

Robert Collier

From: Robert [robert@sierranevadaalliance.org]
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To: 'Robert Collier'
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SIERRA NEVADA ALLIANCE

Keeping light in the range.

Climate Change News April 2009

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

Campaign Updates

TRUCKEE CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK (CAN) RELEASES NEW CLIMATE CHANGE GUIDE

Truckee's Guide to a Smaller Footprint from Truckee CAN is a resource that will be useful for the citizens of Truckee as they develop strategies to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. The guide begins with an overview of the basics for understanding climate change. However, the bulk of the guide highlights organizations and utility districts that already have programs in place that aim to reduce carbon emissions. The Truckee Donner Public Utilities District, for example, offers solar rebates for its customers that install solar panels under the State's SB1 program. You can also check out the guide for great suggestions on how individuals can reduce their carbon footprint. Finally, the guide has a list of additional resources for those who want to learn more about what they can do in the Truckee Donner area.

Aside from being a phenomenal resource for Truckee's community, the *Guide to a Smaller Footprint* is a model for what other towns can do to address climate change.

To obtain your own copy of the guide contact Beth Ingalls at info@truckeecan.com or [download a .pdf](#).

Alliance Events

May 23, Birding in Tahoe
Bird expert Sheryl Ferguson will lead a walk on Pope Beach near South Lake Tahoe, 7:30-10:30am. For more info contact Kay Ogden (530)-542-4546 x304.

June 12, Land Use Summit at the Sierra Health Foundation in Sacramento. The summit is free to attend, but you must register. Email [Trish Hickson](mailto:Trish.Hickson@sierrahealth.org) or call 530-542-4546 ext. 313 for more information.

October 16-18, 16th Annual Sierra Nevada Alliance Conference at the North Tahoe Event Center in Kings Beach. Mark your calendar! Check back at our [website](#) for more details!

Other Events

SIERRA NEVADA ALLIANCE PARTICIPATES IN NATIONAL CONVERSATION ON CLIMATE ACTION

On April 22, the Sierra Nevada Alliance partnered with the City of South Lake Tahoe to lead a Conversation on Climate Action that took place across the county in observance of Earth Week. The lunchtime event at the Tahoe Recreational Center was one of hundreds to take place across the country. These conversations were designed to spark or reignite community engagement in their local government's climate protection initiatives; identify specific ways in which every citizen, local business and other key stakeholders can support these initiatives; chart a course of action for setting and meeting climate protection goals; and elevate the collective voices of local governments and their communities into the national and international climate action dialogue.

The Tahoe Conversation was a monumental success, drawing nearly seventy attendees, including the Mayor and local television reporters, and featuring several well-received speakers such as:

- Mayor of Tahoe Jerry Birdwell provided an inspiring introduction.
- Robert Collier, AmeriCorps member serving with Sierra Nevada Alliance's Water & Climate Change Program, spoke about the local impacts of climate change.
- Marion Gee, Sierra Nevada Alliance Water & Climate Change Program Associate, spoke about climate change adaptation strategies.
- Patricia Hickson, Sierra Nevada Alliance Land Use Associate, spoke about mitigating the worst case scenario impacts of climate change.
- Darin Dinsmore, Regional Planning Partners, spoke about the new basin-wide Sustainability Framework.

For more information about the National Conversations on Climate Action go to <http://www.climateconversation.org/>.

Taking Action for the Sierra

AB32 AND SB375 WORKSHOPS

The Local Government Commission, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, and Senator Darrell Steinberg will host workshops to discussion the following topics related to AB32 and SB 375:

May 2 Solar Seminar 10-12pm at the Madelyn Helling Library Community Meeting Room. Come see Martin Webb founder of Plan it Solar talk about solar energy. For more info, call 530-432-3776.

May 5 Making Climate Change Policy Work in Difficult Economic Times 8:30-6pm UC Berkeley International House, Berkeley, CA. This is a conference focused on the job and equity impacts of carbon pricing policies. Register [here](#).

May 11-15 Bike to Work, School, Play Week. Last year 450 people rode! Sign up at www.tahobike.org and help achieve the goal of 750 riders this year.

May 15-June 7 Tuolumne River Trust's Paddle to the Sea. This is a three week festival celebrating the Tuolumne River as it courses from Yosemite to the Golden Gate. Find more information on their [website](#).

May 16, 9th Annual Snapshot Day 9am-12pm. Come learn about your local watersheds and collect data that provides a "snapshot" in time of water quality in the Tahoe and Truckee River watersheds. Register [here](#).

- How AB32 and SB375 relate to local governments
- Strategies for local government compliance
- Economic benefits
- How to take advantage of the new CEQA rules and exemptions
- Funding opportunities for planning and implementation
- Model programs and best practices that result in the reduction of the most greenhouse gas emissions for your money

Speakers will include top staff from the sponsoring organizations as well as regional and local experts, who will showcase some of the best and most innovative steps that local governments are taking. Register for the workshops at <http://www.lgc.org/events/sb375.html>.

See below for dates and locations nearest you:

- May 7 – Fresno
- June 4 – San Diego
- June 25 – Los Angeles
- July 15 – Oakland
- July 30 – Sacramento

ADAPTATION SPOTLIGHT: COLUMBIA BASIN TRUST BRITISH COLUMBIA

In British Columbia, the Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) is supporting local governments, communities, First Nations, and individuals in the Columbia River Basin (click [here](#) for a map) to understand and respond to expected local climate change impacts. The CBT has developed the *Communities Adapting to Climate Change Initiative* to help communities increase their resiliency to climate change at the local level. By identifying the range of potential impacts, assessing local vulnerabilities and sensitivities, and developing adaptation strategies, the CBT will strive to prepare its pilot communities for climate change. So far the CBT has partnered with the cities of Kimberly and Elkford.

Kimberly has framed its project around three steps: learning, sharing, and planning. As part of the learning step, Kimberly will gather expert climate change projections for the area by finding out what changes residents are observing, identifying key issues of concern for the community, and identifying area where the community may be vulnerable. In the second step, the city will host a series of workshops to present and exchange information and ideas on climate change and adaptation. Finally, Kimberly will create a roadmap for a more robust and resilient future. Head to the city's [website](#) for more information.

The District of Elford is taking similarly proactive steps to address climate change. The District is integrating an adaptation strategy into their official community plan. The project proposes to engage the community in an emerging conversation about climate change including mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, energy consumption, and adapting to the impacts of climate change. More specifically, the project will:

- Develop locally specific research on climate change risks and ways to address those risks.
- Model the land use scenarios that include adaptation strategies and greenhouse gas mitigation.
- Develop an Official Community Plan that teaches the community, Columbia Basin Trust, and planning profession about how to integrate climate change thinking with planning.
- Develop an implementation process that does justice to the findings of the planning and climate change research.
- Ensure the process is replicable.

For more information about the District of Elford's community plan visit their [website](#).

You can also check out the Columbia Basin Trust's complete Climate Change Initiative page at http://www.cbt.org/Initiatives/Climate_Change/.

Relevant News Articles

Local

[Turning up the heat: Sierra faces climate change](#) by Adam Jensen, Tahoe Daily Tribune, Apr. 22. Nevada Irrigation District General Manager Ron Nelson held a workshop to discuss how Sierra Nevada Resource managers, especially water providers, will manage the problems presented by climate change.

[Meadow restoration may be inexpensive method for water storage](#) by Dana Nichols, Recordnet.com, Apr. 26. According to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's new draft report titled Sierra Nevada Meadow Restoration Business Plan, repairing all of the degraded Sierra meadows could increase late-summer water storage by 50,000-500,000 acre-feet per year and cost significantly less on a per acre-foot basis than a reservoir proposed in Colusa County.

[Sierra snowpack's water is no drought buster this year](#) by Matt Weiser, Sacramento Bee, Apr. 2. California's crucial mountain snowpack stands at 81 percent of average. That's essentially unchanged from the March survey and a long way from breaking the state's three-year drought.

[Tahoe water supply continues decline](#) by Jeff DeLong, RJG.com, Apr. 14. Lake Tahoe, the most important reservoir for the Reno-Sparks area, is the lowest in the state in terms of storage at only 21 percent of average. Expected stream flow from melting snow on the Truckee River between now and late July is expected to be 67 percent of average, a report by

the Natural Resources Conservation Service said.

[Study links wildfire in the Sierra to climate change](#) by Associated Press, Apr. 24. A warming climate will fuel larger, more frequent wildfires in the Sierra Nevada and other parts of the West, and the fires will contribute to climate change creating a positive feedback loop, according to a new study published in journal Science.

State

[Colorado won't be able to make 9 out of 10 deliveries by 2050](#), Kathy Metheny, mydesert.com, Apr. 23. Climate change is projected to reduce runoff from rain and snow melt in the Colorado River region by 10% to 30%, global climate models indicate.

[Renewed drought conditions fan California's wildfire fears](#) by Oren Dorell, USAToday, Apr. 23. California is bracing for another year of bad wildfires as a thin mountain snowpack, parched vegetation and an early heat wave signal a third consecutive year of drought.

[Winegrowers, environmentalists unify over wastewater plan](#) by Sonoma West News, Apr. 2. Sonoma county officials are expected to approve a massive wastewater irrigation project's environmental impact report next month despite continued opposition from Healdsburg and Russian River Valley wine growers who say the wastewater project will pollute local groundwater supplies.

[Water controversies boil over](#) by Matt Weiser, Sacramento Bee, Apr. 26. Any doubt that California is hip-deep in an epic struggle for water was put to rest earlier this month when an estimated 10,000 farmers and farmworkers marched 50 miles across the gasping San Joaquin Valley. The goal was to heighten awareness about their water shortage, brought on by a third year of drought and environmental problems in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

[Report outlines possible effect of warming on California](#) by Bettina Boxall, LA Times, Apr. 2. As California warms in coming decades, farmers will have less water, the state could lose more than a million acres of cropland, and forest fires will soar, according to a broad-ranging state report by the Climate Action Team.

[Valley officials urge use of treated wastewater](#) by Daniel Tedford, Whittier Daily News, Apr. 4. While Southern Californian cities are considering mandatory water rationing, experts say San Gabriel Valley residents are wasting 45 million gallons of usable water everyday. That useable water is recycled sewage from sinks, showers, and toilets, which after a three step purification process is suitable for irrigation.

[State's big rivers in big trouble](#) by Garance Burke, AP, Apr. 7. California's two longest rivers, the Sacramento and San Joaquin, were named the nation's most endangered waterways by American Rivers a nation-wide environmental group that considers them threatened by outdated water management and poor flood planning.

[Fuels must clean up act](#) by Kevin Yamamura, Sacramento Bee, Apr. 24. California became the first state in the nation to mandate carbon-based reductions in transportation fuels in an attempt to cut the state's overall greenhouse gas emissions.

National

[EPA clears way for greenhouse gas rules](#) by Josh Broder, New York Times, Apr. 17. The EPA formally declared carbon dioxide and five other heat-trapping gases to be pollutants that endanger public health and welfare, setting in motion a process that will lead to the regulation of those gases for the first time in the United States.

[Obama climate plans face long route to passage](#) by Ayesha Rascoe, Reuters, Apr. 3. A U.S. Senate vote this week rejected an effort to put climate change legislation on a fast track, making it harder for Congress to put limits on greenhouse gas emissions this year.

[Climate catastrophe? Here's what the U.S. could look like in 2100](#) by Jean Weiss, MSN Lifestyle. The Southwestern states, which in the global warming equation include California

and Nevada, will experience intense heat waves, poorer air quality, wildfire, water shortages, drought, and expanding risks to agriculture.

[U.S. offshore wind resources could lead American's clean energy revolution](#) by DOI press release, Apr. 2. U.S. offshore areas hold enormous potential for wind energy development near the nation's highest areas of electricity demand – coastal metropolitan centers.

[What is the cost of staving off climate change](#) by Richard Cowan, Reuters, Apr. 1.

Republicans in the U.S. Congress say they know how much it is going to cost to save the world from the predicted ravages of climate change. But other say their math is way off. Cost estimates range from \$366 to \$3,100 per U.S. family per year.

[The carbon tax: a moral issue](#) by Father Paul Mayer, the Huffington Post, Apr. 8. The recent announcement of two pieces of important clean energy legislation in the Congress has put the carbon tax versus cap-and-trade debate on the nation front burner. Exacting a financial penalty from those who are responsible for the scorching of the earth seems to be a requirement of any elemental morality.

[Take green path, US business warned](#) by Fiona Harvey, Financial Times, Apr. 7. Businesses must not sink money into high-carbon infrastructure unless they are willing to lose their investments within a few years, the US lead negotiator on climate change has warned.

[The dire fate of forests in a warmer world](#) by Bryan Walsh, TIME, Apr. 14. In a new study published April 13 in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS), scientists at the University of Arizona found that water deprived piñon pines grown in temperatures about 7 degree Fahrenheit above current averages died 28% faster than pines raised in today's climate.

[Industry ignored its scientists on climate](#) by Andrew Revkin, New York Times, Apr. 23. A fossil fuels industry group campaigned against an idea its own scientists called irrefutable: a link between heat-trapping gases and climate change.

[Administration stops short of endorsing climate bill](#) by Josh Broder, New York Times, Apr. 23. Obama administration officials said that an ambitious energy and climate change proposal sponsored by House Democrats could help create jobs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but they stopped short of endorsing it.

International

[Greenhouse gases continue to climb despite economic slump by NOAA](#), Apr. 21. Two of the most important climate change gases increased last year, according to a preliminary analysis of NOAA's annual greenhouse gas index, which tracks data from 60 sites around the world.

[G20 forgets the environment](#) by George Mobiot, the Guardian, Apr. 2. The G20's strategy for solving the financial and economic crisis is detailed, innovative, fully costed, and of vast scale and ambition. Its plans for solving the environmental crisis are brief, vague, and uncoded.

[Ice bridge ruptures in Antarctic](#) by BBC News, Apr. 5. An ice bridge linking a shelf of ice the size of Jamaica to two islands in Antarctica has snapped. Scientists say the collapse could mean the Wilkins Ice Shelf is on the brink of breaking away, and provides further evidence of rapid change in the region.

[Rivers shrinking: Flow of many rivers decline](#) by Randolph Schmid, Sac Bee, Apr. 21. The flow of water in the world's largest rivers has declined over the past 50 years, with significant changes found in a third of the big rivers. An analysis of 925 major rivers from 1948 to 2004 showed an overall decline in total discharge.

[Small islands urge deep CO2 cuts, fear rising seas](#) by Alister Doyle, Reuters, Apr. 2. Small island states have sharpened their calls for the rich to make deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions, saying low-lying atolls risk being washed off the map by rising ocean levels.

[\\$7 solar cooker wins \\$75,000 climate change challenge](#) by Matthew McDermott, TreeHugger.com, Apr. 9. A humble cardboard box (technically, two boxes, one inside the

other) has won the Financial Times Climate Change Challenge. The two boxes create a solar cooker oven which could greatly reduce firewood use and carbon emissions in countries that still depend on wood as a primary fuel.

[Warming set to exceed EU's dangerous threshold](#) by Alister Doyle and Gerard Wynn, Reuters, Apr. 7. Global warming is likely to overshoot a 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 F) rise seen by the European Union and many developing nations as a trigger for “dangerous” change, a Reuters poll of scientists shows.

[Retreat of Andean glaciers foretells global water woes](#) by Carolyn Kormann, AlertNet.org, Apr. 11. Peruvian glaciers have lost more than one-fifth of their mass in the past 35 years, reducing 12 percent of the water flow to the country's coastal region, home to 60 percent of Peru's population.

[London mayor – 100,000 electric cars for capital](#) by Alok Jha, The Guardian, Apr. 8. London mayor Boris Johnson announced his intent to make the city the electric car capital of Europe. He wants to introduce 100,000 electric cars to the capital's streets and to build 25,000 charging points.

[Carbon trading won't stop climate change](#) by Andrew Simms, NewScientist, Apr. 20. Theoretically, carbon trading, by using markets to set the price of a ton of carbon, should provide an incentive for industries to reduce their carbon emissions. The number of carbon permits actually on the market is limited, so the idea is that supply and demand set a price that encourages the development of a low-carbon economy. But carbon markets are not working.

[Earth's temperature 8th warmest on record so far in 2009](#) by USAToday, Apr. 16. The Earth's temperature from January-March 2009 was the 8th-warmest on record, according to data released from the National Climactic Data Center in Asheville, NC.

Useful Reports and Resources

[Sierra Nevada Meadow Restoration Draft Business Plan](#) by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation maps out a 10 year program to restore and conserve meadow habitat in the Sierra Nevada. The plan puts emphasis on the first 5 years, during which it focuses on implementation of strategies that will further build the economic and scientific rationale for large scale meadow restoration and conservation, build local capacity and create model projects.

[Climate Change Adaptation: Planning for BC](#) by the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions summarizes the key principles of adaptation to climate change and explores the challenges for British Columbia (BC) in the context of nine top-of-mind issues: biodiversity, extreme events, energy, health risks, sea level rise, population displacement, new technologies, water supply, and crop adaptation. The paper proposes ways to adopt ‘smart adaptation’ strategies that cut across all major government functions in BC.

[Facing an Uncertain Future: How Forests and People Can Adapt to Climate Change](#) by the Center for International Forestry Research looks at adaptation for tropical forests, and tropical forests for adaptation. The report calls for the implementation of adaptation measures to reduce the vulnerability of the forests and forest-dependent communities that will experience climate change-associated disturbances like flooding, drought, wildfire, and other environmental challenges.

[Low Flows, Hot Trout: Climate Change in the Clark Fork Watershed](#) by the Clark Fork Coalition delivers a synthesis of the key findings from years of data gathering in the Clark Fork Watershed, blended with anecdotal observations by a broad spectrum of river basin citizens, from realtor to rancher, fishing guide to firefighter. The report gives a snapshot of what can be done to protect the creeks, economies, and celebrated way of life in the changing climate of the Clark Fork watershed.

[A New Vision for a Warming Northern Rockies: A Summary Report of the Headwaters](#)

[Summit held September 15-17, 2008](#) summarizes the three panels and discussions that came out of the Headwaters Summit held in Missoula, Montana last September. The first panel, titled Education and Outreach focused on how to communicate the complex message of climate change in a way that inspires positive action. The second panel looked at how to overcome the zero-sum game of water use that was inherited from historical water allocation patterns in order to encourage water users to make more sustainable choices. To close out the Summit, the third panel focused on policy options responsive to the impacts of climate change.

[Cool Websites and Blogs](#)

[Water Use It Wisely](#) has a list of the top 100 ways in which you can conserve water. Check out the website for tips such as “When washing dishes by hand, don’t let the water run while rinsing. Fill one sink with wash water and the other with rinse water” and “Adjust sprinklers so only your lawn is watered and not the house, sidewalk, or street.”

[MIT’s Greenhouse Gamble](#): In an attempt to better convey the uncertainty in climate change prediction, and thus the implied risk that the world faces, the Joint Program on the Science and Policy of Global Change developed The Greenhouse Gamble. Depicted as a roulette wheel, the image portrays the MIT Program’s estimations of climate change probability, or the likelihood of potential temperature change over the next hundred years, under different possible scenarios.

[Brown and Caldwell’s Water News Special Climate Change Edition](#) is filled with informational materials pertaining to water resources around the world and how climate change will affect them. Be sure to check out the video clip that features Michael Hanneman of UC Berkeley’s California Climate Change Center.

[Sierra Climate Change Watershed Yield Calculator](#) is a practical tool for evaluating the influence of climate change on watershed yield for the west slope of the Sierra Nevada.

[Where Will the Birds Be?](#) This tool uses climate models and multi-source bird data networked for the first time thanks to the Avian Knowledge Network to predict current and future species distributions for over 80 species. These California Partners in Flight focal species represent the major habitat types found within California including riparian, oak woodland, scrub, conifer, and grassland habitat types.

[LA County Solar Panel Hot Spots](#): Check out Los Angeles County’s new “solar mapping” website! The map lets residents and business owners determine whether their properties would benefit from solar power. Also, the website evaluates a building’s potential to generate solar energy based on roof size, pitch and shade from nearby trees, buildings, and mountains.

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 robert@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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Robert W. Collier
Americorps Member
Water and Climate Change Program Assistant

Sierra Nevada Alliance

P.O. Box 7989, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96158

Phone: (530)-542-4546 Ext. 323

Fax: (530)-542-4570

robert@sierranevadaalliance.org

www.sierranevadaalliance.org

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