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## **Shasta Environmental Alliance Newsletter April 21, 2020**

### **Save Oregon Gulch: From OHV's**

Oregon Gulch is the name of an area and a stream in southwest Redding. The City of Redding Community Services (RCS) Department owns 380 acres, set aside as open space to be developed into a natural area with trails. It is located just south of Country Heights and north of Branstetter Lane and can be reached by driving to the end of Kenyon Dr. (The last 1/3 mile of Kenyon Dr. is a level but very rough and potholed dirt road requiring high clearance vehicle.) The stream has some salmon and steelhead in it.

The area was used extensively for dumping and 4X4's, quads and dirt bike thrashing the stream and causing erosion on surrounding hillsides. It was cleaned up in about 2003 and iron gates were put at two entrances and other areas blocked off. Dan Fehr a now retired CDFW warden led the effort on this coordinating many agencies. Unfortunately, OHV's have been increasingly coming into the area and Friends of Oregon Gulch has been getting calls on this. SEA has checked out the area and found various ways they are coming into the area and have notified RCS and Redding Police Department to see if they could send in dirt bike patrols. We want to see if CDFW wardens can help in this effort too.

You can help too and keep social distance at the same time during the COVID-19 outbreak by walking in the area. The more people on foot, the less likely OHV riders will openly break the law. If you do see someone riding in the area, call CDFW at CalTIP at 888-334-2258. These people are breaking the law, and rangers have to respond, but don't confront the people. Usually when you walk in the area, you won't see anyone walking or riding and will have the area to yourself. To reach the area go to the end of Kenyon Dr. and park to the side of the road at the big yellow gate. The people at the end are nice even though they have a lot of old cars. My pickup has never been bothered in many visits. Enjoy a still wild area of Redding and by your presence, protect the area. Let SEA know what you find and if it is your first visit!

### **Proposed Fountain Wind Project**

There is a proposal for a wind farm in the Round Mountain area and a local group, Citizens in Opposition to Fountain Wind Project (CIO FWP) in the greater Round Mountain/Montgomery Creek area is opposed to it.

In the Spring 2020 issue of Audubon, the National Audubon Society's quarterly publication, an editorial by Audubon President David Yarnold argues that in efforts to fight climate change, we must take into account wildlife and preserving habitat in the quest for more renewable energy, especially with wind farms and where they are located.

“For the past 50 years, a suite of laws has been in place to safeguard birds and other wildlife. Laws like the National Environmental Protection Act, Endangered Species Act, Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, and the century-old Migratory Bird Treaty Act created basic protections for nature and for wildlife... In just three years, those bedrock conservation laws have been gutted.” Audubon believes we must not lose sight of protecting our wildlife while producing renewable energy. The California Native Plant Society has long fought to protect rare plant species when solar farms are located as well as considering the habitats these solar farms may be removing.

SEA President David Ledger and John Livingston, Executive Director of the Shasta Group of Sierra Club did meet with representatives of the Fountain Wind Farm Project but as yet have not taken a position. SEA has sent in comments to Shasta County Planning asking for mitigation for the removal of hardwood and conifer woodlands and will be looking at this area for future comments once the draft EIR is finished.

### **Costco Project Planning Meeting on April 28 via Virtual Meeting**

The final draft EIR hearing on the Costco Project (River Crossing Market Place) will be held at the Redding Planning Commission Virtual Meeting on April 28 at 4pm. The focus will primarily be on traffic issues which the City admits cannot be completely mitigated for. The Biological and Aesthetics sections of the draft EIR were decided at previous meeting, however you can still comment. You can pull out your old letter of comment and rewrite it discussing how you are opposed to the cutting of the native oak trees on the site without mitigation, loss of wildlife habitat without mitigation and the failure to consider the aesthetics of removing most of the oak trees along I-5 and replacing it with a 3 ½ acre warehouse and a huge gas station in its place. SEA has only commented on the Aesthetics and Biological sections, but you can also address traffic issues if you wish.

If you do comment, please Cc to the Redding City Council as this may have an effect on future projects. About two-thirds of previous comments on the Costco Project were about tree removal and City Council Members did take note. If you send comments they should be sent to [planningcommission@cityofredding.org](mailto:planningcommission@cityofredding.org) by the morning of April 24 and they will be included in a packet to all Planning Commission members, but you can also send it in the day of the meeting and the Commission will take a break to read all late comments.

For information to attend the virtual meeting, the easiest way is to go to <https://www.cityofredding.org/departments/development-services/planning/planning-commission> This is just below COVID19 update, then click on Virtual Planning Commission Meetings and it will have all the links and information to view the live virtual meeting as well as how to submit comments during the meeting.

### **Battle Creek Alliance: Fighting to preserve the Battle Creek Watershed**

Battle Creek Alliance was formed in 2007 by local residents due to the ongoing logging, primarily by clearcutting, of the Battle Creek watershed in eastern Shasta and Tehama counties. Since that time we have read dozens of logging plans submitted for this, and other, California watersheds. We have submitted comments on over a dozen Timber Harvest Plans (THPs), and spent thousands of hours on research regarding the natural resources of this, and other, areas. All of our comments have raised concerns about the

declining health of the biological resources in this watershed which support and enhance the common good of the inhabitants of California.

In 2009, BCA began manually collecting water quality data, and has collected over 12,000 samples since then. The record of these samples is in the California State Water Resources Control Board's CEDEN site. A research paper by two hydrologists and a GIS specialist/senior scientist regarding this data was published in the scientific journal, *Environmental Management*, in 2019. BCA felt compelled to collect data due to the fact that the regulatory agencies were collecting little to no data to base their decisions on.

As far as we know, we collect the only long-term, year-round water data in the Sierra/Cascade region to track upland disturbance's impacts. Cal Fire acts as the lead agency in the logging plan review process and has consistently approved plans as having "no significant impacts" while using no factual, quantitative data. The Review Team spends little time in the field; we have spent 30 years and many thousands of hours in the field. Our comment is regarding another new logging plan that was filed at the end of 2019, the Rio Gatito plan. There are almost 76,000 acres of industrial timberland in a large block in the middle of the Battle Creek watershed. Over 80% of those acres have already been cut in the past 20 years.

*(Battle Creek Alliance is a SEA supporting organization. Send in your group's news articles.)*

Here's the direct link to the doc on our site's Library page:

<http://nebula.wsimg.com/98712877ed08a3520618b02a1dcb929e?AccessKeyId=01B8D7A67C3CF9F65262&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

or here's the overall Library link: <http://www.thebattlecreekalliance.org/library.html>

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

**YouTube channel:**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKpWFjIs-AhmugZobutqirg>

### **Shasta County's Shasta snow-wreath (*Neviusia cliftonii*)**

Thank you to all of you who sent in letters of support to the California Fish and Game Commission recommending the commission accept the petition to list the Shasta snow-wreath as endangered. About six people notified me they sent in letters of support plus the following organization: Wintu Audubon, California Wilderness Coalition, Shasta Chapter of California Native Plant Society (CNPS), state CNPS, Shasta group of Sierra Club and SEA. Other CNPS chapters may have submitted letters of support as notices went out to all chapter Conservation Chairs. Dan Glusencamp, Executive Director of CNPS gave verbal support at the virtual meeting. The Petition was accepted by the commission and is now under a one-year review period. Thank you for your support.

### **Shasta Lake City Updating its Tree Preservation Ordinance**

The City of Shasta Lake is in the early process of updating its Tree Preservation Ordinance and SEA was invited to comment. We submitted a nine-page letter of comment on the various proposed changes to the ordinance. The Ordinance does need a few areas of improvement, which will include mitigation fees in place of replanting various oak trees removed during

development. The current ordinance does require replanting oak trees removed over 10 inches in diameter on a three to one basis. However it is difficult to monitor all the trees required to be replanted and to ensure they live at least five years. Paying a mitigation fee would allow the City to plant and upkeep the newly planted trees and also encourage developers to save as many trees as possible. SEA recommended a standard of a six-inch diameter standard for mitigation of tree removal. Some blue oaks can grow slowly, and a 10-inch diameter tree could be 100 years old. Once the final ordinance is written we can determine whether the net result was to preserve as many trees as the current ordinance. Overall, the Shasta Lake Tree Preservation Ordinance is much better than the City of Redding's ordinance.

**SEA is Seeking New Board Members!**

Shasta Environmental Alliance is looking to increase its board membership and is looking for persons concerned about our local environment. Meetings are once a month and currently are done by video conference. Previous environmental board or related volunteer or work experience and willingness to spend at least four to six hours of volunteer time per month in addition to board meetings. We can use your enthusiasm and new ideas. An application is on our website [ecoshasta.org](http://ecoshasta.org), or you can email us at [ecoshasta@gmail.com](mailto:ecoshasta@gmail.com).