



**SIERRA
CLUB**

INSIDE

**FOREST PLAN RELEASED FOR
MOKELUMNE RIVER REGION
TUOLUMNE GROUP EXCOM
NEEDS NEW MEMBERS
LOCAL CONSERVATION NOTES**

The Sequoia

“BETWEEN TWO RIVERS” Tuolumne Group Hosts Local Videographer & River Advocate Ria Rice-Lawson October 23 at the Library

PLEASE JOIN US at 7:00pm, Wednesday, October 23rd at the Sonora Library for a presentation by local videographer Ria Rice-Lawson as she shares her latest video project, *Between Two Rivers*, featuring interviews with indigenous people, cleanup activists, and river conservationists who lament the loss of fish and wildlife to dams on both the Tuolumne and Stanislaus rivers, and who advocate for ways to improve these watersheds in future.

Rice-Lawson, of Crystal Falls, is one of seven individual artists and one group of artists from Tuolumne County who were awarded shares of a total of \$687,707 in state grants in 2023 through the Heartland Creative Corps program to create new projects that address public health, social justice, and environmental issues.

Ria began working with video in 2017, when she lived in Costa Rica. Her partner at the time was a filmmaker, and they started a limited liability company offering filmmaking services. She worked with digital developer SueloWeb.com, and her skills include creative storytelling through video, virtual reality, and photography.

She hopes people who watch her film documentary come away with affection for the Stanislaus River and Tuolumne River watersheds, as well as a better understanding of the ways they have been changed by mankind over time.

Join us on Wednesday evening, October 23rd at 7pm to support this inspired local videographer, and to view *Between Two Rivers*, followed by a brief question and answer period.

**Space is limited. Come early for best seating. Doors open at 6:30pm
7pm Wednesday, Oct. 23rd at the Sonora Library, 480 Greenley Rd.**



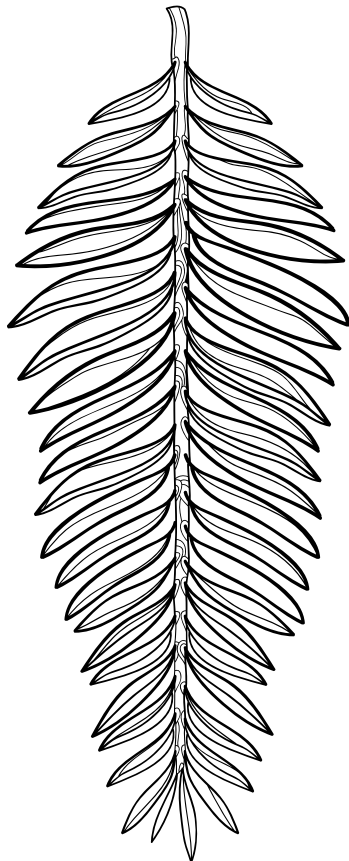
Above: Local videographer Ria Rice-Lawson at work on her next project.

Right: Volunteers from the local clean-up organization 1 Pile At A Time whose work is included in the video.



Massive Forest Service Plan for Mokelumne River Region is Released

Find links to the USFS MAC Project Page and the Project Public Comments Page at our Tuolumne Group web page: sierratuolumne.org



In late September, the U.S. Forest Service announced the opening of a “scoping period” to invite public comments on a new plan for a huge 250,000-acre area called the MAC Project.

The giant “large landscape” national forest project would authorize tens of thousands of acres of forest treatments that will take place over many years. Some of those treatments appear to be mostly positive, such as applying prescribed burns to thousands of acres to get fire back into the forest and to reduce a build-up of fuels. The project area straddles the Calaveras District of the Stanislaus National Forest on the south side of the Mokelumne River and the Amador District of the Eldorado National Forest on the north side of the river.

Other proposed treatments would include the thinning of conifer trees to “open up” dense forest stands. Such treatments that focus on removing small and some mid-size trees can reduce the risk of the treated forest areas burning severely in a wind-driven wildfire. But thinning logging can be highly controversial if the agency proposes to log large trees (for example, up to 40” in diameter) or if logging will be proposed in wild, roadless areas. At this stage of the MAC Project, the agency is asking for general comments on such topics, but the scoping plan provides no clarity as to what is being proposed for logging large trees.

Another potential area of controversy is the degree to which the Forest Service plans to spray herbicides to kill groundcovers or brush species along fuel breaks. How much chemical treatment is proposed is one of the key questions to be answered for the new MAC Project. At the moment, there is no information provided to give the public a clue as to the agency’s herbicide use plans or how many acres could be sprayed with chemicals.

Our Sierra Club group already submitted comments of opposition to proposed herbicide use for fuel breaks in a previous local forest project called SERAL 2.0. Because comments of concern about chemical use were also received from numerous other conservation groups, the Stanislaus Forest staff postponed a decision on



Forest Service staff and stakeholders from the public out in a portion of the MAC Project area - discussing proposed forest treatments and alternatives.

herbicide use for fuel break treatments in that SERAL 2.0 project – but the agency indicated it still may move forward to allow thousands of acres of controversial herbicide spraying in that SERAL 2.0 Project.

Now in the new MAC Project (which will affect an even larger area of public forest than SERAL 2.0), the question arises again: “How much herbicide use (if any) should be allowed for treating fuel breaks?” It’s important to note that the Forest Service acknowledges that broadcast burning, mastication of brush by shredders, targeted grazing by livestock, and hand cutting of brush are all feasible alternatives to chemical treatments. But the agency insists that chemicals are cheaper and more effective.

The Tuolumne Group of the Sierra Club has worked hard to collaboratively engage in discussions about forest management across the local region and to support balanced outcomes. As this new MAC Project is developed, our hope is to be supportive of as many aspects of the planned treatments as possible, but to also make clear to the Forest Service that we oppose the logging of large trees and that we oppose widespread herbicide spraying on public forest lands.

Our Local Sierra Club Needs You— 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.

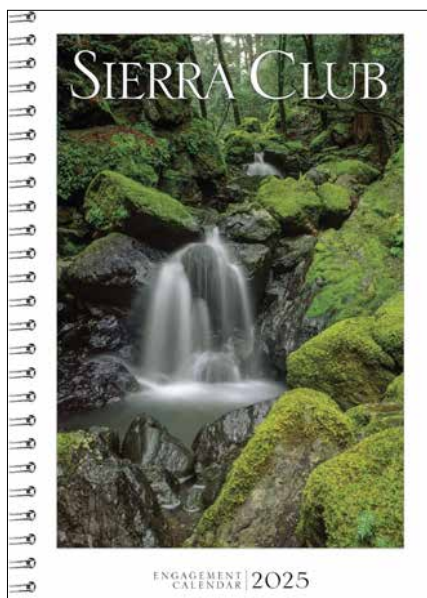
We really could use your help!

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!**

2025 Sierra Club Calendars On Sale Now

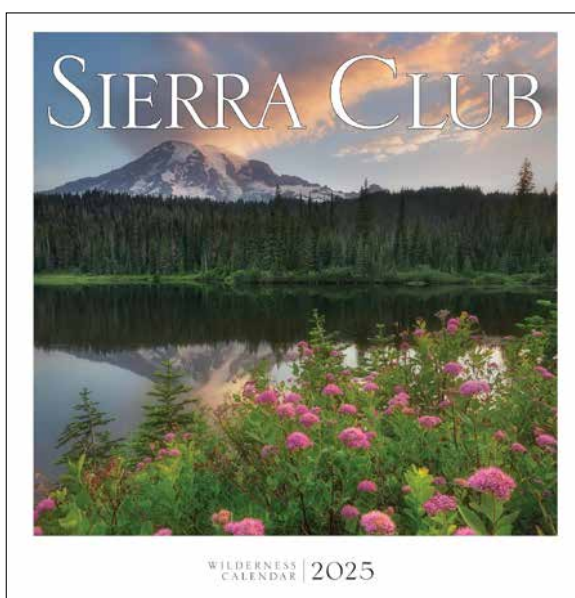
The Perfect Holiday Gift - Calendar Sales Help to Support Our Group



2025 Engagement Calendar - \$20

2025 Sierra Club Calendars are now available for purchase. Our Tuolumne group directly benefits from the sale of these calendars because we get to keep 60% of the sale price!

Loaded with the best nature photography, Sierra Club calendars are both beautiful and functional. They really make great holiday gifts.



2025 Wall Calendar - \$19

To order calendars email Jennie Moiso at johnjen47@hotmail.com, or call 209-533-9417.

In Groveland, you can email Bob Asquith at bobasquith@gmail.com. We can mail your calendars, or arrange to drop them off in person. *Calendars will also be on sale at our library event on October 23rd.* (see page 1)

LOCAL CONSERVATION NOTES

Park Evaluates Final Decision on Yosemite Plan

The final public comment period has now ended for how to manage vehicles and visitors in Yosemite Park. To counter the extreme congestion and crowding that prompted the Visitor Access Plan for the Park, the national Sierra Club provided strong support for establishing a day-use reservation plan to control the number of vehicles to protect Park resources and to best ensure a positive visitor experience for those coming to Yosemite National Park.

Unfortunately, the local Congressman and a majority of Tuolumne County supervisors have sided with lodging and other tourism businesses that oppose any limits on vehicles or visitors in order to ensure high profits for their businesses.

The final Park Service decision for the Visitor Access Plan is expected late this fall or near the end of the year. That decision will set Yosemite Park visitor management direction for years into the future.

Stanislaus Hazard Tree Logging Plan

The Stanislaus Forest recently publicized its decision to approve logging of "hazard" trees along roads or around facilities anywhere in the local national forest. In response to strong concerns raised by CSERC (which partners with the local Sierra Club on many issues), the FS made some adjustments to the Hazard Tree logging plan. It still, however, allows staff to make debatable judgments to allow the logging of large, green trees that may be growing beyond any distance from a forest road where "defects" might legitimately label them as hazardous.



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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

Karen Swanson, tuolumnegroupsecretary@gmail.com

Outings Keith Martin, keithwmartin@sbcglobal.net

Chapter Delegate Keith Martin, keithwmartin@sbcglobal.net

Membership Elaine Hagen, elainehagen@att.net

News Editor Joe David, jd@daviddesign.com

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 volunteer with our group. Interested members are invited to attend one of our ExCom meetings. Contact Membership Chair, Elaine Hagen at elainehagen@att.net.

“BETWEEN TWO RIVERS” PRESENTATION BY LOCAL VIDEOGRAPHER RIA RICE-LAWSON - WED, OCTOBER 23RD

Tuolumne Sierra Club will host local videographer and river advocate Ria Rice-Lawson for a video presentation on Wednesday evening, October 23rd at 7pm at the Sonora Library, 480 Greenley Rd. 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.

The Sequoia Newsletter is designed to provide local Sierra Club members with a trusted source of information on people, events, and issues impacting our environment. Members can also find additional information on our updated web

