

The EPFW Update

Ebbetts Pass Forest Watch Newsletter

Vol. 5, No. 1 • June, 2005

Happy Birthday EPFW—We're Five!

Still Here, Determined as Ever, Organized for the Long Haul

Ebbetts Pass Forest Watch is five years old this spring, thanks to you, our friends and supporters who are EPFW.

Many groups start the way EPFW did—because of shock at some horror. In our case, the horror was 800 acres of clear cuts between Arnold and Dorrington. But often, when the size of the challenge becomes clear, groups dissipate and fade away. EPFW faces a Goliath: Sierra Pacific Industries spreads across a million and a half acres of California timberland, plans to level 80% of those acres and replace them with plantation tree “crops.” SPI is powerful enough to dominate timber policy and wealthy enough to make political donations in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

But we are still here, as determined as ever, and organized for the long haul. We are a non-profit organization, with sturdy by-laws, a great board of directors, and **you**—the hundreds of people committed to the EPFW mission: to protect, promote, and restore healthy forests and watersheds to maintain quality of life in the Sierra Nevada.

During these last five years, we have learned much about forests by commenting on timber harvest plans, doing GIS studies, and monitoring the water in

local creeks. We have walked through, biked through, and flown over land devastated by clear cuts and made known what we have seen, through newspapers, videos, television, and public events. We have gained political savvy—testifying before the state Board of Forestry and regional water boards and holding educational seminars for county supervisor candidates.

Throughout it all, we have remained positive. We

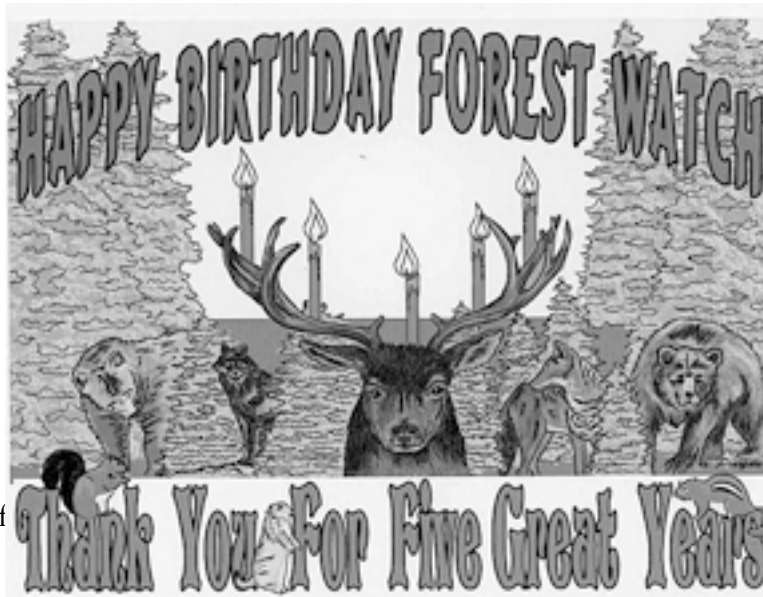
support loggers and responsible logging that respects the forest and sustains it for future generations.

And we have had fun! Three great, rockin' Valentine Day concerts; a Wild and Scenic Film Festival (with another on the way in October); puppet shows in libraries and schools; participation in parades, fairs, Earth Days, and garden shows. And we have given birth to our chickaree mascot, Sierra, who loves adults,

kids, and all public events (and acorns).

We have lots of energy for the future (after all, we're only five years old). With you, we are committed to the quality of life people seek in the Sierra, and that quality depends on healthy forests, abundant wildlife, and clear waters. We're committed to ever deeper dialogue and ever firmer alliance with the citizens of the Sierra. Together, we hold the future of this gorgeous region in our hands.

Drawing by Patty Payne



Ebbetts Pass Forest Watch...a forest and watershed coalition
PO Box 2862 • Arnold, CA 95223 • (209)795-8260 • www.forestwatchers.org



Our Mission

The mission of Ebbetts Pass Forest Watch is to protect, promote and restore healthy forests and watersheds to maintain quality of life in the Sierra Nevada.

Volunteers Learn Basics of Water Monitoring

EPFW, in consultation with the Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Council (UMRWC), has started a program of water monitoring to determine the health of streams in areas subject to logging. Participants in the program are currently undergoing training under the direction of Terry Strange, Director of UMRWC.

Once a month, volunteers from EPFW assemble at San Antonio Creek, near Dorrington, to practice monitoring. They test the creek for turbidity, dissolved oxygen, and dissolved solids using equipment purchased with a grant from the Sierra Nevada Alliance. Date-stamped photos record location and condition of the stream during the sampling. This summer the results will be sent to Strange via a laptop computer donated by EPFW members Steve and Joann Rovno.

Data taken from this site will be helpful in establishing a baseline so that changes in water quality can be assessed.

The water you drink probably started out as rain on forest land in the Sierra. San Antonio Creek, one of the three watersheds in the upper part of Calaveras county, feeds into the Mokelumne River and then into reservoirs, eventually reaching customers of the East Bay Municipal Utilities District. The quality of this water can be affected by sedimentation from erosion caused by roads, grazing, and timber harvesting.

Water temperature can also be affected, making life difficult or impossible for creatures who live in the streams. Dete Kraus, an EPFW member who fished in the White Pines area in the early 1960s, now takes his gear elsewhere because intense industrial logging activity upstream has had a negative effect on trout populations due to increased sedimentation, warming water temperatures, and the use of herbicides. "I've always been interested in streams," said Kraus. "Now I'm concerned with what's happening to them because of human activity upstream, including the use

of herbicides in clearcuts. I hope we can leave something of the beauty and health of Sierra streams for future generations, including my twin grandsons. That's one of the main reasons I've become involved in water monitoring."

Ron Szymanski, who has been coming up to this area since he was a Boy Scout, urges local people to learn more about water quality issues. "If interested people don't get involved, industries can get away with anything. We can't trust them to monitor themselves because their prime consideration is the bottom line and they will stretch the limits of the law to improve profits."

Bunny Firebaugh and Donna Shorts, two more water monitoring volunteers, are also docents in the stream ecology program at Calaveras Big Trees State Park. "It's fun!" says Bunny. "It's my favorite activity at the park." Donna, who "loves streams," has been a member of the team since its beginning in July 2004.

If you'd like to find out more about water monitoring and what you can do to help, call the EPFW office at (209) 795-8260. Donations to help defray the cost of supplies are appreciated, as are gifts of equipment. Our digital camera needs a CompactFlash card and four rechargeable AA NIMH batteries with a charger.



Donna Shorts and Ron Szymanski titrate a sample to measure dissolved oxygen.

Independence Day Parade Will Honor Logging

Together with the Greater Arnold Business Association, EPFW is helping produce the Independence Day parade in Arnold, Saturday, July 2 starting at 10 AM. This year's theme is "Timber: Our Heritage." Grand Marshals Pat and Ron Bradley from the Sierra Nevada Logging Museum will lead the parade. Please join us as we march together in support of responsible logging.

We also need help organizing the parade. Give us a call at 795-8260 if you can lend a hand or would like more information.

State Sues SPI for Nearly \$1 million

The California Attorney General's Office has sued Sierra Pacific Industries for \$964,701 plus attorneys' fees and administrative costs for the Sourgrass Complex Fire in Calaveras County, November 25, 2002.

The fire, which burned more than 800 acres, started from SPI burn piles and was fed by high winds. The California Department of Forestry billed SPI for \$661,035 to cover costs of fighting the fire. When SPI refused to pay, the Attorney General filed suit.

SPI asserts the fire was not its fault, but was the result of unexpected high winds over the Thanksgiving weekend, a claim rejected by the Attorney General's Office, which notes that mountain winds should have come as no surprise at that time of year.

SPI also points out that the U.S. Forest Service, which lost 449 acres to the fire, has not taken action

| SPI Approved THPs in Calaveras County | | | |
|--|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Year | Total Acres | Even-aged | %Even-aged |
| 1999 | 2,617 | 2,168 | 82.8 |
| 2000 | 443 | 392 | 88.5 |
| 2001 | 2,278 | 1,711 | 75.1 |
| 2002 | 6,119 | 3,050 | 49.8 |
| 2003 | 2,568 | 1,764 | 68.7 |
| 2004 | 418 | 389 | 93.1 |
| 6-Year Totals | 14,443 | 9,474 | 65.6 |

"Even-aged" timber harvesting includes clearcutting and near-clearcutting; shelterwood seed step and removal; and seed tree seed and seed tree removal.

against the company. In the view of Tom Dresslar, spokesman for the Attorney General's Office, however, the Forest Service's inaction has no bearing on the case because "The Forest Service under this administration is geared toward making money for timber companies rather than recovering money for the public."

Sierra the Chickaree Brings Smiles and a Message

The Luck of the Irish was with us as EPFW's mascot Sierra the Chickaree (Margi Kraus) appeared in an open convertible for the annual Murphys Irish Day Parade. Kathi Malone drove her car down Main Street with Sierra waving to the crowd to the accompaniment of Irish music. Rain which began that morning held off just long enough for the convertible to make its way along the parade route, then started pouring again. Donna Shorts joined Sierra in the car while Bonnie Frabasilio and Dete Kraus carried the EPFW banner, accompanied by Anne Saunders, Jo Siders, and Bunny Firebaugh.

Emmanuel Serrière donned the chickaree costume for the annual Earth Day Celebration in Angels Camp, giving hugs to kids and adults alike while Arlene Mueller handed out information on clearcutting and its effect on wildlife habitat.



Sierra the Chickaree waves to fans in the Murphys Irish Day Parade.

EPFW Board of Directors and Officers

Bruce Castle, President

Addie Jacobson, Vice President

Gay Castle, Treasurer

Alice Trinkl, Corresponding Secretary

Penny Sarvis, Recording Secretary

Barry Boulton, Bunny Firebaugh,

John Trinkl

President's Message: Volunteerism—You Have Skills We Need

This month we will be celebrating our fifth anniversary. We will also be holding our annual election for new board members, and we will be recruiting people to help with institutional tasks.

Our success in developing programs that will end massive clearcutting in the Sierra Nevada mountains while advocating sustainable and responsible timber harvesting depends heavily on how efficiently EPFW functions organizationally and administratively.

Right now, we need help with these critical skills: maintaining the membership database; re-searching legal issues such as state and county statutes and pending legislation; ordering and keeping records of timber harvest plans; planning and organizing community outreach such as educational events, faires, and parades; map-making using GIS systems; bookkeeping; banking; fund-raising; data management; photography; and poster making.

Volunteering your services will make a big difference in the work we do to protect forest, wildlife, and water resources. Ultimately, your service will help determine the success of EPFW. To learn more, please contact me at (209)728-2771 <blcastle@comcast.net>.

Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves.

—John Muir (1838-1914)

Meet the Board

Alice Trinkl comes from a long line of Californians who have been involved with the Sierra. They've lived in the Sierra foothills, ranched among them, and tried to protect the land one way or another. Her great grandfather, Joachim Henry Senger, was one of the original founders of the Sierra Club. His wife, her great grandmother, was born in Columbia in Tuolumne County during the gold rush.

Alice became aware of Ebbetts Pass Forest Watch when she met some EPFW members at a fair in 2001 and saw pictures of clearcuts which she found appalling. She soon became an active member. "If people know what's going on, they will be energized to do something about it. The quality of life in the Sierra is being severely compromised by the current forest management practices of Sierra Pacific Industries," she said. "It is really important for citizens of the Sierra to have input into how the land is managed."

Regarding Sierra Pacific Industries clearcuts on private land, she added, "the issue of private ownership is real, but what is important is that the effects of what happens on private land are cumulative and have a major impact on the whole watershed, on the scenery, on air quality, and on wildlife. The effects are not an isolated thing, we live in a world of connections, nothing stands alone. SPI owns 73,000 acres in Calaveras County and has already clearcut or near-clearcut 65 percent of the land it has harvested since 1999. We know that their forestry practices are having and will continue to have a major impact on all of us."

"EPFW is doing a very important job and has had some success in raising the visibility of the problem of clearcutting and what it means for the environment. We have a way to go, but we're beginning to see progress in bringing the issues to the attention of our community."

Alice was a public information and media relations professional in San Francisco for many years, as well as a writer and editor. She puts these skills to use now as editor of the EPFW newsletter as well as helping with media relations for the group.

EPFW Update Staff

Alice Trinkl, Editor; Bill Senger, Layout;
Roger Mueller; Penny Sarvis

“My parents, grandparents and great grandparents were always active in the outdoors; they hiked, camped, and explored the Sierra all their lives. Today my brothers and I and our families still do. I have a heritage in the Sierra that goes back many generations, and I want to protect it for my children and grandchildren.”

Office Wish List

Recycled 8.5 X 11" copy paper,
Recycled legal-size copy paper,
Three easels

Contributions to EPFW Are Tax Deductible

Contributions can help reduce your taxes. The IRS has granted EPFW a 501(c)(3) designation (tax ID 68-466959). For more information on how you can help the ongoing work of EPFW, call 209-795-8260

When Are Dues Due?

To simplify your life, and ours in the EPFW office, two changes have been made to membership renewals:

- Starting July 2005, dues will be \$12 for individuals, \$18 for families. Families can include several members. For purposes of EPFW business affairs however, each family will have only two votes.
- Beginning in 2006, all membership renewals will be due on January 15. More about this in the next *EPFW Update*.

Puppet Show Will Travel

EPFW Puppeteers can bring their forest awareness show to your group of preschool or primary age children.

Sierra Chickaree, Mr. Who, the great horned owl, Sweetie Skunk, Sally Salamander, Rascal Raccoon, and Otto Otter present a lively twenty-five minute show about their habitats, complete with audience sing-alongs plus a chance to meet the puppets and learn more about the forest.

Call (209) 795-8260 for more information.

You're Invited to EPFW's Family Birthday Party!

Sunday, June 12, 3-6 PM
Lakemont Pines Lodge, Arnold
A 50s and 60s light jazz Potluck
(bring utensils & a dish to share)
795-8260

Patriotism and the American Land

“Our conservation work is intricately engaged with, and dependent upon, the process of democracy” writes Richard Nelson in *Patriotism and the American Land*, a short (60 pages) but powerful book which explores the meaning of patriotism.

Nelson, nature writer and cultural anthropologist, believes that our freedom to speak can influence decisions, affect government policies, and changes the way our society behaves toward its environment. He reminds himself of the results of saving mountainsides and valleys that would have become barrenlands of stumps and slash without protection: “I acknowledge the blessed good fortune to live in a democracy, a place where citizens can substantively influence decisions affecting society and land.”

His own pledge of allegiance to this living nation includes:

“Allegiance to the forests, the prairies, the deserts, the mountains, the swampland, the sea-coasts, the lakes and rives and oceans.

“Allegiance to the gardens, the wheat fields, the dairy farms, and the range lands from which our bodies are made each day.

“Allegiance to long-leaf pine and turkeyfoot bluestem, to field cricket and firefly.....to black-tailed deer and buffalo and brown bear.

“Allegiance to the greater community of landscape and organisms that encompasses and sustains us all.”

Patriotism and the American Land is one of four books published by The Orion Society, which works to reconnect human culture with the natural world. Essays by Barry Lopez and Terry Tempest Williams' essays also appear in this book. For information about the series: <www.oriononline.org>.

2005 EPFW Calendar

EPFW Annual Meeting

June 12, Sunday, 3—6 PM. Annual Meeting & Fifth Birthday Party. Lakemont Pines Lodge. Potluck: Bring a dish to share and your utensils.

EPFW General Meetings

At the EPFW Office above Two Rivers Trading Company, Cedar Center, Arnold, from 12:30—3:30 PM
July 11, August 8, September 12.

Office Hours

Wednesdays from 10 AM to 2 PM above Cedar Center, Arnold. Drop by or call at (209)795-8260.

Other Events

July 2, Saturday, 10:00 AM. Independence Day Parade, downtown Arnold.
July 29-31 Friday-Sunday, Sierra Nevada Alliance Conference, Kings Beach, Tahoe.
September 3 & 4, Saturday & Sunday, Cedar Center Craft Faire, Arnold.

Adopt a Highway

July 21, Thursday, 9:30 AM. Meet at the Dorrington Hotel.

Water Monitoring

All on Saturdays, 10:30 AM, Meet at the Dorrington Hotel. June 18, July 16, August 20.

Calaveras County Board of Supervisors

Every Monday, 10:00 AM, Government Center, San Andreas.

Board of Forestry

First Tuesday and Wednesday of the month, Sacramento and other locations to be announced.



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Ebbetts Pass
Forest Watch
PO Box 2862
Arnold, CA 95223

MEMBERSHIP/CONTRIBUTION

Help protect our forests, water, and wildlife.

Annual dues \$12 individual, \$18 family—Fully tax-deductible

Stopping the rampant destruction of forests in the Sierra Nevada costs money. Every day, more acres are clearcut, treated with herbicides, and turned into tree plantations. Your additional contribution beyond the annual dues will help bring an end to this practice. Lend a helping hand to Mother Nature. It feels good.

Name _____ E-mail* _____

Mailing Address _____ Phone _____

If you're already a current member, please consider volunteering your time or talent.

I would like to:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer _____ hrs/month | <input type="checkbox"/> Help fold and mail the newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help with fund-raising | <input type="checkbox"/> Liaise with environmental attorneys |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help review timber harvest plans | <input type="checkbox"/> Attend Board of Forestry meetings in Sacramento |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provide office help | <input type="checkbox"/> Help with data management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help with water monitoring | |

Individual \$12 Family \$18 Contribution \$15 \$25 \$50
Membership \$Other _____

Note: Your contribution includes \$12 for membership. Check here if you DO NOT want to be a member:

*Help us save trees and money. We prefer to communicate with you via e-mail if you have it.

If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please leave a message at (209)795-8260.

Ebbetts Pass Forest Watch, PO Box 2862, Arnold, CA 95223-2862



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