



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

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**Yahi Fall 2018 Outings and Events**  
*Coordinated by Alan Mendoza*

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

**Audrey Denney vs. Doug LaMalfa? Vote Denney. And Make History**  
*By Ed Schilling, Yahi Political Chair*



Republican 1st District Congressman Doug LaMalfa and his Democratic challenger Audrey Denney could not be more different. LaMalfa’s voting record on the environment is beyond reprehensible. In contrast, Audrey Denney’s ideas and future votes on environmental issues are exactly what we desperately need.

LaMalfa is a climate change denier. And when politicians like LaMalfa deny the decades long research and overwhelming scientific consensus on climate change, we all suffer. As I write this, fire has burned into western subdivisions in Redding. Tens of thousands have been evacuated. Back in February, 2017, “pineapple express” storms caused the evacuation of two hundred thousand Oroville residents near Oroville Dam. Yet Congressman LaMalfa still turns a deaf ear to climate change mitigation efforts. His voting record is atrocious. In 2017, the League of Conservation Voters gave Mr. LaMalfa a big fat zero. That’s because LaMalfa has voted repeatedly against the EPA's authority to enforce safeguards under

the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, and Safe Drinking Water Act. He’s voted to subsidize fossil fuels and cut funding to renewable energy. He voted in favor of mining companies to continue to pollute mountain streams with toxic waste from mountaintop removal. He voted to mandate that scientific decisions be made only by political appointees in Washington, DC. Mr. LaMalfa also voted to delay implementation of stricter ozone standards (H.R.806) that would protect our health. Nevada, Shasta, Tehama, Butte, and Placer counties all received a failing grade from the American Lung Association for high ozone pollution. But protecting our health is not a LaMalfa priority. LaMalfa voted dozens of times to repeal the Affordable Care Act, for example. He’s

voted to let insurance companies once again charge higher prices for people with preexisting conditions. So, if your preexisting lung condition was exacerbated by dangerous ozone levels? It's not hard to see how bad environmental decisions have consequences down the line on our health, impacts on social justice, migration, and more. What's so bad about LaMalfa? Everything.

We do have a strong and viable alternative to Doug LaMalfa. While LaMalfa is busy shoveling coal for that freight train to environmental ruin, Audrey Denney offers real solutions, especially for this region. Denney promotes soil-based carbon credits and a "soil-based approach to carbon drawdown." This would increase resilience to droughts and other climate change related disasters. Having grown up



*Audrey Denney*

on a farm herself, and after teaching Agricultural Science at Chico State University for several years, she not only knows about the problems we face, but has the experience to do something about them. Her ag credentials and local background offer a great counter-punch to the "he's one of us" propaganda of local rice farmer Doug LaMalfa. Denney receives "zero" corporate PAC money, yet has consistently outraised LaMalfa. (85% of contributions to LaMalfa's 2016 campaign came from lobbyists, businesses and people outside our Congressional district) Denney is solutions oriented. She advocates for "regenerative agriculture," which goes beyond sustainability. "Research shows that proper soil management will actually reverse climate change," Denney states on her website. "Carbon farming, as it's often called, needs to be at the center of a holistic approach that includes transitioning to renewable energy, reducing waste, and cultivating stable markets for producers that pay them fairly for their risk and ingenuity," she adds. Before her successful primary run, I had the opportunity to talk with Denney about forest thinning and related cross laminated timber projects. These projects could boost the economies of forest communities. She provided a wealth of information on the subject, mentioned similar successful projects in Congressional District 4. Denney has also had experience in sustainable farming projects in Central America.

We are all now well aware of the extremes of drought, rainfall and raging wildfires here in California. We call it the "new normal." Therefore, we need a new road map. I believe that Audrey Denney has one. LaMalfa's "zero tolerance" for environmental safeguards, along with his support for the fossil fuel industry, is dangerous for the planet. Please do everything in your power, from canvassing to letter writing to phone banking to whatever creative scheme you can think of, to vote Doug LaMalfa out of office. Let's elect Audrey Denney. We all vote on November 6<sup>th</sup> 2018, in the midterms. Let's flip this district. It can be done. We can make history.

## Forest News

By Patricia Puterbaugh, Lassen Forest Preservation Group



*Caribou Wilderness*

As most Sierra Club members are aware, our environment is under attack from the Trump government and our US Forests are no exception. The US Forest Service moves slowly however, and is critically underfunded, so we will see how this plays out. The USFS has been instructed to “get out the cut”, “increase vegetation management” (log) and generally reverse current forest policy which has been more focused on restoring the health of our forests after a century of logging, grazing

and fire exclusion.

We will see many projects shrink in size to fit Categorical Exclusion (CEs) actions. This allows less time for public comment and analysis. We are hopeful, and will push the USFS to concentrate on areas around communities to decrease the threat of wildfire. The Roadless Rule is under attack, especially in Alaska and the Endangered Species Act is being reviewed for an “update”. The Endangered Species Act is critical to all our public lands and has been the legal wall against abuse of our forests and wildlife dependent on them.

The new Forest Plan for our Southern California Forests is almost final. All of the Sierra Nevada Forests are to follow, but it has been a laborious process for all involved. The Over the Snow Vehicle Plan for the Lassen and Plumas forests is also in the works and making its way thru the review process. We are so blessed to have The Sierra Forest Legacy, Winter Wildlands, Center for Biological Diversity, EarthJustice, Sierra Club, Wilderness Society, Audubon, Defenders of Wildlife, the Native Plant Society, Friends of the River and many local groups watchdogging and defending our public lands each step of the way.

The Plumas National Forest is working on the Mooreville Project, Challenge and Devils Gap. These are smaller CEs designed to be quickly implemented and cut. Sierra Forest Legacy and myself are following these projects as there are many California Spotted Owl territories included. Plumas is one of the most productive forests in the Sierras with many large 2nd growth trees and sensitive habitat.

Lassen National Forest is finishing work on the Creeks Project near Humbug & Humboldt. They will also be starting a small project above Butte Meadows and eventually a project around Jonesville.

Private land owners, particularly Sierra Pacific, continues to clearcut much of their properties. Sierra Club and other groups are working to stop this destructive practice, but so far it is an uphill fight.

Grant money is available for smaller land owners to do fire prevention work on their lands. CalFire is using the money from the California Cap & Trade Law to distribute to landowners and non-profits. More information is at the CalFire web site.

I’m reading and recommend “The Big Burn” by Timothy Egan. A fascinating history of the beginning of the conservation movement and the huge wildfire of 1910.



# Butte County Trails Survey Results

Alan Mendoza, *Yahi Outings Coordinator*

In the spring of 2018 the Butte County Trails Committee surveyed over 750 trail users on Butte County trails. The committee, which will provide input to the county for future trail designs and funding, sought public input on how people use trails, what improvements they would like to see, funding options and willingness to volunteer for trail maintenance.

Hiking, wildlife viewing and mountain biking were the primary uses of trails. The most desired improvement was for more loop trails and connectivity, followed by better maps and information and then better trailheads (parking, restrooms, and kiosks). People also suggested multiple trails starting from the same location as the best idea for future trail design. The most frequent reason for not participating in trail maintenance was lack of public notice and not being asked by anyone. Federal/state grants, followed by private donations was the most recommended funding source for new trail development, while higher occupancy and sales taxes were less popular. The median age of survey responders was 52 and users reported spending on average over \$1000 per year on trails-based recreation.

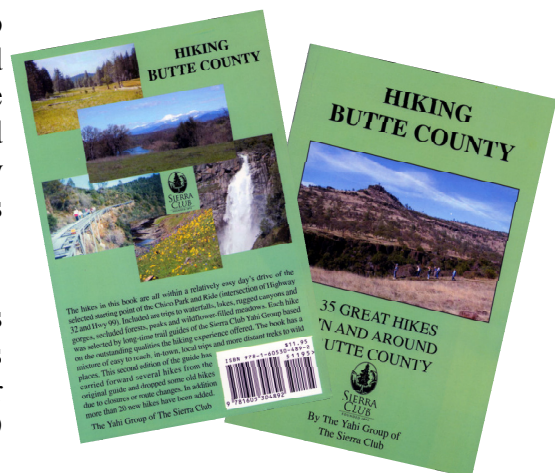
The Sierra Club has always believed the best way to get people to care about the environment is to get people out to see beautiful wild areas for themselves and these results suggest Butte County has a real opportunity to expand and improve the many wonderful outdoor trails we have. Outdoor recreation spending, according to a recent Chamber of Commerce Study, is increasing one and half times as fast as the total U.S. economy. People want to get out and enjoy natural areas as evidenced by the thousands of people in our county who have joined the Sierra Club, the Chico-Oroville Outdoor Adventurers, OLLI, the Native Plant Society and Audubon.

The Sierra Club Yahi Group also provided recommendations to the Trails Committee including getting the Lassen and Plumas National Forests to again hire full-time Trail Coordinators; encouraging Fish and Game to buy the available private property around Table Mountain to end trespassing issues; developing/improving other trails in the Feather Falls area, such as the Seven Falls, Hartman Bar and the Dome Trail; having DWR improve and restore the trails in the Oroville Wildlife Area; and petitioning the BLM to repair the two trails in the Butte Creek/BLM Forks of the Buttes area which are currently in very poor condition.

## 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 Trailside Adventures in Paradise and in Chico at Mountain Sports and Lyons Books. Or you can order one directly from Alan for \$10 plus shipping. Contact Alan Mendoza, 891-8789 or [ajmendoza@prodigy.net](mailto:ajmendoza@prodigy.net).



## A Conservation Letter About Water Issues

By Grace Marvin, Yahi Conservation Chair

**Dear Yahi members,**

Just want to let you know that there are two major water-related issues that seem especially important. One concerns Proposition 3, the (Jerry Meral) Water Bond, that the club does not support and for very good reasons. I am providing you the the club's well-explained arguments. These include the deception involved in how the money would be allocated and in how closed door decision-making would take place. For example, much of the money would be going to the billionaire investors instead of to the environment and to the disadvantaged communities in our state. Funding for unnecessary and wasteful dam projects would receive top billing. Moreover, California taxpayers will be paying for this poor investment for many years to come. To read about the proposal, go to [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org) and enter **Proposition 3** in the SEARCH box.

A second water issue, also involving hidden figures, involves the proposed off-stream reservoir for storing water called Sites. It would be located near Maxwell in Colusa County and would flood beautiful country that I have visited with the Sacramento River Preservation Trust. One of the major documents criticizing the project was written two years ago by Friends of the River and Sacramento River Preservation Trust (based in Chico, CA). The Sierra Club-California and the Club's Water committee still support the criticisms of this 2016 document, including strongly objecting to the diversions of Sacramento River (and the related, significant environmental destruction).

Ron Stork wrote fellow members of our club's Water Committee that the Water Rights analysis of Sites has not yet been done, which would likely show far less water than the project's proponents are advertising. Yet in July, the state's Water commission awarded Sites \$816 Million. Despite this state funding (our tax money), Sites still needs a supplemental Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and 4.4 \$billion from other sources, e.g., Metropolitan and Santa Clara Water Districts, and its fate rests on decisions about the state's Water Fix, i.e., "tunnels" project.

(Recall that Ron Stork famously criticized Oroville Dam in 2006 regarding issues that were not addressed by the state but helped lead to the dam flood disaster of last year.) Read the 2016 criticism at:

<http://www.friendsoftheriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Sites-fact-sheet-5-26-2016.pdf>

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## Rise for Climate, Jobs and Justice

By Ann Ponzio



Join Chico350, partners, allies and other wonderful interested folks on September 8<sup>th</sup> for Rise for Climate Jobs and Justice, a massive day of action in San Francisco, coordinated with action around the world.

**We have a bus round trip to/from Chico/San Francisco for the day.** Reserve your seat now with Ann at [annpnz@gmail.com](mailto:annpnz@gmail.com) TODAY! and RSVP for the march to <https://ca.riseforclimate.org/>

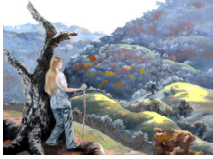
Tickets for the bus are \$10-\$40 sliding scale, with additional optional donations welcome.

This September, cities, municipalities, businesses and civil society will be gathering in San Francisco for the Global Climate Action Summit. Rise for Climate will send a clear message to governments about the will of the people and what we demand: a fast and just transition to a clean energy economy that protects workers and defends the most vulnerable. No more stalling!!

There will be thousands of rallies around the globe. But San Francisco is the anchor city for this march, and it is going to be big, really big. We will amplify our message with the beauty and power of music and art. Chico will be one of 55 communities painting a 40' mural on the streets of the Civic Center! (In preparation for the art build, we will meet and host Bay Area artist David Solnit and the Peace Poets in Chico on August 17th. For more information contact Mary Kay at [mkbe.sparkles3@gmail.com](mailto:mkbe.sparkles3@gmail.com) )

Our bus will leave Chico at 5:30 am to arrive ready to join the March. We will march from Embarcadero Center to Civic Center. There are BART stops along the way to accommodate all of us!

To get a seat on the bus, contact Ann at [annpnz@gmail.com](mailto:annpnz@gmail.com). Seats are limited and are going fast.



## River Watcher: The Awakening

By Rex Burress, *The River Watcher*

I awoke at 3:00 A.M. thinking it was four, and found it was 73 degrees after the day heat of 107 F yesterday, and it was pitch-dark outside in the absence of a moon, not 'cave-dark', but you could see only dark gobs of something in the garden under the diluted starlight.

Sitting in the swing on the porch was a decent break from the A/C, where I could watch the awakening of a new day. By 5:15 on July 21, 2018, there was a faint sky glow that increased until the olive orchard was silhouetted along with my decaying incense cedar tree, simplifying millions of leaves into one dark structure. I love that simplicity that clears up clutter and intricate detail, leaving you feeling cleaner and less burdened, something like after a fresh snow when everything becomes black and white. "Simplify, simplify, simplify," says the top photographers; says the top artists!

The new day was being revealed in utter silence. There was not a single stir, squeak, scratch, or even a whisper of leaves on the entire Olive-Leaf Hill behind my house.

Then I saw a ghostly movement next to the garden fence, more drifting than anchored to earth, but then a tail end of a deer took shape! Then another deer, going somewhere, but bypassing my garden.

The spell was broken for a moment as two bats came darting into the silent dawn, sailing soundlessly over the garden for a last check before slipping into my attic.

What was missing most was bird song. The naturalist who said the best time to hear the song of birds is between four A.M. and six, was writing about eastern America and not Oroville, CA. Around Trenton, MO, early mornings are full of bird activity, perhaps in part trying to zero in on the crescendo of singing [screeching?] insects. Eastern summer nights are alive with the sounds of crickets, katydids, cicadas, frogs and a full house of unknowns that becomes a roar in Arkansas' humid air, but it ceases at sunrise.

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The silence was eerie along the wooded CA hillside that morning. Songbirds silently clung to their perches to avoid the wandering eye or ear of an owl or early-bird accipiter, or was everything deadened by a dozen days in the 100's? In the silent morning I thought of Rachael Carson's book "Silent Spring," as she described a hypothetical time when birds had succumbed to DDT pesticide, indeed a peril if taken to extremes. Once a species is gone, like the Passenger Pigeon, it is gone forever, and a new replacement can take millions of years to evolve.

Next morning was a repeat of the sound of silence, except!, at 4:15 the motion-sensitive night light went on out back, and standing at the edge of the patio, huge ears fully alert, was a deer! It was sniffing some compost residue, sniffing the water hose, the vine lettuce, the mimosa, and on around the brown yard to the bird bath, and there it stopped and drank deeply. It paused at the gate, and then jumped over easily. The shadows of yesterday had returned for a drink. The night light didn't bother it and the nose twitched as if trying to find a scent connected with the light.

Then a second deer followed the route of the first, also sniffing everything, and took a drink of the bird water. The extended heat is telling on the wildlife, and water is precious. "Help hydrate the animals!" That they, too, shall awaken.

*"Faith is the bird that feels the light when the dawn is still dark."--Rabin Tagore*  
*"It is a good idea to be alone in a garden at dawn or dark so that all its shy presences may haunt you and possess you in a reverie of suspended thought."--James Douglas*



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## Newsletter Information

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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.

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