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Sierra Club Lake Group

March-April 2015 Newsletter

Next Meeting: “Russian River: All Rivers”

At 7 p.m. on Wednesday March 25 Lake Group is sponsoring a free showing of the exciting new film “The Russian River: All Rivers - the Value of an American Watershed.” The screening will take place in the Board of Supervisors chamber on the first floor of the courthouse, 255 N. Forbes in Lakeport, and be followed by a brief Q&A session with the filmmakers.

Expressing the profound beauty of the river and ecosystem, this feature-length documentary brings together live action footage and numerous compelling interviews in a provocative discussion of water use, water quality and the loss of irreplaceable biodiversity. The film also covers the river’s history, as a geological, biological and social entity, as well as the problems it currently faces—problems shared widely in our region and beyond. The subjects are broadly applicable to Clear Lake and its watershed, as well as to rivers everywhere. We can all learn something important from this film, which was just named as an Official Selection at the 38th Annual International Wildlife Film Festival! To learn more about the film and to see a trailer, visit russianriverallrivers.com.

Most showings to date have been packed, so while the event is free to the public, reservations are very strongly encouraged. To reserve one or more seats, send an email to reservations@russianriverallrivers.com. See you there!

Momentum Grows for Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument

Recent highlights of the BSM campaign have included the endorsement of the city of St. Helena and press coverage in publications as diverse as the *San Francisco Chronicle* and *High Country News*, as well as a great hike on the High Bridge Trail in the Cache Creek Natural Area on February 28.

Progress is also being made on the state level. Early in January Assemblyman Bill Dodd introduced Assembly Joint Resolution 4, which expresses the formal support of the California

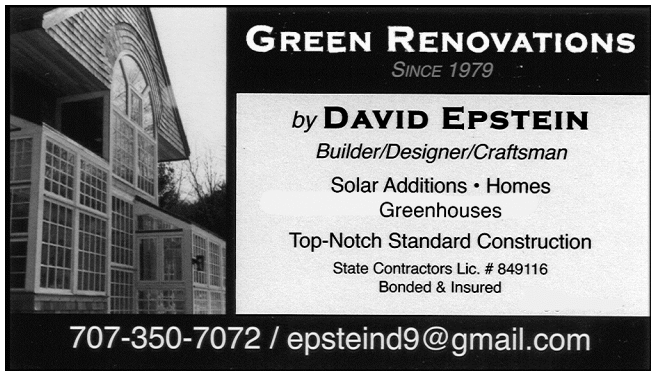
legislature for the permanent protection of the region as a national monument.

AJR4 passed the Assembly on February 17 and is expected to move forward on the Senate side soon under the leadership of Senators Lois Wolk and Mike McGuire.

Federally, legislation to designate the region as a monument was introduced in Congress on February 5 by Congressman Mike Thompson (HR 761) and Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein (S393), with representatives (con’t)

(Berryessa Snow Mountain, con't) John Garamendi and Jared Huffman co-sponsoring. In a particularly exciting new development, the map accompanying the legislation has now been redrawn to include *all* of the Snow Mountain Wilderness, thus bringing the total protected area up above 360,000 acres.

In the meantime, President Obama continues to build his environmental legacy, most recently by the designation of Colorado's Browns Canyon as a national monument. At a mere 21,000 acres, Browns Canyon is tiny compared to BSM, but the region is renowned for its recreational value as well as outstanding natural beauty and importance as wildlife habitat—all of which sounds very familiar. There's no way to predict when the President might choose to act—but wouldn't this be a splendid way to celebrate Earth Day? Stay tuned.



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Let's Go Digital


Lake Group members are invited to help fight deforestation by receiving this bimonthly newsletter electronically rather than on paper. To get it as an email attachment in pdf format instead, send a request to join the "Lake Group Paper Free" list to vbrandon@lakelive.info—not only does this save some trees, it also benefits the Group financially.

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Lake Group Again Offers Scholarships

For the fifth year in a row, Lake Group again intends to award \$1000 scholarships to two graduating seniors from Lake County high schools who are planning careers that will support the Club's mission to "enjoy, explore, and protect" the planet. Applicants are invited to describe their experience and career goals relating to the Club goals of safe and healthy communities, smart energy solutions, and America's wild legacy.

Applications are available from school guidance counselors and at Watershed Books (305 N. Main in Lakeport), or can be downloaded from the Lake Group website, sierraclub.org/redwood/lake. Completed applications are due on April 1, and winners will be announced by April 30. For more information send an email to Cheri Holden, cherisierraclub@gmail.com or call her at 263-5787.

Rent This Space

The Lake Group now accepting (in other words, selling) advertisements in this newsletter: a two-inch (business card size) ad like this costs \$25 per issue, or—Great Bargain—\$100 for a year (six issues) To submit an ad send an email to vbrandon@lakelive.info or call Victoria at 994-1931.

“State of Jefferson”: Lake County Fends off the Secessionists

Lake Group leaders have recently had to turn from their usual exertions on behalf of our land, water, and wildlife in order to combat proposals that Lake County secede from California to join a (so far fictional) “State of Jefferson.”

Although this idea offers no visible advantages to local residents or those of the other 19 targeted counties, proponents were nonetheless invited to give a presentation to the Board of Supervisors in early December, as discussed in the previous edition of this newsletter. That meeting was strictly informational, with no action on the agenda, but it was dismaying to hear three of the five supervisors indicating their eagerness to vote for a “declaration” of support for secession.

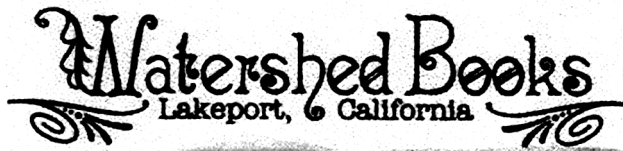
When the proposal came back to the BOS for a vote on February 17, the news had gotten out. This time plenty of Lake County citizens were present to tell the Board that as proud Californians with a clear sense of their own destiny we regard such an action as an unacceptable betrayal of our best interests. Emails and phone calls to the supervisors were said to be in opposition by a margin of forty or fifty to one. Nonetheless, after two hours of debate, none of the comprehensive financial analysis that had been promised, and last-minute information from SOJ proponents that a support resolution would involve the county in litigation to overturn the nation’s fundamental one person/one vote representational principles, the board took a series of extremely confusing votes that appeared to support the county's secession from California, with Supervisors Farrington and Steele in dissent.

But not so fast! When county counsel pointed out that the language adopted at the chaotic February 17 meeting was subject to conflicting interpretations and didn’t seem to represent the intent of the Board, the issue was re-agendized on March 3. Again, the chamber was packed, with half the room waving Bear Flags in lieu of public comment, which had been closed. The Board began by clarifying their previous actions, first deciding that their February 17 votes should be considered merely as a kind of straw poll, and not as an official expression of the will of the county. Along the way every one of them made it clear that they *now* agreed such a momentous decision should be made by the voters and not by the Supervisors presuming to speak in our names.

Of the various resolutions before the Board, the third, placing an advisory vote on the ballot at the November 2016 general election, was clearly the least objectionable, but it contained dubious language repeating secessionist arguments. Supervisors Farrington and Steele had already declared their refusal to vote for any secession referendum at all on the reasonable grounds that the responsibility for bringing this forward should fall on the proponents and not the county. When the “Alternative Resolution” came up for a vote Supervisor Smith joined them in voting no, to thunderous applause and much waving of Bear Flags. Smith then proposed a version without the “whereas” clauses containing secessionist advocacy, and this time it passed, again 3/2.

When the time comes, Lake Group expects to take an active role in opposing this proposal—and in the meantime rejoices in an outcome that has deflated the secessionist momentum, and that allows us to return for the time being to issues directly concerned with our land, water, and wildlife.

By the way, at the instigation of Redwood and Mother Lode Chapters and in the full knowledge that SOJ proponents are taking particular aim at California’s stringent environmental regulations in hopes of unfettered exploitation of the region’s abundant natural resources, Sierra Club California recently adopted a formal resolution to “oppose the proposal to divide California in order to create a new “State of Jefferson.” It is reassuring to know that the Club’s substantial lobbying influence in Sacramento can now be used to help keep this train wreck safely sidetracked.



305 North Main Street
707.263.5787

Help Wanted for Growsite Cleanup

Several years ago local volunteers participated in a series of efforts to clean up illegal marijuana growsites in the Mendocino National Forest, some of them in very remote and rugged locations. Budgetary problems and the tragic death of one of the program leaders have prevented a renewal of these efforts—till now. A message from organizer Bruce Hilbach has just arrived, saying in part:

In good news, there has been much success in preventing new trespass grow activity as well as a commitment to reclamation as part of eradication efforts by the Mendocino National Forest. However there is still historic growsite material to be removed as well as some amount of new material.

Bruce is organizing a group of volunteers to clean up three sites in the Upper Lake Ranger District, the first scheduled for March 26, 27 and 28, 2015. The site is a relatively moderate distance hike in a moderate slope area. Some of the material is in steep watercourses and the brush is heavy. He goes on, "we will be removing everything to the roadside by relay. Support work of those with hiking limitations may very helpful on some days."

If you can help, please get in touch with Bruce directly by sending an email to behilbachb@yahoo.com or phoning 707 983-6169.

Lake Group Executive Committee

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edrobey@wildblue.net

Cheri Holden (Vice Chair), 263 5787
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Win Stiles (Secretary): 367-1593, win@w-s.com

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Carolyn Ruttan, 295-0333,
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sdevoto@mchsi.com

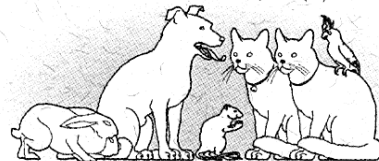
ExCom meetings are held at 7PM on the first Wednesday of every other month, at locations that vary. All members are cordially invited to attend, but requested to contact the Chair first to confirm time and location

A New Look for Lake Group

As part of a national effort to modernize the Club's online presence and improve its functionality by integrating national and local campaigns and streamlining social media connections, all Sierra Club Chapters and Groups are moving to new websites based on a Drupal platform. Redwood Chapter's new site (sierraclub.org/redwood) went "live" early in February, and Lake Group's site is on the verge of doing likewise. Please pay us a visit at sierraclub.org/redwood/lake.

By the way, as announced in the previous newsletter, the Group is looking for a new webmaster. Interested? call Victoria at 994 1931 or send an email to vbrandon@lakelive.info

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Outings

March 15 - **Mount St. Helena Robert Louis Stevenson State Park.** Hike switchbacks about 20 minutes through fir woods up to an old access dirt road, this leads to the very top of St. Helena Mountain. We will go to the Lower Peak which looks out over Napa Valley. On a clear day see spectacular views, including much of the San Francisco Bay area, binoculars advised! Bring water, Lunch & snacks. Class M-7.3-C. Carpool: 8:30 am in front of Middletown Mugshots coffee shop on corner of Hwy 29 & 175. Meet 9 am at Robert Louis Stevenson Park - parking lot. By reservation only. Leader Julie 707-987-9040 or 707-671-5947. Or tikaljak@yahoo.com Rain cancels.

April 12 - Hike around **Boggs Lake**, a vernal pool in a volcanic caldera. If it has rained, there should be lovely flowers. Class E-1-2-A Meet 9:00 a.m. at the parking area located on Harrington Flat Road 1 mile east from Bottle Rock Road. Follow Bottle Road 4.5 miles from its intersection with Hwy 29 to Harrington Flat Road. Reserve with leader Pete McGee at 942 1373 or montesol@hughes.net Rain cancels.

April 18 - **Judge Davis Trail to Wilson Valley to Redbud Trail Head.** Starting at Judge Davis trailhead on hwy 20 and ascending 300 ft to the eastern ridge of Cache Creek canyon we will have expansive views of the canyon. Descending 2000 ft. into the canyon, we cross Cache Creek. Hiking north through Wilson Valley we climb over the 400 ft. ridge to Baton Flat and cross Cache Creek again. Climbing 600 ft to Perkins Ridge, we then descend to Redbud trailhead and shuttle cars. Bring lunch, snacks, two liters water, and river shoes or sandals for creek crossing. Experienced hikers only - 8 hour hike with 1300 ft. total elevation gain. Class: H-13-B. Carpools: Meet 8:15 am Lower Lake Coffee Co. on Main St. By reservation only. Leader Tom McFarling (707) 994-5490 tom.mcfarling@gmail.com. Rain or temp. over 85 degrees cancels..

*APRIL 25, 9AM -- **Hike 4 Healing to the top of Mt Konocti** on the Wright Peak Trail (6 miles round trip, 1200 foot elevation gain): this event is a fundraiser for Worldwide Healing Hands, an organization that supports women's medical, obstetric, and surgical care in the third world. \$25 entry fee, all donations gratefully accepted. Call 279 8733 for more information.

May 3 - An easy hike along the east end of the **Oat Hill Mine Road** to visit the mercury mine sites. Bring lunch and water. Meet at Perry's Deli at the west end of Middletown at 9 a.m. to car pool to the start. Reservation required. Class E-4-A Leader Steve Devoto sdevoto@mchsi.com Rain cancels.

May 10 - **Glen Eden Trail Hike to Goat Rock.** It is time to view wildflowers in the North Cow Mtn. Rec. Area. It consists of grasslands, chaparral-covered slopes with stands of fir, pine and oak. Trail head at 1394' then 2600' at Goat Rock. Bring water & lunch. Class H-8-B. Car pools: meet 8:30 am Lower Lake Coffee Co. on Main Street, off junction of Hwy 29 & 53 or 9:30 am at Glen Eden Trail head 8 miles from Hwy 29 intersection with Scotts Valley Rd. to Glen Eden Trail head on left, park on right. From Ukiah take Hwy 20 E to Lake County and turn right on Scotts Valley Rd. just after Blue Lakes. Go a mile or more to pit toilet on left, trail head on right. Reserve with leader Julie Kreis at 707-987-9040 or tikaljak@yahoo.com Rain cancels.

May 31 - **Mahnke Peak.** This hike starts at the south end of Kelsey Creek Drive and follows a moderately sloped dirt road to Mahnke Peak with a great view over the Geysers power plants. Elevation gain 2116 ft. Bring lunch and two liters of water. Meet at the car pool parking lot at the corner of Live Oak Drive and Highway 29 in Kelseyville at 8:00 a.m. Class H-10-C Leader Steve Devoto sdevoto@mchsi.com Reservation required. Rain cancels.

*Not a Sierra Club hike



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