

Butte, Glenn, Lassen, Plumas & Tehama Counties

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Yahi Summer 2015 Outings and Events

Coordinated by Alan Mendoza

www.sierraclub.org/mother-lode/yahi/outings

Safeguarding the Berryessa Snow Mountain Region

By Charlotte Orr, Tuleyome

With the help of the Sierra Club, Tuleyome, a 501(c)(3) non-profit in Woodland, has been working since 2007 to permanently protect 360,000-plus acres of federal public lands in the Berryessa Snow Mountain region as a national monument. The area, located less than two hours from Sacramento and the Bay Area, is a world renowned geologic site that demonstrates the interaction of three tectonic plates. The region also has a unique natural and cultural history, including ancient archaeological sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

This beautiful stretch of land includes parts of Yolo, Solano, Napa, Lake, Mendocino, Colusa and Glenn counties. This hidden gem starts at Putah Creek, south of Lake Berryessa, and extends one hundred miles north to Snow Mountain Wilderness in the Mendocino National Forest. These lands are a scenic treasure, providing an important migratory corridor for wildlife including black bears, California's second-largest population of wintering bald eagles, tule elk, osprey, river otters, half the state's dragonfly species, a variety of butterflies, and certain species found nowhere else on the planet.

The proposed Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument is supported by over 80,000 individuals, 200-plus business owners, five counties within the designation, many surrounding cities, the state of California, conservation groups, and a wide variety of outdoor recreationists. Hikers, mountain bikers, horseback riders, off-road recreation groups, sportsman groups, paragliders, and many more enjoy the natural beauty and recreational resources offered by these lands.

Recreation in the Berryessa Snow Mountain region currently supports more than 600 jobs and \$55.3 million in economic benefits to local counties. A recent study commissioned by the Winters Chamber of Commerce showed that increased visitation could create a cumulative impact of up to \$50 million in economic benefits for the local economy over the course of five years following a national monument designation.

In December 2014, U.S. Reps. Mike Thompson and John Garamendi hosted a public meeting with Interior Secretary Sally Jewell and United States Department of Agriculture Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment Robert Bonnie to discuss the proposed Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument. This meeting was a huge step forward for the campaign with hundreds in attendance from a variety of stakeholder groups including hikers, hunters, anglers, mountain bikers, paragliders, horseback riders, and others who came to show their support for the protection of the area. Sierra Club members and staff helped both during the meeting and behind the scenes.

In early February 2015, Representatives Mike Thompson, John Garamendi, Jared Huffman, and Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein introduced legislation for the Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument. Later that month the California State Assembly also supported a resolution supporting the designation (AJR4) which was introduced by Assemblyman Bill Dodd and coauthored by Assemblymen Marc Levine and Jim Wood. On April 6, Assemblyman Bill Dodd's resolution passed in the State Senate and is now on its way to the president's desk. This resolution is the first time in history the California State Legislature has supported a new national monument designation.

Supporters of the designation have made it clear that if Congress does not take swift action to protect these lands, then President Obama should use the 1906 Antiquities Act to designate the Berryessa Snow Mountain region as a National Monument.

The Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument will safeguard the area's natural beauty, sensitive area, wildlife, and rare plants, enhance recreational opportunities, provide opportunities for economic growth in surrounding communities, and protect this scenic treasure so that it can be enjoyed by future generations.

Support the Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument

For more information about the Berryessa Snow Mountain region, or to fill out a postcard of support asking President Obama to designate the area as a national monument, please visitwww.berryessasnowmountain.org.

You can also help by writing a letter to the editor in your local newspaper. Contact us for more details.

To support Tuleyome's efforts, you can also go online to www.tuleyome.org and make a donation. Please mail checks to Tuleyome, 607 North Street, Woodland, CA, 95695.

Contact

For questions, please contact <u>info@berryessasnowmountain.org</u> or call (530) 350-2599.

Yahi Club News

Yahi Group Donates Videos to Butte County Library

By Suzette Welch

Sierra Club Yahi Group has again used some of its education and outreach funds to purchase a collection of video documentaries which are being donated to the Butte county Library. The donation is made with the intention of educating the public about important current environmental issues. The videos are listed by title in the catalogue and are available for free check out at all Butte County Library locations.

Groundswell Rising

This film looks at the human side of the Fracking debate. It gives the viewer a look at what it is like to live in a town where fracking activity is happening.

Earth Aid: Water Conservation

This environmental documentary demonstrates a wealth of innovative & original tips on Water Conservation that cost us nothing, but which can save up to 50% of the water each of us uses. Hosted by Emmy Award nominee and environmentalistEd Begley Jr., this film teaches us that by taking a few simple actions, you can help assure a plentiful supply of water for us now and generations to come.

Sand wars

After fresh water, sand is the most consumed natural resource on the planet. As a logical consequence of this exploitation, sand's limited reserves are threatened today. "Sand wars," triggered by building booms, are raging everywhere in the world and 3/4 of the planet's beaches are in decline and bound to disappear, victims of erosion and - as hard it might be to comprehend – smuggling.

Bidder 70

This feature length documentary film is about Tim DeChristopher, the college student who derailed an illegal BLM oil and gas lease auction in 2008.

Clearcut Nation

This film examines the decimation by extreme clearcutting that is occurring in the watersheds of northern California--the watersheds that support all of the life in the state. It includes interviews with author Derrick Jensen, botanist Julie Kierstead Nelson, PhD fire and vegetation ecologist Dennis Odion, PhD hydrologist Tom Myers, wildlife biologist Monica Bond, and rural residents who have experienced the vast changes to the land. This film is based on 8 years of research and field work, as well as decades of life experience in the wild lands of California.

Klamath Basin: A Restoration for the Ages

For over a century, the Klamath River Basin along the Oregon and California border has faced complex water management disputes. As relayed in this 2012, 60-minute public television documentary narrated by actress Frances Fisher, the water interests range from the Tribes near

the river, to energy producer PacifiCorp, farmers, municipalities, commercial fishermen, environmentalists – all bearing legitimate arguments for how to manage the water. After years of fighting, a groundbreaking compromise may soon settle the battles with two epic agreements that hold the promise of peace and fish for the watershed.

Salt of the Earth: Salinity in California's Central Valley

Salt. In a small amount, it's a gift from nature. But any doctor will tell you, if you take in too much salt, you'll start to have health problems. The same negative effect is happening to land in the Central Valley. The problem scientists call "salinity" poses a growing threat to our food supply, our drinking water quality and our way of life. The problem of salt buildup and potential – but costly – solutions are highlighted in this 2008 public television documentary narrated by comedian Paul Rodriguez.

Olomana Gardens Permaculture and Aquaponics

This documentary takes viewers on an in depth tour of this certified organic demonstration farm. Permaculture is basically about reducing waste: using everything and not throwing anything away. The main aim is to create living and sustainable systems. It is an ecologist's dream of actively conserving world life and resources. The film focuses on the synergy between animals and plants. A big feature is the aquaponics section. Aquaponics comes from aquaculture coupled with hydroponics. This type of growing system combines fish raising and production of organic vegetables. It has the potential of supplying vast numbers of people with a sustainable and ecologically healthy supply of protein and vegetables at a minimal investment with quick results.

Vanishing of Bees

Narrated by Academy Award nominee Ellen Page, "Vanishing of the Bees" follows commercial beekeepers David Hackenberg and Dave Mendes as they strive to keep their bees healthy and fulfill pollination contracts across the U.S. The film explores the struggles they face as the two friends plead their case on Capitol Hill and travel across the Pacific Ocean in the quest to protect their honeybees.

Filming across the US, in Europe, Australia and Asia, this documentary examines the alarming disappearance of honeybees and the greater meaning it holds about the relationship between mankind and mother earth. As scientists puzzle over the cause, organic beekeepers indicate alternative reasons for this tragic loss. Conflicting opinions abound and after years of research, a definitive answer has not been found.

Thirsty for Justice

This is a story of celebration - of a diverse grassroots movement that helped make California the first state in the nation to legislatively recognize the Human Right to Water. It is a story about the future, and the choices and challenges that await us all as we strive to protect water resources for ourselves and for future generations.

Yahi Conservation Report

By Grace Maria Marvin, Yahi Group Conservation Chair

Several Yahi members active in a larger group fighting PG&E's plans to cut trees in Oroville (Butte County) -- despite PG& E not providing sufficient evidence that trees are hazardous for their pipelines, nor allowing necessary public input. We learned later that citizen action and threats of lawsuits may have made a big difference in other communities, such as Mountain View. (See <u>stopgelies.com</u> for one man's history of PG&E actions in Mt. View as of 2013.) Largely because PG& E had been working behind the public's view in planning the cutting of beautiful old trees in Oroville (which ultimately were cut even with our belated protests), we are getting farther out in front of PG&E's actions in other parts of the county. There was a very large turnout at the meeting PG& E had with us last week, with dozens of people speaking out about the huge variety deficiencies in PG&E's plans. We're on a roll with press coverage, too, and hope we can make it possible that far fewer trees will be cut.

The Yahi Groups is supporting an addition to Bidwell Park (one of the largest municipal parks in the nation). We hope that the city council will support the addition of Bidwell Ranch, land that the Yahi Group fought to protect from development for many years.

Yahi members have been among the activists supporting a ban on fracking in Butte County (reported in my earlier reports); our initiative is on the ballot for 2016. This April, we expressed our support for an ordinance passed by the Board of Supervisors on 4/21 that bans the import to, and storage and disposal of fracking waste in Butte County. The following information from the Butte County website provides you the basic information:

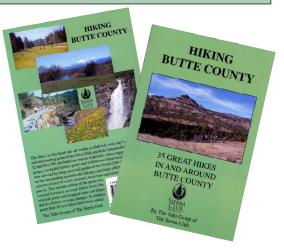
* 9:45 a.m. - Public Hearing - Amendments to Butte County 5.02 Code Chapter 24. Zoning Ordinance, Prohibition on Well Stimulation Byproducts Ordinance - The proposed Prohibition on Well Stimulation Byproducts Ordinance is a County-initiated amendment to the Butte County Zoning Ordinance that would ban the storage or disposal of well stimulation ("fracking") byproducts in the unincorporated portions of Butte County. Adoption of the ordinance has been determined to be categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it will have no potential for physical change to the environment either directly or indirectly, and because it is a regulatory action taken to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement and protection of the environment. The Prohibition on Well Stimulation Byproducts Ordinance amends various sections of the Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 24 of Butte County Code (BCC), as follows: 1) Storage or disposal of well stimulation byproducts is added as a land use category in all zones, and then this land use category is shown as not permitted in all zones; 2) Supplemental Use Regulations section BCC 24?167.1 specifies that "no well stimulation byproducts of any form or of any nature may be stored in, or disposed of in, the boundaries of Butte County, including any injection wells within Butte County"; and 3) The Glossary is amended to add definitions of "Acidizing," "Hydraulic Fracturing," "Injection Well," "Well Stimulation Byproducts," and "Well Stimulation Treatment" - actions requested - 1) ADOPT THE RESOLUTION MAKING FINDINGS RELATIVE TO THE ORDINANCE AND FINDING THE ORDINANCE CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT FROM ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PURSUANT TO CEQA, AND AUTHORIZE THE CHAIR TO SIGN; AND 2) ADOPT THE ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 24, ENTITLED "ZONING" OF THE BUTTE COUNTY CODE TO PROHIBIT THE STORAGE OR DISPOSAL OF WELL STIMULATION ("FRACKING") BYPRODUCTS, AND AUTHORIZE THE CHAIR TO SIGN. (Development Services)

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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 Watcher:

Perils in the Parks

By Rex Burress

While "perils in the parks" may have previously been thought of as charging grizzly bears and belligerent moose in Yellowstone National Park, or falling from a cliff [artist Stephan Lyman in Yosemite 1996], or slipping into a boiling hot spring in Lassen, many of the present-day perils involve problematic people.

With the plight of jobless people thrust into an age of machines taking the place of people, a population increase, and inadequate training, the imbalance often equates into homeless people congesting in parks and public places. Perhaps the severe 2015 winter in the east has also sent wanderers wandering west. There's usually a reason for a "hobo."

The overflow was especially apparent at the Feather River Nature Center area in the winter of 2015. A contingent of homeless gathered around the barbecue pit to build fires with wood they stripped from the adjoining nature park and roughed it along the river. It is said that those who prune their own trees know the true meaning of conservation, as more pride is shown in having a legitimate home and owning trees. Nurturing a nature center and refuge gives the docents a sense of "belonging," too.

No camping is allowed in 'Bathhouse Park,' but enforcement has been difficult since sleeping "hides" become scattered in the thickets--actually all along the river in Oroville, and also in Bidwell Park in Chico. Jail space is limited, and displacement of trespassers merely means relocation. During the day, the tone was/is "It's a public park, isn't it?" You can't be discriminatory these days.

Renowned park director William Mott was featured in a book, "Prophet of the Parks," in which he proclaimed that "parks are for people." Mr. Bill Mott, 1909-1993, who became director of National Parks, hired me for the Oakland Park Nature Center when he was Supervisor there in 1961, and he was an inspiration. Yet, like John Muir who advocated that people "climb the mountains and get their good tidings," Mott and Muir lived in a different age. I wonder what they would think about the visitor-overrun that has happened since the time they promoted parks. John was thought to be a "tramp."

To me, it has always been, "parks are for people AND nature." Mott created the position of "park naturalist" in order to inform people about nature, so even his philosophy is at a cross-roads, but I'm sure he could have made adjustments. Mott was "Mister Outdoors," as well as Master Park Designer, and he contributed enormously to "America's greatest idea: National Parks," as well as to parks, monuments, and wildlife refuges of all kinds, as did his first Oakland Naturalist Paul Covel.

The downside of the displaced illegally infiltrating a park is the uneasiness it gives to park visitors, nature hikers, and school groups to have controversial homeless parked in the park. A certain fire-drug-litter-and-vandalism peril is present, too.

One feels sorry for the unfortunate, and various establishments offer aid, including the Butte County North Valley Housing Trust that is providing low-cost homes. About 1600 homeless are in Butte County, a newspaper article states, and who knows how many are in the Bay Area metropolis?

Does providing free services encourage homeless settlement locally and weaken the effort of "getting a job?" It is stated that Kansas and Missouri have tightened up severely on the dependent's use of welfare money. No more tattoos and trifles. So the maintenance of parks are billions of dollars behind, and most park-use fees are to be raised this year...on tax-paying Americans.

But in spite of the deterioration of man-made structures, the essence of parks--animals, plants and minerals--are always there, maybe descendants of the previous, but there is a constant refreshening continually filling any void. "Nature abhors a vacuum." You can depend on protected wildlife being there, since nature is the original expression of a self-sustainable environment.

"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul." -- John Muir

River Watcher:

The Call of the Coyote

By Rex Burress

Of all the animals that could symbolize the wild west and covered wagon times-- beaver, bear, eagles, rattlesnakes-- surely the coyote and its kin the wolf deserves to place high on the King of the Wild Frontier title.

How distinctly that member of the dog family stands out as a serenader of the night. Those who have heard its wailing cry out on the desert-- or even now at the edge of cities-- know it to be a haunting call of the wild. It adds some flavor to the trip of a Sierra Club backpacker, or a Mohave explorer, as you lie in a sleeping bag listening to the wind whine and the lonesome howls of a wild mammal quite independent even in the wide open spaces. The out-of-doors would be poorer without the coyote.

While some can think of the coyote with nostalgia and admiration, others may be reminded of livestock losses and encroachment upon private land. Be it known that the dog family cannot read human property signs or keep-out notices, and introductions of livestock onto coyote territory is a sort of gift to a predator accustomed to surviving on any meager means.

Just when I thought the bounty system was over, I find that there have been rancher-funded hunts that offer prizes for the most coyotes killed. Such mass killings are rather barbaric and against conservation principles, including the Aldo Leopold studies over a half century ago.

Thus I thought the California ban on coyote hunts that offer prizes, as explained in a 12-2-2014 Enterprise-Record article, was a proper gesture of respect and compassion for a wild animal. The vote by the state Fish and Game Commission was the first such action of any state in the country. The ban doesn't offer overall protective regulation but stops the hunting derbies that reward shooters who bag the most coyotes with cash, belt buckles, or other prizes. What is more obnoxious than to see a dozen dead coyotes hanging from a highway fence? On the ranch, it is war on any animal that interferes with agriculture.

Commission vice president Jack Baylis said the state also needs to limit how many predators a hunter is permitted to kill while respecting responsible hunters and allowing ranchers to manage their livestock. President Michael Sutton added; "Awarding prizes for wildlife killing contests is both unethical and inconsistent with our modern understanding of natural systems." The "Project Coyote" group petitioned the state to end the popular contests that occur almost every month in California.

Aldo Leopold concluded in his predator research, expressed in his book "A Sand County Almanac," that the role of wolves, coyotes, and other predators is important in preventing overpopulation of animals such as deer, rabbits, and rodents. The extermination of problem Canis latrans individuals has been an effort by "coyote haters." There has been a clash between agriculture and wildlife ever since civilization began. Will there be enough space left for big animals as human colonization occupies the land?

I am reminded that the CA mountain lion became imperiled in the 1970's, and a "Save the Mountain Lion" group formed to save the species. I did the art work for their flyer. Regulations were enacted. The cat was saved in the state...but not the grizzly. Only recently the use of dogs was banned from hunting bears.

It is remarkable that the canny coyote has survived in the face of intense prosecution. High on the ridges of the Mayacamas Mountains I once found a coyote trap that propelled a lethal projectile when tripped. Even in rural Missouri where I lived as a boy in the 1940's, wolf and coyote 'drives' would be conducted by the community when one was spotted in the farmlands. There was a "Little Red Riding Hood" fear of their presence, just as all snakes were immediately killed, in a mistaken belief that they were all dangerous.

One time I was hiking around Glen Pond below Oroville Dam, and a most magnificent coyote stood watching me from an overhang. It melted into the thickets, but I had noticed its beautiful fur and intense alertness. We would be deprived of even the expectation of such a sterling moment if the species, or any wild species, becomes extinct.

"The universe would be incomplete without man; but it would also be incomplete

without the smallest transmicroscopic creature that dwells beyond

our conceitful eyes and knowledge."

--John Muir

YAHI Club Information

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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



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.

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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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