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SIERRA NEVADA ALLIANCE SIERRA NEWS

VOLUME IX, ISSUE 1

SEPTEMBER 2005



SIERRA NEVADA ALLIANCE

CALENDAR COLUMN

Second Annual Research Conference on Climate Change

September 14-16, 2005
By PIER in Sacramento

The first scientific conference organized as part of the Western Governors' Global Warming Initiative

Visit:

http://www.climatechange.ca.gov/events/2004_conference/index.html

~ * ~

People Saving Rivers: Watershed Protection through Citizen Monitoring

October 18, 2005
By SYRCL in Nevada City

Visit: <http://www.yubariver.org> or call
530.265.5961

~ * ~

The Next Gold Rush: Linking Sierra Assets to the New Economy

October 21-22, 2005
By Sierra Business Council
in Murphy's, CA

3 main themes: Sustainable Business Practices for Small Businesses in the Sierra; The Sierra Nevada Conservancy; Arts and Agricultural Tourism

Visit: www.sbcouncil.org

Third of Sierra At Risk to Development

On Tuesday, June 21, 2005 the Sierra Nevada Alliance, along with the help of our allies, launched a new land use report into the local and national media spotlight. The report, entitled *Planning for the Future: A Sierra Nevada Land Use Index*, was written by Ellen Hickey, with Joan Clayburgh and Shannon Raborn. Thanks to five simultaneous news conferences and a strong Associated Press story, we got the word out on the importance of land use planning in the Sierra Nevada. The story reached over eighty papers throughout the United States, and over thirteen California and Nevada television stations and ten California and Nevada radio stations. The story was also picked up in the United Kingdom.

The new report shows that the population of the 13-county Sierra Nevada region will triple by 2040 while nearly a third of the land in the region is at risk of succumbing to sprawl-style development. These undeveloped lands provide a current sense of open natural areas that could easily disappear in the next five to ten years, drastically changing the health and character of the Sierra.

Current estimates show that between 1990 and 2040, the population of the Sierra Nevada will triple to the size of San Diego (somewhere between 1.5 million and 2.4 million residents).

What is so important to

Continued on page 6

Hope Floats on Restoration Tour

A 50 passenger bus winds its way along the dirt road in the wide open and spectacular Feather River area. While it's the third day of touring and bus riding – participants are still enthralled and their eyes shine with hope. Why? Because this 3-day tour has been like no other for showing the potential to truly restore areas of the Sierra that were besotted by mining, grazing, road building, and development.

On this third day as the 35 participants bump along, Jim Wilcox and Leslie Mink of the Feather River CRMP narrate all that went into their 9-miles of restoration on Last Chance Creek. The narration is critical and informative, but it is the contrast between areas restored and areas still untouched that speak loudest. In the restored areas the terrain is lush with greenlife, full of varieties of native plants, and the creek meanders and bubbles along. In the unrestored areas, where close to a hundred years of past grazing and road building have taken a toll, sage and a dry brush landscape back right up

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Watershed leaders on tour of restoration projects

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SIERRA NEVADA ALLIANCE

Keeping light in the range.

Executive Director's Letter

The Sierra Nevada Alliance, you will notice, recently got a face lift. Thanks to the pro bono work of Crocker Flanagan, we have a new logo. The logo maintains the heart of our older logo based on a beautiful wood cut – but incorporates our name and is more easily used in a wide variety of documents and venues.

We also chose a tagline – “Keeping light in the range”. The board of directors debated a number of options, but in the end felt that this phrase reflected our vision, hope and determination to pass on this amazing region’s wildlife, clean waters, scenic beauty and inspiration to others. While many people do not know that John Muir called the Sierra “the Range of Light”, – we hope our efforts educate more folks on this term. But even if they never learn this nick name, the essence of keeping hope, light and enlightenment is clearly at the heart of the Sierra Nevada Alliance.

And the face lift also included a revamp of our website, including a snazzy, animated introduction page. If you haven’t visited the website recently, we highly encourage you to peruse our new pages at www.sierranevadaalliance.org. Not only is there more updated and thorough information on our programs, but the imagery is amazing. Thanks goes to Mark Russell for his great work on our site and to office manager Kathy Haberman for riding herd on all the staff to keep this tool updated.

And of course you see here the new newsletter. There are also new designs for our fact-sheets and report covers.

But what is most exciting is that this new look is truly accompanied by new energy and expansion. This year we are doubling our staff thanks to expanded resources. We have added a Land Use Coordinator, a half-time Community Group Coordinator and are hiring a Development Director. All this is driven by expanded program work to protect the region. And, this summer we were blessed with the help of interns Melanie Loftus of Yale, Mary Ann Rozance of University of British Columbia, Jamie May who heads off to UC Berkeley, and Kate Winston a South Lake Tahoe resident. Huge thanks to all the team for their efforts this summer.

Hopefully this issue of the newsletter reflects a portion of the activity and accomplishments so far this year.

Cheers,

Joan Clayburgh
Executive Director

PERIODIC NEWSLETTER OF THE
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Sierra Nevada Alliance’s mission is to protect and restore the natural environment of the Sierra Nevada for future generations while ensuring healthy and sustainable communities. We do this by strengthening the work of people and organizations committed to the environmental integrity of the Sierra Nevada.



Printed on recycled paper.

Unique and United Conference 2005

The 2005 Sierra Nevada Alliance 12th Annual Conference was truly an inspiration. With the backdrop of beautiful Lake Tahoe to remind us of the beauty of the region, 180 participants gathered for 12 workshops, field trips, great speakers, and fun.

The weekend started with a breathtaking (for some literally the 10,000 feet of elevation stole their breath more than expected) hike along the Tahoe Rim Trail lead by guidebook author and Tahoe Rim Trail board member Tim Hauserman. The Youth Track kicked off and fifteen youth of ages fourteen to nineteen participated all weekend. The reception in the evening was a hit with the band Elements of Style, great food catered by Alliance staff, and unexpected entertainment (did you get to see Lynn Sadler, Mountain Lion Foundation Executive Director ride the folding bike (donated for the auction) around the room Friday to win a \$50 'dare you' bet from Mehmet McMillan of WildPlaces?).

On Saturday, Cabinet Secretary Terry Tamminen gave a rousing speech, showing off his Shakespearean actor background in the reading of Joseph Walker. And the fact repeated from Terry most often through the weekend is that Governor Schwar-



*Cabinet Secretary
Terry Tamminen*

zenegger has only two hummers, not the rumor of six. Workshops were packed and got "Great" ratings. In the evening Alliance board and friends presented awards (see page 4 for related story) and shut down the

night with some enthusiastic dancing to the blue-grass band Homemade Jam. Did anyone know that former Friends of the River Executive Director Betsy Reifsnider could rival 19 year old intern Jamie May in Kung Fu kicks on the dance floor?

Sunday, Andrea Mead Lawrence shared her thoughts from over 20 years of con-

servation leadership based in the eastern Sierra and received a standing ovation from the crowd. More workshops followed ranging from CEQA to involving recreationists in local conservation efforts. The fundraising workshop apparently had mock examples based on greek heroes – did you know Zeus was a major donor? And the conference ended with Lynn Sadler challenging everyone to be inspirational speakers. "Right now, we all have a voice that can be every bit as powerful and it is time to use it," Lynn said. Her rousing call to everyone to tap into their inspiration was a perfect ending to a great weekend.

While many conferences impart knowledge and new contacts, this conference truly hit the mark at ensuring people understood the uniqueness of their individual efforts (from restoring Hetch Hetchy to saving Round Valley in the eastern Sierra)

and at the same time that we are all united for one region. Everyone left more motivated to continue working hard for the protection of the Sierra, knowing they are never alone in their conservation efforts, and committed to keeping their passion for the region set on high.

So, save the date for the 13th Sierra Nevada Alliance Annual Conference - August 11-13, 2006.



Youth track participants on conference field trip

Special Thanks to our Conference Sponsors

Their generosity made our event possible

The Sierra Fund Environment Now

**Sorensen's Resort, Sierra Watch, Rebecca Robinson,
Chaco, A.A. Rich & Associates**

Community Action Partners, American Land Conservancy,
California Oak Foundation,
Center for Sierra Nevada Conservation,
Ebbetts Pass Forest Watch, Friends of Hope Valley,
Jan Chatten Brown & Associates,
Jumping Frog Research Institute, MERG,
Restore Hetch Hetchy, Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin Coalition,
Stan Weidert, Trust for Public Land, Sequoia Forest Keeper
and Integrated Environmental Restoration Service Inc., River Ridge,
Sierra Club California and Scott Kruse

2005 Awards for Outstanding Leadership

This year the Alliance recognized a number of amazing leaders. Assembly Member Tim Leslie and Assembly Member John Laird (with Chief of staff Clyde McDonald accepting) were presented the Dean Malley Sun Tzu Award.



Assemblyman Tim Leslie accepts Award

This award goes to a person or organization that developed a winning strategy and exemplified that to win without fighting is best. Sun Tzu wrote "The Art of War" about 500 BC and is in honor of past board member and master strategist Dean Malley. Assembly Members Tim Leslie and John Laird co-authored the legislation that established the Sierra Nevada Conservancy in 2004. Both collaborated with fellow assembly members, worked with diverse and atypical stakeholders, and negotiated effective language for the legislation. It is this collaborative effort, as well as their commitment to the Sierra, that earned them both the award. Their legislative partnership shows that saving the Sierra is not just a rural issue, but also an urban one and that protection of the region is not restricted to one party.

The Alliance also presented to Cabinet Secretary Terry Tamminen at the annual conference and Resources Secretary Mike Chrisman (with Crawford Tuttle accepting) at a Sacramento reception the Frank Wells Last Best Place Award. Both Secretary Tamminen and Secretary Chrisman played a critical role in creating the

Sierra Conservancy and their outstanding leadership in the current administration was critical to the success of establishing this new agency.

Steve Frisch, Sierra Business Council, was presented the Tissiack Award. Steve was presented this award not for one particular effort, but for his role in advising, leading, and supporting numerous conservation efforts around the Sierra. Steve's knowledge of the Sierra and its politics are unsurpassed. He has generously offered his support and knowledge to many individuals and groups and guided collaborative efforts to the advantage of the entire region. He is a leader who continues to inspire many.

Restore Hetch Hetchy was the recipient of the Sierra Lighthouse Award: This award goes to an organization which is a bright beacon of hope in the Range of Light. This is presented to a group which has achieved impressive conservation victories, is a



Ron Good of Restore Hetch Hetchy accepts award from Alliance President Terry Manning

statewide leader, and offers successful strategies for other Sierra groups to follow. May all Alliance groups one day be as accomplished, healthy, and capable.

The concept of restoring Hetch Hetchy valley in Yosemite National Park a few years ago "did not pass the laugh test" for many. But Restore Hetch Hetchy has diligently, passionately and strategically campaigned making the restoration of this valley a nationally debated and thoughtfully considered issue. While the dam has not

come down yet, the "dam of ignorance" on this issue has.

Sierra Watch and Mountain Area Preservation Foundation were also presented the Sierra Lighthouse award for their outstanding efforts to protect Martis Valley. Various development proposals and a community plan for Martis Valley threatened to turn a biologically rich and scenic meadow into a booming sprawl of golf courses and poorly planned growth. However, Sierra Watch and MAPF developed strategies to chronicle the treasures of this valley and alternative ways to more sustainably grow outside Truckee. They have educated the public, built coalitions, negotiated with developers and county supervisors and staff, commented, litigated, and settled on various proposals. Their strategic effort has won two key lawsuits, established over \$30 million dollars in future funding for land acquisition in Martis Valley, and sent Placer County back to the drawing board on their original poorly done community plan. While they admit they have a long way to go too – their strong effort is exemplary.

The Sierra Nevada Alliance also presented the Bed Rock Award (Batholith Award) in thanks for years of service on the Board of Directors of the Sierra Nevada Alliance. Just as the Sierra Nevada is a region united by one gigantic batholith (igneous rock that has melted and intruded surrounding strata – in the Sierra's case 400 miles long), the board is a bed rock of energy and commitment that supports individual and regional conservation efforts that unite Sierra conservationists. This year the award was presented to Randy Barrow and Bob Kelso.

Finally, The Mount Whitney Award was presented to board member Mark Kleinman for his commitment, energy, and creativity in leading the Sierra Nevada Alliance. Mark lead the organizations communication and marketing plan, secured his firm to create pro-bono our new logo, helped with fundraising, and participated in many other ways to build the organization.

New Board Members bring Commitment from Urban Centers

New talent comes to the Alliance this summer from Los Angeles and the Bay Area. Sierra Nevada Alliance member groups elected Jan Chatten-Brown and Tim Little to the board this July.

Tim Little directs the Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment's grantmaking programs and its Environmental Fiduciary Project, which encourages fiduciaries to incorporate environmental factors into prudent portfolio management. Tim also helped create the Northern California Grassroots Environment Fund, a joint project by a group of foundations providing small grants to grassroots environmental groups. In addition, for three years now The Rose Foundation also has provided scholarships for conservation activists to attend the Sierra Nevada Alliance

annual conference. Tim also formerly directed the Coalition for Clean Air. Prior to that, he coordinated fundraising and public outreach for Heal the Bay and Communities for a Better Environment. Tim is a resident of Oakland, California.

Jan Chatten-Brown, an experienced environmental attorney, served on the Sierra Nevada Alliance Advisory Board from 2004 to 2005. She has practiced almost exclusively in the area of environmental law, natural resources, land use, and municipal law since she graduated from UCLA Law School in 1971. For the first twenty-one



years of her practice, Jan worked in various public law offices. Additionally, Jan served as the Southern California Gubernatorial appointee to the California Tahoe Regional Planning Agency during the time when their Regional Plan was being developed, which was widely considered one of the most innovative of its time. Jan is a resident of Los Angeles, California.

In addition, the Alliance welcomes back for a second term board members Joseph Petrillo, Terry Manning, and Steve Robinson. Their biographies are on our website along with other board and advisory board members.

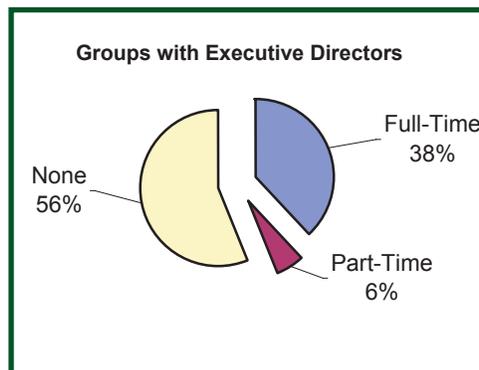
Sierra Nevada Alliance Member Groups - Capacity Survey Shows Room to Grow

Did you know that 30% of Sierra Nevada Alliance member groups are five years old or younger? 28% formed more than 20 years ago. Did you know that 77% of our conservation member groups operate on budgets under \$50,000 a year and over half have no Executive Director. Well, the Alliance didn't know this either until the beginning of this year! And quite frankly, understanding the capacity of all Sierra conservation groups is critical to the future of the Sierra.

When the Sierra Nevada Alliance was founded a key aspect of the organization was strengthening the work of individuals and groups working to protect the Sierra. We recognize that one of the best ways to protect all the Sierra's special places are the place-based organizations who are passionate and committed to preserving them. If you want to save Mono Lake – the Mono Lake Committee is your team. If you want to save Mountain Meadows in Lassen County – Mountain Meadows Conservancy is your partner. If you want

to restore Hetch Hetchy – Restore Hetchy Hetchy is the go-to-group.

But how does the Alliance best serve this string of conservation groups?



Percentage of Groups that have Executive Directors

At the end of 2004 and beginning of 2005 we surveyed our member groups to determine what capacity our groups currently had and where was our assistance needed most. The Member Group Survey was designed as a web survey and was

sent to 64 member groups. Respondents represented groups from every sub-region of the Sierra.

Of the current services the Alliance provides, our Annual Conference, information sharing, and email newsletter (Sierra Nevada Alliance Weekly) were the most popular. The top three developmental activities our member groups could benefit from are Communication/Marketing Plans, Campaign or Project Plans, and in-house board/staff training. And of course – helping groups raise more funding and resources to hire staff and implement larger campaigns is central to future success. So, the Alliance is pleased to announce that we are hiring this fall a community group coordinator whose heart and soul of their job is strengthening the Sierra Nevada Alliance member groups. Stay tuned to hear how we do at providing more support for groups around the range.

For a full copy of the capacity assessment report visit www.sierranevadaalliance.org

Risk of Development: from page 1

consider is that the majority of the Sierra development is shaped by county general plans because very few towns are incorporated. Sadly, seven of twenty counties in the Sierra have general plans that will shape development for the future that are more than ten years old. According to Alliance research, seventy percent of these counties do not have any county-wide map or inventory of areas that need to be protected. Eighty-five percent do not have any plans for preserving critical habitat.

To get the news out on these new findings, the Sierra Nevada Alliance released the report in five simultaneous news conferences held in San Francisco, Sacramento, Reno, Fresno and Bakersfield. This news release strategy involved board members, advisory board members, interns and many conservation partners.

At the Fresno news conference, Sierra Nevada Alliance board president, Terry Manning drove home one of the main report messages: “Residents, visitors and elected leaders still have choices on how these mountain and foothill communities develop, but if we do nothing, the qualities we love and enjoy will be lost.”

The study area for this report includes all or part of the 20 California and three Nevada counties that make up the Sierra Nevada mountain range. The core thirteen Sierra counties, where 75% of their land or population is within the Sierra Nevada are: Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Inyo, Lassen, Mariposa, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sierra, and Tuolumne. Other counties in the Sierra are: Butte, Carson City (NV), Douglas (NV), Fresno, Kern, Madera, Tehama, Tulare, Washoe (NV), and Yuba.

The report includes information on a variety of growth and growth impact indicators including privately owned parcels, traffic, farm, forest and ranchlands, endangered species, development in riparian areas and more. One highlight of the public release was that the Sierra’s oak woodlands are most vulnerable to sprawl. The oak woodlands of the western Sierra

foothills, where approximately 70% of the region’s population lives, have been hardest hit by development. Less than one percent of the foothills are protected from development, and much of the area lies within commuting distance of rapidly growing cities in the Central Valley. Similarly, more than three-fourths of hardwood habitats are privately owned in Sierra Nevada counties with significant acreage in such habitat. For the region as a whole, approximately 68% – almost two million acres – of hardwood habitat is privately owned.

The greatest news of the Alliance release was that our principles for smarter Sierra development were picked up in many news articles and TV stories around California, Nevada and the country. {See side box for principles}

Much to the staff’s delight, a well-done Associated Press story by Don Thompson appeared in well over 80 papers and websites. The story appeared in almost all of the major California newspapers and even national publications including: The San Francisco Chronicle, The Oakland Tribune, The Contra Costa Times, The San Diego Union Tribune, The San Jose Mercury News, The Sacramento Business Journal, The Miami Herald, and the Seattle Post Intelligencer. Non-AP stories appeared in The Fresno Bee, Auburn Journal, Bakersfield Californian, Union Democrat, and YubaNet. The story also appeared in local papers throughout the Sierra Nevada: from Lassen County to Kern County, east side and west side. In South Lake Tahoe, the story made the front page above the fold.

Thanks to the news conferences, we reached millions of Californians on one day through television news. More people watch TV for their news than read the paper. We were on most major outlets in our targeted population centers. In Reno, it was one of the 5:00 news’ leading stories. In addition, the story was picked up by the networks and ran on some affiliates throughout California, such as Redding.



Sierra Smart Growth Principles

1. Maintain the historic development pattern of compact town centers separated by rural countryside.
2. Preserve permanent open space as an integral part of new development both to protect critical natural areas and to provide opportunities for recreation.
3. Protect and restore natural areas.
4. Maintain the sustainable economic productivity of the region’s farm lands, ranch lands and forests.

But the report and public release is only one tactic in the Alliance’s Planning for the Future Campaign. The Alliance is now working with conservation groups in target Sierra counties to help craft successful strategies and broad coalitions to shape smarter growth in county plans. The successful report release kicked off this new effort with a big bang. We hope to revisit the same indicators in the report over time and see that our new campaign has made a positive difference in protecting Sierra wildlife, lands, and rural communities.

For a copy of the full 100 page report, with detailed information on each Sierra Nevada county’s land use indicators, visit the publication section of the Sierra Nevada Alliance website at: www.sierranevadaalliance.org or email sna@sierranevadaalliance.org

Restoration Tour con't: from page 1

to the creek that is gullied and eroded. The restoration work that Wilcox and company have used is a successful plog and pond technique to restore Last Chance Creek. They have rerouted the creek in most areas back to its natural bed before it was channelized by dairy farmers and ranchers of old. They have taken steps to restore the natural gradient and flow. And yes, while for some of us the visuals were the best, the CRMP has done the pre- and post-monitoring using photographs, biological assessments, and other science to determine if there is restored proper function and replicable success.

This Sierra Nevada Alliance organized restoration tour occurred in mid-May for 39 participants. Watershed Coordinator Megan Suarez was principal tour guide, organizer, and watershed charades expert. Participants were from watershed councils throughout the range, as well as representatives from the Department of Water Resources watersheds program and the grant managers for both the Lahontan and Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Boards.

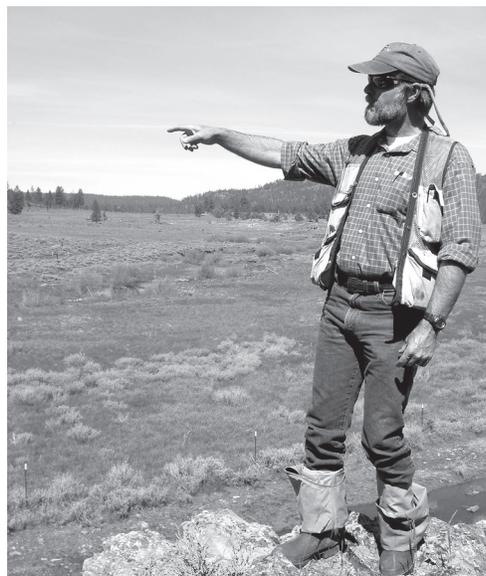
And to kick the tour off right, soil scientist and restoration specialist Michael Hogan began it with a day of classroom training on restoration principals, planning, monitoring and management. Michael is the principal of Integrated Environmental Restoration and former President of the California Society for Ecological Restoration. His highly interactive and animated classroom work provided a strong base to understanding what makes successful restoration. He focused on adaptive management, restoration guidelines, and project steps. Michael also emphasized developing success criteria and monitoring plans to gauge success and the ability to restore proper function to the ecosystem. This classroom component was so well received that participants from the Lahontan and Central Valley Water Board are trying to get their respective Boards to adopt Michael Hogan's adaptive management principles for restoration projects.

In addition to the Feather River Last Chance Creek, participants toured three restoration sites in the Lake Tahoe Basin and another site in the Feather River watershed. Sites varied from efforts to restore water quality and control erosion in neighborhoods and ski resorts, to sites restoring habitat and proper function in wildlands.

And to stay true to monitoring for success, the Alliance asked participants to evaluate the workshop. Participant evaluations claimed that they learned a lot, made great connections, and felt more confident about returning to their watersheds to start planning for watershed restoration projects. Another important accomplishment from the Alliance's perspective was the tour strengthened relationships between Sierra watershed coordinators and state level grant managers.

The tour was made possible with support from a federal 319h grant, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Resources Legacy Fund Foundation.

The Alliance is excited to see new stewards understand the need for and basic principles of conducting restoration projects throughout the range. This tour is one step in a longer-term effort to restore health to all the Sierra's wildlands and watersheds.



Jim Wilcox points out restoration efforts in the Feather River Watershed



New Watershed Program Resources

For the following publications and resources, visit our website at www.sierranevadaalliance.org

2005 Watershed Community Directory

This Directory has profiles and contact information for over fifty groups working on watershed protection and restoration in the Sierra. This can be found under publications.

Watershed Assessment Guide on Web

This section of the website includes How to get started; Common steps in conducting a watershed assessment; Assessment Websites; and Data Collection Websites. This section of the website is in our watershed program pages.

Creek Stewardship Day Toolkit

The Creek Day toolkit is divided into sections of activities such as planning your event, organizing for the day's projects and activities, recruitment/publicity, and other event logistics. This guide is designed primarily for the first time creek day event organizer. This can be found under publications.

Welcome New Member Groups!

The Sierra Nevada Alliance wants to welcome our newest member groups!

Environmental Defense Project of Sierra County works to enforce environmental laws and ensures their county makes sound land use decisions in Sierra County.

Friends of the North Fork works to protect the remote and rugged North Fork of the American River. Friends has been opposing the building of a multi-use trail in the canyon near the confluence segment that is not in keeping with the canyon's wild and primitive values.

Mountain Area Preservation Foundation is a steward for preserving, protecting, and enhancing the Truckee, Middle Truckee River and Donner Summit area's natural environment; and is an advocate for a well planned community.

North Fork American River Alliance's mission is to preserve the wild, scenic and cultural heritage within the watershed of the North Fork American River. NFARA also works to protect public access and provide volunteer assistance to public land agencies doing restoration and protection projects.

Save Round Valley Alliance Advocates for Smart Growth (website: <http://www.srva.net>) works to protect and enhance the quality of life in Inyo County by encouraging appropriate planning and development that safeguard our natural environment, our regional economy, and the interests of local residents. Two current projects concern the Pine Creek Communities Development and the Whitney Portal Preserve.

Sierra Club Placer Group (website: <http://motherlode.sierraclub.org/placer/index.html>) has been focusing on Bickford Ranch development proposal that would impact huge heritage oaks and participating in shaping the placer county conservation plan, among other efforts in Placer County.

Sierra Club Tehipite Chapter (website: <http://www.tehipite.sierraclub.org>) works in Fresno, Madera, Mariposa, and Merced Counties, and all of Yosemite National Park and all of Kings Canyon National Park but excluding Sequoia National Park. The chapter has a very active outings program and is involved in many environmental issues such as air quality;

Sierra Club Yahi Group works in Butte, Lassen, Glenn, Plumas and Tehama Counties. Recent conservation efforts include preserving Bidwell Ranch, preventing excessive tree cutting, participating in local planning, and education regarding water transfer struggles around huge developments in their region.

Sugar Pine Foundation (website: <http://www.sugarpinefoundation.org>) restores the natural regeneration of sugar pines and western white pines in the Lake Tahoe Basin, so that they will continue to be important components of the mixed-conifer forests. Tahoe Chapter California Native Plant Society (website of CNPS is www.cnps.org) seeks to increase understanding of California's and the Tahoe area's native flora and to preserve this rich resource for future generations.

Tahoe Chapter California Native Plant Society (website of CNPS is www.cnps.org) seeks to increase understanding of California's and the Tahoe area's native flora and to preserve this rich resource for future generations.

Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Council focuses on water quality, watershed planning, watershed assessment/restoration and public outreach and education on the Upper Mokelumne River, Dry Creek, and Upper Calaveras River watersheds. The Council is a collaborative forum for all vested interests, including local residents, agricultural, timer and other commercial entitites, recreational users, and public agencies.

Voters Choice of Tuolumne County (website: <http://www.tuolumnevoterschoice.com/index.html>) is a grass-roots organization of citizens who are concerned about the impact of growth on quality of life. Members and friends are dedicated to preserving the rural beauty and historic elements of communities and environments through active participation in the policy making process of local government.

Wolf Creek Community Alliance is a local volunteer organization whose primary mission is to preserve and restore Wolf Creek, its tributaries, and watershed. Wolf Creek is in the Yuba Watershed at the heart of Grass Valley. The WCCA educates the general public about the aesthetic, recreational, economic, and ecological value a natural stream offers; performs hands-on clean-up and restoration work; seeks to implement restoration projects that will make our creek an urban oasis; and create community involvement and pride in the Wolf Creek Watershed.

For more information on all member groups, visit our member group section of the website at www.sierranevadaalliance.org.



Sand Pond next to Sardine Lake - being protected by the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin Coalition

Pre-Register for Your License to Protect the Sierra You Love!

Join the Sierra Nevada Alliance and thousands of visionary Californians in a statewide effort to protect and restore the Sierra Nevada this fall by pre-registering to purchase a Sierra Nevada License Plate.

Sierra Nevada License Plates will be issued by the California Department of Motor Vehicles, if as hoped, legislation is passed this fall allowing for the creation of these plates. These would be official license plates available for all vehicles registered in California.

Proceeds from the sales and renewal of Sierra Nevada License Plates will directly fund the new Sierra Nevada Conservancy's efforts to protect and restore the 25 million acres of majestic land, water, wildlife and rural communities that are the Sierra Nevada and California Cascades. Included are the rivers and creeks, lakes and ponds, meadows and forests, farms and ranches, and rural towns – from the Modoc Plateau all the way to Lake Isabella and more! All the places you love.



While the plate is still under consideration by the California legislature and not currently available, we will need 7500 people ready to purchase plates in the first year. This is not an easy task to get so many folks to sign up in the first year, so pre-registration is critical in the effort to establish a strong source of funding for the new agency.

The Sierra Nevada Alliance is working closely with The Sierra Fund who is leading the legislative and license plate pre-registration effort. Assembly member Tim Leslie (R-Tahoe City) is authoring the legislation, AB 84, this year and is once again joined by Assembly Member John Laird (D-Santa Cruz). This bi-partisan, rural/urban team is working hard on the bill

and as we go to print with the newsletter the fate of the legislation is still unclear. For more on the legislation visit www.leginfo.ca.gov and type in AB 84 under Bill Information.

But the best way for Sierra supporters to help is to pre-register for a plate today. **Pre-registration is easy. Log onto www.sierrallicenseplate.org and fill out the simple form.** You will be notified by email when the Sierra Nevada License Plates are made available by DMV. At that time you can formally register for a Sierra Nevada License Plate for an issuance fee of \$50, and \$40 each year for renewal.

Sierra Nevada License Plates will be available for cars, trucks, motorcycles, trailers, RVs and boats. And of course you'll be available to personalize your license plate.

"It's good to know that my license plate renewal will be an investment in the Sierra," says John Brissenden, owner of Sorensen's Resort in Hope Valley. We at the Alliance agree. Please sign up today!

Welcome New Staff

Autumn Bernstein will be taking over for Shannon Raborn as the Land Use Coordinator, responsible for coordinating the organization's regional land use program.

Autumn has four years experience in advocacy and fundraising for Greenbelt Alliance as their South Bay Field Representative and grant writer. She was also a Campaign Director for a leading political consulting firm specializing in environmental and pres-



sive issues, The Next Generation. She has worked with grassroots groups and directed campaigns on issues including stopping sprawl, protecting ancient forests, promoting smart growth, affordable housing and mass transit. She is well versed in message development, political strategy, coalition building, fundraising, leadership development, campaign management, and building effective grassroots organizations. Autumn holds a B.S. with honors in Wildlife, Fish and Conservation Biology from UC Davis. Her hobbies include hiking, snowboarding, and snowshoeing.

Julie Leimbach is the new half-time Community Group Coordinator, responsible for assisting the Executive Director and staff in supporting our community group program and Sierra Nevada Conser-

vancy related efforts. Julie will also continue to work half-time, as the Coordinator of the Foothills Water Network. Julie holds a BA from Tufts University. Her and her husband are just now completing construction of a "green" straw bale home in Lotus CA. Julie brings to the Alliance a passion for grassroots organizing and deep commitment to the conservation issues of the Sierra.

