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Yahi  
Group



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

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## Yahi Spring 2018 Outings and Events

*Coordinated by Alan Mendoza*

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

## Everytown

*By Wendy Le Master*

With the ever-increasing rise in need for low income housing in recent decades, we have more developers and city planning committees seeking solutions to accommodate and mediate this issue. The problem however, is often times these types of housing developments are placed in locations that are less than desirable and not necessarily environmentally sound for residential development, often times placing residential and industrial development alongside one another.

Within the city of Chico is a town known as Chapman. Chapmantown is an unincorporated area of the city of Chico, which was developed by and named around 1860 after Augustus Chapman, who owned a number of businesses as well as a lumber mill within Chico. The addition to the city quickly developed and is still very much developing to this day. Many of the roads within Chapmantown have not been adapted into the city, and many homes still are not connected to the city services. There is no representation for the members of Chapmantown on the Chico City Council, and because of this the people of Chapmantown's voices are not equally represented within the city, and this marginalizes some of the most socioeconomically challenged members within the county.

Chapmantown is home to a diverse, working class community of families, many of which are all too familiar with the struggle of having the concerns they feel impact their community the most disregarded by the City of Chico and the County of Butte.

One of the current concerns that has been a pressing issue for the residents of Chapmantown, as well as many members of the Chico community, the county and the state, has been regarding the local scrap yard. Chico Scrap Metal owned by George Scott Sr. and established in 1983, operates within in Chapmantown and is located at 878 East 20<sup>th</sup> Street just across from the Sierra Nevada Brewing Company.

Chico Scrap Metal recycles a variety of materials and scraps the rest, and indeed CSM does do a great service to the community providing this resource. Some of these materials include household appliances, auto



batteries, metals – ferrous/non ferrous, and CRV items. Since 2003 CSM has not accepted or processed any heavy equipment or automotives at this location, though this was a common practice at this location since its establishment in 1983. Chico Scrap Metal original location in Chico off Humboldt Avenue previously known as Discount Auto Wreckers, was on the opposite end of Chapmantown from where it is now and operated

adjacent to Little Chico Creek. Chico Scrap Metal was ordered by the city of Chico to move the scrap yard to its current location which previously served as an auto-wrecking business since the 60's.

Located within Chapmantown on East 16<sup>th</sup> Street and just a short distance from the scrap yard is Chapman Elementary School, a school within the Chico Unified School District, where approximately 351 students attend regularly. Walking down East 16<sup>th</sup> Street, you'll notice some of the older homes as well as sections of newer development, a few empty lots, poorly maintained roads and lack of sidewalks in most areas. In addition you will find a sign located at the back of the Chico Scrap Yard on their fence, which states in red letters "Caution! Hazardous Substance Area Unauthorized People Keep Out" and most days, you can hear the crushing of metal, fused with the sounds of cars whizzing past over on East 20<sup>th</sup>, the scent of the air thick and a familiar scent of the local brewery lingers. As you continue walking down you will find the Dorothy Johnson Center, a large building that hosts a wide range of events for the community and has a play yard for the kids in the community as well.

Reflecting on that sign in red letters, one has to wonder how an 8 foot fence with no vegetation buffer could possibly keep these "Hazardous Substances" from coming over the fence and its dust particles from landing on you without your authorization, or leaching into the soil and waterways below. Thinking about the kids, who are playing so freely, attending school and living adjacent to this site, what's to prevent them from breathing in these toxic particles? And how will that affect them as their young bodies develop? An investigation was conducted by the Department of Toxic Substance Control in May of 2007, and the DTSC findings revealed multiple contaminants at the Chico Scrap Metal site. Some of these contaminants include chromium, lead, zinc, and polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB). The Scotts family was ordered to clean up Chico Scrap Metal in addition to three other sites owned by the family. The following year in 2008, it was determined the cleanup efforts were unsatisfactory, and the Butte County Districts Attorney Office filed charges against George Scott Senior. Clean up efforts in these sites could take years.

Chapmantown currently is under the jurisdiction of Butte County, though there has been an ongoing effort to annex portions of Chapmantown to the City of Chico, this isn't expected to take place till 2019. Chico City Council, back in 2006, however had ordered Chico Scrap Metal to move the scrap yard within five years, a decision that came a few years after the city of Chico had adopted the Chapman/Mulberry Neighborhood Plan. After the Scotts family had received multiple extensions to remain operating at the site on East 20<sup>th</sup> Street, residents of Chapmantown and many others including a Chico City Council member Karl Ory, began

connecting and taking this issue on as a community, and a petition was generated to develop a referendum to have Chico Scrap Metal be moved from its current location.

Only 4,700 signatures were needed, however over 9,000 signatures were collected by dedicated members of the community. Karl Ory, whose name was on the initial committee papers, was designated as an advocate of the referendum petition for Move the Junk Yard and later found himself amidst a lawsuit brought against him by the city itself. Chico Scrap Metal holds their position that the city should pay the cost for their business to relocate. However, the relocation of the site may soon be left to a vote by the people, or left to the Chico City Council to decide to shut the scrap yard down immediately rescinding its previous extensions, as a Butte County Judge ruled in favor of Move The Junk Yard and council member Karl Ory as of January, 2018. To learn more about what's happening with this ongoing issue, please look up "Move the Junk Yard" on Facebook, or contact the "Chapmantown Community Coalition" at [www.lovechapman.org](http://www.lovechapman.org).

## Yahi Conservation Report

*By Grace Marvin, Yahi Conservation Chair*

Not surprisingly, 2018 is presenting the Club some major challenges in the conservation area. Among the disappointments / insults is that the Department of Water Resources (DWR) was hiding major problems in the way the damaged Oroville Dam had been constructed – forcing almost 200,000 people to flee for safety last year. Reconstruction of the dam is again displaying shoddy planning and insufficient transparency by DWR, raising fears among Oroville citizens as well as residents of other affected communities. People throughout California hoped that DWR would have learned from all their prior mistakes. We are also angry that taxpayers may be asked to help with the expense of designing, building, and maintaining the new dam.

The public now has access to published, independent analyses that reveal areas where DWR needs to step up to the plate if California's largest source (next to Shasta) of dammed water is going to be both reliable and safe. The Water Committee of the statewide Sierra Club's CNRCC (Ca-NV Regional Conservation Committee) plans to find dam watchers throughout the state, since problems exist elsewhere as well. Let us know if you want to help!

A related issue is the latest push to "maximize" the production and movement of North State waters, especially to corporate interests in the south. (That, after all, is a major reason why Oroville Dam exists.) Yahi Group members are not only concerned about the damage to the Delta caused by the tunnels the Governor plans to build, but also about the drying up of water resources we in the north need for our personal, commercial, and environmental requirements, *e.g.*, wildlife, flora and fauna, waterways, flood plains, agriculture, and traditional and recreational fishing. We urge you to write Ms. Katrina Harrison, Project Manager, Bureau of Reclamation, Bay-Delta office [kharrison@usbr.gov](mailto:kharrison@usbr.gov), letting her know your opinion regarding the Bureau's efforts to "maximize" the flow of water from north to south – including plans for building the Sites Reservoir, tunnels, and other dam related projects.

While we are disappointed that the governor seems to have omitted any discussion of the 2017 Oroville Dam disaster in his annual address (let alone the 2018 issues mentioned above), many of us are quite pleased that the City of Oroville and numerous other entities are suing the DWR, and that dozens of organizations and individuals are demanding that license to operate the dam should be delayed until problems are solved.

## Yahi Group 2018 Changes and Happenings

By Suzette Welch, Yahi Chair

The three newly elected members of Yahi ExCom Wendy LeMaster, Annette Carey and Laurel Heath took office at the Jan. 11, 2018 meeting. Suzette Welch will continue to be Chair, and Annette Carey will continue as Secretary.

Part of the 2018 vote was whether or not to change the bylaws. 50 people voted yes to change the bylaws and 6 people voted no.

3. Executive Committee (ExCom). 3.1 Number. Subject to the powers of the members as provided by these Bylaws, the management of the affairs and activities of the Group shall be in the hands of an ExCom of five members elected by the Group membership for terms of two years. In any election, up to three members may be elected for full terms, as long as the size of the ExCom does not increase as a result and no fewer than two terms will expire in any future year.

Changed to:

...shall be in the hands of an ExCom of 7 members.

...in any election up to 4 members may be elected

Wendy LeMaster continues to do Outreach for Yahi Group. The scope of her projects will include tabling and the publicity for all activities except outings, which are advertised by Skip Augur. We hope to increase outreach this year so if you know of any tabling opportunities which the Club should be involved with please contact Wendy.

For information on forestry and clearcutting issues, please contact Patricia Puterbaugh who will continue to be the Group's expert and go to person.

I wish to thank Grace Marvin, Alan Mendoza, Louise Casey and Paul Krause for continuing with their many years of service to the Group.

We are still in need of a Program Chair and Political Chair

Contact information for all of these people may be found on our "about us" section of the Yahi Group Webpage, [www.sierraclub.org/mother-lode/yahi](http://www.sierraclub.org/mother-lode/yahi).

ExCom meetings are held monthly except July and December. For date and location, contact Suzette Welch.

The 2017 holiday party profits from raffle and party were \$201.00. 44 people attended and heard Dr. Marcia Moore's talk about her Road Scholar walking trip in New Zealand.

## Hiking Butte County

*Hiking Butte County* is a wonderful field guide to hikes in and around Butte County. 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.

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



# US Forest Service News

By Patricia Puterbaugh



Under the new administration the USFS has been directed “from the top,” to plan for “heavy vegetation management” (code word for logging) They have been directed to “go bigger-better-stronger.”

And, they are to accomplish this with less money and staff. The Feather River Ranger District of the Plumas National Forest will be cutting five positions immediately. This Ranger District is in the objection process right now on a very large project in the area of Gibsonville. The board feet planned for

logging was so large the project had to be pulled and rewritten.

Many projects, especially on the Plumas, are taking large trees in the name of “public hazards.” Several environmental groups have been following the NEPA process but unfortunately the USFS is becoming adept at writing “litigation proof” Environmental Assessments (EA). The Challenge Project EA, surrounding the community of Challenge should be written in the next year. The forest projects are trying to focus on areas close to communities for fire safety, but will often go further from the community to log large trees to make projects more profitable.

Because of low staffing our Region 5 has divided our forests into “provinces.” These forests are to “share resources.” Botanists, biologists, fisheries specialists and others will be “shared” between forests. It will be difficult for the USFS to go “bigger-better and stronger,” with less and less staff. The upcoming budget includes a 30% decrease for the USFS.

The Lassen National Forest has several projects in the works near us including the “Jones Meadow Fuels Reduction Project,” “High Lakes Motorized Trail Re-routes and Staging Area Improvements” and “Little Bear Forest Health Restoration Project” (near Humbug Valley and Grizzly Creek). We are pleased this plan will follow the “Interim guidelines for California Spotted Owl Habitat.” The USFS rarely follows its own science based guidelines and studies, so this is a welcome departure.

California Spotted Owl populations in California continue to fall, especially in Lassen. Most logging projects do not follow the interim guidelines so it may be sooner rather than later this beautiful bird will be listed as endangered.

The USFS is also in the process of rewriting and “streamlining” the National Environmental Policy Act. Generally, environmental groups oppose the plan to weaken and streamline the act. There are already many options for expediting the environmental process when writing a plan. We feel the overwhelming problem with the process is defunding and poor staffing in the USFS. This is a veiled attempt by industry to weaken one of our bedrock environmental laws.

The latest attack on the environment is a directive from the Interior Department instructing agencies to NOT consider the effects of climate change when analyzing projects. All references to climate change are to be rescinded from analysis. It took us decades to force Federal agencies to consider the effects of climate change. Now this directive will lead to confusion and an obvious lack of scientific analysis on Public Land Management.

There really isn't much good environmental news with this Administration managing our country except that more and more people are becoming aware of the attacks on our public lands. Environmental groups are energized and committed to clean water, clean air and environmental justice. The environmental laws we depend on including the Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, Endangered Species Act and others have been protecting us since the early 70s. This legislation was passed with bipartisan support. Keep the Faith and Stay involved!

## The Future Climate of Butte County

By Oscar Rodriguez

The recent events of fires and rains across the northern California in the last year alone can really show you how much things have changed from the norm. California is in for a doozy of a ride in the next couple of years that will change the extremes into a new norm, meaning more extreme rain and fire weather. According to the Cal-Adapt, “(it) projects Chico will be averaging sixteen extreme heat days by 2030, with as many as 30 days possible in some years. The California heat wave of 2006 is an example of what the future holds.”

As we saw last summer, Butte County went through a very serious fire season that has had major implications on lives and homes lost. This trend though will not go away, and the citizens of Butte County need to be ready for what the next couple of years will bring. This change will also impact the snowpack levels in the mountains affecting our drinking water when we need it in the summer, according to website What Is To Come?.

“Warming average global temperatures will result in reduced snowpack. Because snowpack in the Sierras and Cascades serves as a reservoir for most of the freshwater used in California—second only to groundwater—any loss in storage will have major impacts on water accessibility and flow regimes. By the turn of the century, this could mean a 30% loss of spring stream flow, which in turn could mean a reduction in up to 25% of water available for agricultural use.”

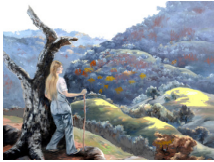
As it stands, California has barely made it out of a drought and while the implications of that drought have not been fully understood, it has made an impact on the struggling water system that California has in place. This has convinced some politicians to want to build more dams, reservoirs and even add twin tunnels to ease the water consumption of the state at an unforeseen environmental cost. With projected future snowfall falling as rain we might be looking forward to much more rain, which can turn into major flooding. It is an easy answer to come up with building more infrastructure but the ones already in place are in serious need of repair as already witnessed by the Oroville dam scare and subsequent major repairs.

We need to be active citizens to best mitigate the problems we see within our environment because climate change affects everyone, and we need to be able to think about how we can adapt to this new climate in the next couple of years. It is a threshold we never had to cross before, but we need to be able to adapt and change our livelihoods to be able to survive. We need to hold those accountable to prepare and make the choices necessary to mitigate the climate change cost that might be in store for the future of Butte County, its people, flora, and fauna.

### Citation

What Is To Come? (n.d.). Retrieved November 08, 2017, from <http://www.chico2030.com/what-is-to-come.html>

Exploring California's Climate Change Research. (n.d.). Retrieved November 08, 2017, from <http://cal-adapt.org/>



## River Watcher: Egg Watch

By Rex Burress, *The River Watcher*

My breakfast egg had a thin shell and broke before I got it fully in the pan! Amid the mumbling about the mess, I started thinking about the great DDT dilemma we had in the mid-1900's when Rachel Carson sounded the alarm with her book, **Silent Spring**.

The side-effects of that DDT pesticide [like the side-effects of some pills], was the startling realization that wild birds began laying thin-shelled eggs that broke in the nest! It took some difficult legislation to correct that serious threat to bird life and I'm glad to say birds still sing in the spring!



Generally, it's well known that birds need to eat sand and small stones to provide grit for the gizzard to pulverize seeds and foods. We know birds have no teeth and depend on a horny beak and a “crop” storage sac to hold food before it enters a first stomach of breakdown acids, and a second stomach containing the gizzard. Some chicken owners provide pulverized oyster shell or even crushed egg shell to aid the digestive process and supplement calcium to make stronger eggshell.

Barnyard chickens are prone to eat any maggoty, rotten, manure things so vulgarly that my Uncle Frank, during his brief farming venture, refused to eat chickens to his dying day! Think about range chicken eggs!

The fact that a bird is reproduced through the development of an egg is a wondrous bit of drama, totally beyond complete understanding, as amazing as the live birth of most mammals. We're constantly confronted with “why” was life conceived this way, and “how” was it created. It's life and death anyway you look at it. “Life through replication.” Each species endowed with special characteristics. A name and a life-history study for each species, much to the delight of bird watchers and naturalists, without even delving too deeply into technicalities.

I was so fascinated with the beauty and wonder of bird eggs when I was a boy on a Missouri farm, that I started a bird-egg collection. Thus I scoured the springtime fields to find nests, carefully remove one egg, transport it home and drill one hole in the side to suck out the yolk. I was left with a distinctly designed shell of 97% calcium carbonate crystals, properly labeled with species name and location, nestled into a cottony tray! My “wildlife corner” in the basement was expanding! As was my knowledge of bird lore. Egg collections are probably illegal now, or require a scientific permit.

I went to extreme effort to add eggs to my juvenile museum exhibit—even climbing a thorn tree to reach a crow's nest, but the splotched green egg was a prize to me, as was the pearly white egg-jewel from a bank swallow nest, hard-gained from a holey high bank over No Creek. At the end of my rope, I was dive-bombed by fussy bank swallows and had to reach blindly into a hole, but there it was!--at arm's length, the nest of eggs!

When I worked at the Oakland Rotary Nature Center, I discovered in the archives a

collection of eggs made by naturalist Bugs Cain, including giant ostrich and emu eggs, plus the tiny hummingbird egg, and he had gone a step farther, adding a study skin of each species!

Outside, hidden on the islands and all through the park, mallard hens stashed nests of a dozen eggs. Soon the mad scramble of ducklings, gulls and herons eating ducklings, and duckling retrievals from the tops of tall buildings and gutters commenced. "Plenty of eggs!" The show was emphasized by boy ducks chasing female ducks often to the point of gang rape. Added to the refuge mallard madness was the unflattering trait of the male leaving all the chick raising to the female!

Eggs are prominent birth-ways of other animals, too, as nearly all insect species lay some kind of egg. Some snakes lay eggs, while others, like rattlesnakes, give live birth. Most reptiles, including turtles, and certainly amphibians, lay rubbery eggs. In the seasonal streams on Table Mountain, newt salamanders gather during the flower-time to have egg-laying frenzies, often locking in copulatory compulsion mingled with clusters of soft egg masses. Frogs do it too, croaking into utter embraces amid gelatinous strands of life.

*"Noise proves nothing. Often a hen who has merely laid an egg cackles as if she laid an asteroid."*

*--Mark Twain*

*"Each thought that is welcomed and recorded is a nest egg by the side of which more will be laid."*

*--Henry David Thoreau*

## **Oak Woodland Mitigation Ordinance**

*By Patricia Puterbaugh*

We hope some Yahi members will be interested in following the Butte County DRAFT "Oak Woodland Mitigation Ordinance" The Draft Oak Woodland Mitigation Ordinance has been prepared to address impacts from proposed development (referred to as "discretionary projects" in the draft Ordinance).

The draft ordinance focuses on the oak woodland as a habitat type. The Ordinance proposes that more than 10% removal of oak woodland canopy area is considered a significant impact subject to replacement.

If you have any questions, please contact Pete Calarco, Assistant Director via email or by phone at 530.538.2167. You can go to the Butte Co. website to sign up for alerts and public meetings and to comment on the draft plan.

<http://www.buttecounty.net/dds/Planning/NotableProjects/oakwoodlandmitigation.aspx> will get you there.

Oak Woodland habitat conservation policies were adopted under the General Plan and will be an important issue as our county grows.



# Yahi Group Information

## Executive Committee

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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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