

Tehipite Topics

April 2004 ♪ Vol. 50, No. 3

www.tehipite.sierraclub.org

Memorial Service Holds Exxon Responsible

Fifteen Years Later, Exxon's Mess Remains a Harsh Lesson

FRESNO - Members of Fresno's faith and conservation communities gathered on March 24, 2004 in front of the North Cedar Street Exxon gas station to remember the tragedy of the Exxon Valdez oil spill. Fifteen years ago, on March 24, 1989, the Exxon Valdez oil tanker spilled 11 million barrels of oil into pristine Prince William Sound in Alaska, resulting in the death of 1 billion animals and the destruction of the fishing industry and the local Native American economy.

Unitarian Universalist minister Brian Jessup led the group in a memorial service to commemorate the 15th anniversary of the oil spill, the worst environmental disaster in the history of the United States. Beyond raising awareness about the aftereffects of the spill, the memorial participants also aimed educate the community about the detrimental impacts of over dependence on oil on the environment, air quality, health, and national security.

"I think people need to start understanding how our over dependence on oil is causing damage at both ends of the process, in tragedies like Exxon Val-

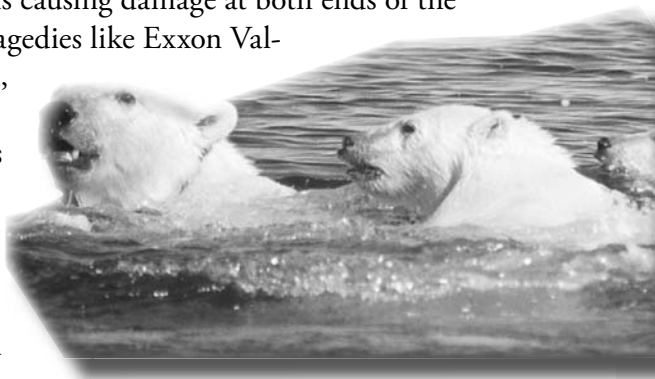
dez in Alaska, and then on our children's health here in Fresno in the form of air pollution and asthma," said

Tracy Pepper, chair of the League of Women Voters of Fresno.

Memorial participants expressed frustration that the industry has not seemed to have learned from their mistakes like the Exxon Valdez spill.

Since the destructive impact of the spill was so severe 15 years ago, we cannot trust that the plan to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska would be any safer. And it would destroy

Please see Exxon on page 4



Chapter General Meeting

Canoe the San Joaquin River and the BLM Adopt-A-Cabin Program in the Death Valley Region

presented by Richard Sloan

Wednesday, April 14, 2004

7:00 p.m.

Unitarian Church
4144 N. Millbrook
Fresno, California

Richard Sloan will present two slide show programs. Richard is co-founder of River Tree Volunteers and also teaches environmental geography in the Death Valley Region. *Canoe the San Joaquin River* will discuss briefly the current problems and pleasures of canoeing on the San Joaquin River between Friant Dam and Skaggs Bridge County Park.

The Bureau of Land Management has a little known program to restore cabins of historical or significant recreational value for the general public to use free of charge. Richard will explain the program and show slides of some of the cabins and their locations. Richard will be available for questions afterward. You can e-mail Richard at RiverRich1509@aol.com for more information.

Merced Group on Page 3



Tehipite Topics is published monthly except July and August by the Tehipite Chapter of the Sierra Club. Subscriptions are \$1 per year for members, included in the annual dues, and \$10 for non-members. Mail Checks to Tehipite Chapter, Sierra Club, P.O. Box 5396, Fresno, CA 93675.

Tehipite Chapter

Chapter phone (559) 271-0652
 Web . . . www.tehipite .sierraclub.org

Officers

Chapter Chair

Richard Sloan (559) 297-5367
 RiverRich1509@aol.com

Chapter Vice-Chair

JoAnne Armstrong. (209) 7265-0636
 sierrafer@peoplepc.com

Chapter Treasurer

Joe Ruff (559) 271-2463
 lpsh@msn.com

Executive Committee Members

William Fjellbo (559) 642-4511
 jbfjellbo@sierratel.com

June Gill (559) 224-4105
 mailto:junegill@cvip.net

Aimee Leyva (559) 438-8670
 aleyva@fresno.ca.gov

George Whitmore . . (559) 229-5808
 Geowhit@qnis.net

Chapter Committee Chairs

Awards

Gerald Vinnard (559) 431-9606

Webmaster / Topics Editor

John Rasmussen. (559) 332-2419
 John@BigBaldy.com

Hospitality

Ray Marx. (559) 641-7589

Membership

Marian Orvis. (559) 226-0145

Ione Scott (559) 665-0460

Ray Marx. (559) 641-7589

Newsletter Distribution

Marian Orvis. (559) 226-0145

Outings and Outings Leader Training

Bruce Busch. (559) 225-8935

. tehipite50@netzero.net

Programs

Heather Anderson . . (559) 434-2510

. ha062@cvip.net

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

LAND STEWARD - SIERRA FOOTHILL CONSERVANCY

by Chuck Peck

The Sierra Foothill Conservancy is looking for a part time land steward. This will be a paid position and, for the right person, may evolve into a full time position. Thanks to the support of groups like the Sierra Club and Fresno Audubon and all of its members, SFC has been successful beyond our wildest dreams of its founders since it was established in 1996. SFC owns three wildlife preserves totaling over 4,700 acres that protect beautiful habitat for foothill species both rare and common. This land brings with it the responsibility to care for it properly. We can't just lock the gate and walk away. Fences need to be built and maintained. Exotic species like star thistle need to be kept in check. Trails need maintenance.

The bulk of that work is done by volunteers. But SFC has reached the point where it needs a person to plan and organize the work. The job will entail:

- Working with other staff to set priorities.
- Schedule the work.
- Organize and supervise the volunteers.
- Make sure all tools and materials are ready when the volunteers show up.

The job will require some weekend work and since it is part time, we are probably looking for someone who is retired but physically fit and who wants to contribute to protecting our environment in a real and important way while supplementing their retirement income. Anyone interested please call Chuck Peck at 559-855-3473. One caution - this is a real job with real responsibilities and will require a genuine commitment.



Conservation Committee

Conservation Chair

Heather Anderson . . (559) 434-2510
 ha062@cvip.net

Air Quality / Transportation / Global Warming

Kevin Hall. (559) 227-6421
 Hallmos@aol.com

Kings Canyon National Park / Giant Sequoia National Monument / Sequoia Forest

John Rasmussen. . . . (559) 332-2410
 John@BigBaldy.com

Sierra National Forest

Tom Eliason (559) 439-7195
 TomEliason@attbi.com

Yosemite National Park

George Whitmore . . (559) 229-5808
 geowhit1954@comcast.net



North Fork of the Kaweah Hike

Wed, April 7, 7 pm - Conservation Committee
 Wed, April 14, 7:30 pm - Executive Committee
 Unitarian Church
 4144 N. Millbrook
 Fresno, California

Merced Group General Meeting

*Newly released video:
"Hetch-Hetchy, Yosemite's Lost Valley"*

presented by Ron Good

Thursday, April 15, 7:30 P.M.

MSEFCU
1021 Olivewood Dr.
Merced, California

Presenter and speaker, Ron Good, Executive director of Restore Hetch-Hetchy Ron Good brings his message of restoring Hetch-Hetchy Valley to its previous state as "one of nature's rarest and most precious temples". He will be showing a new 2003 documentary on "Yosemite Valley's twin", narrated by Shari Belafonte and produced by Deborah Landowne and Restore Hetch-Hetchy.

In 1913 Congress authorized the city of San Francisco to construct a dam and reservoir on the Tuolumne River in Hetch-Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park. In 1923 O'Shaughnessy dam was built and 10 years later after pipelines were completed, San Francisco began harvesting the water. In 1987 Ronald Reagan's Secretary of the Interior, Donald Hodel proposed restoring the Valley to its natural state.

Ron Good is the founder of Restore Hetch-Hetchy and served as its first chair. As its current executive director he heads a diverse organization with representatives of many occupations and walks of life. Their approach is to creatively craft a plan that will be a win-win solution for the cities of the Bay Area, the Turlock and Modesto irrigation districts, as well as those wanting to see Hetch-Hetchy Valley returned to its natural state of beauty.

Come join us for this exciting new video and to hear more on the current progress in the restore Hetch-Hetchy movement. For more information please check out the web site: www.restorehetchhetchy.org.

Merced Group

Group Chair

Ione Scott(559) 665-0460
. iones@thegrid.net

Group Vice-Chair

JoAnne Armstrong . . .(209) 726-0636
. sierrafer@peoplepc.com

Group Treasurer

Urla Garland(209) 722-3749

Group Secretary

Annette Allsup(209) 723-5152

Member-at-Large

Jake Kiriara(209) 394-7028

Publications

Rod Webster(209) 723-4747

Agriculture

Charlie Magneson . . .(209) 394-7045

Membership

Jule Biesiada (209) 384-2835

Tammy Lonero(209) 665-5507

Publicity

Rod Webster(209) 723-4747

Population

Tammy Lonero(209) 665-5507



Outings & Activities:

Saturday, April 3rd

Vernal Pools in Merced County
Marsh Pitman, (209) 723-2986

Saturday, April 17th

Hetch-Hetchy Valley (1A)
A relaxing hike to view the valley and enjoy the wildflower display.
Rod Good and Marsh Pitman, (209) 723-2986

Saturday, May 22nd

Mark your calendar for our Annual Picnic at Cindy Lashbrook's home on the Merced River. Cindy will share more of her horticultural expertise and showcase the eco-friendly techniques she uses on her own acreage.
(details and directions to follow)

Exxon

continued from page 1

a pristine and beautiful refuge as well," said Heather Anderson, the Conservation Chair of the Tehipite Chapter of the Sierra Club, who has visited both Prince William Sound and the Arctic Refuge. "We should not sacrifice America's Arctic Refuge for several months of oil that will not flow for another 10 years."

Some memorial participants dressed in black clothes, holding photos of oil soaked birds and animals, while others held signs linking the oil industry to air pollution and the country's war in Iraq, and calling for renewable energy alternatives.

"It is a tragedy that we have had to go to war over our dependence on oil," said Nick DeGraff, of the Central California Institute. "The irony is if our government would just prioritize renewable energy, we could be totally independent of oil from the Middle East-and we would gain tens of thousands of jobs in the renewable energy industry here in the Central Valley."

The good news for participants at the memorial service was that the Bush administration was recently dealt a setback in its attempt to exploit Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Their provision to include revenues from oil drilling in the Refuge in the 2005 federal budget - was stripped from both the Senate and the House versions of the budget bill this month. Conservationists, however, remain vigilant for renewed efforts to open the Refuge in the coming year.

"A disaster the magnitude of the Exxon Valdez oil spill should never happen again, least of all in such a fragile place as the Arctic Refuge," said Anderson. "Congress and the Bush administration need to honor the American public's desire to keep the Refuge clean and safe, instead of bowing to their oil industry cronies."



We grieve for the destruction of the Exxon-Valdez oil disaster and we fire our spirits for the struggle to free ourselves from market place madness.

National River Cleanup Week

Help out on the San Joaquin River!

National River Cleanup Week is May 15-22. The area of the river where the most help is needed is at 8660 W. Hernon Avenue, just downstream of the Highway 99 Bridge. Come out on May 15 & 16 and help out. Organizations such as RiverTree Volunteers, San Joaquin River Parkway Trust and Millerton Area Watershed Coalition will all be there. For more information call Richard Sloan at (559) 696-2971 or Email at RiverRich1509@aol.com.



EcoView

by Marian Orvis

It has been much too long since we've seen one another. Let's hope the separation will not continue.

I have been so tired of hearing and reading political stuff! I could devote this column to green home cleaning tips; healthy eating; choosing organic products; certified recycled paper; hybrid fitness, i.e., in cars, but not this time. I simply want to read some strange-but-true, sometimes funny and/or ironic items from Eco-Mania from past months of ECONIEWS. Come on along...

Know Your Veggies: Corn is grown on every continent except Antarctica, while blueberries, cranberries and Concord grapes are the only three fruits native to North America. Pumpkins, also a native and arguably a fruit because it contains seeds, have been used medically to remove freckles and cure snakebites. A condition called apocolocynosis means fear of turning into a pumpkin.

Please see EcoView on page 5

EcoView

continued from page 4

Charred Coal: You'd have to cut down or burn 761 million trees to add the same amount of carbon dioxide--17.5 million tons--to the atmosphere as a Midwestern coal-burning electric power plant.

Transit of Venus: On June 8, the planet Venus will pass across the face of the sun for the first time since 1882. The passage will take about six hours and will be visible--with appropriate filters to protect your eyes--from almost everywhere on earth as a round black dot crossing the sun's bright face.

Aye...There's the Rub-ber: Giving new meaning to the word "Protection," a Brazilian condom factory is using rubber from local trees. This will raise the value of local rubber and make the native forest more profitable to preserve than to log. The factory hopes to produce 200 million condoms a year by 2006.

Holding the Bag: Up to five trillion plastic bags were produced in 2002! Their use dropped to 95% in Ireland, where they are derisively called the "national flag," after the government imposed a 15 cent tax on each one. Usage dropped 90% in South Africa, where they've been dubbed the "national flower," after industry was required to make

them more durable--and expensive--to discourage throw-aways.

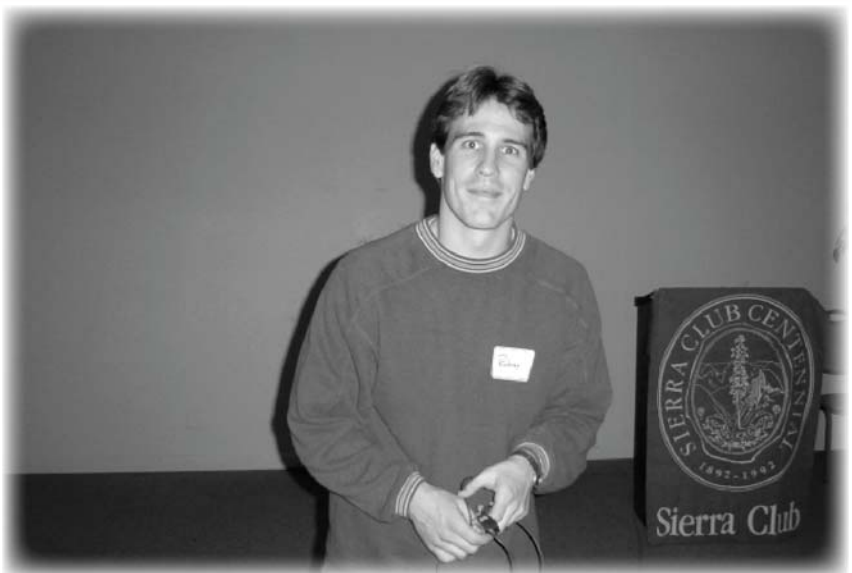
Key Hole: The Lawrence Livermore high-security weapons lab lost 12 master keys that unlock thousands of gates and doors, didn't report it for more than a month and made little effort to evaluate the risk. Replacing and upgrading the lab's locks is expected to cost about \$1.7 million.

Ashes to Ashes: A new theory suggests that house dust wards off some diseases and that asthma may actually stem from too little dust. During one minute of regular breathing, a human takes in from 150,000 to one million specks of dust. (cough, cough...excuse me)

True Grit: Saudi Arabia, fearing shortages because of the increased needs of its neighbors such as Iran, has imposed restrictions on the export of sand.

Guilt Trip: The city of Lyons, France, has placed 10,000 red plastic dog droppings on city sidewalks in hopes they will prompt dog owners to clean up after their pets. France's third largest city spends \$600,000 a year to clean up droppings.

With that last one, I think I better stop for now. See you next month?



Annual Banquet

San Joaquin River Trail

by Don Redmond

Progress toward completion of the San Joaquin River Trail has been stalled for some time due to a combination of factors. The trail is complete in the Madera County portion from Redinger Lake past Mammoth Pool to its juncture with the Pacific Crest Trail near Mammoth Lakes. The trail work crew conducts bi-monthly maintenance work sessions on this section and enjoys excellent relations with the Forest Service. A few more workers could be used for this; however, transport and skill levels are limiting factors.

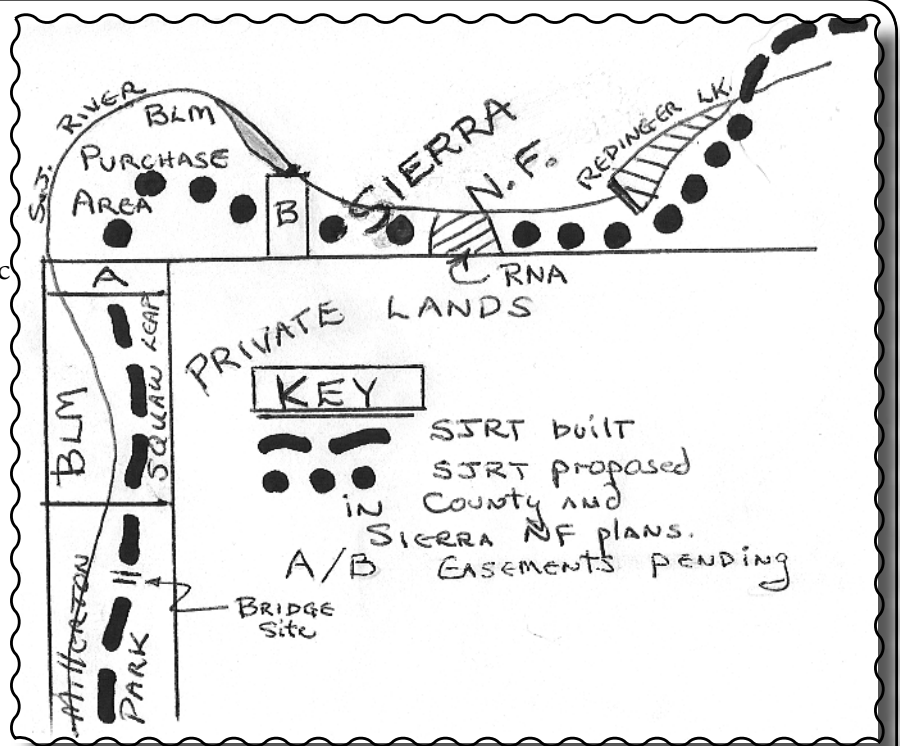
The beginning section northerly through Miller-ton Park thence through BLM's River Gorge unit remains unextended. The route across the Patterson Bend acquisition area, costing the U.S. over \$1MM, remains inaccessible due to 2 unresolved easement needs.

A further impedance is an unresolved clearance to cross the Backbone Research Natural Area in the Sierra National Forest. This area was set aside many years ago strictly for study of the endangered *Carpenteria* flower. Local Forest officials conclude a simple boundary adjustment could allow for the trail to continue adjacent to the river, since the subject plants only occur distantly uphill from the river boundary. However, the deciding official level requires studying possible alternatives, two of which are: a 2-bridge bypass or a complete re-routing of the trail, both being across the river. Local units of major environmental groups have voiced opposition to the bridging proposal due to the obvious impacts and costs. A similar proposal has been raised by BLM to resolve their easement issues.

The Forest Service has no funding or spare personnel to perform the required impact studies as part of their decision process. The uncertainty of how or when these issues are to be resolved forces the Forest Service to withhold permission for the trail crew to proceed with building on the already flagged route. See accompanying map for details.

The big floods of 1995 and 1996 tore out the state constructed Sandy Creek fording on the trail. A replacement bridge structure has been in storage since, due to a lack of funds for installation, estimated to be about \$85,000. A combo of grants is proposed to accomplish this.

Beth Lecox, an outing leader, is the Tehipite Chapter's new delegate to the Trail Council.



63

Outings

Our Tehipite Chapter Outings Chair is Bruce Busch (559) 225-8935 or tehipite50@netzero.com. Please contact him with any questions concerning our outings program. Contact the trip leader directly if you are interested in one of the listed trips.

Outings have a long history in the Sierra Club as a means for people to enjoy and get to know our natural environment. Through leader's efforts, we take people into the outdoors in a manner that promotes their safety and well being, and encourages the respectful use of the environment as a recreational resource. By taking part in outings, trip participants become strong proponents for preservation of the outdoors. Over the years, outings have fueled the Club's conservation efforts and provided a training ground for its leadership. Your leaders are grassroots volunteers, an essential part of the Sierra Club, and help make the Club an important force for conservation in this country. Please note that a new sign-in sheet has been provided by to your leaders which codifies the outing's leader and participant's responsibilities.

Tehipite Chapter outings are free and open to the public. All leaders are unpaid volunteers assuming responsibility for a good trip, and your cooperation is mandatory. Please call the leader well in advance for details, reservations, or if you plan to cancel. Outings start officially at the trailhead. Carpooling is encouraged but leaders can not be responsible for the organization of carpooling. The Sierra Club does not provide insurance for transportation. Drivers are normally reimbursed five cents per mile by passengers. No guns, pets, or radios are permitted on trips. Please leave the area cleaner that you find it. Travel responsibility rests on each participant.

Trip Schedule

April 2004

April 3rd - Saturday

Day Hike (2B) Moderate
Ladybug Trail.
Beth Leacox (559) 446-1825

April 4th - Sunday

Cross Country Skiing - Intermediate
Location to be determined, weather and snow permitting.
Walt Taguchi (559) 435-2818

April 10th - Saturday

Day Hike (1A). Horseshoe Bend.
Don Redmond (559) 268-1537

April 10th - Saturday

Cross Country Skiing - Intermediate
Location to be determined, weather and snow permitting.
Bruce Busch (559) 225-8935

April 17th - Saturday

Day Hike (1A). Skyharbor.
Aimee Leyva (559) 438-8670 or
(559) 301-3977

April 18th - Sunday

Day Hike (2A)
Hike from Friant Dam to Ball Ranch on San Joaquin River Parkway Conservancy properties. Surprise on this hike!
Richard Sloan (559) 696-2971

April 22nd - 26th Thursday - Monday

Channel Island National Park
There will be an Island trip from April 22nd to the 26th, to an Island of our choice. We will have two leaders, so we can have up to thirty participants. First come first served. Last time we had a more than full trip sign up in less than hour. We will camp on an Island in the Channel Island National Park. Plenty of day hikes of varying difficulties. Trip fee includes transportation from Fresno, boat and camping fees, lunch, dinners on the Island, plus use of rented sea kayaks.
This trip is limited and fills up fast!
Dave Wallace (559) 284-2586 and Steve Cosner- (559) 281-5983

April 24th - Saturday

Cross Country Skiing - Intermediate
Location to be determined, weather and snow permitting.
Chuck Nacino (559) 325-1212

April 24th - Saturday

Day Hike (2A)
Goat Mountain.
Bruce Busch (559) 225-8935

May 2004

May 1st - Saturday

Day hike (1A) Moderate.
Willow Creek. We will pass by two waterfalls.
Don Redmond (559) 268-1537

May 1st - Saturday

Cross Country Skiing - Intermediate
Location to be determined, weather and snow permitting.
Walt Taguchi (559) 435-2818

May 6th - Thursday

Summer Planning Meeting
This meeting is for hikers as well as leaders! Meet at the House of Shish Kabob at Fresno and Alluvial for summer hikes and backpack planning. Bring maps and ideas. Dinner at 6:30, come at 7:30 for meeting. This is everyone's opportunity to shape and enhance the Outing program. Everyone is welcomed.
Call ahead for reservations before May the 4th.
Bruce Busch 225-8935

May 8th, Saturday

Day hike (2C) Moderately strenuous.
An all-uphill out-and-back hike to the tumbling and spectacular Chilnualna Falls. Carolyn Ordway 559-449-7780 or cell 559-281-8223

May 8th, Saturday

Cross Country Skiing-Intermediate
Location to be determined, weather and snow permitting.
Gerald Vinnard (559) 431-9606

May 15th - Saturday

Day hike (3C)
This is the Panorama Trail hike. We leave from the Yosemite Valley floor and climb to Glacier Point. From there we follow the Panorama Trail over the Illilouette, across the Panorama Cliffs to Nevada Falls, than down the Mist Trail past Vernal Falls.
Walt Taguchi (559) 435-2818

May 14th - 16th — Friday - Sunday

Car Camp. Hetch-Hetchy.
Beth Leacox (559) 446-1825

May 22nd - Saturday

Day hike(2C) Strenuous, but worth it. Join me on a hike to the top of the highest waterfall in North America, and the 5th highest fall in the world. Yes, I'm talking about Yosemite Falls, all 2,425 feet of it.
Don Gaede (559) 434-5138

May 28th - 31st — Friday - Monday.

Backpack (4E)
Backpack from 10,200' trailhead in the Inyo Mtns to Beveridge "ghost town" at 5,500' and then to hot springs in Saline Valley if shuttle can be arranged, otherwise return to trailhead. 4wd needed to get to trailhead.
Richard Sloan (559) 696-2971

May 29th

Day hike (1A) Moderate
Grant Grove to Sequoia Lake. Lunch at the lake and return to Grant Grove.
Bruce Busch (559) 225-8935

June 5th, Saturday

Half Dome (4E) Very strenuous. Out-and-back to some of the valley's most spectacular views. Beautiful water falls. Carolyn Ordway (559)449-7780 or cell (559) 281-8223

June 5th, Saturday

Day hike(2A) Moderate
Redwood Canyon
Don Redmond (559) 268-1537

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Wont you join the Sierra Club and add your voice to protect the planet, and John Muir's legacy?



F94Q W13001 1
P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968
Encluse check and mail to: SierraClub,

Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to Sierra magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

- MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES: INDIVIDUAL JOINT
- INTRODUCTORY \$25
- REGULAR \$39 \$47
- SUPPORTING \$75 \$100
- CONTRIBUTING \$150 \$175
- LIFE \$1000 \$1250
- SENIOR \$24 \$32
- STUDENT/LIMITED INCOME \$24 \$32

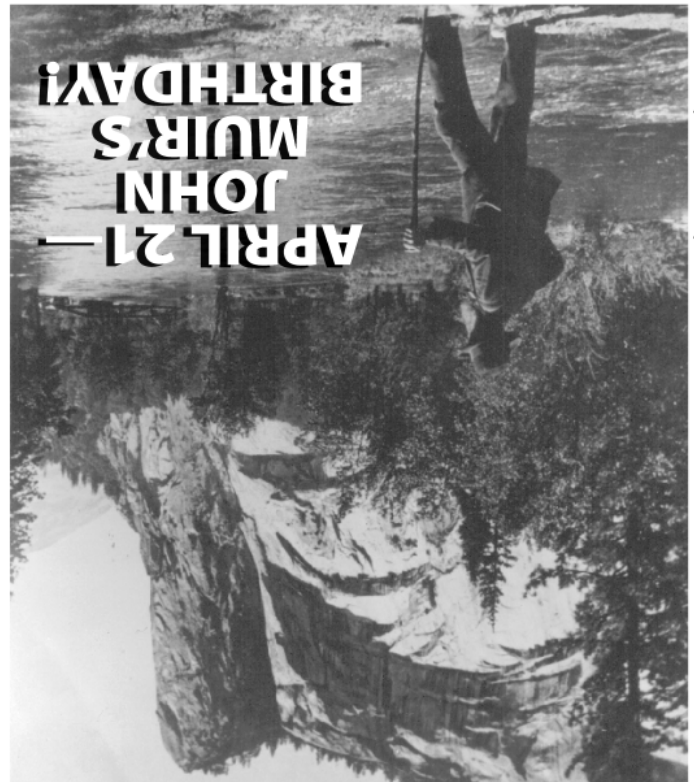
Card Number _____
Cardholder Name _____

Check enclosed, made payable to Sierra Club
Please charge my MasterCard Visa AMEX Exp. Date ____/____/____

My Name _____
Address _____
City/State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____
email _____



Join today and receive
a FREE Sierra Club
Weekender Bag!



William E. Colby Memorial Library, Sierra Club



SIERRA CLUB TEHIPITE CHAPTER
FOUNDED 1892 P.O. Box 5396 • Fresno, California 93755-5396

No Profit Org
U. S. Postage
PAID
Fresno, Calif.
Permit No. 150