

The Sierra Club • Tehipite Chapter

Tehipite Topics

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Sauntering or the Art of Walking

by Richard Wiebe

Walking can never be overrated. It is the quintessential way for human beings to move through space, two legs pacing in rhythm, arms swinging in sync, and head constantly bobbing, scoping out the terrain. As bipedal mammals it is how we were meant to get about. There is a small, yet significant, literature on the art of walking, or, as Henry David Thoreau put it, the “art of sauntering.” He was referring to the medieval tradition of walking when he wrote, “I have met with but one or two persons in the course of my life who understood the art of Walking, that is, of taking walks

— who had a genius, so to speak, for *sauntering*, which word is beautifully derived ‘from idle people who roved about the country, in the Middle Ages, and asked for charity, under pretense of going a la Sainte Terre,’ to the Holy Land, till the children exclaimed, ‘There goes a Sainte-Terrer,’ a Saunterer, a Holy-Lander.” *Walking* was published in June, 1862 in *The Atlantic Monthly*.

To begin at the beginning, to “follow the yellow brick road, start with Geoff Nicholson, *The Lost Art of*

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see also:

2021 Year-End Tehipite Chapter Committee Reports

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EXPLORE, ENJOY AND PROTECT THE PLANET



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



Bear in mind the consequences.

The Yellowstone grizzly bear is an irreplaceable part of America's natural heritage, a symbol of the independence that defines the American character and an icon of all that is wild and free. The Bush administration set forth a proposal that would remove federal protection for the Yellowstone grizzly bear. Help Sierra Club protect our forest friends; they prefer the woods than being on display.

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TEHIPITE CHAPTER INFORMATION

Tehipite Chapter Conservation & Executive Committee Meetings

Second Wednesday of each month ~ members welcome

January 12, February 9, March 9, April 13, May 11, June 8, July 13, August 10, September 14, October 12, November 9, and December 14

The Conservation Committee meets at 7 PM. The Executive Committee meets at 8 PM.

University of California Center, 550 E. Shaw Avenue, Fresno (between First and Fresno Streets)

Meetings are currently being held via Zoom. If interested in attending, contact Chapter Chair Gary Lasky.

Tehipite Chapter General Meetings (via Zoom)

Third Wednesday of each month from 7 to 9 PM, except for July and August

Our general meetings are free and open to the public, and parking is free.

University of California Center, 550 E. Shaw Avenue, Fresno (between First and Fresno Streets)

MEETINGS ARE CURRENTLY BEING HELD VIA ZOOM.

GO TO WWW.SIERRACLUB.ORG/TEHIPITE TO REGISTER THE MONTH OF THE EVENT.

Upcoming Tehipite Chapter General Meetings in 2022



Wednesday, January 19, 7:00 PM

“The Work of USGBC Central Valley,” with Alex Desiga, Marketing and Outreach Associate, U.S. Green Building Council – Central California

USGBC Central California is a non-profit organization that seeks to educate, inspire, and provide resources for building and maintaining sustainable communities in Central California. Their mission is to transform the way buildings and communities are designed, built, and operated, enabling an environmentally and socially responsible, healthy and prosperous environment that improves the quality of life. By providing leadership in energy and environmental design, they help to create better buildings that complement our environment and enhance our communities, places that give people better, brighter, and healthier spaces to live, work, and play. USGBC Central California covers Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, and Tulare County.

Wednesday, February 16, 7:00 PM

“Antarctic Glaciers and Climate Change,” with Michael Hambrey, Emeritus Professor of Geography & Earth Sciences, Aberystwyth University in Wales

Mike Hambrey is a retired professor of glaciology who has taught at universities in Wales, Canada, New Zealand, and Germany, and was awarded the Polar Medal twice by the Queen, in 1989 and again in 2012. Mike's research interests are strongly field-focused, and include structural glaciology, Cenozoic glacial history of Antarctica, Quaternary glacial history of Britain, and Proterozoic glaciations of the High Arctic. Hambrey Cliffs on James Ross Island in Antarctica is named for him.



MERCED GROUP INFORMATION



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Merced Group Conservation & Executive Committee Meetings

We are currently meeting via Zoom, usually at 7:30 on the first Wednesday of each month. Be aware that there are sometimes 'adjustments'. The Conservation meeting is first and generally lasts 30-40 minutes. Anyone with an interest in local, state, or national conservation issues is welcome to attend. It is immediately followed by the Ex-comm portion where official business is conducted. All Sierra Club members are invited to join us for both meetings. Please contact Rod Webster if you are interested in attending so he can confirm the date and time and forward you the log-in info.

Merced Group Monthly General Meetings

... already resumed in September after our normal summer break. They are conducted using Zoom and are held on the third Thursday of the month, except in November and December. All Sierra Club members and the public as well are cordially invited to join us. Program topics and speakers vary — some educate on environmental issues, and others are more entertaining and hopefully inspire folks to get out and enjoy our natural treasures. The *Topics*, the Tehipite Chapter website, and local newspapers often have details on our monthly general meetings, but to make sure info is accurate and up-to-date, email Rod at rwebster@elite.net and get on the email list for notifications and occasional updates on important issues of local concern.

January 20, 2022 Zoom General Meeting

The January 20, 2022 program is "Road Trip New Zealand", a photo chronicle of JoAnne Armstrong and George Deane's "detour" on the beautiful South Island of New Zealand. Slide show narrated by JoAnne. Contact Merced Group Chair Rod Webster at (209) 723-4747 or rwebster@elite.net for the Zoom link to the meeting.

Merced Group Announcements

Merced Group Needs a Secretary

We are searching for someone to serve as Secretary for the Executive Committee of the Merced Group. The committee meets once a month via Zoom from September through June. The job includes taking notes during the meeting, typing, distributing, and printing up the minutes, and presenting them at the next meeting. This position is extremely important to the future of our club. If you can help, send an email to: sierraclub.merced@gmail.com.

Kirihara Memorial Scholarship Fund donations Welcomed

In 2011, the Jake and Fran Kirihara Memorial Scholarship Award was created in honor of two of our founding members. Each year, the Merced Sierra Club awards two scholarships to UC Merced students working towards preserving and protecting the environment. If you would like to give a donation to the Scholarship Fund, please mail it to 345 E. 20th S., Merced, CA 95340.

MERCED GROUP NEWS

2021-2022 Milkweed Propagation and Planting to help Monarch Butterflies

This year the Merced Group is renewing its efforts to help the plight of the monarch butterfly. In 2019 we initiated and coordinated an effort to propagate and plant stands of narrow leaf milkweed where the monarchs could lay their eggs. Milkweed is the only food source that the hatched caterpillars will feed on. The original plan was to plant 3000 seedlings at the San Luis National Wildlife Refuge. Unfortunately the beginning Covid shutdowns forced us to scuttle that plan and find other homes for our milkweed plants. Various organizations, agencies, and individuals rose to the occasion and all were dispersed.

Last year was again a no-go, but we are now engaged again in milkweed propagation and plantings. The Fresno State Horticultural Greenhouse and Nursery staff has already 'cold stratified' and planted milkweed seed that was donated by Xerxes and the East Merced Resource Conservation District. Classes at CSUF will oversee its growth to planting plug size. Many thanks to Jacob Hurst and his students for their interest and assistance.

We already have some leads on where those seedlings could later be planted. The Los Banos campus of Merced College is installing a 'Food Forest' and plans on including a pollinator section of that project. They would like to include milkweed for monarchs to lay their eggs and to provide food for the hatched out larvae. An assortment of flowers nearby would be a food source for the adult monarch butterflies. We will be looking for other potential planting sites in the foothills and the Valley. Irrigated land would be a necessity given the Valley's summer heat and expected drought conditions. Readers who have any prospective leads, especially for a larger swath of a half-acre or more, please contact the Merced Group at rwebster@elite.net.



MONARCH CATERPILLAR ON MILKWEED PLANT

2021 Year-End Chapter Committee Summaries

Climate Committee focuses on getting a price on carbon into the final Senate “Build Back Better” reconciliation bill

by Connie Young, Tehipite Chapter Climate Change Committee

The Climate Committee has been tracking the progress on Capitol Hill of a proposed price on carbon. It is estimated that it will not be possible to achieve President Biden’s goal of a 50% reduction in emissions by 2030, without a carbon price. Sierra Club members have been invited to participate in Citizens’ Climate Lobby (CCL) campaigns to persuade members of Congress and President Biden to implement some form of carbon pricing.

At this writing, a price on carbon is being considered by the Senate for inclusion in the Build Back Better Act (budget reconciliation package). There is reason to believe that there are 49 votes in the Senate for a price on carbon, with Sen. Manchin the lone holdout. It’s possible that even he might be persuaded to vote for it if he can get the other things he wants for West Virginia. The Senate is expected to vote on the Build Back Better Act in January, to avoid interfering with next year’s campaign activities. The outcome of that vote will direct the future activities of the Climate Committee.

We missed you at our monthly meetings!

by Karen Hammer, Tehipite Chapter Programs Committee

In the fall of 2020 we decided it was time to work with the “new normal,” and the Tehipite Chapter Program Committee began hosting monthly meetings and programs via Zoom. In 2021 we hosted Zoom programs every month except July and August, our summer hiatus months. Did you know that? We sure missed you and hope you’ll join us in 2022 as we continue to meet via Zoom. It’s very easy to do. All you need is an electronic device: computer, tablet, smartphone, etc. The monthly meeting invites are sent through email. (Check your spam folder too!) Or if you have opted out of Sierra Club emails, go to the chapter website where you can RSVP each month for the upcoming program (www.sierraclub.org/tehipite). If you go to the website you will also see links to view recordings of some of the programs you missed. *Topics* have included Salmon Restoration on the San Joaquin River, Archeology of the Sierra National Forest, and Wild Utah!, to name just a few. Our plans for 2022 are shaping up really well. January’s presentation is by the US Green Building Council of Central California, and they will tell us about their one-of-a-kind Indigenous and Environmental Resource Center being planned at the San Joaquin River. In February we will be joined by glaciologist and Professor Emeritus Michael John Hambrey who will be Zooming in from Wales to talk about glaciers and climate change. We really hope to see you soon! In the meantime, if you have any suggestions about future programs please contact Karen Hammer at ecuagirl45@yahoo.com.

2021’s KNP Complex Fire burned through all of Redwood Mountain Grove

by Bob Turner, Tehipite Chapter Kings Canyon National Park Committee

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, adjacent to each other and similar in character, are managed as one unit, referred to by the National Park Service as SEKI. As the southern park lies entirely within Tulare County, oversight of Sequoia NP is delegated to the Kern-Kaweah Chapter of the Sierra Club. How the government manages Kings Canyon National Park is considerably less complicated, as there are few roads and little development outside of the Grant Grove area, hence far fewer people visit that part of the park. Most of Kings Canyon NP is wilderness, where machinery is prohibited and pack animals are relegated to well-regulated maintained trails. Beyond those few trails, park staff monitors the number of visitors and how they impact the land, while studying a changing ecosystem as it reacts to the slow and steady warming of the planet. Members of Kern-Kaweah and Tehipite Chapters have together held congenial meetings annually with the parks superintendent to discuss Sierra Club concerns, such as how visiting permits are administered, how best to restore alpine aquatic habitats, and how the park manages wildfires. Since our 2019 meeting, a tenth of the world’s sequoias were killed in a single 2020 fire, and the KNP Complex Fire, also sparked naturally by lightning, swept through the entire forest of Redwood Canyon, killing hundreds of giant sequoias in the Redwood Mountain Grove, considered to be the Earth’s largest, as well as the birthplace of modern prescribed burning science in the west. My hope for 2022 is to meet personally with SEKI’s new superintendent, Clay Jordon, who previously served as Deputy Superintendent at Great Smoky Mountains NP.

Oil/Energy Committee and Fresnoans against Fracking Report

by Ron Martin, Tehipite Chapter Energy/Oil Committee and Chair of Fresnoans against Fracking

The second COVID-19 year of 2020 was still a year of activism for the Oil/Energy Committee and Fresnoans against Fracking starting with gathering signatures for a letter to president-elect Biden to prohibit fracking on public lands. A committee had been formed of staff and volunteers of the Sierra Club, the Center for Biological Diversity, and the Audubon Society to plan efforts to oppose it. The Trump administration had set many fracking leases on BLM land in the South Valley. There was thought of a lawsuit. The leasing process was slowed in the new administration.

As chair of the committee, I join in on the weekly Zoom meetings of the Sierra Club California Energy Committee led by Dr. Jim Stewart, and hear about what is going on with the CPUC (Calif. Public Utility Commission) and its accession to the IOUs (investor-owned utilities) plan to quash the solar industry by jacking up the monthly fee for connecting to the grid to as much as \$90. This has not yet been decided. We often hear from the Sierra Club California legislative Advocate Laura Cullum about the state legislature and other SC staff.

Californians against Fracking under David Braun's leadership asked for a tweet storm to ask Gov. Newsom to ban fracking, which Fresnoans against Fracking joined in.

The Kern County Board of Supervisors moved to streamline approval for drilling new oil wells by specifying one environmental impact report for all wells within most of Kern County — against CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) law. F.a.F. sent email messages to the Kern County Board not to go ahead with the measure. They did it anyway, but were overridden by CalGEM (California Geological and Energy Management agency). Oil corporation lawyers are challenging the blocking in court.

The Community Alliance's Earth Day issue had a climate-emergency section, and Fresnoans against Fracking bought an ad in it. It was small but included our oil-well-water-faucet banner logo and details of the group.

F.a.F. continues membership in the statewide group of groups, the Environmental Justice Coalition. They are partly funded by the California EPA, and had enough funds for technology equipment to facilitate our environmental work, supplying F.a.F. with a new laptop. The member who needed it was laid off with the IRS

Center downsizing and moved to New York State. The laptop box remains in its box.

Two of us from F.a.F. joined CEJC for a demonstration in front of the EPA in Sacramento, traveling by Amtrak. It protested many toxic waste repositories that are leaking, out of compliance, and operating on expired permits. Our demonstration included street theater, of EPA in bed with lobbyists. EPA administrator Gerald Blumenfeld came out along with an assistant and addressed the demonstration, promising that the dumps would be brought into compliance with law and the polluters sanctioned.

I attended a meeting of the Westlands Water District at their headquarters SE of Shields and Fresno with fellow ExCom member Dan O'Connell at his request to make a back-up recording of their open meeting in a video room. The 2½-hour recording helped a lawyer preparing a case against their plan to seek waivers of limitations on their use of water-project water.

I encouraged F.a.F. members of our listserve to join with the Citizens Climate Lobby in their monthly calls to Congressmen and Senators to urge them to support a Build Back Better bill at a crucial juncture.

The treasurer of F.a.F. is suffering from strokes and is unable to do what he has been doing since 2015, keeping track of our bank account and our listserve membership. He passed these duties on to me.

Sierra Club dirty-oil-campaign staff lead Mercedes Macias attended the October meeting of Fresnoans against Fracking from Tehachapi at our meeting place of the last two years, the Chipotle at Shaw and Cedar. She heard about our Fresno activity and told us about her work in Kern County.

This month CalGEM held a statewide online workshop hearing on rulemaking for Gov. Newsom's agreement to set a 3,200-foot zone around all oil wells. Two members of the Committee, a Sierra-Club staff member and two other Valley people made 90-second statements. The comments were about two-thirds environmentalists in favor of strong rules, and one-third oil workers who were opposed.

The group signed on to petitions and letters and partook of webinars on the problems with oil and technologies to help us transition away from it including solar energy and electric cars.

Tehipite Chapter Direct Action



RON MARTIN AND MEMBERS OF ACT NOW ON CLIMATE JOIN THE RAGING GRANNIES TO SING "NOW! NOW! NOW!"

Energy/Oil Committee joins Sierra Club's Act Now on Climate and WILPF's Raging Grannies in protest at Congressman Jim Costa's Fresno office

by Ron Martin, Tehipite Chapter Energy/Oil Committee and Chair of Fresnans against Fracking

Members of the Energy/Oil Committee of the Tehipite Chapter joined members of Act Now on Climate, a new Sierra Club cadre of young-adult staff, on the Fridays of October 1 and 15 earlier this year. The Raging Grannies choir of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom attended, four strong, and brought song sheets for one of the progressive songs they sing, "Now! Now! Now!" ("We need to wake up! We need to wise up!") to the tune of Bella Ciao, an Italian Resistance song.

The group held signs. Act Now on Climate's said, "Pass the Build Back Better Budget," "Honk 4 Solar Jobs," and "Act Now." Ron brought the banner of Fresnans against Fracking and a California bear flag with "No New Fossil Fuels" below the bear, topped by a smaller banner.

After taking photos and a video of the group singing, the group went into the building to ascend to Representative Jim Costa's office. A plain-clothes security guard met them and said that the building was private property and no demonstrations were allowed. The group looked at each other incredulously and objected that they had visited Rep. Costa's office before, and planned only to deliver a document



RON MARTIN AT REP. COSTA'S FRESNO OFFICE

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Redistricting for Equity

The Supervisorial Redistricting Committee and the Equity Coalition's Map

by Ron Martin, Tehipite Chapter Executive Committee Member

A Fresno committee has been formed, comprised of activists from the Sierra Club, the SEIU521 union, the Fresno County Democratic Party, the Central Valley Partnership, and the Dolores Huerta Foundation, to use the possibilities opened by the state's new Fair Maps law.

The committee met weekly to plan testimonies in person and online to the Board of Supervisors (who ignored what we presented, perhaps not even understanding it), then to organize a huge march and rally from the Arte America's museum to the county courthouse that included busloads of activists from surrounding areas, addresses by the leaders of each group, Hmong dance, rancho music, and the Joaquin Murrieta mounted horsemen.

We hope that a judge of a lawsuit will carefully consider that the overwhelming majority of people in our Valley want legal and fair supervisorial district maps as demanded by law.

A board of supervisors who represent the more progressive majority now in Fresno County could be less beholden to the agenda of developers, who have organized our county as their cash cow as they cover the county's wildlands and farmlands with sprawling development of expensive housing, resulting in more vehicle miles traveled, unaffordable housing, and miles and miles of characterless suburbs, strip malls, and chain stores. Supervisors representing our majority could direct the county's resources toward meeting the needs of rural people for clean water and air, possibly even banning extreme oil well treatments now carried

out near Coalinga.

The 2020 census and the subsequent redistricting of all states, counties, and cities, with multiple officers elected from them, raises the issue of how various voting communities in the past have been, through gerrymandering, either packed into single districts or split into districts where they become unrepresented minorities. San Joaquin Valley counties were gerrymandered into districts that resulted in one minority candidate on each board. With Fresno County's current 55% Hispanic population, our Board's composition is the result of districts not of, by, and for the people, but designed to benefit entrenched interests.

For the first time after a census our state has a law opposing gerrymandering, the Fair Maps measure. It specifies contiguous, simple-border districts drawn after hearings for identifying neighborhoods not to be split. The Dolores Huerta Foundation has organized a campaign to implement the law in the San Joaquin Valley by commissioning a legal and fair supervisorial map, having enlisted the service of lawyer Laura Pesante.

Ms. Pesante led studies of voting patterns and communities and is planning lawsuits for some of our counties now that supervisors have voted for maps with small border adjustments that preserve their districts. Fresno County may be one that she takes to court, to at long last open the door to electing a board that will lead our county in a progressive direction, with governing that serves our interests for healthy housing and industries, good career jobs, and sustainability.

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about the Build Back Better Bill. The guard relented, and the group called the elevator.

They took more photos next to the Congressman's seal, signed the back of one of two copies of the document that explained what the large infrastructure bill would do to slow the climate crisis, and delivered it.

Two days after the first action, Act Now scheduled a meeting called "Taco 'bout Climate Change" at a taco take-out, Taqueria Yareli, south of Belmont, on its side patio, serving street tacos and bottled water. The meeting had been publicized through the Mobilize site. Two participants in the actions met with a high-school girl who was a member of her school's sustainability club and her father, and discussed the threat of the climate crisis and what should be done to mitigate it, including carbon taxes, electrified airlines and train lines, hemp to replace concrete.

Two weeks later a smaller contingency of the Energy/Oil committee and the Act Now on Climate staff again met at Rep. Costa's office, this time standing for a while on all four corners of the intersection of M St. and Mariposa with posters, and delivering three pages of signatures gathered at a table at Fresno City College, for which Act Now had gotten a table permit.

Tehipite Chapter Challenges Land-Use Plans

Cemex requests an extension of their mining lease along the San Joaquin River for 100 more years

by Brenda Markham, Tehipite Chapter Land-Use Committee

One of my main concerns for the Central Valley involves Cemex's mining proposal. Cemex's application for a new conditional use permit to continue mining operations near the San Joaquin River for 100 years is appalling. The San Joaquin River has suffered enough already. We are supposed to be restoring the river, bringing back the salmon, NOT blasting a 600-foot-deep pit into hard rock near the San Joaquin River.

Detrimental effects would be numerous- common sense tells us that there will be trouble for the nearby wildlife (let alone the local residents having to put up with noise, traffic and pollution).

It seems to me that our politicians and bureaucrats have their priorities mixed up; we need protection NOT destruction of the San Joaquin River. What about the San Joaquin River Parkway — is not this supposed to be part of the general plan? The Parkway is designed to be a natural and recreational area- in harmony with the environment. Blasting a 600-foot deep hole would certainly NOT be compatible with the Parkway.

This Cemex plan should cause concern for all of Central Valley, especially to those near the San Joaquin River. Nearby residents would be affected — there would be all-day noise from blasting (not to mention rocks flying about as a result of this).

I am in communication with David Randall (with Fresno County) regarding this matter. As of now we are awaiting a Draft EIR for the mining proposal.

Public resists federal BLM plans to drill for oil on valley public lands

by Gary Lasky and Ron Martin, Tehipite Chapter Energy/Oil Committee

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) this year rolled out its latest proposal to auction off our public lands to oil and gas drilling, following a federal court's rejection of its earlier plan for BLM's failure to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The target is the San Joaquin Valley and Central California, including the coastal region from Monterey to Ventura. A total of 1.2 million acres for oil and gas leases will be on the auction block, including the Sierra foothills and around the Valley.

NEPA requires the BLM to hold public hearings. On May 21, the Central California Environmental Justice Coalition, Sierra Club Tehipite Chapter, and Center for Biological Diversity organized to fill a charter bus with concerned Fresno residents to travel to the hearing in Bakersfield and make public comment on the Supplemental Environmental Impact Report.

The BLM refused requests to provide Spanish-language translation or accept spoken comments for the official record. So activists took matters into our own hands: we provided a translator and hired a court reporter to transcribe 90 minutes of public testimony, including personal accounts of the harms to our community from oil drilling.

Three weeks later we again traveled to Bakersfield to hand-deliver 90,000 comments. Teens came with us, and we witnessed the huge Panorama Drive oil field, covered with pump jacks, bring up the toxic, steam-heated oil next to the Kern River, Bakersfield's water supply.

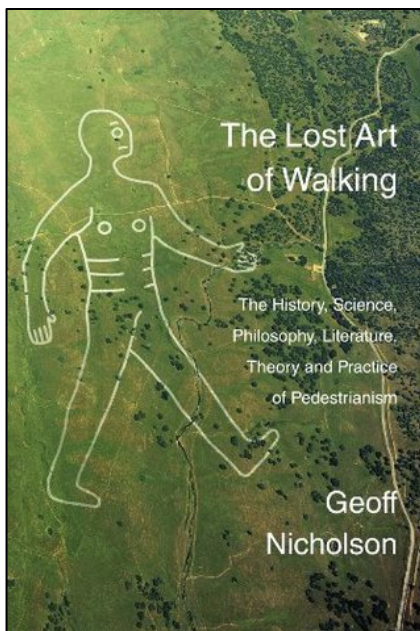
This BLM plan is consistent with the abdication of government regulators by the Trump administration and the handing over of oil drilling regulation to the oil industry. This "energy dominance" will inevitably — and quickly — extinguish our hopes to mitigate the climate crisis created by the burning of fossil fuels. When government regulators are screened for their reckless disregard of our environmental protections in the interest of short-term oil industry profits, the question becomes: who will control the government?

In New Mexico, the BLM lost a court challenge on May 7 when the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals reversed a lower court ruling, setting back an identical effort by the federal government to expand its federal oil and gas lease sale program there. The Court based its decision on a disregard by federal planners for the cumulative impact to the water supply from the proposal to frack thousands of oil wells.

Sauntering or the Art of Walking

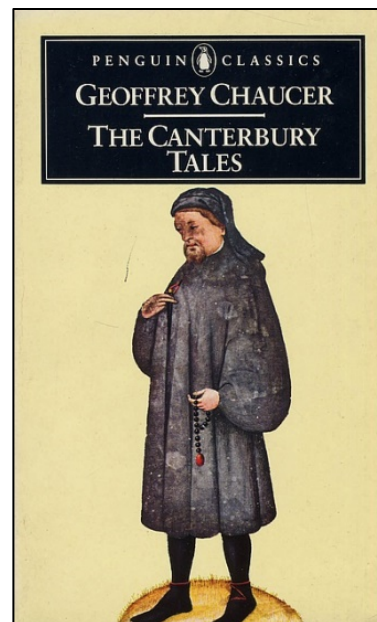
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Walking: The History, Science, Philosophy, and Literature of Pedestrianism (Penguin Books, 2008). From Los Angeles, the anti-walking city par excellence, to strolls around London, to rock music (Bob Dylan) inspired walks, to strolls around London, to “a man walks into a New York City bar,” to desert walkers, to walking photographers, to walking to home and away from home, and finally to “the walks we didn’t take,” Nicholson narrates the history of walking and walking books. He ends with a ten-page bibliography on walking (with all the usual suspects like Abbey, Banham, Benjamin, Burton, Chandler, Chatwin, Davis, Debord, Fletcher, Gilden, Kerouac, Long, Sinclair, and Wordsworth), including several online resources, although a number of those links are no longer valid.

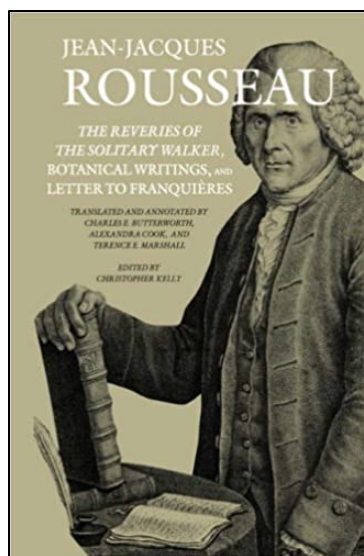


When Geoffrey Chaucer wrote his *Canterbury Tales* (1387-1400) he established the walking narrative genre in the English language. He epitomizes Michel Foucault’s claim in “What is an Author” (*Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*) that an author does more than create individual texts. The truly creative author creates the possibility of an infinite number of texts by instantiating a new genre tradition, “making possible the endless proliferation of texts” into the future. St. Augustine’s *Confessions* exemplifies Foucault’s claim. It founded the western tradition of written autobiographies. Augustine’s “timeliness”, to this day in the 21st century C.E., is due to the fact that he wrote a “modern autobiography” in the 5th century C.E. The *Tales* are a linked set of tales told by a jovial group of pilgrims on their way to Canterbury Cathedral to honor Saint Thomas a Becket (1118-1170), who was Archbishop of Canterbury when he was assassinated for opposing Henry II. Chaucer’s skills of characterization, storytelling, humor, and facility in the nascent Middle English language, established him as the first great English poet.

The Miller’s Tale, The Knight’s Tale, The Cook’s Tale, The Monk’s Tale, and many, many more make up the book. Collectively, they present a picture of a nation taking shape. The tone of this never-ending comedy is, by turns, learned, serious, fantastic, irreverent, lewd, pious, and ludicrous. “Here”, as John Dryden said, “is God’s plenty!” The translation into contemporary English by Nevill Coghill (2003), in the Penguin Classics paperback, preserves the freshness and energy of Chaucer’s original Middle English narrative. Available in paperback for \$11.00.



Jean Jacques Rousseau, the French philosopher and writer born in Switzerland (1712-1778), is the celebrated author of *On the Social Contract* (1762), the charter of republican democratic forms of government like the United States of America. Rousseau was a major influence on Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. In 1782, friends published, posthumously, the unfinished

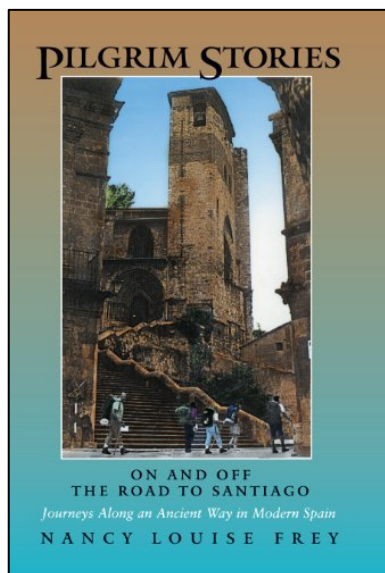


manuscript, *The Reveries of the Solitary Walker*. This book contains his explorations of the human soul in the form of meditations on self-understanding and isolation from urban society. Ten walks are covered, each yielding a reflective essay on the meaning of life in nature. The translation by Charles Butterworth (Hackett Publishing, 1992), with an interpretive essay, extensive notes, and a comprehensive index, is the best paperback English version. Available in paperback for \$13.00.

The “Camino de Santiago” or “Way of St. James” is a

medieval pilgrimage that has become popular again since WWII. Every year thousands of pilgrims from all over the globe descend on northern Spain to replicate this medieval religious event. Nancy Louise Frey, in *Pilgrim Stories: On and Off the Road to Santiago* (University of California Press, 1998), “addresses how and why pilgrims embark on this long journey to search for the past, nature, self, solitude, friendship, austerity, and adventure.” Frey’s uses ethnographic interviews with these spiritual seekers to unearth the yearning for pre-modern society in a world bedeviled by technology and rampant surveillance. “Reading Nancy Frey’s *Pilgrim Stories* is as close as one will ever get to the sights, sounds, anxieties, pains and deeper meanings of the Santiago pilgrimage, short of making the pilgrimage oneself.” —Robert Bellah, author of *Habits of the Heart*. All the routes are covered: *via turonense*, *via*

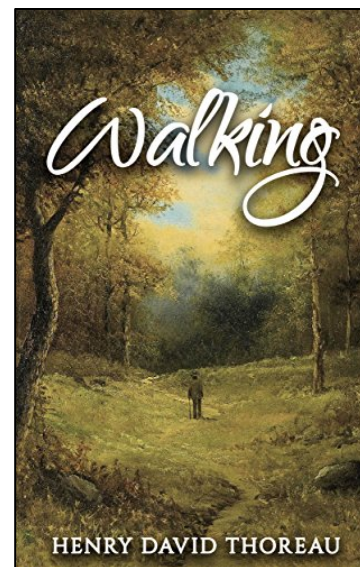
lemovicense, *via podense*, *via tolosana*, *Aragonese way*, *Camino Frances*, *Via de la Plata*, *Portuguese way*, *North way*, and the *English way*. The goal is the Plaza del Obradoiro and its cathedral, Santiago de Compostela where the bones of Saint James, the brother of Jesus, are found. The Camino de Santiago epitomizes religious pilgrimages. This



anthropological investigation invites the reader into the day-to-day world of Santiago pilgrims, secular and religious. Available in paperback for \$19.95.

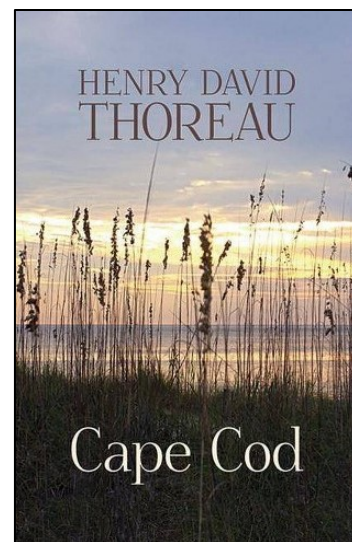
Next, we shift to the New World and the essay/lecture by Henry David Thoreau, “Walking,” published in 1862 and revised many times, a compilation from two of his most popular lectures, the “Wild” and “Walking.” He famously begins, “I wish to speak a word for Nature, for absolute freedom and wildness, as contrasted with a freedom and culture merely civil — to regard man as an inhabitant, or a part and parcel of Nature, rather than a member of society. I wish to make an extreme statement, if so I may make an emphatic one, for there are enough champions of civilization....” Later, one of his most quoted statements appears, “The West of which I speak is but another name for the Wild; and what I have been prepared to say is, that in Wildness is the preservation of the

World.” Notice he said “wildness”, an adjective which could apply to anything, anyplace, or anyone — not “wilderness”, a noun which refers to a designated, legislated, political zone, as in part of a national park. Wildness can occur anyplace. Each human being, given their unique DNA or genome sequence, is wild. Unless genetically engineered, the conception of a new human being is a wild crapshoot, a recombination of the father’s and mother’s DNA. That is why all but identical twins are totally, irreducibly individual. Consequently, having children is the ultimate human wild act.



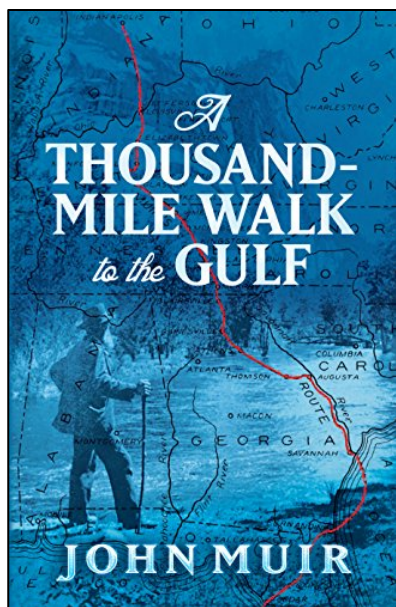
You can never predict the results. You can never calculate the outcome. He concludes his essay with, “So we saunter toward the Holy Land, till one day the sun shall shine more brightly than ever he has done, shall perchance shine into our minds and hearts, and light up our whole lives with a great awakening light, as warm and serene and golden as on a bankside in autumn.” The Cricket House Books paperback reprint of 2010 for \$5.95 is a classy edition of this public domain text.

Henry David Thoreau wrote a classic walking narrative, *Cape Cod*, in the 1850s. It compresses into one book three walks taken in the 1840s and 1850s along the outer Atlantic Ocean beach of Cape Cod, starting from the “neck” east of South Boston, then curving northeast 50 miles to Provincetown. Along the way we meet The Wellfleet Oysterman, the poignant wreckage of a sailing ship, in which some of his dear friends had drowned and the bleached white bones of human skeletons lay strewn on the sand, old lighthouse keepers, tourists from Boston summering on the Cape, and, finally, at the end, the townsfolk of Provincetown. This is a relatively “unknown” text by Thoreau. His



narrative is so accurate and his historical sense so acute that it remains one of the best hiking and cultural history guides to Cape Cod, even after 150 years (2013). Available in paperback for \$12.99.

John Muir's *The Thousand-Mile Walk to the Gulf*, edited by William Frederic Bade (Houghton Mifflin Co. 1916/1998). This is an account of Muir's post-civil war trek from Wisconsin to Florida in 1860s. He carried a botanical press, a walking stick, and a satchel while threading his way cross-country through a landscape filled with roving, violent gangs of homeless Confederate Army veterans and suspicious, backwoods homesteaders. Upon reaching the Florida Keys, Muir



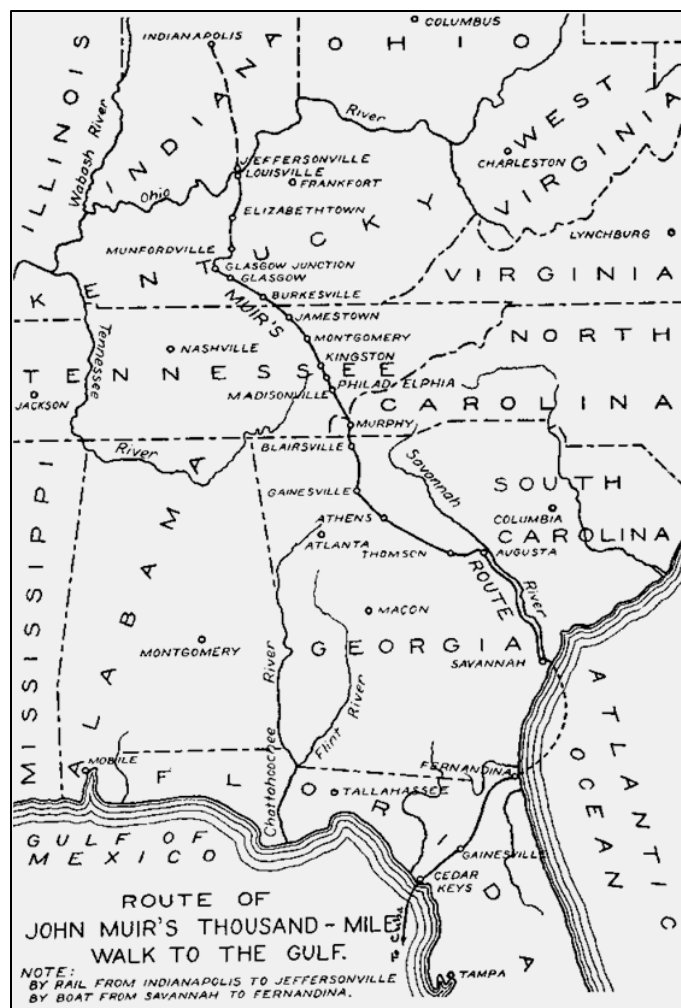
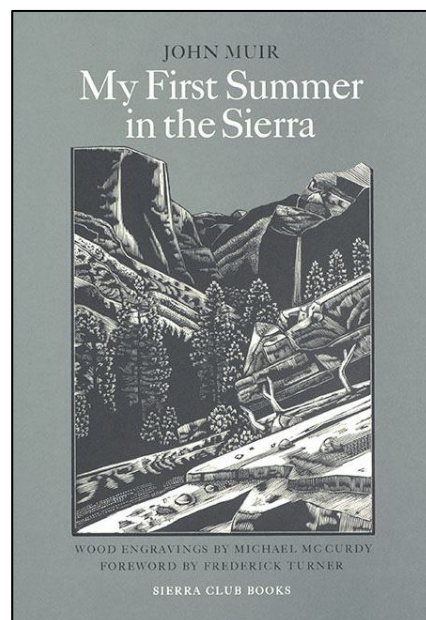
contracted malaria and spent three months convalescing in Key Largo. After his recovery he sailed to New York City and then took a ship to Panama, walked across the isthmus, and then sailed into San Francisco Bay. Upon reaching the city he asked for directions to the nearest wild place. He was directed to Oakland. Landing there he looked

around and immediately left town and headed south to today's Henry Coe State Park, turned east, climbing over Pacheco Pass (today's Highway 152) and walked on to Gustine, Snelling, Coulterville, and Yosemite Valley. The route is described by Peter and Donna Thomas. The hike was 300 miles long. A public domain paperback for \$14.95.

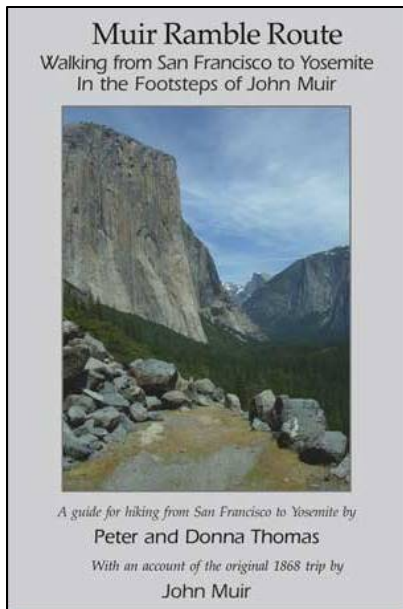
Peter and Donna Thomas, *Muir Ramble Route: Walking from San Francisco to Yosemite in the Footsteps of John Muir* (Poetic Matrix Press, 2010, second revision). This book includes: the story of John Muir's 1868 trip from San Francisco to Yosemite, reconstructed from his journals and papers at the Holt Atherton Library at the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California and a section by section guide to hiking the John Muir Route. Each section has a map, directions, and Peter and Donna's story of re-hiking the route. Muir's trip occurred a year before his famous trek written down as *My First Summer in the Sierra*. "John Muir was one of the greatest walkers of modern times, and through walking he came to know

nature's beauty and diversity. Here, collated conveniently for the first time, is his first encounter with a California still unspoiled by industrial farming, freeways, and oil wells. It should make any reader's feet itch with excitement."

—Donald Worster, Hall Distinguished Professor of American History, University of Kansas. "By juxtaposing Muir's original journals with their re-created trail, Pete and Donna lead us along that delicate edge between the landscape of our dreams and the possibilities of a



MUIR'S WALKING ROUTE ACROSS THE AMERICAN SOUTH TO THE GULF OF MEXICO



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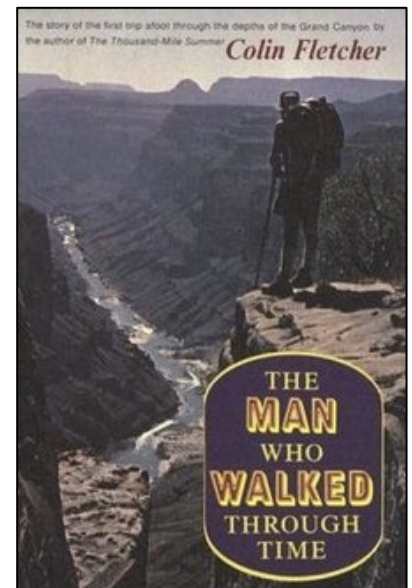
Colin Fletcher,
*The Man Who
Walked Through
Time* (Alfred A.
Knopf, 1989).
Fletcher was the
first person to hike
the Grand Canyon

from the western end at Havasu to the eastern end at Nankoweap. He covered over 300 miles of terrain, walking on the Esplanade and the Tonto Platform, two shelves half-way down into the canyon, over 2,000’ below the South Rim and 1,500’ above the Colorado River. We travel along with Fletcher as he zig-zags, wending his way from side canyon to side canyon on this two-month long trip. A map illustrates his route in

the book: from
Hualapai Hilltop to
Supai to the First
Amphitheater to
Aztec Amphitheater
to Hermit Camp to
Phantom Ranch to
the Palisades of the
Desert to the Little
Colorado River
Confluence to
Nankoweap Creek,
and finally the North
Rim at Point Imperial.
*The Man Who Walked
Through Time* tells
the story of a man

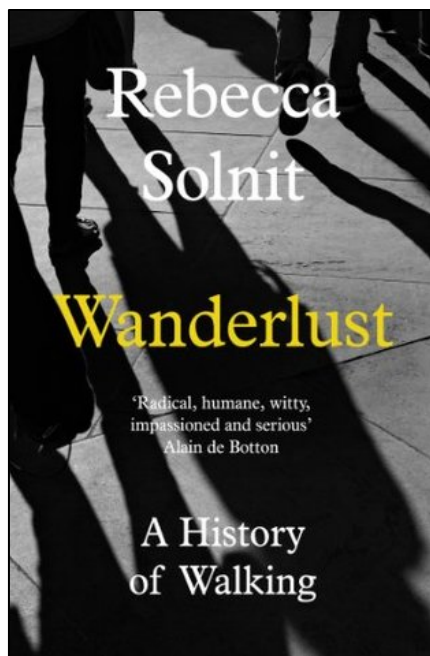
living simply and in solitude in a setting that is, at once majestic, dangerous, and inspiring. It is a journey “below the rim.” It is a narrative that is both a grand adventure and an intense spiritual odyssey. Available in paperback for \$16.00.

Rebecca Solnit, *Wanderlust: The Art of Walking* (Random House, 2001). Solnit, along with Sacramento native Joan Didion, is one of our finest contemporary non-fiction essayists. A San Franciscan, she has written

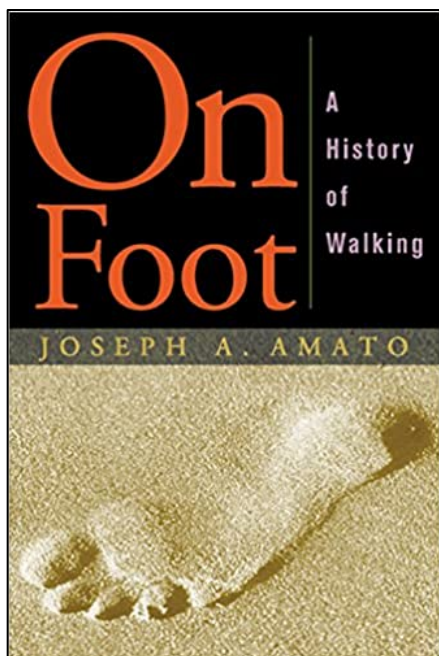


MUIR'S WALKING ROUTE ACROSS THE GREAT VALLEY FROM OAKLAND TO YOSEMITE VALLEY

about the American West's landscape, the maps of San Francisco, the maps of New Orleans, the photographic career of Eadweard Muybridge, and now, with *Wanderlust*, on the fine art of walking. She discusses Rousseau, Thoreau, Muir, Fletcher, medieval pilgrimages like the Way to Santiago in northern Spain, and unlikely urban walking contexts like Las Vegas. This book is a sheer delight to read. Reading Solnit is, in a way, a walk through the literature on walking. Available in paperback for \$18.00.

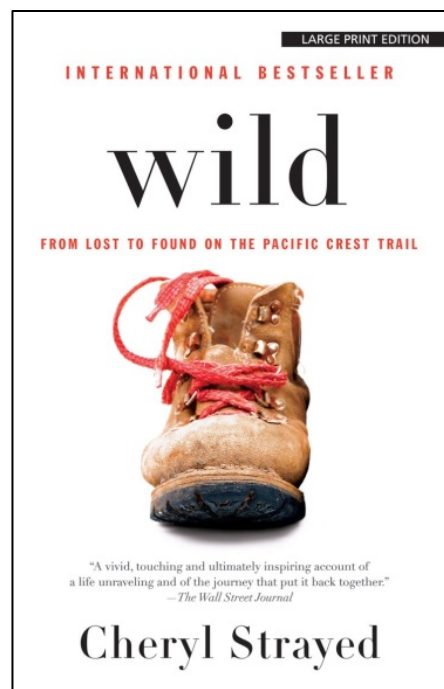


A complementary, non-overlapping study of walking is Joseph A. Amato, *On Foot: A History of Walking* (New York University Press, 2004). The Greeks called a human being a "featherless biped". Why, where, how, and to what effect do human beings walk? Amato's book examines these questions, "...from trekking medieval pilgrims to strolling courtiers; from urban pavement pounders to ambling window shoppers to suburban mall walkers." It is a perfect companion to Solnit's *Wanderlust*. "This is a fascinating book extremely knowledgeable and ambitious, thought-provoking in the best sense. Simply put: a very imaginative presentation and, someone has to say it: not at all pedestrian." —Peter N. Stearns. The book contains an extensive, annotated, 40-page endnote and bibliographic section, a treasure trove of



information on walking resources. Available in cloth for \$55.00, expensive but worth every dollar.

Cheryl Strayed, *Wild: Lost and Found on the Pacific Crest Trail* (Random House, 2013). A modern classic, translated into over 14 languages, on the *New York Times Bestseller List* for over one year (and counting). *Wild* recounts Strayed's hiking of the Pacific Crest Trail in 1995 soon after her mother died of cancer and facing a marriage that was fragmenting and falling apart. A novice hiker, she tackled the most grueling trail in North America in order to make sense out of life's meaning in a time of crisis. The Pacific Crest Trail begins at the Mexican border and goes north all the way to Canada in California, Oregon, and Washington, following, as the name designates, the high crest of California, the Sierra Nevada Mountains and the Cascade Range. She hiked about one-third of the trail, enough to bring sanity back to her personal life. In some uncanny way, Strayed's book has an elective affinity with Frey's *Pilgrim Stories*. The effect of both walks was similar. Today she is a popular on-line advice columnist in Seattle, Washington. Strayed's book was made into a motion picture with Reese Witherspoon starring in the title role. It was released in summer of 2014. Strayed's book is a fitting contemporary capstone to books about walking. Available in paperback for \$15.95.



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Tehipite Topics is published up to three times a year. Downloadable color versions are available on the Chapter website at www.sierraclub.org/tehipite/newsletters. Back issues are archived on the website beginning from April 2004. Articles and photographs from Sierra Club members are always welcome for our coming issues. Send your contributions for the Spring 2022 issue by email to robertsturner52@gmail.com before March 1.

TEHIPITE NEEDS YOUR VOLUNTEER HELP

Your Sierra Club chapter, from Fresno to Merced, has more than 2,100 members. We run entirely on volunteer power, without staff. Below are listed our goals for 2022 and immediate volunteer needs.

This is an excellent chance to work with talented people, eager to show newcomers how to be an environmental activist. **Find an issue that appeals to you** and call Gary Lasky for more information at 559-790-3495, or email tehipite.chapter@sierraclub.org. ***No experience is required, just enthusiasm and a willingness to learn.***

PRIORITY NEEDS:

- ***Coordinator to support our upcoming Water in the Valley workshop, on Zoom.***
- ***Social media lead, to coordinate volunteers to write on key environmental issues.***
- ***Coordinator for our Outings program, including helping Latinx kids and families visit the Sierra.***
- ***Citizen watchdog to attend meetings of your County Supervisors and report news to us, to protect our environment from unwise sprawl.***

OTHER NEEDS:

- Agroecology research: learn how agribusiness and water districts control the San Joaquin Valley economy, and what we can do about it.
- Combat wildfire misinformation, and learn how our National Forests can be managed for their health, using the best available science.
- Support the efforts of Native tribes to gain federal recognition, which would bring to them healthcare and essential funding.
- Work with our Legal Committee, organize a Zoom meeting on San Joaquin Valley litigation strategies.
- Join our Political Team to interview candidates for a local or state office, or for Congress.