



Yahi Group



Butte, Glenn, Lassen, Plumas & Tehama Counties

News Articles Programs Hikes and Outings Meetings Events

Guest Column

Well before dawn, haphazardly laced into well-worn Sorels, I step out onto my front deck. In the deep freeze of winter it pops, the sound folds against the bluish-white hillside north of the house and I hear it again in the distance. Then a silence so deep I swear you can hear evolution.

Heavy frost blanketed my woodpile during the night. I force an armful loose. The light from my studio window paints a warm glow onto knee-deep snow and I can make out the broad paw prints of a lynx leading in a straight line, vanishing in thick spruce and darkness.

In a few minute the wood stove begins to warm the room and I sip green tea from a cup without a handle. It is still hours before first light and I am thinking of something Thich Nhat Hahn once enticed me with.

"It is possible," he said, "the next Buddha will not take the form of an individual. The next Buddha may take the form of a community - a community practicing understanding and loving kindness, a community practicing mindful living. This may be the most important thing we can do for the survival of the Earth."

Living in a small village of 800 folks in the isolation of Canada's Yukon Territory has given me a zealous sense of place through which I have come to see the real depth of what Hahn is suggesting.

Haines Junction has cut its cultural teeth on the border of one of the largest protected wilderness areas in the world - a 22.8-million-acre complex of four World Heritage Natural Sites. Our relationship with wilderness is unique in one important sense: we have not had the time or the population to wreak havoc. We are still an isolated rural place governed, if you will, by rural thinking - the sort of thinking that has evolved unfettered by urbane commercialism and limitless urbanism.

However, in the more populated and developed areas of North America, patterns and cultural contexts have evolved that work

against individual and collective well-being. We need to get back on track.

I have given thought to two notions that might be helpful.

Trappist Monk Thomas Merton once remarked, "Having lost our ability to see life as a whole, to evaluate conduct as a whole, we no longer have any relevant context into which our actions are to be fitted, and therefore all our actions become erratic, arbitrary, and insignificant." Here I think, the relevant context to which Merton refers is "community."

University of Colorado law professor Charles Wilkinson, in attempting to summarize a workable definition of what community is and what it must have, invented a most useful tool he called ethic of place. An ethic of place "equally recognizes the people of a region and the land, animals, vegetation, water and air. It recognizes that people revere their physical surroundings and they need and deserve a stable, productive economy that is accessible to those with modest incomes. An ethic of place ought to be a shared community value and ought to manifest itself in a dogged determination to treat the environment and its people as equals, to recognize both as sacred, and to ensure that all members of the community not just search for but insist upon solutions that fulfill the ethic."

During moments of deep reflection brought on by long walks in big country, I began to connect the dots between Merton and Wilkinson.

Both thinkers have what I fondly refer to as a puzzling love for this earth, a sort of mushy dedication to rock, soil and river. Equally pronounced is their uneasiness with the contemporary predicament in which we define, and then try to live out, our civil character. Both are up front about our estrangement from the "commons." Hidden

just beneath the surface of both their ideas is the assumption that somewhere sandwiched between what we learn and where we learn it, we should expect to find individual well-being, compassion, solitude, joy, and at the end of it all, some kind of noteworthy happiness.

But have we? Washed along by the frantic pace of big-city life, we are unwilling or unable to grasp onto much that is stable, ethical, or authentic. In short, we no longer find ourselves obliged to community. In the 10,000-year march from simple agriculturalist to present-day urbanite, we have forsaken much of our rural heritage.

We would be well advised to pay heed to Merton and Wilkinson.

Community, with its emphasis on family, neighborliness, frugality and good-heartedness, is the context in which Merton and Wilkinson make good sense. Merton is right: without community our lives have become erratic, arbitrary and insignificant. Wilkinson is right: community can be synonymous with compassion, sacredness, and equality. Taken together they provide us with a sensible environmentalism: a sort of rural-urban rendezvous in which concentration, civility and compromise take root. Fertile ground, I should think, for Buddha's next time around.

Gregory Heming is a literary ecologist with a Ph.D. in human ecology and master's studies in philosophy and religion. An ex-Boulderite, he now lives in Haines Junction,

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Yahi 2005 Garden Tour

Third annual garden tour will be different from prior years. We are aiming for May 21st but it is not cast in stone yet. There will be all new gardens; different locations concerned with natural plants owner selected and grown although not limited to that. Anything interesting, educational and/or pretty will be shown.

Writing this in February we can't give you any locations yet. Hint- there may be deer proof plants and a running stream.

You may nominate your or a friend's garden by calling Joanne at 530-893-2154. If you would like to be a hostess for a few hours or help with organization of the garden tour call the same number.

All you green thumbers think about what you'd like to show your fellow Sierra Club members and get out there with trowel in hand now.

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 or 5590 Feather River Place, Paradise, CA 95969, Attn: Louise Casey.

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

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

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

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

Submission Guidelines:

Please include name, phone, and address with each submittal. Short, single topic articles are preferred. Deadlines for proposed articles and letters to the editor: February 1, May 1, August 1, and November 1. A one week extension is available if the submission is sent by e-mail and advance advisory has been provided that the article is forthcoming. 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.

Yahi Club Notes

Some New Faces! Our group has recently elected three members to the Executive Committee. The new Vice-Chair, **Gene Ann McMillan**, is currently contacting Yahi leaders to make sure we know, better, what Yahi activists are doing! (If you are one she has not called, please contact her.) The new Secretary, **Wendy Woods** (formerly, our Fifth member), will not only be doing the minutes; she will also be doing much of the publicity for the Yahi Group's activities -- supplemented by our dedicated newspaper and website editor, Louise Casey. **Lynn Ott**, our new "fifth member" will help plan for a summer program meeting in Paradise.

The new Conservation Chair, Scott Wolf, who lives in Paradise, is a most welcome addition to our leadership. He gained much experience heading the GE Free Butte campaign last year. He recently has been learning the Yahi ropes by attending a variety of meetings and gathering information about local conservation issues and the interests of members. Other Yahi members are getting increasingly involved in educating themselves and, hopefully, monitoring several developments that have been planned in the Yahi region. Our representatives have also been attending Executive and conservation meetings held by the Mother Lode chapter.

Other conservation activism: We just recently learned that two Yahi members have been considering legal challenges, to new logging initiatives in Lassen Forest -- logging that would endanger birds on the Endangered Species list. They are working with the national Sierra Club. We already knew that the Yahi's Stop Bidwell Ranch group was enjoying the newly elected, more environmentally friendly Chico city council (which the Yahi group helped to elect): they will be asking that the Bidwell Ranch property be designated "open space" within the weeks to come; this is important for many reasons, including that there are vernal pools on this land adjacent to Bidwell Park.

We have asked the Membership Chair, Gerda Lydon, and the new Conservation Chair to contact some new members (who answered our questionnaire) to see if they would be **contact persons in communities** beyond Chico and in the several counties the Yahi group covers. In time, we hope information about local Yahi contact persons will enable conservation committees to develop in areas beyond the Chico vicinity. At the same time, our development of a data bank of new volunteers should help us "grow" our activism in and around Chico and Paradise as well. (One member has been active in educating the citizenry of Paradise about a sorely needed tree protection ordinance in Paradise.)

Some of the projects which we should be examining for environmental impacts include a proposed casino, disc golfing, planning for expanding one Wal-Mart and building another one, expansion of State Routes 70/149/99, the clean up of Horseshoe Lake, the Humboldt Road Burn Dump, and others. At this point, the Butte

Sierra Club Contacts in the Yahi Group Area

General Contact

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

Elected Officers

Chair - Grace Marvin: 530-893-1994 or GMRADM@aol.com

Vice Chair - Gene Anna McMillan: 530-345-7003 or geneannamc@pacbell.net

Treasurer - Joanne Gerson: 530-893-2154 or joanne.gerson@att.net

Secretary- Wendy Woods: 530-899-8607 or woods@chico.com

Fifth Member - Lynn Ott : 530-877-1671 or lynnsyarden@sbcglobal.net

Committee Chairs and Other Contacts

Chapter Rep. To Motherlode: Grace Marvin: 530-893-1994 or GMRADM@aol.com

Conservation Rep. to the Mother Lode: Scott Wolf : 530-877-7184 or s_s_wolf@yahoo.com

Conservation - Scott Wolf : 530-877-7184 or s_s_wolf@yahoo.com

Local and Residential Logging - Trish Puterbaugh: Cohasset@shocking.com

Membership - Gerda Lydon: 530-343-9277 or PLYdon2948@aol.com

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Nominations & Elections:

- ~ Betty Volker 530-345-7205 or bettyv5@juno.com
- ~ Susan Mason: 530-892-1666 or sl2mason@sbcglobal.net
- ~ Gerda Lydon 530-343-9277 or PLYdon2948@aol.com

Outings - Alan Mendoza: 530-891-8789 or ajmendoza@prodigy.net

Yahi Club Notes (con't from p. 2)

Environmental Council and the Friends of

(continued on page 3)

Bidwell Park are playing lead roles in such monitoring, but we are planning to expand our volunteer base throughout the Yahi region to enable the Sierra Club to be ever more educated and influential. The Sierra Club has a representative (the Yahi Chair) on the Citizens Advisory Committee for the Bidwell Park Management Plan Update. We will continue to meet with University faculty and student leaders, so that the Yahi can help bridge the campus community divide with mutual environmental concern and action. One outcome should be our annual Fall Chat and Chew where many environmental group leaders are present – with the public invited to discuss conservation concerns and questions.

FUN AND FRIENDLY: We look forward to Sierra Club members participating in the annual **Environmental Banquet** on April 6 and the **Endangered Species Faire** on May 7. On April 22, we encourage you to join in on a meal and a hike to celebrate **John Muir's birthday** and **Earth Day**. We are planning on a **Garden Tour** as well. Please see the Outings and Events Calendar in this paper for more details.

Our Outings program continues to have a terrific schedule of activities under the leadership of the Outings Coordinator, Alan Mendoza, who has asked his outings leaders to raise conservation awareness on hikes and other outings. **We are very grateful for all their efforts!** We also will continue to support our thriving Outings program, for example, by paying for leaders to take First Aid courses and providing materials to them to give to their trip participants concerning conservation issues. A Yahi member, **Stephen Sayre**, has volunteered to help Alan Mendoza with maps for Outings, and Alan continues to conduct training for leaders.

Yahi Executive

Yahi Group Executive Committee meetings are usually held the first Wednesday of every month from 7 to 9 p.m. Please contact Grace Marvin: 530-893-1994 or GMRADM@aol.com regarding the specific place time if you would like to attend or if you have an item you would like placed on the

On May 21 & 22, 2005, Sierra Club members are invited to attend a weekend full of informative and fun events relating to the potential to restore Hetch Hetchy Valley, Yosemite's buried treasure.

On Saturday, May 21, the Sierra Club's Hetch Hetchy Restoration Task Force and the independent Restore Hetch Hetchy Board of Directors will meet jointly during the day at the Evergreen Lodge. Beginning early Saturday evening, we will host a "Soiree" at the Evergreen Lodge, which will feature: wine, cheese, and good munchies; our award-winning documentary film, "Hetch Hetchy: Yosemite's Lost Valley;" and, a presentation regarding our restoration Feasibility Study by our technical/engineering team.

We're also planning to have a silent auction of art and photography with beautiful wildlife and outdoor images, and other exciting items.

On Sunday morning, May 22, we'll have a Yosemite National Park Interpretive Ranger-led day trip to Hetch Hetchy to learn about the natural history of the area, and to enjoy the spectacular waterfalls (Tueeulala and Wapama), great granite walls, and wildflowers.

So, be sure to mark your calendars, and to make your reservations at the Evergreen Lodge. The Evergreen Lodge is giving a discounted rate to people attending the event, so be sure to tell the reservation clerks that you are with Restore Hetch Hetchy.

The Evergreen Lodge is on Evergreen Road (one mile before the Big Oak Flat entrance to Yosemite on Route 120) on the way to Hetch Hetchy. It's about a half mile from Camp Mather. See their website for additional information. Here's their contact info:

EVERGREEN LODGE,

Toll-free number (800) 935-6343;

FAX: (209) 379-2606;

e-mail: info@evergreenlodge.com;

website: www.evergreenlodge.com

Endangered Species Faire

The 26th Annual Endangered Species Faire will be held Saturday, May 7, 2005 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Bidwell Park in Chico. Sponsored by the Butte Environmental Council, it is the oldest environmental fair in northern California.

If your school, agency, or nonprofit would like to attend and promote your activities or support the Faire, we welcome both.

For information, please contact Olivia at

The 4th Meeting for a Stronger Paradise Tree Ordinance has been scheduled for Monday, 2/28/05, from 6 to 8 PM, at the Paradise Branch of the Butte County Library, 5922 Clark Road. Meetings are free and open to the public; and we encourage participation from anyone interested in this subject.

I would especially like to encourage participation by some conservationists, since we've been getting mostly tree-service-company owners anxious that no more restrictions be placed upon tree cutting!

We will be holding meetings every fourth Monday evening, at the same time and location, for at least the next three months. Please contact me, Stephen Sayre, at 876-1391 or at sayhart@infostations.com, for more information or if you would like to receive email notification, agendas, or minutes of previous meetings.

Let's Form a Sierran Hunters and Anglers Section

Are you one of the 20% of Sierra Club members who hunt and/or fish? If so, the Sierra Club environmental Partnerships Program would like to hear from you.

We are interested in learning how hunters and anglers and the Sierra Club can work together to reach our conservation goals. What are we doing right; what are we doing wrong; what can we do better; and how can we best conserve America's natural resources?

We would also like to start some outings that include fishing trips, and also do some events like flyfishing clinics which Chapters could use as either recruitment events or fundraising events.

In addition, we would like to start some service outings that are directly related to, and beneficial for our country's wildlife populations, whether they be game or non-game species.

If you're interested in getting involved in these activities by forming a Sierran

For Sale

2-1 person Sierra Design backpack tents

\$50.00 ea.

1 pr. Sherpa Snow Claw lightweight men's like
new \$50.00

1 pr. Redfeather women's snowshoes never used

Conservation

Go North to Understanding

Seven years ago, Gregory Heming sold his house. He piled his camping equipment, computer, printer, books, clothes and dog into his car. He turned the rear-view mirror out, and drove north, away from Colorado.

The Boulder resident of more than 14 years didn't want the views of the life he was leaving behind to distract him from the simple life he pursued.

Heming drove and drove, through British Columbia and into the Yukon, until he arrived in a little place called Haines Junction, population 800. He pulled up to beautiful Kathleen Lake.

"I thought, 'This is what I've been looking for all my life - real wilderness,'" he said.

Heming rented a cabin with no electricity, plumbing or phone and set out to write a doctoral dissertation on the importance, simplicity and beauty of community to the human character. He decided that the arts were the best way to express community and nature's simplicity.

He started a nonprofit called **The Society for Education and Culture**. And he created the **International Symposium on Wisdom and Wilderness**. Now in its sixth year, the symposium has hosted 80 events with 177 performers of dance, music and writing from 14 countries. Many come from Boulder.

Len Barron, a writer, performer and director who met Heming years ago in Boulder, has taken his talents to the Yukon three times. Barron said Heming offers visitors to Haines Junction a chance to slow down and get in touch with something genuine.

"You know, he's a magician," Barron said. "He just created this thing out of dust."

Now 57, Heming writes award-winning columns for his local newspaper, is the elected Yukon representative for the Green Party of Canada, and is the Canadian representative for Amnesty International.

All his life, he's rambled. After graduating from high school in Colorado Springs in 1965, Heming loaded his black 1949 Ford with a heavy tent and camping gear and drove to the Grand Tetons, where he enrolled in the world-famous Exum Mountain School.

Two years later, by then convinced that the world's largest problem was overpopulation, he got a vasectomy. With that, he set a pattern of activism.

He demonstrated against the Vietnam war in Chicago in 1968. In 1972, after earning a degree in philosophy at Western State College in Gunnison, he became a social worker on the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation in Havre, Montana. He stayed five years.

He was married in 1977 in Woodland Park, and in 1983, he and his wife moved to Boulder,

where he pursued a master's degree in religious studies, with a concentration on American Indians. He took a year off to build a house in Boulder Heights, and during that time established a development company with a business partner.

Heming said he was inspired by the ideals of simple design and the preservation of beautiful open space.

Heming and his partner bought a ranch north of Boulder, as well as more than 500 acres of a pristine elk migration corridor outside Lyons. They gave Boulder County the corridor, and in return the county let them transfer the development rights onto the ranch, where they built upscale homes.

It was the first transfer of development rights in Boulder County - a practice now lauded as an example of smart growth.

Excited by the prospect of ecologically responsible development projects, Heming set his sights on the Heil Valley Ranch - a property that Boulder County officials wanted but had not been able to acquire.

He bought the 5,000-acre property for \$8 million and sold it to the Nature Conservancy for \$8.3 million. The county then got a new open space sales tax approved, and bought the land from the Nature Conservancy. Today, it's a property enjoyed by hikers, horsemen and mountain bikers.

"Gregory is imaginative and energetic, and a very intelligent guy," said Joel Davis, a lawyer who worked with Heming.

During his early career as a developer, Heming's first marriage dissolved.

After the Heil deal, Heming had some money in his pocket, but still yearned to understand what wilderness means to people. So, at Barron's suggestion, he enrolled in the Union Institute in Cincinnati - the country's first university-without-walls program.

And he soon found himself, as he had in high school, packing for a road trip to a faraway land. Heming said he found happiness in Haines Junction, along with his second wife - the town's librarian - and her two "head-banging, heavy-metal teenagers. They're wonderful," he said.

Heming returns to Boulder almost annually, for business and pleasure. He said the city seems

California Wild: Preserving the Spirit and Beauty

FREE PROGRAM

TIM PALMER'S "CALIFORNIA WILD" SLIDE SHOW

California Wild celebrates the beauty of the Golden State, interprets its natural wonders, inspiring you to care for this remarkable place with joy, foresight, and stewardship.


With a blend of natural history, evocative writing, informative passages, and personal experience, writer Tim Palmer brings this spectacular landscape to life. His photographs, and those of Terry Donnelly and Mary Liz Austin, take you to some of the most spectacular landscapes in America.

While much of the California landscape has been changed in the past several generations, much still remains undeveloped. This book captures the spirit of that wildness and reminds us that the exquisite workings of nature are essential to all of life.

California Wild takes you on a tour of mountains and forests, deserts and seashores, grasslands, lakes, and rivers. You'll experience this great state in all seasons, and you'll share incomparable views from the highest mountaintop down to the Pacific surf at sea level. Finally, Palmer tells you about the California Wild Heritage Campaign and the efforts of thousands of people to protect wild land and rivers, which still reveal the force of nature in all its glory.

About the Author/Photographers: Tim Palmer has written more than a dozen books about the American landscape and its rivers, including "The Columbia", which received the National Outdoor Book Award. Terry Donnelly and Mary Liz Austin's images appear in numerous magazines as well as in books and calendars. The trio teamed up for Voyageur Press's "Oregon: Preserving the Spirit and Beauty of Our Land."

California Wild: Preserving the Spirit and Beauty of Our Land is presented by *The California Wild Heritage Campaign Environmental Affairs Council, Environmental Action and Resource Center, Environmental Advocates, AS Recycling, Sacramento River Preservation Trust, River Partners, and Chico Paddleheads*

	Louise Casey Stephen Rose	
	HAVE SIGNATURE, WILL TRAVEL	
Louise Casey, Notary Public 5590 Feather River Place Paradise, CA 95969 Phone: (530) 872-9159	Stephen Rose, Notary Public 14204 Decatur Drive Magalia, CA 95954 Phone: (530) 873-3668	

Yahi Spring Program

by Grace Marvin

Thursday, March 10 - ISHI!

Many already know that Ishi was the last of the Yahi tribe; he wandered into Oroville at the beginning of the 20th Century and was then studied by anthropologists. Even so, Dr. Robert Woods' original slide program should be a real treat.

The program will be in the Conference Room of the Butte County Library, at 1st Avenue and Sherman at 7:30 p.m. Refreshments will be served, and the public is welcome. Call 893-1994 for more information.

This will be the last Yahi program until June, since the Yahi group will be having

Friends of Bidwell Park Spring Activities

by Susan Mason

Bidwell Park 2005 Centennial Activities

So far, more than 50 events have been planned to help celebrate the donation of Bidwell Park to the city of Chico in 1905. For our contribution to this momentous occasion, FOBP has been organizing a series of weekly environmental activities relating to the park, aided by the Sierra Club, the Northern California Natural History Museum, the California Native Plant Society, Chico Creek Nature Center, and others.

There are park walks, hikes, seminars, service projects and special events scheduled throughout 2005. See our calendar at www.FriendsofBidwellPark.org for details. Also, to learn about all of the Centennial

events, see www.BidwellPark.org.

Bidwell Park Needs Your Help

Winter is the best time of year for removing invasive plants. Friends of Bidwell Park (FOBP) needs volunteers to help pull out invasive shrubs and trees from Bidwell Park. We work on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9 am to noon at various locations in Lower and Middle Park. Currently, we're removing Japanese privets, bladder senna, European olive, and pyracantha. This isn't like weeding in your yard, where you seem to pull out the same weeds week after week. We focus on removing plants that are having a major impact on the ecology of the park and won't return in great numbers once we've finished the initial removal.

On Sunday mornings, we pick up trash and remove invasive plants in Annie's Glen, as a Bidwell Park 2005 Centennial restoration project. We hope to eventually replant with the type of California native plants that might have existed there before the Europeans arrived in California. Recently, we started a similar monthly Saturday morning project in Lost Park, the area between the Esplanade and Camellia Way bridges, next to East 1st Street.

Tools, gloves and water are provided for all activities. Specific dates and locations can be found in the calendar at www.FriendsofBidwellPark.org. The work is fun and rewarding and you'll meet some interesting people, too. If you'd like to receive a weekly email describing the week's volunteer activities and other park-related information, send an email to info@FriendsofBidwellPark.org.

Make a Donation to Bidwell Park

FOBP and the Chico Park Department have been working to remove the privet trees that line South Park Drive from the 4th Street entrance to the One Mile entrance. Part of this project has been to remove the old barbed and woven wire fence. Once all of the privets and fencing are removed, the Park Dept. wants to build a split rail fence along this section of the park boundary.

You can contribute towards this park improvement by paying for a section of the fence. The material cost is \$30 for 10 feet of fencing. Donations can be sent to the Chico Park Dept, P.O. Box 3420, Chico, CA 95927. Donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Just indicate on your check that it's for this fence and the

Yahi Group's General Outing Information

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

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

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

Riders are expected, as a matter of courtesy, to reimburse drivers to cover the transportation expenses of the trip. 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/ or call Skip Augur at 894-1366 to obtain a correction.

Suggestions and Comments welcome: Any comments on the outings or suggestions for future ones are always welcome. Mail to Alan Mendoza; 6 Patches Drive, Chico, CA 95928 or e-mail ajmendoza@prodigy.net.



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Ongoing

On-Going Tuesday Power Walks (grade 2, class A). Meet at Chico Park & Ride each Tuesday evening at 6:30PM for a 1 ½ hour brisk, creek side walk just one minute from the parking lot! Wear power tennis/walking shoes and carry water and a flashlight. Meeting time changes to 7PM for April and May. Leader: John, 872-8258; Asst. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980.

March 2005

Wednesday, March 2 - Yahi Group ExCom Meeting, 7-9 PM. All members are welcome. Contact Grace Marvin at 893-1994 or GMRADM@aol.com for information.

Saturday, March 5 - Cross Country Ski to Heart Lake Wilderness and Lassen National Park (grade 2, class B). This is for people who own ski equipment. Bring ski gear, lunch, water, appropriate clothing and \$ for drivers. Unusual weather or snow conditions may change the destination. Meet at the Chico Park & Ride, Highway 99 and Highway 32 at 8AM. Leader: Larry, 342-7998.

Thursday, March 10 - ISHI! Many already know that Ishi was the last of the Yahi tribe. He wandered into Oroville at the beginning of the 20th Century and was then studied by anthropologists. Even so, Dr. Robert Woods' original slide program should be a real treat. Tonight's program will be in the Conference Room of the Butte County Library, at 1st Avenue and Sherman at 7:30 p.m. Refreshments will be served, and the public is welcome. Call 893-1994 for more information.

This will be the last Yahi program until June, since the Yahi group will be having quarterly programs, henceforth.

Saturday, March 12 – Chambers Creek Hike (grade 2, class D). A strenuous 8-mile hike up the north wall of the Feather River Canyon. We start at 2000' and will climb to the 5500' level (depending on snow conditions). Along the mostly shadeless route we will see how nature has reacted to the massive 2000 Storrie Fire and see cascading Chambers Creek. Bring good boots, lots of water, lunch and a hat. The trailhead is about 50 miles up Hwy 70 from Chico. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 8AM or at Spring Valley School (Hwy 70 and Pentz Rd.) at 8:30AM. Leader: Perry, 534-5510; Asst. Leader: Alan, 891-8789.

Sunday, March 13 – Cross Country Ski to Lake Helen via the Lassen Park Road (grade 3, class B). This is for fit intermediate and advanced skiers who own ski equipment. Bring ski gear, lunch, water, appropriate clothing and \$ for drivers. Unusual weather or snow conditions may change the destination. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 8AM. Leader: Larry, 342-7998.

Saturday March 19 – Table Mountain Wildflower Walk (grade 2, class A). Come see the beautiful spring wildflowers and waterfalls on this 6-mile hike that just may take you to places you haven't seen on Table Mountain.

Bring binoculars for bird watching, plant guide, lunch, water and sturdy footwear. Rain cancels. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 9AM. Return time around 5PM. Leader: John: 872-8258; Asst. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980.

Saturday, March 26 – Antelope Creek Hike (grade 2, class B). A scenic 1-way hike along the wildflower-strewn North Fork of Antelope Creek in the proposed Wilderness addition to the Ishi Wilderness. Expect some muddy crossings on this 7-8 mile mostly downstream hike with 1500' of elevation loss. A car shuttle will be required. Bring lunch, water, carpool \$\$ and sturdy boots. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 8:30AM or at Hog Lake parking lot at 9:30AM. Round-trip drive of 90-95 miles. Rain cancels. A joint trip with the Shasta Group. Call to reserve spot. Leaders: Bill (Shasta Group/Red Bluff), 527-8203; Jeanne (Yahi Group), 899-9980; Assistant Leader: Michelle, 865-9491.

April 2005

Saturday, April 2 – Deer Creek Hike (grade 2, class B). Experience the full spring beauty of the Deer Creek trail in a 5-6 mile round-trip hike. Deer Creek in spring offers several small waterfalls as we pass through the newly green buds of Douglas fir, ponderosa pine and incense cedar. Bring lunch, water, carpool \$ and a camera. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 9AM. Leader: Julian, 893-1994.

Sunday, April 3 – Wildflower Walk on the Bidwell Ranch, Chico (grade 1, class A). Save Bidwell Ranch, Butte Environmental and the Sierra Club are sponsoring a spring wildflower walk on the 'ranch'. Tidy tips, meadowfoam and blue dicks should all be out to greet those who wish to experience the natural beauty of the city owned Bidwell Ranch property. The walk will last about 1 ½ hours and cover 1-2 miles. Wear sturdy waterproof shoes as there is often wet and uneven ground. Don't forget a hat and your favorite flower book. Meet at the east end of Wildwood Park parking lot at 1PM. Leader: Betty, 345-7205; Asst. Leader: Jeannie, 894-5354.

Wednesday, April 6 -- Environmental Banquet 6-9:30PM at the Sierra Nevada Brewery, Chico. The evening will include a silent auction, a delicious buffet dinner, award presentations by local groups, and Felicia Marcus, who will speak about politics and the environment.

This is a fundraising event for the 26th Endangered Species Faire. Co-Sponsors include Butte Environmental Council, the Yahi Group of the Sierra Club, and Sacramento River Preservation Trust. Information about tickets: call BEC at 891-

6424.

Wednesday, April 6 - Yahi Group ExCom Meeting, 7-9 PM. All members are welcome. Contact Grace Marvin at 893-1994 or GMRADM@aol.com for information.

Saturday, April 9 – Upper Park Ecological Preserve Hike (grade 2, class A). Come see the new Upper Bidwell Park Ecological Preserve. A guided tour of 5-6 miles featuring a walk along the creek, canyon terrain and spring wildflowers. Bring lunch, water, binoculars and camera and sturdy footwear. Space limited. Call leader to sign up and get meeting place and time. Leader: John, 872-8258; Asst. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980.

Saturday, April 9 – Paskenta Bike Ride (grade 5, class B). For mountain and cross bikes. The ride is about 25 miles of rolling terrain (50% paved, 50% gravel roads). Lots of beautiful springtime scenery. Bring your properly maintained bike, helmet, tube, pump, lunch, lots of water, appropriate clothing and \$ for drivers (75-mile round-trip drive). Meet at the Chico Park & Ride at 9AM. Leader: Larry, 342-7998.

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

Saturday, April 16 – Pulga Hike (grade 2, class B). We begin at the old railway station in Pulga and follow the railway line and the Feather River to the ruins of the old resort town of Mayaro and beautiful Camp Creek Falls. Good views of the Feather River Canyon along the way. A round-trip hike of about 7-8 miles with a 600' climb on a dirt road from the bottom of the falls to the top. Bring lunch, water and carpool \$. Round-trip drive of about 60 miles. Rain cancels. Meet at 8:30AM at the Chico Park & Ride or 9AM at the Spring Valley School (Hwy 70 and Pentz Rd). Leader: Alan, 891-8789 or ajmendoza@prodigy.net; Asst. Leader: Jeannie, 894-5354.

Sunday, April 17 – Teichert Ponds Walk (grade 1, class A). Take a 2-hour tour of the 33 acres of City of Chico property under discussion for recreational/natural area. The ponds are between Chico Mall and Little Chico Creek on the east side of Hwy 99. Rain or shine. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 10AM and carpool to entrance. Leader: Gene, 873-1552; Asst. Leader: Carla, 891-6977.

Sunday, April 17 – Teichert Ponds Trash Pick-Up (grade 1, class A). A 2 hour trash pick up in conjunction with the Friends of Bidwell Park, Associated Students Recycling of CSUC and the City of Chico. Meet at 1:30PM at Creek Hollow Drive off Ridgebrook Way. Wear sturdy shoes and old clothes. Water and gloves provided. Call if you need directions. Leader: Carla, 891-6977; Asst. Leader: Gene, 873-1552.

Friday, April 22— Meet for dinner before the Full Moon Hike on Humboldt Road (below),

Outings and Events

6PM. Let's celebrate Earth Day and John Muir's birthday by eating simply good food together at La Comida 954 Mangrove, Chico. Picnic style but indoors. Call Grace for information: 893-1994 or gmradm@aol.com.

Friday, April 22 – Full Moon Hike on Humboldt Road (grade 1, class A). Join us for an evening walk along the historic Humboldt Road to see the full moon. Short car shuttle required. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 7:15PM. Bring flashlight, water and comfortable walking shoes. Leader: Alan, 891-8789 or ajmendoza@prodigy.net.

Sunday, April 24 – Yahi Trail Hike (grade 1, class A). Celebrate the 100th birthday of Bidwell Park with a hike through the geological, botanical and ecological features of the creek side Yahi Trail in Upper Bidwell Park. The 5-6 mile round-trip trail passes by Alligator Hole, Bear Hole and a Diversion Dam and affords great views of Big Chico Creek and the surrounding canyon. Bring boots, water and lunch. Rain cancels. Meet at 1PM at Rifle Range/Horseshoe Lake parking area in Upper Bidwell Park. Leader: Michelle, 865-9491; Asst. Leader: Lynn, 864-7826.

Friday, April 29 – Singles Fine Dining Extravaganza! Come join us as we enjoy pleasant company and conversation while partaking of a succulent meal in a warm, peaceful atmosphere. All you need to bring us a healthy appetite, a friendly smile and money for dinner. Dinner begins at 7:30PM. Call no later than Wednesday, April 27 for directions and to reserve a spot. Bon appetit. Leader: Lynn, 864-7826; Asst. Leader: Michelle.

May 2005

Sunday, May 1 – Sacramento River Loop Bike Ride (grade 2, class A). A flat, leisurely 15 mile round trip past orchards along Sacramento Avenue to the Sacramento River and return to Chico on River Road. Bring lunch and water. Helmet required. Meet at Subway Restaurant, corner of W. Sacramento Ave. and Nord Avenue at 10AM. Leader: Gene, 873-1552; Asst. Leader: Carla, 891-6977.

Wednesday, May 4 - Yahi Group ExCom Meeting, 7-9 PM. All members are welcome. Contact Grace Marvin at 893-1994 or GMRADM@aol.com for information.

Saturday, May 7--Endangered Species Faire, Bidwell Park. Details from Butte Environmental Council. 891-6424. The Sierra Club will have a table, if we get enough volunteers! Please contact Grace at 893-1994 or gmradm@aol.com to help the Yahi!

Saturday, May 7 – Feather Falls Hike (grade 2, class B). Come enjoy the 6th highest waterfall in the U.S. and the beautifully flowered and shaded, 8-9 mile round trip trail to it. We'll take the lower trail to the overlook, then go above the falls for lunch by the creek and return via the upper trail. Please wear boots or sturdy hiking shoes and bring lunch, water and carpool \$\$\$. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 8AM or at the NW corner of the Oroville Wal-Mart parking lot at 8:35AM. Leader: Julian: 893-1994.

Saturday, May 14 - Hike the Dan Beebe Trail in Oroville (Grade 2, Class A). We will see views of Table Mountain, Feather River Canyon and Oroville Dam. We will start the hike from the Nature Center in Oroville then walk up/along the Feather River for about 3 hours, we will see if we can make it to the top of Oroville Dam, then back to the Nature Center. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 8:15 AM and at the trailhead in Oroville at 9:00 AM. Please bring plenty of water, lunch, carpool \$\$ and sturdy shoes. Return time approx. 5 PM. Rain Cancels. Leader: Michelle, 865-9491.

Saturday, May 21 – Colby Meadows Hike (grade 2, class A). We hike 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. Leader: Larry, 342-7998; Asst. Leader: Julian, 893-1994.

Sunday May 22 – Lower Bidwell Park Hike (grade 2, class A). Celebrate the 100th birthday of Bidwell Park with a flat, mostly shady 9-10 mile trek in Bidwell Park along the south and north side of Big Chico Creek. We'll meet at Caper Acres Parking Lot at 9:00AM. 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. We then return to the Five Mile picnic area for lunch and come back on the north side of the creek to return to the parking lot by 2-3PM. Bring lunch and water. Lunch can also be purchased at the golf course and carried back to Five Mile. Leader: Carla, 891-6977; Asst. Leader: Gene, 873-1552.

Thursday, May 26 – Sierra Club Newsletter Folding. Join us to help fold and sort the Yahi Group 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-Monday, May 28-30 – Mill Creek Memorial Day Backpack & Trail Maintenance (grade 3, class B) (educational). Join the Yahi Group for our annual Memorial Day weekend trail maintenance trip. We will hike 15-16 miles downstream starting at Upper Mill Creek (4000 feet) to Black Rock (2000 feet) in a Wilderness Study Area proposed addition to the Ishi Wilderness. On the way we hike through forests, enjoy wildflowers and follow along the creek. The Forest Service will provide tools and car shuttle back to our cars. Group size is limited, call for reservations. Return time around 6 PM Monday. Leader: Tony, 916-448-3230 or HikingTony@earthlink.net. Asst. Leader: Alan, 891-8789 or ajmendoza@prodigy.net.

June 2005

Friday, June 3 - Singles Dinner at Greyatip Thai Restaurant. Enjoy good company and a delicious meal. Please call by Thursday, for time and to make your reservation. Leader: Michelle

Summer Volunteers Needed at Sierra Club's

This is a wonderful opportunity to meet families and friends from around the world and to share your own interests in wilderness. Please consider spending one week this season with us at LeConte Memorial Lodge. As a volunteer, entrance to the Park is free, and you may camp with us, free-of-charge, under the Ponderosa Pines near the Merced River with a wonderful view of Half-Dome. Many weeks are still available for the 2005 summer season. Bring a friend or family member and volunteer together.

Please call or email Bonnie Gisel to discuss volunteering at LeConte Memorial Lodge this season.

For more information, see: <http://www.sierraclub.org/education/leconte/volunteering.asp>

Contact: Dr. Bonnie J. Gisel, Curator,
Phone: 209 403-6676
leconte.curator@sierraclub.org

Sierra Club Hike Classifications

Distance Rating

Grade 1: up to 6 miles

Grade 2: 6-10 miles

Grade 3: 10-15 miles

Grade 4: 15-20 miles

Elevation Gain Rating

Class A: up to 1000 feet

Class B: 1000-2000 feet

Class C: 2000-3000 feet

Finding True Wilderness

Living in the shadow of great mountains has made me pay attention to detail. The stark beauty of the Yukon overwhelmed me when I first arrived here, by car from Boulder. Now I pay attention to subtle changes in color, slight shifts in wind. I have learned to read the land according to its depth of field.

I have lived in Haines Junction in southwestern Yukon Territory for eight years now, and I can tell you it is a far cry from Boulder both in distance and in spirit.

The Yukon is twice the size of Colorado and yet there are only 30,000 people (more moose than people, in fact). Most of the people (24,000) live in the capital city of Whitehorse. The rest are scattered in small clusters, all within a quarter-mile or so of a rural highway. Step beyond that slick ribbon of highway and you are in deep wilderness; you begin to think with your wilderness mind.

What I did bring with me from Boulder, however, is my passion for running, and today my run takes me up Bear Creek Summit. In a mile I am out of the elongated Shakwak Trench that parallels Kluane National Park and Reserve, and I come face to face with the St. Elias Mountains, the highest coastal mountains in the world.

Two solid plates of dense earth moved imperceptibly together in the Gulf of Alaska over the course of a few million years and presto, mountains rose into thin air. On my left, veiled behind threadlike clouds, rise three of the four highest peaks on the continent.

Ice crystals have formed along the banks of Bear Creek and Summit Creek and it balls up on poplars and willows that bend over the water; main channels are still liquid. A low, yellow November light darts off the ice and the sound of running water stays with me for miles.

Every hundred yards or so I come across signs of coyote and snowshoe hare. On my left, big tracks: wolf. I make a mental note we are moving in the same direction.

I will see no people today; this is an ideal place to run and think. I think about what wilderness is: precious beyond gold, threatened beyond reason.

Wilderness is the context wherein novelty can emerge without violence, where the beauty of evolution just keeps making everything better. Ecologists and economists, it seems to me, dearly need (and want) to embrace this rich notion of the wild, but their language prevents it. Neither discipline has much use for surprises or for the artistic.

Park conservation ecologist David Henry, however, is catching on. He questions the simple assertion that wolves only howl to define territory. "But is there more going on? Is there an emotional or aesthetic element which science misses?"

Of course there is. One only need come

north, way north, to understand this. Here, in solidarity with a pristine landscape, wild beyond our ability to imagine, the distance between wisdom and wilderness narrows, making room in our minds and in our hearts for beauty.

It is dark now and quite cold. I turn from the summit and head home. Below me is the faint glow of Haines Junction.

My breath lingers in the dim light from the headlamp and things begin to close in. Heavy ice has formed between my tights and wind pants, and I sound a bit like breaking glass by the time I reach the narrow road leading to the house.

A half-mile from the house I stop, turn off the lamp and let my eyes adjust. I immediately hear the cold, moving water of Bear Creek. Wood smoke hovers over my little piece of wilderness, and deep in the valley wolves let loose. The sound bounces off the steep, granite walls.

I am hopeful we will find ways of preserving what little true wilderness remains in the world today. Ecology teaches us everything is connected.

US Congressional

League of Conservation Voters <http://www.lcv.org/> calculates environmental ratings based on voting records. A 100 per cent rating indicates the highest concern for our health and greatest appreciation of our natural resources; a 0 per cent rating is the bottom - indicating no concern for these issues in the voting record.

For information on Senators and Representatives from other States or Districts, or for a discussion of the methodology used to calculate the ratings, full information is available.

US Government

Bureau of Land Management

<http://www.blm.gov/>

Bureau of Reclamation

<http://www.usbr.gov/>

National Park Service

<http://www.nps.gov/>

U. S. Environmental Protection Agency

<http://www.epa.gov/>

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

<http://www.fws.gov/>

US Government

President

George W. Bush (R)

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(202) 456-1414
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Vice President

Richard Cheney (R)

Old Executive Office Building
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vice-president@whitehouse.gov

U. S. Senators

Barbara Boxer (D)

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Conservation

Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed

LETTER FROM A JOHNSVILLE SNOWBIRD: Jared Diamond in conversation with Nina Jablonski, Curator of Anthropology, presented at the Hersbt Theater. January 26, 2005 (California Academy of Science Lecture). Reviewed by Joseph Abbott

How does one relate the dream of living beyond California's expanding subdivisions to Jared Diamond's new book *Collapse*? My wife and I attended a "conversation" with Pulitzer prize winner Jared Diamond, author of the best selling book "*Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed*." It's a big book of 591 pages (\$29.95; Viking Press, New York 2005, ISBN 0-670-03337-5).

Diamond, Professor of Geography at UCLA, is also author of *Guns, Germs, and Steel* which explored how modern society evolved. *Collapse* is his sequel. Excellent book reviews are available. I recommend the *New Yorker's* extensive coverage (January 3, 2005; pp. 70-73) or a shorter review in *Science*, Vol. 307 p. 45 January 7, 2005.

Concern for his children's future piqued Professor Diamond's curiosity in society's development and he asked himself if our earth will eventually cease being a place worth living. He catalogs definable principles and factors propelling the West's consumerist society toward ultimate collapse, what lessons are learned from past failed and successful societies, and how citizens can hope to effect positive change. Choice remains possible, but we must become environmentally involved if we want to maintain a livable planet.

Diamond cited concrete examples of societies that failed to adapt by making decisions that destroyed themselves. He discussed fascinating case studies of Easter Island, Norse settlements in Greenland, Mayans of Central America, recent Haitian and Rwandan debacles, and Montana's open spaces. Each societal demise had specific reasons, usually based on shortsighted decisions, made with full knowledge that they would cause long-term trouble. His fascinating presentation contained pertinent and timely lessons. Seminal issues included exploitation of non-renewable resources, societal-induced environmental changes such as climate, overpopulation leading to internecine war and genocide, global trade partnering and China's embrace of American consumerist values (Marxist free-marketing), and

the U.S. response to the global health crises of AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis. It was a smorgasbord of issues combined with stimulating arguments.

The US, with 2 percent of the world's population, consumes 25 percent of the globe's resources and is our planet's largest polluter. And the Third World aspires to this profligate life style. China, soon to double its oil and steel consumption, remains an unembarrassed big-time environmental polluter. China's resource consumption, its expanding population presently at 1.3 billion and the East's enthusiastic embrace of America's consumerism and polluting, will be equivalent to 78 billion people inhabiting our planet in the year 3000 AD. That pressure on resources cannot sustain our life style.

And global warming? The Antarctic ice pack contains 75% of the earth's water. If global warming melts it all, 50% of earth's present land mass will be flooded. If pollution continues as is, our planet won't be fit to inhabit, and that's Diamond's concern.

Are there solutions? Diamond's analogy is of an exponentially accelerating race between consumption outstripping resources while generating pollution versus environmental commonsense. Will society and our planet survive or will both eventually collapse? The answer is not yet certain. Informed choice but not group think could be our salvation.

Diamond recommends voting for the environmentally committed, contributing to environmental groups, and buying from conservation-minded companies; all very simple actions. He speculates that trade globalization will help because the messages of limited resources, over-consumerism, pollution, and conservation avoidance, cannot be suppressed in a communication-savvy world, but the audience felt these solutions namby-pamby. The liberal San Franciscans applauded heartily when a questioner volunteered the need for a revolution in the public's perceptions and actions.

Diamond responded emphasizing that governments can get the environmental message and described the cold, dark, stormy morning of February 1, 1953, when Holland's Zeeland dikes failed and thousands drowned as a wall of sea-water swept over sleeping villages. Lessons were learned and the Dutch redirected billions to

develop systems to minimize recurrences. The Netherlands clearly understands the danger of global warming and rising seas. Diamond speculated it is possible, even for America's xenophobic politicians, to get the environmental-political message. He rhetorically asked how many more billions and military capital will Americans expend to sort out the next two dozen environmentally sick, resource stripped, and politically unstable countries?

Are there lessons for small California counties or was this just the big picture? Diamond outlined the challenge and curse of resource endowment, with political attention devoted solely to resource exploitation while ignoring diversification and long-term sustainability. He theorized that removal of resources with only a few gaining profit, combined with trivial investment in the region's future, insured eventual poverty and conflict.

Plumas County's forests and water are pretty well exploited and now it's time for our real estate to be sold. In its semi-desert east, Plumas is threatened with ten new developments covering 6,000 acres, including 2000 residential units. Will our quality of life be enhanced, or will our grandchildren be disenfranchised menial workers for gated "mac-mansions" of the urban rich who boast they live within 20 minutes of three golf courses?

Diamond challenges us to better protect our resources, plan for our future, and develop opportunities, other than those that foster even more exploitation. Will we continue to tolerate little political interest in jobs and infrastructure, preservation of our water and air, forests and wildlife, farms and ranches? Should discussion



Sierra Club Note Cards

Once again the Yahi Group is offering beautiful Sierra Club note cards for sale for \$12 per box.

Note cards are available at YAH! Sierra Club activities or from Joanne Gerson, 530-893-2154.

For more information about designs, check the Yahi Website

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Conservation

One Extreme to Another

William Clark, of the Lewis and Clark 1803-06 Expedition and later Superintendent of Indian Affairs in 1830, was reported to say that "contact with Europeans inevitably corrupted native peoples." This is from a man who, by April 1803, had met with 12 of the 30 tribes on the Great Plains and knew more about the Indian nations west of the Mississippi than any living American.

According to the book, William Clark and the Shaping of the West, by Landon Jones, the invasion of Europeans onto the American landscape, bringing with them land desires, whiskey, disease, and the need for game-food and furs, resulted in the displacement and destruction of American tribes. One of the biggest problems was the altering of the environment and the reduction of wild game.

In a land where game was so plentiful with not only millions of buffalo roaming American plains and eastern forests before European colonization, but also abundant were vast numbers of elk, beaver, fur bearers and deer. When Lewis and Clark first went up the Missouri River in 1804, they could see hundreds of deer along the shore. Then by 1815, the hunting grounds of the Missouri Osage Indians had become so depleted that they found it necessary to travel up to 600 miles in search of bison. Deer were slaughtered for their skins; 33,000 deerskins were collected at the Fort Osage trading post in 1819 alone. Hunters brought 25,000 beaver skins and 50,000 bison robes to St. Louis in 1833, but muskrats had already dropped from 130,000 per year to scarcely any in 1825.

As the eastern tribes relied increasingly on pelts as their only cash crop, they depleted the wild game on their lands, then turned to trading land for civilized essentials that they had become addicted to. Habitat had been destroyed, too, with large tracts of eastern forest stripped for crop space and fuel. Even Mississippi steamboats had depleted the riparian woodlands along the river, since they required 30 cords of wood every 24 running hours, just as the forests around St. Louis had been stripped for firewood. A fur-trapping post consumed about a thousand cords a year. Nature survived the onslaught because of flexibility, but scars remain.

I only mention these vicious cycles to lead into the ups and downs of wildlife management, which was virtually nonexistent before 1900. Even though I trapped muskrats and skunks on the Missouri farm in the 1940s, the deer, beaver and turkeys had been eliminated by that pioneer element. How enthralled I was to watch the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) engage in wildlife management and restore much of the wildlife that had been there originally, and now my homeland is full of white-tailed deer. They were at work managing small game and habitat restoration in my farm days, and since then they have effectively restored deer, beaver, turkey and otter as a stellar conservation agency - one of the best in America.

Now comes the news, through the "Lightnin' Ridge" outdoor journal published by Larry Dablemont out of Bolivar, Missouri, that there is

discord in MDC management operations. Their deer restoration seems to have succeeded beyond all expectations, much to the hunter's delight, but to the point that major insurance companies complain about the money they are losing in car/deer collisions.

The new attitude has become one of a drastic reduction in the deer herd, where you pay higher prices for deer tags but could shoot as many as you want - at least the does - in 2003. Now some are crying "corruption" and "money grab and waste," although MDC will cite concerns about Chronic Wasting Disease in high populations (Mad Cow Disease partly induced by game farms), habitat destruction, and crop intrusion. The Kansas City Star has allegedly accused MDC of improper money usage. Wildlife management and introduction - or subtraction - of fauna and flora is a complex procedure.

How sad that my proud image of the MDC has taken a hit. Once accused of something, whether it be true or false, a question mark lingers, which is often unjust.

Interfering with natural balances is always fraught with perils, especially in a country with higher and higher human populations. California is no exception, and the CA Fish and Game Department, on a short budget, encounters many problems in gallantly trying to strike a balance between animals and man in a land where humongous crowds of humans roar out of the cities, driving SUVs bristling with rifles and rods.

During the autumn, I stopped my car and watched a handsome buck deer cross in front of me as if accepting my courtesy. How thrilling! But to the homeowners on Kelly Ridge (Oroville), CA, where deer are protected, a different song is sung of garden destruction. When a mountain lion approaches the area, eyeing the deer, the cry is out to kill that beast! Learning to live with nature is a blank wall in many cases.

I am told by a members of the California Wild Turkey Association, a hunter's organization that has helped Fish and Game stock turkey in the Oroville area, that further turkey expansion into the mountains is stymied by lawsuits from several animal and plant agencies. It seems turkeys have become destructive in scratching up a living, imperiling rare plants, especially in the higher hills where endangered plants exist.

Sierra Club members and other outdoor organizations prize the sight of wildlife and

National Sierra Club

The annual election for the Sierra Club's Board of Directors is now underway. In March, you will receive in the mail your national Sierra Club ballot. This will include information on the candidates for the Board of Directors as well as three ballot questions to be decided.

The Sierra Club is a democratically structured organization at all levels that requires the regular flow of views on policy and priorities from its grassroots membership in order to function well. Yearly participation in elections at all Club levels is a major membership obligation. Your Board of Directors is required to stand for election by the membership. This Board sets Club policy and budgets at the national level and works closely with the staff to run the Club.

Voting for candidates who express your views on how the Club should grow and change is both a privilege and responsibility of membership. The same responsibility rests with the membership when ballot questions on major policy issues are to be voted upon.

Members frequently state that they don't know the candidates or the background of the ballot questions and find it difficult to vote without learning more. You can learn more by asking questions of your group and chapter leadership and other experienced members you know. Visit the Club's election website:

www.sierraclub.org/bod/2005election

This site provides links to much more information about candidates, their background and views and also additional information on the ballot questions.

You should use your own judgment by taking several minutes to read the ballot statement of each candidate and pro and con statements on the ballot questions. Then make your choices and cast your votes. You will find the ballot is quite straightforward and easy to mark. A

The Sport of Hunting

The sport of hunting wild animals has become a controversial issue in this time of extreme scrutiny from activist groups. The term "sportsman" has been molded to mean fair play in pursuing authorized animal targets and a respect for rules and regulations as well as fellow hunters. The humane element in modern society, however, often criticizes the killing of any animal with guns or traps no matter how justified harvesting the surplus is to food sources or wildlife management.

The impetus for this article actually involved a newspaper article about "Poaching rampant during elk hunt in Idaho." It seems that the Idaho Department of Fish and Game opened a special season to thin out a large herd of elk, but when some hunters who bought tags "opened fire like boys with their first BB guns," ethics were thrown out the window, and they were shooting until they emptied their rifles and calling hunting friends on their cell phones to come join the bonanza.

I am reminded of the elk - and buffalo - that the Lewis and Clark Expedition encountered in 1804. Those animals were a boon to the expedition's meager food supplies, and they shot what they could with their single-shot musket loaders. Modern guns might have created a lustier approach as it seems when there is opportunity, often the trend is toward greed. Even so, buffalo were later killed by the millions in the 1800s, often just for their tongues or hides, or for "sport." We know how close to extinction the great herds became, or the total extinction of the passenger pigeon, through lack of wildlife management.

American Indian tribes had subsisted on buffalo and the large supply of game for thousands of years, limited to obtaining what they could through arrow and spear, but there is no doubt that they, too, had few concepts of conservation. Large herds of buffalo were lured into stampeding over cliffs, far beyond what the tribes needed. The reason that many Indian tribes were nomadic was because they would wipe out the game in one area and then simply move on. Fire was used on the prairies and in the forests to obtain animals. When the European fur quest developed, Indians helped decimate animal populations to obtain pelts to exchange for trade goods.

Having experienced hunting in my youth, I can understand the value placed on the sport and the importance of the gun as a tool for harvesting surplus animals that otherwise might become over-populated and die from disease or starvation. Although I have lost that youthful passion for shooting wild animals, I still have a .22 rifle tucked away in the closet.

Somehow, it is comforting to know that that explosive device is available if needed for home defense or dispatching a rogue animal. It is rather simple to pull the trigger, which has accounted for some serious situations on the home front and in war. Discipline is needed as demonstrated in the unfortunate event of "hunter killing hunters" in Michigan this year.

Watching the hunting scenes on television gives a rather glamorized unreal spin to the sportsman's encounter with the out-of-doors. Those hunters clad in their "Cabela's" camouflaged clothing and armed with mighty rifles able to bring down the lovely caribou on a hill 275 yards away could seem detrimental to the hunting idea. The picture of hunters shaking hands over a vanquished regal big-game giant, or placing its head in a trophy room, can certainly be fuel for anti-gun/anti-hunting agendas.

The trouble is, human compassion can identify with the fallen creature and judge that it is unjustifiable to thus kill an animal. Although game agencies can regulate proper conservative animal takes, they cannot regulate human emotions on either the greed or the extreme preservation side. There is little compromise on either side, whether it is sport hunting or an old-growth redwood tree. There is no doubt, though, no matter how much one denies it, that life has to be killed in order for mankind to survive. Even the head of cabbage has to be slain in order to nourish the living, and life and death is most evident on the farm where animals and plants live. Blood must flow in order to kill the cow or the deer, and the lifeline must be severed whether cabbage or corn.

The same newspaper also had an article about "Washington appeals court upholds bans on animal trapping." The steel trap has taken on the appearance of an evil slayer of animals, and the non-trappers have won out. American Mountain Men beaver trappers of the 1800s will turn over in their graves! Having experienced "skunk trapping" as a boy on the farm, and knowing about trapping prolific muskrats to save a levee, and knowing that steel traps are not as terrible as they are portrayed, I can find some reluctance about the ban, which includes mole and gopher traps.

I will not deny that I took some pride in outwitting the Norway rat that got into our house last summer. It was chewing our doors, heating pad, chairs and foodstuffs until the steel-adorned trap clamped down on its beady-eyed head. I

Environmental

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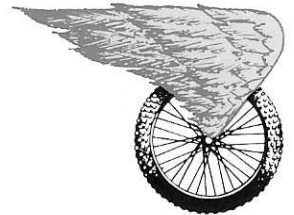
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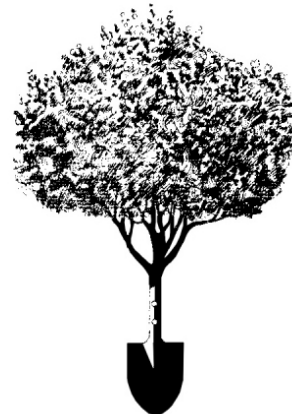
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