

## SEA Newsletter June 2022

### Two Bald Eagle nestlings die following CalFire 2021 burn

Two Bald Eagle nestlings died following a CalFire burn close to a Bald Eagle nest, despite CalFire being warned about the nest and the threat a fire would pose to the eagles. The nest was located about 200 feet off Highway 36 down a ravine near Dales Station and Manton Road. This happened on June 1, 2021.

A photographer from Red Bluff had been regularly taking pictures of the eagles as they built their nest and were raising the eaglets, when she saw a posted notice of an upcoming CalFire burn at the end of May 2021. She contacted some Redding eagle watchers, who in turn contacted a CalFire employee of the danger the fire would pose to the birds. The CalFire employee called them back and said a biologist said the fire would not harm the birds.

The photographer went back after the fire on June 8 and found two dead eaglets; one hanging off the side of the nest and the other found hanging about 10 feet below the nest. The parents were sitting at the top of the tree.

Marily Woodhouse of Defiance Canyon Raptor Rescue, who provided the information in this story, received an email from a biologist explaining why the fire didn't kill the birds; it was the smoke that did.

*"A bird's respiratory system is more sensitive to toxins, including smoke, than a mammal's respiratory system. This is because birds have a higher oxygen demand than mammals and a bird's lungs are 10 times more efficient at capturing*

*oxygen. The rapid efficiency of gas exchange in bird lungs makes them more susceptible to inhaled toxic agents, including smoke. Inhaled toxins, such as smoke, can cause irritation and damage the respiratory system. It also can compromise the immune system, making the bird more susceptible to infections. This is especially true in young birds in the nest that are unable to escape the smoke. Smoke inhalation toxicity in birds is caused by irritant gases (aldehydes, hydrogen chloride, and sulfur dioxide), particulate matter, and nonirritant gases (carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, and hydrogen cyanide) released by combustion."*

The birds were not burned; they most likely died from lung infections in the week following the fire, as they could not fly while the fire was burning and smoke was covering the nest.

This is one of the problems that due to the massive wildfires in California, CalFire has been given pretty much free range with its Vegetative Treatment Plans, and environmental studies under CEQA are no longer required. This can threaten not only birds and other animals, but also rare plants. To read an in-depth story on this by Marily Woodhouse, go the Daily Kos via this link.

[https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2022/4/15/2092201/-/Cal-Fire-burns-next-to-Bald-Eagle-nest-eaglets-die?\\_r=2022-04-15T14:51:19.000-07:00](https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2022/4/15/2092201/-/Cal-Fire-burns-next-to-Bald-Eagle-nest-eaglets-die?_r=2022-04-15T14:51:19.000-07:00)

SEA will be sending letters to CDFW & USFWS on the killing of these birds.



Eaglet hanging about 10 feet below nest. Photo taken at dusk by Marily Woodhouse. More photos at end of newsletter.

## Barricades are up at Oregon Gulch



In April SEA was able to put in place 20 concrete barriers weighing 3700 lbs. each at various places to keep out 4x4, Quads and other OHV's. It will not keep out most dirt bikes, but it will limit their access.

SEA Board Member Jim Milestone was in charge of the job and worked with Travis Menne of Redding Community Services, who operated the loader that moved the barriers to several access places at Oregon Gulch. Last year Jim worked with a volunteer crew from Bethel Church that put up fencing strengthened by cables on steep slopes to keep out the dirt bikes.

Travis Menne was able to get WAPA to commit to purchasing iron gates to put up on their access roads to further protect the area.



Just one of 20 barriers placed to keep out OHV's.

Jim spent many hours organizing and overseeing work at Oregon Gulch and was also helped by Bill Kuntz, Brian Crane, and David Ledger. OHV traffic is way down at Oregon Gulch, and we encourage people to take hikes through this 380-acre natural areas which will also discourage further illegal dirt bike travel. A big thanks to Jim for taking on this project and following it through. The Bower Charitable Fund provided SEA a grant for the cost of the work protecting the area.

## Shasta County Planning Commission Votes County-Wide Ban on Wind Farms

The Shasta County Planning Commission took a step backwards for Shasta County and efforts to produce clean energy by approving a draft ordinance that will place a complete ban on industrial scale wind farms everywhere in Shasta County; however, small scale wind turbine systems will be allowed. This ordinance will go to the Board of Supervisors most likely in July.

Banning large scale wind farms throughout all of Shasta County because most of it is in a high fire area seems to be nonsensical. Rarely does a wind turbine cause a fire outside the immediate wind turbine tower. In our area arson is a more common cause, such as the Delta Fire, Fawn Fire, the Cloverdale Fire, the Creek Fire, and numerous small fires throughout the greater Redding area. PG&E has caused numerous fires including the Zogg Fire and the Camp Fire. The Carr Fire was caused by an automobile hauling a trailer.

Denmark produced 48% of its electricity using wind power in 2020.

Kansas produces 30% of its electricity from wind power in 2020

Nebraska and Texas produce 20% of their energy from wind power.

In Kansas, Nebraska and Texas, wind turbines are placed on parcels of about 80 acres each, allowing farmers to still plant their crops and obtain additional income from rental of land for the wind turbines, sometimes providing crucial income to allow their farms to be profitable.

## **Costco Planning Commission Decision: Behind Closed Doors**

When the new Costco site on Bechelli Lane was first proposed, the Redding City Council was desperate to get it approved because Redding could lose considerable sales tax revenue to Anderson, should Costco build there. Recent evidence has been revealed that all was not out in the open about the entire process.

In a recent comment letter dated 3/22/2022 to the Planning Commission on an unrelated issue, Frank Coughlin, a former Planning Commissioner, included in his letter the following statement regarding a meeting he had with former Development Services Director Larry Vaupel who oversees the Planning Department:

*While I was serving on the Planning Commission, Larry Vaupel requested a meeting with each of the Commissioners, one on one, prior to the vote on Costco. The day of my meeting, Larry showed up at my home with Paul Hellman. I had no idea that Paul was coming to the meeting. In retrospect, I am glad Paul was there so he could confirm what took place at the meeting. I took them back to my office where I sat down behind my desk. Paul sat in the chair in front of my desk to my right, while Larry was the last one to be seated in front of my desk on the left.*

*Before Larry's Glutes Maximus touched his chair he said to me, "I'm here to tell YOU how YOU are to vote on Costco."*

*Before he could say another word, I told Larry to SHUT THE "EXPLETIVE" UP AND LISTEN TO ME. I told Larry that NO ONE is going to tell me how to vote.*

*I also told Larry that when Mayor Rick Bosetti appointed me to the Planning Commission, he told me that I could vote to APPROVE, DENY, or REQUEST an amendment for any item that came before the Planning Commission, PERIOD!*

While there is nothing illegal about this, it does raise questions about the independence of the Planning Commission that Vaupel would go to each Commissioner to tell them how to vote.

## **More Costco Shenanigans Strawberry Fields/Redding Rancheria vs City of Redding**

Then there is the issue of an almost secret sale of a small parcel of land at the south end of Bechelli Lane by the City of Redding which could connect to the casino the Redding Rancheria wants to build on the old strawberry fields to the north of Costco. This small section of Bechelli Lane was necessary for access to the proposed casino site

According to an article in the Shasta Scout, the City had negotiated in private with Red Emmerson, owner of Sierra Pacific Industries, who owns land adjacent to the proposed casino. The City put a proposed sale for a vote in a closed session of the City Council in 2020. The property was noted on the agenda only by parcel number, so it was not known to the public where it was, although this was probably legal. However, the property was never declared surplus nor had a CEQA determination been made. Redding Rancheria sued the City or Redding in court after finding out about the almost-secret sale. On May 17, Superior Court Judge Tamara Wood ruled that the sale violated the Surplus Lands Act, CEQA and the city's policies. The articles can be found at [shastascout.org](http://shastascout.org).

## **7500 Acres of Blue Oak Woodland and Grasslands to be Protected**

The California Rangelands Trust is in the process of placing a conservation easement on 7500 acres of land in far western Shasta County in the middle Cottonwood Creek watershed near Tehama County. SEA will be writing a letter of support. Shasta County has an extremely weak tree ordinance. It is entirely voluntary, although the Planning Department can at times require trees to be preserve. The easement will prevent the land from being subdivided and oak trees from being cut unless used only for firewood for the two homes on the entire 7500 acres. They cannot be cut for grazing.



## Redding's Tree Canopy

SEA was able to get the GIS department of the City of Redding to work up some tree canopy coverage figures for several areas of the City of which we will give more details next month's newsletter.

We asked the City to draw up maps for the core of downtown Redding running basically from between West St. and Continental Street on the west and east respectively and between Trinity Street and Cypress Ave. on the north and south respectively, generally excluding most but not all residential areas. This showed the total canopy in this area to have 12.1% tree cover, however, for trees over 40 feet in height, the canopy was only 1.6%! For trees between 7 and 15' tall, the canopy cover was 5.6%. This means the canopy for shade trees over 15' tall was only 6.5% and is this is based on 2020 mapping.

For the Garden Tract, basically between Continental Street and Park Marina Drive on the west and east respectively and between Locust and Yuba Streets (excluding Sequoia School and the commercial lands on Park Marina Drive) the tree canopy was 30% with 18.4% tree canopy with trees over 15' tall and 11.6% for small trees between 7 and 15 feet tall.

Scientists studying the heat island effect believe that a tree canopy in a city should be at least 40% to counteract the heat island effect. The heat island refers to the amount of solar radiation absorbed by areas such as streets, parking lots, buildings, sidewalks and rooftops. The difference can be as much as 12 degrees between a tree canopy area such as the natural area of Turtle Bay and a typical city downtown area with few trees according to the NOAA.

Nighttime temperatures can have as high as a 22 degrees difference between an urban area and an adjacent countryside. This is because the asphalt and concrete etc. not to mention air conditioners, continue to radiate heat well into the night whereas the treed countryside continues to cool after sunset. This is why Redding needs a new tree ordinance that preserves and/or mitigates for the loss of trees.



(From 2019) One of several stacks of tree removal without permit off Timore Lane resulted in a penalty of about \$340 for 10 trees removed although the owner did hoodwink City staff on this by texting a photo of an RFD order to create a fire break with the date and number cut off. A Public Records Request by SEA determined it was for another section of the property that was concerned with brush in 2019, not 2020 when SEA reported it.

## Jeremy Pagan Appointed New Development Services Director

The City of Redding Development Services has finally hired a new Director, Jeremy Pagan. He has been working for the City for about a year and as an interim Director. His appointment was announced by City Manager Barry Tippin on June 2. This appointment is important as that is one of the reasons Planning was holding off on drafting a new Tree Ordinance for Redding. SEA hopes to be meeting with the new director in the near future.

## \$4000 Fine for Illegal Tree Removal

In a related development, on June 8, SEA received unsolicited, a copy of a \$4000 fine the Planning Department had levied on someone for illegally cutting down seven trees of which two were determined to be healthy and on which the fine was based. The largest fine previously that I am aware of was under \$400 and that was for about 10 tree. Hopefully this is a sign that the City will take a more proactive approach in preserving our tree canopy under the new director.

## **Easy Redding Bike Ride on New Trails Saturday, June 11, 8 am,**

Join the Trails and Bikeways Council of Redding and Shasta Environmental Alliance on an easy group bike ride of 3 to 4 miles on a new trail connecting Highway 299 with Hilltop Drive near the AAA Auto Club and including a ride along Boulder Creek to the Boulder Creek School. This will be an easy bike ride on several short trails with stops for identifying a few native plants and explanations of the detention ponds and problems with flooding on Boulder Creek. For more information, contact David Ledger at [david@ecoshasta.org](mailto:david@ecoshasta.org). We will meet at the end of Mill Valley Parkway, which is off Mission de Oro Street.

## **Kids Fishing Day Mt. Shasta Fish Hatchery Saturday June 11 and July 9**

Like shooting fish in a barrel. The Mt. Shasta Fish Hatchery will have free fishing days for kids 15 and under with pole and bait provided (Unless too many show up). This is a great way to get children interested in the natural world. Adult volunteers also needed. Registration 8:45 to 2:30, fishing 8 am to 3 pm. This will be in a stocked pond at the hatchery. For more information call 530-225-2361.

## **Wild and Scenic Film Festival Shasta Living Streets Saturday, June 11 6:30 pm**

Shasta Living Streets will be screening its 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Wild and Scenic Film Festival with 10 stunning films outdoors at Shasta Living Streets. Doors open at 6:30 pm, and films start at 8 pm. Join the fun and see your friends. For tickets go to [shastalivingstreets.org](http://shastalivingstreets.org) which are also available to view virtually June 12-16. Proceeds benefit Shasta Living Streets and the new Shasta Bike Depot. There is also a drawing for a \$5500 E-Cargo-Bike. For more information call 530-355-2230.

## **Upcoming SEA Tour of Redding Clear Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant Thursday, June 16, 9:45 am**

SEA will be given a tour of the City of Redding's Clear Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant on the Sacramento River on Thursday, June 16, at 9:45am. This will start with a discussion of the overview of the plant and then a tour of the treatment process, and lastly a discussion and walk to the settling pools. Most of the tour will be in air-conditioned buildings.

Learn about how this water is treated so it is safe enough to be returned to the Sacramento River, including the problems with storm water infiltration into the system, the recycling of some of the water, and future environmental issues with waste water. This is an important part of the purification of wastewater of which California has had high standards prior to the Clean Water Act of 1972.

We will meet at the plant off Eastside Road at 9:45am. Limited to 20 persons, to ensure a space, email David Ledger at [david@ecoshasta.com](mailto:david@ecoshasta.com).

## **Memorial Remembrance: BILL W. OLIVER Saturday, June 18, 3 pm Woody's Brewing Company**

William W. Oliver, forestry scientist, founder of Wintu Audubon, and all-around great person and environmentalist, passed away on May 3, 2022, at the age of 87. Bill lived a full life working in a field he loved: forestry and volunteering for Wintu Audubon for over 40 years, compiling statistics on Audubon's annual Christmas Bird Count, as well as serving as President many times. He was recognized by Shasta Environmental Alliance for our annual award as an Environmental Champion for his environmental work. He was also a fun person to be around and enjoyed good-natured kidding.

A Memorial will be held at Woody's Brewing Company, 1257 Oregon St. Redding, Saturday, June 18, at 3 pm. RSVP at [davidwoliver@gmail.com](mailto:davidwoliver@gmail.com).



**Coggins Park Field Trip**  
**Whiskeytown NRA**  
**Saturday, June 25**

We will carpool to Coggins Park, a small area of old growth trees at 4200 feet in Whiskeytown NRA that survived the Carr Fire. This will be a 3 to 4 mile walk on adjacent trails. You must be vaccinated and boosted for this field trip, bring mask for drive up if your driver requests. For more information, meeting time and directions, contact walk leader Chris Harvey [cdharvey003@gmail.com](mailto:cdharvey003@gmail.com) This is a joint SEA, Shasta CNPS field trip.

**Heart Lake Field Trip**  
**Lassen National Forest**  
**Sunday, June 19, 8 am**

This field trip will be a 4 ½ mile hike of moderate difficulty with scattered shade with a 1000 foot climb to beautiful Heart Lake at 6500 foot elevation in Lassen National Forest. The lake provides views of the west side of Brokeoff Mountain from the lakeside. We will see a variety of native plants in bloom on the hike up. To cut down on greenhouse gases, we will carpool up, so all participants must be fully vaccinated and boosted. If you plan to go, and for more information, contact David Ledger at [david@ecoshasta.org](mailto:david@ecoshasta.org). We will meet at the Mt. Shasta Mall parking lot at 8 am.



Dead eaglelet on nest, its sibling fell down 10 feet below, see page 1.

**SEA Conifer and Old Growth Field Trip**

Cool 50-degree weather greeted SEA/CNPS members on this joint Lassen Park conifer walk on May 28. We saw many late blooming snow plants (*Sarcodes sanguinea*) on the short winding Lily Pond Trail where we also identified 10 different conifer species: Ponderosa, Jeffrey, western white, lodgepole and sugar pine as well as incense cedar, Douglas fir, mountain hemlock, white and red fir.

Then we drove to the Nobles Trail This trail follows the old Nobles Trail wagon train road that settlers used to reach northern California.

One of the rewards of walking in an old growth forest are the many snags left standing that are a source of food for many birds seeking wood eating insects and also home for cavity dwelling birds.



Tree huggers Marty Weidert and Judy Wavers on the Lassen Emigrant/Lost Creek Trail.



CalFire controlled burn near Bald Eagle Nest. Smoke engulfed the eagles nest, the parents were able to fly away.