



SIERRA CLUB
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Blue Oak Group



Butte, Glenn, Lassen, Plumas & Tehama Counties

Tuscan Water District: Stealth and Wealth vs. Nature’s Health

By Jeffrey F. Obser, Executive Director, Groundwater For Butte

The years-long effort to convert one of California’s last healthy groundwater basins into a “water bank” culminates Dec. 5. Having mailed out ballots on Nov. 7, Butte County will count votes for and against establishing a Tuscan Water District on some 102,000 acres north, south and west of Chico. (It is named after the Tuscan Aquifer, though it overlies only a small portion).

As a “landowner” election, voters get one vote per dollar of assessed land value (home values not included). This means a handful of larger landowners will decide the question, and then dominate the TWD if it is established. With agricultural land ownership fast consolidating into fewer and bigger entities, an aggressive corporation or consortium will inevitably control the TWD. Based on its board candidates, some would conclude that is already the case.

Meanwhile, the Vina Groundwater Sustainability Agency, tasked with preserving the entire basin beneath Chico and Durham as well as the TWD, announced in its 2022 sustainability plan that it would tolerate groundwater levels dropping to unprecedented levels: Low enough to strand countless domestic and small-farm wells, desiccate Chico’s urban tree canopy and creek ecosystems, and risk irreversible damage to the Tuscan Aquifer.

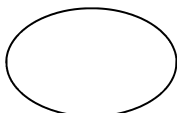
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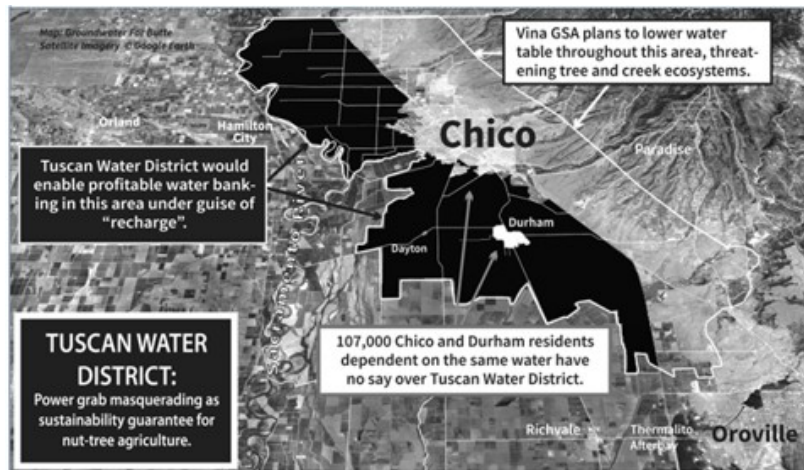
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Tuscan Water District *(continued from p. 1)*



Lowering the groundwater would create space for water banking – a goal our group has identified in State planning documents going back decades. The Tuscan Water District is designed to implement these plans in tandem with the Vina GSA under the cover of “recharge” – pumping surface (river) water back into the ground with expensive publicly-funded infrastructure. But water banking only profits growers with senior water rights and “recharge” may only end up benefitting the proliferating ultra-deep ag wells in Glenn and Colusa Counties.

California has many agricultural water districts, some in Butte County, but most date from the 1960s or earlier. Interest in creating new ones rose after California passed the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act in 2014. When San Luis Obispo County rejected a new water district in a democratic election, Paul Gosselin, then the Butte County Water Conservation & Resource Department Director, began pitching landowner-controlled water-district creation to growers both inside and outside Butte County.

Debra Lucero, then a Butte County Supervisor, wrote on Facebook in 2021 that Gosselin and others, “came up with another idea – one that could circumvent the arduous San Luis Obispo process and even the Board of Supervisors.”

Already in 2017, Gosselin had lined up a group of growers to advocate for their financial interests in the groundwater (the Agricultural Groundwater Users of Butte County or AGUBC). That group spearheaded the Tuscan Water District’s formation process; its members dominate candidates for its board.

Though AquAlliance promptly sued the Vina GSA over the 2022 plan to lower groundwater levels (the case is pending), the State Department of Water Resources approved that plan in August – six months earlier than required. Then in September, it awarded \$5.5 million in grants to the Vina GSA, part of \$187 million granted statewide, ostensibly for sustainability projects.

The official overseeing the approval and the grants was none other than Paul Gosselin. In 2021 he moved to Sacramento, rich in connections to Butte County’s growers and water sellers, to become

(concluded on page 3)

Newsletter Information

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For submissions, comments, or inquiries, contact: Suzette Welch, booksontape@rocketmail.com 530 570-3240. Please include name, phone number, and address with each submission. Short, single-topic articles are preferred. Deadlines for proposed articles and letters to the editor: February 1, May 1, August 1, and November 1.

Blue Oak Group News reserves the right to edit all submissions for reasons of space, clarity and potential libel. The opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Sierra Club or the Blue Oak Group.

Blue Oak Winter 2023/2024 Outings and Events

Coordinated by Alan Mendoza. For updated outings information and for general information about outings and meeting places, please see our web site at: www.sierraclub.org/mother-lode/blue-oak

Friday, December 15—Blue Oak Holiday Potluck

Valley Oaks Village, 1950 Wild Oak Lane, Chico, Ca. Party starts at 5:30 pm. Limited parking so please carpool. Bring your own beer and wine. There will be a \$5 charge for room rental and cleanup. More information on page 5 of this newsletter.

Saturday, January 20—Day Hike (2,A) Hike Along Feather River in Oroville

A pleasant 3-4 mile stroll along the paved, scenic Feather River Parkway to the Nature Center and back. Afterwards we will have a group lunch at Tong Fong Low Chinese Restaurant in downtown Oroville. Please bring water, comfortable walking shoes and restaurant/carpool \$\$\$. Rain cancels. Meet at Chico Park & Ride to carpool at 9:30AM or at trailhead in Oroville (Riverbend Park - Hwy 70 & Montgomery Street) at 10:00AM. Leader: Alan, 530-588-8031 or ajmendoza666@gmail.com

Tuesday, February 20 —Help Prepare Blue Oak Newsletter for Mailing

Join the mail crew on Tuesday Feb. 20, 2024 at 2:00 pm to process the Blue Oak Group Newsletter for mailing. The meeting place is the Lodge at the Terraces in California Park located at 2750 Sierra Sunrise Terrace. The Lodge is the older independent living section of California Park. Everyone is welcome to come and help. Please join us so we can quickly get the Newsletters ready to mail. The processing gathering provides a great excuse to get together, catch up on news and meet new people. Suzette Welch, Coeditor Blue Oak Group Sierra Club Newsletter

Saturday, February 24—Day Hike (2,B) Hike the South Side of Bidwell

Enjoy the amazing spring beauty of upper Bidwell Park along with beautiful views as we hike the South Rim/Annie Bidwell trail. A 6-7 mile hike paralleling Big Chico Creek with several short 100' up and down climbs. Bring boots, water and lunch. Car shuttle required. Meet at 9AM at Five Mile parking area. Rain cancels. Leader: Alan, 530-588-8031 or ajmendoza666@gmail.com

Tuscan Water District *(continued from p. 2)*

Deputy Director of Groundwater Management for the State of California. Groundwater For Butte has come to assume that, having dropped the property-tax assessment from its founding election (this would require a 2/3 majority to pass), the Tuscan Water District will seek and get State DWR funding in its initial phase. TWD's key selling point to growers wary of government regulations and taxes was that if they didn't support this scheme, the state would gain control. But ironically enough, that is exactly where things are headed.

TWD is the product of a years-long, behind-the-scenes collaboration by a close-knit group of officials and growers who did not seek broad public approval for their plans. Largely ignoring scientific and environmental stakeholders, they have instead moved around the goalposts as needed to preserve business as usual in a water-thirsty nut-orchard industry that expanded 57% in Butte County between 1999 and 2019. The public, and particularly families and smaller growers in the TWD area, have been left without meaningful representation even as threats to their water access grow.

This landowner-weighted election can only turn back the TWD if the vast majority of smaller landowners fill out their ballots and vote NO. What will be lost by rejecting the water district? Nothing. Butte County's water problems are indeed best solved locally - by its competent, professional Water Conservation & Resource Department, with earnest and transparent leadership from the Board of Supervisors on behalf of the broad public interest.

Blue Oak Group Remembers Joanne Gerson and Larry Crisman

By Betty Volker

Joanne Gerson



Joanne Gerson was a long time board member and activities leader for both Blue Oak group and, back in the late 80s and early 90's, the Sierra Club Singles portion of the Blue Oak group. Joanne wore many hats for the SC. She served as treasurer for the Board for many years along with calendar sales. She also led outings.

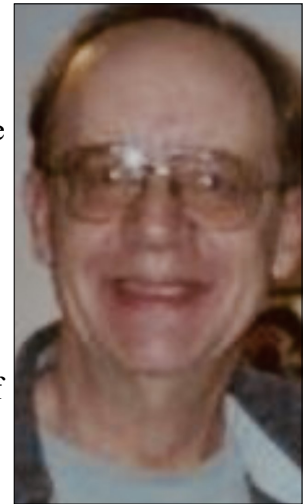
Along with her SC interest, she always had a beautiful yard and garden. She worked in her garden even in her 90s. Joanne loved Chinese Oriental design, and it showed in her home and garden. Joanne had 5 children and worked in real estate. After her children had grown and left home, Joanne traveled around the world on her own.

We miss this 5 foot , 100 pound tenacious woman.

Larry Crisman

My memory of Larry started in the 80s. He taught many of us older Blue Oak members how to X-country ski. He led ski trips to Lassen Park and Butte Meadows. He was instrumental in building and maintaining the ski trails in the Colby Meadows area. He would bribe work crews with free ski lessons. Larry often communicated with the Forest Service when the wild areas were being abused.

Besides being an avid X county skier, Larry was involved with CARD Volleyball leagues, mountain biking, Chico State Men's choir, a baker of bread and a gifted musician. He was a many talented man.



Blue Oak 2024 ExCom Elections

By Suzette Welch

It is again time for Blue Oak Group Members to vote for people to represent them on the Blue Oak Group Executive Committee (ExCom). This year we have four empty seats and three candidates: Grace Marvin, John Hollister, and Marissa Maxey. You can read the candidates statements on the ballot form included with this newsletter. For those members who do not receive a mailed newsletter but instead get an email notification that the Newsletter is available online, that email will include the link for your downloadable ballot.

Please take a few minutes to participate in this important process. Ballots should be filled out, folded, taped, stamped and mailed by December 31, 2023.

Holiday Potluck Dec. 15, 2023

By Suzette Welch



FRIDAY DECEMBER 15, 2023, will be the date for our annual Holiday Potluck. Once again it is to be held at Valley Oaks Village 1950 Wild Oak Lane, Chico, Ca. Party starts at 5:30 pm. Limited parking so please carpool. Bring your own beer and wine. There will be a \$5 charge for room rental and cleanup.

Our speaker for the evening will be Alan Mendoza, Blue Oak Group’s Outings Leader. He will be showing pictures/slides on his favorite hikes in the western U S outside of California.

The annual Holiday Party is a good time to visit with old friends and meet some new people. So bring your favorite dish and plan to have a pleasant evening.

One-Mile Litter Pick-Up a Success!

By Marissa Maxey



On October 21st , local youth and young adults participated in the One-Mile Litter Pick-Up in Lower Bidwell. The event was a collaboration between the Sierra Club, the California Health Collaborative (CHC), and Butte Environmental Council (BEC).

Volunteers picked up nearly 1,500 cigarettes butts from Lower Bidwell, along with 15 bags of trash! Students representing Butte College, Chico State, Chico High School (BSU and Environmental Club), Las Plumas High School (BSU), and Inspire

High School received education from Chico State Public Health interns on the environmental impact of cigarette butts and disposable vapes on the flora and fauna of Bidwell Park before volunteering their time. Thank you to all the volunteers!



2023 Blue Oak Group Sierra Club

Executive Committee

Chair: Suzette Welch
Interim Secretary: Betty Volker
Treasurer: John Hollister
Board Member: Jane Coleman
Board Member: Marissa Maxey

Committee Chairs & Contacts

Rep. To Motherlode: Grace Marvin
Conservation Chair: Grace Marvin
Facebook Administrator: Suzette Welch
Forest activist: Patricia Puterbaugh
Membership Chair: Position Open
Newsletter Editors: Suzette Welch, Louise Casey
Newsletter Distribution: Steve Miller, Dave Nopel, and Suzette Welch

Newsletter Advertising: Position Open
Outings Chair: Alan Mendoza
Outreach Chair: Wendy McCall
Political Chair: Position Open
Program Chair: Position Open
Publicity : Position Open
Treasurer: John Hollister
Website: Louise Casey
Youth Activities: Wendy McCall

Wild & Scenic River Protection Recommended for Butte Creek

By Allen Harthorn, Friends of Butte Creek.



Threatened spring chinook salmon in Butte Creek. Photo by Allen Harthorn, Friends of Butte Creek

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is recommending that 5.7 miles of Butte Creek flowing through public lands in Butte County be added to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The recommendation is included in the agency's draft Northwest California Integrated Plan (NCIP). The public has until December 28, 2023, to comment in support of protecting Butte Creek and many other streams flowing through public lands managed by the BLM in northern and northwestern California.

Wild and Scenic River protection would prohibit federal permits and funding for any new dam or diversion on the protected segments of Butte Creek. A river corridor averaging 320 acres per mile is established along river segments flowing through federally managed public lands. These public lands are managed to protect the free-flowing qualities and outstandingly remarkable values of the recommended or designated stream. Public segments are also classified and managed as Wild, Scenic, or Recreational based on the level of existing development in the river corridor at the time of designation. In addition, the federal agency is required to develop and implement a comprehensive river management plan for the designated segment. Since the BLM has no authority over private property, the agency's recommendation does not affect existing private property, land use, or zoning.

The BLM is required to identify and recommend potential Wild and Scenic Rivers in the agency's land and resource management process, but only Congress can add a river to the National System. Once the BLM's recommendation is finalized, the suitable stream is managed administratively to protect its values until Congress acts on the recommendation.

The draft NCIP addresses the future management of more than 380,000 acres of BLM-managed public lands scattered throughout northern and northwestern California. The draft NCIP recommends wild and scenic protection for 56 suitable river segments totaling 135.3 miles, including 4.9 miles of Butte Creek and .8 miles of the West Branch Butte Creek (a tributary). Other important wild and scenic recommendations in the Sacramento River watershed include the Sacramento River near Bend and several tributaries (Paynes Creek, Turtle Creek, Battle Creek, Clear Creek, and Cottonwood Creek). Butte Creek is eligible for wild and scenic protection because it is free flowing and possesses outstandingly remarkable scenery, recreation, fish, geology, and history values. The creek is perhaps best known for supporting the largest wild population of threatened spring chinook salmon in the Sacramento River watershed. The creek also supports threatened steelhead trout. The creek's scenic quality is outstanding, providing a background for diverse and high-quality recreation opportunities, including fishing, swimming, sunning, hiking, tubing, picnicking, and whitewater boating. Butte Creek flows through a rugged boulder-strewn canyon with numerous seasonal waterfalls created by its side drainages. The canyon through which the creek flows displays geology that is exemplary of the northern

Sierra Nevada. Butte Creek canyon also contains several sites listed or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The BLM has tentatively classified all suitable Butte Creek segments as a Scenic River.

Please email the BLM today in support of the agency's Wild and Scenic River suitability recommendation for Butte Creek. Feel free to use the short template below for your email and add any relevant personal experience you may have recreating on Butte Creek. Public comments are due by Dec. 28, 2023, but early support comments will help focus the agency's attention on Butte Creek. You can go old school and mail a letter to the BLM at the address below or you can submit an electronic comment to the BLM by visiting: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2012803/570/8004019/comment>.

NCIP Project Manager
Bureau of Land Management
1695 Heindon Road
Arcata, CA 95521-4571

Sample comment letter available at www.buttecreek.org

If you would like to review the entire NCIP, DEIS, and Appendices, visit:
<https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2012803/570>.

For more information, contact Steve Evans, CalWild Rivers Director, email: sevans@calwild.org; phone: (916) 708-3155; or Allen Harthorn, Friends of Butte Creek, email: allen@buttecreek.org; phone: (530) 228-5342.

Upbeat Conservation Report

*By Grace M. Marvin, Blue Oak Group Conservation Chair;
Blue Oak Group Representative to the Mother Lode Chapter's Conservation and Executive Committees*

Sierra Club California's Conservation Committee's five-hour meeting was held on October 28, 2023. A few of the key points.:

1-At the beginning of this year the Governor's budget was dismal as far as natural resources go, but he later recouped \$3 billion which helped (1) the **30 by 30 program** (preserving and protecting 30 % of our land and waters by 2030) and (2) **clean transportation**. Gov. Newsom supports 1-electrifying public transportation and car travel where possible, and 2-forcing oil companies to set aside their money before drilling in order that the companies can clean up after any spills.

Newsom also has money to fight other climate risks. Our members' calls to Sacramento were very important in getting those bills passed, according to Sierra Club California's Director, Brandon Dawson. S.C. California is also thankful that a very bad infrastructure bill that would have meant expanding highways and dams was stopped *in its tracks*.

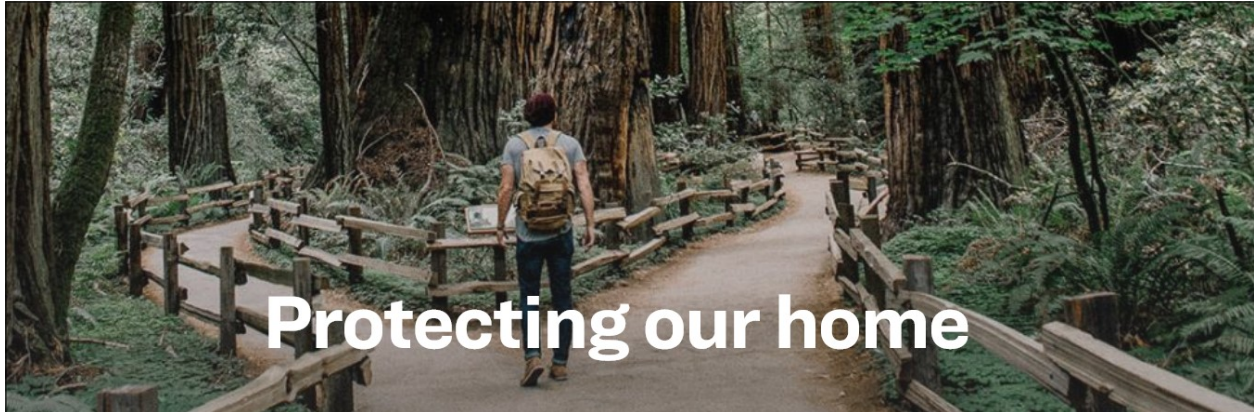
2-Social issues: Our club supports low-income housing, farm worker safety, and helping to meet environmental justice goals. We can celebrate the fact that relevant legislation passed this year.

3-California has 12 Sierra Club Chapters, while all other states have one chapter per state. This makes our statewide decision-making far more complex than in other states and suggests to me that we should keep our eyes open -- as we hear new club regulations being developed by the national Sierra Club.

4-California comes under the Paris Agreement, *i.e.*, the International Agreement on Climate Change. Since agriculture is a huge emitter of CO2 in our state, we need all levels of government (national, state, county, city) to enact legislation to better mitigate our excessive pollution. Moreover, California has seen

(continued on page 8)

Upbeat Conservation Report *(continued from page 7)*



Protecting our home

Photo Courtesy of the Sierra Club

a 90% loss of tidal wetlands, which exacerbates climate change. How? Wetlands store huge amounts of carbon dioxide meaning that wetland destruction releases CO₂.

Both the Sierra Club and President Biden are very interested in reducing our state's and nation's carbon dioxide. California's Natural Resources Agency will deliver the first set of targeted actions regarding natural climate solutions by January 1, 2024.

5-Daniel Roth of the NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council) said that agriculture can be looked at as a natural climate solution (!) which is reassuring since California is a huge producer of food and CO₂. Agriculture has created about 10% of US GHG emissions, largely due to farm machines. But we can **change agricultural practices** to better address issues regarding both pollution and social equity. For example, a major way to increase carbon mitigation and agriculture involves **cover cropping**. ("A cover crop is defined as a close-growing crop that provides soil protection, seeding protection, and soil improvement between periods of normal crop production," *Soil Science Society of America*.) We also need to consider what we can do with the carbon that the state produces and the benefits of having carbon stored in the soil.

Soil biodiversity also has many advantages, including regulating greenhouse gas emissions, mitigating pesticide cycles, and positively affecting water regulation. In summary, cover cropping and soil biodiversity are major avenues to fight destructive climate change. (Recommendation: Use your search engine to find out more about soil diversity, if needed.)

6-There is much carbon storage in the desert, potentially keeping carbon, safely, in storage for thousands of years. (Note that *Engineered Carbon Sequestration* has pollution problems as compared to natural carbon storage, *i.e.* Capture and Storage *through engineering*, is "not effective, safe, economical, or necessary.")

7-There were many other issues I covered that I do not have room to discuss here, including Zero Waste; environmentally harmful pesticides, fertilizers, and cosmetics; the necessity of protecting wildlife, deserts, and forests; and decarbonization of buildings. The controversial issue of Biomass was mentioned in a negative light: According to the Center for Biological Diversity Biomass power plants are a significant source of air pollutants, harming the vulnerable communities where biomass facilities are located and worsening environmental injustice in California.

Let us celebrate and further good news that comes our way. Our planet sorely needs us to do so!

Stop Valley's Edge: Update

By Susan Tchudi, Smart Growth Advocates

Stop Valley's Edge has had a busy autumn, working to keep attention on the Referendum campaign.

On Tuesday, September 19, we created a press conference that included a short parade from City Plaza with large puppets and signs and "A Living Cartoon" in front of City Council Chambers, prior to a City Council meeting. Our large puppet, Mr. Pavitover tried to defeat nature, bringing fire and traffic in his wake. However, Mother Earth (another large puppet) argued for saving Butte County Meadowfoam, bats and birds. The press conference was covered by Chico Sol, Chico Enterprise Record, and Action News.

In late summer, we began working with Metric Cosmetics to create two videos: a three-minute and a 30-second video highlighting the major talking points against Valley's Edge. The longer one will be shared on social media; Stop Valley's Edge is raising money to air the short version on television.

The first weekend in November Stop Valley's Edge sponsored a concert at the Women's Club. Under the leadership of Pamela Posey and Erin Ward, "Don't Fall for the Sprawl" featured musicians Audrey Debauchery, Black Fong, and Dylan's Dharma.

Stop Valley's Edge continues to table every Saturday at Farmers Market from 9:00 to 12:00.

Our biggest challenge is to raise funds. We have three major expenses for the Stop Valley's Edge Campaign.

1. Printing costs for tabling materials for tabling at Farmers Market and for our door-to-door campaign, including "palm card" to distribute to voters.
2. Television advertising will be expensive. Will need lots of financial contributions to make it possible to air our television spot.
3. We are planning two billboards for the months of January and February. Again, this sort of advertising costs hundreds of dollars.

How You Can Help:

1. You can provide financial support. Make your check out to Stop Valley's Edge and mail to:
Stop Valley's Edge
P.O. Box 2234
Chico, 95927

OR scan the QR code to donate online:



2. You can volunteer to educate people about Valley's Edge. Contact friends and neighbors. Please text or email Susan Tchudi (530-781-4122 or susantchudi@gmail.com) to receive materials.
3. Volunteer to table at Farmers Market or other events or join a phone bank when it's time to get out the vote. Please contact Susan Shrader at jazzimpressionschico@yahoo.com.

Donate! We really need the money in order to capture a much wider audience. We will only succeed in stopping this project with the support of the whole community.

(concluded on page 11)

Lassen Forest Preservation Group

By Trish Puterbaugh

Lassen Forest Preservation Group - Forestry Committee of the Blue Oak Group Sierra Club



Control burn in Cohasset

Writing this toward the end of October we are extremely happy that our North State has not had any large wildfires. There were some in the North West portion of the state, but many of those were light to moderate burns and may be termed, "good fire". We had some summer rains that helped keep humidity higher and fuels less dry. How sweet to have our creeks and lakes full!

Not much has changed since my last update for the Lassen and Plumas National Forests. However, there is always opportunity to comment on some of the ongoing projects.

The main focus of work on the Lassen is the Dixie Fire Community Protection Project. This is a 48,390 acre project focusing on "community protection zones" (a new term) around the communities of Old Station, Silver Lake, Warner Valley, Chester, Prattville, Baccala, Humbug Valley & Coon Hollow. <http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=63425>. Many feel the Lassen USFS has not worked with the public to design this project. Most agree that dead and dying trees need to be taken down and removed along public roads, near homes and infrastructure and public areas. However, the degree of salvage logging is enormous. This, coupled with the private land that has

already been clear cut after Dixie and the hazard trees that have already been removed on thousands of acres is staggering.

The EA is currently being written for the Upper Butte Creek Project in our "back yard" near Jonesville, Humbug Summit and the Butte Creek headwaters. The biologists, botanists and others are writing reports and doing surveys. That EA will come out in January and it is important the public weighs in on this project. Butte Creek is one of the only creeks in our state with a decent salmon run - and that may be generous. Biologists collected small salmon from Deer and Mill Creeks this month to take them to UC Davis. They are very concerned this spring run will go extinct. We do not want this to happen in Butte Creek. Logging is only one of the threats that damage salmon habitat. However, any disturbance to this fragile population is not acceptable. We are concerned the plan for heavy logging to protect communities in Jonesville and Butte Meadows is over zealous. Please look at this plan and comment when the EA comes out or before. <http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=62761>

The West Lassen Headwaters Project is being planned now with a collaboration between the Butte County RCD and Lassen personnel. The Sierra Institute also has a hand in this large project. They are really trying to involve the community in the project design.

The Colby Mountain Recreation Project is also in process. The plan is to construct 36 miles of new single track and other improvements out of the Jonesville Snowmobile Park and update parking and restrooms at Humboldt Summit.

At this time both the Lassen and Plumas National Forests are in Prescribed burn season. There is a very big push to burn wildlands to reduce fuels. Most National Forest burns are in previously logged areas. We know we cannot thin our way out of the dilemma we are in after over a century of fire suppression, logging and grazing our public lands. Prescribed fire is the most efficient, least expensive,

fastest and most ecologically beneficial work to "restore" our forests. There is usually only small windows of opportunity to put good fire on the ground. The forest can't be too dry or too wet. The good thing is more and more folks are learning this lost art and we will all benefit.

The Feather River Ranger District (based in Oroville) is in recovery mode from many fires in the last years. The Plumas will also be doing lots of "community protection projects" (new term) around communities in the coming years. They have Central, West and Eastside projects. They plan to put in Permanent Fire Control Lines - another new concept. And, use PODs - or Potential Operational Delineations, which are "big boxes on the landscape where fire can be contained". We are doubtful of these new terms and ideas. Lake Almanor, the town of Chester and Hwy 89 did not stop the Dixie Fire from spreading like "wildfire" in one night. We are pleased the Sierra Forest Legacy is commenting on these project for us. It is extremely difficult to argue with those who think the more trees we cut down, the safer we will be from fire.....makes sense doesn't it!??

Butte County Fire Safe Council is very active applying for grants and doing work to reduce small fuels near our Butte County communities. CALFIRE is doing large prescribed fire projects also. The Butte Co Prescribed Fire Association is planning another TREX training soon and will be putting more good fire on the ground in the coming month. (Photo is a controlled burn at our association building in Cohasset) PGE is working constantly in Cohasset where I live and other foothill communities cutting dead trees near power lines. We are losing what looks like about half of our conifers up here on our ridge. It is very hard to see large old trees dying - usually due to beetles. I keep it simple in my mind - there are just too many trees. Fire suppression and poor logging practices have created a huge overload of trees. We love them - but they can't compete, especially with the horrible 3 year drought and the ones before that. Like I said, I keep it simple because there are a myriad of reasons. Mother Nature is taking care of our forest in her way, and I have faith she will prevail! I also believe we humans are part of this planet, and we can do the right thing sometimes :)

Stop Valley's Edge *(continued from page 9)*

Valley's Edge would be one the largest development projects in the history of Chico – virtually the same size as Gridley by acreage and population in the Chico eastern foothills.

WHY YOU SHOULD VOTE NO:

TRAFFIC: It would add thousands of vehicle trips each day to overburdened and under maintained roads and would increase traffic jams.

HOUSING: We need affordable housing, not housing for those of above average income proposed by Valley's Edge. Land exists within Chico's urban footprint to create the greatly needed housing.

MAINTENANCE OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Chico roads desperately need repair. Sprawl puts increased stress on existing public services. Moreover, taxes and fees will not cover needed additional services, like fire and police.

FIRE DANGER: The property burned three times in the past 19 years, and backfires were set on it to protect Chico during the Camp Fire. We need the buffer.

DEPLETION OF GROUNDWATER: This mega development means increased usage on our groundwater basin that has been determined to be in overdraft.

CLIMATE CHANGE: The addition of tens of thousands of trips PER DAY would add pollution to our air and greatly increase GHG emissions making it impossible to meet climate and sustainability goals.

LOSS OF OPEN SPACE, TREES, AND SPECIES: This land contains precious vernal pools, endangered species, unique mima mounds, and slow-growing blue oaks- 1000 planned to be cut down.

CHICO'S GENERAL PLAN: The General Plan specifies growth in a "compact urban form" with mixed -use housing, walkable wide sidewalks, and multi-modal transit.

Protect the things we love about Chico -VOTE NO

March 5, 2024

Sprawl never pays for itself.

Newsletter Sponsors

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