



SIERRA
CLUB

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explore,
enjoy,
and protect
the planet

Sierra Club Lake Group

November-December 2020 Newsletter

Next Meeting: What's Going on with CLERC?

At **6PM on Thursday November 19** Lake Group is proud to host Clear Lake Environmental Research Center (CLERC) co-founder and Executive Director Will Evans. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 has been an incredibly productive year for CLERC and its partners. In March, CLERC was awarded a \$3M Fire Prevention Grant from CAL FIRE for fuel reduction, workforce development, and planning future projects. In July, CLERC Lab opened what is currently the only accredited environmental laboratory in Lake County and began providing analysis services to local water agencies. We will hear from Will about these projects and some of the exciting additional plans CLERC has for 2021.

Although the meeting is free as always, reservations are required to assure one of the limited spaces in the Zoom room. Visit the online calendar on Lake Group's website, www.sierraclub.org/redwood/lake, to sign up: all registrants will receive a link to the event by email a few days before it takes place. To accommodate an overflow crowd the forum will also be live-streamed to our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/sierraclublake

2021 Sierra Club Calendars

Despite the constraints of the coronavirus pandemic, Lake Group has 2021 Sierra Club calendars for sale in both wall and appointment versions at the discounted price of \$14. Since neither in-person meetings nor our usual holiday party will be possible this year, we've placed a much smaller order than usual, so prompt action may be necessary to obtain the kind and quantity you want. Calendars can be purchased at Watershed Books, 305 N. Main in Lakeport, or in Lower Lake by making advance arrangements with Victoria, vbrandon95457@gmail.com or 707 994 1931.



*Highland Springs
Equestrian Center*
707-279-1903

*Horse Boarding in a Sublime Setting in the Wine Country
8900 Wight Way, Kelseyville, CA 95451
Paul Marchand and Juliana Vidich
www.highlandspringsequestrian.weebly.com*

KONOCTI POST

www.konoctipost.blogspot.com

a lake county naturalist's blog

TAKE A RAMBLE. IT'S FREE.

Walker Ridge Update

The Walker Ridge Coalition's campaign for the permanent preservation of this ecological treasure kicked off several weeks ago, with a Zoom webinar presentation featuring artist and author Obi Kauffman and Nick Jensen from the California Native Plant Society. More than 350 viewers watched it live and it has since been posted on YouTube.

Additional virtual presentations on the Reptiles and Amphibians of Walker Ridge and on the ways we can take effective local action to protect the area have been scheduled.

The campaign is also continuing to collect signatures on a petition asking the BLM to designate Walker Ridge as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Please add your name if you haven't done so already—the goal is to present the petition with stakeholder and scientific support letters to the agency and to Congressman John Garamendi by the end of November.

Links to the videos and petition are all available along with a wealth of additional information and wonderful artwork at cnps.org/conservation/protect-walker-ridge

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 vbrandon95457@gmail.com or call Victoria at 994-1931.

Lake Group Executive Committee

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ExCom meetings are held virtually on the Zoom platform at 5:00PM on the third Thursday of the month.. All members are cordially invited to participate, but requested to contact the Chair first for connection information

Fire Resiliency Forum Dec 8

A 3:30PM on Thursday December 8 Redwood Chapter is hosting a community forum on wildfire resilience featuring a presentation by environmental scientist Alexandra D. Syphard, Ph.D., focussing on recent wildfire trends in California, comparing the roles of climate change and land use change in altering fire patterns, and the importance of land use change in wildfire risk to human lives and property. An expert panel will join her to explore these issues--of such great relevance to our community!--in depth.

Although the meeting is free and everyone is welcome, registration is required to access the Zoom space: all registrants will receive an email the day before the event with connection information. In case of overflow the event will also be live-streamed to the Chapter Facebook page. Visit the event calendar on the Chapter website, sierraclub.org/redwood, to register.

Eel River/Lake Pillsbury Update

As previously discussed, PG&E does not intend to relicense its Potter Valley Project hydroelectric facility when the current permit expires in 2022. To fill this void, a coalition of environmental organizations and water users called the Two Basin Partnership has applied to assume the license, with the intention of maintaining water deliveries to Mendocino and Sonoma county agricultural users while opening the upper reaches of the Eel River to fish passage by removing Scott Dam; dam removal would drain Lake Pillsbury.

Now Congressman John Garamendi has entered this discussion, apparently at the request of the Lake Pillsbury Alliance and Lake County Chamber of Commerce. His formal comments to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) announce categorical opposition to the removal of Scott Dam and demand that Lake County have a “full and equal seat at the table” during the planning process.

Although both the Congressman and District 3 Supervisor EJ Crandell are to be commended for responding to the concerns of the Lake Pillsbury community even though very few members are Lake County residents or their constituents, it’s most unlikely that the survival of the lake can be the outcome. Since the deadline for any relicensing application has passed, the only options FERC has are relicensing to the Two Basin Partnership or decommissioning the facility altogether. They can’t compel the Partnership to pivot to a dam-retention-plus-fish-ladders outcome, or consider that outcome at all without identifying a responsible and well-funded entity to assume responsibility for massive construction costs and ongoing dam maintenance. Since no such entity is apparent, wouldn’t efforts to negotiate meaningful mitigations for the county be more a more fruitful approach than categorical opposition? For details about the project and the FERC process visit PotterValleyProject.org

Outings

Along with meetings, in-person events, and use of office space, all Sierra Club Outings have been suspended until February 28, 2021 at the earliest, and the suspension may be continued longer, depending on the state of the coronavirus pandemic. In the meantime we encourage members and supporters to get out doors whenever they can do so in a safe, socially distanced way— and look forward to joining you out on the trails in a happier time.

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 Outings Chair Deb Sally at 235-9011 or enviracat1@gmail.com

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 vbrandon95457@gmail.com—not only does this save some trees, it also benefits the Group financially.

The COVID-19 crisis has not passed and continues to disproportionately harm Black, Indigenous, and Latinx people and other communities of color. The pandemic has revealed how the communities hardest hit are often the same people that suffer from high levels of pollution and poor access to healthcare. The fight for environmental justice cannot be separated from the fight for racial justice.

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