



**SIERRA
CLUB**
FOUNDED 1892

**Yahi
Group**



News Articles Programs Hikes and Outings Meetings Events

Western U.S. Forest Health Project 2009

Around the late 1800's, the pristine forests which covered our western mountain ranges were logged off with little or no regard for their future. The resulting second-growth forests are in increasing danger of catastrophic wildfire due to lengthening fire seasons and excessive fuel buildups from decades of fire-suppression. A recent study by U.S. Geological Survey's Western Ecological Research Center has determined that the drying and disease are affecting trees in the old growth forests as well, in all sizes of trees, at all altitudes. Many of these trees have died already, and many more are dying as we humans haggle over what to do about it.

Fire, of course, is necessary to the maintenance of a healthy forest. At this time, however, it can be argued that none of our western forests are all that healthy. Hundred-year-old mixed evergreens, crowded and competing for water and nutrients are becoming weakened, diseased and bug-infested in growing numbers. If an aggressive, hands-on approach to clean and fireproof these forests is not undertaken in the near future, the poor trees will have nothing to do but slowly die while waiting for the inevitable catastrophic wildfire to consume them.

In years past, before decades of fire-suppression left excessive fuel loads in these woods, fire could burn through an area, and many of the trees would survive to prosper, fire-scarred, but still very much alive. Sure, this was good, and sure, some of the 1.3 million acres burned in California last year were benefited by the fires...but many areas were not. Please, if you think that all fire is good, go out into some of the areas that have burned in the last 20 to 50 years and see if anything like a forest has re-established.

Pristine forests that were here before the advent of the white man simply do not exist anymore, and it is largely because of human intervention (i.e., clear-cutting, fire suppression, indiscriminate logging) that the forests are in such unhealthy condition: tinderboxes! The proposal here is for we the people who caused this mess in the first place to clean it up and render beautiful and sustainable forests for generations to come.

Environmental groups, well-meaning in their efforts to preserve the forests and the creatures which occupy them, often make objections to the methods employed by professional foresters. Where conditions indicate immediate action, regulations and litigation often stand in the way. Meanwhile, the specter of catastrophic wildfire is rapidly approaching a state of emergency.

In hopes that the preceding paragraphs have impressed the reader with a sense of urgency in promoting a workable approach to the stewardship of the western forests, and that the only real solution is thinning and fire-proofing them, I will now offer the details of this plan:

This project will proceed with the philosophy of producing healthy, sustainable forests. This will require the removal of large amounts of bio-mass, in some areas 75 to 80 percent of all-size trees, fire-ladders and brush, leaving one big tree every 75 or 80 feet with a scattering of various sized trees in between. The final step in this preliminary treatment will be to burn off the ground cover. Clear cutting is unacceptable excepting in cases where widespread disease and death of trees indicate replanting.

The actual work in the woods will proceed with the felling and bucking of trees, chipping the excess biomass on site. Logs should be stripped of their bark onsite, the bark chipped and spread back on the surface. Stumps can be cut close to the ground, scored, and covered with dirt in order to deteriorate in short time. Some slash and standing dead and downed logs are left behind for animal habitat. The lower branches of conifers, so-called "fire-ladders" will be trimmed high enough to resist ground fire.

Logs bucked in 20 foot lengths can be hauled out by new age equipment designed to do minimal damage to the forest floor. In this, the use of old railroad rights-of-way which are extant in many of the second-growth forests may prove beneficial. It will also be of

benefit to this project, and to future maintenance efforts, that the network of mountain roads be preserved, and new roads be built in strategic locations. Upon arriving at established roads, logs and chips can be hauled out with existing equipment, to a mill site which is not too distant.

Functions of the mill, and its proximity to other forest product mills, can be based on ecological assessments of any and all areas which are in immediate danger of catastrophic wildfire. How much biomass will come out? How much timber? Will it be feasible to generate electricity and/or natural gas to market? Can logging equipment be rebuilt and designed to run on natural gas? These mills can produce lumber, firewood, stove pellets and can be run entirely on electricity generated from the burning of woodchips in high-temp fireboxes where a very efficient burn can be achieved.

Efforts to jump-start the economy currently underway are sure to put people to work, and inject a flow of cash into the mainstream society. But we must ask, "Where is this money coming from?" Is it acceptable to just print it, or will we borrow more from China (a Communist country) or Japan. As luck would have it, China, who has recently stopped buying our old cans and bottles, has little wood. Ditto Japan, and for that matter Iran. These wood-deprived countries would gladly buy our logs.

Fire Safe Councils, springing up around western mountain communities continue to do a wonderful job of fire-proofing the urban interface. It would be great to carry this work out into the afflicted forests, but efforts to do so and/or build roads are often thwarted by well-meaning environmentalists, or held up by excessive regulations and time-consuming permit processes. This is a call to action. If all the interested parties cannot get together and come up with a plan that can be put into immediate action, then surely we will be in a state of emergency. Can the governments move to estop adverse lawsuits and streamline permit processes, and/or declare State of Emergency!

Last year in California, hundreds of wildfires burned out

of control as firefighting crews were widely deployed and working overtime. In some areas, including old growth, catastrophic wildfire destroyed all the trees and scorched the ground, leaving little chance for natural recovery. These were not healthy, forest friendly fires. Here on the eastern slope of the Sierra, we were subjected to weeks of stifling, eye-stinging smoke which sometimes reduced visibility to less than a mile. It goes without saying that if something is not done soon, the situation will only get worse.

Please, for the sake of the forest, help in this effort to get the excess trees and biomass out. Please, for the sake of the economy, let's develop a revitalized timber industry. Let's work together to produce beautiful, sustainable forests.

LABEL

Non-profit
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit Number 590

Yahi Group—Sierra Club
Post Office Box 2012
Chico CA 95927

A New Energy Economy

America is in the worst recession since the Great Depression. Our nation needs a new economic driver. President Obama's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 will be investing in the backbone of our nation's economy, which is Main Street. It will provide money for new green jobs, businesses, renewable energy generation, weatherizing and retrofitting government buildings and homes, and a unified national smart grid. The Recovery Act of 2009 is investing in American workers, American infrastructure and America's future.

Between 1996 and 2000, the tech sector created 1.6 million jobs, roughly 14% of new U.S. job growth. This decade, housing accounted for 40% of new job growth, and the financial sector drove record profits. Both of those growth engines have stalled. Our new growth engine is renewable energy and energy efficiency to jump-start our economy, create green jobs, and make us healthier and more secure.

Economy. This new growth engine will create huge number of **immediate jobs** in public and private building weatherization and retrofitting. One study indicates that \$10 billion invested in energy efficiency retrofits can create **120,000 jobs a year** (Clean Energy Corps Working Group). Investment in retrofitting buildings creates over **seven times** as many jobs as the same investment in coal power (Earth Policy Institute, Dec. 2008).

The average U.S. household can save 30% of its energy bills, or about \$900 annually, through efficiency improvements (U.S. Dept. of Energy; Center for American Progress Green Recovery Report, Sept. 2008). A 15% energy improvement in commercial building codes will save an estimated 1 peak watt per sq/ft of building. The energy savings of 15% on 19 billion sq/ft of commercial floor space translates to 19,000 megawatts, or the **equivalent of 63 power plants** (Alliance to Save Energy).

Green Jobs. Investing in renewable energy generation creates nearly **four times** more jobs than spending the same amount of money within the oil industry, and 300,000 more jobs than a similar amount of spending directed toward household consumption. These jobs creates are roughly **triple** the number of good jobs (paying at least \$16 an hour) as spending the same amount of money within the oil industry. This investment will bolster employment especially in construction and manufacturing, bringing back the 800,000 construction jobs lost in 2008 (Political Economy Research Institute). Investing in

retrofitting buildings creates over **seven times** as many jobs as the same investment in coal power (Earth Policy Institute, Dec. 2008).

Solar. Investing in solar photovoltaic (PV) creates **two times** as many jobs as the same investment in coal power (Earth Policy Institute, Dec. 2008).

Fifty jobs are created per megawatt (MW) of solar PV, more than any other energy technology (Solar Generation, 2008).

Wind. Investment in wind power creates **four times** as many jobs as the same investment in coal power (Earth Policy Institute, Dec. 2008).

Wind providing just 20% of our electricity by 2030 will create 500,000 wind jobs and \$2 billion in local annual revenues (Dept. of Energy, May 2008).

85,000 people are employed in the wind industry today, a 70% increase from 50,000 people last year (AWEA Press Release, January 28, 2009).

Unified National Smart Grid. One study indicated that a \$16 billion federal investment in smart grid projects could create 280,000 new jobs and over 150,000 jobs this year (KEMA of Gridwise Alliance, Dec. 2008).

The current grid limitations cost the nation \$80 billion to \$188 billion per year due to grid-related power outages and power quality issues (NREL). We lost 6 billion kilowatts from transmission lines in 1999.

3M Corporation has begun marketing a new transmission line that carries 1.5 to 3 times as much power as conventional lines. These new cables save 750 megawatts per 500 miles, equivalent to the electricity production from 2.5 average-size power plants.

Health. There are over 500 coal-fired power plants operating in the U.S. These existing plants are responsible for 2 billion tons of carbon dioxide annually, making them the **nation's single largest source of global warming pollution.**

Existing coal-fired power plants are also major contributors to soot, smog and mercury pollution, causing 25,000 premature deaths, 38,000 heart attacks, and 21,000 hospitalizations each year.

Pollution from existing carbon power plants contributes to more than 600,000 asthma attacks each year. Asthma, which is exacerbated by air pollution, is the #1 cause of hospitalization for children under 15 years of age.

National Security. The new growth engine of renewable energy will make our nation free from its dependence of Middle Eastern oil. It will allow communities and homes to generate their own decentralized power, making it more difficult for terrorists or natural disasters to disrupt the flow of electricity. It will also reduce the demand on the nation's strained electricity grid and decrease the need to build dirty, expensive coal power plants.

Conclusion. Renewable energy is the new economic driver of our American economy. Renewable energy and energy efficiency upgrades will provide the greatest amount of quality paying jobs and immediately jump-start our economy toward a more efficient and healthy future. Investing in renewable energy will modernize and improve our nation's infrastructure and national security by making our nation energy independent and free from dependence on Middle Eastern oil. Renewable energy will help decentralize power, allowing communities and homes to generate their own electricity which will help protect against electricity disruptions from terrorists and natural disasters. Renewable energy is clean energy which eliminates the devastating health effects of pollution from carbon-based power plants and helps curb carbon dioxide emissions, the main source of global warming.

Newsletter Contacts

SIERRA CLUB YAH! GROUP NEWSLETTER is published quarterly in March, June, September and December by the Yahi Group of the Sierra Club, Post Office Box 2012, Chico, CA 95927 or 5590 Feather River Place, Paradise, CA 95969, Attn: Louise Casey.

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to Yahi Group of the Sierra Club, Post Office Box 2012, Chico, CA 95927 or 5590 Feather River Place, Paradise, CA 95969, Attn: Louise Casey.

The newsletter is mailed free to all current members of the Sierra Club residing in the Yahi Group area. It is also available, without charge, at selected public places and merchants in the Yahi Group area.

For submissions, comments and inquiries, please write to Sierra Club, Post Office Box 2012, Chico, CA 95927 or contact the content editor Susan Sears at 530-532-0149 or the copy editor Louise Casey at 530-872-9159.

For advertising in the Newsletter, please call John Woods (530-899-8607). For changes in membership address (which also affects the address for receiving the newsletter by mail) please write to Sierra Club Member Services, Post Office Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80328-2968; sending a mailing label for the old address will speed the process.

Submission Guidelines:

Please include name, phone, 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. A one week extension is available if the submission is sent by e-mail and advance advisory has been provided that the article is forthcoming.

Sierra Club Yahi Group Contacts

General Contact

Linda Stuke: 530-345-2696
She will relay inquiries or comments to the appropriate person.

Executive Committee Officers

Chair: Dave Garcia
530-533-2357 or rangerdave@mynvw.com
Vice Chair: Goodie Sweatt
894-3988 or gsweattsclub@sbcglobal.net
Secretary: Annette Carey
872-3557 or annettecare@sbcglobal.net
Fifth Member: Barney Hope
343-4026 or bh.csuchico@gmail.com
Fifth Member: Jan Hildenbrand
894-0438 or janmh2@sbcglobal.net

Point Persons

Westwood, Chester, Lake Almanor, Susanville and Greenville: Fred Binswanger
530-256-3197 or sbins@citlink.net
Portola, Greenville, Quincy: John A. Shower
530-284-6856 or theshowers@frontiernet.net

Committee Chairs and Other Contacts

Chapter Rep. To Motherlode: Grace Marvin
530-893-1994 or g-marvin@sbcglobal.net
Conservation: Chair: Grace Marvin
530-893-1994 or g-marvin@sbcglobal.net
Election Committee Chair: Betty Volker
bettyv5@juno.com
Membership: Gerda Lydon
530-343-9277 or PLydon2948@aol.com
Newsletter Editor: Susan Sears
530-532-0149 or sjsears@sbcglobal.net
Newsletter Publication: Louise Casey
530-872-9159 or YAH!news@comcast.net
Newsletter Distribution -
Steve Miller: 530-345-0806
Dave Nopel: 530-342-4118
Outings: Alan Mendoza
530-891-8789 or ajmendoza@prodigy.net
Political Chair: Bob Woods
530-893-8656 or MathContr@aol.com
Program Chair: Gerda Lydon
530-343-9277 or PLydon2948@aol.com
Publicity:
Skip Augur: 530-893-9222
Wendy Woods: 530-899-8607 or woodsofchico@sbcglobal.net
Treasurer: Paul Krause
530-894-2931 or paul@paulkrause.com
Trail Maintenance: Stephen Sayre 876-1391 or stephensayre@att.net
Yahi Website: Louise Casey
530-872-9159 or YAH!news@comcast.net

Action Area Contacts

Bidwell Ranch: Betty Volker:
bettyv5@juno.com and Pat Kelly 345-1135
Chico Sustainability Committee: Julian Zener:
julianzener@sbcglobal.net
Rep. to Butte County General Plan meetings -
Mary Watters: maryjwatters@sbcglobal.net
Disc golf: Grace Marvin:
530-893-1994 or g-marvin@sbcglobal.net
Forest Issues: Trish Puterbaugh:
Cohasset@shocking.com

Conservation Notes

By Grace Marvin, Yahi Conservation Chair

TANC Power Line.

We are learning just how much this huge project, proposed by the Transmission Agency of Northern California, would hurt many small towns and natural resources in our region (including Bidwell Park). We need to inform ourselves about a variety of serious problems with the \$1.5 Billion project. Terry Davis (Mother Lode Chapter) provided me the following website as a way to get started: www.stoptanc.com. This will be discussed at the upcoming Mother Lode Chapter meetings as well. Meanwhile, Patricia Puterbaugh sent a letter questioning TANC in Lassen National Forest.

Climate Change.

Jennifer Hennessey is Chico's "energy czar." (Do you know if your community has one and is seeking funding?) As Yahi Conservation Chair, I attempted to get in on the national Sierra Club call on "Greening Your Economy with Federal Economic Recovery Funding," but the phone/computer problems resulted in our learning that we could see it on a videotape instead. (Contact coolcities@sierraclub.org for more information.) The basic point I learned from the working part of the phone call was that cities, small and large, can get access to these clean energy opportunities funds that come from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. It might be necessary to let your local officials know about them. Even if they have already applied for these funds, it would be worthwhile for you to provide additional or alternative project ideas to your officials. That money must result in jobs, first and foremost, even while our club also recognizes the urgency of dramatically reducing CO2.

In Chico, the mayor and other city officials are aware of these funding opportunities. Nonetheless, I passed on information about money available for adding bikeways. Furthermore, the Chico Sustainability Committee, including a Sierra Club representative, has been addressing air quality issues.

Disc Golf.

People on all sides of this issue would like to see it go away. As I write this at the end of April, the Chico City Council approved one of the recommendations made by the Bidwell Park and Playground Commission, namely, that a largely unused and heavily weeded site near Caper Acres in lower Bidwell Park be considered as a new location of a *short course*. Unfortunately, those disc golfers enjoying the beauty of the area where the current, illegal, and environmentally destructive short course is located (on a ridge above Highway 32 in Upper Park) do not seem willing to give up their fight to stay there as well. Some City Council members have caved under the pressure from the young disc golf players. This is in spite of the fact that Council already compromised with the disc golf community: "At its 01/06/09 meeting, the City Council voted unanimously to allow a disc golf course to be developed in upper Bidwell Park adjacent to Hwy. 32 and to work on relocating a short disc golf course at a new location(s) to be determined closer to Chico." It is particularly important that we contact Councilors Tom Nickell and Scott Gruendl. We need to let them know we expect them to vote against keeping the *short course* at the Highway 32 site – to facilitate the healing of the soil, trees and plants now being used for the short course. (The Sierra Club supported their candidacy in 2006, and they are up for re-election next year.)

Tehama County's General Plan.

The Yahi Group covers five counties, including Tehama. Thus, it was most appropriate that our club contribute a significant amount of money to challenge the Tehama County General Plan. The Shasta Group covers part of Tehama County as well; they are taking the lead in questioning why the plan projects 1000% growth over 20 years, yet does not examine the most basic resources needed for such development. Of particular concern are inadequate water and infrastructure elements.

Drought Water Bank, Other Water Issues.

Last November, the Yahi Group and the MLC joined the Butte Environmental Council and many other environmental organizations in signing a three-page letter to the Department of Water Resources and the U.S. Bureau

of Reclamation challenging the proposed Drought Water Bank. "The Sacramento Valley is willing to share more of its water resources with other areas of the state if it will not harm the environment en route, if there are serious water conservation measures in receiving areas, and there is a commitment to protect the economy and the environment in areas of origin."

The Yahi Executive Committee voted this April to send a substantial amount of money to the Butte Environmental Council. BEC has recently filed a lawsuit, along with the California Sportfishing Protection Alliance and the California Water Impact Network, challenging the DWR, California's National Resources Agency, and the Governor for not following the law regarding water transfers. For example, the plaintiffs argued that it is illegal to allow northern Sacramento Valley groundwater basins to become private water banks, such that water could then be transferred south of the region. Although we are not contributing directly to their lawsuit, we are providing money that BEC needs for the Ground Water Protection Fund for Butte, Glenn and Tehama Counties.

I received the support of the Yahi Executive Committee to send a letter from the Yahi Group to Senator Feinstein urging her to protect U.S. wetlands by co-sponsoring an amendment to the Clean Water Restoration Act.

Volunteers Needed.

Please contact me if you can do any of the following: We need volunteers to write letters and to attend and participate in environmental meetings. We also need someone to take up plastic bag recycling in Chico, while we also would like to see folks take up environmental causes in other Yahi communities (Butte, Glenn, Tehama, Plumas and Lassen Counties). We would especially love it if volunteers could engage younger people (below 45?) in conservation activities. They are our future!

Chico Fest.

Annette Carey and Nelson Parmenter beautifully organized the Yahi participation in this event on the grounds of the Sierra Nevada Brewery. They obtained the assistance of several Yahi volunteers who explained the highlights noted in our Chair's lovely Yahi display. It included issues of concern, large photos, including one with information about Clair Tappaan Lodge and outings. We also collected signatures on a petition regarding clear cutting and had numerous handouts – but not enough newspapers! (Oh well, the environment may have benefitted.)

Dyer Mountain.

Steve Robinson reports that his Mountain Meadows Conservancy continues to help prevent many different kinds of environmentally destructive development efforts in this fantastically beautiful meadow and mountain area near Westwood and Lake Almanor. The Mother Lode Chapter contributed some of the money for legal costs in this struggle, which will resume in the courts when and if that becomes necessary. In the meantime, MMC is working to purchase that land before any other attempt to rezone it occurs.

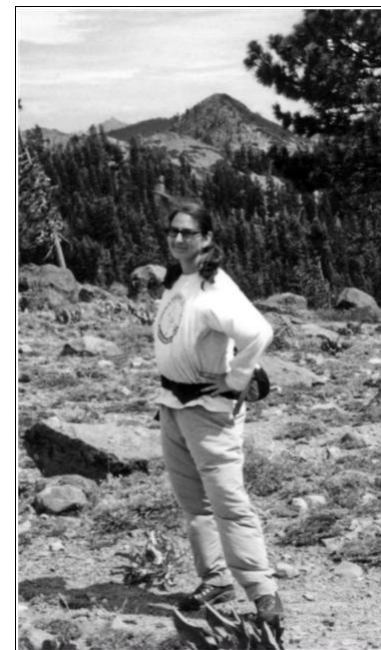
Outings with Conservation Components.

Several of our outings have a serious conservation component in them. For example, some involve trail maintenance while others are hikes with explanations of how nearby natural beauty is threatened, e.g., by clearcutting, intensive recreational activities, drought, etc. Participants can follow up on this education through activism, such as letter-writing to the newspapers and to key officials.

In this regard, it is worth pointing out that Jim Brobeck and Patricia Puterbaugh (Lassen Forest Preservation Group) spend minimal time stopping clear cutting, and that Marilee Woodhouse is currently the Mother Lode contact for clearcutting. In fact, Patricia reports that she and Jim write comments regarding private logging, where much of the clearcutting is done. She and Jim need more volunteers to help them. Please see contact information in this newsletter. Most of their conservation work is in the National Forest, where there isn't as much logging.

Two of the Yahi volunteers who have taken on the fight against abuses caused by off-road vehicles and other trail-related issues are Larry Chrisman and Stephen Sayre. It

Theresa Marcis



On the first day of spring 2009 the Yahi Group lost a remarkable friend when Theresa Marcis passed away. Theresa led numerous outings for the group for most of the last 10 years including many backpacking trips to the Warner Mountains, Trinity Alps, Yolla Bollys, Lassen Park and Yosemite. She always gave far more than she received from all of us who had the pleasure of accompanying her in the mountains she loved so much—an infectious smile, a beautiful song, constant laughter and a deep concern for the environment. It was impossible to go on one of Theresa's trips and not have a good time. She made sure everyone felt welcomed and a part of the group and always brought extra

“goodies and treats” to share. Her incredible sense of humor would quickly pass through the whole group. Her desire for preserving wild places was always expressed in an upbeat manner and through a positive message. You could not repress her enthusiasm and joy. She also frequently volunteered to work for the Yahi Group on several maintenance projects, caroling at nursing homes and by sitting at our booths.

Theresa led several trips devoted to poetry and writing and always kept a journal. She shared the same passion as John Muir—when she saw spectacular scenery she was moved to put her feelings into words and often into a song. Her intimate relationship with the outdoors meant no small detail went unnoticed whether it be a budding flower or a grizzled juniper tree on a ridge that had withstood the wind for hundreds of years. We learned so much from her about truly seeing our world and living our lives to the fullest and enjoying every day. Theresa certainly made the most of her life and touched so many people who met her on the outings she led. She will be deeply missed by all of her many friends in the Yahi Group. Here are some of Theresa's last writings:

“I am restored by the bounty of nature—grass, rocks, wind, sweeping vistas, sunsets and sunrises. The soul and physical support I'm receiving is so heartfelt and loving from all of you who are supporting me that my heart is continuously broken open, and I experience universal life force and healing every step of the way. Truly, I am guided by this presence. An exceptional morning has arrived, and the world is alive. Feel it in each palm.”

Alan Mendoza

is noteworthy, I believe, that Lassen Park recently sent a memo out regarding their halting certain illegal snowmobile activities.

YAH! Program: June 11, 2009

By Gerda Lydon, Yahi Group Program Chair

The Yahi Group of the Sierra Club will host Paul Krause on Thursday, June 11, 2009 at 7:00 P.M. in the Conference Room of the Chico Library at East 1st Avenue and Sherman. Paul will give a PowerPoint presentation of his recent travels to Africa: "Journey through Southern Africa from Cape Town to Victoria Falls." The meeting is open to the public and refreshments will be served. For further information, call 343-9277.

It'll be interesting to see what we are going to do in the Fall inasmuch as the library hours are being curtailed, as you well know. What a mess! Contact your supervisor! Hopefully the Friends of the Library will come up with some sort of a petition in support of a ballot measure that could provide stable funding for our libraries. We've tried this before in Chico but it didn't make it. Maybe with more people using the libraries we'll have better results.

Summer 2009 Outings

On-Going Tuesday Volleyball. Join Yahi Group members and friends for friendly, co-ed volleyball every Tuesday night at 7PM at the Chapman Center (corner of E. 16th Street and B Street in Chico). Cost: \$3 per night. Some experience required, free lessons included. For more information call Karen, 899-8305 or Betty, 345-7205.

June 2009

Friday-Sunday, June 5-7 – Burney Falls Campout (grade 2, class A). Enjoy the beautiful campground at Burney Falls State Park, with its 129' spring-fed spectacular waterfall, several miles of easy hiking trails and large Lake Britton for canoeing/kayaking. To sign up and get more info call leader. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980; Asst. Leader: Annette, 872-3557.

Saturday, June 13 – PCT Hike Warner Valley to the Feather River (grade 5, class B). We will hike a round-trip distance of 20 miles on the Pacific Crest Trail from Warner Valley to the north fork of the Feather River. Great scenery to enjoy including beautiful Stump Ranch Meadow, Willow Lake, Boiling Springs Lake and the spectacular Terminal Geyser. If we have enough vehicles we may do a one-way car shuttle to Hwy 36. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 7:30AM. Leader: Alan, 891-8789 or ajmendoza@prodigy.net

Sunday-Thursday, June 14-18 – Pacific Crest Trail Maintenance (Educational). Volunteers are needed for work on the Pacific Crest Trail from the footbridge over Bear Creek down the trail to the crossing of the Middle Fork of Feather River. Camp near Deadman Spring using 4x4s to shuttle for backpack style camping. An exciting and interesting adventure with all meals provided to volunteers by the Pacific Crest Trail Association. Contact: Dennis, dawashburn@comcast.net, 925-978-3939 or Larry, larry_krumm@sccoe.org or 408-270-4513.

Saturday, June 20 – Chico Mural Walk & Lunch (grade 1, class A) (Educational). Stroll around downtown Chico to view the many innovative murals followed by a group lunch at a downtown restaurant. Cost: lunch only. Meet on the steps of Chico City Hall (Main St. & 4th St.) at 10AM. Leader: Carla, 891-6977; Asst. Leader: Gene, 873-1552.

Saturday, June 20 at 7:30 PM - Yahi Program in Butte Meadows at the Volunteer Firehouse. (Educational) The program "Rescue on the Mountain" featuring Enloe Flightcare personnel will discuss the advantages of helicopter and when a helicopter is used versus ambulance. Limited chairs: please bring a chair. For questions or information call: Betty, 345-7205 and Steve, 873-7091.

Saturday, June 27 - Saddle Lake, Oliver Lake, Upper Chambers Creek Exploration (Conservation) (grade 2, class A) Starting up Perry's Trail in rare, upper elevation, old growth mixed conifer on a SW-facing slope, we will check on the effects of last summer's wildfire on a goshawk nesting site, hike up roads proposed for closure to beautiful Grassy and Saddle Lakes, then investigate how much hiking trail and new path was bulldozed by CalFire within a Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized part of the High Lakes, to remote Oliver Lake and the upper part of Chambers Creek. Along the way we will note existing conditions where a new hydroelectric project has been proposed, see if any trail maintenance outings may be needed, and check if road conditions may allow shorter hikes there in the future. There will be some off-trail hiking to see everything on this all day, 10-mile round-trip adventure with no back-

tracking; but there is no poison oak at this elevation (see the Storrie NW quad map). Meet at Spring Valley School at 7 AM, or at the Rock Creek Crossing bridge (and primitive campsite) at 9 AM for the 70-minute, 4-wheel-in-low-gear climb to the trailhead. More 4-wheel drive vehicles are needed; so please email or call to confirm space, offer your vehicle and driving skills, or for a detailed map and directions. Leader: Stephen, 876-1391, stephensayre@att.net; Asst. Leader: John, 872-8258, hubbollister@yahoo.com

July 2009

Friday, July 3 – Friday Night Outdoor Concert. Friday night concert in downtown Chico featuring the Chico Community Band at City Plaza from 7PM to 8:30PM. Meet at 6:30PM at Chico Paper Company at the corner of 4th and Broadway. Bring finger food snacks to share and chair. Possible trip for yogurt or ice cream afterwards. Leader: Carla, 891-6977; Asst. Leader: Gene, 873-1552.

Saturday, July 4 – Colby Meadows Hike (grade 2, class B). This popular 7 ½ mile round-trip hike will take place in the cool of the late afternoon and evening. We will see wildflowers, lush green meadows and a three-quarters moon. This is not a power hike, but if you're a slow hiker or have

health problems and need to rest a lot, please call leader for approval. Bring food, water, hiking boots, a light jacket or long sleeve shirt, flashlight and \$\$ for drivers. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 2:45PM and leave at 3PM sharp! Return to Chico around 10PM. Leader: Larry, 342-7998.

Sunday, July 5 - Educational Walk in Jonesville (grade 1, class A) (Educational). Learn about the CSU Yurt and the health of Colby Meadows. Walk will last about 3 hours. Three miles round-trip with little elevation gain. Bring water and sunscreen. Meet at 8AM at the Chico Park & Ride or 9:30AM at the Jonesville Snowmobile Park. If you are meeting at the Park & Ride call one of the leaders in advance. Leader: Larry, 342-7998; Asst. Leader: Betty, 345-7205.

Saturday, July 11 – Mt. Brokeoff and Mt. Lassen Hikes (grade 4, class D) Climb Lassen Parks two highest peaks in the same fast-paced day. We'll start with Mt. Brokeoff and enjoy the beautiful flowering trail for a round-trip distance of 7.5 miles and 2600' elevation gain. We'll then drive to the Mt. Lassen trailhead and hike the volcano for more great views and another 5 miles and 2000' elevation gain. You must be in excellent shape and have already been at some higher elevations as we will have to hike at a very steady pace. Bring lots of energy food, water and carpool \$\$\$. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 7AM. For more info call leader. Leader: Alan, 891-8789 or ajmendoza@prodigy.net

Saturday-Sunday July 18-19 – Mt. Eddy Climb and Car Camp (grade 3, class C). Climb 9025' Mt. Eddy, the highest peak in the Klamath Mountains. The beautiful 9-10 mile round-trip trail in the proposed Mt. Eddy wilderness area climbs 2800' and passes Deadfall Lake, several streams and verdant alpine meadows and wildflower displays. At the top enjoy an incredible close up view of Mt. Shasta to the east and the Trinity Alps to the west. After our afternoon climb we will camp overnight and do a short hike on Sunday before driving home. Call leader for more info. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 9AM. Leader: Alan, 891-8789; Asst. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980.

Thursday-Sunday, July 22-26 – Yosemite Backpack (grade 2, class B). A base camp trip to the gorgeous Vogelsang area. We start at Tuolumne Meadows and hike in 7-8 miles with a 1500'

Yahi Group's General Outing Information

The following information is intended for people who have decided to take or are contemplating an outing that has been organized by the Yahi Group of the Sierra Club. The information is based on the Group's established policy (available from the web site or from the Outings Committee Chair); it will be supplemented by trip specific information and by the outing leader.

Updates: Updated outings information can be found on our web site at <http://www.motherlode.sierraclub.org/yahi/>

Transportation: There is an active interest in car pooling, but leaders cannot organize car pools to Sierra Club outings. All trips begin and end at the trailhead, which is not necessarily the initial meeting place. Any car pool arrangements are private agreements between the driver and the passengers.

Riders are expected, as a matter of courtesy, to reimburse drivers to cover the transportation expenses of the trip. The customary amount is 10 cents per mile per passenger depending on the vehicle, the number of passengers and the road conditions. For example, one passenger only should pay the driver a little more and a car full of passengers should pay a little less. This is only a guideline.

Membership in Sierra Club not required: Outings are open to the general public unless otherwise indicated. If you enjoy the outings, it is hoped that you will see the value of joining; application information is available in this newsletter or on the website.

Fees and costs: Occasionally an outing announcement will indicate a cost. Unless the announcement specifically indicates that outing is a fund raiser, the cost indicated is only that which has been estimated to cover trip expenses. **Non-Sierra Club members are asked to make a \$2 donation if attending an outing to help defray our costs for outings**

Sign-up: Most activities do not require advance sign-up; it is merely necessary to show up at the designated time and place. For those outings where advance sign-up is requested, a call to the leader will initiate the procedure. If fees or deposits are needed, the sign-up is not considered complete until those have been paid. Deposits may not be refundable; please inquire at time of making payment.

Outing Waivers: All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read the liability waiver before you choose to participate on an outing, please go to

<http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/>, or contact the Outings Department at (415) 977-5528 for a printed version.

All activities: These are group outings. It is important that participants follow the instructions of the outing leader. Please be sure you are in adequate physical condition to undertake the activity you choose (see classifications for guidance). If you are unsure of the difficulty of the trip or of your ability, check with the leader before deciding to go. The outing leader may decide to disallow the participation of an outing applicant if the leader concludes that the applicant's reduced preparation or capability may negatively affect the outing for the rest of the group.

Hiking and Day Activities: Bring lunch, water, and essentials, as well as reimbursement money for your driver. Wear boots or sturdy shoes.

Dos and Don'ts: Plan to carry out anything you carry in. Pets are not allowed unless the trip specifically indicates "pets permitted". No firearms. No electronic music devices.

Young people: Please consult with the leader for a decision as to whether the outing is appropriate for a youth, whether accompanied by an adult or not. Any person under 18 not accompanied by a parent must have a written parental authorization to give to the outing leader. Forms may be obtained in advance from the outing leader or from the Outings Committee Chair at 891-8789. The completed form is required to provide for emergency medical care if needed.

Errors in the schedule: If there is incorrect information in an outings announcement, please see the web site at <http://www.motherlode.sierraclub.org/yahi/> or call Skip Augur at 894-1366 to obtain a correction.

Suggestions and Comments welcome:

Any comments on the outings or suggestions for future ones are always welcome.

Mail to Alan Mendoza; 6 Patches Drive, Chico, CA 95928 or e-mail ajmendoza@prodigy.net.

YAH! Newsletter On the Internet

elevation gain to Vogelsang and set up a base camp to enjoy the beautiful views and sparkling lakes and creeks. Day hikes on Friday and Saturday to Vogelsang Pass and Ireland Lake. Hike out on Sunday. Individual commissary. Limited space and permits, call leader to reserve a space. Cost \$5 for permit, plus carpool \$\$ for drivers. Leader: Alan, 891-8789 or ajmendoza@prodigy.net.

Saturday, July 25 – Flood of 1997 Presentation in Butte Meadows. (Educational) Watch a DVD on the historic flood of 1997 at the Butte Meadows Volunteer Firehouse. Locals will also share their photos and stories. Bring a dessert to share and your own chair. Leaders: Betty and Steve, 345-7205.

Saturday-Sunday, July 25-26 - Saucer Lake Backpack, (grade 1, class A) This three mile trip is an easy one night backpack into remote Saucer Lake with beautiful views and great swimming. Families with children and those of us who have quit the "hard" trips should truly enjoy this slow paced, fun trip. Individual commissary. Limited to eight people. One hour from Chico. Call leader, John at or e-mail at 530-872-8258 or hubhollister@yahoo.com.

August 2009

Saturday, August 1 – Kings Creek Falls & Sifford Lakes Loop Hike (grade 1, class A) Spend the day on a 5 mile loop enjoying meadows, wildflowers and a spectacular waterfall and lakes. After hiking to Kings Creek Falls we will cross Kings Creek on a bridge and head east to Bench Lake and the beautiful Sifford Lakes before returning to Kings Creek Meadow. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 8:30AM. Leader: Julian, 893-1994.

Wednesday-Sunday, August 5-9 – Marble Mountain Wilderness Backpack, (grade 2, class B) The exact route is undetermined at this time. The plan is to hike in on Wednesday and establish a base camp, from which we will do day hikes. Even though it is August, the wildflowers will make you think spring has returned. Exciting vistas, lakes, caves, and Marble. Individual commissary. You must contact leader, John, at 530-872-8258 or hubhollister@yahoo.com. A truly wonderful experience.

Saturday-Sunday, August 15-16 – Juniper Lake/Lassen National Park Car Camp (grade 1, class B) Spend a relaxing summer weekend away from the valley heat at cool 7000' Juniper Lake. The Yahi Group has reserved a group campsite close to the lake. Individual commissary. Optional hikes are planned to Inspiration Point, the top of Mt. Harkness and Snag and Horseshoe Lakes. A canoe will be available or you can bring your own watercraft to use on the lake. Cost: \$15 per person and park entrance fee of \$10. Call leader to make reservation, get meeting time and to get more info on costs and carpooling. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980; Asst. Leader: John, 872-8258.

Thursday, August 20 – Yahi Newsletter Folding. Join us to prepare and sort the Yahi Group newsletter for mailing. It only takes about an hour and we always have lots of fun. Volunteers are always needed. Call 343-9277 for directions and more info.

September 2009

Saturday - Sunday, September 12-13, Wade Lake Backpack. (grade 1, class B) Enjoy this popular area after the crowds have left. We will stay at gorgeous Wade Lake where we can swim, boulder on headwall cliffs, or bird on the lake's plateau. Sunday we'll visit two more lakes ranging from cool to freezing, but spectacular for viewing. Last year we had one of our best trips here. Individual commissary. Contact leader, John, at 872-8258

or at hubhollister@yahoo.com.

Clair Tappaan Lodge Summer Activities



All year long Clair Tappaan Lodge, located at Donner Summit, offers special events for its guests. Some of the events are included in the cost of overnight lodging and meals (\$50 per night for adult Sierra Club members) while other activities require an additional fee. For details, reservations and costs for the following activities please contact the lodge at 800 679-6775 or 530 426-3632, or click on www.sierraclub.org/outings/lodges/ct/activities.asp.

June 21 – 26. Sierra Serenity. Clair Tappaan Lodge has hosted this program for nearly 20 years and is happy to invite past program participants as well as new. Twelve-step meetings are held each morning followed by group hikes in the Truckee-Tahoe area.

June 26 – 28. Finding your Way -- Land Navigation Workshop. Learn or polish navigational skills using map, compass, GPS and altimeters. Bring any tools you may have and learn how to use them from a pro. Beautiful hikes. Instruction led by Bill Straka.

August 14 - 16, 2009. Gala 75th Anniversary Celebration of Clair Tappaan Lodge and 85th Anniversary Celebration of Hutchinson Lodge. Two days of hikes, music, scavenger hunts, demonstrations, historic exhibitions, wine and cheese, a beer garden and music festival, and more.

Save the Dates October 31 - November 1 for a **Halloween/Day of the Dead weekend** at Clair Tappaan Lodge. Costume parade and contest, pumpkin carving contests, piñata, musical chairs, games for kids. On Sunday, Day of the Dead installations will be welcomed. Bring your own to add to the display.

Don't forget that all summer long there are many 5-7 day national outings and Elderhostel trips scheduled at the Lodge. Please see the Clair Tappaan Lodge website, or call the Lodge for availability and details.

Directions to Meeting Places For Yahi Outings

Chico Park and Ride: From Highways 99 and 32, go east on 32 and make an immediate left onto Fir Street (it's only about 100 yards from Highway 99). We meet in the lot closest to the freeway.

Oroville Wal-Mart: Exit Highway 70 at Oro Dam Blvd., go east one block. Wal-Mart is on south side of Oro Dam Blvd. at Feather River Blvd. We meet at the northwest corner of the parking lot.

Paradise SaveMart: The parking lot is at the corner of Wagstaff and Clark Roads; we meet in the northwest corner.

Wildwood parking lot: Take East Avenue or Manzanita to Wildwood Avenue, the entrance to Upper Bidwell Park.

Distance Rating

Grade 1: up to 6 miles

Grade 2: 6-10 miles

Grade 3: 10-15 miles

Grade 4: 15-20 miles

Grade 5: over 20 miles

Elevation Gain Rating

Class A: up to 1000 feet

Class B: 1000-2000 feet

Class C: 2000-3000 feet

Class D: over 3000 feet

The Wolves of Yellowstone

A TV show depicted the wolves of Yellowstone after their introduction 14 years ago. Much controversy surrounds bringing back a "livestock killer" where they once flourished but, like the grizzly bear in California, the animals were considered just too big, destructive and dangerous to have around.

Yellowstone National Park does have large herds of elk and buffalo, so there is plenty of food, enabling dramatic numbers of wolves to exist there. After the original wolves were exterminated in Yellowstone in the 1930s, 31 wolves from Canada were released in the park in March 1995 and now number about 170.

Wolves are basically dog-like and playful, but they do have powerful jaws and can be quite formidable. There was a scene where a lone wolf overtook and killed an elk in the river – quite a mouthful. The photographer captured the essence of "red in tooth and claw" very vividly, with the wolf biting into the neck, and those penetrating, dreamy-looking gray-brown eyes expressing the call of the wild of ages past.

Wolves have been around for several million years, with fossils of giant Dire Wolves being recovered as near as the Irvington Rock Quarry in the Bay Area. They undoubtedly were common all through California, along with Saber-toothed Cats, Mastodons, and Giant Sloths. The wolf has a lot of experience in being a predeceous killer.

However, wolves are of the dog family from which your pet housedog has descended. As such, the primitive urges still linger deep down in the brain of Fido, dulled by a long period of domestic life. I have seen "tame" wolves being shown to classrooms, and they look like big, gentle dogs, but the risk of them reverting to a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde complex almost takes your breath away.

The myriad of dog-types all descended from domesticated wolves. Housecats are also chips off various wild cat species. Practically any pet you possess has a convoluted wild connection, so be cautious with pets, especially wildlife kept in captivity. They have teeth and talons and suppressed instincts!

Quite vivid in my mind was the death of a zookeeper at Oakland Zoo about 30 years ago. A disgruntled elephant sat down on the man. Not many people have elephants as pets, but the array of wild animals kept in homes is surprising, especially reptile fanatics. Escaped Burmese pythons have about taken over Everglades National Park. Leave the raccoons and rattlers in their natural habitats.

Particularly shocking was the pet chimpanzee that attacked a woman and bit off her hands and face. Monkeys and other primates are potentially dangerous, with an astounding 15,000 as pets in America, even though 20 states – including California – now prohibit primates as pets. The "Viewpoint" author Jennifer Fearing states: "We need to end this dangerous monkey business. Primates belong in the wild, not in our backyards and basements. Support the Congressional passage of the Captive Primate Safety Act."

Although people may appreciate the beauty of birds and other wildlife close up, they belong in their natural environment, even though a compromise has been made with the establishment of good zoos with attractive habitats. Take a Sierra Club safari and see the real thing interacting with their habitat!

Animals give me more pleasure through the viewfinder of a camera than they ever did in the crosshairs of a gunsight. And after I finished "shooting," my unharmed victims are still around for others to enjoy. I have developed a deep respect for animals. – Jimmy Stewart

Margaret and Mildred on Location

During the winter of 2008, a visitor came to Oroville and wanted to see the Feather River Nature Center. I gave a tour to "Trish," a bush worker from Australia. This young woman appeared bronzed and weather-beaten from her back-country work but well versed in the montage of exotic animals that live in that harsh environment.

When I asked about the deadly snakes there, she said, "I see Tiger Snakes all the time, but the Taipan is most dangerous." Australia is full of some of the most interesting snakes in the world, about 70% of them being venomous.

But birds were what she wanted to see in America, and she was thrilled to see a turkey vulture fly by in the cold winter morning. It was summer in Australia, and the red-flowering eucalyptus were blooming there just as were those introduced to the river at Oroville.

The rugged voyager lived in the town of Margaret River, Western Australia, on the very tip of the continent, where there is about 50 inches of rainfall a year, and a lush forest hugs the coast. The name Margaret River intrigued me, and you always wonder what the story is behind names.

I learned that the river and town were named in 1839 by John Bussell, honoring his cousin, Margaret Wyche. Bussell had also founded the nearby town of Busselton. At that time, Margaret River was a lumber camp, but has since become a tourist town of 4500, famous for its vineyards. People come to see massive limestone caves near the river, and to surf in some of the highest ocean waves in the world just off Cape Naturaliste.

Then I learned about Mildred Lake in the wilderness of Alberta, Canada. J.R. Akins named it after his wife, Mildred Grass Akins, in 1914. There aren't many rivers and lakes named after women, although I do remember that Lewis and Clark labeled Judith River in honor of Clark's fiancée. There is Jenny Lake in the Tetons, but it seems most waterways are named after men, Indians, landmarks, or animals.

The thing about Mildred Lake is that a massive strip-mining operation processing oil sands is being conducted where formerly there were no roads in the dense forests, and the Chipewyan and Cree Indian tribes lived in isolation, hunting, fishing, and trapping to survive. Nowhere on Earth is more earth being moved now than near Mildred Lake. To extract one barrel of oil, the industry must first cut down the forest, then remove two tons of peat and dirt atop the oil sands, then process two tons of sand. Heated barrels of water strip the bitumen from the sand, and the waste is discharged into oily tailing ponds that cover 50 square miles. One time 500 migratory ducks landed there and died. Billions of dollars are involved in construction and in profit, with pipelines all the way to the U.S. to move the "dirty" oil.

What do Margaret River and Mildred Lake have in common? Although they are in different environments and far apart, since the advent of Europeans both areas that were pure wilderness before have been altered drastically. Forests have been cut in both locales, land turned into agriculture or scraped bare to extract natural resources.

It has been the same story all over planet Earth. When there are valuable resources, or a beautiful place to live, and few laws, great changes are wrought to the land, often destructive. It would be good if conservation-vision could begin at the beginning.

Earth gets its price for what the Earth gives us. – James Russell Lowell

Smashed

Down by the riverside, on a glorious April day when all of the tree vegetation was breaking forth in green splendor and the flowers were blooming, I was attracted to a butterfly that had been smashed by a car on the Diversion Dam road.

The tattered remains of a pipevine swallowtail shimmered in the breeze as if alive, but the torn wing remnants would never fly again. The beautiful body and aerial magnificence seemed to have been wasted by an early death.

The daily news consists mostly of tragedy stories, but the demise of a butterfly will never make the headlines. An unfortunate encounter that results in loss of life is difficult to understand, as it ends the normal sequence of continuation, human or butterfly, yet thousands succumb each day, whether through war or, as in the animal world, predators making a kill, or even livestock munching wildflowers! Insects die by the millions, especially those road losses. I went through a swarm of some gnat-like masses on the highway, and the car was splattered. Some accidents can't be avoided, but others, like squirrels on the road, need a brake.

Yet it was sad to see the loss of that one butterfly. I know its life story started when the pipevine bloomed in February, later grew leaves on which swallowtails laid eggs that hatched into the leaf-eating black and red larvae. About May, a larva crawled to a rock, attached, and changed into a dead-looking chrysalis case. There the flickering, transforming life hung all summer and all winter, finally to break open early the next spring. A breath-taking beautiful butterfly emerged, pumped its wings open with fluids before flying forth like a winged angel – right into the path of an oncoming car!

Dozens of swallowtails fluttered in the meadow, and other than the emotional agony of a beautiful life dying, one more loss on the road would seem insignificant. What we call waste is not a loss in nature, however; every particle goes from use to use. Even that smashed butterfly was food for the ants, and the crumbled wing tissue would be added to the soil.

It is a desirable human characteristic to feel concerned and sympathetic toward loss of life. There are certain segments of mankind trying to save creatures in peril, whether it is whales or some endangered species of butterfly. Efforts are made to save habitats so the animals can have some place to live. The loss of one pipevine swallowtail smashed on the road means nothing in the overall population, but those who appreciate beauty and the wonder of life can take heart in the Albert Schweitzer attitude of respect for life.

There is a balance of compassion between the extreme position of the Jainism religion in India that advocates sweeping the path clear of insects before walking there to avoid stepping on life, and the callous uncaring outlook. Even Schweitzer said he could swat a mosquito and still have respect for its unique function and beauty.

Of course, some things – plant or animal – have to be killed for food or else the human species would be endangered. "To every thing there is a season...a time to plant, and a time to pluck up; a time to kill, and a time to heal..." – Ecclesiastes 3:1. That's the way of life.

One is constantly reminded of the infinite lavishness and fertility of Nature – inexhaustible abundance amid what seems enormous waste...we learn that no particle of her material is wasted or worn out... It is eternally flowing from use to use, beauty to yet higher beauty... We rejoice in the imperishable, unspendable wealth of the universe, and watch and wait the reappearance of everything that melts and fades and dies about us, feeling sure that its next appearance will be better and more beautiful than the last. – John Muir

Join the YAH! Blog

Solar Power Overview

By Frederick A. Ruth

Solar Power is magic. Converting sunlight into electricity is similar to Middle Age efforts at turning lead into gold. But solar power works, and the "gold" is the most versatile, non polluting energy source on the planet.

Until recently, we could only purchase electricity from our local utility. Solar power now provides a second choice, a more thoughtful option, with multiple benefits for us all.

In my work as a solar energy consultant, I find people weigh the environmental, security and independence, technology and financial benefits as the main reasons to go solar. Today I'll outline the financial benefits of solar power.

In 2001, PG&E converted to a multi-tier rate structure and since its emergence from bankruptcy in 2004, electric rates have climbed steadily. PG&E electric rates are now the highest in the country.

Currently, solar power comes in at two to four cents above PG&E's baseline rate and well under tiers 3, 4, and 5. Overall electricity savings are substantial, especially for big users. Once installed, solar electric costs never go up. Savings on electricity costs start immediately, solar homes are worth more and property taxes cannot be increased.

In deciding to go solar, one must consider the generous help from the local, state and federal programs, will not last forever. In PG&E territory, California Solar rebates are at \$1.55 per AC watt. Next step down is \$1.10 per AC watt. On January 1, 2009, the Federal Investment Tax Credit for solar power was increased to 30% of the solar system cost after state rebate. Now nearly 50% of the costs to go solar, including installation, are currently covered.

When considering solar the first step is conservation. Reduce your use. But recognize, electric rates will continue to increase and even by conserving your bill will be higher in the future.

Think of solar power as the "hard asset" part of your portfolio. Never again suffer a 50% value drop like "paper assets". Solar is the safest investment with the highest return available. Your solar power investment pays you back every month, fixes your electricity costs and insulates you from higher rates in the future.

California's interior valleys have more solar power installations than anywhere else. The market is very competitive with consumers benefiting from low costs and high value. Solar power is a proven, mature and reliable technology.

The financial "stimulus" of rebates and tax credits, currently prices solar power "under

Plumas County Upgrades General Plan

Plumas County has a general plan that was originally adopted in 1984 and has had the most amendments in the state (400+). Jerry Brown, California's Attorney General and keynote speaker at the 2007 PCL conference promised to sue all counties who failed to bring their general plans to current standards. Thus, Plumas County was on his short list of targeted counties. Even so, the cost to create and implement a new plan initially caused foot dragging, especially by a county supervisor that is no longer in office. But this state of denial has passed and Plumas is well on its way to bring itself current. The process started about two years ago with a series of "visioning" meetings held with the public at various locations within the county. The results of those sessions were catalogued and summarized into booklet form for later use in creating the new general plan. This is the point at which the process began to stall. The cost, political power struggles and disagreement over process caused progress to grind to a halt. As mentioned earlier, the recent election and realization of the need to make it happen (i.e. discussions with state officials) put the project on a higher priority.

The Board of Supervisors recently appointed a special five-member committee to facilitate the process. It consists of two board members, two planning commission members and one at large member from the public. The committee's first task was to choose a consulting firm that would coordinate and help construct the general plan update. The committee was unable to make a final decision for their recommendation and submitted the names of two finalists to the Board of Supervisors. Both firms, Design Workshop and Minterhamish, were interviewed and questioned before the final selection was made on Tuesday, 18 March by the Board of Supervisors. At that time, Design Workshop out of Truckee, was unanimously chosen. An overflow crowd attended the meeting. Many of us were surprised how quickly and unconfessionally the selection happened. The decision was made in five minutes. Evidently the process had led them to a clear choice, also seemingly favored by most of the audience. The Board also unanimously voted to request a two-year extension in order to implement the updated plan. The extension was authorized by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research.

Now the real work and expense begins. And this brings me to the main point of this article: planning and zoning at the county level influences more than just the economics and location of development in a municipality. We have a real opportunity to affect how our local environment is treated for a long time to come. A citizen's group, "Plumas Tomorrow", has been formed to keep track of the planning process and help facilitate a good result. The possibilities for improvement are almost limitless and your ideas and efforts would be appreciated. If you have interest and/or expertise in this area, please contact me at 284-6856 or theshowers@frontiernet.net.

There are big issues at hand, and we can affect the final result. A few examples include: The proposed world class sized open pit, acid heap copper mine could be controlled and/or eliminated by proper zoning and restrictions: Water, air and noise quality can be maintained/improved in a similar manner: Open space can be maintained and urban sprawl curtailed: Cleaner industries and sustainable businesses can be developed (thus avoiding the boom and bust industries and encouraging alternative energy development/use). For those who want to make a difference, opportunity is

An Open Letter to Wally Herger

The ExComm voted to present a letter to Wally Herger asking for his support in passing a strong climate and energy bill in 2009. The documentation was provided by 1 SKY, a national campaign focused on passing effective federal climate policy. 1 SKY is endorsed by over 50 environmental organizations including the Sierra Club, National Wildlife Federation, Audubon Society, Earthjustice, Greenpeace, League of Women Voters, Oxfam, The Wilderness Society, and Union of Concerned Scientists, just to name a few. The following letter was hand-delivered to Representative Herger's Chico field office on 4-14-09.

Dear Representative Herger:

The Yahi Group/Motherlode Chapter/Sierra Club has nearly 1,500 members and encompasses Butte, Glenn, Lassen, Plumas, and Tehama counties. Our executive committee is asking you to review the attached documentation on the "Principles for Effective and Efficient Climate Legislation" and a "Preliminary Analysis of the Markey-Waxman Discussion Draft."

We hope these resources will guide you and help provide strong and effective policy initiatives to support a climate/energy bill that will reduce carbon emissions, while creating millions for green jobs and jumpstarting our economy. We know that you are concerned about the employment, economy, safety and health of your constituents. This legislation will conform and usher in the United States Supreme Court April 2007 ruling that "carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases constitute a danger to public health and welfare" based on years of scientific research and analysis.

We hope we can count on you for passing a strong climate and energy bill in 2009 and making sure that the "American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009" is as strong as possible to rebuild our economy and combat the threat of climate change. We look forward to your cooperation.

"Every good thing, great and small, needs defense." - John Muir

Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag



My Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____
 State _____ Zip _____
 email _____

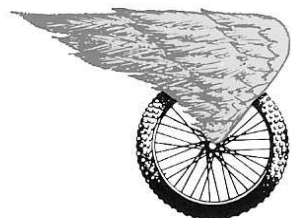
Check enclosed, made payable to Sierra Club
 Please charge my Mastercard Visa
 Exp. Date ____/____/____
 Cardholder Name _____
 Card Number _____

Membership Categories	INDIVIDUAL	JOINT
INTRODUCTORY	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
REGULAR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47

Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

F94Q W 0904 1
 Enclose check and mail to:
SIERRA CLUB
 P.O. Box 52968
 Boulder, CO 80322-2968

PULLINS CYCLERY



Steve & Katy O'Bryan

801 Main St.
Chico, CA 95928
Ph.: (530) 342-1055
Fax: (530) 342-8224
E-mail: pullinsusa@aol.com

Gala Anniversary Celebration at Clair Tappaan Lodge

By Olivia Diaz

August 14-16 the Sierra Club will celebrate its two historic lodges at Donner Pass:

Clair Tappaan Lodge – 75 years and
Hutchinson Lodge – 85 years

Events will include stories with s'mores and brandy around the campfire in the meadow of Clair Tappaan Lodge, a lunch at the Warming Hut (now owned and being renovated by Donner Ski Ranch) with stories from veterans of the lodges, a wine and cheese reception, theme hikes and lots of new activities.

The committee is arranging for a horseshoe tournament, Bocce Ball, a fly-fishing demonstration, a scavenger hunt, on-going raffles, and many more activities. Chair Ernie Malamud welcomes new volunteers. On Sunday there will be a music festival with a beer garden, which will be open to the public. On Saturday night there will be a keynote speaker (TBA) and later, opportunities for star gazing.

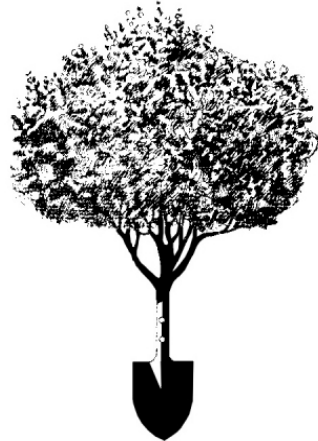
Bartlett
COMPUTER REPAIR
APPLE & MACINTOSH
Hardware & Software
Support & Installation
Fast, Dependable Service



Lorna Bartlett
(530) 893-3817

P.O. Box 7617, Chico, CA 95927-7617
lornabar@pacbell.net

FLORAL NATIVE NURSERY
2511 Floral Avenue
Chico, California 95973-2511
Telephone: (530) 892-2511
Fax: (530) 342-1641
E-mail: cohasset@shocking.com



A CALIFORNIA NATIVE
PLANT NURSERY

Gold Lake Lodge

At the crest of the Sierra Nevadas

Hiking • Fishing

Swimming • Boating

Meals and Lodging Provided

530-836-2350

GoldLakeLodge.com

Ed's Printing

- We encourage the use of recycled papers
100% recycle paper available
- We use vegetable based inks
- Paper sizes printed up to 18 x 24 in.

550 Cherry Street • Chico, CA • 891-4625

John D. Burge, CPA
Certified Public Accountant

567 E. 5th Ave. Chico, CA 95926
530 342-3680 Fax 530 345-7651
johnburgecpa@sbcglobal.net

Steve Miller
Broker



Miller Real Estate

Sales – Appraisals
Chico, CA
530-345-6061

email: steveinchico@accessbee.com



Frederick Ruth
Solar Energy Consultant

Lic.#750184

3904 Cosby Avenue • Chico, CA 95928
530 519 5168 cell • 888 OK SOLAR office • 530 893 3021 fax
fruth@recsolar.com • www.recsolar.com