



**Shasta
Environmental
Alliance**

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

December 2023 Newsletter

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Thank You Giving Tuesday Donors!

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UPCOMING SEA EVENTS



Photo by Lisa Ross - People enjoying a previous New Year's Day hike at Top of the World!

Sacramento River Bend Field Trip

Saturday, December 9th - 9:30 am

Meet at CVS parking lot on Placer

Sign up on [our MeetUp site](#)

New Year's Day Hike

Monday, January 1st - 9:30 am

Sign up on [our MeetUp site](#)

Limit is 20 people

*For more info about any of SEA's upcoming events,
contact david@ecoshasta.org*

Trip Report: Clear Creek Greenway Field Trip



Photo by Kathy Urlie

By Laurie and Don Burk

Nine enthusiastic hikers showed up for the joint Shasta Chapter CNPS–Shasta Environmental Alliance field trip along Clear Creek on what turned out to be a very warm mid-November afternoon.

We hiked upcreek along a portion of the trail that Shasta Environmental Alliance has adopted and recently cleaned up a bit. Good thing, too, because some of the encroaching star-thistle was head high!

We hiked for a couple of miles upstream, crossing Clear Creek Road at one point, and veering off to the northwest to see some silverback fern (*Pentagramma pallida*), which is very uncommon in Shasta County. To get to the fern, we passed by some gold-mining equipment that is apparently still in use, despite its derelict appearance.

David stopped along the trail now and then to point out and discuss various botanical wonders: oracle oaks, common vs. whiteleaf manzanita, galls on sandbar willow, and much more. We were fortunate to

have retired wildlife biologist Paula Crumpton along, who really knows her birds! She identified a black phoebe by sight, and an American dipper in the creek riffles by its canary-song, but we all could identify the turkey vultures circling above—over 16 of them! Paula was also able to explain the grating on an adit: to protect a good roosting place for bats.

Back at the trailhead, we were treated to the spectacle of salmon creating and protecting their redds, the males vying for dominance, sometimes locking jaws in battle. Such excitement!

Trip Report: Jenny Creek Field Trip



Photo by David Ledger

The SEA field trip to the proposed Jenny Creek trail in the City of Redding Open Space in early November was enjoyed by a small group of people including several Wintu Audubon members who were able to identify the many birds we saw on this walk.

We started in the LR Woods Park on Royal Oaks Drive and walked down to near where a bridge will be built across Jenny Creek. The Parks and Recreation Department has not released full details of the trail as of yet but it was originally proposed as a 12-foot-wide paved trail. As we hiked the trail, it became evident as it neared Jenny Creek toward the east end of the open space that it would take a significant gash out of the hillside due to the steepness of the terrain.

This area is in an oak woodland between Royal Oaks Drive and Overhill Drive. There were hundreds of birds along the trail which I was unfortunately flushing out before those behind me could catch many of them but birder Tricia Ford was able to identify many of the birds on the walk despite this. This oak

woodland was a very important habitat for birds and undoubtedly many small mammals during evening hours.

Following our walk in the open space, we drove down to the end of Overhill Drive to a trail that crosses Jenny Creek and connects with the Sacramento River Trail at the ½ mile mark.

A 12-foot wide trail in an important oak woodland seems unnecessary with a quiet road for walking or biking down Overhill Drive which connects up with Mary Street leading to Shasta High School, downtown Redding, and the Sacramento River Trail. Another trail on the other side of the neighborhood can be reached by walking or biking down Royal Oaks Drive to Palantine Court which has a City of Redding dirt trail that also connects to the Sacramento River Trail. Perhaps another neighborhood is in more need of a trail.

SEA Tree Planting



We made an exception to our front yard shade tree program and planted two trees in the Mary Lake neighborhood where the Trails and Bikeways Council had installed a bench dedicated to Dr. Harry Daniel because of his advocacy work for trails. This is on a short trail upstream of Mary Lake along upper Jenny Creek. The Trails and Bikeways Council built this natural soil trail between Lakeside Drive and Moyvane Drive. One was a blue oak, the other was a sycamore that was planted near a man-made wetland area.

We will be continuing to plant trees in the future and have a backlog to plant now.

Shasta Land Trust Hosting Workshop

About Conservation Easements



**SHASTA
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Conservation Easement Workshop

Thursday, December 14th at 5:30 PM



LEARN ABOUT CONSERVATION EASEMENT BENEFITS & OPPORTUNITIES

Don't miss this **FREE** workshop for landowners within Shasta County and the surrounding areas interested in learning more about how a conservation easement might benefit them and their property.

- Conservation Easement Purposes & Requirements
- Donated and Funded Projects Process
- Potential Property & Landowner Benefits
- Shasta Land Trust Property Selection Process

Q&A to follow with Shasta Land Trust Staff & Landowners Panel

Register to attend this free event at the Shasta Land Trust, 5170 Bechelli Lane, Redding, CA, to learn more. Drinks and appetizers will be provided!

LEARN HOW TO PROTECT THE LAND YOU LOVE



Register to attend by scanning the QR code or contact Christina Sousa below. Space is limited!

REGISTER: Please call our office at (530) 241-7886 or email Christina Sousa at csousa@shastalandtrust.org

Lands conserving the following are of special interest:

- Ranching or Agricultural Production
- Timberland or Managed Forests
- Wildlife Habitat and Corridors
- Aquatic Resources
- Cultural or Historic Sites
- Public Access or Educational Opportunities
- Tribal Access to Natural Resources
- Threatened or Endangered Species
- Connectivity to Other Protected Areas

5170 BECHELLI LN | REDDING, CA 96002 | 530.241.7886 | SHASTALANDTRUST.ORG

Shasta Land Trust (SLT) is hosting a Conservation Easement Workshop on Thursday, December 14th from 5:30p - 7:30p. This will be a **FREE** workshop designed for landowners within Shasta County and the surrounding areas who are interested in learning more about how a conservation easement can benefit them and their property. Learn about the purpose of conservation easements, the difference between donated and funded projects, as well as the benefits and requirements that come with them.

The goal is to help landowners make informed decisions and understand our selection process. SLT also invites you to participate in a “Question & Answer” session afterward with a panel of Shasta Land Trust staff and landowners who have used a conservation easement as a tool to forever protect the land they love.

For more information or to register, [click here](#).

This workshop is free and appetizers/drinks will be provided, but space is limited so please register to attend. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Tessa at Shasta Land Trust via email at csousa@shastalandtrust.org or via phone at (530) 241-7886.

Your General Plan Comments Have Made a Difference



Image by David Ledger - cement walkway very close to the River's edge

The Development Services/Planning Department has listened to many critical comments made regarding the Draft General Plan and because of those comments, they have strengthened some of the language.

Much of the draft plan had phrases such as “consider, strive to, or work to” all of which are so vague as to be meaningless whereas other California cities' general plans state words such as “shall, must, will, and require.” The city dropped many of these vague phrases, but not enough which received widespread complaints and ridicule. However, they did take heed of your many comment letters.

One extremely important area they did not address adequately was climate change. They left in the waffle wording of “consider.” This is the most important issue facing all of life on earth and, in particular, hot Redding. Here is the weak wording:

“EJ3E – *Consider* the development and adoption of a Climate Action and Resiliency Plan. Support plans, standards, regulations, incentives, and investments, and seek grants and other funding to reduce the impacts of climate change on vulnerable residents.”

I served on the General Plan focus group for this section and at each meeting many of us emphasized the importance of strengthening the language but it was never changed as we wanted it. It looks like Redding is not really willing to do more to combat climate change except to “consider” doing something about it. How mealy-mouthed can you get?

A Threat to Sacramento River Riparian Areas

Another item of concern is setbacks of development from the Sacramento River which are currently 150 feet. A careful reading of a map of the waterways of Redding has this small exemption of lands from the Cypress Street Bridge to Turtle Bay.

“Minimum 75-foot development setback from riparian dripline or 150 feet from bank whichever is greater. Water-orientated commercial projects in the Cypress Avenue, Park Marina, and Convention Center areas which may have reduced setbacks.”

This is from the 2000 to 2020 General Plan and the same map and description is used in the new draft General Plan. The newer office buildings north of the Cypress Street bridge are as close as 45 feet from the bank and the concrete trail is as small as 10 feet from the bank.

Keep those comments coming! You can easily comment on these issues addressed above or any others by going to this link: gpccomments@cityofredding.org

BLM Northwest California Integrated Management Plan

Providing more protection for important lands in northern California.



By David Ledger

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is still soliciting comments on its updated Northwest California Integrated Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (NCIP) which involves 382,000 acres of land in northern California managed by the Redding and Arcata offices.

BLM is offering five options as to how to manage all of their lands ranging from No Plan, keeping everything as it is to the desired plan of protecting more lands for the public to enjoy while still offering recreational opportunities. Option five would advocate greater protection for wilderness areas or areas with wilderness characteristics, protecting wild rivers and streams to acquiring areas in the Sacramento River Bend area for greater recreation opportunities for the citizens of Shasta and Tehama counties. Land acquisitions would be increased from willing sellers and some isolated land plots that are unmanageable would be sold or traded for other lands. Overall, Option 5 would provide greater protection for important natural wildlife areas and provide more recreational opportunities for the public.

SEA board members Bill Kuntz and David Ledger have been meeting virtually with a diverse group of environmentalists ranging from the California Wilderness Coalition, the Pew Charitable Trust, Conservation Lands Foundation, The Wilderness Society, Defenders of Wildlife, California Native Plant Society, Friends of the Lost Coast, and several fishing groups on this issue.

The deadline to comment is December 28 and the California Wilderness Coalition has a sample letter you can write, plus a link to more information about the plan go to this link: <https://secure.everyaction.com/854aLqYcxEmmkl33rgDcCg2>

Congressman Doug LaMalfa opposes the BLM Plan

Congressman Doug LaMalfa has submitted a rider to a BLM funding bill that will specifically prohibit any funding for work on the required plan for Northwest California only. This means those of you who enjoy many of the trails around the Redding area, the Sacramento River Bend area, the Swazey Recreation Area, and many other lands have a harsh opponent in LaMalfa. His bill would stop all funding in its tracks to increase and protect these important environmental and recreational areas. I've written a letter to LaMalfa from a form on his website two weeks ago and hand-delivered a letter to his Redding office asking why he wants to deny residents of throughout his district increased recreational areas by preventing any funding to update a 30-year-old plan. You may call his Redding office at (530) 223-5898 to enquire why he is voting against these funds.

Water Pollution in the Sacramento River

And what is being done about it.



Image by David Ledger - Artwork on storm drain at Yuba and Market Streets Redding

Do you ever wonder how the water, leaves, litter, pesticides, and other debris that goes into our storm drains are treated before it goes into the Sacramento River? Well, they are not! All water you see going into storm drains goes directly into a nearby stream or river without any treatment.

This means the oil from your driveway, fertilizer or pesticides on your lawn, litter that flies out your car window, or pollutants purposely poured into a storm drain go directly into the river. There are several storm drains on I-5 that collect the water with oil, tire particles, and trash from the freeway where it is directed to a local stream or city storm drain; from there, it goes into the Sacramento River with no filtering or treatment. The dog

poop your dog leaves on local trails, and any dangerous disease in it will eventually reach the Sacramento River.

This is why it is important to keep our river clean. Some ways you can ensure you're doing what you can include refraining from spraying pesticides on your lawns, washing your car on your lawn vs on your driveway, cleaning up your dog's poop, removing litter in your curb's gutter, and other methods recommended by the City of Redding Storm Water Management Program.

The current lack of stormwater treatment will be changing in less than 7 years. The California Water Quality Control Board passed regulations in 2015 requiring municipalities to clean up their storm drain runoff including preventing all trash over 5 millimeters (under ¼" in thickness). Unfortunately, this still leaves the dog poop, pesticides, and other runoff to adversely affect the fish and other fauna in the river.

For a good overview of Redding's Storm Water Management Program, go to [Redding's Storm Water Management webpage](#).

Thank You to Our Giving Tuesday Supporters!

Thank you so much to everyone who donated on Giving Tuesday! These funds will help power our work into 2024! It is always so encouraging to have people from our community want to be a part of the collective voice for our North State environment.

Again, thank you so much for your generosity and we hope to see everyone out on our educational trips/hikes sometime in 2024!

Please consider a donation 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



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