

**Robert Collier**

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## Sierra Climate Change News October 2008

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

### Campaign Updates

#### **Two NEW publications released by the Sierra Nevada Alliance!**

[Planning for Water-Wise Development in the Sierra: A Water and Land Use Policy Guide](#)

Poorly planned development has become a chief threat to the waters of the Sierra Nevada. But what is good growth, from a watershed perspective? *Planning for Water-Wise Development in the Sierra*, co-authored by the Local Government Commission and Sierra Nevada Alliance, highlights the central- but often overlooked- role community planning plays in watershed protection and sustainable water management. The guide provides local conservation groups, local government and the public with important information about the connection between development and water. The guide also contains land use and development strategies, which local governments, homeowners and developers can employ to reduce the impact of development to our Sierra watersheds. To learn more about the vital connection between development and water quality, water supply and the health of the Sierra's watersheds contact the Sierra Nevada Alliance.

For a hard copy, email [info@sierranevadaalliance.org](mailto:info@sierranevadaalliance.org) or call 530-542-4546. To download a free PDF version, visit our [website](#).

[State of Sierra Frogs and Toads](#)

Six of the native frogs and toads of the Sierra Nevada and California Cascade ranges are experiencing dramatic declines in

### Alliance Events

**Nov. 8 Calaveras Water and Land Use Forum**, 10-4, Native Sons Hall, 389 Main Street, Murphys, CA. Both climate change and development impact water, but what are the specific water resource implications of snowpack changes, growth trends and development patterns? For more information or to RSVP contact John Adams [jadams2212@comcast.net](mailto:jadams2212@comcast.net) or 209-795-6672.

**Nov. 12 Tulare Water and Land Use Forum**, 6-9 pm, Tulare County Office of Education, 2637 W. Burrell Avenue, Visalia, CA. Key speakers include Dr. John Suen of CSU Fresno, Paul Daley, CEO of Daley Homes, John Friedrich from Sierra Nevada Alliance, Fred Brusuelas from the City of Visalia, Bobby Kamansky from the South Sierra IRWMP and Keith Watkins from the Tulare County Farm Bureau. For more info, contact Brian Newton 559-627-3571 or Laurie Schwaller 559-561-0111 or

population. For example, the California red-legged frog, the largest native frog in the western United States, can no longer be found across 70% of its historic range in California and has almost completely disappeared from the Sierra foothills. These hard hit critters are part of a larger Global Amphibian Crisis; 40% of the world's 6000 labeled amphibian species have declined recently and nearly one third are facing extinction. The latest publication of the Sierra Nevada Alliance, *State of Sierra Frogs and Toads: A report on the status of frogs and toads in the Sierra Nevada and California Cascade Mountains*, draws attention to this local crisis in order to raise awareness and public concern.

To download a free copy or to order a hard copy for \$10 including shipping, visit our website:

[https://secure.twinwolf.net/sierranevadaalliance/publications/FROG/frog\\_order/](https://secure.twinwolf.net/sierranevadaalliance/publications/FROG/frog_order/)

Questions or comments on this report? Email [marion@sierranevadaalliance.org](mailto:marion@sierranevadaalliance.org) or call 530-542-4546 ext.311

### California Adaptation Strategy Drafts Vision, Guiding Principles and Objectives

The great news is that the Resources Agency responded to the Alliance and other NGO's requests and drafted principles and objectives for their California Adaptation Strategy (CAS). Their principles are strong, very similar to the Alliance's Climate Change Adaptation principals in our [Sierra Climate Change toolkit](#), and provide guidance to state agencies and others for how to adapt. To read the draft, go to the [website](#).

The CAS is an effort to synthesize the most up-to-date information on expected climate change impacts to California for policy-makers and resource managers, provide strategies to promote resiliency to these impacts and develop implementation plans for short and long term actions. There are six working groups developing strategies for water, ocean and coastal resources, working landscapes (agriculture and forestry), biodiversity and habitat, infrastructure and public health. For more information, check out their [website](#) and join the list serve.

### Sierra Climate Change Initiative Approved by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Board

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy is leading a collaborative effort to identify actions that can be taken to address the effects of climate change. The initiative is addressing mitigation and adaptation efforts in the region and its communities. For an overview of proposed actions and strategies, visit their [website](#).

**Sierra Nevada Alliance Climate Change Presentations-** Thank you *Sierra Watch* for hosting the Alliance's "Adapting Resource Management to Address Climate Change" presentation this month! Are you or your organization interested in learning more about adaptation, resource management and climate

[tccrg@erathlink.net](mailto:tccrg@erathlink.net)

**Feb. 28 Fourth Annual Wild and Scenic Film Festival**, 6-9, Lake Tahoe Community College, South Lake Tahoe, CA. More info to come!

### Other Events

**Nov. 5-8 Climate, Ecosystems and Resources in Eastern California Regional Symposium**, Tri-county Fairgrounds, Bishop, CA.

For more information contact John Smiley [jsmiley@ucsd.edu](mailto:jsmiley@ucsd.edu) or Connie Millar [cmillar@fs.fed.us](mailto:cmillar@fs.fed.us) or go to the [website](#).

**Nov. 13-14 CA Climate Change and Water Adaptation Summit**, Long Beach, CA. For more information, go to the [website](#) or contact John Andrew [jandrew@water.ca.gov](mailto:jandrew@water.ca.gov)

**Nov. 17 CA Connectivity Forum**, Freeborn Hall, UC Davis, 9-5. Join planners, conservationists, scientists and decision makers in this unique discussion of the status and future of wildlife habitat connectivity in California. For more information contact Fraser Shilling [fmshilling@ucdavis.edu](mailto:fmshilling@ucdavis.edu) or 530-752-7859 or go to the [website](#).

**Feb. 7 PCL's Annual Legislative Symposium "Steps to a Sustainable California."** Sheraton Grand, Sacramento. For more information, contact Melanie Schlotterbeck 714-779-7561 [MSchlotterbeck@pcl.org](mailto:MSchlotterbeck@pcl.org)

change? The Sierra Nevada Alliance has created a presentation that provides a useful overview of climate change impacts, especially in the Sierra, and how resource planners can adapt to these changes. Call 530-542-4546 ext. 311 or email Marion Gee [marion@sierranevadaalliance.org](mailto:marion@sierranevadaalliance.org) to take action and schedule a presentation today!

## **Taking Action in the Sierra**

### **AB32 Proposed Scoping Plan Released**

The Scoping Plan is California's policy blueprint containing the broad overview of the programs, measures, and approaches that will help California achieve the required reductions of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions required under the Global Warming Solutions Action (AB32). When completed, the plan will have a range of GHG reduction actions, which include direct regulation, alternative compliance mechanisms, monetary and non-monetary incentives, voluntary actions and market based mechanisms such as a cap and trade system. To download the Proposed AB32 Scoping Plan or to submit comments, go to <http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/scopingplan.htm>

### **California's State Climatologist Wants You!**

Climatologist Michael Anderson, an employee of CA Department of Water Resources, wants volunteers to arm themselves with rain gauges and plug their home rainfall figures into a growing national database. California is the 36th state to join the non-profit Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network. The Network is sponsored in part by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the National Weather Service. The project depends on home-based, amateur rain spotters to take daily rainfall measurements and report them on the network's website [www.cocorahs.org](http://www.cocorahs.org). To join this network, all you need is internet access and to pay \$23 for a rain gauge. Training is offered online. Join this growing network and help scientists better understand how climate change is affecting the Sierra!

### **Thoreau's Legacy: American Stories about Global Warming**

The Union of Concerned Scientists and Penguin Classics are encouraging all aspiring writers and photographers to submit their personal stories and images about global warming for publication in a new online book, to be published in 2009. Submissions are due by Nov. 15. For more information or to submit your entry, go to their [website](#).

## **Relevant Articles/Media**

### ***Tom Knudson's Series on Climate Change in the Sierra for the Sacramento Bee***

[Sierra warming: Climate Change puts heat on high country](#), Aug. 3.

[Sierra climate change puts range's species on the run](#), Aug. 24.

[Old growth junipers felled amid warming debate](#), Sep. 21.

[Yosemite glacier on thin ice](#), Oct. 19.

### ***Tom Knudson's Sierra Summit Blog: Conversations and Observations about California's Mountains***

[Latest Entry: A Hiker's Guide to Climate Change](#), Oct. 27. John Soare's new digital guidebook to northern California trails includes contemporary issues like climate change.

## **Local**

["California, US are sued for failing to protect tiny mammal."](#) by Denny Walsh, Sacramento Bee, Oct. 6. The Center for Biological Diversity is suing so that regulators will ensure the survival of

the pika in the face of climate change.

["Climate change forcing animals to move up."](#) by David Perlman, San Francisco Chronicle, Oct. 10. From the mountains of Yosemite to the lowlands of Costa Rica, global warming is forcing animals and plants to move upslope.

["Alpine lakes beginning to show effect of climate change."](#) Physorg.com, Aug. 26. A recent study forecasts that increased climatic variability poses serious consequences for both the biodiversity and ecosystem function of high-elevation lakes.

["California, nonprofits form coalition to protect Sierra."](#) by Tom Knudson, Sacramento Bee, Oct. 9. The Northern Sierra Partnership was recently formed to protect open spaces, forests, watersheds in the face of climate change.

## State

["California Slashes Supply to State Water Districts."](#) CA Department of Water Resources will cut supplies to water districts by 85 to 95% after two extremely dry years.

["Five Ways California vintners are weathering climate change."](#) by Paul Franson, San Francisco Chronicle, Oct. 24. Climate changes vary at the local scale and CA vintners are coming up with interesting strategies to adapt.

["Old Growth Forests are Valuable Carbon Sinks."](#) ScienceDaily, Sep. 14. Contrary to 40 years of conventional wisdom, a new analysis published in the journal Nature suggests that old growth forests are usually "carbon sinks".

## National

["A Water warning from an ancient people."](#) by Brian Fagan, Sacramento Bee, Oct. 5. They call Chaco Canyon in New Mexico the Stonehenge of America. It is also the site of the great Chaco drought that coincided with long dry cycles in California.

["Climate Change Destroying Walden Pond's Flowers."](#) by Alexis Mafrigal, Wired.com, Oct. 27. Scientists are using Henry David Thoreau's records to study how the landscape has changed.

["Climate Change Equals Stronger Rains."](#) by David Biello, Scientific American, Aug. 8.

Tracking El Nino with satellites reveals that a warming world means not only heavier downpours but drier deserts.

["Carbon Tax seen as best way to slow global warming."](#) by Timothy Gardner, Reuters, Oct. 13. Climate taxes, not cap and trade alone, will lead to the vast technological changes the world's energy system needs to fight global warming, a top U.S. economist says.

["Watch Frontlines "Heat" television program online,"](#) a global investigation into one of the greatest crises that mankind has ever faced- Can we roll back global warming?

["Southern drought creeping northward."](#) AP, Oct. 17. The drought that plagued the Deep South for more than a year is creeping northward, and officials in multiple states are restricting outdoor burning in the face of water shortages and forest fire risks.

## International

["For the first time in human history, the North Pole can be circumnavigated."](#) by Geoffrey Lean, the Independent, Aug. 31. Melting ice opens up North-west and North-east passages simultaneously. Scientists warn Arctic icecap is entering a 'death spiral'.

["One Quarter of World's Mammals Face Extinction."](#) by David Biello, Scientific American, Oct. 6.

["U.N. says credit crisis could enable green growth."](#) by Patrick Worsnip, Reuters, Oct. 10.

["Special Report: Nothing to Fear from curbing growth."](#) by Kate Soper, New Scientist, Oct. 15. We are hearing ever more about the contradiction between hanging on to a habitable planet and the expansionary demands of the global market.

["Global warming pollution increased 3 percent."](#) by Seth Borenstein, AP. Despite the economic downturn, CO2 output jumped 3% between 2006 and 2007.

["Poverty: Water wars hit rural Zimbabwe."](#) by Ignatius Banda, IPS, Oct. 16. When water experts warned at the turn of the millennium that soon wars will be fought not over oil but over water, little did Zimbabweans know they would be some of the first people affected.

["Longest, hottest drought on record."](#) by Asa Wahlquist, The Australian, Oct. 11. The long drought affecting southern Australia is officially the worst on record.

["Chile: Pedaling Against Pollution."](#) In Chile, public bicycle services, bike routes and special parking areas are some of the initiatives currently being developed.

## **Useful Resources/Reports**

[Climate Change Adaptation Policy Workshop](#) in Irvine, CA was held Sept. 24-26 and the PowerPoint presentations are now available online.

[The National Water Program Strategy: Response to Climate Change](#) final report was released by the U.S. EPA and gives an overview of climate change on water resources and the nation's clean water and safe drinking water programs as well as 40 specific actions the National Water Program intends to take to adapt.

[Maryland Commission on Climate Change's Climate Action Plan](#) was released in August. The plan is meant to answer 3 important questions: how and when will climate change affect Maryland's citizens and natural resources, what can Maryland do to adapt, and what can Maryland do to reduce emissions and the state's carbon footprint. Chapter 5 specifically addresses the state's strategy for adaptation.

[Chicago Area Climate Change Quick Guide: Adapting to the Physical Impacts of Climate Change.](#) Chicago has created a Climate Action Plan to reduce its greenhouse gas emission as well as this guide which explored the impacts of climate change in Chicago and gives advice to the city on how to adapt.

[New York City Dept. of Environmental Protection Climate Change Program's Assessment and Action Plan](#) was released in May 2008. The report included an examination of the science and predictions, potential adaptation strategies for water, wastewater, land use planning and other systems planning, and greenhouse gas mitigation.

[Melbourne's Future Map](#) is an examination of the potential and current impacts of climate change and opportunities for the city and its citizens to adapt and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

[Adapting our Ways: Managing Scotland's Climate Risk](#) is a consultation paper written to inform Scotland's climate change adaptation framework and includes strategies, principles and priority actions for climate adaptation to consider in developing the framework.

[The Role of Environmental Management and Eco-Engineering in Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation](#) is a recent report by the Finnish government that recognizes the potential benefits of intact or well managed ecosystems as buffers against natural hazards caused by climate change. The report examines a series of case studies and provides practical and proven approaches for different situations.

[Feeling the Heat: Global Warming and Rising Temperatures in the United States.](#) New report examines warming trends in the United States and suggests next steps the government needs to take immediately.

## **Cool Websites/Blogs**

[KQED News Climate Watch Blog](#) is a multi-year initiative to provide in-depth coverage of climate related science and policy issues, with a specific focus on California. It is a true multi-media endeavor, centered around a comprehensive web climate portal that provides a wealth of resources and a healthy discussion of climate change.

[River Network's Water, Energy and Climate Change](#) website contains articles, presentations, water management plans and reports covering these three interconnected issues.

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](mailto: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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