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Sierra Club Lake Group

July-August 2017 Newsletter

Midsummer BBQ July 21

This year's party will be held at **5:30PM on Friday July 21**, at Highland Springs Equestrian Center, **8900 Wight Way** off Bell Hill Road. As usual, it's planned as a semi-potluck: the Club will provide a main dish, and guests are asked to bring beverages, and a side dish or dessert to share. To eliminate as many throwaways as possible, we're also asking guests to *please bring your own plates, napkins, and eating utensils*. It's always free, and all Lake Group members and their guests are very cordially invited. Our hosts Paul Marchand and Juliana Vidich also offer an opportunity to tour the facility and perhaps (if it's not too blistering hot) to take a short hike: call Paul or Juliana at 279-1903 to make advance arrangements. To RSVP for the BBQ (very strongly recommended) contact Ed at 994 8304 or edrobey@wildblue.net

Berryessa Snow Mountain: Comment Deadline Coming *Very* Soon

As previously discussed, the Trump administration has ordered Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to "review" the status of 22 national monuments and five marine reserves, including the Berryessa Snow Mountain national monument right here in Lake County. It's outrageous that the special status of this special place is under threat despite overwhelming public support for its permanent protection as a natural and recreational treasure.

Lake County is already on record as objecting to any attempt to de-designate or downsize BSM: both the Lakeport city council and the county Board of Supervisors unanimously approved resolutions of support, and our own Assemblywoman Cecilia Aguiar-Curry (who as mayor of Winters played a key role in the

campaign for permanent protection) sponsored Assembly Joint Resolution 15 in support of *all* California's monuments, adopted June 8..

But the Department of the Interior needs to hear from us as individuals too, and the July 10 comment deadline is only a few days away. It's too late to count on delivery of a letter through the mail, but not to submit comments on line: go to regulations.gov and search for "DOI-2017-002," then click "Comment Now" to access the comment page.

It's also possible to submit an online "postcard" at tuleyome.org/monumentalsupport

By the way, the DOI seems to be doing all it can to discount the overwhelming expressions of support it is receiving on behalf of threatened monuments all over the United States. (con't)

(Monumental Support, con't) To make sure your voice is counted, be sure to use your own words to say something personal and specific about why Berryessa Snow Mountain matters to you. We have also learned that if more than one monument is mentioned in any given letter it will be tallied as generic support not associated with any particular place—so please contact the Department of the Interior separately on behalf of each monument you want to defend.



BOS Says No to Middletown Dollar General

As was discussed at length in the previous edition of this newsletter, on April 18 to the immense dismay of the community (as evidenced by an audible groan), the Board of Supervisors overturned the Planning Commission’s rejection of the proposed Middletown Dollar General outlet, and directed county counsel to prepare Findings of Fact to back them up. Those Findings included the statement that “the project is in conformance with any applicable community design manual criteria,” a most dubious assertion given the dozens of inconsistencies with the Middletown Area Plan that had been identified in both written and oral testimony at numerous hearings.

But not so fast! When the Board met to approve the findings on May 23—ordinarily a routine matter but one that had been placed on the timed agenda at the request of Lake Group chair Ed Robey—the chambers were packed once again. Again, one speaker followed another in urging the supervisors to reject the glaringly implausible Finding that the project was consistent with the Middletown Area Plan. Although none of these persuasive arguments was new, something had indeed changed since the board decision on April 18: District 4 Supervisor Tina Scott had thought things over and concluded that the project did not meet the MAP design criteria and therefore she could not in conscience support it. It was then left to county counsel to draft an alternative set of Findings in support of the decision to reject the project.

In a brief and uneventful special meeting on May 31 the Board approved findings that the project “does not meet the spirit and intent of the Middletown Area Plan . . . does not possess a village scale and character . . . does not reinforce Middletown’s small town character . . . and detracts from the area as a whole,” which is what we had been saying all along. That makes three consecutive rejections: maybe Dollar General will finally start to feel unwelcome.

Rent This Space

The Lake Group is 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.

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.

Annual Weed Tour Coming Soon

Lake County's 13th annual Invasive Weed Tour, and the fourth to be held at Anderson Marsh State Historic Park, has been scheduled for Thursday July 20. Participants will gather at the ranch house at 9AM, take a guided walk ranging from one to two miles (depending on the weather) to see the amazingly diverse array of invasive plants that flourish in the park, and return to the house for a (free!) lunch and discussion of aquatic invasives under the trees. RSVPs required: please call the Ag Commissioner's office at 263-0217 by July 17 to reserve your place. This event is sponsored by the county Department of Agriculture and the Lake County Resource Conservation District -- see you there!

Gathering Seeds to Preserve Biodiversity

The Sanhedrin Chapter of the California Native Plant Society recently received a request from a Ph.D candidate in botany who is looking for help in collecting *Collinsia* ("Blue-eyed Mary," "Chinese Houses," etc) seeds. These plants are locally abundant and GPS coordinates are provided for the populations of interest, which are generally located adjacent to roadways and readily accessible. This sounds like a good excuse for some moderate outdoor activity without the need for serious hiking in hot weather.

Besides all that, the project is offering \$13/hour for the work, plus mileage and a meal each collecting day.

Interested? Send an email to Alannie-Grace Grant at agrants11@vols.utk.edu and she will provide additional information.

Lake Group Executive Committee

Ed Robey (Chair, Treasurer): 994 8304,
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Debi Sally, 995-2125, enviracat1@gmail.com

Other contacts:

Steve Devoto (Outings): 279-8308,
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ExCom meetings are held at 7PM on the third Wednesday of the month, at locations that vary. All members are cordially invited to attend, but requested to contact the Chair first to confirm time and location

KONOCTI POST

www.konoctipost.blogspot.com

a lake county naturalist's blog

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Outings

At press time, no Lake Group outings had been scheduled. Please visit sierraclub.org/redwood/outings for a list of offerings throughout Redwood Chapter.

Help Wanted: Outing Leaders. No experience needed, just a love for brisk exercise in the out-of-doors. There are many good reasons to become an Outing leader, including an opportunity for autocracy: as leader *you* get to choose where to go, and when. Interested? Get in touch with Outing Chair Steve Devoto at 279-8308 or sdevoto@mchsi.com.



Sierra Club Lake Group
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Save the Date!

Film Festival October 28

As a fundraiser for the Middle Creek Marsh Wetland Restoration project, Lake Group is sponsoring a Wild and Scenic Film Festival at the Soper Reese community theater, 275 S. Main in Lakeport. Besides a series of prize winning films from last January's acclaimed Wild and Scenic Festival in Nevada City, the event will feature some local films, wine, beer and other refreshments, informational tabling from local groups and at least one live performance—hours, co-sponsors, ticket prices and other details coming soon.