



SIERRA CLUB

The Sequoia

Come Learn About Mushrooms and Other Fungi with Dr. Tom Hofstra March 26th at the Sonora Library

INSIDE

FEDERAL STAFFING CUTBACKS
POSE SEVERE THREATS
TUOLUMNE GROUP EXCOM
NEEDS NEW MEMBERS
WHICH BATTERIES ARE BEST?

WARM SPRING CONDITIONS can lead to opportunities to discover a wide diversity of fungi across our local region. On Wednesday, March 26th, Dr. Tom Hofstra will present a program about fungi for our Sierra Club group at the Sonora Library on Greenley Road at 7pm. Mark your calendars!

Tom has been teaching folks about local natural history, including mushrooms and other fungi, for more than two decades. He began teaching on the subject of fungi at UC Santa Cruz in the 1990's during his graduate studies there in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. Since 2005, he has instructed field courses on local fungi at Columbia College, where he heads

the Forestry and Natural Resources program. Tom also serves as Staff Ecologist for the Central Sierra Environmental Resources Center.

Tom's presentation, entitled Fungi of the Central Sierra, will cover the natural history of local mushrooms and other fungi including recognizing common local groups and species, ecology, evolutionary biology, and tips for finding local fungi.

Just seeing pictures of some of the fungi will be worth the time, with so many interesting variations. We hope to see you there!

7pm Wednesday, March 26th at the Sonora Library, 480 Greenley Rd.
Space is limited. Come early for best seating. Doors open at 6:30pm



Unprecedented Cutbacks in Federal Staffing Poses Severe Threats to Local National Forests & Yosemite

In the Stanislaus Forest, the lack of any non-fire seasonal staff this field season will leave campgrounds with limited services and a wide range of forest positions vacant.

CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVES TO LET THEM KNOW THESE MASS FIRINGS ARE HURTING AMERICA



Almost immediately after taking office, President Trump began taking steps to downsize government that resulted in a massive number of federal employees being fired. Nearly all agencies have been targeted, including agencies providing foreign aid and critically needed food supplies to refugees and others scattered around the world. When it comes to federal lands in this local region, the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service have had significant cutbacks in staffing.

SEASONAL EMPLOYEES

Back under the Biden Administration, the leadership of the Forest Service expected major budget cuts to the agency's budget by the new Congress, even before there was the change in the presidency. So last fall the Forest Service declared a national decision to NOT HIRE any seasonal employees this year except for firefighters. That means thousands of positions won't be filled – including those who clean restrooms at campgrounds, maintain recreation sites, remove trash, do wildlife protection work, and other tasks. Basically, in the Forest Service, a large percentage of work done out in the for-

est (rather than at a desk in an office) is done by seasonal employees. But this year, only seasonal firefighters will be hired.

For the Park Service, the new Administration publicized that zero seasonal staff would be hired. But the outcry was so great from so many businesses, local politicians, and coverage in the media, the Administration eventually flip-flopped. The latest position is that the Park Service will hire MORE seasonal employees this year than normal.

FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES TARGETED

In February the new Administration sent out email notifications to 3,400 full-time Forest Service employees who had spent less than 2 years in their current position. They were terminated for supposedly not providing essential work or for failing to perform adequately. In reality, many were high-performing, essential staff. Similarly, roughly 1,000 full-time Park Service employees were also terminated. While the firings only affected a relatively small percentage of the overall staff at individual national forests or at Yosemite Park, most of those fired had worked with dedication for years and often perform work that will now go undone.

The revised decision by the Administration to hire more seasonal employees at National Parks than normal will soften to some degree the blow to stability and operations at Yosemite Park. But in the Stanislaus Forest, the lack of any non-fire seasonal staff this field season will leave campgrounds with limited services and a wide range of forest positions vacant.



Take a Stand to Protect Wild Places— Join Our ExCom Group!

Our Sierra Club Tuolumne Group functions thanks to the volunteer efforts of our Executive Committee (ExCom).

ExCom members meet 8 times per year for an hour (currently via Zoom), to discuss and monitor local environmental issues. We plan public presentations and outings, and coordinate our newsletter and website. Our local group networks with other local environmental organizations to provide public input on local issues of importance. Keeping members up to date on relevant local challenges is a large part of our work.

Each year we reach out for new ExCom members. **This year, the situation is critical.** Our Excom group is in dire need of new members.

Our meetings are few, but the issues we are watching continue to grow. There are several slots that need to be filled for 2025. Any local members are eligible to run for the ExCom.

We really could use your help!

There are many ways to put your skills and interests to work on our ExCom team, all with the knowledge that you are contributing to efforts to protect and preserve our local environment. New members can make an impact and help to determine our group's agenda moving forward.

If you would like to be a part of our ExCom or attend one of our meetings, contact John Buckley at johnb@cserc.org for details so you can join with others to help the Tuolumne Group to keep functioning effectively. **Thanks!**

HEY MRS. GREEN

What are the Greenest Household Batteries?

Rechargeable ones. Standard batteries often contain toxic chemicals such as cadmium. None of the batteries we use are exactly great for the environment—mining for their components creates pollution and so does disposing of them in landfills and incinerators. On the positive side, low self-discharge nickel-metal hydride rechargeables last longer than single-use batteries. And, on average, you only need to buy about 12 rechargeables, instead of 200 single-use batteries, every four years. According to the product-review website Wirecutter, AA and AAA rechargeables cost less than single-use batteries. Of the batteries tested, Energizer Recharge was the only one made from 4 percent recycled materials, and it performed among the best.

Here are some tips for taking care of your electronics better and extending battery life: Store batteries in a cool, dry place (not the refrigerator!). Get a high-quality charger that stops charging when a battery is full, such as the Panasonic Eneloop Power Pack. Avoid leaving batteries in the charger after they're juiced up; overcharging degrades them.

Also choose slow or gentle mode if your charger has one. If it has a conditioning mode, use that every 10 to 15 charging cycles. Many states have laws requiring that batteries be recycled. The Call2Recycle.org website lists the battery and cellphone drop-off locations for responsible recyclers certified by e-Stewards. (www.e-stewards.org)



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TUOLUMNE GROUP

The Tuolumne Group Executive Committee meets by Zoom eight times each year. For information on how to participate in the next ExCom meeting, email membership chair Elaine Hagen at elainehagen@att.net

Secretary-Treasurer

Joanne Mccullough, californiacountrymcc@gmail.com

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We welcome your input and feedback.

NOTES & UPDATES

CONNECT WITH YOUR SIERRA CLUB TUOLUMNE GROUP

Want to put your support for the environment into action?

Consider joining our Executive Committee. Have a great idea for a local Sierra Club presentation? There are many ways to engage with our group. Interested members are invited to attend one of our ExCom meetings. Contact Membership Chair, Elaine Hagen at elainehagen@att.net.

LEARN ALL ABOUT MUSHROOMS & FUNGI WITH DR. TOM HOFSTRA - WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26TH

Tuolumne Sierra Club will host Dr. Tom Hofstra for a presentation on Wednesday evening, March 26th at 7pm at the Sonora Library, 480 Greenley Rd. EVENT IS FREE - Come early for best seats! See page 1 for details.

RATHER RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER VIA EMAIL?

If you would like to receive this newsletter via email either instead of, or in addition to our printed edition, email your request to mail@sierratuolumne.org

WILDFLOWER PRESENTATION COMING IN APRIL

On Wednesday, *April 23rd* the Sierra Club Tuolumne Group will host a presentation on Sierra Wildflowers – look for more information in our next newsletter. April Newsletter.

