



**SIERRA  
CLUB**  
FOUNDED 1892

**Yahi  
Group**



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

News  Articles  Programs  Hikes and Outings  Meetings  Events

### Deer Road - Kills

### What Causes Them, Why They Persist, and How to Respond.

Twenty-five years ago, Frank used to have 50 deer at his 80-acre ranch in Sierra Valley, "but now there are only two.

"The problem is from [vehicle] road kills and too many coyotes," says Frank. "The US Trapper over there doesn't kill enough of them [coyotes].

"The deer need to get down to the river to get something to drink, so I put out guzzlers filled with water up here so they don't have to cross [road] A23 and risk getting hit. Even so, the kill is still way high because [people] drive too fast [70+ mph], especially at night when the deer are out. No one pays any attention to the road signs [Slow Down; Deer Crossing Next 10 Miles] anymore, and the County doesn't care. They [road department] go out at 7 A.M. and pick up the [deer] bodies so the general public doesn't see them."

Noel, Chico rancher, deer hunter and deer ecologist, used to see "two to three hundred deer in the cow pastures above Chico every winter, but now you're lucky to see any.

"Up to the 1990's the Tehama deer herd was the largest in the State, but no more. The herd is down about 40% because of housing developments; they [deer] have no place to go. Their migration routes are blocked when they build those houses [developments] with fences and dogs on the ridges.

"Bad forest management [imposed] by government, logging, and environmentalists are also to blame. Fire suppression and [excessive] cutting make the forage grow too high so the deer can't get to their food. They need brush 3 feet high but it's now 10 to 12 feet tall. We need cool fires [in the forest] but they [fire suppression] won't let that happen. We can send a man to the moon but we can't manage our open spaces."

Eric, outdoorsman and Feather River



whitewater enthusiast, claims, "[deer] winter and summer ranges are impacted by development. The [real] issue is land use, and there's no magic bullet. There is no public concept of [wisely] using open space. It's a combination of poor federal, state and local planning.

"[Society] needs to build high density on small footprints rather than massive real estate developments; we need a different model than the one that's driving our present economic system. We have an outdated post-WWII suburban model based on exploitive road transportation. It's all about land use."

Ray, who owns the body shop in Portola, sees at least two deer-damaged vehicles each week. He has repair jobs from Quincy to Truckee. "Most deer are hit from spring through August. The average repair cost is \$3,000 to \$6,000. The cars [I repair] are either covered by comprehensive [insurance] or so damaged they don't function at all. Those [vehicles] with only liability [coverage] or slightly damaged are repaired at home.

"The major problem is speed; they're driving too fast, they don't pay attention, and they don't

know where the deer are crossing like most old-timers do. At night you have to look side-to-side to see them. Those deer whistles don't work. I see them on the front of [smashed] cars all the time."

The story is much the same up the Feather River Valley along State Routes 70 and 89, and into the Sierra Valley, but most Plumas road deer kills are in the Chester area. The two-lane State Route 36 runs east to west and divides the deer herd's summer range to the north from the waters of Lake Almanor to the south, and there are no deer underpasses except a natural one at Bailey Creek.

Deer stay north of SR 36 foraging and dropping fawns until August, when their water holes run dry. Then there is deer movement across the road to the lake to obtain water and back again. Added food magnets south of the road are housing and a golf course.

The deer travel results in a "blood alley" along this road corridor. The cars and trucks kill more deer than hunters do, and do it less humanely.

Margo of the California Deer Association (a conservation organization) reports they are very concerned with the decrease in California herds. Lake Almanor in Plumas County is "a problem area because of the golf resort, OHV's, housing development, and fences, but cars are the worst."

Close to Almanor, the Association, along with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), placed and

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## From the ExCom

By Janice Heckerson

Summer is a good time to be outdoors and a quiet time for Yahi Group meetings. But much work is ongoing. Many committees keep active, such as Forestry, Membership, and Greenspace. Of course, others are planning the fine programs at the monthly meetings and publishing the newsletter.

John Woods is soliciting business advertising for the Newsletter. ExCom also approved classified ads from members of three lines for \$5.00 for one publication. It was decided to apply for an ISN number for the Butte County Trail Guide so it can be sold in any store. And we are asking outing leaders to collect \$2.00 from each non-member for their

### About this Newsletter

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.

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to Sierra Club, Post Office Box 2012, Chico, CA 95927.

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 Wood (530-899-8607) or Goodie Sweatt (530-894-3988). 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. Submissions will be returned if specifically requested and accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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

## Awards Potluck

by Gerda Lydon

On June 12 about 25 members gathered in the Conference Room of the Chico Library to partake of a scrumptious potluck followed by a very interesting and illuminating talk by Dr. Joseph Abbott, a frequent contributor to this newsletter. It seems that the politics in eastern Plumas County are not that different from those of Butte County.

Award certificates for outstanding service to the Yahi Group were presented to:

Kevin Birkes - for being Chair, now in his fourth year.

Louise Casey and Susan Sears - for their efforts in publishing our quarterly newsletter. In addition, Louise serves as the Yahi Group Webmaster.

Joanne Gerson - for her untiring efforts as Yahi Group Treasurer for the last seven years. She has also taken on the sale of calendars as well as Christmas cards and note cards.

Steve Green - to thank him for his two years on the Yahi Group Ex-Com. Steve is also a member of the Chico Tree Ordinance Committee, as well as an active member of Friends of Bidwell Park.

Trish Puterbaugh - for her constant vigilance and work on forestry issues.

Betty Volker - for her years as Chair of the Yahi Group and Singles, and her latest effort in initiating and chairing our spring garden tour fundraiser, which netted over \$1,000.

Jeanne Woodbury - for her unsurpassed efforts as outings leader.

### 25- and 50-Year Membership Awards

Congratulations to our 50-year members:

### Yahi Group of the Sierra Club

#### Elected Officials

#### Co-Chair (Organization)

Kevin Birkes: 530-824-2588

kevbirkes@earthlink.net

#### Co-Chair (Administration)

Joanne Gerson: 530-893-2154

joanne.gerson@att.net

#### Vice-Chair

John Hollister: 530-879-9196

sierralives@aol.com

#### Secretary

Janice Heckerson: 530-343-5168

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joanne.gerson@att.net

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Wendy Woods: 530-899-8607

woods@dcsi.net

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trehgr@sunset.net

#### Forestry Committee

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sayhart@infostations.com

#### Green Space

Wendy Woods: 530-899-8607

woods@dcsi.net

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Trish Puterbaugh

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LouiseCasey@netscape.net

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Susan Sears: 530-532-0149

## Removing Invasive Weeds in Bidwell Park

By Susan Mason

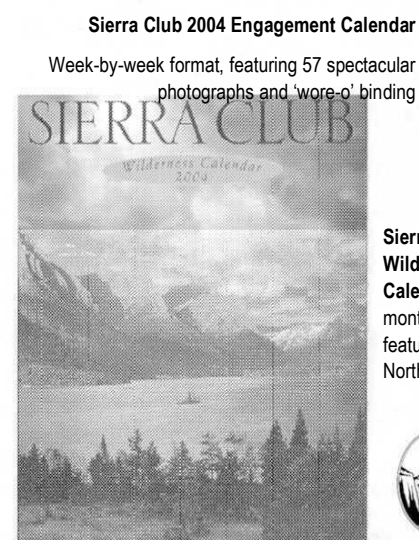
A few months ago, several of us decided to form a new organization, focused specifically on helping Bidwell Park. You can read more about the group, Friends of Bidwell Park, at our web site [www.friendsofbidwellpark.org](http://www.friendsofbidwellpark.org). We have lots of ideas about ways to help the park, physically and financially, and will be starting up various programs over the next year.

One project we started almost immediately was a weekly volunteer invasive weed removal project. Park volunteer Laura Nissim, who has single-handedly removed tons of privet and ivy from Five Mile, was our inspiration for this program. As anyone who visits Lower Park already knows, the park is smothered in invasive plants. Some botanical surveys indicate that 90% of the plants there are non-native. Park Director Dennis Beardsley suggested we focus on Bladder Senna, a shrub that's mostly found in the Cedar Grove area. It

seems to be spread primarily by people picking the pods and popping them as they walk through the park. The plants have a woody stem and can be removed fairly easily in the rainy season using a Weed Wrench, a tool that locks onto the weed stem, allowing the user to lever out the deep tap root. Until it starts raining again, we're concentrating on identifying places in the park that have Bladder Senna and removing the seed pods, to reduce the number of new plants next year.

Our weeding dates (alternating Friday and Sunday mornings from 7-10 am) and locations are posted on our web site and we also have a weekly email reminder available. We provide tools but volunteers should bring work gloves and water. You can show up and leave any time—even an hour a month of help will make a big difference eventually. We also need Bladder Senna spotters—people who regularly walk in Lower Park, especially on the dirt paths

## SIERRA CLUB 2004 CALENDARS



**Sierra Club 2004 Wilderness Wall Calendar**—Spiral bound, month-by-month format, featuring 12 majestic North American



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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.



**SIERRA CLUB**  
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## Sierra Club Holiday Cards

**20 cards per box with 5 each of 4 different Sierra Club**



- SC3000 Yosemite**
- SC3001 Landscapes (sample above)**
- SC3002 Winter Wildlife**
- SC3003 Nature's Details**

**photographs.**

## Volunteers Needed to Represent the Yahi Group at the Chico Farmer's Market

This holiday season the Yahi Group will again be providing information about the Yahi Group of the Sierra Club and selling Sierra Club calendars, holiday cards and note cards at the Farmers' Market in Chico. We will have a table at the Saturday market every Saturday morning between November 29 and December 20.

We need volunteers to attend to the table on each of these Saturdays. It is a different and enjoyable way to experience the Farmers' Market, meet a lot of people, and help the Yahi Group all at the same time.

If you can volunteer some of your time for any Saturday in that period, please call Joanne at 893-2154.





# Outings and Events

## Explore Kauai, Hawaii—



Come explore the garden island of Hawaii as we kayak, snorkel and hike our way along its shores, rivers and canyons.

For more information and to sign up call leader. Leader: Jeanne,

## Yahi Group

Join our more than 25 cross-country ski enthusiasts this winter as we explore the backcountry of Butte Meadows and Lassen Park and enjoy the groomed trails of Mt. Shasta and Royal Gorge.

If you'd like to be added to (or updated on) our cross-country ski list, please contact Yahi Group leaders, Jeanne, 899-9980 or Larry,

## Sierra Club Hike Classifications

### Distance Rating

Grade 1: up to 6 miles

Grade 2: 6-10 miles

Grade 3: 10-15 miles

### Elevation Gain Rating

Class A: up to 1000 feet

Class B: 1000-2000 feet

## 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.

**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. A customary amount is 6 cents per mile per passenger depending on the vehicle, the number of passengers, and the road conditions. 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 web site.

**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 chose 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 [www.motherlode.sierraclub.org/yahi/](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 email [ajmendoza@prodigy.net](mailto:ajmendoza@prodigy.net).



**Take  
A  
Hike!**  
...With the  
Sierra Club

# YAH! Group Fall 2003 Outings and Events

## Fall 2003 Programs

By Gerda Lydon

We have some very exciting programs scheduled for you to finish out the year. I hope you can join us. Marvey Mueller will present "Armchair Visit to Yosemite" on September 11. Marianne Werner will present her program of "Beauty Around the World," countries in Europe, Africa and the Middle East she visited before 9/11, on October 9. Greg Higgins, M.D., will show slides of "Hiking, Climbing and Botanizing in Alaska" on November 13.

Programs are presented the second Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Chico Library on East 1st Avenue at Sheridan. Refreshments are served, and small donations are gladly accepted.

**On-Going Wednesday Weekly Walks** (grade 2, class A). Meet at Chico Park & Ride each Wednesday evening at 6:30PM for a 1 ½ hour creekside power walk along the creek. Wear tennis/walking shoes and bring water and flashlight. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980.

## August

**Friday, August 29, 6:30PM - Game Night & Pot Luck.** Come join the fun and eat good food under the trees by a sparkling pond. (if it is too hot we can go inside for air conditioning). Bring your favorite game, plate & cup etc. and a potluck dish. We will provide cool drinks. Call for location. Leader: Joanne, 893-2154.

**Friday – Sunday, August 29-31 - Backpack in the Trinity Alps, Stonewall Pass to Echo Lake** (grade 4, class C). We'll hike 7 miles into the Trinity Alps crossing Stonewall Pass to enjoy the cool enclave of Echo Lake. We'll set up base camp and explore. Excellent vistas, some snow, lots of breathable air. Bring backpacking gear, food for 3 days, 2 nights and \$ for carpooling. Group size is limited. Approximate round trip drive of 300 miles. Return time about 8 PM on Sunday. Call for reservations and specifics. Leader: Theresa, 899-7331.

**Sunday, August 31 – Dayhike to Green Island & Saucer Lakes** (grade 1, class A). From Sunflower Flat at the end of forest road 26N31 we'll hike the easy (about 520' elevation loss & gain) 3-mile trail down to Soda Creek and up to the floating bog at Green Island Lake. We then continue another mile for swimming at deep, beautiful Saucer Lake in the Chips Creek Roadless Area. Meet at Paradise Albertson's at 7:30AM or at the Chico Park & Ride at 8:15AM for the drive up through Butte Meadows, or meet at Cherry Hill campground at about 9:30AM for the 12-mile shuttle over gravel & dirt roads to the trailhead, where the outing begins. Bring lunch, water and swimsuit. Leader: Stephen, 876-1391 or [sayhart@infostations.com](mailto:sayhart@infostations.com).

## September

**Wednesday, September 3, 6:30PM – Weekly Walk** (see beginning of schedule for details).

**Saturday, September 6 – Help Maintain Trails in Upper Bidwell Park.** Suitable for all ages and a good way to learn more about the trails in the Park. Gloves, tools, training and beverages are provided by the Parks Department. Wear sturdy shoes or boots. For more information, contact Steve Hogue at the Parks Department, 895-4758 or [shogue@ci.chico.ca.us](mailto:shogue@ci.chico.ca.us).

**Saturday- Saturday, September 6-13 – Eastern Yosemite Backpack & Circle Around Mt. Lyell** (grade 5, class D). Starting from Toulomne Meadows an exploration of the little visited, very scenic country of the North Fork of the San Joaquin River. Starting up Rafferty Creek to Lewis Creek and then traveling into the area south of Mt. Lyell. We then go cross-country over a pass and down enchanting Bench Canyon to Twin Island Lakes. From here north and over another cross-country pass to the John Muir Trail, delight in the vistas from Donohue Pass then head back down to Toulomne Meadows. One layover day is planned. Individual commissary. Cost \$5 for permit and carpool \$. A relatively strenuous trip for backpackers with some experience in cross-country travel. Leader: Alan, 891-8789 or [ajmendoza@prodigy.net](mailto:ajmendoza@prodigy.net)

**Wednesday, September 10, 6:30PM – Weekly Walk** (see beginning of schedule for details).

**Thursday, September 11, 7:30PM - Armchair Visit to Yosemite.** Presented by Marvey Mueller. Conference room, Chico Library East 1st Ave. & Sherman.

**Saturday, September 13 – Dog Hike & Swim** (grade 1, class A). Tired of leaving Fido at home while you go out and have fun hiking? This time, bring your dog along for a hike in Upper Bidwell. We will first hike along the lower trail, where your dog can run off-leash, as far as Bear Hole. Then at Bear Hole, we switch to the Yahi Trail (leash)

**Sunday, September 14 – Peak Adventure: Mt. Lassen & Brokeoff Day Hike** (grade 3, class D). Are you ready for a challenge? Come help us take on the two tallest peaks in Lassen Park, Mt. Lassen and Brokeoff Mountain. Bring lots of food, water, Ibuprofen and Ben Gay. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 7:30AM. For more information and to sign up call leader. Thunderstorms cancel. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980; Asst. Leader: Charles, 895-3045.

**Wednesday, September 17, 6:30PM – Weekly Walk** (see beginning of schedule for details).

**Friday, September 19 - North Rim Hike and Write** (grade 2, class A). Join us for a relatively easy 6-mile morning walk to the end of the North Rim trail and back. In addition to plenty of water and a hat, bring along a notebook and a pen. Along the way, we'll write in response to interesting prompts. Don't worry: writing is optional. Approximately a 6-mile hike with a return time around 11:30 AM. Meet at Chico Park and Ride at 7:30 AM Leader: Theresa, 899-7331 / [tmarcis@shastacollege.edu](mailto:tmarcis@shastacollege.edu)

**Saturday, September 20 – Young Adult Cinder Cone Hike** (ages 18-35, grade 1, class 2). We'll climb one of Lassen National Park's most spectacular volcanic formations, the Cinder Cone, from Butte Lake. A total hiking distance of only 4-5 miles, but the cinder cones can be very slow going. Great views from the top of the Fantastic Lava Beds, Lassen Peak and Prospect Peak. Bring lunch, boots, water, sunscreen, a windbreaker and a hat. The top can be very windy. Leader: Charles, 895-3043; Asst. Leader: Holly, 894-5591.

**Saturday, September 20, 9AM-1PM – Fall Bidwell Park and Chico Creeks Cleanup.** Butte Environmental Council, City of Chico, and the CSUC A.S. Recycling invite you to the Bidwell Park and Chico Creeks Fall Cleanup. For more information call 891-6424 or [www.becnet.org](http://www.becnet.org).

**Saturday-Sunday, September 20-21 – Canoe/Kayak Boat Camp.** Lake Oroville boat-in campsites are a treat for paddling, fishing, swimming, exploring and solitude. Join us on a 2-mile paddle to Goat Ranch campsites on the North Fork of the Feather River. Enjoy two days of aquatic adventure and an evening of campfire songs, stories and star-gazing. There will be a motorized shuttle for camping gear. You must have your own boat and a PDF for each person

### 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.

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on board. Individual commissary. Also bring tent, sunscreen, swimsuit, sleeping bag, water and towel. Limited to 16 people. Call for reservations and more information. Leader: Dave, 533-2357; Asst. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980.

**Sunday, September 21 – Chico Mural Walk & Lunch** (grade 1, class A). Stroll around downtown Chico to view the innovative murals followed by a group lunch at a downtown restaurant. Cost: restaurant lunch. Meet on the steps of Chico City Hall (Main St. and 4<sup>th</sup> St.) at 10AM. Leader: Carla, 891-6977.

**Wednesday, September 24, 6:30PM – Weekly Walk** (see beginning of schedule for details).

**Saturday-Sunday, September 27-28 – Backpack to Saucer Lake** (grade 1, class A). This trip is fine for children, older hikers, and those wanting an easy trip. Three miles in, past beautiful Green Island Lake, great swimming, fishing, relaxing. Bring your youngster or parent and enjoy the leisurely pace. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 8:30 AM. Round trip drive of about 90 miles. Please call leader in advance. Leader: John, 879-9196.

## October

**Wednesday, October 1, 6:30PM – Weekly Walk** (see beginning of schedule for details).

**Saturday, October 4 – Colby Meadows Hike** (grade 2, class A). A hike of about 7 total miles in the cross-country ski area. We will see seldom-visited meadows and springs and may see pileated woodpeckers, northern goshawks and red-breasted sapsuckers. Bring boots, lunch, water and \$ for drivers. Round-trip drive of about 75-80 miles. Meet at the Chico Park & Ride at 9AM. Rain cancels. Leader: Larry, 342-7998; Asst. Leader: Lynn, 877-1671.

**Saturday, October 4 – Help Maintain Trails in Upper Bidwell Park.** Suitable for all ages and a good way to learn more about the trails in the Park. Gloves, tools, training and beverages are provided by the Parks Department. Wear sturdy shoes or boots. For more information, contact Steve Hogue at the Parks Department, 895-4758 or shogue@ci.chico.ca.us.

**Wednesday, October 8, 6:30PM – Weekly Walk** (see beginning of schedule for details).

**Thursday, October 9, 7:30PM - Beauty Around the World.** Marianne Werner will present her program of countries in Europe, Africa and the Middle East she visited before 9/11. Conference

room, Chico Library East 1st Ave. & Sherman.

**Friday, October 10 – Full Moon Paddle.** Join us

for a calm leisurely 4-mile paddle of the North Forebay in Oroville. The splendid Harvest Moon will be gloriously bright and shimmering on the cool calm waters of this man made waterway. Learn about the nocturnal wildlife and the visible fall constellations. You must have your own boat and a PFD for each person on your vessel. Bring kayak/canoe, PFD, flashlight, binoculars, warm clothing and \$2 for the entrance fee. Limited to 20 people. Meet at 7 PM at the North Forebay in Oroville. Call leader for directions and sign up. Leader: Dave, 533-2357

**Friday, October 10 – Upper Bidwell Park Full Moon Hike** (grade 2, class A). We'll admire the pretty sunset while we eat dinner atop Bidwell Park's Upper Rim Trail. Then we'll join the coyotes and rattlesnakes as they howl at the moon as she rises above the treetops. Our trek continues along the rim trail and then winds down to the canyon floor bathed in moonlight. We'll return via the lovely Yahi Trail or park road. Bring a full moon dinner, water and a flashlight. This is a moderately-easy 8-mile loop with a 750' elevation gain early on. Meet at Horseshoe Lake at 6PM. Return around 10PM. Rain cancels. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980; Asst. Leaders: Peggy, 343-9843, Holly, 894-5991.

**Saturday, October 11 – Young Adult Deer Creek Hike** (ages 18-35, grade 1, class A). Take a 6-7 mile walk through the cool forest and early fall greenery as we follow the rush of Deer Creek. At the end of the hike we'll see an interesting road cut for the amateur geologists. We'll begin at the trail just off of Highway 32. Bring water, lunch and carpool \$. Rain cancels. Return at approximately 3PM; about an 80-mile round-trip drive. Meet at Chico Park and Ride at 8 AM. Leader: Charles, 895-3045; Asst. Leader: Holly, 894-5501.

**Saturday, October 11 - Breakfast and Walk** (grade 2, class A). Have a delicious breakfast at the Brunch House Restaurant (they specialize in apple-walnut pancakes) then take a nice walk along the bike/walk path nearby. Bring water. For directions and a reservation, call leader by Thursday evening October 9. Leader: Carla, 891-6977.

**Sunday, October 12 - North Rim Dog Hike** (grade 2, class A). Bring your dog along for a hike along the North Rim trail in Upper Bidwell Park. We will begin at the Easter Cross and hike uphill along the North Rim for a couple of hours until we reach the end of the trail, stopping occasionally to enjoy the views along the way. At the end of the trail we will rest and have lunch and then head back down the hill. Your dogs can do the hike off-leash, but bring a leash along just in case you need to restrain your dog at some point. Also bring lunch and plenty of water for you and your dog. Rain cancels. Meet at the Easter Cross Parking lot in Upper Bidwell Park at 9:30 AM. Space limited to 10 obedient, people-friendly and dog-friendly dogs. Dog-lovers without dogs are also welcome to join in the fun. Rain cancels. Call leader for reservations. Leader: Peggy 343-9843; Assistant Leader: Bill, 527-8203.

**Wednesday, October 15, 6:30PM – Weekly Walk** (see beginning of schedule for details).

**Saturday, October 18 – Nature Photography on Deer Creek** (grade 1, class A). We won't do much

walking. We'll do a lot of talking about picture composition, structure, and the use of light. And we'll try to put the ideas to use. There should be plenty of color with black oaks, big leaf maples, and elephant ears. Bring your camera and film. Also bring your knowledge to share with others. Meet at Chico Park and Ride at 9 AM. Round trip about 80 miles. Please call leader in advance. Leader: John, 879-9196.

**Saturday, October 18 – Thomes Gorge Day Hike** (grade 3, class B). A 10-11 mile hike in the foothills of the Mendocino National Forest. The historic Nomlaki Trail features extensive views of the Sacramento Valley, vernal pools and spectacular geological formations. We will hike through chaparral and foothill pines, and then descend 1100' to the deep sparkling pools of Thomes Creek. Bring boots, water, lunch and \$ for drivers. Rain cancels. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 8AM or in Orland at the Berry Patch Restaurant at 8:30AM. Return to Chico around 6PM. Driving distance about 120 miles round-trip. Rain cancels. Leader: Michelle, 865-9491, Asst. Leader: Bill, 527-8203.

**Wednesday, October 15, 6:30PM – Weekly Walk** (see beginning of schedule for details).

**Sunday, October 19 – Cross Country Ski Trail Maintenance.** Free cross country ski lessons for those who work on the Colby Meadows ski area. Tools furnished by the Forest Service. Bring work clothes, gloves, lunch and \$ for drivers (approx. a 75 mile round trip-drive). Meet at 8:30AM at the Chico Park & Ride. Return around 4PM. Leader: Larry, 342-7998.

**Wednesday, October 22, 6:30PM – Weekly Walk** (see beginning of schedule for details).

**Saturday, October 25 – Cross Country Ski Trail Maintenance.** Free cross country ski lessons for those who work on the Colby Meadows ski area. Tools furnished by the Forest Service. Bring work clothes, gloves, lunch and \$ for drivers (approx. a 75 mile round trip-drive). Meet at 8:30AM at the Chico Park & Ride. Return around 4PM. Leader: Larry, 342-7998.

**Sunday, October 26 – Deer Creek Hike** (grade 1, class A). The crashing cacophony of Deer Creek provides constant music and several small waterfalls as we travel downstream on a 4.6-mile undulating trail through the lovely Douglas Fir, Ponderosa Pines and Incense Cedar. Only 40 miles from Chico, the drive up Hwy 32 is a delight in itself. Bring lunch, water,



# Outings and Events

camera and carpool \$. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 8:30AM (don't forget to turn your clocks back). Return time around 4PM. Rain cancels. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980, Asst. Leader: Michelle, 865-9491.

**Sunday, October 26, 6PM – Winter Outings Planning Meeting.** Come join us as we plan our outings for the winter (December 1 – March 1). We will have a potluck and set our schedule for the Holiday season and the coming new year. Bring a potluck dish to share and your own serve ware. The Yahi Group will provide beverages. Everyone interested in outings is welcome. Call leader for meeting place. Leader: Alan, 891-8789 or [ajmendoza@prodigy.net](mailto:ajmendoza@prodigy.net).

**Wednesday, October 29, 6:30PM – Weekly Walk** (see beginning of schedule for details).

**Friday, October 31 - Halloween Costume Party, Potluck and Games Night.** Plan to have a howling good time as we begin the holiday season with a Halloween Party! Deck yourself in your most bewitching/ghoulish garments. Whip up a wickedly delicious dish to share and bring your favorite Halloween brew. Card tables and chairs appreciated, and bring a favorite game! The fun begins at 6PM. Call for meeting place. Leader: Alan/Joy: 891-8789; Asst. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980.

## November

**Saturday, November 1 – Help Maintain Trails in Upper Bidwell Park.** Suitable for all ages and a good way to learn more about the trails in the Park. Gloves, tools, training and beverages are provided by the Parks Department. Wear sturdy shoes or boots. For more information, contact Steve Hogue at the Parks Department, 895-4758 or [shogue@ci.chico.ca.us](mailto:shogue@ci.chico.ca.us).

**Sunday, November 2 – Mountain Bike Ride to Colby Mountain** (grade 3, class B). A 15-mile trip with excellent views of Mt. Lassen and the Butte Creek and Deer Creek drainages. Some single track. Bring properly maintained bike, helmet, tube, patch kit, pump, lunch, lots of water, appropriate clothing and \$ for carpool. A round trip drive of 75 miles. Meet at the Chico Park & Ride at 9AM. Rain cancels. Leader: Larry, 342-7998; Asst. Leader: Dave, 533-2357.

**Wednesday, November 5, 6:30PM – Weekly Walk** (see beginning of schedule for details).

**Saturday, November 8 – Full Moon and Eclipse Walk** (grade 1, class A). We'll meet at 6:30 P.M. at Five Mile Recreation area parking lot in upper Bidwell Park. From there we will walk up the

North Rim Trail to a suitable viewing site to witness the full moon and the eclipse. Bring flashlights, warm clothing, and sturdy shoes. Rain or serious clouds will cancel unless die-hards call me and insist. Leader: John, 879-9196.

**Sunday, November 9 – Bidwell Park Day Hike** (grade 2, class A). Take a flat, mostly shady 10-mile trek along the south and north side of Big Chico Creek. Meet at Caper Acres Parking Lot at 9:30AM. We'll walk on the paved park road (and maybe some dirt trail offshoots) past Five Mile to Upper Park (via a dirt road/trail) and end at the golf course to partake of lunch there or go back to Five Mile. We come back on the north side of the creek to return to the parking lot by 2-3PM. Bring water and lunch (or purchase at golf course). Rain cancels. Leader: Carla, 891-6977.

**Wednesday, November 12, 6:30PM – Weekly Walk** (see beginning of schedule for details).

**Thursday, November 13, 7:30PM - Hiking, Climbing and Botanizing in Alaska.** Greg Higgins, M.D., will show slides. Conference room, Chico Library East 1st Ave. & Sherman.

**Friday, November 14 – Singles Dinner at Happy Gardens Restaurant.** Come enjoy good food and good company. Reservations a must. Call leader by Wednesday evening the 12<sup>th</sup>. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980; Asst. Leader: Carla, 891-6977.

**Saturday, November 15 - Bike Ride to Chico Airport** (grade 2, class A) Meet at 11:00 AM by USPS mailboxes on Pillsbury Rd in parking lot in front of Mervyn's, across from Round Table Pizza. We'll take nearby bike path to Chico Airport and watch planes take off and land while eating our lunch. Round trip ride of 7 miles. Bring water and lunch. Rain cancels. Leader Carla, 891-6977, Asst. Leader, Gene.

**Saturday, November 15 – Young Adult Feather Falls Hike** (ages 18-35, grade 2, class B). Come with us to enjoy a moderately strenuous hike of about 8-9 miles to the majestic 640-foot high Feather Falls in the proposed Feather Falls Wilderness Area. We'll follow the lower, more scenic trail down to the viewing platform where we'll have lunch. Then we'll huff and puff our way back up to the parking lot. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 8:30 AM to carpool. Bring water, lunch, good boots and a camera if you've never seen the falls. Round trip drive is about 150 miles and we will return about 4:30 PM. Rain cancels. Leader: Charles, 895-3045; Asst. Leader: Holly, 894-5591.

**Sunday, November 16 – Paradise Flume Walk** (grade 2, class B). A walk along the beautiful flume just below Paradise. The flume trail is flat and has rushing water right next to it. Meet at Paradise Albertson's at 9:30AM. Rain cancels. Leader: Lynn, 877-1671; Asst. Leader: Annette, 872-3557.

**Wednesday, November 19, 6:30PM – Weekly Walk** (see beginning of schedule for details).

**Thursday, November 20 – Sierra Club Newsletter Folding.** Join us to help fold and sort the newsletter for mailing; it only takes about an hour and we always have a lot of fun! Volunteers are always needed: newcomers and old members are both welcome. Call 343-9277 for directions and more info.

**Saturday, November 22 – Help Enhance Wildlife Habitat at the North Forebay.** The

North Forebay in Oroville is a man-made waterway with a vast potential for wildlife. California State Parks is requesting the participation of the community in planting trees to enhance the current biodiversity and improve the habitat for raptors and boie nesting birds. Tools, training, and beverages will be provided. Bring work clothes, lunch, work gloves and boots for a memorable day. Participants will be invited on a weekend campout on Lake Oroville's Floating Campsites at a late date. For information call Ranger Dave Garcia at 530-538-2211

**Saturday, November 22 - Deer Creek Day Hike** (grade 2, class A). Take a 5-6 mile walk through the beautiful reds, yellows and greens of fall as we follow the rush of Deer Creek. We'll begin at the trail just off of Highway 32. Bring water, lunch and carpool \$. Rain cancels. Return at approximately 4PM; about an 80-mile round-trip drive. Meet at Chico Park and Ride at 9 AM. Rain cancels. Leader: Charles, 895-3045.

**Wednesday, November 26, 6:30PM – Weekly Walk** (see beginning of schedule for details).


## December

**Saturday, December 6 - Shuttle Hike from the South Side of Bidwell Park to Five Mile** (grade 2, class A). Join us as we start from the Green Gate along Hwy 32 and hike one-way, downhill for 6-7 miles along the south side of Bidwell Park to Five Mile below the golf course. Beautiful views along the way of the Sacramento Valley, Big Chico Creek and Upper Bidwell Park. A short car shuttle will be required. Bring lunch, water and sturdy shoes. Rain cancels. Meet at 8:30 AM at the Chico Park & Ride. Leader: Charles, 895-3045; Holly, 894-5591.

**Saturday, December 6 – Help Maintain Trails in Upper Bidwell Park.** Suitable for all ages and a good way to learn more about the trails in the Park. Gloves, tools, training and beverages are provided by the Parks Department. Wear sturdy shoes or boots. For more information, contact Steve Hogue at the Parks Department, 895-4758 or [shogue@ci.chico.ca.us](mailto:shogue@ci.chico.ca.us).

**Saturday, December 13 – Christmas Caroling/Potluck Dinner.** Let's spread some Christmas cheer to our community seniors with our sweet voices and smiles. Wear Christmas attire. Song sheets provided. We'll practice first, carol a few nursing homes and return for a potluck dinner. Bring a dish to share and your favorite beverage. Call to sign up and get directions to meeting place

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# Conservation

## Trails of Destruction

There was a trail of destruction on the pathway indicating where some thoughtless person had thrown litter, broken branches, and crushed some bottles along a corridor where most people walk to enjoy the beauty of the out-of-doors.

Although that litter would have merged into the meadow matrix and become reconstituted in a hundred years, it is a needless blemish to inflict on the landscape. Nature heals over the scars of earth if given time. It is remarkable the way planet earth is constantly in the process of covering trails of destruction, from not only litterbugs, but all kinds of agricultural slashes, industrial encroachments, immigrant intrusions, and even natural vegetative and geological inflictions. How long will the environment hold together for life on earth?

As permanent as stone-rimmed forest aisles appear, there is a constant natural erosion in addition to newly introduced human intrusions that constantly alter the fabric of nature. Climatic forces pound away at the most sturdy rock, and if given enough time, will reduce it to a flat plain. This happens so slowly that we don't see the conversion in our lifetimes, but John Muir recognized this process when he said: "Nature is ever at work building up and pulling down, creating and destroying, keeping everything whirling and flowing, allowing no rest but in rhythmical motion, chasing everything in endless song out of one beautiful form into another."

What we see in our immediate environment is more likely to be yesterday's leftovers of some hiker along the trail, or a dam being built on a waterway, or the fisherman dumping his excess line at the water's edge, or the garbage trucks raiding the neighborhood

and rumbling away to deposit great heaps of litter in some refuse dump. Or if you are traveling Interstate 80 in Nebraska, you are liable to see (and smell) some horrendous refuse manure dumps with cattle standing on top of those miniature mountains!

There are trails of destruction along our roadways too. There is not only the land alteration caused by the construction of the highway and the addition of asphalt, but the messy fallout of debris cast from moving automobiles defies description. The road edges glitter with broken glass all across America, strips of torn truck tires litter the pavement, and an army of volunteers are hard-pressed to keep the paper-and-product scene from consuming the roadway. Sections of freeways are adopted by concerned organizations, and signs indicating the patrolled sector appear all over the country. Some people will just not take their litter with them.

Some great trails of destruction occur in the Sacramento Valley farming regions--not only in the original alteration of habitats--but in the products reaped from the soil that often accumulate into problem particle piles.

There is a question of what to do with the by-products of mass-produced crops. The stems, limbs, and chaff become a major problem, especially in the fields of rice where vast amounts of stubble-stems remain after the grain is taken. One approach to that stem-surplus is to build a "straw-bale house" such as the building being built to house the Shorebird Nature Center at the Berkeley Marina. At least it is a use-example initialed by super Nature Center Director Patty Donald, and hopefully it will generate a trend to search for other uses of that vegetative left-over other

than the noxious fire method. Burning produces trails of destructive smoke that ruins many a fine day.

Although we have been able to trace various animals through their "trails of defecation," including remnants contained in coprolite dinosaur dung and old Indian middin mounds, a most stupendous and mind-boggling defecation/destruction trail problem has occurred in the mountainous regions of the Sierras and in particular, Mt. Shasta. Mountain "overrun" of hikers--and their bowel waste--has contaminated the rocky and snowy fields with people-patties--waste particles that linger in the cold preservation!!

The environmentally helpful motto of "Take only pictures, leave only footprints," has taken on an added clause. Now it is also, "Take it with you!"

Climbers are being asked to place their fecal waste in plastic sacks as they take the "leave no trace" ethic to a new level.

In the past four years, climbers have hauled 10 tons of their own waste off Mount Shasta in a rite of passage that is seen as a model in other wilderness areas overwhelmed by the sight, stench and health threat of human waste. The Shasta patrol rangers found themselves navigating fecal minefields late in summer as the snow pack receded and left unexpected surprises. Hikers melting snow for water unearthed waste that posed the threat of coliform contamination.

Since 1996, it has been mandatory to use kits containing sealable plastic bags marked with a bull's eye on the enclosed paper. The sheet is pinned to the ground with rocks or snow. After the target is struck, the sheet is rolled like a burrito, stuffed in the first paper bag, placed in the second bag, and then deposited in the plastic bag. The bags are dropped in trailhead garbage cans, and about eight times a year, rangers haul barrels 220 miles south to a Sacramento company that ships it with medical waste to Salt Lake City where it is steam-sterilized and buried at a cost of \$25,000 a year."

I relate this rather unnerving situation as a reminder that habitat is taking a hit wherever people accumulate. With population increase projected, there may be a time of severe trip limitations for backpackers and users of popular parks. In places like Sequoia and Kings Canyon national parks, backpackers are being asked to carry out toilet paper, and "Nature Call" kits are being handed out in Inyo National Forest. In high country, there is no soil where waste can be buried, and people are outnumbering bears by a wide margin.

We may rely more and more on visual exposure to the wildlands via projected images, and Nature Centers will be increasingly valuable as educational centers, even as backyard habitats will become more and more treasured.

## Recycle



Recycle old cell phones, pagers, PDAs and rechargeable batteries at Staples. We'll donate a portion of the proceeds to the Sierra Club.

## Save



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## Transportation Bill Presents Big Challenges for Environment Legislation Could Erase Decades of Progress ... or Build on Successes

In the coming months, Congress will pass a mammoth transportation bill which could either continue moving transportation priorities in the direction of smart growth, or take us backward toward a narrow focus on road-building and promoting more sprawl. We are especially concerned that environmental reviews and public involvement processes that help protect communities may be dramatically weakened.

TEA-3, as the federal transportation bill is now termed, will guide spending over the next 6 years to the tune of \$250 - \$375 billion. The last transportation bill, passed in 1998, was \$217 billion. Because the funding authorization runs out on September 30, 2003, Congressional committees are working this summer to draft a new bill. However, some in Congress want to use TEA-3 to undo many of the gains made during the last decade.

Because the wrong transportation choices can result in dangerous impacts on air and water quality, public health, our natural and historical heritage and quality of life, it is critical to make our priorities known to Congress in the coming few weeks. August and September are the critical months to give your input on this legislation.

### Top priorities for TEA-3

**No “gutting” of the environmental and public review processes**, which offer protections for communities, parks, wetlands, wildlife refuges, historic sites, and more. The Bush administration and some Congressional leaders have proposed damaging proposals that would gut the environmental review provisions outlined in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and remove the protections on parklands, historical sites, wildlife refuges and other environmentally sensitive areas.

NEPA is a landmark environmental law, passed with broad bipartisan support 30 years ago and signed into law by President Nixon. Now, President Bush and some members of Congress want to impose unrealistic deadlines on conducting environmental reviews of transportation projects; severely limit timeframes for citizens to challenge bad aspects of projects in court; and transfer more power over environmental reviews to state and local departments of transportation. These changes would weaken those reviews and the public input process. Within TEA-3, we must preserve the protections offered by NEPA.

The Bush Administration would also transfer the power to evaluate transportation project impacts

on historic sites, parklands and recreation areas from resource managers – whose focus is on environmental preservation – to the U.S. Department of Transportation. This move would drastically weaken the protections on our nation’s most important sites from irreversible impacts.

**Don’t weaken clean air protections.** As asthma rates and respiratory ailments continue to rise around the country, and the health threats of bad air, especially for children and seniors, grow annually, we cannot allow any deterioration of our clean air protections.

In an attempt to ignore the long-term effects of transportation projects on air quality (and to circumvent impediments to new road construction), some in Congress would require that air pollution consequences of new roads be projected for only 10 years. This is *half* of the 20 year projections that are now required. Cutting back these projections would ignore important data and will only lead to dirtier air in the long run.

Other attacks on clean air include lengthening the time between air quality check-ups from every three years to every five years. It is important to balance the air pollution budget frequently enough to catch problems before they become serious, just as people should balance their checkbooks regularly. We must resist attempts to lengthen intervals between air quality check-ups.

In order to clean up the nation’s air, Congress should increase funding for transportation that improves air quality. The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality improvement program (CMAQ) provides funding for clean transportation projects in regions with unhealthy air. CMAQ provides essential emergency funds to help areas with the worst air pollution implement measures such as clean buses, transit, and pedestrian and bike infrastructure so they can meet acceptable air quality standards while also solving transportation needs. The number of regions with unhealthy air will more than double in the next few years; thus the CMAQ

program should be at least doubled to meet the growing need.

**Protect and Grow the Transit Program.** In order to build upon the gains in mass transit over the last decade and promote alternatives to sprawl, we must insist on the following:

Oppose a crippling proposal by Senators Max Baucus (D-MT) and Charles Grassley (R-IA), which would raid the transit fund in order to bolster the highway fund. The Baucus-Grassley proposal would push responsibility to come up with the missing funding onto states and localities through a bonding mechanism, which would prove risky and would destabilize the program putting transit further out of the reach for our communities.

Maintain a level playing field between the transit and highway programs. Currently, states and localities must pay for 20 percent of new transit and highway projects, while the federal government pays 80 percent. Due to high competition for transit projects, communities often will pay a higher percentage to get a transit project. The Bush Administration wants to require states to come up with 50% of the cost for new transit, setting a prohibitive threshold to get new projects started for the least affluent communities who would need it the most. At the same time, however, the Bush proposal maintains an 80-20 federal-state split for road projects. Effectively, communities that are trying to solve transportation needs would be encouraged to build roads not transit. This would be a devastating change in policy that would only create more sprawl and greater air pollution.

In order to meet the growing demand for transit in metro, suburban and rural communities around the country, Congress should grow the transit program. The current 4:1 highway/transit funding ratio should be changed to 3:1. For every \$3 spent on highways, transit should receive at least \$1. Increasing transit’s slice of the transportation budget will move our transportation priorities in the right direction to clean up our air, increase our transportation choices, and revitalize businesses in our towns and cities.

Because the transportation bill is only authorized every six years, it is a massive piece of legislation with only a narrow window of opportunity for us to influence the outcome. Once this bill passes, the next opportunity to influence federal transportation priorities will be 2009.

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## Deer Road - Kills — *(Continued from page 1)*

maintains deer guzzlers (water supplies) north of SR 36 and west of SR 89 outside of Chester to encourage the herd not to cross the highways to get water at the lake. These guzzlers are rain- or man-filled tanks that provide water to wildlife in the dry summer months.

"We go up there once a month, starting in May, to fill and clean the tanks and repair those that are vandalized," says Margo. "Route 36 is a death trap for the herd, and the kill rate there is among the highest in the state.

"We have expressed an interest to a couple of the public agencies involved with this matter in funding solutions to the situation.

"This was once the biggest deer herd in California but its numbers have been greatly

*(continued on p. 10)*

reduced; road kills and habitat destruction are the two biggest factors.

"What we really need is more interagency cooperation between Federal [USFS], State [Caltrans, Fish and Game] and local [County] agencies."

For years, Mark, of District 2 Caltrans, kept unofficial but detailed records of the kills of the Tehama deer herd for a six-mile stretch of SR 36 east of Chester; Caltrans removes the carcasses. He sees unrelenting kill intensity significantly decreasing herd size.

In late summer through autumn of 1990-1992, Caltrans collected 341 deer remains: bucks, does (many pregnant) and fawns, and the carnage has not ceased. Another 287 deer died along this same patch of road for similar months in 2000 and 2001.

Efforts to obtain money for protected deer crossings along the SR 36 death corridor are thwarted by official kill counts. Although thousands of dead deer were removed from SR 36 in the past 10 years, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) database (the official State deer kill registry) tabulated only 10.

With such poor reporting, it's impossible to justify funds for deer crossings. The public needs to report deer strikes, and the reporting methods need improvement.

Although much of this occurs in Plumas County, county defaults to state to solve the problem. Plumas County keeps no database of the number of deer killed or removed from their roads, nor is there any locally inspired public education to reduce the number of deer/vehicle collisions. Those deer warning signs on our

county roads are more for legal protection than for the deer, and they prove woefully ineffective in reducing deer/vehicle collisions.

Compared to other states, California exercises poor stewardship toward deer. From the above remarks, we can appreciate the fact that the decrease in deer numbers is due to diverse causes, and habitat loss is the big one.

Destruction of habitat and food supply by ill-conceived forest practices, reduction of summer and winter ranges by development, and disruption of migration trails by homes, golf courses and attendant fencing are subtler, more important causes of deer depletion, but less appreciated than dramatic vehicle collisions.

The difficulty is finding the political will to rectify the many problems and the more practical issue of obtaining money to do it. One method that makes a difference is building deer-safe road crossings, but California lags in tapping federal funds because its deer-kill statistics do not justify the support needed to do it.

Deer-kill data collection starts when the CHP becomes involved, but there is much underreporting because deer collisions are not motor vehicle violations. CHP must write up vehicle violations, but they are not required to write up uncomplicated deer collisions, so this rarely occurs. This is the major reason for the low deer-kill numbers reported by the state; the "official count" starts with CHP.

Here's how it works after the paperwork is done - if it's done. Deer-kill vehicle collision information first enters official California databases

**We need to accurately acquire the information on the deer we kill from as many sources as we can, input it efficiently, share it effectively, interpret it**

through a CHP computer system called SWITRS (statewide integrated reporting system). However, a SWITRS entry does not allow direct reporting as a deer-kill/vehicle collision because there is no discrete computer field for it.

If the data is entered, it must be completely typed in. To be counted, the actual computer entry,

as typed, must read "other, animal, deer." This takes precious time; it's not always done, or it's done incompletely. This is the second reason for underreporting. The SWITRS information software package (vintage 1960s) needs updating to correct this deficiency.

SWITRS data from all local CHP stations is uploaded to CHP's Sacramento headquarters, and a copy is sent to Caltrans via electronic transfer between SWITRS and the Caltrans TASAS computer system (traffic accident surveillance analysis system, software package vintage 1970s). In addition, CHP provides Caltrans Information Technology (IT) with hard copies of all vehicle collision reports.

After review of CHP reports, any information that was not coded into SWITRS - such as deer-kill/vehicle collisions - is now coded and/or corrected by Caltrans IT staff. There is a TASAS code for entering deer-kill/vehicle collisions.

These Caltrans entries accumulate credit toward deer-kill/vehicle collision prevention, such as deer-proof fences and underpasses, but only for State roads, not county roads.

County road deer-kill vehicle collisions are not entered into SWITRS; 80 of surfaced roads in Plumas are county roads. This is a third reason, and another big one, for underreporting deer kills.

Calling local police, county sheriff or road department, Caltrans or the local human society does not earn funding for deer crossings, as there's no official data acquisition by any of these agencies. At present, the lack of documentation is the obstacle which perpetuates our deer-kill problem, and until this changes, more deer will die on the roads.

What's needed is an anonymous, integrated, no-fault, citizen-reporting system. What's also needed is direct reporting by city, county and state road departments.

Additionally, multi-agency coordination and cooperation between federal, state, county and city agencies - combined with a system that encourages ideas from the public, environmental, logging, development, insurance, automotive interests and hunting groups - should be developed.

We need to accurately acquire the information on the deer we kill from as many sources as we can, input it efficiently, share it effectively, interpret it wisely, and act on it decisively.

The challenge to save our deer herds is there,

# Conservation

## Games of Numbers

By Rex Burress

One of the most apparent environmental problems to emerge from advancing civilization and its corresponding human population increase is the number of decreasing habitats for wildlife. Of particular note lately is the dilemma of decreasing fish numbers.

In spite of a hardy run of hatchery-kindled king salmon on the Feather River in year 2002, golden trout in the Sierra mountains and rockfish in the Pacific Ocean are not faring so well. In fact, the golden trout, endemic to the Sierras and of special interest to the Sierra Club, is being considered as a candidate for the endangered species list.

At one time, according to a newspaper article, golden trout were found in 450 miles of Sierran streams, but over the past 100 years that has dwindled to just over 80 miles. Native populations of the fish are found only in Golden Trout Creek and the South Fork of the Kern River in the Golden Trout Wilderness in Inyo National Forest.

What happened to the golden trout? Like many species of animals and plants, there has been an increasing amount of human-caused erosion that has weakened the ecological fabric--and, of course, just plain fishing has taken a toll. Hiking the High Sierra and having an evening meal of golden trout gradually erodes the trails and decreases the fish supply, and although some considerate trail work and catch-and-release methods have slowed the decline, regaining the former status is difficult. There is competition for the very water where the fish live, in addition to the normal challenge of surviving at high altitude.

Fish, in particular, are trapped in their watery habitat and must accept prevailing conditions. They are constantly facing severe challenges as water quality in general has declined in the last couple hundred years. Dams contort their freedom, immigrants from Asian countries have increased the fishing pressure, drought adds to the demand for agricultural water, and now, in what would seem like an endless supply in the vast ocean, that source has hit bottom.

Rockfish, such as the red snapper species, have been gleaned from the depths by scouring-trawlers that rake the bottom with huge nets and destroy habitat and by catch. Protected fish have to be thrown overboard dead. Hans Radke, a fisheries economist

and chairman of the Pacific Fishery Management Council said, "Just like buffalo hunting, logging and salmon fishing before it, the seemingly limitless harvests of ground fish have hit the wall on the West Coast." We might add that it was the wasteful harvest of buffalo, passenger pigeons, and the clear-cutting of forests that has accelerated the deficits. We know how the sardine industry once hit bottom along the vast Sardine Row at Monterey because of overkill. Natural resources are limited, and the wise use of our natural resources is good conservation. We will all be hit by higher costs and fewer food choices as the fish supply is affected, just as pesticide-altered agricultural crops invade our digestive systems. Perhaps it is time to build your victory garden and fishpond!

Part of the problem is the numbers game. Humans are increasing. The projected population is so large I can't even remember the projected number. Yet, babies are so cute and life so precious, we generally want to see as much of it as we can, and that is reflected in the extreme effort some organizations and individuals expend in fighting abortion and birth control.

The other day some of those devoted Jehovah Witnesses left some of their publications at my doorstep, and although I am not of that creed, I am kind to them as often some nature information can be gleaned from the pamphlet "Awake!" This was an issue devoted to "Do numbers control your future?" As the examples of numbers and predestiny and prophecy were revealed, a passage quoted from the Bible caught my attention. Ecclesiastes, in which the admirable "A time and season for everything" occurs, the verse in Ecclesiastes 9:11 (9-11 !) states: "The swift do not have the race, nor the mighty ones the battle, nor do the wise also have the food, nor do the understanding ones also have the riches, nor do even those having knowledge have the favor; because time and unforeseen occurrence befall them all."

I think this means that things concerned with numbers are not a sure thing in spite of apparent mathematical certainty, and that those formulas of populations, planetary stability, and warring powers are subject to change. Disease, asteroids, pollution, and attitudes all have a bearing on the future it would seem, and we can help control our own destiny by applying suitable regulations. At least, I hope this also means we can bring back species teetering on the brink of extinction even if we can't save those who have succumbed. Maybe it also means we can improve planet earth by protecting habitat and diverting war monies into the environment! Let us hope.

*Hope is but a little word,  
But oh the joy it can bring,  
To a heart overburdened and weary,  
From the maddening flurry of things.*

## Deer Road—Kills

(Continued from page 10)

but it will take new paradigms, public education, political lobbying, and financial support - especially federal money - to do it. Everyone knows the problem exists, but without motivation, documentation, information, and wise decisions, the funds will never be found to fix it.

### What to Do After a Deer/Vehicle Collision

1. Assess:
  - a. Pull off the road and stop where it's safe.
  - b. Determine what happened.
  - c. If someone is killed or injured, attend to the emergency. Call 911.
  - d. Identify your location by noting the milepost (number on the roadside posts). It's easier for CHP (or police) and the carcass-removal folks to find you.
2. Report to CHP or local police:
  - a. Report any injuries and all property damage to anyone else (another vehicle or structure).
  - b. Call CHP (911) even if on city or county road. It ensures you are "in the system" and protected. All 911 calls go to a CHP dispatcher.
  - c. If you have no cell phone or cell coverage, call later on a landline. On a landline, contact CHP through its local number. CHP still wants to know you are OK.
  - d. Insist CHP make an accident report; they rarely do it of their own volition for an

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Teva shoes Womens size 6. Worn 3 times. Were \$85. \$50 takes them now. 893-2154.

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Wood-look computer desk with hutch and printer cabinet. \$25. Call 872-9159.

Large button, ATT phone. \$10. Call 872-9159




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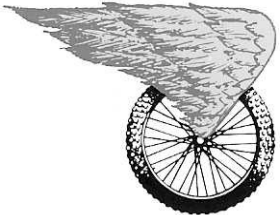


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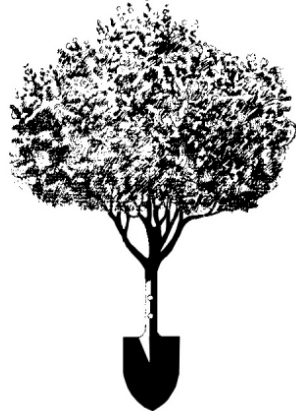
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