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From: Marion Gee [marion@sierranevadaalliance.org]
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Subject: Sierra Climate Change News January 2009 (d)



SIERRA NEVADA ALLIANCE

Keeping light in the range.

Sierra Climate Change News January 2009

Including Campaign Updates, Taking Action for the Sierra, Relevant News Articles, Useful Reports and Resources and Cool Websites and Blogs

Campaign Updates

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: 4th Annual Wild and Scenic Film Festival Saturday Feb. 28 in South Lake Tahoe

Come join us for an inspirational night of films and fun when the Sierra Nevada Alliance and Patagonia@Heavenly present the *Fourth Annual Wild and Scenic Environmental Film Festival On Tour* on Saturday February 28, 2009 from 6 to 9 at the Lake Tahoe Community College, 1 College Drive, South Lake Tahoe.

Hosted by the Sierra Nevada Alliance and Patagonia@Heavenly and sponsored by the South Yuba River Citizen's League (SYRCL) and Patagonia, the *Wild and Scenic Environmental Film Festival on Tour* sits apart from the hundreds of festivals around the world by leaving you feeling inspired and motivated to go out and make a difference in your community and the world.

A few of the featured films at this year's event are:

Alliance Events

Feb. 28 Fourth Annual Wild and Scenic Film Festival, 6-9, Lake Tahoe Community College, South Lake Tahoe, CA.

Sep. 18-20, 16th Annual Sierra Nevada Alliance Conference. Mark your calendar! Check back at our [website](#) for more details!

Other Events

March 17-18 Symposium on Coping with Climate Change in Sierran Systems: Incorporating

American Outrage- Two feisty elderly Western Shoshone sisters who graze their livestock outside their ranch are sued for trespassing on U.S. public land. Why should the U.S. spend millions prosecuting two elderly women grazing a few hundred horses and cows in a desolate desert?

Homegrown Revolution- In the midst of a densely urban setting in downtown Pasadena, radical change is taking root. For over twenty years, the Dervaes family have transformed their home into an urban homestead. They harvest nearly three tons of organic food from their 1/5 acre garden every year.

The Last Descent- Join a group of whitewater kayakers from Sacramento as they travel to some of the world's most amazing rivers...descending them for possibly the last time before they are destroyed by large hydroelectric projects.

[Click here](#) to view the films that will be presented. Please join us in celebrating the natural and wild world at our *Fourth Annual Wild & Scenic Environmental Film Festival on Tour!*

Climate into Land and Resource Management and Developing Adaptation Strategies, Tahoe Center for Environmental Sciences, Incline Village, NV. The symposium will summarize current info about the documented and predicted effects of climate change in the Sierra Nevada ecoregion, explore the strategic and conceptual framework for incorporating climate into land and resource management in the Tahoe Basin, present and discuss plausible adaptation strategies to cope with climate change. Please register by March 6 on their [website](#) or contact Nancy Starr at 530-621-5552.

Tickets are \$10 each for Sierra Nevada Alliance members and \$12 for non-members. We're please to offer a special membership price for the film festival- join for \$20 and get TWO FREE tickets and discounts and special invitations to other Alliance events. Tickets can be purchased starting Feb. 3 at Patagonia@Heavenly (near the gondola); the League to Save Lake Tahoe's Office and Information Center (955 Emerald Bay Road); the Sierra Nevada Alliance office (2489 Lake Tahoe Blvd, Suite 5) or [click here to purchase ONLINE](#). Tickets will also be sold the evening of the event at the Lake Tahoe Community College depending on availability.

SPOTLIGHT: Devil's Postpile National Monument General Management Plan To Include Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies.

Devil's Postpile National Monument (DEPO) recently announced the development of their first General Management Plan, to be released by 2011 and to coincide with the 100th anniversary of DEPO. The plan will identify long-term future desired conditions for the monument and guide park managers as they decide how to best protect monument resources and manage visitation. Staff are also developing a Resource Stewardship plan to address operational and strategic monitoring, adaptation and mitigation needs. Some of the issues the plans will be addressing include: how to reduce the carbon footprint of visitation and access; impacts of climate change on visitation patterns; possible pressure on rivers, including dam construction, and the implications of wild and scenic river designation; and management of high species diversity in the face of climate change.

As a result of a number of geographic and other factors, Superintendent Deanna Dulen, is considering managing DEPO as a refugium that is less affected by climate change. Some management actions Dulen foresees include:

- Development of a more intensive inventory and monitoring program for surface water and groundwater
- Assessment of possible wild and scenic river designation
- Meadow monitoring

- Restoration of meadows and springs
- Bird habitat studies
- Fire hazard management
- Maintenance and development of migratory corridors
- Controlling invasive species

DEPO is working with the Inyo National Forest and welcomes opportunities to discuss management of the Eastern Sierra as a unified system. This collaborative strategy, along with additional research and continued monitoring, will enable the staff to take an integrated and informed approach to management in the face of climate change.

To learn more about this project, you can sign up for DEPO's General Management Plan listserv at this [website](#). You can also check out the [PowerPoint presentation](#) from the recent Climate, Ecosystems and Resources in Eastern California Conference in Bishop, CA on Nov. 5 or a synthesis of the workshop [Managing Devil's Postpile National Monument in an Era of Changing Climate: a Workshop to Explore Future Climate Variability, Impacts and Adaptation Options](#) held on Oct. 8 in Yosemite National Park. Another useful resource for adaptation management options is the recent report by the U.S. Climate Change Science Program entitled [Preliminary Review of Adaptation Options for Climate-Sensitive Ecosystems and Resources](#), which includes a case study of the Tahoe National Forest and its adaptation options.

Cap-and-Trade web site and listserv

The California Air Resources Board (ARB), Office of Climate Change, announces the launch of its new Cap-and Trade website and listserv. These resources will provide up-to date information on the design elements of California's Cap-and-Trade Program, as well as updates on the rulemaking timeline and workshops.

Click on the linked text to view the [Cap-and Trade web site](#). To sign up for the listserv, click on the following link: http://www.arb.ca.gov/listserv/listserv_ind.php?listname=capandtrade.

Taking Action for the Sierra

Truckee Climate Action Network Launches New Carbon Footprint Project

Truckee Climate Action Network, in conjunction with Moonshine Ink, will be releasing "Truckee's Guide to a Smaller Footprint" a new project funded by a grant from the Nature Fund at the Truckee Tahoe Community Foundation. Set to be released in time for Earth Day 2009, the guide will be distributed free within the community and will highlight programs which are currently being undertaken by our local government agencies, non-profit organizations, schools and businesses to reduce carbon emissions within Truckee. The guide will provide residents with the most current information on programs and services in one convenient place and will also feature an assessment of Truckee's current carbon footprint and offer useful strategies to help Truckee move collectively toward a greener future. For more information, contact Beth Ingalls by email info@truckeecan.com or by phone 530-386-3128.

Relevant News Articles

Local

[Sierra Warming: Later snow, earlier melt: High anxiety](#) by Tom Knudson, Sacramento Bee, Dec. 26. In addition to the late arrival of this year's snow season, warmer temperatures are thawing the existing snow sooner. Already 10 percent smaller than a century ago, Sierra snowpack is expected to decrease dramatically in the coming decades.

[As old growth trees dies at faster rates, scientists blame climate change](#) by Tom Knudson, Sacramento Bee, Jan. 23. A new study has found that tree mortality rates have doubled in old-growth forests across the Sierra Nevada and western United States because of rising temperatures.

[Dirty snow causes early runoff in Cascades, Rockies](#) by brightsurf.com, Jan. 12. A new study from the Department of Energy's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory finds that soot from pollution causes winter snowpacks to warm, shrink and warm some more. This continuous cycle results in snowmelt streaming down mountains as much as a month early.

[Climate Change Action Plan to be revealed in 2009](#) by Craig Thomas, Sierra Sun, Jan. 1. As California Attorney General and climate change advocate Jerry Brown increases the pressure on local planners to consider future projections for the effects of global warming, more and more government agencies in the Tahoe Basin are integrating climate change into their agendas.

[Ski areas warn that global warming could be their end](#) by Tony Hake, Denver Weather Examiner, Jan. 6. A study sponsored by Aspen Mountain and Park City Mountain Resort warns that Colorado's ski industry is threatened by global warming. The study projects that a warming planet will force ski areas to move to higher elevations or, at worst, put them out of business.

State

[California facing worst drought in modern history](#) by USA Today. State officials reported a Sierra Nevada snowpack smaller than normal and said that California may be at the beginning of the worst drought in modern history. Residents are urged to conserve water.

[California scores vindication, environmental win](#) by Samantha Young and Erica Werner, Associate Press, Jan. 26. Pres. Obama handed California a big environmental victory by endorsing a key part of the state's greenhouse gas reduction plans and offering a clear sign that California can expect a friendly relationship with his administration.

[Emissions rule waiver expected this spring](#) by Matthew Yi and Wyatt Buchannan, Sacramento Bee, Jan. 27. California officials say they plan to enforce the state's regulation requiring an average vehicle fuel efficiency of 35.7 miles per gallon as soon as the EPA grants the state a waiver.

[Grim water outlook for Nevada and California](#) by Martin Griffith, Associated Press, Jan. 28. U.S. Bureau of Reclamation officials, meeting with water users at a conference last week in Reno, said the snowpack water content is again averaging below normal. As of Jan. 22, the snowpack water content was 49 percent of average for Northern California, 57 percent of average in Central California, and 64 percent of average in Southern California.

[Utilities turn their customers green, with envy](#) by Leslie Kaufman, New York Times, Jan. 30. The Sacramento Municipal Utilities District has begun sending their customers energy efficiency ratings as compared to their neighbors in an effort to use neighborly competition as an incentive to reduce energy use.

[Call for ideas on living in a warm world](#) by John King, San Francisco Chronicle, Dec. 19. The Bay Conservation and Development Commission is preparing to launch a \$125,000 competition that will invite architects, planners, and engineers to develop innovative proposals "to climate-proof the Bay Area."

National

[Agencies' report warns of faster climate change](#) by Juliet Eilperin, Los Angeles Times, Dec. 26. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. faces the possibility of much more rapid climate change by the end of the century than previous studies have suggested.

[Raising the bar on fighting climate change](#) by Bryan Walsh, Times, Jan. 23. As the new presidential administration's acknowledges the threats of climate change, advocacy groups are re-examining the merits of the U.S. Climate Action Partnership, a coalition of corporations and green groups that called for carbon reductions in 2007.

[Western Washington sees a pattern of severe flooding](#) by Michael Ricciardi, ecoWorldly.com, Jan. 15. Climate change, clear cutting forestry practices, and development are blamed for several severe floods that have occurred in eighteen Washington counties since 2006.

[In the dying West, dams are no longer the answer](#) by George Miller, San Francisco Chronicle, Jan. 8. This fall California revoked the federal government's unused water right for the Auburn Dam project that would have placed a reservoir on the American River. Since 1960, the Bureau of Reclamation has spent more than \$300 million researching this project that will never deliver a drop of water.

[Now is the time to address the mountain pine beetle infestation](#) by Perry Backus, Ravalli Republic, Jan. 2. Mountain pine beetles are eating their way through forests across the West. An estimated 3.9 million acres have been infested in Montana, Colorado, Wyoming, Oregon, Idaho, Utah, and Washington.

International

[Next year to be among the world's top five warmest on record](#) by Matthew Carr, Bloomberg.com, Dec. 30. According to a forecast by the U.K. Met Office and the University of East Anglia, the global temperature in 2009 is forecasted to be 0.72 degrees Fahrenheit more than the 1961-1990 average.

[Climate Change has firm grip](#) by Thomas H. Maugh, Los Angeles Times, Jan. 27. Researchers say that even if nations can get carbon dioxide levels under control, it would take 1,000 years or longer for the climate changes already triggered to be reversed.

[Rising acidity is threatening food web of oceans, science panel says](#) by Cornelia Dean, New York Times, Jan. 30. An international panel of marine scientists says that ocean acidification is accelerating so fast it threatens the survival of coral reefs, shellfish, and the entire marine food web.

[Moving up: Climate change forces species to higher elevations](#) by Tim McGee, Science and Technology, Jan. 25. Research led by the University of York has found that tropical insects, the most numerous group of animals on earth, on the island of Borneo moved about 67 meters uphill in the past 42 years. This represents a major threat to global biodiversity, as insects species are pushed into ever-higher elevations, the options for habitat become scarce.

[97 percent of climatologists say that global warming is occurring and caused by humans](#) by mongabay.com, Jan. 22. A new poll among 3,146 earth scientists found that 90 percent believe global warming is real, while 82 percent agree that human activity is a significant factor in changing mean global temperatures.

[Many glaciers will disappear by mid-century and add to rising sea levels](#) by Juliette Jowitt, The Guardian, Jan. 19. Most of the planet's glaciers are melting so fast that many will disappear by the middle of the century. New figures from the World Glaciers Monitoring Service show that glacier loss in 2007 was the third worst on record.

[NASA study links severe storm increases, global warming](#) by Spaceflight Now, Dec. 27. The frequency of extremely high clouds in Earth's tropics is increasing as a result of global warming, according to a study by scientists at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California.

Useful Reports and Resources

[Climate Change and Water Resource Management: A Federal Perspective](#), released by the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Geological Survey, explores strategies that will improve water management by tracking, anticipating, and responding to climate change. The report provides an outline for how water monitoring must improve for water managers to successfully anticipate climactic changes. Moreover, the report stresses that because of uncertainties in future climate patterns, water resource managers must employ adaptive management methods when creating their water planning regulations.

[Adapting California's Water Management to Climate Change](#) by Ellen Hanak and Jay Lund of the Public Policy Institute of California provides a comprehensive overview of the challenges California's water managers face as they incorporate rising sea levels and global warming into their management plans. The report praises water supply managers for being prepared to adapt to climate change, but draws attention to the work that needs to be done in flood management to adapt to shifting flood patterns.

[Climate Change in California: Scenarios for Adaptation](#) by Amy Luers and Michael Mastrandrea of the Public Policy Institute of California reviews the most recent assessments of the potential impacts of climate change in California, including sea level rise, higher air and water temperatures, reduced Sierra Nevada snowpack and changes in runoff patterns, and an increase in the frequency of extreme events such as droughts and floods.

[Conservation and Management of Ecological Systems in a Changing California](#) by Elisa Barbour and Lara Kueppers of the Public Policy Institute of California outlines recommendations such as developing more forward-looking conservation planning processes to protect future habitat and improving the coordination of existing conservation efforts. The report suggests a stronger and more coordinated response from the state if California intends on complying with regulations such as the Endangered Species Act.

[Adaptation of California's Electricity Sector to Climate Change](#) by Edward Vine of the Public Policy Institute of California is a paper that focuses on the adaptation challenges of the residential and commercial sectors of the electricity arena. Electricity in these sectors will be in increasing demand as the need for air conditioning rises with global temperatures. In addition, the paper examines the role of renewable energy sources, specifically hydropower, as they make up more and more of the state's electricity portfolio.

[Coastal Sensitivity to Sea-Level Rise](#) is a joint report by the EPA and the U.S. Geological Survey that discusses the impacts of sea-level rise on the physical characteristics of the coast, on coastal communities, and the habitats that depend on them. The report examines multiple opportunities for governments and coastal communities to plan for and adapt to rising sea levels.

Cool Websites and Blogs

[How to talk to a climate skeptic](#) by Gristmill is a compilation of refutations of arguments that a typical global warming skeptic might use to question the existence of climate change. The webpage has rebuttals to skeptical arguments including "Antarctic ice is growing," "global warming is a hoax," and "what's wrong with warm weather?"

[41pounds.org](#) is a non-profit subscription service that will halt the delivery of junk mail to your home for five years. The manufacture of junk mail consumes more than 100 million trees per year, is a massive waste of natural resources, and contributes to global warming. Furthermore, 41pounds.org estimates that you will reclaim over 70 hours per year that would have been spent sifting through junk mail. Visit the website to learn more about how you can eliminate 41 pounds of mail per year.

The purpose of the Sierra Nevada Alliance Climate Change Electronic Newsletter is to provide you with relevant information, news, media, events and resources combed from local, state, national and international sources regarding Climate Change. If you have any suggestions or contributions, please feel free to email them to marion@sierranevadaalliance.org.

Climate Change Campaign Background

Climate change is occurring now. The Sierra's precious resources including flora, fauna and rural communities are feeling the impacts now and will continue to be negatively affected unless we make greenhouse gas emissions reduction and adapting resource management practices to climate change high priorities. The Sierra Nevada Alliance is committed to educating the general public, resource planners and community leaders of the Sierra about climate change impacts while empowering them to take the necessary actions to reduce emissions and adapt to this new future. For more info, check out our [Climate Change Campaign Website](#).

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Protecting and restoring Sierra land, water, wildlife and communities since 1993.



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