

Wandering & Wondering



John Maybury

Barack Obama for president, now is the time for all good green citizens to get on the bandwagon. Bring signs and bells and whistles. Come on down and help us celebrate the coming change of administration to an oil-free zone, and tell the oil companies and the president that we don't want no stinking oil wells drilled on our coast.

BAY NATURE

This summer is an ideal time to stay local: Beat the cost of gas and concern about CO2 emissions, and truly appreciate the wonders of Northern California. We live in the most beautiful and biologically diverse urban area in the United States, and now is a great time to get to know it better. The publishers of Bay Nature magazine have launched a powerful new online gateway to outdoor adventures close to home:

- Discover great places to explore from 2,000+ parks.
- Learn about your local environment from 700+ articles.
- Choose from hundreds of local nature-related events and outings.
- Track seasonal changes in local plants, wildlife, and weather.
- Watch videos about nature nearby.
- Connect with more than 300 environmental organizations.

You'll enjoy new places and rediscover favorite places. Local natural-

ists and experts will guide you, courtesy of the vast collection of articles, images, maps, videos, and other resources to a deeper understanding of the natural world of the Bay Area. At this virtual gathering place, you'll also tap into a wealth of local organizations and events, plus opportunities to protect wildlands and wildlife. (BayNature.com)

SIERRA CLUB WILD FOR OBAMA

First of all, thanks! We're glad you're as excited about Barack Obama as we are. Now let the Obama for President campaign know that the Sierra Club and you are ready to take him all the way to the White House. Please call the Obama campaign now and let them know you're from the Sierra Club and you're ready to volunteer. Here's the number: 866-675-2008. Please call, it's going to take all of us pitching in to elect a President who will build the clean energy economy our country needs. Again, thanks. We'll be in touch as election day approaches. Thanks for everything you do to protect the planet. (Carl Pope, Executive Director, Sierra Club)

TRAIN MIX

California high-speed rail and Amtrak would be coordinated by a new state department if legislation becomes law. Sen. Denise Ducheny, D-San Diego, who chairs the Senate Budget Com-

mittee, amended a bill to create a state Department of Railroads to consolidate many of the state's train programs into one agency. "It's been frustrating getting the transportation money out and all these rail programs in different things," Ducheny said. Her measure, Senate Bill 53 as amended in the Assembly, would pull together such programs as the currently state-subsidized Amtrak service such as the San Joaquin and freight programs, the grade crossing responsibilities of the Public Utilities Commission and the High-Speed Rail Authority. "I really want to see high speed rail happen," she said. "I think how you do that is you get the rail lines so you are coordinating them. You've got to put this stuff together." A \$9.95 billion bond on the November ballot would provide \$9 billion for a high-speed train that would carry passengers at more than 200 mph through the San Joaquin Valley on a route between northern and southern California. The bond would provide \$950 million to help coordinate conventional service with the bullet train. SB 53 would make the high-speed agency a division of the proposed new department.

RIVER LOVERS

The Tuolumne River Trust is working with the Sierra Club and Clean Water Action to organize a Tuolumne River

presentation on Tuesday, July 22 at 7 p.m. at the San Mateo Public Library, Laurel Meeting Room, 55 West 3rd Ave., San Mateo. Could you please help spread the word? Here's how: Make a few phone calls. We've got a great list, but we need help making calls (we'll give you a script, so it's really easy). Even a few calls would make a difference. If you can help, please contact Kati at kati@tuolumne.org or 415-292-3531 and let her know how many calls you can make. She'll email you the names, phone numbers, and a script. Also, post flyers in your neighborhood. For flyers, please contact Kati at kati@tuolumne.org. The Tuolumne River is under threat. Despite dramatic declines in salmon and steelhead trout, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission has proposed diverting up to 25 million more gallons of water per day (enough to fill 1,000 swimming pools every day) from this "Wild and Scenic River." With more than half of the Tuolumne already diverted for urban and agricultural uses, it's time to focus greater attention on water conservation, efficiency and recycling.

BURN UP, BURN DOWN

We were laughing over/about/at this at breakfast: DEAR ABBY: Does a house "burn up" or "burn down"? HOT TOPIC IN ASHEBORO, N.C. DEAR "HOT": It does both, depending upon where the

fire starts. According to the Beverly Hills Fire Department, if a fire starts in the attic, it burns down—and if it starts on the first floor, it burns up.

SNAKE CHARMER

Scott McKellar has a friend in the Santa Cruz Mountains who keeps a pet rattlesnake that has bonded with a mouse. The friend also has kept a pet wolf and coyote. She once incubated an ostrich egg, cracked it, scrambled it, and fed it to local firefighters. Her newest project is incubating a raven egg, raising the raven, and training it to do things that ravens do. Ravens are apparently quite intelligent, like other corvids (ravens, crows, magpies, jays).

SWAMI SEZ

Adversity: What does not kill me postpones the inevitable. Individuality: Remember that you are unique, just like everybody else.

MAYBURRITOVILLE

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