



# The Sequoia

## Learn About Sierra Wildflowers from Biologist & Wildflower Expert Rebecca Otto 7pm, April 23rd at the Sonora Library

### INSIDE

SERIAL 2 DECISION  
ALLOWS USE OF HERBICIDES  
ADMINISTRATION ACTIONS  
TARGET NATURAL RESOURCES  
YOSEMITE RESERVATIONS



Photos by Rebecca Otto

**P**LEASE JOIN US at 7:00pm,  
Wednesday, April 23rd at the  
Sonora Library for a presenta-  
tion entitled *Forest Wonderings:  
Wildflowers of the Sierra Nevada* by  
retired biology professor and Sierra  
wildflower expert Rebecca Otto.

Wildflowers are in bloom across the Sierra foothills. Now is a great time to get out and enjoy the beauty of springtime.

Rebecca Otto retired from her position teaching biology at Chabot College in Hayward in 2022. Since then she has spent her time exploring the forests and foothills of the Sierra Nevada with a focus on the wildflowers of the region.

Rebecca currently maintains a website targeting the general public, sharing her knowledge and plant photos from her wanderings, hoping to spark interest in our local plant biodiversity. Visit [www.sierranevadainbloom.com](http://www.sierranevadainbloom.com).

### *Rebecca remembers...*

*"I had the good fortune of living in a house on the edge of an undeveloped woodland, filling my childhood with endless hours of exploring and collecting nature's little treasures. I credit this for giving me an early appreciation of nature."*

*"My students have come from communities that have been underrepresented in the sciences throughout my career. They were not afforded my childhood privilege of aimlessly playing for hours in the forest. Like so many Americans, many lacked the appreciation for nature that unites members of the Sierra Club. I hope my instruction played a role in increasing their awareness of the flora, fauna, and ecology of our incredible planet."*

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

## SERAL PLAN UPDATE

# Stanislaus Herbicide Decision

**DESPITE STRONG OPPOSITION FROM THE SIERRA CLUB & OTHER GROUPS, THE STANISLAUS NATIONAL FOREST HAS APPROVED HERBICIDE USE FOR 7,500 ACRES OF FOREST FUEL BREAKS**

*The Tuolumne Sierra Group will be submitting a letter objecting to the recent decision to allow the spraying of herbicides across thousands of acres of local national forest fuel breaks.*

*You can add your voice expressing opposition to this decision to allow herbicide applications in the forest.*

*Find a link to the USFS SERAL Project Comments Page on our Sierra Club Group's website: [sierratuolumne.org](http://sierratuolumne.org)*



**W**HEN THE FOREST SERVICE releases proposed projects for public comments, the agency consistently promotes the message that: “Your comments are important to us.” Yet when public comments from groups or individuals urge major changes in a proposed action, the Stanislaus Forest often shrugs off public comments and continues to stick with the agency’s original proposed plan without making any feasible adjustments to lessen controversy.

The massive SERAL 2.0 forest treatment project was put forward last year for public input. The Tuolumne Group of the Sierra Club and other local conservation groups all supported or at least accepted the high levels of fuel break construction, forest thinning logging treatments, broadcast burning, and road treatments proposed for the SERAL 2.0 project. But the Tuolumne Group and the other local environmental groups strongly objected to plans to allow spraying of herbicides across thousands of acres of local national forest fuel breaks.

While chemical treatments may be the cheapest and fastest method to control brush or small trees on fuel breaks, even the Forest Service admits that broadcast burning,

mastication with shredding equipment, hand cutting of brush and trees, or targeted grazing may be feasible alternatives to herbicides. Yet in March, the local Forest Service not only approved the controversial plan to allow spraying on up to 7,500 acres, but the agency also approved another controversial “condition based” proposal for the Forest Service to be “pre-approved” to log trees killed or damaged by some potential future fire or some future outbreak of bark beetles.

Despite the conservation community’s requests to scale back or to eliminate herbicides, the Stanislaus Forest now intends to use spraying as a key treatment on up to 12 square miles of the local forest.

# New Administration Actions Target the Nation's Natural Resources

**I**t would take many pages to just briefly list all the Administration actions that are directly and indirectly affecting the environment. As noted in last month's Sequoia newsletter, the widespread firing of federal agency employees along with funding freezes that block agencies from paying for new contracts have combined to create chaotic conditions and uncertainty for the Park Service, the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management and other agencies. Here are a few other significant actions that have far-reaching consequences for the environment and for federal lands:

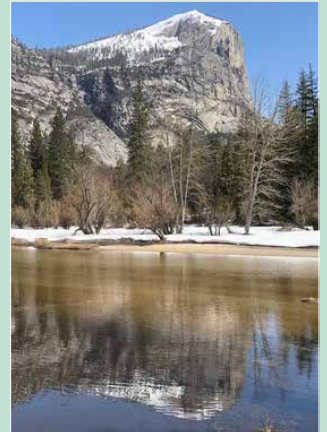
**The President signed an Executive Order to maximize timber production on Forest Service and BLM lands** - directing agencies to revoke or suspend any regulations that are "onerous" for

timber production. Key conservation policies that protect wildlife, water quality, and recreation could be weakened or gutted in the months ahead.

Under new leadership, the Environmental Protection Agency announced 31 actions to deregulate EPA policies deemed unpopular with industries and anti-environmental interests. **New EPA administrator Lee Zeldin stated: "We are driving a dagger straight into the heart of the climate change religion..."** The EPA weakened its long-standing regulations for power plants and the oil and gas industry. It directed reconsideration of mercury and air toxics standards and the reconsideration of wastewater regulations for oil and gas drilling. The actions include gutting incentives for electric vehicles and shifting EPA policies to expedite new permits for the coal industry.

Air quality and water quality will be significantly affected. While court decisions have temporarily blocked some of the widespread firings of federal employees or the immediate closing of entire agencies, one way or another, the agencies that were created to manage vast federal lands and resources are being shrunk in size and forced to shift their focus to resource exploitation and new programs to privatize long-standing government roles for public lands.

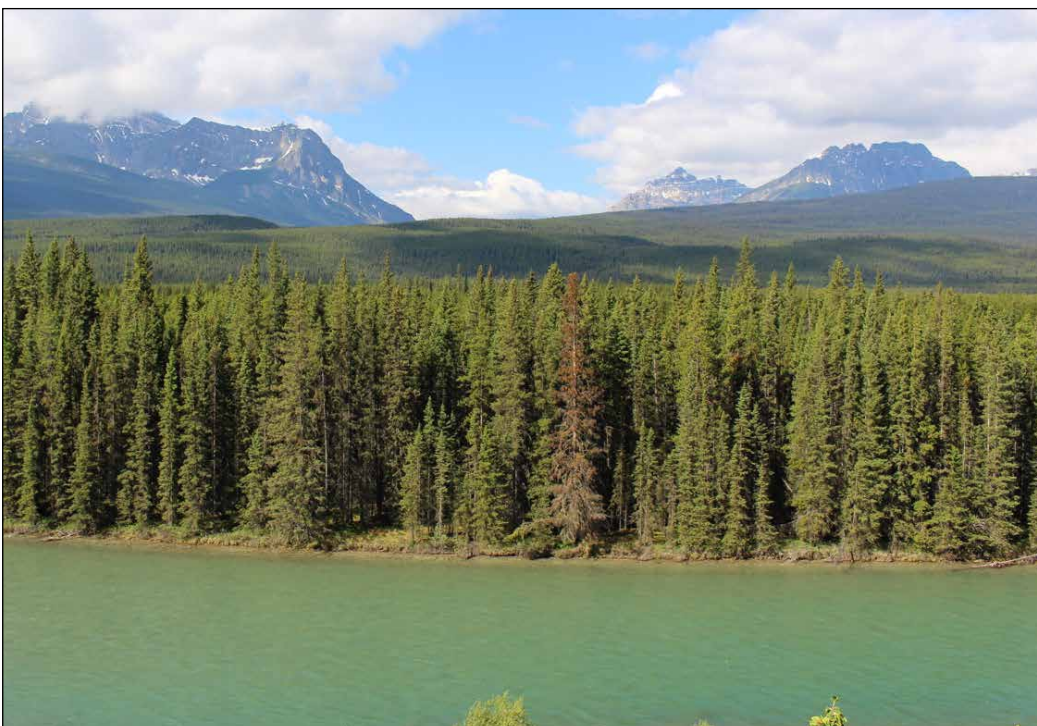
## Yosemite May Have a Day-Use Reservation Plan After All



For months the Park Service was silent on whether there would be day-use reservations required this year to reduce traffic jams and congestion in Yosemite Park. A long-awaited Visitor Management Plan was not approved by the new Administration, so there was uncertainty as to what would take place this year. In late March, the media highlighted an unofficial report that Yosemite will have a pilot project reservation system, but that it will be shorter than in previous years.

As described in the media, reservations will be required on weekends between 6 a.m. and 3 p.m. from May 24 through June 15, 2025 and from August 16 through August 31, 2025. Reservations will be required seven days a week from June 16 through August 15, 2025. The reservations will be valid for three consecutive days. You can purchase reservations at [Recreation.gov](https://www.recreation.gov) starting April 17th.

**UPDATE:** As this newsletter goes to press, Congressman McClintock has called on Interior Secretary Doug Bergum to end the reservation system - stay tuned to local media for latest info.





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TUOLUMNE GROUP

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**SIERRA  
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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](mailto:elainehagen@att.net)

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**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](mailto:elainehagen@att.net).

### FOREST WONDERINGS: WILDFLOWERS OF THE SIERRA NEVADA

Tuolumne Sierra Club will host retired biology professor and Sierra wildflower expert Rebecca Otto for an in person presentation on Wednesday, April 23rd at 7pm at the Sonora Library, 480 Greenley Rd. FREE - Come early for best seats!

### 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](mailto: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 page: [www.sierratuolumne.org](http://www.sierratuolumne.org).

