



# The Sequoia

## 2019 Sierra Club Hiking from Groveland

By Bob Asquith

### Interested in Hiking?

Join us any Thursday.

Contact Bob Asquith, Outings Leader at [bobasquith@gmail.com](mailto:bobasquith@gmail.com)

Look for photos from recent outings on our "Hiking the 120" page on Facebook.



*This adventurous group enjoyed a sunny day of snowshoeing into Yosemite to the Crane Flat Heliport. Our Hiking Group heads out on Thursdays throughout the year. For details email [bobasquith@gmail.com](mailto:bobasquith@gmail.com)*



**T**HE BEGINNING OF 2019 has already posed challenges – high among them is hiking in places that are not muddy. So far, we’ve found some great places that were not.

We snowshoed in Yosemite to the Crane Flat Heliport with awesome snow conditions and incredible views. Our hearty crew braved sun and snow for 2 miles up and 2 miles back, some over untracked snow. Then, of course, we recharged with lunch at the local eatery.

We ventured onto a ridge high above Groveland in an area called Yosemite Springs and traversed several other local roads, thus avoiding muddy trails.

Our January pot luck brought out those hikers who respond best to hiking calls involving food. And, thanks Pat for a truly good event!

We hiked above Sonora on the Dragoon Gulch trails, looping back and forth to come up with 5 miles and, of course, lunched at local eateries.

Next, we hiked a road downslope in an incredibly bucolic valley where we met some four-legged locals and, most recently, hiked a loop in Greeley Hill.

Ahead, we will begin our months-long chase of wildflowers. Please come join us!



*Yosemite Springs hike, above Groveland*

**INSIDE**  
**OUR GRANDCHILDREN**  
**LOCAL WATERSHED GROUP**  
**OFFERS RAINWATER**  
**STORAGE TANK REBATES**

# It's A Grandchild!

By Todd Stolp



**T**oday is a wet wintery morning. An infant was born last night, bestowing the title of “grandparents” to four who had not previously officially qualified for such an honor. Please indulge the following ruminations entering the mind of one of those four new grandparents.

Perhaps one of the most exciting duties as a grandparent is the roll of guide and mentor. The romantic view of the Elder walking the Child, hand in hand, along a trail pointing out the infinite activities of life underway in every direction is a heart-warming image. But it would



*Calvin Frederick Ponting Stolp, b. February 9, 2019*

be delusional to consider that the older person is absolutely essential to the education of the child, as nature, whether we like it or not, instills an irresistible urge in every budding human to explore and experiment. If that is so, then what is our role? What are the most important lessons to be shared with future generations destined to inherit this planet?

The temptation is to prioritize those parts of the natural world which we ourselves find “beautiful.” A dramatic cumulonimbus cloud, a colorful butterfly, or the sparkle of freshly fallen snow will all reliably raise youthful eyebrows.

At the right inspirational moment, such scenes might even bring a gasp, a cheer or googly eyes. If we are honest with ourselves, there seems to be a tiny sense of personal pride that we, as mentors, feel from such moments of sharing, as if we are somehow authors of the natural events themselves. At least, we tend not to go out of our way to dispel such illusions.



*Upper Tuolumne River - photo by Todd Stolp*

Before such behavior is shrugged off as part of natural human egocentricity, it may be worth a closer look at what credit we might actually warrant for creating such memorable moments. To take in the magnificence of that cumulonimbus cloud requires enough of an unobstructed vista to comprehend its galactic proportions. A close-

up look at a butterfly is most likely to occur when flowers are in bloom, perhaps in a planned city park. A jewel-encrusted layer of snow seems most inspiring when it is untouched in an open Sierra meadow. Making it possible to share such views with a child is a result of our own design. First, we must preserve the places themselves. Second, we must make viewing such scenes accessible without destroying the very subject of our awe in the process. Finally, we must take the time to bring the moment into existence.

Another important part of our legacy is recognizing mistakes made by our own generation hoping that they might not be repeated. It seems every generation dating back to the dissemination of Homo species out of Africa has been affected by the loss of resources. Whether we consider tangible resources like food and medicine or less tangible resources like shelter and scenery, we have paid dearly for past failures to sustain diversity for ourselves and our animal and plant kingdom relatives. The consequences of a monocultured potato industry during the Irish Potato Famine included widespread starvation and diaspora. When extensive exposure to quinine derivatives resulted in malarial resistance and rendered those antimalarial treatments nearly worthless, artemisinin was finally isolated from the sweet wormwood plant in China in 1972. Artemisinin became a highly effective anti-malarial product and continues to save countless lives. When we lose diversity in the animal and plant kingdoms we discard valuable insurance against our own obsolescence. This insurance policy is intended not so much for our own safety, but rather for the survival of future generations.

When I first drive my grandson to Yosemite I plan to be a passenger so that that I might savor the look on his face the moment that Yosemite Valley comes into view as we emerge from the Tunnel road. It is a privilege to share this planet with our offspring, but it is perhaps even more important that we model in our lifelong behavior the respect and willing stewardship that this planet deserves, in celebration of both its resilience and its delicacy. ■

# Local Watershed Stakeholder Group Offers Rainwater Storage Tank Rebates

For many years, the Tuolumne Group of the Sierra Club has been a participant in the Tuolumne-Stanislaus Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Group – a collaborative stakeholder group that works for local water and watershed benefits. By partnering with the City of Sonora, water districts, Tuolumne County, a variety of non-profit organizations, and other interests, the Tuolumne Group has supported proposed projects that have successfully received millions of dollars in grants from the State.

One example of the success of the IRWM is the fact that eight local regional projects were funded by the State with \$3.6 million in Proposition 84 funding. In Murphys, a new spray field was constructed for the wastewater treatment plant. In Groveland, a new sewer lift system was completed to rehabilitate an aged, faltering system. And the Tuolumne River Trust was funded to provide watershed education and to lead watershed restoration work, primarily within the Rim Fire area.

In 2018, one of the IRWM participants, the Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District (TCRCD) created what it calls the “Landowner Resiliency Program.” With funds from the State, the project helps landowners of the region implement water conservation projects on their property. The project starts with a professional assessment of each participant’s current

water use. Based on the opportunities identified during the assessment, each landowner is then provided with a plan for best management practices (BMPs) that may include rainwater storage, greywater to landscape piping, lawn or turf alternatives, or other strategies. The project then provides assistance with acquiring needed materials so that landowners can successfully install the BMPs outlined in their plan – such as rainwater capture water tanks.

The water storage tanks are the most publicized aspect of the program. The TCRCD helps property owners to plan their project and then to set up and connect necessary piping for rainwater capture tanks. When the next drought occurs, those who capture rainwater from their roofs can use the stored water to meet the needs of their gardens or landscaping. **The best news is that landowners who participate in the TCRCD program are eligible to apply for a significant rebate for the cost of the rainwater tanks that are installed.** This is a great opportunity for local Sierra Club members.

TCRCD’s project will be accepting applications through December 2019. More information can be found at: [www.watertoolkit.org](http://www.watertoolkit.org)

TCRCD will also be hosting workshops on rainwater harvesting during the Sonora Home & Garden Show April 13th and 14th at the Mother Lode Fairgrounds. ■



**Rebates are available on tanks like these that can store rainwater for use during drier months.**

## MEMBER PROFILE



### Elaine Hagen On the Front Lines

By Todd Stolp

When Elaine Hagen and her husband, Matt, began looking for a home in the Sierra foothills in 2014 they placed a high priority on property with a reliable water supply. Their concern for access to water was aroused when the water table dropped significantly in the vicinity of their rural San Luis Obispo county home as nearby vineyards expanded. When residential wells failed, the land was often purchased from local families and deeper wells drilled to sustain the popular wine industry, compounding community water shortages. Elaine points out that it was partly this experience that inspired her interest in environmental advocacy and solidified her “mantra:” People and Planet over Private Profit.

Elaine serves on the Executive Committee and as the Membership Chairperson for our Sierra Club Tuolumne Group. She helped to launch the People’s Environmental Network Sonora in 2016, seeking to inform the public about climate change and other issues. To raise awareness of environmental issues without addressing climate change, Elaine notes, “would be like rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic.”

Elaine worked as an RN and taught child-birth classes while raising three children in Santa Cruz. Her father was employed as a logger, enabling her to understand a broad range of perspectives related to the lumber industry. She sees that there are legitimate alternatives to fossil fuels that can still protect the planet and meet the needs of industry. Her most recent focus has been on political efforts to elect representatives who accept that climate change is real and must be addressed and mitigated.

Elaine supports incentives for the solar energy industry. By creating jobs, diminishing our environmental footprint and preparing communities for the future, she sees such policies as opportunities for bipartisan support. We welcome her talents to the Tuolumne Group of the Sierra Club.



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Tuolumne Group Executive Committee meets monthly at the Tuolumne Utility District boardroom, 18885 Nugget Road in Sonora. For information on attending our next meeting, contact Trudy Craig at the email listed below.

**Co Chair** Trudy Craig, [broadinski48@yahoo.com](mailto:broadinski48@yahoo.com)

**Membership** Elaine Hagen, [elainehagen@att.net](mailto:elainehagen@att.net)

**Treasurer** Kevin Rice, [kjrice@ucdavis.edu](mailto:kjrice@ucdavis.edu)

**Outings** Keith, Beth Martin, [keithwmartin@sbcglobal.net](mailto:keithwmartin@sbcglobal.net)

**Chapter Delegate** Kevin Rice, [kjrice@ucdavis.edu](mailto:kjrice@ucdavis.edu)

**Webmaster** Jim Bearden, [jbearden@ieee.org](mailto:jbearden@ieee.org)

**News Editor** Todd Stolp, [ststolp@sts-studios.com](mailto:ststolp@sts-studios.com)

**Newsletter Design** Joe David, [jd@daviddesign.com](mailto:jd@daviddesign.com)

**Secretary & Programs, Open Positions**

**We welcome your input and feedback.**

## NOTES & UPDATES

### UPCOMING EVENTS

The state's regional biologist has been invited to speak at the April Tuolumne Group Sierra Club program on the topic of vector-borne pathogen surveillance programs that are underway in the Sierra foothills. If you are interested in bugs and our intimate relationship with them, this program on the efforts of the California Department of Public Health to monitor vector-borne organisms in our area is for you. Look for details in our next newsletter, or visit: [www.sierratuolumne.org](http://www.sierratuolumne.org)

### INTERESTED IN RECEIVING NEWSLETTER VIA EMAIL?

If you would like to receive our newsletter via email either instead of, or in addition to our printed edition, email your request to [jd@daviddesign.com](mailto:jd@daviddesign.com).

### JOIN US FOR WEEKLY HIKE AND OUTINGS

Our Hiking Group meets every Thursday for day hikes to various points in the Sierra. Enjoy good company and explore some of the region's hidden treasures. Read about recent hikes on page one of this newsletter. For details on upcoming hikes, contact trip leader, Bob Asquith via email at [bobasquith@gmail.com](mailto:bobasquith@gmail.com).

### GET INVOLVED

Interested in getting more involved with our Tuolumne Chapter? There are many ways to volunteer for whatever time you are able to give. Contact Co-Chair Trudy Craig by email at [broadinski48@yahoo.com](mailto:broadinski48@yahoo.com) to find out ways to help. There are also opportunities to participate in forest hikes and projects occurring throughout the year. Find out more on our website: [www.sierratuolumne.org](http://www.sierratuolumne.org)

