



SIERRA CLUB
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Yahi Group



Butte, Glenn, Lassen, Plumas & Tehama Counties

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Yahi Fall 2013 Outings and Events

Coordinated by Alan Mendoza

<http://www.motherlode.sierraclub.org/yahi/outing.htm>

Area Conservation News

By Grace Marvin, Yahi Group Conservation Chair & BEC Advocacy Chair

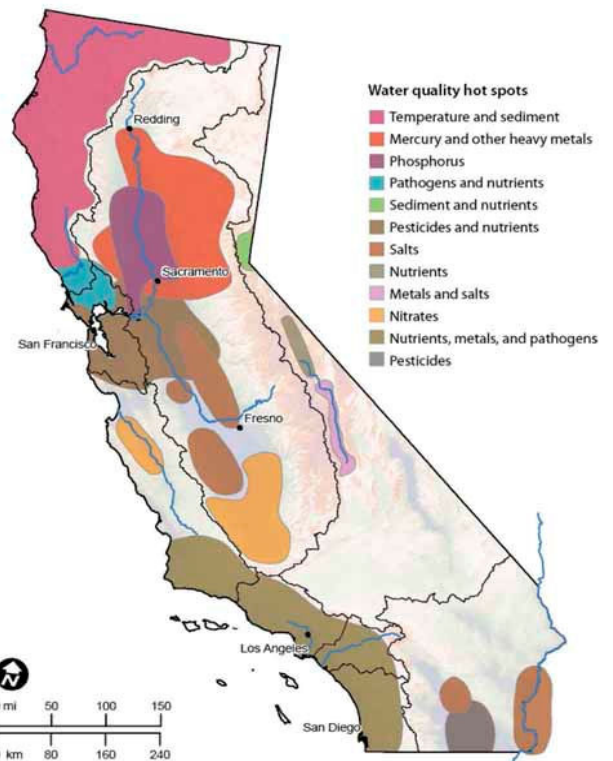
Fighting the Delta Ecosystem Disaster

On June 17, 2013, the California Sportsfishing Protection Alliance reported that they had “joined the California Water Impact Network, AquAlliance, Friends of the River, Center for Biological Diversity, and Restore the Delta in filing a lawsuit against the Delta Stewardship Council’s Delta Plan and Environmental Impact Report. The lawsuit alleges numerous explicit violations of the statutory requirements of the Delta Reform Act, CEQA, and Public Trust Doctrine.” Many other organizations are filing lawsuits as well.

Moreover, the Environmental Water Caucus (EWC) has helped people realize that there is no need for the twin tunnels (the key component of the Bay Delta plan).

EWC has an alternative plan for water conservation throughout the state which many of these more progressive north state water leaders support fully. The EWC consists of many organizations including Sierra Club California, BEC, Citizens Water Watch, the Winnemem Wintu, and more. To see the EWC’s detailed *Water Solutions Now* and other policy recommendations, go to www.ewccalifornia.org.

Ordinary citizens in the north state are becoming increasingly aware of the urgency involved in protecting north state waters.



Regional Water Problems

Thus, the Sierra Club's Yahi Group and CNRCC, BEC, Citizens Water Watch, and others are trying to get the word out about specific actions that citizens can undertake. Examples include the following:

1. It is becoming clear that counties may need to take the lead in fighting the abuses to our water and air from fracking, especially if higher levels of government are resistant to related regulations. Activists (as of the beginning of August) have been struggling to get a strong and fully transparent anti-fracking measure passed on the state level, but the energy companies have been pouring vast amounts of money into their pro-fracking campaigns. Note that counties elsewhere across the country and state have had had success getting legislation passed. *Let's work on local initiatives to strongly regulate or stop fracking.* This does not require money!
2. More and more water transfers are taking place. Corporate farmers, Westlands Water District, and others living or working south of the Delta are purchasing north state waters — with the endorsement of some north state water officials. *We need to contest these water transfers and educate our fellow citizens on how such transfers are feeding into the frenzy to build the massive tunnels.* The costs and levels of ecological destruction of water transfers would be much more massive — from the north state through the Delta. Contesting such transfers in court does require money, however, so your donations to local organizations leading the charges are very important.

NOTE: BEC has a *Code Blue* series of programs aimed at educating citizens about water issues, with the series to be resumed in the fall. For example, uninformed citizens may hear from the state that they need to vote in November to allow bonds to be issued for Delta habitat restoration (whose plans are totally inadequate) while not realizing that they are thereby supporting the Twin Tunnels. At the same time, unwittingly, they will be voting in a tax burden for themselves since citizens will have to pay the interest costs associated with the bonds. The BEC training will include action citizens should take.

3. The United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) is holding meetings regarding their plan to raise Shasta Dam by 18.5 feet (with a supposed increase in water yield of 13 percent), and we have until September 26 to register our comments for the record about that plan. You can send your comments to Katrina Chow, Project Manager, USBR, 2800 Cottage Way, MP-720, Sacramento, CA 95825-1893. The office number is (916) 978-5067.

At the July USBR public presentation in Redding, I learned (from the audience) about numerous problems associated with raising Shasta Dam, the keystone of the federal government's water project in California. What was especially noteworthy to me (as a water novice, not a water wonk) was the fact that the USBR printed an extensive amount of posters summarizing the cost and benefits of different alternatives for raising the dam by different amounts, but nowhere was there any listing of benefits and costs for a *no dam raising* alternative. (My posing the question to the USBR speaker yielded no telling results.

The USBR documents, on the other hand, do identify significant but unavoidable costs.) Nor was there any linkage made between raising the dam and the state plan to build the twin tunnels, even though their creation would place even more demands on north state water. Yet a hand count demanded by some of the hundreds of people in the audience showed that the vast majority seemed to be against any dam raise. They identified numerous costs involved in having a dam. Some public comments included the following:

- How the current dam violates promises regarding Native American cultural lands, and raising the dam would make the situation so much worse
- That many other people's agricultural and fishing livelihoods would be drastically affected
- That the project's effect on recreational interests would negatively impact people and the area's economy

Other effects inadequately addressed by the USBR statements included climate change, endangered species, wild and scenic rivers, air quality, water quantity and quality and its effect on fish passages and human beings (and their tax money).

It is projected that three-fourths of the additional water gained by raising the dam will be sold to water contractors south of the Delta.

Note: Friends of the River identified the above problems and more. Thus it is a good source for considering your comments. See www.friendsoftheriver.org/NoDamRaise.

The USBR Bureau will hold public hearings on Tuesday, September 10, 6-8 pm, Holiday Inn, Palomino Room, 1900 Hilltop Drive, Redding; Wednesday, September 11, 1-3 pm, Cal Expo Quality Inn Hotel and Suites, Conference Room, 1413 Howe Avenue, Sacramento; Thursday, September 12, 6-8 pm, Merced County Fairgrounds, Germino Building, 403 F Street, Los Banos.

You can review the USBR's statements and plans online at www.usbr.gov/mp/slwri. Please register your comments with the USBR before September 26, whether or not you can attend a meeting!

BEC Addresses Agriculture, Transportation

As reported earlier, I am the Yahi Group's liaison to, and Advocacy Chair of, the Butte Environmental Council (BEC). As such, it has been very rewarding to be a part of the activism of BEC employees and members. They are involved with numerous concerns that are of interest to the Sierra Club, and many are members of both organizations.

For example, BEC has been exploring the impact of dioxins on foods stemming from the co-generation incinerator in South Oroville (leased by PG&E but owned by Covanta Energy Co.), and seeking to notify Oroville's citizens. The Yahi Group's secretary and news editor helped get out the word about a July 31 information and organizing meeting in Oroville's public library.

BEC staff, consultants, and volunteers also are working on the Butte Regional Conservation Plan and the county's agricultural mitigation ordinance. They are seeking important regulations and mitigations associated with land development and transportation projects. Decisions about land use and zoning as well as transportation are directly related to a more global concern of many organizations, that is, climate change.

Citizens Action Network Addresses Fracking, GMOs

One of the most important recent local organizing successes (about which I have heard) involves the recently formed Citizens Action Network (CAN) group. That collection of roughly forty people came together because of frustrations over environmental issues such as fracking and the need to label genetically modified food (or *organisms*, thus called GMOs), as well as demanding access to affordable health care.

CAN's organizers continue to be active in more established organizations such as the Sierra Club, Butte Environmental Council, and Citizens Water Watch. But regular members include some who do not gravitate to the "environmental" label. The organizers do not care about that, however, since CAN members are so enthusiastic about *doing* something, e.g., protesting outside grocery stores regarding lack of GMO labeling, becoming an overwhelming presence at pro-fracking meetings, etc.

Dyer Mountain Project on Hold

Of special interest to the Yahi Group: the four-season Dyer Mountain development project in Lassen County seems to have been placed on permanent hold. Stay tuned to this column to learn where the parties, including the Sierra Club, finally decide to go on this matter. The Sierra Club is one of three major parties helping to fund this lawsuit.

We believe that there is widespread recognition that skiing is not feasible there due to the relatively low altitude and diminishing amounts of snow. Much else about the project is not sustainable either, such as there being no plans for housing, education, roads, and social services for the workers as well as the wealthier residents (that the designers expected to be drawn to the resort).

To see pictures of the outstanding beauty of the area as well as some of the strong arguments about fighting a four-season development at Dyer Mountain, please see www.mtmeadows.org.

In July 2013, there was a memorial for Steve Robinson, who was the preeminent leader in bringing attention to the Dyer Mountain project. He saw to it that parties to the lawsuit (such as the Sierra Club) stayed engaged in this long multi-year battle and, consequently, participated in many meetings both in the Susanville area and in the north state region.

CNRCC Addresses CA Environmental Policy

On the same day as Steve's memorial the Sierra Club's CNRCC (California Nevada Regional Conservation Committee) was meeting in Sacramento via a webinar. That state-wide committee and the delegates who attended the Sacramento meeting are strongly devoted to preserving many of the values for which Steve stood. CNRCC policy-making, lobbying, and organizing are aimed at ensuring that the state of California has the best environmental policies. Among other things, they have recently helped to accomplish the following:

- Keep California's state parks open
- Cut toxics
- Reduce garbage and hazardous waste
- Protect fundamental environmental safeguards, especially the very important California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
- Clean up transportation pollution
- Preserve California's forest habitat
- Safeguard the coast
- Advance solar power
- Fight the Delta ecosystem disaster and promote water conservation.

To find out who is on the Sierra Club's CNRCC and how they helped implement the projects listed above, please see california2.sierraclub.org/. You might want to lobby, or at least write, your legislators accordingly.



Yahi Club News

Thank You

By Gera Lydon, Yahi Membership Chair

We are very pleased to recognize the following long-term members of the Yahi Group:

50-year members

John and Miriam Barker, Portola

25-year members

Phyllis Bond, Chico

Caryl and Matt Brown, Chico

Sarah Dolliver, Chico

Thelda Eli, Chico

Pat Foster, Oroville

Delaine Fragnoli, Quincy

Richard Frey, Chico

Dave and Celeste Garcia, Oroville

S. Lewis and J. VandeHoven, Chico

Michael Lovinfosse, Magalia

Maria Meyer, Chico

Mimi Mitchell, Chico

Michelle Murray, Chico

Anthony Nicosia, Chico

J. Rawlins and Nancy Praizler, Chico

Gary Reid, Blairsden-Graeagle

Celeste Silva, Oroville

Merrily Stover and Larry Jendro, Oroville

Beth Tice, Chico

Penny Warren, Chico

Frieda White, Chico.

Thank you so much for your support of Sierra Club.

Yahi Group Program Meetings

By Suzette Welch, Program Chair

Two Yahi Group program meetings, September 19 and November 20, will be held at the Chico Branch Library on the corner of East First Avenue and Sherman. The meetings will start at 7 pm with refreshments served.

On **Thursday, September 19**, David Samuels will talk about *The Milky Way, National Parks & Me*. When David Samuels retired from teaching in 2007, he serendipitously became involved with our national parks through a volunteer program that places amateur astronomers in the national parks to provide star parties, solar viewing, dark sky awareness, and astronomy outreach to park visitors. David will share his ramblings through some of our beautiful national parks. During his talk you will enjoy landscapes of New Mexico, Utah, Colorado, Maine, and California, and meet some of the interesting folks who work in our parks.

On **Wednesday, November 20**, Steve Zachery, a ranger at Lassen Volcanic National Park, will talk about his experiences at the park. Also at this meeting Chris Nelson will give a short presentation on the growing problem of clearcutting in California.

Used Camping, Hiking and Backpacking Gear Wanted

The Sierra Club Yahi Group is planning a fundraiser for the club by selling good quality, used camping, hiking or backpacking gear. If you have anything to donate, please contact Alan Mendoza at 530-891-8789 or ajmendoza777@comcast.net.

Conservation News

Statewide Coalition Sues to Halt Delta Tunnels

from a Press Release Issued by California Water Impact Network

SAN FRANCISCO, CA — A statewide coalition of fishing, wildlife, and farming community groups announced on June 17, 2013, the filing of a lawsuit against the Delta Stewardship Council's Delta Plan, which includes a proposal to build two 35-mile tunnels to siphon water away from the Sacramento River and San Joaquin Bay Delta. The lawsuit asserts that the Delta Plan violates the 2009 Delta Reform Act, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and the state Administrative Procedure Act, and seeks to have the plan set aside.

The groups said that the \$54.1 billion project would have devastating impacts on California's farming and fishing, and put several endangered species — including salmon — at increased risk of extinction. The lawsuit was filed in San Francisco Superior Court on behalf of groups from both northern and southern California, including Friends of the River, California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, Restore the Delta, AquaAlliance, California Water Impact Network (C-WIN), and Center for Biological Diversity.

The 2009 Delta Reform Act, which established the Delta Stewardship Council, required that the council create the Delta Plan as a framework for its permitting authority over actions affecting the Delta. According to the Act, the council must approve only actions that serve the coequal goals of environmental protection and water-supply reliability. Instead the council approved a plan that excludes most water transfers from permitting requirements and lays the groundwork for Delta water-export tunnels.

The coalition's lawsuit seeks to have the Delta Plan and its programmatic environmental impact report (PEIR) set aside for failing to disclose and analyze the devastating adverse environmental consequences on northern California rivers, the Delta, and endangered fish species that will result from taking enormous quantities of fresh water out of the Sacramento River upstream from the Delta. The lawsuit urges the court to suspend any activity based on the plan that could change the physical environment until the council has met its legal requirements. This would include delaying construction of the Brown Administration's proposed water-export tunnels.


Barbara Vlamis, executive director of AquaAlliance, said, "We join this lawsuit because we are the heart of the area of origin for the Sacramento River watershed. The Tuscan Aquifer in Butte, Glenn, and Tehama counties is the groundwater foundation that supports the streams and rivers that are vital for farms, fish, and communities throughout California. The Delta Plan's goal to expand groundwater storage north of the Delta is a fool's errand. The State of California has failed to protect its groundwater, and has acknowledged serious overdraft in 11 basins. The only reason we don't know of more overdraft conditions is because the State Department of Water Resources hasn't studied this since 1980! If water transfers increase in scope and duration, particularly when groundwater is substituted for surface water, it will escalate the losses already underway in the Sacramento River watershed's creeks and rivers and will jeopardize what remains of the hydrologic system that supports the majority of California's

economy, the Central Valley's fish and flyway, and the largest estuary in North America: the Sacramento/San Joaquin Bay Delta."

"The Delta Reform Act gave the Delta Stewardship Council an historic opportunity to remedy 40 years of water policy failures. Instead, the council failed to use the best available science — biological or economic — and adopted a status quo program that fails to fix the Delta or the water supply problem," said Carolee Krieger, executive director of the California Water Impact Network. "The council failed to honor its own mandate: the adoption of an effective strategy for the distribution of water and the preservation of the Delta."

Bob Wright, senior counsel for Friends of the River, said: "Seeking relief from the courts is now necessary to protect our rivers and fish from this arbitrary, destructive action. The council's plan is part of the worst threat to northern California rivers in history, and continues state agencies' efforts to take the water regardless of the adverse consequences. The Delta Plan . . . violated the California Environmental Quality Act by failing to disclose and analyze the devastating adverse environmental consequences on northern California rivers, the Delta, and endangered species of fish resulting from taking enormous quantities of fresh water out of the Sacramento River upstream from the Delta."

Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla, executive director of Restore the Delta, said, ". . . This is the opening salvo in what will be an epic legal battle over California's water future. The Delta Stewardship Council failed . . . to conduct a comprehensive benefit/cost analysis indispensable for maximizing the use of limited resources for the greatest good for all Californians. And by not conducting this essential piece of work, they have forgotten the impacts of water diversions on the \$5.2 billion annual Delta agriculture economy, the \$750 million annual Delta recreation economy, and the \$1.5 billion annual California coastal salmon economy. We believe the reason the council refused to perform all the above analyses is that they expect the science would not support the construction of the Peripheral Tunnels. There is a better solution that includes upgrading Delta levees, reducing exported water to a sustainable level that restores fisheries, and investing in regional water projects."

Mike Jackson, attorney for C-WIN, Restore the Delta, California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, and AquAlliance, said: "The Delta Plan violates CEQA in ten different ways. It fails to achieve the co-equal goals of Delta ecosystem restoration and water supply reliability established by the Act. The Delta Plan may be the most incomplete environmental document I've even seen. The council ignored three critical documents they were obligated to use: a State Water Resources Control Board water flow recommendation; a Department of Fish and Wildlife report on biological objectives, and the Delta Protection Commission's economic sustainability report. In all three cases, the documents were inconvenient to the approval of the tunnels." 



We Need You

Yahi Group needs volunteers to help with tabling, to represent the club at events, and to become a board member. If you have an interest in becoming more involved with the club, send an email to Suzette Welch: (booksontape@rocketmail.com) or talk to a board member at the next program meeting.

Energy Consumption in the Garden

From the Arboretum at UC Santa Cruz

One hour of chain saw usage = car driving 660 miles

Solution: Plan your garden to minimize usage of gasoline-powered tools.

One hour of a new gas-powered lawn mower usage = 11 cars driving for 1 hour

Solution: Human-powered lawn mower or better yet get rid of the lawn (saves on water too).

17 million gallons of gasoline are spilled each year refueling garden equipment = more than was spilled by the Exxon Valdez

Solution: Do not use gasoline-powered tools.

Pesticides and fertilizers (particularly nitrogen) require energy to produce (for example, in conventional vegetable production, pesticides and fertilizers can use up to 80 percent of the total energy consumed, including energy to run farm machinery)

Solution: Do not use pesticides or commercial fertilizers. Compost kitchen waste and garden leaves.

One hour of leaf blower usage = car driving for 145 hours

Solution: Use a rake or a broom. Leave leaves in garden to compost and improve the soil.

Homeowner Leaf Blower Emissions Compared to Light Duty Vehicle Emissions

0.8 hp average, 50% load factor, 1999 emissions data

(from Air Resources Board, California Environmental Protection Agency, December 1999)

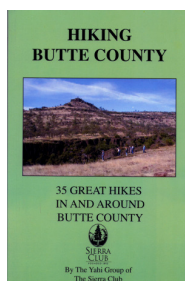
	Exhaust Emissions, leaf blower,	Exhaust Emissions, new light duty vehicle,*	Exhaust Emissions, older light duty vehicle,**
Hydrocarbons	56.73	0.39	201.9
Carbon Monoxide	119.2	15.97	1310
Particulate Matter	1.44	0.13	0.78
Fugitive Dust	48.6-1031	N/A	N/A

*New light duty vehicle represents vehicles one year old, 1999 or 2000 model year, driven for one hour at 30 mph.

**Older light duty vehicle represents vehicles 1975 model year and older, pre-catalytic vehicle, driven for one hour at 30 mph.



Hiking Butte County



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

You can purchase it for \$11.95 at Trailside Adventures in Paradise and in Chico at Mountain Sports and Lyons Books. Or you can order one directly from Alan for \$10 plus shipping. Contact Alan Mendoza, 891-8789 or ajmendoza@prodigy.net.

River Partners Mud Blast Event

By Chris Purkis

Hello to everyone at the Sierra Club - Yahi Group! We (River Partners) are hosting our only two fundraising events of the year in September and October. Before we talk about that, we would like to share a little bit about ourselves. <http://www.riverpartners.org/>

River Partners is a nonprofit organization which started up in Chico just over 15 years ago. We started with a focus on restoring and conserving riparian habitat along the Sacramento River - these habitats support some of the highest biodiversity of any ecosystem in Cali. To date, we have acquired and put 8,000+ acres of land into restoration in California. We have also planted over 1 million native trees and plants along riversides since our founding. You can see an example of the impact we make on page 4 of our March 2013 journal.

http://www.riverpartners.org/documents/newsletters/Journal_201303.pdf

Like those of you in the Sierra Club - Yahi Group, River Partner's stresses the importance of environmental stewardship and we truly value recreation. Our mission is to create wildlife habitat for the benefit of people and the environment. This directly encompasses recreational interests. With that said, we are confident that you would enjoy participating in our event, called The Mud Blast. This is not only because of the huge amount of fun you will have, but also because of the purpose behind the event. This event is a 5k mud and obstacle course race, and you can find more information on it below!" <http://www.mudblast.org/>

So, why does the Mud Blast race matter?

- All proceeds benefit River Partners and the work we do in California to restore and preserve river habitats.
- In the past 15 years, we have planted over 1 million native trees and plant species along riversides in California
- This event is great for team building and for having a good time while making a difference - teams range from serious to silly.

Race location/dates

We are hosting two races:

1. The Sacramento River Race is in Colusa, CA at the Willow Bend site on Saturday, September 14th.
2. The San Joaquin River Race is in Modesto, CA on Saturday, October 19th. Check out what previous races were like, <http://www.mudblast.org/sjriver/past.htm>

Registration + discounts

For team sign ups, you can register here for the Colusa race <http://www.mudblast.org/sacriver/registration.htm>

- The event is \$55 for adults. The cost of registration will go up higher at the end of August.
- Registration includes bibs, a t-shirt, and lunch post-race
- Please like our FB page, <https://www.facebook.com/mudblast?fref=ts>



YAH! Club Information

Executive Committee

Co-Chair: Laurel Heath, 343-3290, laur3290@gmail.com
Co-Chair: Suzette Welch, 342-9214, booksontape@rocketmail.com
Vice Chair: John Hollister, 872-8258, hubhollister@yahoo.com
Secretary: Lorna Cunkle, 877-7895, lornacunkle@comcast.net
Board Member: Carla Moreno, 343-5902, carlaruby80@gmail.com
Board Member: Celeste Garcia, 533-2357, celesterdh@mynvw.com

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Representative to Mother Lode: Grace Marvin, 893-1994, g-marvin@comcast.net
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Newsletter Information

Yahi News is published four times a year, in March, June, September, and December, by the Yahi Group of the Sierra Club, P.O. Box 2012, Chico, CA 95927.

For advertising, contact Celeste Garcia, 533-2357, celesterdh@mynvw.com.

For changes in mailing address or email address, contact Sierra Club Member Services: membership.services@sierraclub.org, or (415) 977-5500.

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

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

The Last Word



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GOING, GOING... GONE?

Sea turtles date back nearly 90 million years and are among the Earth's oldest surviving species. All 6 species of sea turtles are protected under the Endangered Species Act. Sierra Club has mounted a major effort to defend and preserve threatened habitats before their inhabitants are gone forever.

Help protect our animal friends; because once they're gone, they're gone. Join Sierra Club now.

Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
Special Offer	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32

Contributions, gifts and dues to 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 for your Chapter newsletters.



Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!



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