



Table of Contents:	
Democracy Placed on Pause	1-2
Yahi Club News	3
Yahi Conservation Report	4-5
8th Annual Wild & Scenic Film Festival	5
You Can Hike a Lot Just By Walking!	6-7
Yahi Group Contacts	8
Newsletter Sponsors	9

Yahi Fall 2014 Outings and Events

Coordinated by Alan Mendoza

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

Democracy Placed on Pause By Butte County Board of Supervisors

by Dave Garcia, Yahi Group Political Chair



The Frack Free Butte County (FFBC) Campaign submitted over 10,000 signatures to the County Clerk-Recorder's Office on June 5 to qualify their voter referendum initiative on fracking for the November Ballot. A high power attorney firm representing pro-frackers filed a complaint the following day claiming the petition was invalid because of facial defects.

On June 16 County Clerk Recorder Candace Grubbs sent FFBC a letter stating the signatures had not been validated because of the complaint. On July 23, our treasurer Joni Stellar, went before Superior Court Judge Robert Glusman representing FFBC. She plead that the 10,000 signatures represented the will of the people and that their right to vote on this issue should not be denied over minor formatting

requirements. The judge waived the facial defects and ordered the clerk-recorder to validate the signatures.

The fracking initiative was qualified with 7,975 valid signatures the day before the Butte County Board of Supervisors met on July 29. The Supervisors had three choices they could make on the Fracking Initiative of:

- 1) adopt the initiative and make it law,
- 2) place the initiative on the November general election ballot, or
- 3) have county staff do a 30 day study of how the initiative would affect the county.

State law requires that an initiative cannot be placed on the election ballot less than 88 days after a board of supervisor's decision to approve the initiative. The 88 day limit for the November ballot was August 8. The BOS chose to study the initiative for 30 days excluding it from the Nov 4 election. The Supervisor's 4-1 vote will now place the Fracking Initiative on the next eligible election which is June 2016.

Frack Free Butte County is determined to protect our most valuable resource our water from the danger and contamination of fracking. We will continue to educate people of the dirty, dangerous and deadly consequences of fracking. With a one to one million contamination ratio, where one gallon of frack fluid can contaminate one million gallons of drinking water, this risk is too great to allow in our county. We must continue to engage with the BOS in getting them to place their own county Fracking Ban Ordinance on the Planning Commission's agenda so it can move forward into becoming law.

Dave Garcia 8-5-14



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Yahi is your local Sierra Club organization. Call us or visit the Yahi website today and learn how you can help...

<http://motherlode.sierraclub.org/yahi/>



Yahi Club News

Yahi Fall Program Meetings

By Suzette Welch

Thursday, September 11, 2014 - Roger Ekins, who along with Helen Ekins, wrote the book "The Flumes and Trails of Paradise: Hiking Through History on the Ridge" will give a talk on - *Mysteries of the Flumes* - an introduction to the PG&E flume systems and some of the oddities one might find while exploring them.

Tuesday, November 11, 2014—Nancy Hawley will tell us how she became a park ranger and about her experiences at Cape Hatteras National Seashore and Denali National Park.



These two talks will make up the fall lineup of program meetings of the Yahi Group of the Sierra Club. Social hour with refreshments will start at 6:30 PM with the program following at 7 PM. at the Chico Branch Library at 1108 Sherman Ave. on the corner of East First Ave. and Sherman in Chico. The talk is free and open to the public. Non Sierra Club members are welcome. For more information call Suzette Welch 342-9214.

Wanted: Your Help

By Laurel Heath

The Yahi Ex-Com Board is looking for a person to join the board in January who has computer technical skills and would be willing to help out with the tasks that require them.

Also, we are seeking a person who would be willing to lead a solar installation program in Chico which is provided through our Mother Lode Chapter.

If you are interested in either of these positions please contact Laurel at 343-3290 (laur3290@gmail.com) or Suzette Welch at 342-9214 (booksontape@rocketmail.com).

Save the Date – Friday, December 12, 2014

By Suzette Welch



This will be the date for our annual Christmas Potluck. It will be held at Valley Oaks Village 1950 Wild Oak Lane, Chico, Ca. Party starts at 6:00pm. Limited parking so please carpool. Bring your own beer and wine. After dinner we are going to have a talk by David Nopel – "Hiking along the Oregon trail". The annual Christmas Party is a good time to visit with friends new and old. So bring your favorite dish and plan to have a pleasant evening.

If you plan on attending, please notify Suzette Welch by e-mail booksontape@rocketmail.com or phone 342-9214 stating number of people in your party and what you plan to bring.

Yahi Conservation Report:

What happened *before* the July 29, 2014, meeting of the Butte County Board of Supervisors?

By Grace Maria Marvin, Yahi Group Conservation Chair

As I write this report, all is pending for the ordinance to ban fracking in Butte County. During the many months of seeking such an ordinance, Frack-Free Butte County (FFBC) awaits a decision about the validation of at least 7605 signatures and the response of the Butte County Board of Supervisor to such a validation.

FFBC's Steering Committee is composed of a variety of people, including from the Community Action Network, Sierra Club-Yahi Group, Citizens Water Watch, and Butte Environmental Council. With missionary style enthusiasm, we struggled to:

1. work with organizations fighting fracking elsewhere ,
2. engage in fund-raising,
3. create widespread educational campaigns,
4. recruit hundreds of volunteers to gather signatures throughout the county,
5. institute productive weekly FFBC meetings,
6. understand local and statewide political and legal processes (and shenanigans), and
7. overcome an extraordinary number of roadblocks.

The major one (as of today, 7/28) was the legal challenge presented first to the County and, then, by the County to FFBC. The County was required initially to accept the finding of the oil and gas companies' lawyers that our ordinance had two *facial defects* (related to wording and to type of font); this meant that the county could not go forward with the counting of citizens' signatures.

At first, we felt quite defeated, as the facial defects seemed to be two FATAL defects! Then, our only hope seemed to be that the Supervisors would approve their own ordinance-- which citizens still have not seen. Moreover, the Board of Supervisors (BOS) seemed reluctant to advance their own staff's ordinance, even though they had voted 4-1 in April to have the staff write an ordinance to ban fracking.

With some additional research and luck we learned: we could file a Writ with the court to challenge the county's ruling and, thereby, have the county resume signature gathering (barely) in time to place our initiative on the November ballot. We did not have a lawyer, but we still were heard in court, as Joni Stellar became the FFBC petitioner. At the first hearing, the judge granted the lawyers' request that a local landowner could join the opposition.

A few days later, a breakthrough for FFBC: the county agreed that the two facial errors were minor and should be ignored by the judge. At the expedited second hearing, the judge was ready: he had read these statements of the county, as well as arguments from our Petitioner and those of the opposition lawyers. Meanwhile, a very impressive crowd of FFBC supporters filled the court room, while many others had to stand outside. The judge probed the other side's reasoning, reflected on the intent of our petition, and came to the conclusion that our petition had not misled the public in any way.

Thus, Frack-Free Butte County had a victorious day in court. But the concerns remain at this moment. Will the validation of signatures be completed in time for tomorrow's BOS meeting and, if so, what will the Supervisors will decide?

Editor's Note:

The petition was accepted by the county on July 28, 2014:

http://motherlode.sierraclub.yahi/newsletter/fracking_signature_certification.pdf

The Butte County Board of Supervisors then voted to study the fracking issue for 30 days, pushing the initiative past the deadline for the November 4 ballot.



Friends of Butte Creek Host the 8th Annual Wild and Scenic Film Festival

Friends of Butte Creek
www.buttecreek.org



All Day Event - Saturday, September 13th

Friends of Butte Creek are **expanding the Wild and Scenic Film Festival to a full day event this year** to offer a full day of great environmental, educational and exciting adventure films. 2014 theme -“emPOWERment.” Power. Energy. Empowerment. The Festival will be featuring films that explore where power comes from (the good and the not so good), what it takes to maintain our current system, the cost it is having on our environment, and what are some new ways of harnessing energy that are sustainable. The subject of energy combined with the human spirit of positivity and inspiration that the film festival imbues, led to the festival theme.

The program will start **Saturday morning at the Pageant Theater** with the first ever Wild and Scenic **Children's Program** featuring **two** showings at **9:30 and 11:00 AM**.

Also at the **Pageant Theater** will be an **afternoon matinee** at **1:00 PM** featuring the premiere showing of "**DamNation**", just released this spring, about how removing dams has freed rivers across the country. Other films of a rivers & fish theme accompany this film.

The **evening event** will be held at the **Sierra Nevada Brewery Big Room** at **5:30 PM** for inspiring films about our planet, people, animals and the good, bad and ugly of how we coexist. Feature films are "**North of the Sun**" and "**Damocracy**". A Big Room **Buffet** will be available, as well as unique items offered in the **Silent Auction**.

Come Join the Friends of Butte Creek, Sacramento River Preservation Trust, Butte Environmental Council, California Native Plant Society and others celebrating the Empowerment of People to create positive change for the future. See you at the Festival!

Information: Visit www.buttecreek.org

Tickets - online: buttecreek.brownpapertickets.com

Locally: **Pure Skin, or Chico Natural Foods Co-op**

River Watcher:

You Can Hike a Lot Just By Walking!

By Rex Burress

I will admit I took that title from Yogi. [You can observe a lot by just watching]. But propulsion is what it's all about whether you're pushing to reach a destination on the John Muir trail, or strolling along the river, or even rolling in a wheel chair! Sierra Club members know all about foot locomotion.

Our hero John M was fond of calling a good walk “sauntering,” and I remember the story about when he left the Bidwells in Chico to float down the Sacramento in a “snag-hopper” boat they built. He landed on the shore adjacent to the “Marysville Buttes” and sauntered across the fields to reach the top of what is now the Sutter Buttes. Along the way he made the acquaintance of the button willow.

Plain hiking without watching for wildlife was not Muir's style, as he absorbed every plant, rock, and animal he confronted. He often carried a plant press, too, as described in the book, “Nature's Beloved Son; Rediscovering John Muir's Botanical Legacy,” by Bonnie J. Gisel with images by Stephen Joseph, a portfolio consisting of 150-year-old specimens Muir had collected.

Muir spent time studying glacial tracks, too, and making notes in his journal. You can't do all that without a meandering/sauntering style, nor can a guided nature walk be built on a fast pace. Just ask Wes Dempsey, guide extraordinaire of Chico, who makes frequent stops to discuss things like the Zigedene Lily along the trailside.

I had the pleasure to guide an Oroville group on a nature walk recently, and I'm even slower than Wes. To really see nature you have to observe a lot! The group was used to “making six miles a day,” which doesn't leave much time for petal pondering in one morning. A couple of participants became impatient and zoomed on ahead, which is alright, but it makes “descriptive phrases” by the speaker rather shortened and gives the guide a feeling of inadequacy.

There are many styles of walking. Like in a marathon footrace, some focus on mental images, some count, and even physical foot falls differ. Do your toes or your heel hit the ground first? Postures are also unique. When I worked at Lake Merritt in Oakland, I would see the same joggers and walkers everyday, and I could spot them all the way across the lake by just the way they moved. Those were mostly exercise geeks who were only intent on sweating and getting there. They proceeded as if in a trance. That's OK for fitness goals, but just a little fitness and a whole lot of watching the world around us is preferred by others.

On mountain treks, a five-foot favorite stick is helpful, but for more stability, the ski-type, two piece metal poles are recommended. In fact, older walkers generally have less foot control and that third or forth leg will aid your balance. It's unthinkable to fall and break a leg out there in the outback.

I haven't done a "thousand-mile walk" but I walked thousands of miles in my youth on the Missouri farm, just in doing daily chores, hunting, and fishing. The creek was two miles away in the bottomland and I went there often. Following the coon hounds at night really put on the mileage as you tried to keep going in the direction of the bawling dogs. Of course, you never got tired when there was booty to bag!

Both Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau wrote contemplative essays on walking. Thoreau also used the term 'sauntering.' He said, "It is a great art to saunter...an early morning walk is a blessing for the whole day...I spend four hours a day sauntering through the woods and over the hills and fields..."

A mountain hike with fellow Sierra Club members, when you're toting a 40-pound pack, involves a whole agenda of different thinking, but there is surely a time for strenuous hiking and a time for a slow nature walk. Watch and combine objectives when you can.



Yahi on the Web

By Louise Casey, Yahi Webmaster

The Yahi website has a whole new look. And it now automatically resizes to be easily readable on many devices, including smart phones and tablets.

The Yahi Group also now has a FACEBOOK page at

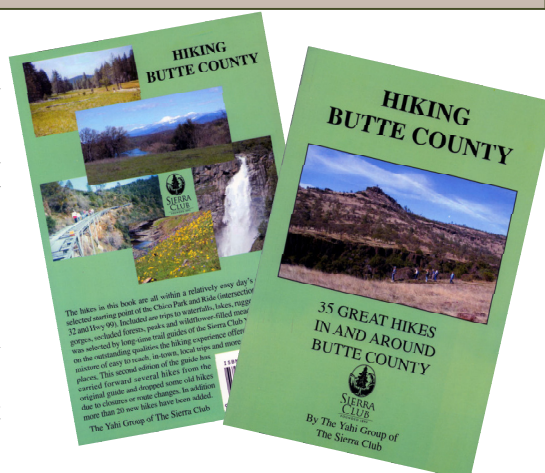
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1494003344180107/>

I envision the page as a place for people who support the ideals of the Sierra Club and the local Yahi Group to easily share information and ideas. Visit the page, and together let's see what we can make of it.

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.



YAH! Club Information

Executive Committee

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Newsletter Information

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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



Photo by Marie Scarrin

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.

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Contact **membership.services@sierraclub.org** or (415) 977-5500.

Tell them if you want to receive only Yahi Group emails, or Yahi Group emails along with Sierra Club national and/or state emails.

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