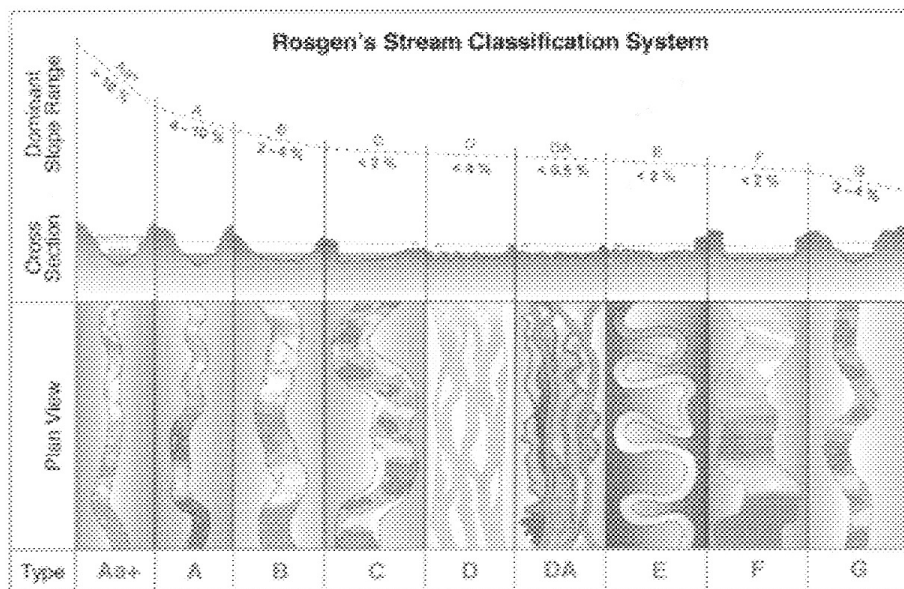




News  Articles  Programs  Hikes and Outings  Meetings  Events

## Feather River Coordinated Resource Management Group: Plumas County's CRM

By Joseph Abbott



CREDIT: ILLUSTRATION: LEE SILVEY, FROM D. ROSGEN, *APPLIED FLUVIAL GEOMORPHOLOGY*

*A field guide to rivers. Drawing on data from more than 1000 waterways.*

In 1849 and thereafter, 685 million cubic feet of mining debris was dumped into the Yuba River. Marysville was so clogged by mud washed down river, that by 1868, river beds were higher than its streets, and levees had to be constructed. Debris washed down the Sacramento, through San Francisco Bay, and miles into the Pacific. Hydraulic debris amounted to 1.5 billion cubic yards or 8 times the soil moved to build the Panama Canal [adapted from "Becoming California," *Gold Rush Magazine*, 2002].

It's about protecting our nation's topsoil, those few upper inches of our earth that sustain land life. In the past 200 years, 75% of US topsoil was lost from poor agricultural habits, unrestrained logging, and overly enthusiastic mining. Soil erosion degrades water quality, causes floods, and obliterates fisheries. The catastrophic Plumas County floods of 1987 vividly demonstrated that traditional approaches to managing natural resources don't effectively address the root causes of stream instability and erosion. For example, logging is commonly done

balancing rights to private property. This concept bore fruit in Plumas in 1985, when the Feather River Coordinated Resource Management (CRM) group was established with a mission to "protect, maintain and enhance ecosystems and...stability, in the Feather River watershed through collaborative landowner participation."

The CRM concept encourages participating governmental agencies and private landowners to develop strategies and to better manage Plumas' private and public lands. The longest running and most successful of all California's CRMs is the Feather River CRM, whose focus is 763,600 acres of the north and middle forks of the Feather River basin. However, strangely absent from the CRM

on high ridges, and the sponge-like environment is not restored. Lacking nature's sponge to retain heavy rain, it's inevitable that downstream meadows wash out. Private landowners and layers of governmental agencies usually manage rivers and streams, each with its separate objectives and practices. Theoretically, better management is attained by collaboration, cooperation, and involvement of soil conservationists and private property owners. Working together, it might be possible to prevent floods, improve our waters, and enhance recreational assets such as fishing, while

are logging companies, mining, and agricultural firms that are the cause of erosion. The local public's voice in the CRM is the Plumas Board of Supervisors.

In 1985, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) faced \$80 million in costs to dredge erosion debris from its Feather River dams. PG&E bought the idea of then Plumas County Supervisor John Schramel and his supporters that it was cheaper to prevent silting than to continue dredging, and they funded the CRM concept in Plumas. The Plumas politicians liked the CRM idea because it allowed them a voice in land management and demonstrated that they were replacing jobs lost from the collapse of local logging. The CRM concept would never have happened without Schramel's vision and leadership.

In 1985, 12 federal, state, regional, and local government agencies, along with PG&E, signed on to be the first CRM members. The scheme expanded with present participants a "who's who" of 22 national, state and local agencies, including wealthy federal and state water boards. Local control is maintained through the Plumas County Board of Supervisors with input from Plumas environmentalists like the Quincy Library Group and fishermen from Salmonid Restoration and Trout Unlimited. The CRM has evolved from a PG&E demonstration project to a federal- and state-funded operation, earning substantive income, attracting millions to the local economy, and creating jobs from its 15 miles of rehabilitated Plumas streams.

The CRM can only be fathomed by understanding the Plumas Corporation. Plumas

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# Yahi Executive Committee 2005 Elections

Members' copies of this newsletter include a ballot for participation in the annual election of three members serve on the Executive Committee in 2005.

We have elections every year for members to serve on the ExComm, two persons one year and three the following year, each candidate serving for a two-year term. This way the 'institutional memory' is preserved. The Nominating Committee has been having a tough time the past few years to find volunteers to serve on the committee, therefore we do not have a 'run-off' this year. It is fun and a rewarding experience to be on Ex Comm.

There are three openings on the Executive Committee for 2005. Each Sierra Club member may vote for up to three candidates including a write-in if the member chooses to do that. If you are a Yahi Club member, please take a few minutes to complete

## About This Newsletter

SIERRA CLUB YAH! GROUP NEWSLETTER is published quarterly in March, June, September and December by the Yahi Group of the Sierra Club, Post Office Box 2012, Chico, CA 95927 or 5590 Feather River Place, Paradise, CA 95969, Attn: Louise Casey.

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

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

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

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

### Submission Guidelines:

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

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

## Candidates Statements

**Gene Anne McMillen:** "I always grow enough for me and the bugs," is how my Illinois grandmother explained not using pesticides in her backyard garden. Her words, along with the actions of my other grandmother who vigilantly discouraged neighborhood cats from harming visiting song birds are vivid memories that influence my attitudes toward the earth.

My husband and I have been Sierra Club members since 1968 and have looked to the Club for information and advice about environmental issues over the years. Although I've lived in Chico for only a year, I already have come to love and value its parks and open spaces. With the extra time that retirement has provided I look forward to the opportunity to more actively contribute to this important organization.

**Lynn Ott:** Hello fellow Sierra Club members. I have been a resident of, and enjoyed the natural beauty of Butte County for the past 19 years. Throughout my adult life I have been highly involved with the Sierra Club. In the mid nineties I became a Sierra Club trip leader and have since led numerous outings. As a result of living in northern California, I have developed a heartfelt connection with nature and am deeply committed to its preservation. Over the years I have participated in letter writing campaigns, habitat restoration projects, and grassroot movements.

Professionally, I have taught environmental health at both the undergraduate and graduate level, completed a doctoral level internship at the Environmental Protection Agency followed by subsequent summer employment, and presented research pertaining to ozone air pollution at the American Public Health Association conference (2003).

If elected to the Executive Committee, I will work together with our local Sierra Club officers and leaders in order to continue to provide quality educational and recreational programs. In addition, I will work to preserve our local environment for ourselves and the generations to follow.

**Wendy Woods:** *I have been an active member of the Sierra Club since the early 1970's when I first became aware of the many environmental issues facing us.*

*For the past two years I have expanded that commitment by being a member of the Executive Committee of the Yahi Branch of the Mother Lode Chapter of the Sierra Club. In that capacity, I have joined with other members of the Executive Committee in making decisions and formulating policies that guide and direct our club.*

*I understand the issues facing the Yahi branch and have the background to evaluate club activities and participate in long range*

## Yahi Group of the Sierra Club

### 2004 Elected Officials

#### Chair

Grace Marvin: 530-893-1994

GMRADM@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@chico.com

### Yahi Group Contacts

#### Chapter Rep. To Motherlode

Grace Marvin: 530-893-1994

GMRADM@aol.com

#### Conservation Chair

Marvey Mueller: 530-345-2785

marveychap@earthlink.net

#### General Contact

Linda Stuke: 530-345-2696

#### 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@chico.com

#### Local and Residential Logging

Trish Puterbaugh

Cohasset@shocking.com

#### Membership

Gerda Lydon: 530-343-9277

# News Bites

by Grace Marvin

## CELEBRATING OURSELVES

Let's celebrate our own good work! Many Yahi members are active doing Sierra Club work, even if it is not always in the Sierra Club name. During the past few months, this has included researching candidates and propositions regarding environmental positions (with special thanks to **Randy Larsen** and **Theresa Marcis**), moving **Yahi Group endorsements** through the Mother Lode chapter and beyond, campaigning for measures and politicians -- locally and in swing states, and attending or presenting at numerous civic meetings, public hearings and programs. Many have also been active writing letters or articles, sending email, working on Yahi media, and otherwise spreading the word about environmental issues and interests to citizens far and wide. Still others have been training trip leaders, leading trips, donating foods or services for our Chat and Chew and holiday and other programs, and helping to revise Yahi policies -- with **all of your participation greatly appreciated**.

Last October, we used what we learned from our May Chat and Chew to try to reach out to young people: we co-sponsored our second Chat and Chew with two university groups in beautiful Lower Bidwell Park. The educational goal is to **bring together a variety of local environmental groups and to informally discuss our varied conservation efforts**. The food, the information exchange, and the social networking were as marvelous as in May. We had a similar turnout (about 50 people), including a dozen environmental leaders and the surprise appearance of three city council candidates. We encourage more Sierra Club members and friends of all ages to attend what we hope to be an annual Chat and Chew. We also hope to improve the coordination of preparation tasks among Sierra Club volunteers and university groups, such as Associated Students Recycling and the Environmental Resource Center. We expect that this will result in a greater attendance of **both college students and the public** at this fun and educational event.

## MAKING THE SIERRA CLUB'S PRESENCE FELT

It very important for our Executive Committee and other Yahi leaders to make the Sierra Club's positions known, publicly, on a variety of environmental issues. All members with computer access can review the national S.C. conservation policies, by looking at the website <http://www.sierraclub.org/policy/conservation/>. Officers should check it carefully before making statements on behalf of the club. You may also find some local conservation "Contacts" within the Yahi Group's many counties

efforts by logging onto <http://www.motherlode.sierraclub.org/yahi/index.html>. (We gratefully acknowledge the work of **Louise Casey** in maintaining this Yahi website. She is also our Newsletter Publication Editor. We also thank **Kent Wooldridge**, retired Computer Science professor, who is working to get many Yahi activities included on the new environmental calendar at Chico State).

## MAKING YOUR PRESENCE KNOWN

When we hear about environmental concerns in the counties the Yahi Group serves, it would be wonderful if your contact information were available to activists needing your involvement. One example: We had a request that the Sierra Club take a stand on "**saving Lake Almanor**." We need people who have the time and interest in becoming educated about the issue. More such people may live in Chester, for example, than in other communities. **Please let me know if YOU are interested in this or any other environmental issue**, so that I may help get you in contact with others *in your area* who express similar interests. ([gmradm@aol.com](mailto:gmradm@aol.com) or 530-893-1994).

## YAH! SPICES: OLD AND NEW!

We will start making plans for 2005 at January's Executive Committee meeting. Included will be consideration of the following: Celebrating John Muir's birthday on April 20, Earth Day events, Bidwell Park Centennial, BEC banquet, garden tour, garage sale, Endangered Species Faire, Yahi's annual Chat and Chew, a retreat for officers and outings leaders, outings policies, joint activities with Butte College and CSUC, strategic planning, division of Yahi Group labor, program planning, and the 2005 holiday party. (See this paper about the **2004 holiday party**.)

The Vice-Chair, the Secretary and the Fifth Member slots need filling on the Yahi Executive Committee. Thankfully, we have three good candidates for these vacant seats. The people who have expressed an interest in joining (**Gene Anna McMillan** and **Lynn Ott**) or staying on the Executive Committee, namely, **Wendy Woods** whose skills make us hope she will be our new Secretary, and **Joanne Gerson**, our multitalented Treasurer, all seem to be enthusiastic about the club doing as much as our volunteer time permits. This includes enjoying the great outdoors responsibly, reaching out to members and non-members, becoming more ecologically aware, and helping to encourage conservation awareness and activism. Let's continue many of the great traditions of the club and add some spices of our own. **Please vote** for the candidates listed in this paper to help show your support!

At the December, 2004, Executive Committee

meeting, we will discuss the needs of the Executive Committee and of the **Yahi committees, i.e., the people who help us meet club goals**, and my report on the Mother Lode Chapter Conservation and Executive Committee meetings. If the time is right for you, I am asking you to **please consider serving on the conservation, program, or membership committees**, and letting me know of your interests (or your questions about serving). We need YOU.

We gratefully acknowledge the work of **Janice Heckerson** who cheerfully served as the Yahi Secretary the last two years; she also has volunteered to help the person who volunteers to become the new Program Chair. Since **Gerda Lydon** is retiring from the marvelous work she has done for many years as Program Chair, I have been finding speakers for 2005 and will do so until we have a new program committee (soon, I HOPE!). Please note that program details are listed in the Calendar of this paper.

On **January 14**, we will get the chance to hear and see all about the **Snow Goose Festival**, with all of its environmental treats for the eyes, ears, and feet of young and old. This Sacramento Valley celebration of our wildlife resources is certainly worth learning about whether or not you can participate in the January 28-30 festival events. See why people come from many miles away to attend it.

On **February 10**, the **Winter Gear and Where to Use it** program should be especially appealing to those members and friends who aspire to or already engage in physical activities in our wintry outdoors. Jake Palazzo not only will show off winter gear from Mountain Sports in this popular program; he has also agreed to also tell us about *where* we can engage in winter sports activities, and show us how to get there. I hope you will share your secret spots as well, whether you are an armchair traveler or a physically active one!

Robert Woods, instructor and naturalist, will provide attendees with his especially interesting and original slide program about **Ishi on March 10**. For those new to the area or who do not know: Ishi was the last of the Yahi tribe, who wandered into Oroville at the beginning of the last century. Ishi's story is beautiful and sad, inspiring and of



# Getting Involved

*From the Human Dimensions Research Unit of Cornell University, PO Box 3884 Ithaca, New York. 14852-3884. Published 2004, 52 pages, paperback. Item code: 147CBDM. Price \$13.95 plus shipping and 8.25% CA sales tax.*

This guide is a primer on building community consensus to define deer overpopulation, develop intelligent alternatives, allow viable choices, and evaluate eventual outcomes as applied to a suburban setting. Though the guide focuses on deer control in communities along the eastern seaboard, the urbanization of California's remaining deer habitat makes this guide relevant to California conservationists.

Specifically, the guide presents ten sophisticated case studies from eight northeastern states spanning 25 to 30 years of deer overpopulation. Because of garden destruction, vehicle-deer collisions, and tick-borne disease, these northeastern communities were forced to confront their deer overpopulation, usually the result of governmental neglect or mismanagement.

Though this guide seems more like a course syllabus designed for a master's degree than a publication directed to the public, it has excellent how-to chapters outlining strategies for community-based deer control efforts that every environmentalist should read. The ideas presented are applicable to a spectrum of community issues, not just conservation. Sections focusing on how individuals best perform in a community framework are highly recommended. Summaries, bibliographies, a glossary of terms, side-bars, and personal experience quotes also enhance the presentation.

However, some readers may find it a shortcoming that none of the communities acknowledged that deer can be accepted as a resource and not just annoying pests. Generally, most communities opted for deer eradication programs--the easy way out. Nine out of the ten communities decided to decrease their herds through hunting. The sole exception was a seemingly impractical effort to decrease deer reproduction through sterilization, which needed private funding. In the other cases, the source and cost of financing was not explicitly stated. Although outcomes were emphasized, there was no long-term assessment of culling effectiveness or the triggers for re-culling. Surprisingly, no community tried to decrease vehicle-deer collisions by constructing deer by-passes, recommending deer resistant plants, developing criteria for garden barriers, identifying deer migration routes, or preventing building on already known migration paths.

The take-away message is that animal management, either domestic or wild, is not the preserve of the specialist but must include individuals working as a community to effectively recruit the power of official agencies and elected officials which presently are overly responsive to special interests. Only by government making decisions with its citizens and both sharing responsibility can human-animal interactions be effectively addressed, hopefully mitigated, or possibly solved.

*Readers interested in California's unique deer issues and solutions are referred to California State Fish and Game, UC Davis, and UC Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources web-sites. Also recommended is The Sunset Western Garden Book, 2000,*

## Yahi Volunteers Needed

We will have a table at the Farmers Market starting November 27 and every Saturday thereafter if we can get volunteers to do it part of the time and it isn't too wet or cold. Call Joanne,

## Help Remove Invasive Plants from Bidwell Park

The Chico Park Department uses very little herbicide or other chemicals for their vegetation management program in Bidwell Park. This means that alternative methods, primarily human labor, are necessary to try to recapture the park from the invasive plants that are currently overrunning it.

Park funding has barely kept even with the inflation rate while more and more park maintenance time must be devoted to mitigating the effects of a major increase in park usage. You can show your support for the park policy of minimal herbicide usage by volunteering to help remove invasive plants.

Friends of Bidwell Park has identified more than 130 invasive plant species in the park and is removing these plants from Bidwell Park 3-4 mornings a week. They supply tools, gloves, water, and training. For dates, locations and times, see [www.FriendsofBidwellPark.org](http://www.FriendsofBidwellPark.org).

If each of the 1500 Butte County Sierra Club members participated in even one morning of invasives removal during the next three months, it would far exceed the 1300 hours that FOBP spent removing invasives last year and make a

## Annual Holiday Party

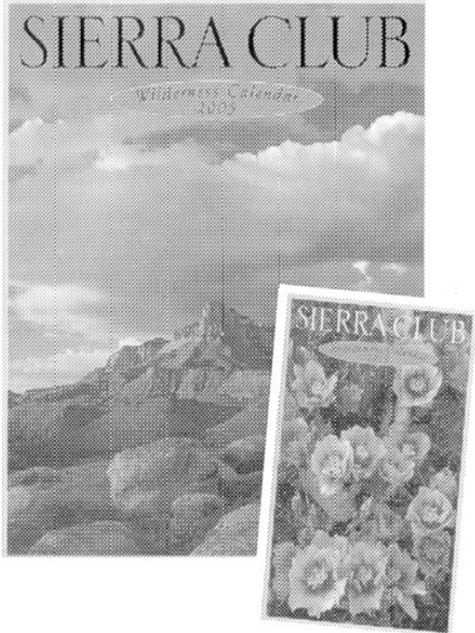
Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM you can see all your old friends and make new ones at the holiday dinner held at Café Malvina, 234 W. Third Street, Chico. The parking structure right across the street will make parking easy.

You can choose a traditional Italian or a vegetarian dish. The meal will cost \$15 and the good feelings will be free. Call 893-2154 early to make your reservation with Joanne.

There will be a raffle of a lovely original watercolor of Mt. Shasta donated by Phil and Gerda Lydon. As always you can look forward to purchasing the luscious baked goods donated by members. Those of you who are bakers please call Joanne to tell her what you will be giving for the bake sale.


There will be calendars, engagement books and both holiday cards and blank cards all with the famous Sierra Club pictures on sale as well. All items are \$12. Do your gift shopping the quick and easy way while supporting your local group at the same time.

This is your best chance to renew old friendships and feel the comradeship that only



**Buy from us and support local conservation work**

**To order, call:  
Joanne at 893-2154**



**Explore, enjoy and protect the planet**

## Yahi Winter 2004/Spring 2005 Programs

**Thursday, January 13, 7:30 PM Program: "The Snow Goose Festival"** - The Yahi group has invited a speaker from the Sacramento River Preservation Trust to tell and show us all the fun and interesting activities involved in this annual environmental event. Whether or not you attend the Festival (1/28-1/29/05), you will find out about why this local event attracts and informs people from all over the state and country.

**Thursday, February 10, 7:30 PM Program: "Winter Gear And Great Spots To Use It"** - Jake Palazzo from Mountain Sports will show his latest gear, and share his ideas about great winter spots for local winter sports. Perhaps you or your friends can add to his list of nearby winter sports locales – whether you are an active or an armchair traveler or both!

**Thursday, March 10, 7:30 PM Program: "Ishi!"** - Many already know that Ishi was the last of the Yahi tribe, but we hear that Dr. Robert Woods' original program about this fascinating survivor is a real treat. If you would like to hear about our local roots, here's your opportunity to learn from a wonderful Teacher/Naturalist/ Interpreter (B.S. in Wildlife Biology from the University of Montana) .

### Yahi Group's General Outing Information

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

**Updates:** Updated outings information can be found on our web site at [www.motherlode.sierraclub.org/yahi/](http://www.motherlode.sierraclub.org/yahi/)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Class C: 2000-3000 feet



# Yahi Group Winter 2004/2005 Outings

## December



**Yahi Group Cross Country Ski List.** Join our more than 60 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.

**On-Going Tuesday Volleyball.** Join Yahi Group members and friends for friendly, co-ed volleyball every Tuesday night at 7PM at the Chapman Center (corner of E. 16<sup>th</sup> Street and B Street in Chico). Cost: \$4 per night. Free lessons included. For more information call Karen, 899-8305 or Betty, 345-7205.

**Saturday, December 4 – 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](mailto:shogue@ci.chico.ca.us)

**Sunday, December 5 – 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/walking shoes. Meet at bridge near One-Mile at 8AM. Rain cancels. Leader: Alan, 891-8789 or [ajmendoza@prodigy.net](mailto:ajmendoza@prodigy.net).

**Saturday, December 11 – 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. Musical instruments welcome. 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 to sign up and get directions to meeting place and time. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980; Asst. Leader: Peggy, 343-9843.

**Saturday, December 11 – Paradise Flume Hike** (grade 2, class A). We'll walk 5 to 6 miles above the rushing waters of the flumes above the West Branch of the Feather River from Dean Road up to the dam below Coutolenc Road. Bring lunch, water, comfortable footwear, and layered clothing. Heavy rain cancels. Light rain is good for us. Meet at 9:30 A.M. for a self-organized carpool at the Chico Park & Ride or join leader at 10:00 A.M. at the Paradise Albertson's parking lot on Clark Road. Call leader for directions if you need them. Leader John, 872-8258; Asst. Leaders: Dale & Brook, 873-3220 and John, 877-1617.

**Sunday, December 12 – Cross Country Ski** (grade 2, class B). We'll go where the snow is good. This is for people who own their own equipment. Bring skis, boots poles, lunch, appropriate clothing and \$ for drivers. Call leader for meeting time and place. Leader: Larry, 342-7998.

**Sunday, December 12, 6 PM – Annual Yahi Group Holiday Dinner.** You can see all your old friends and make new ones at the holiday dinner held at Café Malvina, 234 W Third Street, Chico. The parking structure right across the street will make parking easy. You can choose a traditional Italian dish or a vegetarian. The meal will cost \$15 and the good feelings will be free. Call 893-2154 early to make your reservation with Joanne.

**Saturday, December 18-19 – Winter Solstice in Colby Meadows** (grade 2, class A). Spend one of the longest nights of the year in a yurt surrounded by wintering trees and the poetry of snow. We'll snowshoe or cross-country ski 2 miles to the yurt, stay the night and return the next afternoon. Cost: \$5 per person for yurt. Call to sign up and get more details. Leader: Theresa, 899-7331.

**Wednesday, December 29 – Cross Country Ski** (grade 2, class B). We'll go where the snow is good. This is for people who own their own equipment. Bring skis, boots poles, lunch, appropriate clothing and \$ for drivers. Call leader for meeting time and place. Leader: Larry, 342-7998.

## January

**Saturday, 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: John, 872-8258; Asst. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980.

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

**Saturday, January 8 - Feather River Hike** (grade 2, class A). An easy 5-6 mile hike along the paved bike path in Oroville from Hwy. 70 to the Nature Center/Fish Hatchery. Along the way we should see nice views of the Feather River and lots of wildlife, including many winter waterfowl. Bring lunch and water. Meet at 10:00 A.M. at the parking lot off of the Montgomery street exit off Hwy. 70 or at 9:30A.M. at the Chico Park and Ride. Leader: Michelle, 865-9491; Asst. Leaders: Dale/Brook, 893-5485 and Lynn, 877-1671.

**Thursday, January 13, 7:30 p.m. Program: "The Snow Goose Festival"** - The Yahi group has



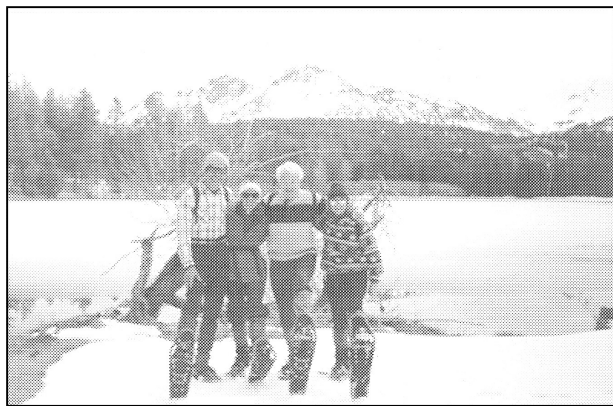
invited a speaker from the Sacramento River Preservation Trust to tell and show us all the fun and interesting activities involved in this annual environmental event. Whether or not you attend the Festival (1/28-1/29/05), you will find out about why this local event attracts and informs people from all over the state and country. Yahi program meetings are held the second Thursday of the month in the Conference Room of the Chico Branch Library located at 1st and Sherman and begin at 7:30 P.M. Refreshments will be served and the public is welcome. Call 893-1994 for information.

**Saturday, January 15 – Llano Seco & Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge** (grade 1, class A). We'll take an incredible drive through the



# Outings and Events

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: Alan, 891-8789 or [ajmendoza@prodigy.net](mailto:ajmendoza@prodigy.net); Asst. Leaders: Brook/Dale, 893-5485, John, 877-1617 and Jeannie, 894-5354.

**Sunday, January 16 – Teichert Ponds Walk** (grade 1, class A). Take a 2-hour tour of the 33 acres of Chico Parks property under discussion for development as recreation/natural area. The ponds are between Chico Mall and Little Chico Creek on the east side of Hwy 99. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 10AM and caravan to trailhead. Leader: Gene, 873-1552; Asst. Leader: Carla, 891-6977.

**Saturday, January 22– 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 or [ajmendoza@prodigy.net](mailto:ajmendoza@prodigy.net).

**Saturday, January 22 – Cross Country Ski Lessons.** This is for beginners and intermediates who want to improve their overall ski technique and fitness. There is a fee of \$10 per lesson (Yahi Group fundraiser). Bring ski gear, lunch, water, appropriate clothing and \$ for drivers. Call leader for meeting, time, place and more information. Leader: Larry, 342-7998.

**Sunday, January 23– 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 or [ajmendoza@prodigy.net](mailto:ajmendoza@prodigy.net).

**Saturday, January 29 – Cross Country Ski Lessons.** This is for beginners and intermediates who want to improve their overall ski technique and fitness. There is a fee of \$10 per lesson (Yahi Group fundraiser). Bring ski gear, lunch, water, appropriate clothing and \$ for drivers. Call leader for meeting, time, place and more information. Leader: Larry, 342-7998.

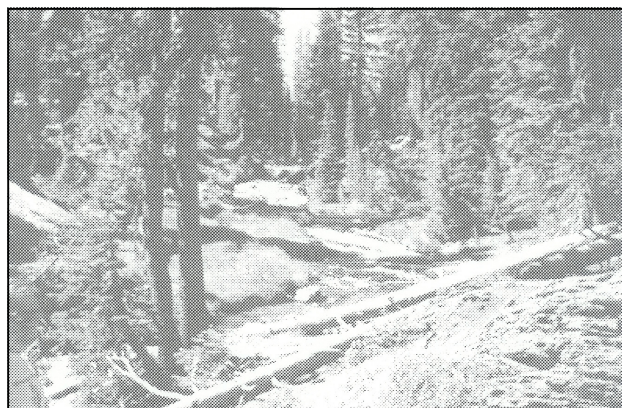
## February

**Saturday, February 5 – 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](mailto:shogue@ci.chico.ca.us)

**Sunday, February 6 – Bike Ride to Chico Airport** (grade 2, class A). Meet at 11AM at Chico Nut Company, Esplanade and E. 11<sup>th</sup> Ave. (Park on E. 10<sup>th</sup> Ave. by Chico Nut Co. parking lot). We'll take nearby bike path to Airport and watch planes take off and land while eating lunch. Round trip ride of 8 miles. Helmets required. Bring water and lunch. Rain cancels. Leader: Gene, 873-1552. Asst. Leader: Carla, 891-6977.

**Sunday, February 6 – Cross Country Ski** (grade 2, class B). We'll go where the snow is good. This is for people who own their own equipment. Bring skis, boots poles, lunch, appropriate clothing and \$ for drivers. Call leader for meeting time and place. Leader: Larry, 342-7998.

**Thursday, February 10, 7:30 p.m. Program: “Winter Gear And Great Spots To Use It”** - Jake Palazzo from Mountain Sports will show his latest gear, and share his ideas about great winter spots for local winter sports. Perhaps, you or your friends can add to his list of nearby winter sports locales – whether you are an active or an armchair traveler or both! Yahi program



meetings are held the second Thursday of the month in the Conference Room of the Chico Branch Library located at 1st and Sherman and begin at 7:30 P.M. Refreshments will be served

and the public is welcome. Call 893-1994 for information.

**Saturday, February 19 – Almond Blossom Bike Ride** (grade 2, class A). A flat, leisurely 15 mile ride through orchards and pastures on quiet country roads to Durham Park for lunch and return on the Durham Bike Path. We'll stop often to admire spring flowers and smell fantastic tree blossoms. On return we may check out murals on bike path along the Midway. Meet at 10AM at the Glen Oaks Memorial Park Cemetery Office, Hegan Lane and the Midway. Helmets required. Bring water and lunch (or buy one at the Durham Market). Rain cancels. Leader: Gene, 873-1552. Asst. Leader: Carla, 891-6977.

**Saturday, February 19 - Deer Creek Day Hike** (grade 2, class A). Take a 5-6-mile walk through the late winter colors as we follow alongside beautiful Deer Creek. We'll begin at the trail just off of Highway 32 and hike to a secluded lunch spot. Bring water, lunch and carpool \$. Rain cancels. Return at approximately 4PM; about an 80-mile round-trip drive. Meet at Chico Park and Ride at 9AM. Leader: Julian, 893-1994; Asst. Leader: Jeannie, 894-5354.

**Thursday, February 24 – Sierra Club Newsletter Folding.** Join us to help fold and sort the newsletter for mailing. It only takes about an hour, and we always have a lot of fun! Volunteers are always needed: newcomers and old members are both welcome. Call 343-9277 for directions, more info.

**Saturday, February 26 – Feather Falls Hike** (grade 2, class B). Come enjoy the 6<sup>th</sup> highest waterfall in the U.S. and the beautifully flowered and shaded, 8-9 mile round trip trail to it. We'll take the lower trail to the overlook, then go above the falls for lunch by the creek and return via the upper trail. Please wear boots or sturdy hiking shoes and bring lunch, water and carpool \$\$\$. Meet at Chico Park & Ride at 8:30AM or at the NW corner of the Oroville Wal-Mart parking lot at 9:05AM. Leader: John, 530-879-9196; Asst. Leader: Jeanne, 899-9980.

**Sunday, February 27 - Singles - Lunch and Walk** (grade 1 class A) Meet for lunch at the Italian Cottage (2525 Dominic, corner of Skyway). Afterwards we will walk to the Chico Tree Improvement Center (2471 Cramer Lane) for a stroll under the beautiful trees. Wear good walking shoes. Heavy rain cancels. Please call by Friday so we can make reservations. Leader: Michelle, 865-9491; Asst. Leader Lynn, 877-1671.

## March

# Conservation

## Feather River Coordinated Resource Management Group *(continued from p. 1)*

Corp, a million-dollar-a-year California Corporation chartered in 1983, is Plumas

*(Continued on p. 8)*

County's non-profit (501c3) economic development engine and performs three functions: (1) fosters economic and business development; (2) encourages tourism; and (3) coordinates the CRM.

Since many federal and state watershed grants are only distributed to non-profits, Plumas Corp. acts as the awards vehicle for the unincorporated CRM consortium. Plumas Corp. is CRM administrator, usually its project applicant and contractor, and hires and maintains the full-time, very dedicated, three-person CRM staff. The CRM is housed in the Plumas Corp. offices, a County-owned building contiguous to Quincy's Gansner Airport.

The CRM is a voluntary consortium of many agencies operating semi-autonomously under the Plumas Corp. umbrella. Although the Plumas Corp. contracts with Plumas County for some financial support, the CRM has no County contract. The CRM is self-sustaining and funds its rent, utilities, maintenance, bookkeeping, insurance, and administrative costs from its grants with about 14% going to its overhead. In its first decade of operation, the CRM was funded for over four million dollars, meaning the CRM is the Plumas Corp. main player and payer.

The CRM structure is complex but has a purpose. There are three oversight committees: (1) An executive decides policy and wields its political influence when needed. John Schramel serves on the Plumas Corp. Board, chairs the CRM and the Feather River Resource Conservation District (RCD), and has many other state water connections. (2) Management identifies funding, especially mandatory state and federal programs. (3) Steering's primary function is educational. The Technical Advisory Committees (TAC), the functional core of the CRM, are ad-hoc groups assembled to guide each project to completion. This multi-layered structure serves to identify and obtain funding, expedite projects, and insure completion.

The CRM uses the Rosgen "geomorphic" approach to "restore...protect" and ensure our

land remains productive and usable. And it has all proved very profitable. The CRM realized early on that there was an abundance of Cal-Fed and state water money that would accomplish its goals. To date the CRM has treated over 4,000 riparian acres -- that's almost 40 projects -- at a cost of five million dollars, contributed largely by the CRM's state and federal partners. In the past eight years, the CRM has garnered even more millions, and that excludes the recent Plumas County Monterey Agreement money.

Are stream restoration projects working and cost effective? The CRM, as do most stream restoration groups, bases its restorations on the Dave Rosgen system of stream classification developed in the 1980s. The classification includes nine major types and a complex variety of subtypes so that now there are 41 categories of streams and configurations. Using straightforward field techniques and applying a detailed four-step analysis, Rosgen and his liked-minded restorationists classify a stream and forecast how it can be altered for the better. Rocks, willows, and logs are used to mimic naturally occurring stream reformations. Practically, this involves plantings and reducing bank cuts by placing rip-rap and boulders, and carving new channels using mechanized earth movers. Rosgen, former cowboy and self-taught hydrologist, derides "high puke-factor equations" of academia. His detractors, mainly academic geomorphologists, claim Rosgen's system is "geomagic" or naive "cookbook reconstructions" that deserve more insight. In spite of obvious limitations and its controversial nature, Rosgen's system survives and is sought by state and federal funding agencies attracted to its presumed predictive capability.

Although several are successful, many Rosgen projects are not, and some of these were in Plumas. In 1994, the 29-acre Wolf Creek project near Greenville failed. In 1995, the CRM restored Jamison Creek within the Plumas-Eureka State Park, a geomorphically unstable area. This project entailed stream reconstruction and bank stabilization on 2,000 feet of creek. Excess runoff caused by mining and logging higher in the mountains had led to widespread erosion. The CRM reformed braided lower stream channels into a single channel, and banks and flood plains were cut back and vegetated. Parks funded and coordinated construction by local contractors for \$180,000. In 1997, heavy winter rain resulted in unusual snowmelt. The Jamison project washed out because the upstream watershed on US Forest Service land had been deemed unimportant to the success of downstream restoration. This perspective proved excessively narrow, as the restoration was unable to withstand the sudden water surge from farther up the Jamison.

Jamison Creek is an ongoing problem. Parks, often remiss in monitoring and evaluation, again seems determined to repeat its past mistake. News that Parks again contracted

with the CRM for step pool restoration of the Jamison raised local eyebrows. Another example of problematic control of restoration projects is the stream permitting process. California Fish & Game sent a game warden to assess the Jamison restoration and place permit terms and conditions. The warden states he is a "cop trained to stop poaching" and untrained in the performance of hydrology and biological permitting. Is there a message in all this for Parks and the CRM, or is stream permitting and evaluation just pro-forma?

Stream restorationists acknowledge these expensive watershed projects, amounting to over two trillion dollars in California alone, deserve more rigorous assessment. To quote the CRM's project manager, we are "developing comprehensive project-specific and watershed-wide monitoring programs to look at short and longterm effects of restoration..." but state and federal evaluation dollars are scarce. Nationwide, monitoring and evaluation is still woefully underfunded. However, the National Science Foundation has begun to inventory and evaluate all US stream restoration projects. Called the National River Restoration Science Synthesis (NRRSS), it has already collected data from over 35,000 restoration projects to determine what projects work and why others don't. NRRSS plans useful recommendations to granting agencies and restoration groups like the CRM to ensure more successes.

Because of prior poor management practices, stream restoration has arrived and we the public will be paying more to rehabilitate our nation's rivers, streams, watersheds, and meadows, to try to make our waters more productive, cleaner, and safer.

For further information visit:

Feather River CRM web site:

[www.feather-river-crm.org](http://www.feather-river-crm.org)

Plumas Corporation web site:

[www.plumascounty.org](http://www.plumascounty.org)

River Doctor, Science 13 August 2004; 305: 937-939:



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# Batfrogs

Although I am battered about by ideology presented by "experts" in various fields, including political discourse from opposing sides, I am especially perplexed by some of the biological dilemmas being presented in the public forum. I read the "Measure D: Letting Mother Nature Be" by Scott Wolf in the Yahi paper with considerable interest. In fact, it rather stirred my imagination.

I have not studied the "genetic engineering" issue very intently, gathering a few figures from both sides, but tinkering with the natural processes by entering the gene-level is something to research thoroughly. Vegetative benefits have been achieved by experimenting with cross-breeding and grafting techniques: witness Luther Burbank tending his plants, and any number of other botanical geniuses have manipulated the intermingling of species to produce some shockingly beautiful hybrids. Nature evolves the changing landscape in a much slower scenario, equipping species to adapt to their environment as climates and habitats are altered over millions of years.

Maybe genetic engineering is something necessary to supply the expanding populations with sufficient food, but if some madman embraces the wrong idea, chaos could ensue. Remember Frankenstein? No wonder George W. Bush is concerned; some super Democrat might be constructed at the microscopic gene level.

Already we have cross-bred and in-bred some outlandish creations, especially in some of those monstrous Japanese goldfish, fancy chickens, productive milk cows, and grotesque pigs plus cloning some calves. In a time when the West Nile Virus is being spread by mosquitoes, some genius may produce some super mosquito eater like a batfrog able to gulp down vast quantities day and night, which might be the salvation of mankind!

The batfrog would be able to flick mosquitoes close to the water, and then lift off to snatch them from the sky. Flying at night would be advantageous to the amphibious skin perhaps buffered with some choice hair, and it could dive into the water after mosquito larvae. Einstein said imagination is more important than knowledge, so some stalled scientist may read this idea and propel his imagination!

What is natural? Mutants have occurred in nature spasmodically in the past, which may partially account for the evolution of species. A

radical photon or rogue cosmic ray altering gene structure or defective sperm cells are some of the possibilities of bio-diversity. The fittest survive. I am reminded of some "freaks" that occasionally appear. They are out-of-the-norm forms of life that can shake our perceptions of reality. Those human beings joined at the head pose enough questions "to stagger infidels."

Fifty years ago on the Missouri farm, I shuddered to think of the "Siamese Twins" joined at the back and who popularly presented dance and sing programs. We had in our community a "different" man that Dad said was a hermaphrodite, a person who was both a man and a woman. "How can that be?" I thought as I puzzled over that strange idea and impossible word. Those unfortunates that had some gene malfunction usually ended up in circus freak shows.

There was a horrible house in the community called "the poor house," where mentally defective people were kept. Later it might be known as an asylum, but it was clear, not everyone was born "created equal." Some deformities were/are caused by physical irregularities. My Aunt Edith was "crippled at birth" and spent a lifetime as an invalid with twisted hands and speech, hobbling through life with family aid and 20 years in a care home.

Something out of the ordinary can create considerable interest. When I worked with the Rotary Nature Center in Oakland, we had a two-faced cat stored in the cupboards. One head, but two perfect faces on an otherwise normal kitten that apparently lived a few months before dying and being preserved in formaldehyde. The popularity was enormous, as there were constant requests to see the "two-faced cat." It was so popular that someone stole it! No genetic engineers were involved. We also had a two-headed albino gopher snake found in the Oakland hills. And a five-legged toad! How do you explain these deviations? Mutations that can't function sufficiently soon die, but altered forms that thrive make new species...in a few million years.

Question: How were the dinosaurs conceived and how did they develop? Was it an erratic cosmic beam...or instant creation by a Creator? It would be gratifying if we knew for sure which came first, the dinosaur or the egg.

Normally there is considerable abnormality in animal and plant species, which is a little disconcerting to botanists and birders dependent on their field guides. Some of those variations are caused by cellular intruders, such as the gall-swellings on plants. The variety of leaf and stem swellings appearing in the summer is caused by various gall-producing insects that lay eggs in plant tissue causing a hormone enlargement where larvae can develop.

A myriad of plant alterations are caused by fungi, virus, bacteria, and other insects. One form is a large, flattened stem called fasciation that sometimes appears on poison oak and the Tree of



# Snow Goose Festival

## January 28-30, 2005

Be sure to catch the Pacific Flyway's amazing wild waterfowl display this time of year by attending the 6th annual Snow Goose Festival, January 28-30, 2005, held in Chico and Red Bluff.

During this fun-filled weekend many exciting field trips, educational workshops and presentations, fascinating exhibits and a Young Naturalist activities area for children and families ensure a rewarding experience.

Here in the Sacramento's north valley we're fortunate to live in an area with such diverse habitats for wintering waterfowl and wildlife. Our festival celebrates this.

New this year is a Friday Night Reception and Art Show at the CARD Community Center and our popular Saturday night "Gathering of Wings" banquet at the Sierra Nevada Brewery Big Room.

For more information, contact:

Snow Goose Festival  
P.O. Box 1063  
Chico, CA 95927

# Monumental: David Brower's

The Environmental Action and Resource Center at Chico State is pleased to announce a premiere event coming this December. The documentary film, **Monumental: David Brower's Fight for Wild America** will show on December 7, 2004 in the BMU Auditorium.


This is a unique opportunity to meet Film Director Kelly Duane and speak with her on how she made such an epic film. In addition, Brower's former personal assistant Bill Travers will speak on his experiences in climbing and mountaineering with Brower.

The event is free to all and there will be a free reception following the presentations. This is a unique opportunity to see the life of David Brower and his fight to save some of the most prestigious national parks we all enjoy today as well as view archival footage, much shot by Brower himself, of rafting and climbing.

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# At the Junction: Slow Down—Pedestrian Region Ahead

By Gregory Heming

I am a deeply spiritual evolutionist with a passion for small rural communities, good literature, and walking. There, I've said it. And out of this jumble (stirred now I might add by over a half century of living) have come a bias or two and an attitude about what a community is and what it must continue to be in order to be healthy.

I have seen fads come and go, technologies as well. And I have seen and lived in my share of small, friendly and healthy communities only to watch technological innovation take its toll. There is a connection here, and I would like to see if I could put a new spin on the issue of technology and community by summoning up a literary hero of mine.

Henry David Thoreau is a great writer and an intuitive economist. In one instance he wrote, "My vicinity affords many good walks; and though I have walked almost every day... I have not yet exhausted them... The limits of an afternoon walk... will never become quite familiar to you."

In so few words he set forth the makings of an economy, exhibited a deep understanding of the connection between humans and their local environment, and hinted at a rather folksy spiritualism. Taken as a whole, Thoreau's words have several implications for the small rural community in which I live.

Haines Junction is currently juggling issues of tourism, economy, and ecological integrity. In other words, how can we get an economy up and running without destroying the rural character of the place and without seriously over-stressing the local environment? This, of course, is a very difficult issue, one that many small communities have come up against. Thoreau may be of some help.

Walking is a great way to experience wilderness. It is economical, given the right scale it is soft on the environment, and there is no doubting its healthful

benefits. It is one of our oldest technologies and I think it is here to stay.

Ah ha! Some would say, but can you fuel an economy on it? My answer is a resounding, yes – I think.

I am a bit hesitant only because I was not able to come up with a recent example of a small community - at least here in North America - that has really attempted to develop a robust tourist economy focused on walking.

Tapping into the "walking" market could be an utter gold mine for a community like mine. As Thoreau reminds us, the pleasures of walking, even if we do it through familiar territory day after day, are inexhaustible. If, by the mere fact of walking, we can find inexhaustible territory to explore, this should surely catch the eye of any community looking for ways to encourage tourists to stay another day.

My plan for a "walking economy" in Haines Junction would look like this. Our big draw here is Kluane National Park. Whether we agree or not, the intent of this park is and has always been to keep it as natural, pristine, and ecologically intact as possible. The real threat to the park is not people (if we are sensible about the numbers) but the technology they bring along, rent or purchase to help them "experience" wilderness. This includes airplanes, ATV's, bicycles, pack animals, snow machines, outboard motors, dog teams, etc. (I find myself wanting to exclude cross-county skis and canoes since they are as close to walking as you can get.) Following the park's lead, we then advertise Haines Junction as the "walking capital of Canada" and partner with Parks Canada to fully promote Kluane National Park as the Canadian national park to walk. Extending this to include all of the greater Kluane area would only add to our market share.

The trick now is to find and develop the market. This should be simple. Being able to boast of being the home of a national park impervious to all technology except walking would put us at the top of the www. com. search engines for unique destinations. If we cannot find enough tourists out of six billion candidates in the world willing to truly experience the wilderness by "walking the wilderness," I would be utterly surprised. Since the goal is to tantalize tourists with a walking experience, they would have to come for an extended period of time – stay for more than just another day. To even begin to

explore this inexhaustible landscape on foot they would likely use up their entire vacation right here in the heart of Kluane country.

This is where I have to admit that this is not an original idea. How many lawyers does it take to come up with the idea of experiencing wilderness by walking? One. University of Michigan law professor, Joseph Sax, has laid out a marvelous new view of what it means to experience our national parks.

In the 1980 publication of *Mountains Without Handrails: Reflections on the National Parks*, he set forth strong arguments aimed at sorting out the age-old problem of recreational use of wilderness. The core of what he has to say is this: "The quality of resources the visitor needs to consume shrinks as he discovers the secret of intensiveness of experience. In the same way, the more knowledgeable and engaged the visitor, the less he wants or needs to pass through the parks quickly or at high speed." In short, the more a person wants to engage wilderness, the slower he or she will pass through it. The reverse is equally true: the slower one travels through wilderness the more intensive the experience.

What Sax and I are shooting at here is that there are ways "people can be encouraged to use their leisure time in a slower-paced, less energy-consuming, and more intensive fashion," thereby providing us with real incentives to seriously investigate a "walking economy."

Beyond just experiencing wilderness, pedestrianism, as a "new-old" technology, has enormous potential to invigorate a small community like Haines Junction. In many ways it would allow this community to build constructively on the national park philosophy of ecological integrity, it would encourage new industry, and because it embraces a slower style of living, it just might give me more quiet time to spend with Thoreau.

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# Conservation

## Devastation

*"Nature is ever at work building up and pulling down, creating and destroying, keeping everything whirling and flowing, allowing no rest but in rhythmical motion, chasing everything in endless song out of one beautiful form into another."*  
 – John Muir

It was difficult to remember or justify Muir's quotation on habitat change when I saw the devastation in the River Bend Park Nature Reserve near Oroville, CA. I had avoided the hot summer months and rough dusty road leading into the park's fishing ponds, but one fall day after a rain, I went to check the river corridor, and to my utter dismay I discovered that a fire had gutted the wildlife area!

The heart of the reserve was blackened. Three giant cottonwood were scorched and probably dead since fire is particularly destructive to the fibrous bark. I had watched gray squirrels scampering across those sky island branches, bird flocks perching in the shade, and in autumn those golden flags of life fluttered to the ground to "fit the earth like a leather glove," as Robert Frost said.

But it is a bleak autumn for that cottonwood grove in 2004.

Fire may be the forerunner of new future growth, and fires may be purposely used to clear weed patches and underbrush, but nevertheless, life and artistry is destroyed in the flames. How many millions of leaves, spiders, and insects are killed by a wildfire invading wildlands may never be known. Decaying wood that harbors life and provides a mulch-blanket for the forest floor is also lost. It is a slow process for animals and plants to reestablish residency in a burned area, and the vacuum is filled only by the reservoirs of life in adjoining land.

"How can nature have such a devastating force as fire," I mused as I examined the damage in the former wild tangles. That the energy exists in living

things to ignite into scorching flames seems contradictory to the advancement of nature, but just as wind storms, freezing temperatures, drought, earthquakes, and volcanoes take a toll, there seems to be this anti-life force to add to the struggle for survival for many species. It is as if there is a deduction system to keep a control on living things and prevent overpopulation. To the aesthetic and artistic minded, such loss is deeply felt and difficult to understand, although in the long run of many years, fire can be an initiator of renewal. There is no doubt that some flowering plants receptive to fire ashes can spring back in one season, and American Indians fired thickets seeking the new sprouts of plants like redbud for basketry work.

The human factor has become crucial in the fire scenario, causing more fire-sweeps than would otherwise be natural. Building into fire-prone hill areas is one reason fires can get out of hand, as sparks just seem to emanate from human activities, carelessness, purposeful meanness, and disrespect for the beauty and beneficial values of a forest. I think the majority are conscientiously concerned about the healthy aspects of the environment and respectful of trees, but it only takes one culprit to start a fire. Around towns we do see landscape greenery planted and watered which is helpful to the immediate surroundings.

How gratifying to see the statement about California becoming the first state to reward landowners for leaving forests standing to help control global warming! It is a program adopted in late October, 2004, by the California Climate Action Registry. With personal input, preventing fires will be doubly important to those who live on the land.

The crux of the matter is that about 60,000 acres of forest is destroyed by development annually in CA. Because healthy trees store carbon dioxide but release it when they're destroyed, "in California alone, forest loss is equivalent to two and a half million new cars going on the roads every year," said Laurie Wayburn, president of the Pacific Forest Trust. Loss of trees is fuel for greenhouse gas, in spite of what the Bush Administration might say in its ignorance of what the Kyoto Protocol represents.

And so I walked around the burned wildlife area, mourning for the giant cottonwood with the unique knobby base, for the willows that had graced the understory, for the patch of primrose, feeling a loss of visual beauty and the animals that had scampered in their home. The ground cover was blackened into cinders, exposing the sand mounds and scorched rocks. There is a

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

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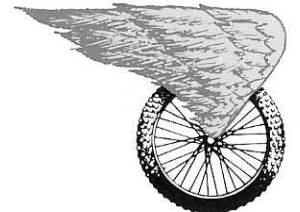
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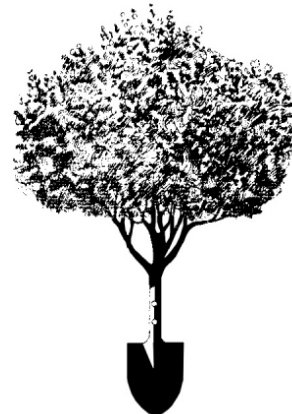
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