



**Shasta
Environmental
Alliance**

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

January 2024 Newsletter

In this issue:

Upcoming SEA + Community Events

2024 Earth Day Festival

NOAA Approves Sierra Pacific Industries Plan Without Proper Public/Tribe Input

Event: The Bark Beetles' Impact

Trip Report: New Year's Day Hike to the "Top of the World"

Trip Report: Sacramento River Bend Area

Invasive Species: Stinkwort

Thank you to our donors!

Donate

UPCOMING SEA EVENTS



JANUARY

Chamise Peak Native Plant Field Trip

Sat., January 13th from 9 am to 1 pm

FEBRUARY

Cloverdale Trail Restoration & Ecology Field Trip

Saturday, February 10th at 9 am

The Bark Beetles Impact Talk

Tuesday, February 13th at 6pm

2024 Earth Day Festival - Free Event

EARTH DAY REDDING

April 20th, 2024 • Caldwell Park



Free
Event



Music
Food
Booths



Kid's Activities
Secure Bike Corral

Upcoming Events Calendar
at seashasta.org

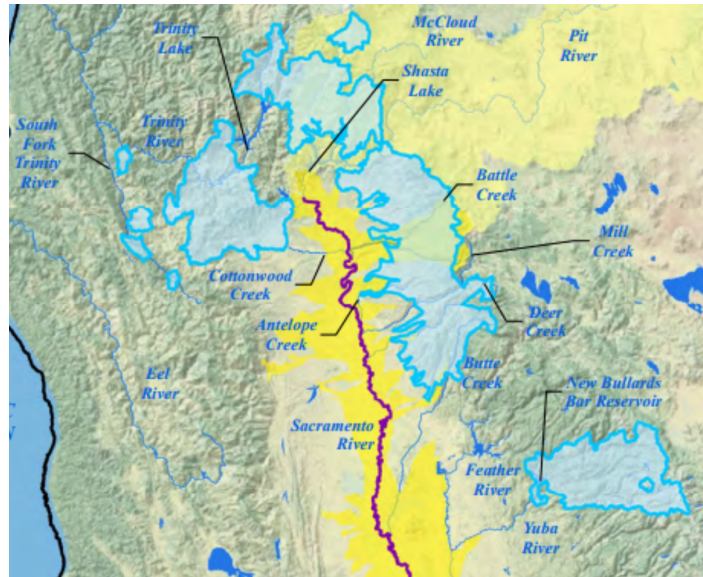
Shasta Environmental Alliance is organizing another free Earth Day Festival at Caldwell Park on Saturday, April 20 from 11 am to 4 pm. This year's Earth Day theme is Planet vs. Plastics to educate the public about the threats that plastics, especially microplastics, pose to our environment. This is the theme of International Earth Day and you can go to their website at earthday.org to find out more information.

We will be asking all exhibitors and food vendors not to bring single-use plastic items to this year's event. We will be inviting 5 artists to exhibit paintings with an environmental or outdoor natural theme and we will have a few food vendors. Once again we will have music, but will arrange the setup so we will not have booths too close to the music so exhibitors can easily converse with people at their booths. As usual, we will have

many exhibits, games, and activities for young children, but we will be adding a few activities for middle school children as well.

This will once again be a non-commercial event except for food vendors. If you would like to have a booth at the Festival for your nonprofit, community group, or public agency, contact david@ecoshasta.org. Nonprofit and community exhibitor fees are \$30, agencies are \$60, and schools can exhibit free of charge.

NOAA Approves Sierra Pacific Industries 355,000 Acre Plan Without Proper Public/Tribe Input



Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI) submitted a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in 2016 covering 355,000 acres of SPI land in northern California, primarily the Sacramento and Trinity River watersheds. In return, SPI received an Incidental Take Permit from NOAA IN 2021. The 50-year-long permit will allow SPI to “take” 8 species of fish including threatened and endangered salmon and steelhead throughout watersheds in northern California. The permit assures SPI that no additional future regulatory restrictions will be imposed if their practices inadvertently kill protected species.

In return for this Safe Harbors Act agreement with NOAA, SPI agrees to improve logging roads on its lands over the 50-year agreement to reduce sedimentation into streams and NMFS will be allowed to restock certain streams upstream of Shasta Lake with anadromous fish.

SEA President David Ledger and Battle Creek Alliance Director Marily Woodhouse only heard about the plan following a presentation by a NOAA scientist at a November 2023 meeting of the Greater Battle Creek Watershed Working Group. A SPI representative at the meeting was questioned at the meeting about the water quality monitoring requirements. He stated that SPI has water monitoring stations on streams that are recording data “24/7.” Most of these results

are not available publicly, and some of their data is collected upstream of the land logged, rather than downstream where the impacts occur.

There will only be two water monitoring stations for the entire HCP of 355,000 acres. One is above Shasta Lake, and the other is on a feeder stream to Lower Antelope Creek. It was only after contacting NOAA that we discovered none of the required stream water monitoring stations were in Battle Creek, the site of a \$166 million fish habitat restoration project that was begun in 1999 and is still not completed.

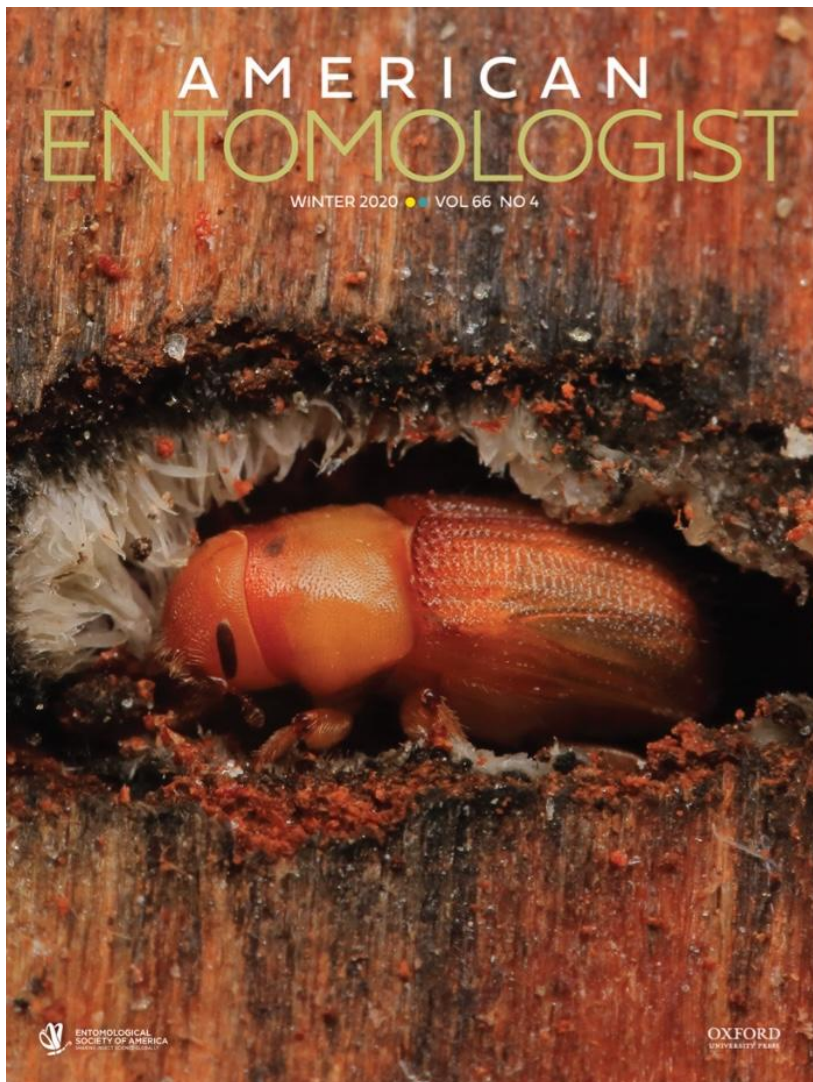
Ledger and Woodhouse requested a virtual meeting with NOAA and NMFS which was held in December. From that meeting, we learned that the only notice given to the public was a listing in the obscure Federal Register. No notices were sent to any media and there was only a 30-day comment period. This contrasts with years of numerous notices and public meetings over the Shasta Dam Raise, the new Delta Tunnel, the Sites Reservoir, and months of notification for the recent BLM proposed revisions to their Integrated Resource Management Plan for public lands in this area.

Only three tribes were notified none were in the HCP area. The Pit River, Redding Rancheria, and Winnemum Wintu tribes were not notified. This is especially disturbing as first it is required by law and more importantly, the Winnemum Wintu at considerable expense transplanted the genetically original salmon that were from the McCloud River from New Zealand back to the McCloud River. The NMFS has plans to plant salmon in different streams that flow into Shasta Lake, which means a wayward salmon could alter the genetic purity of the salmon the Winnemum planted in the McCloud River.

We also asked NOAA for copies of the three letters of support for the HCP. All three were from other logging companies. Not surprisingly, the NOAA and NMFS secrecy about this project prevented any of the general public or the tribes from commenting on the plan as it was basically kept hidden.

On a related note, there was a similar proposed SPI HCP and Safe Harbors Act plan in Humboldt County and the USFS had public notices and three public hearings so all parties could weigh in. That HCP is currently in court. Unfortunately for this HCP, the comment period has passed, however some of the tribes would have a legal basis to appeal as there was no notification.

Event: The Bark Beetle's Impact



Join us Tuesday, February 13th from 6 pm - 7:30 pm for a presentation by Dr. Donald R. Owen. Don will start his talk with an overview of native bark beetles and their impacts, including their response to climate change. He also will explore the concept of “pest” using bark beetles and some lesser-known forest insects as examples. Finally, he will talk about some local insects with fascinating life histories – insects that can be observed simply by stepping outside and being observant. Don is a retired Forest Entomologist with degrees from Penn State and UC Berkeley. At the start of his career, he worked for the USDA Forest Service in New Mexico, Alaska, and California. In 1991 he switched permanently to the CA Dept. of Forestry and Fire Protection, where he served as Forest Health Specialist and the Department’s lead on forest insects. He has a broad background in forest insects and diseases, both

native and invasive, and their impact on forest ecosystems.

He enjoys exploring the lives of insects through photography. His photographs appear on the FORESTRY IMAGES website and have been featured in publications of the Entomological Society of America.

New Year's Day Field Trip 2024



Photo by Lisa Ross

We had a great turnout for our annual SEA/CNPS field trip up the Westside Trail to the “Top of the World,” the highest hill in the trail complex. We had approximately 28 people on the field trip, which made it difficult for everyone to hear all of the plant identification, but many new friendships were made.

Everyone was given a list of plant species from before the Carr Fire and several species have almost disappeared from areas of high-intensity burns including gray pines and several Ponderosa pines. Surprisingly the few knob cone pines that were in the area before the Carr Fire seemed to be the only conifers resprouting and they are growing quite fast.

One new plant since the fire is stinkwort, a prolific invasive plant in California that was only seen on these trails after the Carr Fire. One stinkwort plant on the trail looked dead and most of the flowers had already gone to seed, but surprisingly there were new flowers on the plant almost ready to open. SEA plans to have a volunteer stinkwort removal crew pull up and bag all the plants we can find next fall.

The walk took a little under three hours to walk the four miles, but we identified plants and features of the surrounding landscape and socialized on the way up. This is a hike that a person in decent shape can make in under 90 minutes.

We had many members of the SEA alliance on the field trip: Amy Henderson, President of the Shasta Group of CNPS; Sandy Harrison, President of the Trails and Bikeways Council; Lisa Ross and Ray Pfister, Horsetown Clear Creek Preserve Board members; MaryAnn McCrary, Cochair of North State Climate Action as well as members of Sierra Club and Wintu Audubon Society.

Trip Report: Sacramento River Bend Area

Field Trip



For this mid-morning field trip, we walked upstream next to Paynes Creek and an adjacent water ditch which was being converted into storm drain-sized pipes. The walk was between two habitats: the rich soil of the Paynes Creek floodplain on one side, a hillside of dry grasslands, and a few scattered shrubs and blue oaks on the other. We were close enough to the creek to be under the canopy of large

California sycamores, Fremont cottonwoods, and valley oaks.

The trees we saw ranged from shrubby hop trees to towering sycamores, with California buckeyes, figs, and Oregon ash underneath. Apparently, the Valley Elderberry Longhorn

Beetle is occupying some of the blue elderberry shrubs as most were fenced off should over-enthusiastic workers on the diversion canal work cut some down by mistake.

On the dryer sections of the walk, we found hollyleaf redberry, California juniper, blue oaks, interior live oak, foothill ash, and buckeyes. The only plant in bloom was naked buckwheat, but we could identify vinegar weed by smell, stinging nettle by leaf, and buckeyes by stem color, shape, and bud. The rocks and boulders on the trail had an amazing variety of lichen species on them, some with up to ten different species on the same rock. Next to and on some of the boulders in the slightly shadier areas were mats of *Selaginella*, a primitive non-flowering plant just up the evolutionary tree from mosses.

Stinkwort (*Dittrichia graveolens*)



by David Ledger

Stinkwort is a fairly new invasive plant in California in the sunflower family that grows up to three feet tall with tiny heads of yellow flowers that bloom in the fall and when in seed, form a tufted head somewhat like a miniature dandelion. The stems and leaves are sticky and have a strong unpleasant smell and it can cause dermatitis although not as bad as poison oak.

It was first discovered in California in 1984 and has spread throughout the state. The plant is originally from southern Europe and northern Africa. It has become a fast-growing invasive in California and may spread like yellow star thistle. It can be toxic to sheep and cattle, although most cattle won't eat it unless they are starving.

I found the plant pictured on the Westside Trail in Redding and pulled up about 15 plants that had just started to bloom. I came by a week later and many of the plants I pulled had flowerheads that had gone to seed. Now I know why they put them in plastic bags when sites are cleared of the plant with volunteers. I will point them out on the joint SEA/CNPS field trip on the Westside Trail on New Year's Day. They may have been brought in by fire restoration crews or someone on the trail with seeds in their clothes. SEA and CNPS may do a stinkwort removal next fall if we have enough volunteers.

Thank You to Our Donors!

Giving Tuesday Donors:

Muffy Berryhill, Kris Bertelson-Williams, Dawn Bieser, Laura and Mike Bradley, Aleta Carpenter, Miki'ala Catalfano, Allan Craig, Lang M. Dayton, John Deaton, Mari Ennis-Applegate, Lyra Gray, Kathy Grissom, Penelope Harris, Karen Hazeltine, Janice Hunter, Kay Johnson, Kay Kosko, Suzzie Lang, David Ledger, John Livingston, Lee Macey, Diane Madgic, Robert Madison, Victoria McArthur, Jim Milestone, James Nelson, Geneva M Omann, Donald Owen, Cathy Reisfelt, Cathy Scott, John Springer, Max Walter, Jaclyn White

Other Donors:

\$25 to \$99

Kris Bertelson-Williams, Sandra Cameron, Barbara Dorris, Tammi Douse, Ailene Genoff, Robert Hixon, Cathy Reisfelt, Linda Samuels, Jamie Spielmann, Michael Koturba, Brigitte Robertson, John Winchell, Marti Weidert

\$100 to \$249

Sierra Club, Paula Dulak, Derle Gilliam, Kathleen Gilman, Green Party of Shasta County, George Horn, Laura Bradley, Siskiyou Land Trust, Karen Foss, John Lefler, Doug Mandel, John Springer, Connie Word

\$250 to \$499

Mary Belkin, Don and Laurie Burk, Barbara Featherstone, Ryan Henson, Peter Waller, Shasta Chapter, California Native Plant Society

\$1000 & Up

Chris Harvey

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



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

Copyright (C) | 2022 | Shasta Environmental Alliance | All rights reserved.

Our mailing address is:

P.O. Box 993777

Redding, CA 96099