



Shasta
Environmental
Alliance

P.O. Box 993777 • Redding, CA 96099 • ecoshasta.org

August 2024 Newsletter

In this issue:

SEA and Community Events

Protecting the Medicine Lake Highlands

Whiskeytown Bald Eaglet Rescued, Rehabilitated, and Released!

Climate Change at Whiskeytown and the Effect of Heat on Eagles

Friends of Jenny Creek Update

Project 2025: A Threat to Our Environment

Whiskeytown Updates

Trip Report: Cold Boiling Lake Hike

Trip Report: Echo Lake Hike

Thank you to our donors!

Donate

SEA Events

Keeping Our River Clean: Redding Storm Drain Facility Tour

Tuesday, Aug. 20th, 11:30 am-12:30 pm.
20055 Viking Way, Bldg 3, Redding



Protecting the Medicine Lake Highlands

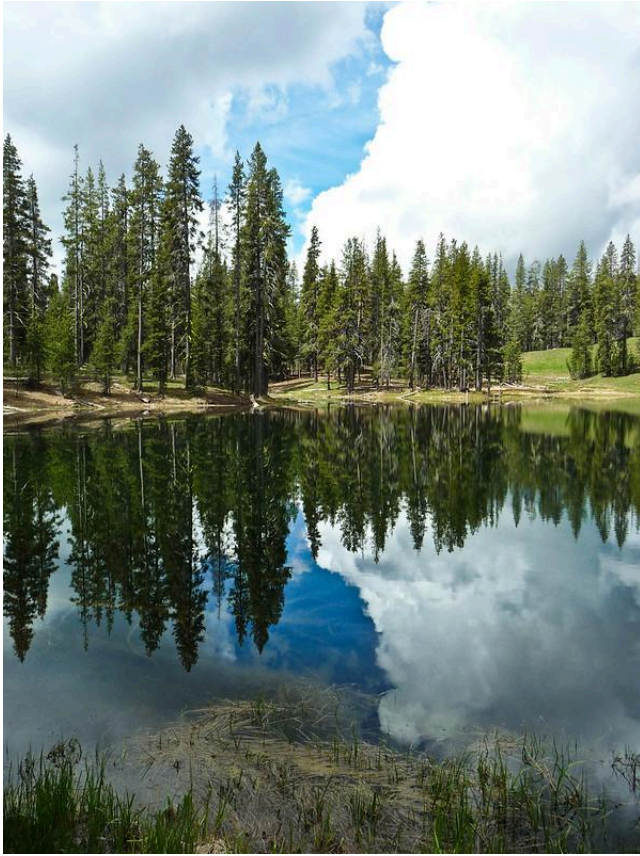


Photo by Little Medicine Lake photo by Michael McCullough Creative Commons; Photo of Laurie by lava rock by Don Burk

Shasta Environmental Alliance (SEA) is supporting the efforts of the Pit River Tribe to have the Medicine Lake Highlands declared a National Monument (Sattitla) in concert with CalWild, CalTrout, California Native Plant Society, Wilderness Conservation Foundation, W.A.T.E.R., and Trout Unlimited. Many other area groups are also supporting this and we are urging all SEA supporters to support this by signing a petition of support on the Pit River Tribe website for the effort. **You can sign the petition and learn more about the effort [here](https://www.protectsattitla.org/take-action).**

<https://www.protectsattitla.org/take-action>.

One of the major reasons for National Monument status is many companies have tried to

get geothermal permits for electric plants which are a threat to the pristine waters that flow from the Medicine Lake area. Drilling compounds, forest clearing for roads, industrial-size plants, and extensive high-voltage power lines would all threaten the ecosystem and in particular water pollution. Protecting this land with National Monument status will also help California meet its 30/30 goals and the area is also sacred to local tribes. Trout Unlimited has an excellent article and photos on the importance of preserving the water [here](#) and another article by the Redding Record Searchlight can be found [here](#).



You can also send your comments directly to President Biden [here](#) and Congressman Doug LaMalfa [here](#). SEA would also like to see copies of your letters that we can forward to Senator Padilla who is supporting this. Please forward your letters to SEA at david@ecoshasta.org

Whiskeytown Bald Eaglet Rescued, Rehabilitated, and Released



(Left) Fortune when found; (Right) Fortune after rehabilitation

Photos by Marily Woodhouse

On July 6th, members of the public reported a dehydrated fledgling bald eagle in distress in Whiskeytown National Recreation Area. Kate, a dedicated kayak and paddle volunteer with experience in handling raptors, and Russ Weatherbee, the Whiskeytown's wildlife biologist, promptly responded to the call. They successfully rescued the young female bird (since named Fortune), with Kate providing immediate care by giving her water and cooling her down with a fan.

Following this, Fortune was transported to Defiance Canyon Raptor Rescue for care and recovery. Fortune came to the Rescue severely underweight and dehydrated, prompting caregiver and Rescue Director, Marily Woodhouse to give her fluids and a few weeks to recover, helping her get to a healthy weight. Fortune was released back to her nesting site at Whiskeytown and while she didn't fly away due to it being a bit steep, she did hop back into her habitat. If you'd like to see a short video showing Fortune's release, [click here!](#)

This summer has been a particularly challenging summer for Northern California eaglets. Marily mentioned that she's seen more eaglets needing rescuing this summer than ever before - at least seven have come into her care so far. It's thought that the intensifying heat has caused a lot of stress in the eaglets, leading to many falling from nests and being injured, dehydrated, and, unfortunately in some cases where they aren't rescued in time, to die. Please see a more in-depth article in this newsletter discussing the links between climate change and how it affects raptors.

To donate essential funds to Defiance Canyon Raptor Rescue and help rescue and rehabilitate our area's raptors, please [CLICK HERE](#)

Climate Change at Whiskeytown and the Effect of Heat on Eagles



Photo: Friedrich Haag / Wikimedia Commons

Whiskeytown National Recreation Area has been tracking daily weather since 1960, providing over 60 years of data to understand the local climate changes. This data shows that it's getting warmer, especially at night. Since 1960, the daily average low temperature has increased by 4.5 degrees, while the daily

average high temperature has increased by 1.6 degrees. These rising temperatures can affect visits to the park by making it hotter, especially during the night.

In late July 2018, during the start of the Carr Fire, temperatures hit 111 degrees, tying the all-time high for those days. The Carr Fire was the most destructive fire in the history of the National Park System, burning 97% of the national recreation area and destroying over 100 structures. The fire started during a record-tying heatwave, highlighting the impact of global warming.

The annual average rainfall of 60 inches has remained steady since 1960, but winter precipitation varies greatly from year to year. Before and after the Carr Fire, the park received nearly 100 inches of rain during the winters. However, the period from 2019 to 2022 was the driest three-year span on record.

In summary, Whiskeytown is experiencing warmer temperatures and fluctuating precipitation patterns, which have significant effects on the park's environment and visitor experience.

Continued on next page.

The Effect of Heat on the Redding Eagles

There is an excellent citizen science video on YouTube illustrating the effects of heat on the death of eaglets at Turtle Bay in two years of unusually hot weather. The video compares temperature ranges historically and at the time of eaglet deaths in two separate years. This was an individual effort but many of the volunteers of Friends of the Redding Eagles played an important part. The video is 54 minutes long but if you divide it up into two sessions it is easy to absorb. This video will teach you a lot about the biology of Bald Eagles and is well worth the time and a bad omen for our warming climate. [See Eagles at Risk: A Race to Survive on YouTube by clicking here.](#)

Friends of Jenny Creek Update

Article and photo by Friends of Jenny Creek

Friends of Jenny Creek has been very busy in the past few months in our effort to stop the City of Redding with its plans to build a paved 12' wide trail/road, lighted, with some 8' wide sections, along the creek, and through the greenbelt. The creek is in a very steep little canyon, north of Eureka Way, with slopes of 50% or more, bordered on both sides by the Upper and Lower Sunset Terrace neighborhoods. The trail would run from the T.R. Woods Park in Upper Sunset Terrace, and travel sideways along a steep slope, then drop down to the creek's level, cross an 80' bridge, and end at the bottom of Overhill Drive. Jenny Creek flows into the Sacramento River and thus is a critical habitat for species using wildlife corridors. This creek and greenbelt, as an ecosystem, is a hidden gem on the west side of Redding.



FJC is very concerned that the construction and long-term use of a trail along the creek would be destructive to the environment, including the removal of 68 or more trees, possible erosion into the creek and river, and loss of biodiversity when many native species are already experiencing drastic drops in numbers, fragmentation of habitats, and are part of the crisis of extinction that is happening worldwide.

Our latest efforts center around writing an alternate routes proposal to the City of Redding's Parks and Trails Department and the Planning Department. In this document, we describe the uniqueness of Jenny Creek and its greenbelt. The creek includes ponds in which "listed" (protected, species of special concern, threatened, or endangered) species such as pond

turtles might be found. These ponds are adequate in size for salmon to spawn in when they have been able to enter the creek in the Fall during heavy rainstorms.

One of our members has created a list of all the bird species she has found in 30 years, that were seen in her backyard which is adjacent to Jenny Creek. We also have a document that includes all the listed species that could be found in Jenny Creek, including those that are listed with the state, and/or the federal government, with a few being watched by other agencies.

The habitats found there are unique and are included in the Terrestrial Significant Habitats data set with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Areas of Conservation Emphasis (ACE) suite of terrestrial conservation. CDFW describes this dataset: "Terrestrial Significant Habitats may include habitat or vegetation types that are the focus of state, national, or locally legislated conservation laws, as well as key habitat areas that are essential to the survival and reproduction of focal wildlife species. The Terrestrial Significant Habitat dataset includes Oak Woodland Habitat and Riparian Habitat;" these are both found in the Jenny Creek greenbelt on both sides of the creek.

We have alternate routes to propose to the City of Redding staff and Planning Commission. These alternate routes would then be used by bikers, hikers, and walkers instead of the city building the proposed Jenny Creek Trail. They include upgrades to the Overhill Drive Trail and the Palatine Trail, both of which are already established trails. The entrance to the Overhill Drive Trail is found at the bottom of that street, past the barricades, and it ends at the Sacramento River Trail. We propose that the city upgrades this trail by removing the stairs and cutting a passage through the decommissioned railway berm. The Palatine trail stairs at Palatine Court in Upper Sunset Terrace wind down towards the river, cross the berm, and end at the Sacramento River Trail. We propose that the city upgrades this trail by upgrading the stairs and creating "swingouts" around them for bike riders and walkers.

Friends of Jenny Creek need your support. *We need volunteers to help in our efforts!*

Please visit our website: FriendsofJennyCreek.org to learn more about the organization. We are non-profit and have ongoing expenses such as attorney fees and operating costs, so if you share our concerns over the proposed Jenny Creek Trail, please consider donating as well.

Project 2025: A Threat to Our Environment

Project 2025

Most of you have probably heard of Project 2025, a proposal by the Heritage Foundation think tank and others to reduce the size of the federal government and drastically change how it would function. It also advises loyalty oaths to the president from mid-level and higher-level federal employees.

Just a few of the drastic changes Project 2025 wants to see take place:

- Reduce or eliminate the Environmental Protection Agency
- Eliminate the Department of Education
- Eliminate the Department of Homeland Security,
- Eliminate the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (also the National Weather Service)
- Eliminate the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau
- End almost all programs that address climate change
- Withdraw from international treaties addressing climate change
- Reduce funding for renewable energy
- Increase oil drilling and coal mining

To get a better grasp of other important issues, read *Project 2025 Explained: What To Know About The Controversial Right-Wing Policy Map For Trump—As Director Steps Down* from Forbes, a conservative-leaning business magazine [here](#).

Whiskeytown Updates!



Photo by Shannon Hunter

Some exciting Whiskeytown National Recreation Area trail updates!

- Kanaka Peak Trail has reopened for the first time since the unprecedented 2018 mega-fire.
- Brandy Creek Falls Trail will further reopen to Lower Falls Overlook. The trail beyond the overlook remains closed due to extreme safety hazards within the Carr Fire burn scar. Hazards include swift-moving water, slippery boulders, and an entire washout of the trail, footbridges, and railings. The geology and hydrology of the stream corridor on the final approach to Brandy Creek Falls have remained highly unstable since the Carr Fire.

And some ideas from Whiskeytown to recreate responsibly during these hot summer days:

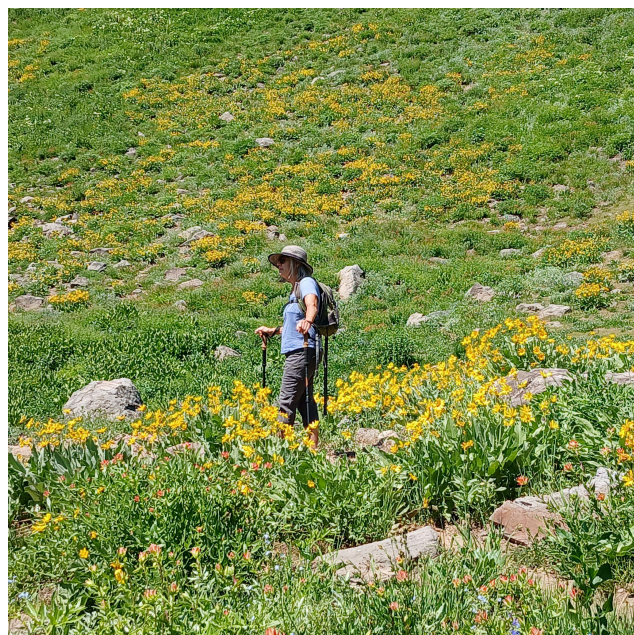
- Limit hikes to the early morning.
 - Carry and drink lots of water.
 - Use the water filling station available 24 hours a day outside the Visitor Center
-

Trip Report: Cold Boiling Lake Hike

Photos: Group-Haley Pratt; Hiker in flowers-Mati Weidert; Bee-Brigitte Robertson

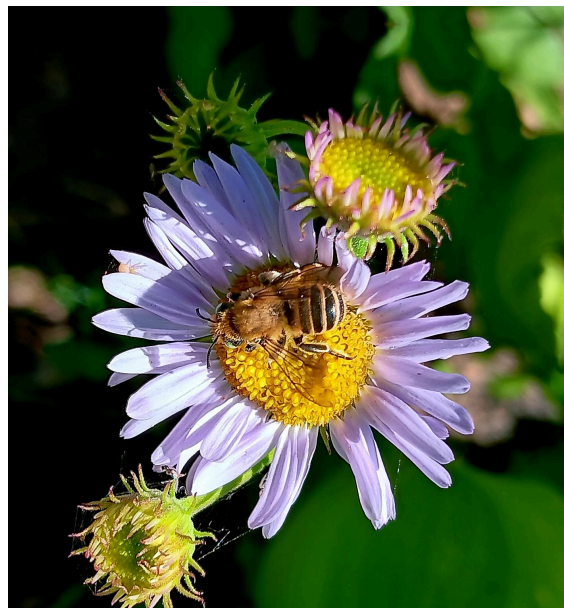
It reached a high of 115 degrees in Redding when CNPS and SEA led a field trip to Cold Boiling and Crumbaugh Lakes in Lassen Volcanic National Forest on Monday, July 8. Fortunately, it was cooler at 7300 feet, but it was still a warm 82.

The Dixie Fire had burned this area, so most of the shade was under dead trees, but there were still a few small groves of trees that survived. The fire did bring out a lot of wildflowers with an amazing diversity around Crumbaugh Lake, with one guidebook calling the north side of the lake that we walked on “one of the most extensive wildflower gardens in the park.”



After eating lunch surrounded by wildflowers at the lake, we walked about ½ mile past the lake in a burned forest before heading back, in all about an easy 3 ½ mile hike with only a 300' elevation gain. The heat did get to one hiker who did not bring enough water, but after some of us shared our water with her, she revived and made it back to the trailhead. A reminder, always bring at least 1.5 liters of water on hot day hikes. It was about 82 degrees when we returned to our cars. We had 18 to 20 people show up, a pleasant and fun group. If you want to see a great diversity of wildflowers, take a hike to Crumbaugh Lake.

The tree species at this high altitude were all conifers: red fir, mountain hemlock, lodgepole, and western white pine. Shrubs included: Brewer's mountain heather (*Phyllodoce breweri*), pine mat manzanita (*Arctostaphylos nevadensis*) blue elderberry (*Sambucus mexicanus*); Herbs: wandering fleabane (*Erigeron gracialis*), tiling's monkeyflower (*Erythranthe tilingii*), western waterleaf (*Hydrophyllum occidentale*), narrow flowered lupine (*Lupinus angustiflora*) satin lupine (*Lupinus obtusilobus*).



Trip Report: Echo Lake Hike



Photo by Brigitte Robertson

For this adventure to Lassen Volcanic National Park, SEA led a joint group of 13 hikers from SEA, CNPS, and Dog (re)Tired on a day it was 115 in Redding. When we got to the parking lot at Summit Lake it was a warm 84 degrees.

This is a fairly easy hike of about 3 ½ miles with several steep spots climbing up a ridge for a little over 300 feet, then descending back down another 300 feet to Echo Lake (It *does* have an echo if you shout!). The area had a medium burn primarily on the hike up the trail, but that opened the forest and activated dormant seeds, so there were wildflowers along the trail. The area around the lake was not burned and the trail down the lake was a beneficial low-intensity burn that burned the smaller and weaker trees.

When we reached the lake, we had lunch while a few people went swimming or wading to cool off. As we sat by the lake a few high clouds moved in and a breeze picked up, significantly cooling the air. By the time we hiked back to the parking lot at Summit Lake at around 2 p.m., it was a pleasant 75 degrees.

The trees on the trail were mountain hemlock, red fire, western white and lodgepole pine, and a few white fir. Shrubs included bush chinquapin, tobacco brush, pine mat manzanita, green leaf manzanita, Brewer's mountain heather, and mahala mat. Herbaceous plants included narrow-flowered lupine, satin lupine, slender Penstemon, and marum-leaved buckwheat with many more next to Summit Lake. This is a great easy hike but it does require balance due to the steep sections.

Thank You to Our Donors!

Acorn (\$25 to \$99)

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Young Oak (\$250 to \$499)

Barbara Featherstone, Ryan Henson, Cathy Lefler, Peter Waller, Shasta Chapter of the California Native Plant Society

Oak Tree (\$500 to \$999)

Mary Belkin, Ray Pfister & Lisa Ross

Oak Woodland (\$1000 & Up)

Don and Laurie Burk, Lang Dayton, Chris Harvey

We Couldn't Do This Work Without You.

Please consider donating to SEA!



You can go to ecoshasta.org to donate!

If you prefer to send a check, our mailing address is:

Shasta Environmental Alliance

P.O. Box 993777

Redding, CA 96099-3777

