

# Tehipite Topics

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[www.tehipite.sierraclub.org](http://www.tehipite.sierraclub.org)

## Adopt-A-Cabin in Death Valley

by *Richard Sloan*

This time of the year, the California deserts invite you to explore. The temperatures are mild, springs are flowing, and there are promises of brilliant wildflower displays. With those thoughts in mind, and the Adopt-A-Cabin program as a theme for the outing, eight adventurers set out from Fresno for a five day adventure March 5-9, 2005, in the Northern Mojave/Death Valley area.

The group, led by Richard Sloan, met at the Bureau of Land Management's Jawbone Canyon Visitor Center. The first destination was Bickel Camp. The nine mile drive into camp was a challenge because of the recent rains. Pooled water from recent rains covered the road in many places and made the drive a challenge, but none of the vehicles got stuck. A docent met us at Bickel Camp, explained the uses of some of the mining machinery on display there, and opened the Adopt-A-Cabin for us. From there, we went on to explore the Burro Schmidt Cabin and Tunnel. We continued over the El Paso Mountains to visit three more Adopt-A-Cabins off the Garlock Road in Goler Wash. The wildflower display here was just beginning, and so not very dramatic.



Although the Garlock Road was closed due to flood damage, we continued on to the Minnetta Mine Cabin, where we made camp for the next two nights. We shared the cabin and grounds with a couple from Merced and a couple from Wisconsin. Laurie Sloan provided a wonderful spare rib dinner for the group to eat around the campfire the first night.

The second day we started our explorations at China Garden, where the spring was flowing nicely and the goldfish occupants looked quite healthy. China Garden had been a truck garden at the turn of the last century and is part of the upper source of Darwin Falls. From China Garden we retraced our steps to go for a hike high on Zinc Mountain, to explore mining activity at the end of a high mining trail used by the miners with their mules. The trail was shored up to the side of the mountain in places by high stone walls. The view is spectacular, looking east to the northern end of the Panamint Valley and down to the canyon Darwin Falls is in. Our last stop for the day was at Darwin Falls in Death Valley National Park, where a perennial stream falls twenty feet to a pool surrounded by maidenhair fern and black willow. Returning to camp, we prepared tri-tip steak and cooked corn in the husk on the barbeque.



See *Adopt-A-Cabin*, Page 2



**SIERRA CLUB**  
FOUNDED 1892

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***Adopt-A-Cabin, from page 1***

Our third day out, we explored the Minnietta Cabin grounds and mines, packed up and headed to the Saline Valley. After the long trip in, we made camp and then soaked in a hot spring several miles from the Warm Springs area. The road in was not as bad as we had feared, but we were really glad we had high clearance vehicles because of the large amount of rockfall on the road, and gullies cut across the road by the recent rains. The 55 miles of washboard road were the worst they have been in ten years.

On the fourth day, we visited the Lower Beveridge cabin. It was in good shape and the waterfall behind the cabin was better than the one at Darwin Falls, which is not always the case!

The road in, although short, was scary in places. We then visited the Indian petroglyphs at Hunter Mountain. I am sad to say they have pretty much been destroyed by relic hunters or vandals since our last Sierra Club outing in October. The site of the village and grinding holes are still okay and interesting to see. We tried to visit the Snowflake Mine, but the road is now closed due to rockfall at the third switchback. Not wanting to hike that far, we went up the next canyon north. Following a flowing stream, we discovered a pleasant

*See Adopt-A-Cabin, Page 4*



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## Merced Group

### Merced Group Conservation and Executive Committee Meeting

Thursday, April 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M.  
Rod Webster's home, 345 E. 20<sup>th</sup> St., Merced

### General Meeting

Thursday, April 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:30 P.M.  
Sierra Presbyterian Church, 3603 M St.  
(M St. and Yosemite Ave., across from Merced College)

### "Vagabonding in India"

*presented by Jerry Jackman and Sandy Wilson*

Jerry and Sandy are members of the Yokuts Group of the Mother Lode Chapter of the Sierra Club. They will share slides and stories of the four months they spent in India. This was a large portion of the six months that they spent exploring Asia. They are sure to have some fascinating accounts and striking photos of this exotic land, which they toured so extensively. Come share their adventure!

### Annual Picnic

Mark your calendar! Saturday, May 14<sup>th</sup> will be the Merced Group's annual picnic for members, friends and family. Details to follow in the next *Topics*.

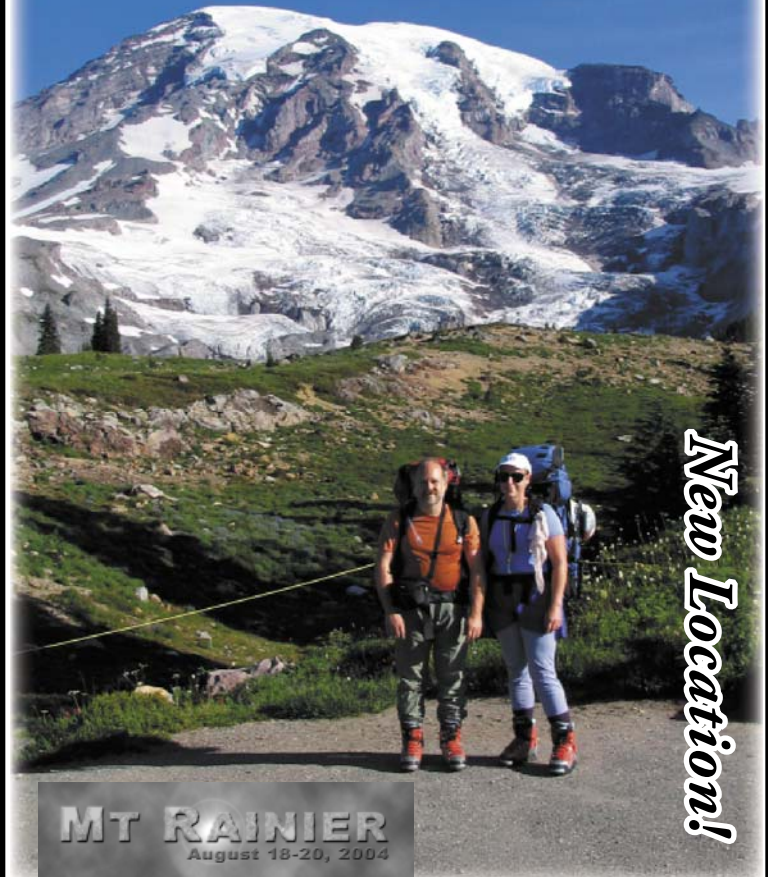
### Outings

Vernal pools outing to Cunningham Ranch in Merced on Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup> is booked up. Call Marsh Pitman at (209) 723-2986 for an update on the meeting place and details. If you are signed up for the 9<sup>th</sup> and cannot make it, let Marsh know. He has a waiting list.

### Special Note

If members in the Los Banos region have particular environmental concerns, please contact the Conservation Chair of the Merced Group, Marsh Pitman at (209) 723-2986.

## April General Meeting



## Chapter General Meeting

### "A Trek to the Top of Mt. Rainier"

*presented by John & Marcia Rasmussen*

Wednesday, April 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M.

**University of California Center**

**550 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno**

**(across from Fashion Fair)**

See Article in September 2004 *Tehipite Topics*  
(available at [www.tehipite.sierraclub.org](http://www.tehipite.sierraclub.org))

# Earth Day Plus

by Heather Anderson

Earth Day reminds the world's people of the necessity for continuing care, which is vital to the protection of our planet. It happens at the vernal equinox, a time when night and day are of equal length, a kind of metaphor for recognizing that one way of life over another is not superior. It is a shared planetary event, a demonstration of global community. We need to respect Earth's balance between wildlife, varieties of vegetation, water, air, and land, but we must also understand how humankind, as a single species, is disrupting this precarious balance. Early diverse cultures celebrated spring as a renewal of life; we can continue that by celebrating Earth Day every day. So what can you do to help? What have other people done?

How can you add another item on your to-do list, or fit another job into your already full schedule? As an art educator, a major interest of mine is education. I ask myself, "Why aren't more people interested in our environment?" Perhaps it is because we are not educating children about these concerns at an early age. How can we help folks understand the need for global environmental concerns in general and current local problems in particular? Our chapter used to have an Education Committee. Why not now? We can lead discussions, present interesting talks, teach classes. Many teachers already include an environmental studies program in their curriculum. Still, it is a good idea for teachers to know what the Sierra Club is doing, and to be updated on issues. The San Joaquin River Trust has for many years not only organized a group of River Docents, but also stocked supplies for teaching environmental studies both at the river and in the classroom. We can do our share. Volunteers are needed.

Our chapter's Political Committee works to gather information about potential candidates for local public office, and arranges a time and place for interviewing them on their environmental views. The local chapter and national Sierra Club may endorse those who qualify, and publish voting suggestions in our *Topics*. Our Political Committee needs help; we invite your participation. Our Water Committee

is just getting down to work again. Kevin Hall has contributed endless hours improving air quality; there is still much to do. During the year, we staff a Sierra Club table in connection with other environmental or educational organizations. This is a great way for outreach into the community, and we are hard pressed for help to staff our table.

Very often we are in need of folks to run for office on Tehipite's Executive Committee. You may contribute to the thrust of our chapter and simultaneously gain a better understanding of its work. Let us know when you are prepared for that. We appreciate those dedicated folks who lead the day hikes and weekend trips we enjoy, but a handful of outings leaders have been doing all the work. You are probably more experienced than you think, so give it a try. If you can write, email an article to our *Topics* editors; if you like to photograph, send pictures.

One of the most important things we can do, which is easy and takes very little time, is to write, email, or phone. Letters to the Editor are a must. Phone our President, Senators, and Representatives supporting or rebutting crucial environmental bills up for imminent vote. You can find out what these are by phoning the National Conservation Chair, Bruce Hamilton, at (415) 977-5678, or your local Conservation Chair, Heather Anderson, at (559) 434-2510. Ask National for a free subscription to *The Planet*; it has a brief concise rundown of crucial issues. Ask Vicky to send you *The Alaska Report*, (415) 977-5527. And don't forget to thank those Congressional Representatives when they help us. Keep informed. Attend our general meetings; they are education as well as entertainment. We lost the Senate vote on drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, so we have MUCH work to do. It is not yet a done deal.

You get the picture. There is a task waiting for each of us. This is an opportunity to give back to the Earth what it gives to us in such rich beauty, order, and abundance. It's up to us to insure and celebrate the beauty and ecological health of future Earth Days. ❀

## *Adopt-A-Cabin, from page 2*

waterfall surrounded by ferns. A stone and log cabin in the canyon still had wooden shingles left on the roof. We later identified it as the "Beekeeper's Cabin" in McElvov Canyon. Pleased with our discovery, we headed back to camp.

Our trip out was pleasant. We stopped to play in the snow at South Pass and then paid a visit to the Ruth Mine near Trona. Fields we had passed on the way in were now burst-

ing with flowers. The volunteers working on the Ruth Mine have now made the mine manager's cabin a viable place to spend the night in the Adopt-A-Cabin located there. With that trip under our belts, we are now looking forward to the October outing to the area. That Sierra Club trip will go into wilderness area and is limited to fifteen people. ❀

# San Joaquin River Trail

by Richard Sloan

What a wonderful treasure we have in the San Joaquin River Trail, and it is right in our own back yard! On March 13, nine of us met at Sky Harbor to carpool up to San Joaquin River Gorge and hike the fifteen or so miles back down. Flowers of every color were blooming the length of the trail in great profusion. In places, the trail smelled as if some sweet exotic perfume had been sprayed in the air.



The weather was cool, perfect for hiking. Little streams were flowing and the Lake Millerton water level was high.

The trail follows the contour of the lake, sometimes rising several hundred feet above, and then descending back down again. As you follow the trail you will see signs of past residential and mining activity. There are some mine shafts in the area. Look at the entrances, but please don't go in. A rock could drop from the ceiling at any time, or the air could be bad inside, to name only a few of the dangers. Explore the rock walls and try to picture the buildings that once existed there.

The hike was set up to be a cleanup of the trail as well. Steve Starcher, Central Unified School District Watershed Coordinator, assisted with the car shuttle. Steve Haze from the Sierra Foothill Conservancy met us at the start of the trail to hand out literature about the trail. While waiting for people to arrive, we picked up three bags of trash at the Sky Harbor meeting place. Along the trail we were only able to find one bag of trash, which Dave Big Bear, BLM Representative at San Joaquin River Gorge, carried out for us from a service road. The trail gets a respectable amount of use, so we had expected to find much more trash than we did. Our thanks to all who pack it out! 🐾



Mine on the Death Valley Trip

### Upcoming Chapter General Meeting Presentations

- April 13      John & Marcia Rasmussen.....  
                    A Trek to the Top of Mt. Rainier
- May 11        Don Redmond .....
- Costa Rica: From the Clouds to the Coast
- June 8         Lloyd Carter.....  
                    Water Wars Update

### **NEW LOCATION!**

University of California Center  
550 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno  
(across from Fashion Fair)

# ECOVIEW

## APRIL IS HERE! EARTH DAY MONTH!!!

by *Marian Orvis*

### EASE UP ON FOSSIL FUELS!

The average American household produces 9,900 pounds of carbon dioxide a year, which means that the energy we use in our homes is responsible for more greenhouse emissions than the cars we drive!

The U.S. Department of Energy says that every appliance has two price tags: a purchasing price and an operating cost. That's not counting the environmental and health costs of burning coal and other fossil fuels in power plants, which causes emissions of nerve-damaging mercury, and carbon dioxide, the primary greenhouse gas. Energy-efficient appliances can save you money on utility bills. Look for appliances with the Energy Star. See [thegreenguide.com](http://thegreenguide.com) for product reports on refrigerators and room air conditioners. Also see ratings at [consumerreports.org](http://consumerreports.org) and [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov), or call 888-STAR-YES.

If you want to try your own energy audit (because it pays to study your home to determine where leakages are and which appliances are wasting energy), see Alliance to Save Energy's [ase.org/checkup/home](http://ase.org/checkup/home).

### HOW ABOUT LEAVING LIGHTER FOOTSTEPS ON YOUR MOTHER?

**Recycle.** Wherever you buy, ask about takeback programs for products. Nike's Reuse-A-Shoe campaign will accept any company's sports shoes. See [nikeorganics.com](http://nikeorganics.com) for locations.

**Shoes**—sweatshop-free, organic cotton blend, PVC-free.

**Food**—organic, local, fair-trade, shade-grown, grass-fed. Buy organic and buy local from sustainably run businesses. See the state-by-state listing of retail stores at [fairtradefederation.org](http://fairtradefederation.org).

**Better your own workplace.** Propose a corporate social responsibility report, composting, recycling or other sustainable practice. You apartment/condo dwellers could also propose this to the folks in control of your complexes.

As investors, read annual reports (this is a tough one!) and proxy statements, and join shareholder actions you agree with. See [shareholderaction.org](http://shareholderaction.org).

### MORE...

Worldwide, agriculture uses 70% of the total water supply. Though farming represents just 3% of California's economy, it consumes 85% of the state's fresh water.

**Mystery solved.** British scientists have discovered where albatrosses go in the 18 months between breeding seasons. Some go entirely around the world once, and others, twice. The information could help define critical year-round habitat that could stop the bird's rapid flight towards extinction. It's the world's most imperiled family of birds, with 19 of 21 albatross species globally threatened—mainly from loneliness and baited hooks stretching for miles across the ocean.

**Adios.** Brazil lost more than 7,000 square miles of Amazon rainforest last year, an area more than half the size of Switzerland.

Hope to see you on a trail in the next couple of months. How about it? 🐾



## Full of the Joys of Spring?

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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.

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# Join The Sierra Club Online!

Visit [www.sierraclub.org/membership](http://www.sierraclub.org/membership)

# Trip Schedule

## Outing Ratings

Distance	Elevation Gain
1) up to 6 miles	A) under 1,000 feet
2) 6 to 10 miles	B) 1,000 to 2,000 feet
3) 10 to 15 miles	C) 2,000 to 3,000 feet
4) 15 to 20 miles	D) 3,000 to 4,000 feet
5) over 20 miles	E) over 4,000 feet

Our Tehipite Chapter Outings Chair is Carolyn Ordway (559) 449-7780 [jbord606@yahoo.com](mailto:jbord606@yahoo.com). Please contact her with any questions concerning our outings program. Contact the trip leader directly if you are interested in one of the listed trips.

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 review additional trip and participant requirements at [www.tehipite.sierraclub.org/outings](http://www.tehipite.sierraclub.org/outings).

### April 2<sup>nd</sup> - Saturday

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

### April 2<sup>nd</sup> - Saturday

Day Hike (2A)  
A new trail out of River Gorge (the old Squaw Leap area) above Aubery.  
*Don Redmond (559) 268-1537*

### April 9<sup>th</sup> - Saturday

Day Hike (2C) Moderate  
Chilnualna Falls. The top cascade, just 100 yards to the right of the granite-lined trail, consists of five pool-and-drop tiers. Off Highway 41 near Wawona, in Yosemite.  
*Carolyn Ordway (559) 449-7780 or 281-8223*

### April 10<sup>th</sup> - Sunday

Cross Country Skiing—Lower Intermediate  
Location to be determined.  
*Walt Taguchi (559) 435-2818*

### April 16<sup>th</sup> - Saturday

Cross Country Skiing—Intermediate  
Location to be determined, weather and snow permitting.  
*Gerald Vinnard (559) 431-5780*

### April 16<sup>th</sup> - Saturday

Day Hike (2A+)  
Up, up, up the Burma Road above the Merced River at Briceburg.  
*Paul Weiss (209) 966-6605*  
*yosemiteman@starband.net*

### April 23<sup>rd</sup> - Saturday

Day Hike (2A)  
A rarely done trail to Horseshoe Bend near Auberry. Should be lots of flowers and a big river pool for lunch.  
*Don Redmond (559) 268-1537*

### April 30<sup>th</sup> - Saturday

Cross Country Skiing—Intermediate  
Location to be determined, weather and snow permitting.  
*Steve Fretz (559) 439-6673*

### May 7<sup>th</sup> - Saturday

Day Hike (2A)  
Grant's Grove in Kings Canyon National Park. This is going to be Don's famous comb of trails.  
*Don Redmond (559) 268-1537*

### May 14<sup>th</sup> - Saturday

Day Hike (1A)  
Grassland State Park, north of Los Banos. This will be an adventure.  
*Gerald Vinnard (559) 431-5780*

### May 21<sup>th</sup> - Saturday

Day Hike (1B)  
Zumwalt Meadow, a great place for a picnic lunch or just relaxing. Kings Canyon National Park, near Cedar Grove.  
*Steve Fretz (559) 439-6673*

### May 28<sup>th</sup> - Saturday

Day Hike  
Location to be determined.  
*Walt Taguchi (559) 435-2818*

See [www.tehipite.sierraclub.org](http://www.tehipite.sierraclub.org) for additional trips, updates, and information about our outings program.

# May General Meeting

*"Costa Rica: From the Clouds to the Coast"*

*presented by Don Redmond*

May 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M.

NEW LOCATION!

University of California Center  
550 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno  
(across from Fashion Fair)

Don is an avid international traveler who has visited more than fifty countries. In recent years, his focus has been on Latin American countries. He has explored the rainforests of Belize (4 times), Peru (3 times) and Costa Rica (3 times). These visits aid in his teaching as a docent with our Chaffee Zoo. Don will present his video of Costa Rica's famed Monteverde Cloud Forests, where he visited last spring, then take us to the sunny Pacific coastal beaches for a dazzling review of birds, mammals, reptiles and plant life. Previous trips included horse and canopy-cable rides, whitewater rafting and mud baths. The country's good care of these wonders, noted friendliness, and lack of an army or income tax draw many visitors and immigrants. Don't miss this great program!



A discussion in Death Valley

Sierra Student Coalition  
(SSC)

[www.ssc.org](http://www.ssc.org)



SIERRA CLUB

TEHIPITE CHAPTER

FOUNDED 1893

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## Sierra Summit 2005

# The Sierra Club's first-ever National Environmental Convention & Expo

September 8-11, 2005  
The Moscone Center  
San Francisco, CA



### Register Now!

[www.sierrasummit2005.org](http://www.sierrasummit2005.org)

**WHEN** September 8-11, 2005.

**WHERE** Moscone Center, San Francisco.

**ENTERTAINIERS/SPEAKERS** Ariana Huffington, Bill Maher, Robert Hass, George Lakoff, Bill McDonough, Ric Burns, (plus many more still to be confirmed.)

**WORKSHOPS/PANELS** Arts and the Environment (photography, poetry, painting, music, salvage art, and more) • Living Well (spirituality/religion, sustainable cooking, bikes and transit, and more) • Natural Heritage (birds and wind power, forest protection, urban nature, and more) • Outdoor Adventure (eco-tourism, backpacking with family, non-traditional allies, and more) • Visionary Solutions (reshaping the forces of globalization, leaving fossil fuels behind, restoration, and more) • Working Smart (framing the public debate, technology and organizing, nurturing new leaders, and more.)

**EXPOSITION** 150 green and outdoor businesses, a cooking stage, a climbing wall, an on-site eco-house, “green” dollhouse, hybrid cars, more...

**OUTINGS** Day hikes in Golden Gate Park, trail restoration service trips, San Francisco Giants baseball games (all accessible by public transit.)

**DIRECTION SETTING PROCESS** Gathering of 1,000 delegates, representing chapters, groups, committees, and other entities to set the direction of the Club for the coming years.

**DELEGATE BREAKDOWN** 1,000 delegates to be appointed or elected — 1 delegate from each group (totalling 300) • 4 delegates from each chapter (1 Council of Club leaders delegate, 1 senior volunteer, 1 activist under 30, 1 outing leader, totalling 272) • 163 “at-large” delegates from chapters, based on number of members • 285 delegates from national committees, boards, govcom, other entities. (For more on the delegate selection process, go to [clubhouse.sierraclub.org](http://clubhouse.sierraclub.org).)

**SIERRA CLUB SHOWCASE** All entities invited to showcase their work, share their success stories in poster sessions.

**COST** (if you register by May 31): Members \$260, leaders \$200, delegates \$100. (Check with a Tehipite Chapter Executive Committee Member for delegate and leader rate information.)

**TO REGISTER AND FIND OUT MORE** [sierrasummit2005.org](http://sierrasummit2005.org).