



## Butte, Glenn, Lassen, Plumas & Tehama Counties

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## Yahi Fall 2017 Outings and Events

*Coordinated by Alan Mendoza*

[www.sierraclub.org/mother-lode/yahi/outings](http://www.sierraclub.org/mother-lode/yahi/outings)

## Recycling News

*By Sharon Frisch*

Since 1990 California has had to develop 21 new landfills. It is disheartening to think of all the natural habitat that has been converted to dumps. In addition, there are "major potential environmental impacts related to landfill leachate, including groundwater and surface water pollution"<sup>1</sup> – this at a time when scientists are predicting increasingly severe drought in California.

According to CalRecycle's extensive website, unless we reduce the waste stream entering our landfills we will have completely used up our current landfill capacity within 30 years. If we can reduce the waste stream to less than 2.7 pounds per day per person, the current landfill capacity will last until the 2080s. Recyclables and organics that could easily be diverted account for 44% of what is disposed in California's landfills.

### Organics

Organic materials (food waste, landscape and pruning waste, nonhazardous wood waste, and food-soiled paper waste) make up about a third of California's total disposal.<sup>2</sup> Greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the decomposition of organic wastes in landfills have been identified as a significant source of emissions contributing to global climate change.<sup>3</sup>

California's AB 1826, signed into law in 2014, set up a time table for requiring businesses to begin recycling/composting organic waste, but unfortunately the requirements have proven difficult to implement. The idea sounded good – compost organic waste and sell the composted material as soil amendments. However, problems arose in that the organic waste material used as feed stock could be contaminated with numerous things, such as herbicides or pesticides. Leaves picked up from city curbs and streets can contain automotive wastes. Animal droppings can also find their way into municipal compost, meaning that municipal compost must be allowed to gain high temperatures and/or be composted for a lengthy time to prevent the presence of pathogens.<sup>4</sup>

Residential composting remains an extremely important way to reduce the waste stream.

### Plastic bags

Plastic bags should not be put in recycle bins as they clog the machinery used in separation of materials.

Clean dry polyethylene plastic bags, labeled #2 or #4, should be recycled by taking them to collection bins for

plastic bags. These are found mostly at grocery stores. Clean dry Ziploc bags should also be recycled in the same plastic bag bins with other plastic bags. #4 plastic is used to make bread bags and shrink wraps and dry cleaner garment bags. When recycled, the bags are melted down and used to make plastic boards.

1. **Present and Long-Term Composition of MSW Landfill Leachate: A Review**, Peter Kjeldsen, Morton A. Barlaz, Alix P. Rooker, Anders Baun, Anna Ledin, Thomas H. Christensen. Published online: 03 Jun 2010
2. CalRecycle
3. <https://www.planetnatural.com/commercial-compost>
4. **What's In Commercial Compost, and why you should make your own**, E. Vinje

## Yahi Group News

By Suzette Welch, Yahi ExCom Chair

This summer most of the Board members and Chairs were traveling and relaxing. Alan Mendoza and Wendy Le Master were traveling on foot and offered hiking and camping activities for outdoor enthusiasts this summer.

We as usual had no ExCom meeting in July. We did meet in August to get started with the fall schedule of programs and activities.

### Volunteers Needed

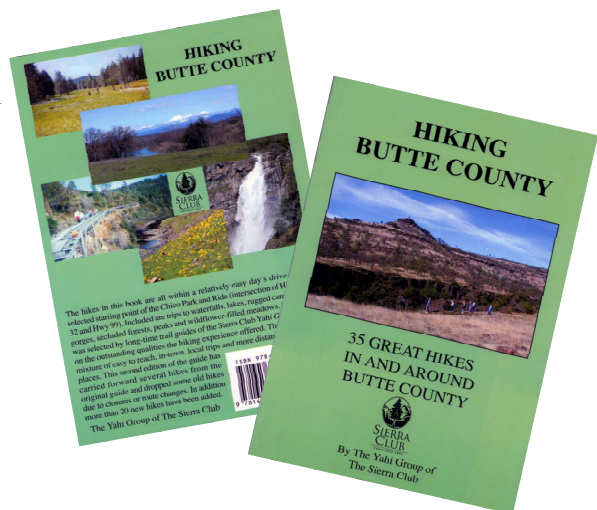
Yahi Group is still looking for a volunteer who would like to be in charge of planning and organizing a series of educational or recreational program meetings. A volunteer is also needed to take on duties of keeping membership current and if needed updated. We have been losing members often due to people not remembering to update their membership.

Volunteers will once again be needed to get the Yahi Newsletter ready for mailing at the Terraces Senior Living 2750 Sierra Sunrise Terrace in Chico. We will meet at 3pm on November 16, 2017. It usually takes about an hour to get the Newsletters mailing ready. Come to the mailing and spend a pleasant afternoon getting to know new members and chatting with old friends. Come to the mailing and spend a pleasant afternoon getting to know new members and chatting with old friends. For more information contact Suzette Welch [booksontape@rocketmail.com](mailto:booksontape@rocketmail.com) or 342-9214.

## Hiking Butte County

*Hiking Butte County* is a wonderful field guide to hikes in and around Butte County. It was assembled by the outings leaders in the Yahi Group under the direction of Alan Mendoza. In it you will find descriptions directions, distances and difficulty information for 35 hikes. This is the only book of its type for this area.

You can purchase it for \$11.95 at **Mountain Sports, The Bookstore** in Chico (118 Main Street) and the **Lake Oroville Visitor Center** (917 Kelly Ridge Road). Or you can order one directly from Alan for \$10 plus shipping. Contact Alan Mendoza, 891-8789 or [ajmendoza777@comcast.net](mailto:ajmendoza777@comcast.net).



# Lassen Forest Preservation Group

By Patricia Puterbaugh



*One of the old-growth sugar pines on Oregon Hill Rd. removed because it was a threat to public safety."*

Spring and summer are always a busy time in the forests. The National Forest staff is out in the field scoping, planning and finishing projects. These are often related to logging, but there are also many research, monitoring, watershed and restoration projects.

The National Forests (USFS) have been directed by the Trump administration to increase logging significantly while at the same time there is a hiring freeze and the proposed budget for the USDA/USFS will cut 21%. The USFS is already struggling with anemic staffing. One Lassen National Forest (LNF) ranger district has only 27% of its normal personnel. Unfortunately, this often sets the agency up for failure – a Republican/Trump tactic.

There have been several new laws introduced in the house to weaken the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) – one each by LaMalfa & McClintock. In the last decades there has been a gradual chipping away of NEPA and the Trump Administration could do more

harm. Luckily, great organizations including the Sierra Club, Earth Justice, Center for Biological Diversity, Sierra Forest Legacy, Natural Resources Defense Council and others will be fighting to keep our environmental laws strong.

One good law we are hoping may pass is to carve the fire-fighting budget out of the USFS operating budget. Now, all USFS fire-fighting costs are paid by the agency. This leaves a minimal budget for beneficial forest thinning, prescribed fire, research, restoration and hiring the scientists needed to assure science-based management of our National Forests.

If you want to see what specific projects are proposed for the Lassen or Plumas National Forests you can go to their websites and click on “projects” or “schedule of proposed actions”. These are updated at least quarterly.

Lassen will be starting the plan for the High Lakes Motorized Trail Reroutes and Improvements this summer. It is supposed to be implemented next year. We are hopeful this will be a beneficial project to the High Lakes Motorized trail area that will protect the lakes from OHV overuse. There are new projects being proposed in Lassen for Jones Meadow, Diamond Mountain and the “Little Bear” project out of Butte Meadows. The LNF continues to do work on the Storrie Fire restoration area.

The Plumas National Forest (PNF) is unfortunately busy cutting many huge hazard trees that are not truly hazards. One was just completed along Oregon Hill Road where over 2,000 trees, many old giants, were cut in the name of “public safety”. Others and myself protested this strongly but were unsuccessful. It is heartbreaking. PNF has projects surrounding Challenge, Butterfly Valley, Brush Creek, Forbestown and elsewhere. If anyone is interested in following any of these projects check the PNF/projects website and email or call the project contact. I generally do not follow projects on the PNF, but am closely following Challenge.

I often go up to the forest during the summer to “scope” projects. I spent two days last week with industry representatives and USFS staff looking at Snow Mountain and the proposed Badger project. Snow Mountain is practically inaccessible (it took us 4 hours to find the USFS land). It is a USFS parcel with some beautiful old growth, completely surrounded by private land West of Burney. Badger is a project that borders Lassen National Park (LNP). Lassen National Park is also doing some planning for more thinning around the Northern Entrance to the park at “crossroads” and Manzanita Lake. The Park is allowed to do much more aggressive prescribed fire than the USFS, but they often have to thin first. Their goal is to allow natural fire on the landscape. We are pushing prescribed fire anywhere and everywhere it is safe. Studies show that thinning alone will not help the forests recover from a century of aggressive logging, grazing and fire suppression.

Lassen Forest Preservation Group is affiliated with the Sierra Forest Legacy, an organization set up by dozens of California environmental organizations to monitor our National Forests. Their mission “is to engage citizens, communities, and coalition members in the healthy management of Sierra Nevada forest ecosystems to protect and restore the region’s unparalleled beauty and natural values. We apply the best practices of science, advocacy, and grassroots organizing to safeguard forest lands throughout the Sierra Nevada.”

I am also a member of the Butte County Forest Advisory Committee, and the Burney-Hat Creek Community Forest and Watershed Group. These are both groups set up for “collaboration” between the logging industry, environmental groups, interested citizens, OHV enthusiasts, RACs, State Parks, CalFire, BLM, USFS and many other “stakeholders” interested and concerned about public lands.

My contact is  
[pmpueterbaugh@yahoo.com](mailto:pmpueterbaugh@yahoo.com)



*An area in the Challenge community planned for thinning.*

## Who Represents the NorthState to Stop the Twin Tunnels?

By Barbara Vlamis, AquAlliance

To fight the construction of the Twin Tunnels, AquAlliance has represented the public and the environment of the NorthState for the environmental review in 2014 and 2015 and before the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) over many months in 2016/2017.

Our region is fortunate to have many courageous and effective environmental groups. Each of the groups has a niche to fill. AquAlliance has its own role and responsibilities in regard to our water resources. Some background on the tunnel saga is necessary to understand future needs and actions.

### NEPA/CEQA Process

AquAlliance wrote detailed individual comments on specific issues affecting the NorthState and recruited experts to expose weaknesses about project modeling and economics. These comments are currently being used as part of the CEQA complaint we'll file August 21<sup>st</sup>. We also signed many coalition comment letters as did the Sierra Club of California.

### SWRCB Process

AquAlliance was the only entity from the mid/northern Sacramento Valley representing the public during the first phase of SWRCB hearings that covered the potential injury to any legal user of water: residents, farmers, businesses, and recreational users. We will also take part in the second phase later this year that will address how the Twin Tunnels may unreasonably affect fish and wildlife.

AquAlliance's extensive participation before the SWRCB started in January 2016 and will flow into 2018. The water districts from the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys will all continue to advocate for their special interests at the hearings. Along with our colleagues,<sup>1</sup> we will provide facts about the Tunnels' threats to our region and people through expert testimony, cross examination, and calling witnesses. This creates the foundation to challenge the Twin Tunnels in court - again.

For more background, below are the introductory paragraphs from a Sacramento Bee article explaining this part of the Twin Tunnels' process. One MAJOR issue is missing from the article. In the 50,000+ pages the agencies threw at the public during the NEPA/CEQA process, AquAlliance discovered that the water agencies seeking to build the Twin Tunnels hid the source of the water for the Tunnels.

We also discovered that the agencies' documents *do* acknowledge that the Tunnels will add "... additional capacity to move transfer water from areas upstream of the Delta to export service areas and provides a longer transfer window,<sup>2</sup> " and that "Groundwater substitution transfers could approach as much as 400,000 acre-feet in any given year...<sup>3</sup> "

AquAlliance exists to Defend Northern California Waters. To support our work on behalf of the NorthState: <http://www.aqualliance.net/support-us/donate/>

1. California Sportfishing Protection Alliance and the California Water Impact Network.

2. SDEIS/RDEIR Appendix A, pp. 5-15, 5-16.

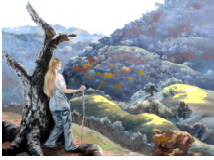
3. SDEIS/RDEIR p. 5C-23.

### 7/24/16 Sacramento Bee excerpt:

*Still swirling in controversy, Gov. Jerry Brown's proposed \$15.5 billion re-engineering of the troubled Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is heading into a critical phase over the next year that could well decide if the project comes to fruition.*

*Crunch time starts Tuesday. The State Water Resources Control Board begins months of grueling public hearings on the details of Brown's plan to burrow a pair of massive tunnels beneath the heart of the Delta, a grand public works project designed to shore up the reliability of water deliveries to millions of Southern Californians and San Joaquin Valley farmers...*

<http://www.sacbee.com/news/state/california/water-and-drought/delta/article91502652.html>



## River Watcher:

# On the Importance of Museums and Nature Centers

By Rex Burress

In case anyone has forgotten, while in the pursuit of domestic business, or traumatized by anxieties caused by flood and fire around Oroville, what the importance of museums and nature centers is all about. Maybe we need some fresh reminders.

The Feather River Nature Center [FRNC] that rose from the ruins of the Old Bathhouse down by the riverside, has been a community effort to build a place with a mission of bringing nature and people together. Nature centers have been constructed all over America with intent of enhancing and preserving places for nature activities so that people, and kids especially, can grow to love the ever-interesting and beautiful world around us. In the mode of John Muir: “I care to live to entice others to look at nature's loveliness with understanding,” and understanding has also been the thrust of Oroville's four other museums, the Pioneer Museum, the Chinese Museum, the Lott House, and the Antique Tool Museum. Cultural history and natural history are akin to the understanding of life. With understanding comes respect for our environments.

Our Oroville FRNC idea was born in the fall of 1996 at a community cleanup around the Bathhouse site. The conceptual vision slowly took form in the following year under the guidance of Peter Maki and aided by a host of vital volunteers eager to help advance a public nature center and wild plant garden.

The original 'Bathhouse' recreational building was built by the WPA in 1935, and sat on five acres the City of Oroville owned--an 'auto-park'/first park, as described in conjunction with the 1856 ferry and swimming beach. “Old Ferry Road.” Much of the complex was lost in the flood of 1937, and only the sturdy walls of the ruined Bathhouse were left standing.

After 1996, a roof, windows, and doors were installed in following months—all by volunteers. The FRNC was crafted, and dedicated in 1998. Improvements have been ongoing ever since, continued by a long list of inspired individuals and “Friends of the Nature Center” docents, all donating their services, and aided by renewed interest and help from the City of Oroville and its museum program. The FRNC is concerned with providing nature interpretive assistance to the public, and a nature museum has been the central focus in helping to inform people about the wonders of nature. Nature is the very foundation of life on Earth.

Among a host of important projects supporting the nature center has been the stone wall that the volunteer staff built in front of the center that protected the grounds during the 2017 flood. Again, the stone building survived, but the road edges were undermined, closing down the center into the summer.

What is the importance of nature interpretation? Why have a nature center and a nature museum? Take a walk on the wildside, along the river, or in any park or wildland, and not only will you be refreshed by the healthy aspects of woods and water, but you will be connected to a wild subject of intense interest.

I received my grounding in nature centers at Oakland's Nature Center, and witnessed the advancement of our kid volunteers--the formation of future wildlife advocates. In particular was Jim Covell, who went on to be a ranger and finally a director at Monterey Aquarium. Jim Carlton, had a career in marine biology, Frank Sato was a moth expert, became a teacher of entomology. Most gratifying was Elizabeth Sunday. As a 12-year-old, she followed me around when I was photographing animals, and 25 years later, returned to tell me about her career in photography! “You started it,” she said! She had been to Africa photographing natives in villages, using a special technique with mirrors that she developed. Thus go the stories of the influence that Centers and Museums make in spreading inspiration to aspiring students of all ages.

Having a place to concentrate the teaching efforts of docents and naturalist guides helps to enhance the nature/historical educational effort as well as providing a place to exhibit nature curios and items of historical and artistic fascination. Such public attractions gives a community a sense of pride and joy. Man does not live by bread alone...

A museum, as does a park, provides a place of mental relief in the turmoil of political times and creates a certain stability of mind in knowing artifacts from the past are being protected, researched, and exhibited for the enlightenment of the public and the children of the future. Just knowing that museums and nature centers and parks are there enriches the aesthetical circle of thoughts involved in our heritage.

# Yahi Group Information

## Executive Committee

Chair: Suzette Welch, 530-342-9214, [booksontape@rocketmail.com](mailto:booksontape@rocketmail.com)  
Secretary: Annette Carey 530-872-3557 [annettecare@sbcglobal.net](mailto:annettecare@sbcglobal.net)  
Board Member: Jane Coleman 530 343-4768 [volecole@juno.com](mailto:volecole@juno.com)  
Board Member: Sharon Frisch, 530 781-3856, [safritsch@comcast.net](mailto:safritsch@comcast.net)  
Board Member: Wendy Le Master 530-513-9570 [lemasterwendy@live.com](mailto:lemasterwendy@live.com)

## Committee Chairs and Other Contacts

Rep. To Motherlode: Grace Marvin 530-893-1994 [g-marvin@comcast.net](mailto:g-marvin@comcast.net)  
Conservation Chair: Grace Marvin 530-893-1994 [g-marvin@comcast.net](mailto:g-marvin@comcast.net)  
Lassen Forest Preservation Group: Patricia Puterbaugh 530 342-1641  
[pmputerbaugh@yahoo.com](mailto:pmputerbaugh@yahoo.com)  
Membership: Position open  
Newsletter: Louise Casey 530-872-9159 [YAHInews@comcast.net](mailto:YAHInews@comcast.net)  
Newsletter mailing: Gerda Lydon 530-343-9277 [plydon2948@aol.com](mailto:plydon2948@aol.com) and Suzette Welch  
530-342-9214 [booksontape@rocketmail.com](mailto:booksontape@rocketmail.com)  
Newsletter Distribution: Steve Miller 530-345-0806 and Dave Nopel 530-342-4118  
Newsletter Advertising: Position Open  
Outings Chair: Alan Mendoza 530-891-8789 [ajmendoza777@comcast.net](mailto:ajmendoza777@comcast.net)  
Outreach Chair: Wendy Le Master 530-513-9570 [lemasterwendy@live.com](mailto:lemasterwendy@live.com)  
Political Chair: Mary Kay Benson 530-332-9272 [mkbe.sparkles3@gmail.com](mailto:mkbe.sparkles3@gmail.com)  
Program Chair: Position Open  
Publicity: Skip Augur 530-519-4724  
Treasurer: Paul Krause 530-894-2931 or [paul@paulkrause.com](mailto:paul@paulkrause.com)  
Yahi Website : Louise Casey 530-872-9159 or [YAHInews@comcast.net](mailto:YAHInews@comcast.net)  
Youth Activities: Ernesto Rodriguez, 530 710-7400, [azreal24@gmail.com](mailto:azreal24@gmail.com)

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For submissions, comments, or inquiries, contact Louise Casey, 872-9159, [YAHInews@comcast.net](mailto:YAHInews@comcast.net). Please include name, phone number, and address with each submittal. Short, single-topic articles are preferred. Deadlines for proposed articles and letters to the editor: February 1, May 1, August 1, and November 1.

*Yahi 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 Yahi Group.

# The Last Word

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John D. Burge, CPA  
Certified Public Accountant

17 Williamsburg Lane  
Chico, CA 95926

530 342-3680  
Fax 530 342-3721  
[johnburgecpa@sbcglobal.net](mailto:johnburgecpa@sbcglobal.net)

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