



**SIERRA
CLUB**
FOUNDED 1892

Yahi
Group



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

News Articles Programs Hikes and Outings Meetings Events

A Conversation with John Perschutti

by Joseph A. Abbott

A longtime environmental activist in Plumas County discusses the 2001 Sierra Nevada Framework, the proposed Framework Amendment, the 2003 Healthy Forest Initiative, the 1998 Herger-Feinstein Quincy Library Group Act, and recent forest fire initiatives.

John Perschutti lives at the northern edge of the Sierra range. Over the years, his love of hiking the old growth forests managed by the federal government, especially the Plumas National Forest, has turned him into a dedicated advocate for their preservation. While working on Federal California Spotted Owl (CASPO) requirements in 1993, John discovered U.S. Forest Service (USFS) miscalculations about the extent of timber harvesting on federal land, and forced precedent-setting reductions in federal timber harvests, especially in the Sierra. His other major victories include preventing the sale of timber in Mohawk, where the State Parks Department planned a logging road through virgin tree stands within Plumas-Eureka Park's most wild area, and where John now visits a Douglas fir that was designated for cutting. Perschutti also stopped the Buzzard's Roost timber cut near Nelson Creek. By inspecting the land personally, he was able to videotape evidence of active logging in defiance of a legal restraining order, and to force a favorable legal settlement that saved many old growth trees.

On first meeting, Perschutti bears a striking resemblance to Strider, the long-legged protector of the hobbits in J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* novels. Tall, almost gaunt, lightly bearded and in his 50s, he dresses in a ball cap, comfortable walking clothes and heavy boots, and looks eager to get outdoors and start hiking. Born just outside Scranton PA, where his father was a miner in the heart of anthracite coal country, he moved at age 10 with his family to Los Angeles. A graduate of Long Beach State with a Masters in Fine Arts, Perschutti makes his living designing, manufacturing, and selling his own pottery.

In a recent interview, he spoke in slow, measured phrases, as he pondered and found the answer to each question. Yet he became thoroughly animated when discussing his favorite



friends, the grand old trees of the Plumas and his memories of hiking the Sierra forests.

John Perschutti relaxes in his studio

WHAT DREW YOU TO ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM?

Once I understood what was happening to the Plumas Forest, I became environmentally involved. I've since learned that a huge personal investment must be made to understand how to monitor the forests and to effect positive changes. It's entirely different now than when I started 25 years ago, because federal regulations are now so complex. To be effective, new recruits must learn lots quickly, which makes it difficult to attract young people to environmental monitoring.

I first joined the group called "Friends of the Plumas Wilderness" because I wanted to keep things as I liked them. Congress had just passed the National Forest Management Act of 1976 for California, which first mandated public input into forest planning. The Friends began attending educational courses, which taught us all the actual process of how to effect management and planning of the Plumas National Forest. The group's efforts created the Plumas National Forest Plan, which Washington first tried to reject but we appealed and ultimately won. In the end, the Friends created a plan for Plumas National Forest and we carved out the Bucks Lake Wilderness Area.

Unfortunately, divisions within the Friends over our management and goals resulted in key members departing to join the Quincy Library Group (QLG).

The remaining Friends became the "Plumas Forest Project" of which I'm the director. We directly monitor federal timber sales and affect the outcome of other Federal decisions with environmental input. We are the sole, directly engaged, "on the ground" environmental group. I personally hike each proposed federal timber sale area. Some harvest projects are large, but fortunately there is only about one a year. I apply what I learn from one project to another. I've refined my approach to focusing on key issues in each project, and then I decide if the project is ripe for fine-tuning or should be left alone. My inspection trip gives me a good idea of USFS document completeness, and I like to spend a few days hiking the forest.

WHAT IS IN THE SIERRA NEVADA FRAMEWORK PLAN FOR MANAGING FEDERAL FORESTS?

The Framework was based on a decade of a work by the public, and Bradley Powell, former California Regional USFS Forester, and Mike Dombeck, former Washington Chief of USFS, and was passed by Congress in 2001. Sound scientific principles were used to produce the plan for better management of federal forests in the Sierra. The Framework balanced timber interests and environmental concerns. The plan considered the Sierra a single ecosystem instead of an arbitrary collection of a dozen different national forests.

The core of the Framework was public participation in federal management through comment on timber sales. Thirty days after

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Bidwell Ranch Property—Again

It's not over, until it's over! Once again the Chico City Council is being asked to consider putting houses on the Bidwell Ranch property as a way to pay for the purchase of the property in 1997. Let's protect the property from development and get it annexed to the park, once and for all!

The Bidwell Ranch Committee is asking all those concerned to write letters to the newspapers, to the City Council members and to attend City Council meetings where this will be discussed. On December 12, at a daytime "workshop", city staff will be giving the council members financial data regarding the feasibility of putting

developments on the Bidwell Ranch property. It is anticipated that a public meeting will be held sometime after that for the Council members to discuss, hear public input and vote on it. We expect this meeting to occur in January 2004. We urge all those concerned to attend that meeting. Call Betty at 345-7205 for more information or inclusion on a phone list. There will also be a meeting at the Chico library (on Sherman) on Monday night, January 5, 2004 at 7 P.M. to discuss the Bidwell Ranch issue.

The following is a letter sent to the City Council members by Yahi Group Chair Kevin Birkes in October 2003:

City Council Members
City of Chico
P.O. Box 3420
Chico, CA 95927

Dear Council Members:

The Yahi Group/Sierra Club (1,400 plus local members) supports rezoning the 750 acres next to Upper Park, known as Bidwell Ranch, to either open space (OS-1) or preferably making it a permanent part of Bidwell Park. The addition of this open space will greatly benefit our community. It will enhance and protect Upper Bidwell Park and will maintain the gorgeous views of the foothills from Wildwood Park and the frequently used Sycamore Channel Road. The vernal pools, watershed and wildflowers will benefit from a contiguous open area as this area will continue to be a wildlife corridor. This land is a gateway to the upper park. The area needs to be preserved for the enjoyment of many and for generations to come. It is part of what makes Chico a desirable place to live.

Some of our concerns regarding the proposal for the sale of a portion of the Bidwell Ranch Property are:

1. Building housing under the CDF flight path creates a danger to the homeowners. Will the CDF move elsewhere if it receives too many noise complaints? Who will be responsible to the homeowners?
2. Inadequate infrastructure to handle 10,000 car trips per day generated by a cluster of 1,500 residences. Who will pay for this infrastructure? Do we want this infrastructure?
3. This leapfrog-type development is urban sprawl at its worst, creating a huge pod of homes not connected to other housing and surrounded by sensitive plants and pools.

Please remember that this land was not purchased as a land speculation investment to fix budgetary woes. It was purchased at the behest of the citizens of Chico to stop development of the property. Please respect their wishes and follow the example of Annie Bidwell, by adding this beautiful piece of land to her park. Future generations will thank you for your far-sightedness today.

Sincerely,
Kevin Birkes
Yahi Group Chair
kevbirkes@chico.com

About this Newsletter

SIERRA CLUB YAHİ 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) or Goodie Sweatt (530-894-3988). For changes in membership address (which also affects the address for receiving the newsletter by mail) please write to Sierra Club Member Services, Post Office Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80328-2968; sending a mailing label for the old address will speed the process.

Submission Guidelines:

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

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

Yahi Group of the Sierra Club

Elected Officials

Co-Chair (Organization)

Kevin Birkes: 530-824-2588

kevbirkes@earthlink.net

Co-Chair (Administration)

Joanne Gerson: 530-893-2154

joanne.gerson@att.net

Vice-Chair

John Hollister: 530-879-9196

sierralives@aol.com

Secretary

Janice Heckerson: 530-343-5168

JaneHeck@cs.com

Treasurer

Joanne Gerson: 530-893-2154

joanne.gerson@att.net

Fifth Member

Wendy Woods: 530-899-8607

woods@dcsi.net

Yahi Group Contacts

Chapter Rep. To Motherlode

Kevin Birkes: 530-824-2588

kevbirkes@earthlink.net

General Contact

Linda Stuke: 530-345-2696

Conservation Committee

John Hollister: 530-879-9196

sierralives@aol.com

Fire Safe Council Representative

Jean Christ

trehgr@sunset.net

Forestry Committee

Stephen Sayre: 530-876-1391

sayhart@infostations.com

Green Space

Wendy Woods: 530-899-8607

woods@dcsi.net

Local and Residential Logging

Trish Puterbaugh

Cohasset@shocking.com

Membership

Gerda Lydon: 530-343-9277

PLydon2948@aol.com

Newsletter Publication Editor

Louise Casey: 530-872-9159

LouiseCasey@netscape.net

Annual Holiday Dinner

by Gerda Lydon

The annual Yahi Holiday Party will be held Dec. 14th at Caffe Malvino (new place for us) in downtown Chico. Tickets are \$15, and the ticket price includes tax and tip. Choice entree: chicken or vegetable lasagna.

No tickets will be available at the door!! The number of participants is limited to 55 Yahis, so make reservations early. Bring extra money for bake sale, dessert or beverage. Call Betty 345-7205 or Goodie 894-3988.

Michael Denega to Speak at Snow Goose Festival

Learn about arctic birds of the Yukon Flats and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from a dynamic traveling birder and photographer who just happens to make his living as a researcher and teacher of biological sciences! At the Saturday night banquet of this year's Snow Goose Festival, keynote speaker Michael Denega will share his knowledge through an exciting PowerPoint presentation of the Pacific Flyway's arctic birds, which he has studied as a college instructor, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service volunteer and biological researcher. His travels and studies have taken him from the northern-most regions of the flyway in Alaska, to the southern-most habitats of South America.

The 5th Annual Snow Goose Festival will be held in Chico on January 23-25, 2004. See poster on page 11 of this newsletter, or call 345-1865 for

Sierra Club Holiday Cards

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



photographs.

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



2004 Yahi Election

By Betty Volker

It is election time for the Yahi group. Kevin Birkes has finished his 2nd term on the Yahi board and will vacate his seat as Chair. We thank him for his good works. We have a wonderful nominee to take the 5th position on the executive committee. Please note the information on Grace Marvin below and return your ballots.

Yahi Group Executive Committee Ballot

Procedure: This year, there is one opening on the Executive Committee. Each Yahi Sierra Club member may approve the candidate or vote for a write in of their choice. The second vote check box is for dual member households. Please clip this ballot and mail prior to December 31, 2003 to:

Yahi Group—Sierra Club
Post Office Box 2012
Chico CA 95927

Grace M. Marvin

[write in]

Candidate Statement

Grace M. Marvin: I've been a member of the Sierra Club since 1984. That's when I moved to Chico to teach sociology at Chico State. I have attended numerous Sierra Club activities events, including hikes, trips to Clair Tappan, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, backpacking, presentations, and parties. I was asked to be a member of the chapter's Responsible Trade committee and have made two presentations about the need to prevent politicians from stripping governments (on many levels and throughout the world) of laws protecting our air, water, forests, soil, safety regulations, etc. My husband and I met on a Singles hike, and we recently participated in Outdoor Leadership training held by the Sierra Club. We are both very strong advocates of the conservation policies of the Sierra Club and

Yahi Group Annual Holiday Dinner and Bake Sale

Sunday, December 14, 2003

- ⇒ Caffe Malvino in downtown Chico
- ⇒ 5 P.M. Social Hour (no-host bar, wine and beer)
- ⇒ 6 P.M. Dinner - Chicken or Vegetable Lasagna
- ⇒ Tickets \$15 - price includes tax and tip
- ⇒ Buy tickets in advance: Betty (345-7205) or Goodie (894-3988)
- ⇒ Please bring \$ for the Baked Goods, Beverages and

Member Profile

Carla Moreno

Sierra Club's Long-time Conservationist, Political Advisor and Service Provider



Lost Creek Camp, Crater Lake National Park.

National Sierra Club Service Trip. Photo by John Battista., 8/1/3

Conservationist

Our Sierra Club group had just finished our dinners atop Chico Creek's diversion dam and were packing up to head back, when I noticed Carla Moreno and her friend, Gene McKensie, scuttling around the slippery black volcanic boulders, picking up litter. And later, as we walked along the upper park road in the waning light, Carla darted in front of several of us to add some more trash to her nearly full plastic bag, leaving the woman she had been talking with to wonder what had happened to her.

When I reminded Carla about this incident as she sat across from me at my kitchen table recently, she laughed heartily.

"I've just never believed in littering and throwing things out," she reminisced.

Picking up other people's trash and recycling what she can of it is not new to Carla, who grew up with a mother who never wasted anything.

For her mother, who lived through America's Great Depression, it was an economic necessity. But for Carla, it was for her love of the environment that she passed the idea of conservation on to her own children.

"I wanted to show my children that there isn't an infinite amount of resources, and that you need to conserve what you have," she said.

So when she and her family were living south of San Francisco in the late 60's, they joined several other families in collecting recyclable items and delivering them to the first recycling station in the area, at Pacifica, off Highway 1.

With a twinkle in her eye, Carla recalled that not long after that, her son Nicholas told her that he was the only one in his junior high school class who had never, ever littered.

"My mother wouldn't let me," he'd explained to

his teacher.

And that same son, now grown, is passing the idea of conservation on to his own son, explaining that a lot of their trash can be recycled.

"Now that is something your grandmother's been doing for years," Nicholas explained to his son.

Political Activist

Carla first joined the Sierra Club in 1968 because she wanted to support its efforts in protecting the coastal environment. She and her family lived within walking distance of the ocean and spent a lot of time exploring the tide pools there. Carla didn't want the northern California coast to end up like the overcrowded southern California coast. She agreed with the Coastal Initiative that called for keeping development a mile back from the coastal shores.

"When we built our house, we came to appreciate what we had and what we could lose if [more] development moved in," she reflected.

Later, in 1975, after she and her husband divorced, Carla became actively involved in the Single Aires, a subgroup of the Loma Prieta chapter of the Sierra Club (south of San Francisco). It was in this group that Carla learned to cross-country ski and backpack. She acted as its chairperson for one year and was an outings leader for 10 years.

Carla helped the Single Aires build a hiking trail in Butano State Park that is still in use today. She also participated in their adoption of a memorial Redwood grove near Big Basin State Park in order to raise funds for further parkland acquisition.

Then when she moved to Redwood City in 1979, Carla got involved with the Sierra Club's fight against a proposed development project that called for filling in part of the bay and its marshlands. She joined others in precinct walking, and they won by 17 votes.

"That really sold me on precinct walking," she said with a laugh, "because you just knew - you'd felt like you'd been part of it, and to win by that much ... so that was very gratifying."

Creative Chef

Gratifying, too, for Carla has been her participation in 20 national activist and service trips, for 17 of which she was the cook.

Carla first got involved in national outings in 1986 when she was looking for an inexpensive way to vacation and ended up on a service trip to the Marble Mountains in northeastern California. Here she met John Albrecht, leader trainee from Eugene, Oregon. Over the next year, Carla and John became good friends, and Carla ended up moving to

Eugene, also. Here she spent the next 11 years with John, he leading and she cooking for service trips all over the western United States.

One of Carla's most memorable service trips was to the Cloud Peak Wilderness in Wyoming. Carla recalled that she had an assistant on that trip, a cook trainee, who she'd sent off to buy produce just before the trip. That day, the grocery manager convinced this inexperienced young lady that it would be much cheaper to buy a whole crate of cabbage than the several heads Carla had requested she buy. Unbeknownst to Carla, the crate of cabbage got loaded up on the pack horses, and off they all went.

When Carla found out, she said she had to devise all sorts of ways to feature cabbage in her meals.

"In the end, we tried to feed it to the horses, but they wouldn't eat it. We finally had to bury it," Carla said, laughing. On that trip, she became known as "Cabbage Carla."

Carla said she has always enjoyed the challenge of cooking for the national service trips because a lot of participants follow special diets. Most of the cooking she does is vegetarian, but she has also had vegans and people who were gluten- or lactose-intolerant. And, because she wants everyone to feel part of the group, she has always tried to plan meals that everyone can eat.

Carla said she spends hours poring over recipes and has some really delicious dishes and desserts such as tofu chorizo, salami egg fried rice, and spumoni cheesecake.

And, because people are working hard, Carla wants to feed them well. So each dinner consists of a soup, salad, main course and dessert. Her participants appreciate it.

"One of my best compliments was a few years ago," she said with a smile. "A guy wrote and said, 'God, this trip was like eating at a different international restaurant every night.'"

On that trip, Carla served one of her most popular dishes, Black Bean Chili. It was her version of a recipe she'd gotten from Café Beaujolais in Mendocino, which had once served its chili to nationally famous chef Julia Child.

And now Carla is living in Chico due to the urging of her sister Nona who lived here too. Even though Carla has been here just two and a half years, she has become very active in the community. While continuing to cook for national service trips, Carla also volunteers at the KCHO radio station, cleans a section of Highway 99 for the Green Party, is a volunteer for Park Watch, does trail maintenance in Upper Bidwell Park, and is a Sierra Club outings leader for the Yahi Group.

Carla's daughter Sabella couldn't imagine her mother ever slowing down. As she once told Carla, "It's going to be hard to find a rest home with trails around it."

YAH! Group Winter 2003/2004 Outings and Events

Yahi Winter 2003/2004 Programs

Thursday, January 8 - Trish Puterbaugh will inform us what the Lassen Forest Preservation Group is doing to monitor logging in our area, plans for the future and summarize current policy on private and federal lands. Come prepared with questions.

Thursday, February 12 - Carla Moreno will discuss recycling. How to purchase items made of recycled material at local facilities and how to dispose of materials. With our landfill slowly reaching its capacity, this will be a very informative evening.

Yahi Group program meetings are held at the Chico Branch of the Butte County Library at the corner of East 1st Avenue and Sherman. Meetings start at 7:30 PM.

Yahi Group's General Outing Information

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

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

Riders are expected, as a matter of courtesy, to reimburse drivers to cover the transportation expenses of the trip. A customary amount is 6 cents per mile per passenger depending on the vehicle, the number of passengers, and the road conditions. This is only a guideline.

Membership in Sierra Club not required: Outings are open to the general public unless otherwise indicated. If you enjoy the outings, it is hoped that you will see the value of joining; application information is available in this newsletter or on the web site.

Fees and costs: Occasionally an outing announcement will indicate a cost. Unless the announcement specifically indicates that outing is a fund raiser, the cost indicated is only that which has been estimated to cover trip expenses. **Non-Sierra Club members are asked to make a \$2 donation if attending an outing to help defray our costs for outings**

Sign-up: Most activities do not require advance sign-up; it is merely necessary to show up at the designated time and place. For those outings where advance sign-up is requested, a call to the leader will initiate the procedure. If fees or deposits are needed, the sign-up is not considered complete until those have been paid. Deposits may not be refundable; please inquire at time of making payment.

Outing Waivers: All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read the liability waiver before you chose to participate on an outing, please go to: <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/>, or contact the Outings Department at (415) 977-5528 for a printed version.

All activities: These are group outings. It is important that participants follow the instructions of the outing leader. Please be sure you are in adequate physical condition to undertake the activity you choose (see classifications for guidance). If you are unsure of the difficulty of the trip or of your ability, check with the leader before deciding to go. The outing leader may decide to disallow the participation of an outing applicant if the leader concludes that the applicant's reduced preparation or capability may negatively affect the outing for the rest of the group.

Hiking and Day Activities: Bring lunch, water, and essentials, as well as reimbursement money for your driver. Wear boots or sturdy shoes.

Dos and Don'ts: Plan to carry out anything you carry in. Pets are not allowed unless the trip specifically indicates "pets permitted". No firearms. No electronic music devices.

Young people: Please consult with the leader for a decision as to whether the outing is appropriate for a youth, whether accompanied by an adult or not. Any person under 18 not accompanied by a parent must have a written parental authorization to give to the outing leader. Forms may be obtained in advance from the outing leader or from the Outings Committee Chair at 891-8789. The completed form is required to provide for emergency medical care if needed.

Errors in the schedule: If there is incorrect information in an outings announcement, please see the web site at www.motherlode.sierraclub.org/yahi/ 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.



Sierra Club Hike Classifications

Distance Rating

Grade 1: up to 6 miles

Grade 2: 6-10 miles

Grade 3: 10-15 miles

Elevation Gain Rating

Class A: up to 1000 feet

Class B: 1000-2000 feet



Winter 2003/2004 Yahi Group Outings

Early June, 2004 – Explore Kauai, Hawaii. Come explore the “Garden Island” of Hawaii as we kayak, snorkel and hike our way along its shores, rivers and canyons. Required sign-up with air fare by January 24. For more information call leader. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980; Asst. Leader: Charles, 895-3043.

Yahi Group Cross Country Ski List. Join our more than 35 cross-country ski enthusiasts this winter as we explore the backcountry of Colby Meadows and Lassen Park and enjoy the groomed trails of Mt. Shasta, Royal Gorge and Tahoe-Donner. If you'd like to be added to (or updated on) our list, please contact Yahi Group Leaders: Jeanne, 899-9980 or Larry, 342-7998. All ability levels welcome.

February Power Walks (grade 1, class A). Meet at Chico Park & Ride each Wednesday evening in February at 6:30PM for a 1 ½ hour creekside, brisk walk. Two groups: fast and faster. Wear tennis/walking shoes and bring water and a flashlight. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980.

December 2003

Tuesday, December 2 – Coed Volleyball Lessons & Play. For those interested in working on basic skills and team play. Coed recreational volleyball rules will be followed. No recent volleyball skills needed. Cost is \$15 (5 weeks) for info, details and directions, call Betty, 345-7205.

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

Saturday, December, 6 - Shuttle Hike from the South Side of Bidwell Park to Five Mile (grade 2, class A). Join us as we start from the Green Gate along

Hwy 32 and hike one-way, downhill for 6-7 miles along the south side of Bidwell Park to Five Mile below the golf course. Beautiful views along the way of the Sacramento Valley, Big Chico Creek and Upper Bidwell Park. A short car shuttle will be required. Bring lunch, water and sturdy shoes. Rain cancels. Meet at 8:30 AM at the Chico Park & Ride. Leader: Charlie, 895-3045; Asst. Leader: Holly, 894-5591.

Sunday, December 7 – Llano Seco & Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge (grade 1, class A). We'll take an incredible drive through the heartland of the Sacramento Valley's wintering waterfowl, stopping several times to observe the thousands of birds who feed and rest in the freshwater marshes. We'll also do two easy walks at Llano Seco and the Sacramento Wildlife Refuge. Bring binoculars, field guide, camera, lunch and water. An 80-mile round trip drive. Bring \$3 for entrance fee and \$5 for carpool. Heavy rain cancels. Call leader to sign-up and get meeting info. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980; Asst. Leader: Michelle, 865-9491.

Saturday, December 7 – Last Chance to Purchase Yahi Group Holiday Dinner Tickets. See December 14 write-up for details. Call Goody, 894-3988 or Betty, 345-7205.

Saturday, December 13 – Christmas Caroling/Pot Luck Dinner. Let's spread some Christmas cheer to our community seniors with our sweet voices and bright smiles. Wear Christmas attire. Song sheets provided. We'll practice first, carol at a few nursing homes and then return for a pot-luck dinner. Bring a dish to share and your favorite beverage. Call for directions to meeting place and time. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980; Asst. Leader: Peggy, 343-9843.

Sunday, December 14 – Winter Conditioning Walk (grade 2, class A). A flat, fast paced 1 to 1 ½ hour brisk walk in the park for those who want a workout. Wear your tennies. Meet at bridge near One-Mile at 8AM. Rain cancels. Leader: Alan, 891-8789.

Saturday, December 14 – Yahi Group Annual Holiday Dinner – 5PM. The Cafe Malvina in downtown Chico will host the Yahi holiday dinner. Social hour is from 5-6. Entree choice of chicken or vegetarian lasagna will be served at 6. Tickets are \$15 includes tax and tip. No tickets will be sold at the door. Bring extra cash for desert, bakesale, and

fundraising activities. No host bar. Call Goodie, 894-3988 or Betty, 345-7205.

Saturday, December 21 – Victorian Christmas. Enjoy the very popular Victorian Christmas in Nevada City with its quaint, historic downtown shops, costumed vendors, strolling carolers and musicians, carriage rides and traditional Christmas treats such as roasted chestnuts and hot cider. We'll go early to browse the shops and then eat lunch. The street faire begins at 1:30PM, and we'll eat dinner before returning at approximately 8PM. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 9AM to carpool. Bring a lunch and \$ for carpool and dinner. Dress warmly. For more information, contact leaders. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980; Asst. Leader: Joanne, 893-2154.

Saturday, December 27 – Cross Country Ski (grade 2, class B). We'll go skiing where the snow is good. This is for people who have their own equipment. Bring skis, boots, gloves, lunch, water, appropriate clothing and \$ for drivers. Call leader for meeting time and place. Leader: Larry, 342-7998.

January 2004

Thursday, January 1 – New Year's Day Hike (grade 2, class A). Get the New Year started on the right foot (or left) by walking off some of those delectable holiday treats you've been eating since Halloween! We'll have a lovely, flat 6-mile hike along the south side of Chico Creek, cross through the golf course and take the Yahi Trail to the Diversion Dam. We'll return the same way. Dress in layers and bring water and snacks. Meet at Bidwell Park's Five-Mile parking lot (south side) at 1 PM. Return time approximately 4 PM. Rain cancels. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980; Asst. Leader: Bill, 527-8203.

Saturday, January 3 – Early Bird Cross-Country Ski Lessons. This is for beginners and intermediates who want to improve their overall ski techniques and fitness (see calendar also for later ski lessons). There is a fee of \$10 per lesson, this is a fund-raiser for general Yahi Group expenses. Bring ski gear, lunch, water, appropriate clothing and \$ for drivers. Call leader for meeting place, time and more information. Leader: Larry, 342-7998.



Outings and Events

Saturday, January 3 – Help Maintain Trails in Upper Bidwell Park. Suitable for all ages and a good way to learn more about the trails in the Park. Gloves, tools, training and beverages are provided by the Parks Department. Wear sturdy shoes or boots. For more information, contact Steve Hogue at the Parks Department, 895-4758 or shogue@ci.chico.ca.us

Sunday, January 4 - Bidwell Ranch Walk (grade 1, class A) We'll walk on and around the area known as Bidwell Ranch, part of which is being talked about for development. There are vernal pools, meadowfoam and other things to consider as to how this area could be used. Please bring any information you have and we'll share and learn. Meet at 1PM at Wildwood Park (by Fire Station on Manzanita Ave) at the eastern parking lot. Bring water. Rain cancels. Leader: Carla 891-6977.

Tuesday, January 6 – Coed Volleyball Lessons & Play. For those interested in working on basic skills and team play. Coed recreational volleyball rules will be followed. No recent volleyball skills needed. Cost is \$15 (5 weeks) for info, details and directions, call Betty, 345-7205.

Thursday, January 8, 7:30 PM - What the Lassen Forest Preservation Group is Doing to Monitor Logging. Presented by Trish Puterbaugh. Conference room, Chico Library East 1st Ave. & Sherman.

Saturday, January 10 – Youngbloods Deer Creek Hike (grade 1, class A, ages 18-35). Take a 4-5 mile walk through the cool forest as we follow the rush of Deer Creek. We'll begin at the trail just off of Highway 32. Bring water, lunch and carpool \$. Rain cancels. Return at approximately 3PM; about an 80-mile round-trip drive. Meet at Chico Park and Ride at 8 AM. Leader: Charlie, 895-3045; Asst. Leader: Holly, 894-5501.

Saturday, January 17 – Cross Country Ski (grade 2, class B). We'll go skiing where the snow is good. This is for people who have their own equipment. Bring skis, boots, gloves, lunch, water, appropriate clothing and \$ for drivers. Call leader for meeting time and place. Leader: Larry, 342-7998.

Sunday, January 18 – Lassen Park Snowshoe Hike (grade 2, class B). Trailhead near the Manzanita Lake entrance station parking lot. Enjoy beautiful

mountain scenery on a moderate snowshoe walk in Lassen Park. We'll snowshoe part of the park road and travel cross country to a nice view of Mt. Shasta and nearby peaks. Bring snowshoes, boots, layered clothing, lunch, water and \$ for carpooling. Storm cancels. Approx. 180 miles round trip drive. Meet at 8AM at the Chico Park & Ride or at 10 AM at the Manzanita Lake parking area. Please call to confirm trip. Leader: Alan, 891-8789.

Saturday, January 24 – Table Mountain Hike (grade 1, class A). Explore the dormant beauty of Table Mountain. If there are early rains, wildflowers may be present. Bring binoculars for watching birds, lunch, water and sturdy boots. Rain cancels. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 9AM. Return time around 4-5PM. Leader: Charlie, 895-3045.

Sunday, January 25 – Spring Outings Planning Meeting & Potluck. Everyone welcome to an open meeting of all Yahi Group members to discuss what you'd like to get out of the club and what suggestions you have. Excom and committee members will be there to answer questions. Afterwards we'll plan our spring outings. Call leader for meeting time and place. Leader: Alan, 891-8789.

Wednesday, January 28 – Cross-Country Ski Video. This video is for beginners, but has information for cross-country skiers of all levels. There will also be a short overview on equipment and clothing. Meet at 7 PM at the Community Room in the Chico Mall adjacent to the food court. Call leader for more information. Leader: Larry, 342-7998.

Friday, January 30, 6PM - Talent Show and Pot Luck Supper. This is your chance to show off your talent to a captive audience. Kick back at the end of the work week with a delicious potluck supper. Then after your meal begins to settle, you can perform your talent for fellow Sierra Club members and/or watch them perform for you. All types of talent (musical, theatrical, poetry, magic, etc.) welcome. Piano available. Call leader for location and directions. Leader: Peggy (343-9843).

Saturday, January 31 – Cross-Country Ski Lessons. This is for beginners and intermediates who want to improve their overall ski techniques and fitness. There is a fee of \$10 per lesson, this is a fundraiser for general Yahi Group expenses. Bring ski gear, lunch, water, appropriate clothing and \$ for drivers. Call leader for meeting place, time and more information. Leader: Larry, 342-7998.

Lessons. This is for beginners and intermediates who want to improve their overall ski techniques and fitness. There is a fee of \$10 per lesson, this is a fundraiser for general Yahi Group expenses. Bring ski gear, lunch, water, appropriate clothing and \$ for drivers. Call leader for meeting place, time and more information. Leader: Larry, 342-7998.

Saturday, February 7 – Help Maintain Trails in Upper Bidwell Park. Suitable for all ages and a good way to learn more about the trails in the Park. Gloves, tools, training and beverages are provided by the Parks Department. Wear sturdy shoes or boots. For more information, contact Steve Hogue at the Parks Department, 895-4758 or shogue@ci.chico.ca.us

Wednesday, February 11 – Weekly Power Walk (grade 1, class A) See beginning of schedule for details.

Thursday, February 12, 7:30 PM - Recycling. Presented by Carla Moreno. Conference room, Chico Library East 1st Ave. & Sherman.

Sunday, February 15 – Winter Conditioning Walk (grade 2, class A). A flat, fast paced 1 to 1 ½ hour brisk walk in the park for those who want a workout. Wear your tennies. Meet at bridge near One-Mile at 8 AM. Rain cancels. Leader: Alan, 891-8789.

Wednesday, February 18 – Weekly Power Walk (grade 1, class A) See beginning of schedule for details.

Saturday, February 21 – Youngbloods Table Mountain Hike (grade 1, class A, ages 18-35)). Come enjoy the early greenery and beginning wildflowers on Table Mountain. Bring binoculars for watching birds, lunch, water and sturdy boots. Rain cancels. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 9AM. Return time around 4-5PM. Leader: Charlie, 895-3045.

Sunday, February 22, 2004 Upper Bidwell Dog Hike (grade 1, class A). Bring your dog along for a hike in Upper Bidwell Park. Exact route to be determined by trail conditions and stamina of the participating dogs. Bring leash, water for yourself and for your dog, snacks, and dog treats. Space limited to 6 obedient, people-friendly and dog-friendly dogs. Dogs must be up to date with immunizations. Dog-lovers without dogs are also welcome to join in the fun. Meet at Horseshoe

February 2004

Wednesday, February 4 – Weekly Power Walk (grade 1, class A) See beginning of schedule for details.

Saturday, February 7 – Cross-Country Ski



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Conservation

National Park Rights

I see the future of Yosemite is up for debate again according to a newspaper article. Just when some progress has been achieved under the hard-wrought New Plan in restoring some of the Yosemite Valley meadows and woodlands after years of heavy usage, Rep. George Radanovic, the Mariposa Republican who chairs the House Subcommittee on National Parks, Recreation, and Public Land, has now introduced a bill, as of July 14, 2003, emphasizing easy access to the valley via more automobiles (again), more parking lots, and rebuilding more campsites (again).

Folks, it is a pity but we have to keep constantly on guard in order to prevent political raids on our public parks and protected wild places. There seems to be no such thing as judicial integrity anymore as clever lawyers and politicians find ways around established laws. All too vivid is the eternal example of the Yosemite invasion to snatch away the park chunk of Hetch Hetchy Valley for commercial use. That was after the long hard battle to secure Yosemite as a National Park in the first place. John Muir worked relentlessly for the initial park status, and again until his death in trying to prevent the loss of Hetch Hetchy land in what appeared to be a safely contained National Park, but politicians know no stop signs when profit is present, especially in this age of governmental resource raids of our national assets to pay for lengthy wars on the other side of the planet and budgetary mismanagement. (Opinion)

Some of these resource raiders despise public watchdogs like the Sierra Club who keep them from going hog-wild with the public's national wildlands treasury, and Radanovich's bill, in an apparent dig at the Sierra Club, also calls for the demolition of the LeConte Memorial Lodge, a historic building that the conservation division of the Sierra Club occupies under a special use permit from the National Park Service. The Bush administration is wavering on its initial support of the preservation side of the valley re-enhancement plan to improve the environment, apparently swayed by more money to be raided from our natural resources. We can only continue to keep up our vigilance, and remember these trends at the next election. Wild can win if guided by friends!

These disconcerting news notes on money grabs at the expense of years of diligent efforts by concerned environmental workers only make us more aware of the back-treading our national leadership is exhibiting in jeopardizing the meager amount of National Parks and Refuges in protective custody. If

the majority cannot have its wishes on park improvement and preservation recognized, what can we do to assure parklands for the future? Of course, President Bush didn't pay much attention to millions of Iraqi war protestors either. If we can allow pieces of the parks to be chiseled or drilled away to finance budget shortfalls that only seem to get shorter; if we can allow a giant piece of Yosemite to be lost like Hetch Hetchy; if we do not adhere to approved improvements for land rehabilitation, but succumb to yet another congressional bill, what are we to do?

Revising Yosemite tactics to get more cars in the valley so older people, especially, can have ready access to the natural wonders, would seem commendable from some viewpoints. I'm beginning to fall in that "older" category and don't have the traveling stamina that I once had sixty years ago, but I relinquish a possibility of easy access if that means the destruction of more Yosemite meadows, habitat, and quality of the streamsides. To me, it is important just to know a healthy Yosemite is there to feed future generations with scenes of beauty, reachable for me by memory, video and word if nothing else. I vote for less intrusion into the valley if that means better quality places for wildlife—even if it denies me easy physical access. Does my vote count?

Another National Park issue is the attempted privatizing of park personnel by the Bush Administration, mentioned in the article "Pink Slips in the Parks" appearing in the September 03 issue of *Sierra* magazine. Look this one over. Basically, it threatens to undermine the dedication of devoted park service employees by replacing them with private enterprises, according to retired Yellowstone superintendent Bob Bardee, who says, "We need a strong cadre of professionals steeped in Park Service traditions and with a commitment to its goals. That shouldn't be bartered away. It should be inviolate. It'd be like turning the Army over to a bunch of mercenaries."

I like that word "inviolate," but it doesn't seem to be part of some people's vocabularies. Inviolate denotes a *sacred* attitude and a respect for established values. It is generally thought that privatization will weaken the agency's preservation ethic, and the upcoming battle will shape the future of our national parks. The Bush privatization push removes regulatory obstacles for GOP-favored industries with poor environmental records. Those who evaluate concessionaire bids can choose whom they want.

The National Parks Conservation Association is quoted as opposing the privatization plan and contends the parks need more staff and a third more funding. Grand Canyon National Park has no geologist! Privatization has no allowance for on-the-ground inventories of plants and animals, which would seem vital to maintain healthy balances, and I wonder if nature interpreters are left out. David Uberuaga, Mount Rainier official, says if the type of people that we have and the passion they have for the parks is lost, it would threaten the nonhuman species—the ones who can't talk.

In the swirling cloud of intrusion into the out-of-doors in our time, it is essential to retain adequate

"Every good thing, great and small, needs defense."—John Muir

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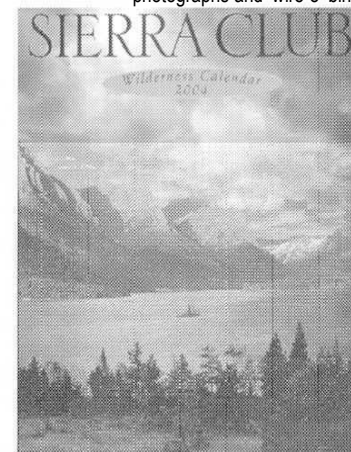
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Many of us take "garbage" for granted, along with a lot of other things. In our modern society where we can flick a switch and get the power to light up our lives or cook our meals or propel our vehicles and toys, or fire up our connection to the World Wide Web; where we can turn a tap and instantly get clean water for drinking or bathing or irrigation; we also tend to assume that once we throw (or flush) something away it will disappear from our lives forever.

Of course I suspect that those who read this newsletter know better! As we drive on Highway 99 past Neal Road, we can't help noticing the growing "mountain" on the east side of the highway. Curious, I decided to ask some questions about the Neal Road landfill, and Steve Rodowick, Recycling Coordinator for the Butte County Public Works Department, was kind enough to provide the answers.

We all see the growing mountain on the east side of Highway 99 as we travel past Neal Road (Mount Trashmore?) - how tall is it now? Will it get any taller? Didn't it start out as a canyon?

Neal Road landfill started out as a small canyon, 180' above sea level. Currently 480' tall, the hill we can all see as we drive by on Highway 99 is known within the department by the name of the man who engineered the site. It will probably not get much taller, although it will extend to the west.

Do you have to bring in dirt from other areas?

Yes. Also, seasonally, some organic mulch, ground-up pine needles, etc., mostly from Paradise, and some from the "green waste" program. The landfill is covered and compacted every day.

Chico composts and/or grinds its organic mulch. The Cities of Chico and Oroville are not part of the Butte Regional Waste Management Authority - it is comprised of Butte County, the Town of Paradise, and the Cities of Biggs and Gridley.

Is there a date set for closing this site?

The current life span of the Neal Road site is 30 years from today. More modules are planned, so that the site can be more than doubled from its present size.

As the first module is finished, a liner will be placed over the older sections. The new modules are being lined in advance of being used.

There are several ponds on site. One collects the storm water that leaches through the landfill; another is used as a sewage pond by the septic-tank pumping companies.

Each new module requires permits from the California Waste Management Board, the State Water Board and the Air Quality Management District.

When each module is closed, it will be completely covered with dirt and vegetation. Some contouring may be done, but not much. It will be brown in summer and green in spring, just like the rest of the surrounding hills.

Are we "importing" any solid waste from other counties? "Exporting" any?

We are not importing waste from other counties; however, we are exporting: 13% of Chico's and 95% of Oroville's goes to Yuba County. This impacts tipping fees, however, which generate revenues for local programs.

How much has recycling helped?

Recycling helps, and is still better than the MRF [Materials Recovery Facility] approach. A "dirty" MRF includes all the garbage from local restaurants mixed in with newspapers, cans, bottles, plastic, etc., and is not all captured as well as it would be by the use of individual containers that separate recyclable items from other items.

Coming to Oroville within the next 18 months will be commingled recycling containers for curbside pickup - meaning that newspapers, cans, bottles, etc., can all be placed in the same container for pickup.

When people haul stuff all the way out to Neal Road (instead of to one of the local collection sites), does any of that material get recycled?

At the landfill, there are several different individual piles or categories: cardboard, tires, green waste, scrap metal, e-waste, and there is even a bicycle pile. There are currently about 3-4 dozen bicycles in various states of repair; some only need a new chain. STARS [Sheriff's Team of Active Retired Seniors] volunteers pick them up and refurbish them for needy children.

When people take things out to the dump, they can leave one TV set for free; the second and succeeding units require a fee of \$5.50 per unit.

The County is currently seeking a grant to deal with e-waste, which means anything with a plug or a chip: TVs, VCRs, phones, radios, wrist watches, computers, toasters, etc. The grant, in the amount of \$286,000, would build and staff a transfer facility for e-waste; we hope to break ground by the spring of 2004. We are seeking community partners like the Salvation Army to participate in this program so that not everyone has to haul their e-waste to the dump.

Butte County has a problem with illegal dumping. Do you think it would help if people could bring items to the dump at no charge? Might it be possible to get a grant to cover the costs associated with doing this?

As for the concept of offering "free" dumping, I don't feel this would end illegal dumping. Our gate fees are the lowest in the entire state. Our Freon recovery fee (for old refrigerators) has been reduced from \$45 per unit to \$15 per unit. This is not a question of economics but of human behavior.

We see flocks of gulls coming in to Lake Oroville every evening just at sunset. Are these birds "commuters" - do they spend their days working the landfill?

We don't usually see a lot of birds. When we do, they can be deterred by the use of a harmless popgun to scare them off. Mostly, though, the daily covering and compacting discourages them.

Are there monitoring wells? How are they working?

There are a half dozen monitoring wells on the site to check for the presence of heavy metals and other trace elements that leach out from the landfill.

There is very little actual decomposition or methane formation from the landfill, because of the compaction. I've heard stories of people digging up landfills 20 years later and finding fresh-looking newspapers, yellow bananas and red steaks.

As the first module is closed and other modules are opened up, a gas extraction well will be installed. We don't expect it to generate enough gas to produce useful energy; likely it will just be "flared off."

What's the worst thing people throw away, in terms of sending it to the landfill, that should be disposed of in some other way? Computer equipment? Batteries? Tires?

The worst things are the easily recycled items: aluminum, glass, raw lumber.

Tires are not buried in the landfill. A tire recovery firm, under contract, comes and takes them away to be either shredded or burned. Shredded tires make a wonderful surface for running tracks at high schools or on jogging trails.

What's the one message you would like all of us to hear? Is there something more we can all do to

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Recycle

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A Conversation with John Perschutti — *(Continued from page 1)*

notification, proposed timber cuts were reviewed, received public response, and changes were accepted, or rejected, to create a final document. This report went to the San Francisco USFS region where another 45 days was allowed for any appeals. Thereafter, there was the legal option, but by then, concerns were usually resolved.

(continued on p. 10)

Timber projects carried out under these rules

proved excellent. The Administration's proposed Supplement to the Framework and the 2003 Healthy Forest Initiative (HR 1904), change everything. It's an entirely new game if Congress approves every Administration proposal. Their changes gut prohibition of clear cutting and disallow public input established by the Framework.

WHAT IS THE PROPOSED SIERRA NEVADA FOREST FRAMEWORK PLAN ADMENDMENT?

The Administration wants to remove positive aspects of the Framework that adversely affect logging companies. The Amendment doubles federal harvesting, allows aggressive thinning, and expands cattle grazing. This month, the USFS Regional Forester Jack Blackwell officially reviews public comment to the Amendment, but it's clear his response is already decided. Changes resulting from this could be huge, and there is no scientific forestry to support any of it.

The new Amendment guts environmental analysis and the whole process that goes with it. The original Framework invited environmental comments and mandated a USFS response even if the reply was a one liner such as "You're full of it." Everything in the original Framework was scientifically supported by years of careful study and the plan was environmentally sound. In the Framework, dialogue between the government and public was excellent. The important goal now is to protect this rational process because, without it, the only option is the court system. "Analysis paralysis" is the Administration's term to trash environmental review, public input, and justify the Amendment, Initiative, and other mandates. Now timber people are welcome and the public is excluded. What Washington wants is economically driven.

Under the Amendment, public notifications, environmental scoping, and public comment survive in form but not substance, and both are weakened. USFS is not required to respond to comments or to perform environmental analysis on projects under 1,000 acres. The Amendment's core is the categorical exclusion which presumably accelerates USFS decisions regarding "small" timber sales. If the public dislikes the project, and the sale is approved, the only recourse is in the federal courts, not administrative appeal. In effect, one must seek legal action for every timber harvest, and that's expensive with the increased logging envisioned by the Administration. No organization can afford continuous court challenges. To undertake these cases, lawyers need decisions that mandate forest-wide, precedent-setting changes. Resources to protect the environment are limited and the legal

system can't fix everything.

Republicans are not basically anti-conservation and most don't comprehend this administration's anti-environmentalism. Richard Nixon had a great environmental record, but the Bush folks make even Reagan and Watt look like conservationists. Timber industry lobbyist, Mark Rey, controls the USFS and mandates logging. Under the ruse of saving the forest and combating catastrophic fire, he accelerates unfettered cutting. Washington's present forest plan is based on greed.

HOW DOES THE ADMINISTRATION'S PLAN TO PREVENT FOREST FIRES WORK?

It doesn't. One of their ideas is to cut "extra trees" not needed for wildlife. The sale of these "extras" would pay for the removal of small trees which start fires. This distorted logic fails because there are no extra trees, and regardless, extra trees are not the fire problem, nor their removal its solution. We're not really talking about removing small trees; it's all about cutting big trees. Logging companies want to make money, and there's no money in fire prevention.

The Administration wants cuts of 40 to 60 thousand acres yearly, to remove the forest canopy. They postulate that this stops wildfires because it prevents crown fires, but this is pseudo-science. Fires spread from the ground to the tree tops (the crown) by traveling up ladders formed by the branches. Fire does not continuously jump from crown to crown because crown fires cannot self-sustain. Crown fires cease burning at night and self-annihilate in a day. Removing the canopy to prevent fire is fallacious as crown fires are not dangerous. Canopy removal is an industry red herring, to allow cutting bigger, more profitable trees.

When you harvest big trees, the new replacements go through a long phase before becoming fire-resistant. Small trees are fire prone because they have low branch fire ladders, and they easily ignite. Older trees (12 inches wide) have branches 10 feet high or so from the ground, which prevent ground fires from climbing into the tree, and so are harder to ignite. "Cutting big" is not smart, it is poor forestry science, causes excessive re-growth, and results in a greater fire danger. The good news is that the short term consequence of "cutting big" is the USFS mandated removal of ground and ladder fuels, but the ultimate bad news is that the resultant open canopy creates a virtual garden because there's too much sun, too little competition among seedlings, and the logged area needs continuous maintenance. Mechanization makes it all the worse because churning ground duff is equivalent to rot-tilling, resulting in a lush seedbed of explosive growth and an even more devastating fire danger.

"Cutting small" is good, prevents fire, and these trees are very usable. I just purchased wood to build a kiln room. The 2 by 4 inch pieces had center knots, meaning the tree was about the size of each piece. I couldn't find one 2 by 4 brace that didn't have a center of a tree in it; all were milled out of a single tree. Harvesting small trees provides useful wood products and reduces fire, but industry wants big trees because they yield more money with less effort.

WHAT DOES THE QUINCY LIBRARY GROUP PLAN DO FOR THE PLUMAS FOREST?

The Quincy Library Group (QLG) is a coalition of local county politicians, timber people and citizens, including some Audubon and Sierra Club members. They succeeded in passing the Herger-Feinstein Quincy Library Group Forest Recovery Act (H-F QLG) in 1998 which allows environmentally paradoxical clear-cutting in the Plumas National Forest, but to me, there is no common sense in micro-managing our federal lands. The Act's regulations turned out to be too restrictive for QLG, so now they are fighting for changes. QLG thought forest protections would be removed by the Act, but Congress didn't accommodate them.

QLG has pushed a multi-aged, multi-story, fire-resistant forest concept for areas that will be clear-cut. After one swath of forest is clear-cut, the area is allowed to grow new trees for several years. Then there is another clear-cut in an adjacent swath of old trees. Now the ages in the three adjacent tree swaths are all different. All trees are of different ages or multi-aged, and different levels or multi-storied, and so the process continues. But it all comes down to clear-cutting, which does not create a fire-resistant forest. The combination of enormous areas of fire-vulnerable new growth and brush next to adjacent areas filled with easy ignitable small trees, makes the QLG forest less fire-resistant, not more. QLG says it wants to "cut big" to offset costs for any small tree and brush removal, but they forget it's the big trees that don't burn. I disagree with accelerating any cutting and I certainly do not endorse any clear-cutting, because it's the wrong prescription. QLG also proposes defensible fire zones where fire fighters presumably defend against wildfires. But all their ideas are no more than theories, and knowledgeable foresters don't believe any QLG ideas will actually work in practice.

A key provision incorporated in the H-F QLG Act is compliance with other federal laws such as NEPA (National Environmental Protection Act of 1969) which requires protection of our endangered species. A major species issue is preservation of a healthy California Spotted Owl population. Observing environmental requirements, USFS has shown a declining owl population. To maintain a viable owl population, USFS has discontinued cutting trees, which stopped all clear-cutting in the Plumas National Forest. This decision resulted in less harvesting in the Plumas than in any other Sierra National Forest. Since the QLG plan was centered on clear-cutting, they oppose the Spotted Owl guidelines and are dead set against environmental compliance. The QLG would have much preferred the Act's compliance sections to have been written with invisible ink.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR CONCERNS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE FOREST?

My biggest single concern is the predictable negative response of government officials. The citizen is continually told he is wrong even though he is more often right. Now, even egregious district USFS decisions are invariably upheld. It's clear that no one can win any administrative appeal, or affect

Conservation

Alone

A recent newspaper article told about a young man hiking alone in a western canyon, and when he was pinned by a shifting boulder, he used a dull pocket knife to cut off his arm in order to escape. Another story told of a young man also hiking alone who fell into a mine shaft and in despair of ever being found shot himself. These were extreme examples of a certain danger in traveling alone and the need for extra attention to safety especially when you're on your own.

Dangers exist not only in the physical environment, but in the criminal element that sometimes lurks beside the trail. It is especially perilous for women to be on trails alone in some areas because of the danger of rape by deviant human predators far worse than a tiger, and it is disgusting...no...infuriating, that the condition exists, hampering the freedom of an activity that should be available to all without fear of danger. A few years ago a rapist was at large in the Oakland Hills, and the trails were posted with signs warning women to be with a companion. In a pristine park conducive to meditation where one can regain a quietness within while being alone, it is simply tragic that society has to contend with the thieving element, depriving the individual of freedom of choice.

Some famous people, however, have explored alone, notably John Muir, who not only made a thousand-mile botanical trip from Wisconsin to Florida as a young man in 1867, but climbed in the Sierras alone, often with only a bag of bread and tea. In a time before today's elaborate light-weight backpacks and efficient footwear, he would walk with unpadded leather boots studded with steel hobnails, and would settle down beside a bonfire at night and cut pine boughs for bedding. He was filled with the enthusiasm of nature discovery and glossed over hardships, climbing sheer peaks, traversing rough terrain—and never even had a broken bone! Practical and observant, he was adapted to exploring alone...but there certainly were fewer thieves to contend with.

Muir also explored with companions, making his first walk across the Sacramento Valley to Yosemite with a man when he first arrived in California, although John lamented about the annoying habits of his fellow traveler and was glad to be off alone into the Sierras. He did keep in contact with people though, even commenting that he couldn't exist without human companionship; after all, he was a superb storyteller and communicator. John became a popular member of the Sierra Club summer group trips after becoming club president and founder in 1892. He joined the Harriman Scientific Expedition to Alaska in 1899, flanked by the top scientists of the day. Even his Last Journey into South America and Africa in 1911, although he embarked alone, was always in contact with ships, transportation allies, and attendants of travel.

Those solitary sojourns have been made mostly by men, although Rachael Carson explored alone along the coastal areas, and a few other women have made journeys alone. We are reminded that the early 1800s Mountain Men roamed the west trapping beaver, often alone, but usually connected to groups

or a base camp. Most pronounced was the solitary winter journey John Colter made in the Montana mountains while searching for trade routes and in the process discovered Yellowstone. Henry David Thoreau was a lone explorer and built his famous cabin at Walden Pond, but it was only two miles from Concord, so he was close to company.

There have been modern explorers who have made some notable journeys alone, including Colin Fletcher and his thousand-mile summer trek across the desert (dependent on airplane food drops), and especially David Raines Wallace who searched the Klamath country alone in search of Bigfoot as described in his book, *The Klamath Knot*. In this day and age, it is actually difficult to find an isolated place where you are completely alone. Airplanes, satellites and cell phones have connected most of the world until complete privacy is rare. You can make short journeys alone—and you can find a few of those mini-wild trips in your community—but in the end, we are confronted with the possibility of meeting someone on the trail. However, we are dependent on our social structure for many of the necessities of life.

My wife Jo made a trip to Lassen National Park with two lady comrades to climb Mt. Lassen August 9th. I made that trip 20 years ago, and there were only a few people on the trail in a relatively wild and empty space, but Jo said the trails were crowded. "A hundred?" I asked. "No, thousands!" she shockingly said. Mountain trails have become crowded in recent years to the point wilderness permits are required in most of the Sierra. Not much chance of being mugged on trails like that...or does it heighten the danger? Going on guided tours also has a safety feature, but you lose some of that privacy factor.

There is a certain need for writers to gather thoughts while alone when it is just you and the computer or pencil when you start to structure your story perhaps in your study or secret place. We know very little of true aloneness such as must have descended on John Muir when he was in the roadless wilderness crouched alone before his fire or waiting for the burst of dawn in an isolated land. It is gut-wrenching aloneness when you know you are completely on your own, living or dying by choices you make throughout the day without any fellow human to talk to or help you. A Robinson Crusoe type of experience must give such a surge of fear or desperate feeling.

Contending with modern threats along the trail shouldn't keep us away from nature, but it is advisable to be alert, pick your time and places, and perhaps break away from aloneness to walk with someone or a group. There is a time and place for everything... "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven..." There is a time to walk together and a time to walk alone. Watch!

"The whole wilderness seems to be alive and familiar, full of humanity.



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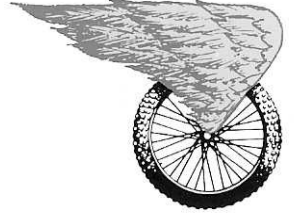


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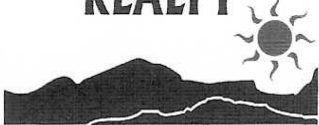
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