

Poudre Canyon Cache

Newsletter of the Poudre Canyon Group of the Sierra Club

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Welcome to the fourth edition of PCG's online newsletter, featuring important local, regional and global environmental news and information. Please send your PCG news stories, event announcements, and Eco Tips to jpgascoyne@frii.com for inclusion in future newsletters.

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1. Input sought Wednesday on Fort Collins Budget Process

As the City of Fort Collins moves forward with its 2010-2011 budget process, named "Budgeting for Outcomes," concerned citizens are being urged to weigh in on this \$1-billion budget.

The meeting will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. this Wednesday, May 13, at the Drake Center, 802 W. Drake Road in Fort Collins.

A number of Green groups, including Sierra Club, Western Resource Advocates and Clean Water Action, are asking the City to consider saving tens of millions of dollars and, as well, decrease its climate change footprint. The groups' proposal, titled "Water Supply Sustainability for Fort Collins" could save Fort Collins citizens up to an estimated \$40 million by conserving both water and energy.

The proposal states as a goal: "Use scientific and economic analysis to re-assess Fort Collins' water supply, water conservation, and drought management policies to see if Fort Collins can reach buildout without relying on new, expensive, damaging water supply projects such as a new Halligan Reservoir and the Windy Gap Firming Project."

Gary Wockner of Clean Water Action said, "Over the past 15 years, conditions in Fort Collins have changed dramatically. Citizens use much less water, the City's budget is very tight and climate change is occurring. We need to re-assess these large projects to see if they still make financial and environmental sense in the 21st Century.

"Water use rates have dropped 25% in the last 14 years," Mark Easter of the Sierra Club added. "The potential for more conservation is dramatic. We should do everything we can to conserve water and see if we can save millions of dollars by not participating in these new projects."

"Technology and efficiency are the smart investments for the future," according to Stacy Tellinghuisen of Western Resource Advocates. "The City especially needs to focus on climate change impacts of its water supply planning. Both water and energy can be saved, and greenhouse emissions can be cut. These large and costly water supply projects may not be necessary."

Spokespersons said that the Green groups are not opposing outright the Halligan and Windy Gap project proposals, but that they are asking for new scientific and economic analyses that incorporate new technology and efficiency standards, and that include the economic cost of degrading the environment.

The Green groups are delivering their proposal to City decision makers and staff, and including it in the public input process on Wednesday night.

For more information on the proposal, contact Gary Wockner at 970-218-8310.

2. Governor's Climate Change Coordinator to Speak

Former Colorado House majority leader Alice Madden has been appointed by Governor Ritter as his Climate Change Coordinator. Madden, a senior fellow on climate change with the Center for American Progress, will be speaking in Fort Collins this Wednesday, May 13.

Alice will discuss Colorado's State Climate Change Plan, and how local governments, companies, and citizens can become involved and help battle climate change in our state.

The free event, open to the public, begins at 6:30 p.m. at the New Belgium Brewing Company. Sponsors are the Poudre Canyon Group of the Sierra Club, the Clean Water Fund and the Fort Collins Audubon Society. For more information, call 218-8310.

3. PCG hosts "Chill the Drills" Presentation

At its regular membership on Wednesday, May 6, PCG members learned about the "Chill the Drills" project. The slide presentation, by Kit McGurn, described a Sierra Club national campaign to protect three fragile areas of the United States Arctic in Alaska from the effects of oil, gas and coal development.

The three areas of concern are the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), some of the Takakaka Lake area, and some of the Ubibibibi river uplands, both located in the National Petroleum Reserve, Alaska (NPRA).

McGurn is the National Arctic Organizer for the Sierra Club. His effort includes collecting post cards for presentation to the Secretary of the Interior some time next year.

4. Save the Poudre's First Annual June Rise Contest

Save the Poudre has announced a fundraiser, focusing on the annual June Rise, to help its campaign to stop the Glade Reservoir project.

Every spring, as the mountain snows melt, the Cache La Poudre River rises. Sometimes, when the snow is abundant, the river flows high. During drier winters, the flows are lower. Each spring, however, there is June Rise - a time when the river peaks from snowmelt-driven flows. The peak usually occurs between May 15 and June 30. After that, the river flow begins to drop.

Local sponsors have donated a number of outdoor-focused prizes.

- First prizes: 1. Dagger Whitewater Kayak, valued at \$975. 2. Condo weekend in Steamboat - valued at \$500.
- Second prizes 1. Photo on canvas, "Poudre River Summer," valued at \$250. 2. Marin Commuter Bicycle, valued at \$450.

- Third prizes 1. Poudre rafting trip for two - valued at \$126. 2. Poudre River winter photo - valued at \$300
Prizes will be awarded in two categories: the closest guess of the highest flow in cubic feet per second (cfs) and the closest date and time when the peak flow occurs between May 15 and June 30. Only one guess per entry will be accepted. Tickets, at \$5 each, can be purchased online at www.savethepoudre.org. See that website for complete contest rules.

Local sponsors of the contest prizes are Dagger Kayaks, Fine Prints Imaging, Wendy Poppen, Colorado Frame Manufacturing, Maria Montano Photography, Fort Collins Bike Co-op, Mountain Whitewater Descents and John Bartholow, photographer.

5. Save the Poudre Update

The Save the Poudre Coalition is reporting positive news in its efforts preserve the Poudre River.

The Army Corps of Engineers has decided to issue a revised Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) for the Northern Irrigation Supply Project (NISP) and the Glade Reservoir that would be built in conjunction with NISP water storage objectives. The new SEIS will take many months to prepare. Coalition spokespersons say that this delay by the Corps, perhaps as much as 18 months, could mean that the Glade Reservoir will never be built. The Coalition will continue to insist that the highest scientific standards are applied in analyzing the project and its potential impacts.

The Save the Poudre Coalition continues to develop a "Healthy Rivers Alternative" to NISP/Glade. The Coalition states that its alternatives, including increased conservation measures, will be cheaper than NISP, better for the river, and better for area farms.

The Coalition said that it was very excited to learn that the Colorado Water Conservation Board will move forward aggressively to develop new water conservation standards for all Colorado cities - a major component of the Alternative's own objectives.

In addition to stopping the construction of Glade, the Coalition will continue its work to improve streamflows in the already degraded Poudre River as it moves through Fort Collins.

6. Colorado Citizens Against ToxicWaste Host Documentary

Colorado Citizens Against ToxicWaste (CCAT) has completed "Yellowcake," a ten-minute documentary intended to raise public awareness of the environmental, health and socioeconomic impacts of the front end of the nuclear fuel cycle.

CCAT has also announced the launching of its new website, "Down the Yellowcake Road," at www.downtheyellowcakeroad.org. In addition to other information at that site, the documentary may be viewed at the website - best seen with Internet Explorer 8.0.

7. Eco Tips

#1. Dishwashers: wash less; rinse less. Newer dishwasher models are powerful enough to remove the gunk, so save water (and time) by skipping the pre-rinse. Energy Star dishwashers consume one-third less water than older units. Wait until the dishwasher is full before running it.

#2. Faucets: turn them off. An estimated 3,000 gallons of water per year can be saved by turning off the tap while brushing your teeth or shaving. Look for other creative water savers - wash fruit and vegetables in a bowl rather than under a running tap.

8. Upcoming Events

(See above for two events on May 13)

June 3 - Wednesday: Laurie D'Audney of Fort Collins Electric will give a presentation on water conservation. The event begins at **7:30 p.m.** at the Fort Collins Senior Center.