbolically related to Pluto, the nuclear reaction is very hard, if not impossible, to control. In the film *Chinatown*, the manager of a nuclear power plant played by Jack Lemmon explains to a reporter played by Jane Fonda, that his facility has deep protection because it has backup systems for its backup systems in order to keep what is very hard to control under control—a managed chain



Spent nuclear fuel is stored in the Diablo Canyon yard (the plant is just to the left, out of the photo). Imagine the result of a tsunami hitting this facility. A significant tsunami reached the California coast following the March 11th earthquake that devastated Japan.
Photo by PPEcke from Wikimedia

like Faust, we know the deal we are making when we choose to use nuclear energy. Faust knew that after he enjoyed lovemak-

ing with Helen of Troy and a thousand other worldly pleasures, he would be fetched by demons down to hell. We know that natural disasters of biblical proportions occur rather often on this planet. We know that even bigger cataclysms occurred prehistorically. We also know that there is simply no way to build a nuclear facility strong enough to withstand these cataclysms, and that the cataclysms will take out the whole plant and all its backup systems in one fell swoop. It is only a matter of time. We know all this; therefore one can only conclude that those who finance and build these facilities—and it occurs to me that the word “facilities” is hardly a good word for these monstrosities since it means “something to make things easier”—knew also that they were taking a calculated risk that the disaster that would destroy these facilities would come later rather than sooner and they would no longer be around to have to answer for their dirty work. The profits would have been long spent and they would be long dead and freed of any responsibility.

And what were, and are, these captains of industry and high finance risking? They were, and are, risking the very future of this planet. They risk the very future of their own children—which says a great deal about the condition of their moral core—absolutely rotten! They, in a very calculating and deceptive manner, externalized and continue to externalize, the enormous costs of these dubious operations onto all of us and onto all of our children and grandchildren for a thousand generations!

It was once said by nuclear proponents that power produced by nuclear power plants would be “too cheap to meter.” Let us parse that statement with the measure of Fukushima Daiichi.

"Newt" from page 1

creatures save making their backs a rustier browner shade of orange, while leaving the clearly visible underside almost fluorescent bright! The answer to this riddle is that evolution has provided the newt, as it has many other amphibians, with a protection in the form of toxicity—a potent neurotoxin—and the newt's orange color is a bright flag signaling predators not to eat the gentle newt lest they grow quite sick and die.

But the color leads in a different direction in this story. That bright orange reacquainted me with my childhood amphibian friends as I drove up Watts Valley Road along Little Dry Creek Canyon towards Burrough Valley on foggy mornings or rain-wet late after-

noons. I noticed newts making their slow inexorable trek down from the steep brushy eastern slope of Oat Mountain to the fresh clear pools of Little Dry Creek to do the wild thing, just as they had always done as far back as newt memory could go if it could go. And maybe it can go—I don't know for sure one way or the other. But there they crept, some on the edge of the road, some in the middle, and yes, some crushed and mangled road-kill newts to join their quicker cottontail cousins, their flitting gray squirrel and ground squirrel cousins, their acorn woodpecker cousins, their slithering rattle, king, garter, and gopher snake cousins--all roadkill--to be crow or coyote feed or rot on the roadside or be ground to dust and grease near the centerline, all victims of the pneumatic tire, a new item evolution has not yet prepared the newt and many of its terrestrial cousin creatures to deal with.

I have also noted that newts do not seem to frequent Tollhouse Road, which parallels Big Dry Creek for many miles between the little hamlet of Lecher all the way to Tollhouse. Is this because newts never used this creek, or because the greater traffic on this road has rendered Big Dry Creek newts extinct? Or is it possible that newts do still inhabit Big Dry but that they migrate to and from said creek only on the creekside opposite the road? One day I will test this hypothesis. But today I am late to an environmental meeting of some sort or other.

“What is this?” asked some ancient great grandfather or great grandmother newt (if you will permit me for just a moment to personify the newt) as he or she came for the first time upon the denuded soil we call a road. There it was—for the first time in a million years, give or take! A barrier, at first a broad swath of denuded soil with narrow wagon tracks, then some fifty years later an expanse of asphalt, which later still was straightened out to let impatient humans and their automobiles travel faster.

“Pause! Avast! Why so seeming fast but deadly slow!” remarks Thoreau, looking philosophically on from Walden. And suddenly the solution comes to me: We should put up signs in areas like this, frequented frequently by wildlife. Ah, yes, we already have signs with silhouettes of jumping deer on them—though by the shape of their antlers these deer appear to be leaping whitetails, and not our local blacktails, a subsidiary of the mule deer clan. But we could have other signs, bright yellow diamond signs with silhouettes of cottontails, ground squirrels,

and raccoons. And since human love for our fellow terrestrial creatures surely goes beyond the mammalian, we should also include lizards—whiptails and fence lizards for hereabouts—and of course amphibians must not be neglected. A plethora of signs should be put up, enough to create at least a thousand jobs for sign makers, signs populated with toads, frogs, and yes California newts. The illustration at the top of this essay is my entry for the “Slow down to watch for newts” sign. And yes, it can mean either “Slow newts are crossing” or “Slow, newts are crossing” because newts are slow. So give ‘em a brake—har, har. (I mean it seriously—I really do. Just smiling seriously, like Elfie.)

“Lawsuit” from page 1

es the Board of Supervisors’ approval of the Friant Ranch Project. The landowner, Bigelow-Silkwood and the Friant Ranch LP developer were also named as defendants. This lawsuit follows on the heels of two separate lawsuits filed against the County on March 4 by the City of Fresno and the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust.

The proposed project would develop what is presently 940 acres of agricultural grazing land, seven miles north of the City of Fresno. The Friant Ranch project is described as an “active adult community” consisting of some 2,500 new residences and 300,000 square feet of retail and office space.

The goals of this lawsuit are to force the withdrawal, rewriting and recirculation of the Environmental Impact Report. Plaintiffs want the EIR to account for the full costs of the project, including the hundreds of millions of dollars required to construct an adequate transportation system for the future 5,000 residents, plus retail shoppers, planned for Friant Ranch. The real costs of sprawl in Fresno County include the impact of increased auto emissions on our ozone and PM2.5 air pollutant levels, as well as the price we pay for increased greenhouse gas emissions.

“What concerns us is this ‘leapfrog’ development because it will increase vehicle miles traveled and air pollution,” according to Sarah Sharpe, Environmental Health Program Director for Fresno Metro Ministry. “Fresno County has some of the highest rates of asthma in the nation. We need to protect the public health through better planning. We need to focus on infill and more compact, transit-oriented communities: walkable and bikeable.”

Great

San Joaquin River Clean-up

Please contact Richard Sloan at 559-696-2971, riverrich1509@aol.com, Steve Starcher, 559-289-8874, sastarcher@gmail.com or Steve Haze, 559-970-6320 re opportunities to help clean up the San Joaquin River.

Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park

Reserve early for 2011 !!

July 16-19; July 30-August 2; September 9-11; October 17-19

Explore the wild, windswept islands of Channel Island National Park. Enjoy the frolicking seals and sea lions. Train your binoculars on unusual sea and land birds. Hike the trails to find blankets of wildflowers and plants found in no other place on earth. Kayak or snorkel the pristine waters--- or just relax at sea. These live-aboard, eco tours depart from Santa Barbara aboard the 68' twin diesel Truth. Fee (\$785 for July trips; \$590 for September and October) includes an assigned bunk, all meals, snacks, beverages, plus the services of a ranger/naturalist who will travel with us to lead hikes, call attention to items of interest and present evening programs.

To make a reservation mail a \$100 check, payable to Sierra Club to leader: Joan Jones Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732.

Contact leader for more information (626-443-0706; jholtzhl@aol.com)



“Consistent with the General Plan, Fresno County must plan development closer to existing communities, not in the middle of bucolic pastures miles from town,” said Gary Lasky, Vice Chair of the Sierra Club Tehipite Chapter. “This project takes us in the wrong direction. ‘Leapfrog sprawl’ is simply unaffordable to our county’s treasury and to the taxpayers of Fresno County. When smart growth principles are violated, the taxpayers are stuck with the bill.”

The suit was filed because the project Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) fails to examine and account for numerous significant adverse environmental impacts from this project, including impacts on transportation, air and water quality and parklands. The Project also conflicts with a number of Fresno County General Plan core goals and policies, including policies intended to preserve agriculture, open space and minimum levels of service on rural roads. The suit asserts that the approved project is inconsistent with the County’s General Plan policies directing large-scale urban development to communities with already-in-place infrastructure: water and sewer, roads and transit options, police and fire services. The General Plan requires orderly and logical development close to established urban areas.

There are also cumulative impacts from a host of development projects waiting in the wings that will impact the quality of river water. Treated effluent from this and other reasonably foreseeable projects will make its way into the San Joaquin River, threatening salmon recovery efforts.

Chris Acree, Executive Director of Revive the San Joaquin, opposes the Friant Ranch project: “Our efforts to restore the San Joaquin River and bring back salmon depend on smart planning and clean water.” Acree adds, “Friant Ranch developers are passing on an expensive debt to the taxpayers. We can’t afford to rush into another poorly designed rural ‘new town’; we can barely even provide services to our existing rural communities.

Legislative News Sierrans Should be Aware of

By Connie Peterson

Central Valley Congressional representatives voted in support of set of policy riders added to Continuing Resolution HR1, the temporary measure to keep the federal government funded. Unless modified in the Senate, this legislation will have long-lasting, negative

impacts on the environment and public health. Both Democrats and Republicans voted in support of amendments to:

- Bar the EPA from setting common sense standards to limit global warming pollution by major emitters like coal and oil refineries (Amendment 1);
- Prevent the EPA from regulating the cement production industry that dumps mercury and other hazardous air pollution into the air we breathe and water we drink (Amendment 3);
- Cut \$8.5 million from EPA’s Environmental and Management Allocation to eliminate funding for that agency’s gas registry that tracks how much carbon pollution is spewing from large power plants and refineries (Amendment 4);
- Block the EPA from updating health standards for particulate matter pollution—particles that penetrate deeply into our lungs, aggravate respiratory illnesses like asthma and emphysema. Take note that our “toxic” Valley has the highest rates of childhood asthma in the nation. (Amendment 8);
- Create a loophole in the Clean Air Act, prohibiting the Environmental Appeals Board from considering air pollution impacts of any drilling projects off the Alaskan coast (Amendment 9);
- Continue \$53 billion in taxpayer subsidies for the world’s biggest and most profitable oil companies operating off shore for free in publically owned resources (Amendment 10);
- Prohibit the EPA from finalizing safeguards to ensure the safe disposal of coal ash which contains hazardous chemicals like arsenic and lead—and bear in mind the devastation wrought by the failure of the TVA coal ash pond in 2008 (Amendment 11);
- Prevent EPA from using its authority under the Clean Air Act to restrict permits that have “unacceptable adverse effects on water, fish or wildlife”—an authority hardly abused, having been used only 13 times in 39 years. (Amendment 12);
- Block the EPA from implementing new water quality standards for Florida’s lakes and halt public education to help protect that State’s waters from excess pollution from sewages and fertilizers (Amendment 16);
- Cut by 90% the already minimal allocation for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which is actually funded by oil royalties and helps fund local projects like parks. The LWC has also provided critical funding for cherished places like Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon Parks. Cardoza did not support this action; Costa did. (Amendment 17);

- Halt implementation of off road vehicle management plans on our national forests—a problem the Forest Service has named one of the four greatest threats to forests and grasslands (Amendment 19);
- Reject capping agricultural subsidies at \$250,000—that go primarily to factory farms (Amendment 21);
- Block implementation of the Equal Access to Justice Act, signed into law by Ronald Reagan, which gave American’s the right to recover attorney’s fees if they prevail in Court, curtailing citizen efforts to hold federal agencies accountable when they violate environmental, health and safety laws (Amendment 22);
- Not support an effort to increase funding by \$20 million for the Department of Energy’s innovative Advanced Research Projects-Energy (ARPA-E) and decrease funding for fossil energy research and development in the same amount (Amendment 25).

In addition, local Republican representatives voted to:

- Prohibit the United States from contributing funds to the Nobel Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate change;
- Prevent the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) from establishing a Climate Service that would combine data and analysis to facilitate better long-term investment decision making;
- Eliminate the ability of the President to retain advisors (known as czar’s) who coordinate policy across executive branch agencies and to also eliminate funding for the State Department’s Special Envoy for Climate Change --the principal negotiators in international agreements to reduce carbon pollution;
- Block EPA policies designed to ensure mountaintop removal coal mining does not pollute streams and destroy aquatic life with mining waste;
- Bar the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement from proposing rules to protect streams from surface coal mining; and
- Cut \$70 million from the Department of Energy’s Energy Efficiency and Renewal Energy programs which create jobs in clean energy technology, and increase our energy security.

There is news on the state front as well. The LA Times reported on March 17 that conservatives in the California State Legislature are using the budget as a bargaining chip to require sweeping changes in the California Environmental Quality Act—this even after CA voters soundly defeated Propositions 16 and 23 in 2010.

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 Chair is Marcia Rasmussen, Marcia@BigBaldy.com, 559-332-2419. Please contact Marcia 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.

Outings Leaders may post their own trips on the web page or send them to Marcia@BigBaldy.com.

CST #2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California. California has established a Travel Consumer Restitution Fund (TCRF) under the California Seller of Travel Act. The TCRF is not applicable to these Outings. The law requires us to advise you that you would not be eligible to make any claim from the TCRF in the unlikely event of default by the Sierra Club. California law also requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. The Sierra Club has such a trust account.

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Sierra Club California Needs Your Help

You have great people in Sacramento lobbying to protect the Sierra and on other critical issues like climate change. Bill Magavern, Jim Metropoulous, and Annie Pham do a terrific job, and they need our help. Please go to the Sierra Club California web site at

www.sierraclubcalifornia.org

Donate generously!

Required Liability Waiver

All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read the Liability Waiver before you choose to participate on an outing, please go to: <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/>, or contact the Outings Department at (415) 977-5528 for a printed version.

Carrizo Plain National Monument (1A)

April 2nd, 2011 (all day)

Guided tour and hikes on Sat. (9:30 - 2:30 p.m.). Visit Painted Rock and Soda Lake among other sites. Possibly catch a good wildflower display. Option to camp out overnight Fri. and/or Sat. night. Rustic conditions. Must carry in water. Karen Hammer 298-5272

Mt. Diablo

Saturday, April 2, 2011 - 8:00am

Leader: Elaine Gorman. Type: Day Hike. Rating: Intermediate. Climbing Elevation: 1,800 feet. Distance: 9.00 miles

"The Giant Loop" will begin and end on the north side of Mt. Diablo. Almost 9 miles and 1800' elevation gain, wahoo! Hopefully, we will see early spring wildflowers, small waterfalls, and if we are lucky, some rattlesnakes. Beware of poison oak and ticks. Bring lunch and beverage, hiking boots, hiking poles (recommended), rain/cold weather gear, sun hat, \$\$ for carpool and probable dinner stop, and other essentials. Meet at Modesto Park 'n' Ride (north of Vintage Faire Mall) at 8:00 AM. Contact leader to sign up. Rain cancels. Contact: Elaine Gorman, 209-524-7630, goford@sbcglobal.net

Intermediate Cross Country Ski

Saturday, April 9, 2011 - 8:00am - 5:00pm

Back country ski trip to Buck Rock with views of the majestic Kings Canyon River drainage of the Middle and South forks, the Obelisk and Spanish Mt. Trip depends on snow conditions. Contact: Call Steve Fretz @ 439-6673 for time and meeting place.

San Joaquin River Trail Run

Saturday, April 16, 2011 - 8:00am - 11:00am

Rating: Intermediate; Climbing Elevation: 500 feet; Descending Elevation: 500 feet; Maximum Elevation: 600 feet; Elevation Gain: 500 feet; Distance: 6.00 miles We will park near the end of Sky Harbor Rd., and walk up the more level part of the trail. The trail is quite scenic as it winds along the San Joaquin River. We will run at about a 9 minute/mile pace, and have a snack at the turn around point. Experienced (but not elite!) runners only. Contact: Don Gaede 960-5661

Ascent to Glacier Point and post hike barbecue

Saturday, June 4, 2011 - 7:30am - 8:30pm

Day Hike, Rating: Intermediate

Ascend to Glacier Point via the 4 mile trail with views of Yosemite Falls across the valley. This is moderately strenuous and is for hikers who are reasonably fit and accustomed to doing hikes of this length and elevation. Bring a minimum of 2 Leader: Karen Hammer 298-5272

Flyfishing Upper Twin Lakes Car Camp

July 8 & 9, 2011 - 7:30 PM - 7:30 PM

Day Hike. Rating: Intermediate. Distance: 7.00 miles.

Ever want to try your hand at casting a fly for trout? Want to have a better than even chance of catching something on your first trip? Like hiking the high Sierra? Here's an opportunity.

Car camp Friday evening. On Saturday Morning, we will break camp and head for Upper Twin Lake. This is a moderate hike, all on trail (no cross country). Fishing here is good for brook and rainbow trout, all wild (not hatchery raised). We will practice catch and release with barbless hooks.

Continued page 8

More Outings, Page 8



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Deadline for *Tehipite Topics* is the 15th of each month. Please submit material to wattsvalleypreservation@gmail.com.

More Outings

If people arrive at the campground in time, the leader will go over basic knots, how best to handle trout to be released, and answer any angling questions the group may have. The leader will be going up Friday Morning in order to secure a campsite, so the participants will have to organize their own caravan/car pool, or simply drive up on their own. Email flyfing-er78@yahoo.com for a printable topographic map of the hiking area. If you're willing to share your email to facilitate carpooling, say so. Fishing License required. Call John Cameron at 559 903 513838.. No experience is necessary.

Mt. Whitney Summit - (date to be decided)

Thursday, July 21, 2011 - 12:00am - Saturday, July 30, 2011 - 12:00am
 Day Hike, Rating: Difficult
 Interested in climbing the highest peak in the 48 contiguous US states? We are excited to offer this fabulous trip. It is one of THE premier hikes in the country, not only because of Mt. Whitney's "highest 14er" tatus, but because of the hike's extreme, rugged beauty. This is simply a must do hike.

Wilderness Permits for Mt. Whitney are in great demand and are distributed by lottery in February. We will request July 21, 22, 23, 24, 28, 29, or 30. We hope to be granted a permit for ONE of these dates, with space for ten hikers. As soon as we know, we will need \$15 from each hiker for the permit. Leader: Gerald Vinnard 559-431-5780 or gvinnard@hotmail.com or Marcia Rasmussen, 559-332-2419 or Marcia@BigBaldy.com

Banquet, from Page 3

for their excellent work in these respective areas:

Chip Ashley – Recipient of the Outstanding Conservation Award in special recognition, not only for his conservation work in the areas of energy and air quality, but also as Editor of our newsletter, the Topics.

Gary Lasky – Recipient of the Outstanding Conservation Award in recognition for his exceptional activism, communication, and organizing skills in current conservation issues.

Ron Olsen – Recipient of the Outstanding Environmental Education Award for his exceptional work as a Biology Instructor at

Fresno City College, for the Sierra Foothill Conservancy, and for the San Joaquin River Parkway.

Radley Reep – Recipient of the Outstanding Community Service Award in recognition for his consistent work over many years in helping to revive a healthy ecology for a magnificent resource, the San Joaquin River.

Jan van Wagtendonk – Recipient of the Outstanding Community Environmental Service Award in recognition for his work in prescribed burning in Sierra Nevada wilderness ecosystems, its impact, application, and management.

Congratulations to our awardees, and we look forward to sharing this special annual event next year with our club members.

"Bus" from page 3

Max Stauffer, president of the Yosemite Sierra Visitors Bureau, spoke in opposition to the proposal, his main concern being that businesses along the route would be hurt due to reduction of car traffic.

Anyone who has visited Yosemite Valley in the last few decades and been caught for an hour in the gridlock in the Lodge-Village area has to look at this proposal favorably.