



VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

SNAP NEWSLETTER

“Serving the Sierra”

MARCH 2008

SIERRA NEVADA AMERICORPS PARTNERSHIPS ON A ROLL

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It is amazing just how much work a group of people can accomplish when they get together. Margaret Mead said it best, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” Well, this small group has done amazing things. In January and February alone, the SNAP program put in **7620 hours of**



service. SNAP members have been busy with ecological monitoring and habitat restoration, as well as, conducting hours of environmental

education and recruiting volunteers for different activities. And SNAP is just getting started! As the field season starts, SNAP can expect its impacts to grow!



Right: Kara Rockett serving in Quincy, CA. at Science Night. **Above:** SNAP Member in Yosemite National Park for Jan. Training.



SIERRA NEVADA AMERICORPS PARTNERSHIP NEWS

SNAP BY THE NUMBERS:

SNAP currently has all **27 positions** filled. Each member will be contributing a minimum of **1700 hours** to serving the Sierra from **January 7th, 2008 through December 23rd, 2008**. Members are serving at **19 different sites** throughout the Sierra. Members are focusing on habitat restoration, ecological monitoring, environmental education, and volunteer recruitment.

SNAP Program Goals for 2008:

1900 Acres of the Sierra will be in a stage of recovery
240 Sites will be monitored
17,200 People will attend an environmental education presentation or event by a SNAP member
2400 Volunteers will be recruited by SNAP members to participate in service

As of March 1st, SNAP members have:

Restored **12.86 acres** of habitat
Monitored **83 sites**
Conducted environmental education presentations and events to **1919 community members and students**
Recruited **686 volunteers** to serve

JANUARY TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS:

Despite what some called the worst storm in fifty years to hit the Sierra, SNAP members came from around the country to Mariposa, CA to attend SNAP training on January 7th through the 12th at the Yosemite "Bug" Hostel. Training topics included organizing restoration efforts, recruiting volunteers, the history of AmeriCorps and national service, and regional watersheds to name just a few. John Muir himself (Lee Stetson) even popped in to inspire SNAP members and help to swear members into AmeriCorps with the AmeriCorps and SNAP pledges. To top it all off, Yosemite National Park interpretive ranger Shelton Johnson treated members to a snowshoe ecology tour through beautiful Yosemite National Park.



2008 SNAP Members during a snowshoe tour in Yosemite National Park at Badger Pass. Photo courtesy of Amy Rodrigues



- March 29th, **Water & Land Use Policy Summit:** Sierra Health Foundation, Sacramento, CA. Contact Dan Keenan for details or preregistration (required) at Dan@sierranevadaalliance.org
- March 29th, **SWEP Workshop - Project Webfoot: Water, Wetlands and Waterfowl Educator Workshop!** Tahoe Center for Environmental Sciences (TCES), 291 Country Club Dr. in Incline Village. 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Email Eric for info at ejmckee@syr.edu
- April 4-8th, **Cottonwood Creek Fence Building .** Friends of the Inyo will be working on an 88 acre cattle exclusion fence that will be returning the riparian area to health and viability. All volunteers welcome! Meeting time and place TBD. Contact Maria if you have any questions at mariadzul@gmail.com
- April 19th, **Heal Yourself—Heal Your Earth: Creating a Healthy Community Inside and Out.** Grass Valley, CA from 9am to 5pm. For details contact Jen at jen@syrcl.org or Noel at noel@wolfcreekalliance.org
- April 19th, **South Lake Tahoe Earth Day Festival.** MontBleu Casino in South Lake Tahoe, CA. Information at www.southlaketahoeearthday.org
- April 23rd, **Quincy Earth Day Event.** Contact Kara Rockett for further information at kararockett@hotmail.com
- April 24th, **Sierra Environmental Water Caucus,** April 24, Sac Tree Foundation. Anyone interested in receiving notices of this, please email Marion at marion@sierranevadaalliance.org
- **April 28-May 2nd,**
SNAP Mid-service Spring Training. Springville, CA
More information to come!
- **May 11-17th,** **AmeriCorps Week.** For more information visit:
<http://www.americorps.gov/aboutamericorpsweek/index.asp>
- May 16th, **Youth Service Symposium** hosted by SWEP at the North Tahoe Middle School (time TBD). Contact Eric with questions at ejmckee@syr.edu
- June 7th, **Sierra Business Council with Truckee Day clean-Up!** On Saturday celebrate the 5th Annual Truckee Day. Green Living Expo from 12:30-2:00 pm at the park along with the community picnic. Join Cool Chrissy and Lovely Leah for a fun Day in Truckee! Email Chrissy at prestell@unr.nevada.edu or Leah at lseagraves@sbcouncil.org

**SNAP Birthdays
this Quarter:**

- March 10th:**
Amy Sturgill and
Jas O’Growney
- March 23rd:**
Leah Seagraves
- April 8th:**
Dan Murnane
- April 10th:**
Anna Simmons
- April 19th:**
Amy Rodrigues
- April 21st:**
Kara Rockett
- May 1st:**
Justin Wood
- May 31:**
Katie Nelson

MEMBER PROFILE: AMY STURGILL**Where was a favorite place you have lived?**

The most amazing place I have ever lived is Two Medicine Valley in Glacier National Park. This valley is in the southeast part of the park and was home to a total of eight park service employees including myself. Two Medicine Lake is one of five lakes in this little glacial valley surrounded by towering peaks, all named after Blackfoot Native Americans. Waking up every morning to this lake and to these mountains was an absolute blessing. Go check it out and see for yourself...

Your favorite quote?

"Keep close to nature's heart and break clear away, once in a while, and climb a mountain or spend a week in the woods. Wash your spirit clean." John Muir

What do you enjoy doing with your free time (when you have it)?

Hike, run, ski, climb, consume tasty beers.

A great book you have read recently or just a favorite book in general?

Desert Solitaire. Ed Abbey! That man is a god!

What project are you looking forward to working on in your term of service?

The Tribute Trail Project. We are creating a nine mile trail to pay tribute to Chinese immigrants that are an often overlooked cultural entity in our gold mining legacy. This trail will start in downtown Nevada City and follow the Deer Creek river canyon downstream. My hopes are that this project will provide accessible recreational opportunities for residents and visitors as well as inspiration to become active, educated stewards of the creek. If I can manage to stay out of poison oak, creating this trail will be a great experience.



Amy serves with Friends of Deer Creek in Nevada City.

MEMBER PROFILE: SIMEON CASKEY**Where is a favorite place you have lived?**

A favorite place I have lived was a little town where all of your Santa letters went - North Pole, Alaska. While not actually the 'North Pole' (actually was just south of Fairbanks) it sure felt like it. I lived there until I was eight when we then relocated to 'The Hand' (also known as Michigan). Favorite memories include, but aren't limited to: Moose in backyard, getting our runaway 4H pig wasted, dog sledding, 30 below temps, and going to see our nearest, and only neighbor a mile down the 'block'.

Your favorite quote:

"...beware of all enterprises that require new clothes...." - Henry David Thoreau Also, sort of cliché, but still awesome: "We do not inherit the Earth from our Ancestors, we borrow it from our Children." - Native American Proverb

What do you enjoy doing with your free time (when you have it)?

In my free time I enjoy exploring, and have recently been spending it climbing, snowboarding and disc golfing. Looking forward to spring/summer in the Sierra, not to mention Spring Training!

What is a great book you have recently read

A good book I just finished recently is 'Nature Noir'. This was written by a ranger in the American River canyons and is full of interesting events he experienced while serving for 10 + years. It also provides good scientific background of local climate, geology and ecology.



Simeon serves with American Rivers in Nevada City.

What project are you looking forward to working on in your term of service?

During this service year, I am especially excited to start working on our Bear Valley restoration project. Located at the headwaters of the Bear River, in a beautiful valley, is a disrupted mountain meadow ecosystem. During the coming year we will be assessing the health of the system and based on the findings, deciding how to restore it....Hooray for field work!

MEMBER PROFILE: JUSTIN SAYDELL

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in the cuts of good ol' Cleveland, OH. It's a wonderful place if you like to live in a dying product of the Rust Belt. I guess I'm a country boy at heart because even though I grew up in a fairly large and stinky city, I much prefer the solitude of the open range, hence my move to Idaho. So you could say that my experience growing up in the rock 'n' roll capitol of the world was "sub par". I grew up with a multicolored Mohawk, a fist raised in the land of hypocrisy, and a lot of freakin' angst. I have since mellowed out a bit and decided to pursue my true personality as a goofy nerd instead. A few things I think I took for granted living there but now realize I kind of miss: the eastern deciduous forest during the fall season (its gorgeous and amazing), the bird-watching (rated by National Geographic as one of the best birding sites in the WORLD), the music scene (the best I have ever encountered and probably will ever encounter), the impromptu hip-hop slam competitions on our lunch breaks in the Maintenance Department at the city zoo, Lake Erie (water supply isn't as much of an issue so much as water quality, but having a big lake allowed me to get ridiculously awesome at water skiing and wakeboarding) the Cleveland winters when it would get so cold that 4-7 foot swells would freeze as is and my dog, Cody, and I would go exploring on them.

So there is Cleveland in a nutshell. No, I have never been to the rock'n'roll hall of fame except to use the restroom. It is a rip off (\$18+ dollars for admission) and they display stuff that has nothing to do with rock 'n' roll such as Brittany Spears paraphernalia. Oh, and I also want to give a shout out to the Cleveland Indians for kicking ass and taking names last season. Play on players.

Your favorite quote?

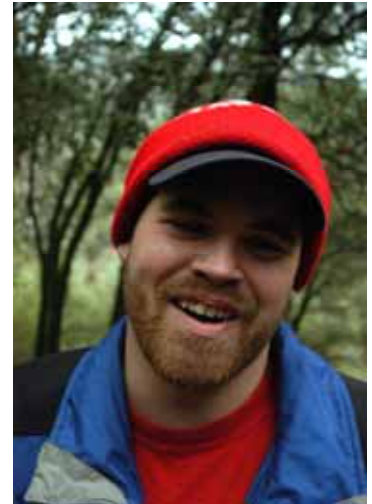
I'm not a big quote person because I'm usually not moved by the words alone. To me, it's also about the delivery and presentation. But for good measure my favorite quote for now will be "Cowabunga" -Michelangelo of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (and all his predecessors that spelled it with a "K")

What you like to do in your free time (when you have it).

It changes almost on a daily basis, but some of the ones that have seemed to withstand the test of time include: Latin dancing, unadulterated spontaneity and randomness, backpacking/camping, mountain biking, pickup games of football, tinkering around with gadgets and gizmos, beat boxing like a pro, and fixin' to become the next hip-hop sensation to come out of the mid-west (watch out Eminem). Coinciding with my desire to spit on a mic, I write. I guess you could call it poetry...I guess. As a consequence I enjoy the occasional spoken word poetry reading or poetry slam competition but probably will never take part in one for several reasons, but mainly because I need a kickin' beat behind me to get me in the mood. Ultimately, I have a lot of energy that I often don't know what to do with (my roommate and fellow Ameri-Corps member Amy Rodrigues can attest to that).



Justin's preferred self portrait



Justin serves with the Planning and Conservation League in Sacramento

A favorite Book?

My favorite book of all time has to be, "Desert Solitaire" by Edward Abbey. If you've read it you totally know how awesome it is. If you haven't, you totally should. Mainly, I'm just a big fan of Edward Abbey. I love his angst, his anger, his ethics, and his sense of adventure. R.I.P. my man.

A project that you are really looking forward to working on in your term of service this coming year

Frankly, I just hope to make a positive contribution to an organization that does a lot of good work for the environment and for the citizens of California. I am looking forward to any and all the adventures I will be having this year. I'm sitting here squirming in my seat just thinking about it.

MEMBER PROFILE: BRITTANY WOIDERSKI

Hold your right hand up (palm facing you). Using your left hand, point to the place on your right hand where the tip of the index finger meets your middle finger. That's where I grew up, in Cheboygan, Michigan. (Yes I know, it's fun to say.) During the school year, my time was divided between getting into trouble on my family's dairy farm, picking morels in the woods, taking motorcycle rides with my dad, and doing chores at my best friend's farm, one of many homes away from home. During the summer months, my parents and I traveled across the US because of my dad's job (he lays crude oil and natural gas pipeline). I've spent summers in Maine, Louisiana, Virginia, Oregon, Arkansas, Iowa, as well as traveled to all of the states in between. I wasted away the summer of 1991 with mermaids in Homosassa Springs, Florida, attended fifth grade in Onalaska, Texas, and I even landed myself a job during my last high school summer working as a hired hand on an Arabian horse ranch in Chugwater, Wyoming. From 2002-2006, I attended Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo (hey, another fun name) where I studied geography (environmental analysis & resource mgmt), earth science, and environmental science. If you ever visit WMU (go Broncos!), make sure and visit Bell's Brewery and Bilbo's Pizza (yes, it's based on The Lord of the Rings books and *delicious*).

So twenty-three and a half years into this lifetime, I've picked up many trades and hobbies, most of them stemming from the typical "hey, I wanna try that" brainwave. I have so many hobbies and I have fallen in love with each of them, but my favorites



remain timeless and the list continues to grow. The few that I have listed here are the ones that when I engage in them (or revisit memories when I cannot), I become acutely aware of my existence and why I am and should be so grateful for such a beautiful life. Taking motorcycle rides with my dad, getting advice about life from Pa (my grandfather), hunting for asco-carpis in northern hardwood forests, working with stained glass, teaching my nieces and nephews (ages 1½ - 15) the wonders of the world, writing in my journal, backpacking, reading, SCUBA diving, baking sweet stuff, traveling, and daydreaming about what the world would be like if dinosaurs were still alive.

Yosemite National Park.
Photo by Dan Deegan



Brittany is serving a second year at Yosemite National Park as their Physical and Biological Sciences Assistant

"I become acutely aware of my existence and why I am and should be so grateful for such a beautiful life" -

Brittany Woiderski

MEMBER PROFILE: ALLISON O'BRIEN

Where is a favorite place you have lived and why ?

I studied abroad in Sydney, Australia for 3 months. There are many reasons why I loved living there: the ocean, kangaroos, Sydney, Cairns, the Great Barrier Reef, excellent gelato, Australians, Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, the scenery and unique wildlife, and so much more. We had a lot of free time and I got to spend a lot of time at the beach. (I was there January-April, so while my friends were ice fishing, I was swimming. It's always fun to remind people of the temperature difference.) It was fun getting to know the locals. They tend to be very friendly, smart and funny. Mostly, I enjoyed living somewhere different. I love to travel and experience new things.

What project are really looking forward to working on in your term of service this coming year?

We are currently working on developing an interpretative birding trail on our Maddalena Ranch property. The property is located in the Sierra Valley and is designated an Important Bird Area. It is a beautiful area and I can't wait to spend some time on it. I will be helping design interpretative panels for the trail. I learned how to do this in a class and really enjoyed it. I am looking forward putting my knowledge and creativity to the test.



Allison is serving with the Feather River Land Trust in Quincy, CA



Feather River

What is a great book you have read recently?

I can't help it, I love the Harry Potter books. Who doesn't wish they could do magic and fly?

Your favorite quote:

"Some people without brains do an awful lot of talking."-The Scarecrow, The Wizard of Oz.

What do you like to do in your free time (when you have it)?

I enjoy chatting with friends (preferably while drinking a beer), playing games, RUGBY!! (playing it, talking about it, watching it), reading, watching movies, listening to music (Jack Johnson is my hero) and cooking. I also love being outside. I can be persuaded to do just about anything, but skiing, camping, canoeing (again, preferably with a beer), disc golf, and swimming are among some of my favorite outdoor activities

"Some people without brains do an awful lot of talking."

-The Scarecrow, The Wizard of Oz. Favorite quote of Allison O'Brien

SNAPPY OPINIONS PAGE

If you could give infinite funding to any person or group based on their environmental ideas/work, who would it be, why, and how do you think it would make a difference?

DAN KEENAN WOULD SUPPORT:

International Institute for Sustainable Development IISD– Poverty and environmental degradation are issues that ought to be dealt with on the same level in the modern world. If developing countries were able to grow more sustainably, economically, socially, and environmentally, then they would have more access to better trade practices. Sustainability is planning for the future, while taking care of the needs for today. This is also essential for the reduction of desperate poverty world-wide.

IISD is a research and lobby group. That's where we're at with the idea of "sustainable development"- not yet adopted into government or corporate thinking, which is where it needs to be if we're going to save the environment and reduce global poverty (and all the associated problems ie: war, disease, etc.).



Dan serving with the Sierra Nevada Alliance in South Lake Tahoe, CA



KATIE NELSON WOULD SUPPORT:

Ducks Unlimited.—My dad grew up in the Illinois River delta hunting waterfowl like his father before him and his grandfather before him. As a kid, he used to take me out into the wetlands to look for woodies (wood ducks) or climb up on a beaver dam. Many times, we would go out and not see a single duck. But we would see the sunrise, the morning steam rise off the wetland, the cattails swaying in the slight breeze.

My dad has been volunteering for Ducks Unlimited since before I was born. With only two-hundred paid employees, the organization has become a banner for NGO efficiency relying on volunteers to save countless tracts of duck habitat from Canada to Mexico. "Greenwing Events" introduced me to fishing, environmental education, and habitat restoration. It is a big reason why I am so involved with conservation today. The more people this organization and others like it reach, the more they'll begin to appreciate the small wildernesses that surround everyone in this country. And the more they'll be willing to protect it.

SNAPPY OPINIONS PAGE CONTINUED

IAN HERDELL WOULD SUPPORT:

I don't think I would ever give infinite funding to any group or person. In the present state of the world, driven by a global market economy, money is power and infinite money will corrupt regardless of ideals and goals. If I had infinite funding to doll out though (I of course would not be corrupted), I think I would spread it around to youth education programs that focus on hands on service learning. The future of the world will lie in the hands of their hands and we desperately need an alternative to the pervasive distractions of video games and TV, which tend to create passive consumers instead of active stewards. I think it would also be important to use this infinite funding supply to ensure steady long-term support for programs so they have the chance and freedom to develop with out as many funding constraints.



Ian is serving a second year at WildPlaces in Springville, CA

BUMPER STICKER FAVORITES

SNAP members were surveyed for their favorite bumper sticker slogans; here are some highlights:

- Anna Simmons: **"The best things in life aren't things"**
" What will your children breath?"
- Dan Deegan: **"If you are flammable and have legs, you are never blocking a fire exit."**
-Mitch (the Mitch part is important)
- Kara Rockett: **"Protect the homeland, Celebrate Earth Day."**
- Leah Seagraves: **"You are Infinite"**
- Jas O'Growney: **"Live Simply, so Others can Simply Live"**
- Marion Gee: **"Knitting is Knotty"**
- Jen Hemmert: **"May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be."**
Mother Theresa
- Jeff Ward: **"Suburbia: Where they tear out the trees & then name the streets after them."**
- Sarah Pitzer: **"Do not meddle in the affairs of dragons, for you are crunchy and taste good with ketchup."**
- Amy Rodriguez: **"The early bird gets the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese"**
- Dan Murnane: **"It's nice to be important, but it's more important to be nice"**
- Maria Dzul: **"Environmentalists can be dismissed as stupid girls who love birds."**
- Noel Kroepelin: **"Live the Question"**
- Becca Sunday: **"Pee in Hetch Hetchy"**

Chrissy Prestella's bumper sticker:
"Will work for trees."

A FINAL DEEP THOUGHT COURTESY OF DAN DEEGAN:



INVASIVE WEEDS HAIKUS

Invasive species
Thistles purple, scotch and bull
Native plants displaced

Propeller blades chop
The Eurasian watermilfoil
My boat will not move

On land and water
Invasive species spreading
Monoculture soon

No herbicide left
Bull thistle monoculture
Time to call the goats

SNAP MEMBER PLEDGES:

AmeriCorps Pledge:

I will get things done for America—to make our people safer, smarter, and healthier.

I will bring Americans together to strengthen our communities.

Faced with apathy, I will take action.

Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground.

Faced with adversity, I will persevere.

I will carry this commitment with me this year and beyond.

I am an AmeriCorps member, and I will get things done.



SNAP MEMBER PLEDGES:

SNAP Pledge:

Throughout the range of light we will teach our neighbors to become stewards of the land.

We will monitor, restore, protect and conserve resources for future generations, and foster socially and environmentally responsible communities.

From Mt. Whitney to the central Valley, we will take a stand and lead by example.

We will serve the Sierra.



Yosemite National Park

Photo: Dan Deegan

The Sierra Nevada AmeriCorps Partnership is a part of the Sierra Nevada Alliance's Community Group Support Program. Its mission is to develop the capacity of community based organizations to play a leading role in the protection, restoration, and stewardship of public lands, local waterways and working landscapes of the Sierra Nevada region.

For any questions or contributions, please contact:

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