



Locating Gold, Gems and Minerals

The official publication of the *Trails and Tales of UPI*. The family oriented, small-scale miners, metal detecting and prospecting group, educating in, and promoting gold, gem, mineral and metals hunting of all types.

www.unitedprospectors.com

April/May 2005

No. 274, Vol. 56-5

*Getting set for the
potluck!*

*PLP Interim Rule Raffle!
See page 11.*

Oxbow Comes Off Despite Inclement Weather and the FS!

*Acknowledgements
go to Tom and
Christa Eastland and
Bill Greymont for
their pictorial input to
the newsletter.*

*Left: Jerry Randall,
Right: Charlie Brown,
past Presidents of the
Corporation speaking
about Henry Henry,
and how he is missed.*





UNITED PROSPECTORS INC.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Don Siegel
April/May 2005

- PRESIDENT** Don Siegel
- V. PRESIDENT** Tom Eastland
- TREASURER** Samantha Wait
- SECRETARY** Rita Perry
- DIRECTORS**
Chet Chastain
Linda Doyle
Gerald Hurt
Steve Letlow
Bill Reboin
Brenda Marsh
Aaron Matula

The time is now for you to get ready for a great mining season. Check your wet suit for the usual winter shrinkage. Fire up those dredge motors, to insure that there are no reasons not to take advantage of the great runoff that is sure to have moved some color around and restock your favorite dredge hole. THAT'S RIGHT THE SEASON HAS ARRIVED. Make sure you have all of your required paperwork in your toolbox and come on out to Bull Creek.

This year will be a great one both from a mining perspective and an organizational standpoint. As you are aware we have gone through some changes this year. Now is the perfect opportunity for you to have an impact or some input on how your organization is run and the direction we are going to take as government encroaches on our freedom to mine as our forefathers have. My having been involved with this great organization and how it is run for the past three years has been and is a fun and great experience. However as we continue to move forward, new fresh ideas and energy is certainly going to be needed. The leaders we currently have are doing a fantastic job but need your support if UPI is to remain a strong healthy organization. Talk with your board members and express your interests and discover how you may have an impact or help.

See you at Bull Creek.
Don

- EDITOR/PUBLISHER**
CLUB HISTORIAN Bill Reboin
- EDITORS** Mark Weber
- ADVOCACY/
POLITICAL ACTION** Gerald Hurt
- CHAPTERS** Tom Eastland
- CLAIMS** Chet Chastain
- ETHICS/GRIEVANCE** Gerald Hurt
- MEMBERSHIP** Linda Doyle
- OUTING COORDINATOR** Brenda Marsh

- TECHNICAL ADVISOR** Steve Letlow
- WAGON MASTER**
HFA by Steve Letlow, Open
- WAYS AND MEANS** Aaron Matula
- WEB MASTER** Mark Weber

The Outing!

This time around the outing was a day trip for the Ed/Pub. Commitments at work didn't allow for me to take a couple of days off so that I may cover the outing, not like I didn't need it. I was only able to be there on Saturday and cover what I could. Christa Eastland and William Greymont are thanked for their pictorial coverage of the outing, some nice pictures indeed.

Over the off season somebody (ies) sort of ripped Oxbow a new one. Whoever was playing around there left huge unfilled holes in the shoreline/exposed streambed. The consensus is that whoever was there doing what they did didn't have a clue. The FS alluded that it was UPI members. This area has been open mining for several decades. Anybody could have done it. The moral of the story, fill your holes when you're done, and no complaints. All of the areas where these huge holes were left were soft packed high water float areas. It is really doubted if anything was found. Seeing as we couldn't mine because of the Forest Service arbitrary closure and the high water preventing us from getting to the other side we did some clean up work. There was a pretty good-sized crew that went out and tackled filling the holes in.

There were a couple of members, I didn't catch their names, which suited up, wet suits, and braved the cold water and current. They had to wade/swim to cross the river with their mining gear to check out the bars downstream. They didn't find much, but they didn't spend a lot of time either. Moreover the water was too high for anything but flood gold. There are a few pictures of this venture in the newsletter.

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Tentative Schedule for 2005

- June 4 & 5** - Bull Creek
- July 1 thru 4** - Genesee@ Babcock Crossing
- Aug. 12 - 14** - Spanish Creek/Clm Gold
- Sept. 9-11** - Greenhorn Creek plus more
- Oct. 8 & 9** - Bull Creek
- Nov. 5 & 6** - Coulterville - 6th annual pre-Thanksgiving outing/feed

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Wagon Master: Open, HFS by Steve Letlow, see Technical Advisor

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Asst. Claims Plumas Co.: Johnny Lewis Jr., (530) 283-4787

Chapters

For Chapter meeting times please contact the representative indicated for your Chapter area. For information or volunteer work on area Chapters listed as open, please contact:

Tom Eastland, Chapters Chairperson. Please see Contra Costa Co. below for contact information.

Alameda County, Chairperson; Steve Kleszyk, (925) 443-4993 or ratled88@aol.com
Meeting held at - - - Prospectors Claim Store
174 S. "K" Street
Livermore, CA

Contra Costa County, Chairperson; Tom Eastland, (925) 932-4288 or chapters@unitedprospectors.com
Meeting held at - - - First Baptist Church Mansion
3033 Bonifacio St.
Concord, CA



Madera County, Chairperson; Open

Sacramento County, Chairperson; Open

San Joaquin County, Chairperson; Steve Letlow, (209) 986-6276 or sbletlow@comcast.net
Call Steve for when and where. It is understood that meetings will be held at Terry Schoens shop.

Santa Clara County, Chairperson; Open

Stanislaus County, Chairperson: Don Siegel, (209) 551-9802 or dps0736@aol.com
Call for particulars



The old miner sez: Regarten da curent debacle wit da FS an otherz it look like they gotta be a line drawn inna sand an sez nuf is nuf. It gonna take all partizapaten!

UNITED PROSPECTORS INC. (UPI)© THE TRAILS AND TALES OF UPI©

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UPI encourages submission of articles of all kinds related to the trials and tribulations and experiences of small scale miners, opinion pieces, cartoons and poems. Unsolicited e-mail submissions become the property of UPI to use as they wish. Submissions in writing, accompanied by a self addressed stamped envelope will be returned to the sender if not used.

UNITED PROSPECTORS INC. PROSPECTOR
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There has been no Board Meeting held since the last issue of the newsletter. The next Board Meeting will be at the Bull Creek outing at 9:00 AM Saturday, June 4th.

This will be the first regular meeting of the year, as there was not a meeting at Oxbow. You are invited and encouraged to please attend the meeting. There are business items that need to be looked at and discussed. Additionally it is time for the membership to start thinking about whom they want representing them on the Board for 2006. This is your organization, speak up be known, be heard and have a part in its governance.

Hopefully there will be some news from PLP and or our Political Advocate on the situation with Oxbow I & III, by the time of the outing. Right now all there is, is the desire from the Board that we will come out on top of the heap.

Lots of things to look at plus mining to be done. Don't forget about your NOI if you plan on mining any other way than with hands and pan at BullCreek.

(Continued from page 2)

The outing continued

Myself, Chet and a couple of others moseyed around on Indian Bar, Oxbow, checking out rocks with pyrites crystals, fools gold, in them and other items of interest on the bar. The crystals are cubical some were small some were large and in cases all that was there was the impression of there having been a cubical shaped item in the host rock. There were also good-sized pieces of heavily mineralized quartz lying around, but no visible Au.

Did a lot of members mine? No, only two mined at Oxbow, where the FS allowed us. There were several members that went upstream from the dam and hit some bedrock above the powerhouse on the Rubicon. To the best of my knowledge it was slim pickings there.

Did we have a good time? You bet. Lots of stories were told, ac-

quaintances were renewed and the camaraderie was firmed up. I was having enough fun talking and looking at rocks that I completely forgot that down at the bridge that crosses the Middle Fork of the American River there is a trail. The trail heads back into the Bake Oven and Deadwood Ridge area. The trail name is the North Fork of the Middle Fork Trail. About a mile up the trail as I recall there is a place several hundred feet above the existing stream, the Middle Fork of the American River, where there is a gravel bench, where the river used to be. It might have been worth the hike to perhaps do some detecting.

The Potluck started around 5:00, it's still early in the year, didn't want Mother Nature to turn the light off. It was really good as usual and of course the raffle followed with lots of great prizes. Unfortunately as I was not prepared to camp and I had to leave that evening. As usual it was a great outing as they always are.

Chapter Member Report

Hi:

On Saturday, Lance and I went up to Moccasin Creek for the day. The weather was a little overcast but warm. There were probably 20 people there, counting kids, and everyone had fun. UPI served lunch and cold drinks of the soft kind, if you know what I mean.

We had a common dig using two power sluices on the side of a hill, a bench above the current streambed. We found some decent gold, and some nice pickers.

The raffle was held and there was quite an improvement in the raffle

prizes. We had a new member who happened to win three prizes in the raffle and then we had another member from Alameda, first dig for him, and he also won a couple of prizes, one being the biggest nugget. Also, this member is going to start coming to our chapter meetings.

How was your weekend? Hope your weekend was as much fun as ours.

Ivan

Word has it that the San Joaquin and the Contra Costa county chapters are having good turn-out for their meetings that's good to hear.

We need to get some folks in the other chapter areas to step up to the plate and get some activity going there.

Outing Pictures



Top row: Chet at one of the claim markers. Filling in the hole and Samantha looking things over.
Bottom row: More hole filling. Illegally installed no camping sign covered. UPI Oxbow 2 & 4, where you loose sight of the river.



NEW MEMBERS AND RENEWING MEMBERSHIPS

This section is devoted to acknowledging and welcoming all new members and those renewing!

Welcome aboard for a year of fun.

Information is from 03/21/05 through 05/11/05

<u>New Members</u>	
<u>Name</u>	<u>City/State</u>
Frank Baccelli	Elk Grove, CA
Herb Berryhill	Olivehurst, CA
James Bonetti	Salida, CA
Robert Brannan	Redwood, CA
Joe Bryant	Placerville, CA
Tom Chrisman	Ceres, CA
Vern & Nancy Hafner	Reno, NV
Kelly & Kathy Hall	Oakhurst, CA
Roy Harrison	Yuba City, CA
Steve Hix	Modesto, CA
Daniel McCabe	Napa, CA
Gerald Meecham	Overton, NV
John Meling	Modesto, CA
Gary Meltzer	Indianapolis, IN
Hank Miller	Yountville, CA
Richard Mills	Foresthill, CA
Joel Orona	San Jose, CA
Merv Pate	Manteca, CA
Edgar Pate	Clovis, CA
Debbie Reboin	Los Angeles, CA
Andy & Adele Rico	Nice, CA
Steve Shields	Citrus, CA
Louis Venable	San Pablo, CA
Fred Vizgaudis	Truckee, CA
Greg Voisard	Coarsegold, CA

Royce Waataja

Sonoma, CA

Renewing Members

<u>Name</u>	<u>City/State</u>
Robert J. Anderson	Clovis, CA
Dan Broers	San Jose, CA
Lee Brokaw	Modesto, CA
Ray Budowich	Coulterville, CA
Robert Burger	Berkeley, CA
Dave Cates	Modesto, CA
Bob Christensen	Oakley, CA
Brian Coughlin	Lodi, CA
William Eastland	Placerville, CA
Neil & Betty Greiner	Rocklin, CA
James Hammond	Santa Clara, CA
Ron Hess	Reno, NV
Nancy Hiteshew	Vallejo, CA
Jack & Diane Holinger	Concord, CA
Mark Johnson	San Jose, CA
Alan Maxwell	Rough & Ready, CA
Charles P. McMullen	Modesto, CA
Charles A. McMullen	Modesto, CA
Bob Mixom	Reno, NV
Dennis & Pat Mobley	Stockton, CA
Rick Neet	Garden, CA
Joe & Billie Owens	Maricopa, CA
Douglas & Joy Parker	Castle Rock, WA
Carl & Bernadine Peterson	Arthur, ND
Don & Annie Robinson	Foresthill, CA
Terry Schoen	Ripon, CA
Wesley & Marsha Smith	Pacheco, CA
Aron Starratt	San Jose, CA
Randol Thrasher	Atwater, CA
Norman Trainer	Marysville, CA
Gaylan Walters	Napa, CA
Stan Webster	San Jose, CA

(Continued on page 6)



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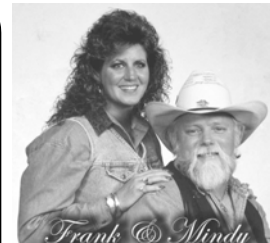
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(Continued from page 5)

Members Up for Renewal as of 06/31/05

Steven & Penny Bisset
David Cherry
Russell Dunn
James Furuson
Marvin Gaydosh
Vic & Ester Griffith
Gerald Hurt
Darrel Kitchen
Thomas Lee
Bill McCallister
Chuck Morris
Miklos Nemeth
CeCe & Dale Pierce
Lance Schmidt
Richard Soderquist
Larry Varnado
Mark E. Weber

Dan Blake
John S. Cook Sr.
Roy & Marti Dunston
Karl Fierling
Curtis Gibson
Johnathon Griggsby
Don & Bev Kalkbach
Sid Lanier
Brenda Marsh
Mike & Gail McCann
Mike Murray
Rod O'Connor
James Pruden
Donald Siegel
Ted Stolting
Jesus Venegas
William & Betty Wheeler

Those of you up for renewal please note that there is a dues increase being implemented.

The last increase of dues for UPI was in 2001. Since that time we have added just short of 1200 acres to our claim inventory. The added acreage and claims, has increased the overhead and maintenance cost for the claims. At the same time, there have been increases in all other costs associated with operating the organization.

Over the past year the Board has taken a few steps to decrease the cost of operation, however without sacrificing various successful actions we found no further ways to decrease cost. This being the case we have found it necessary to increase the annual dues to keep up with the overall raises in costs of everything associated with the cost of doing business. Therefore effective beginning June 1, 2005, all annual dues, due on that date forward will increase to \$45.00 per year. Lifetime dues will increase to \$450.00.

If your anniversary date is after June 1, you can save by renewing before June 1 with no change in your anniversary date.

Editor-in-Chief/Publisher
For the Board of Directors

Welcome aboard to all of you for another year of enjoyment with UPI the small-scale miners advocate. Lets see you at the scheduled outings and the potluck and raffles. It's always a great time for all on top of finding that elusive yellow metal, Au.

It's really nice to see the renewals year after year, and it is really nice to see all of the new members. There are a number of you renewing that I have never had the pleasure of meeting, I only know you by name. Come on by all of you to the outings and lets get acquainted.

Bill Ed/Pub

Good Member News!

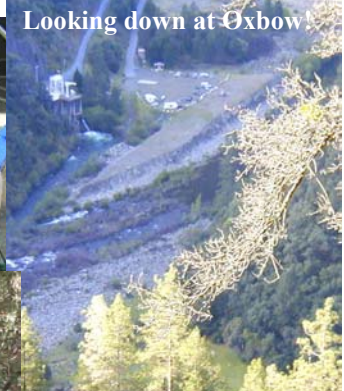
As some of you know Seymour Gessler had a recent stay in the hospital for preventive/curative surgery. Seymour is out of the hospital, still doing physical therapy, but doing well.

Bernice, Seymour's wife, expresses both of their thanks for all of the support, cards and prayers from the UPI members.

Raffle Winners!



Other Pics



Third to the right: Gerald hand delivers notice to the FS that we are camping at Oxbow.



UPI ROLL CALL

List of members and guests present at the Oxbow outing, Potluck and Raffle including the raffle results.

April 9 and 10, 2005

1. Don Siegel: Winner of 1880 Morgan silver dollar.
2. Bill Greymont: Winner of the large gold nugget.
3. Brenda Marsh
4. Beverly Paul
5. Ron and Susan Bassell: Susan won a nice pry bar, and the small gold nugget. Ron won a UPI T-shirt and a set of UPI coasters hand crafted by Linda Doyle our Dir. of Membership. A pretty good haul I'd say.
6. Stan and Richard Webster
7. Mike, Linda, Michelle, Laura, Rachel, the Doyle Gang, went home with a couple of items: Linda won the Amethyst necklace and Mike won the folding lock blade which he donated back after the raffle.
8. Aaron, Denise, Jennifer and Alex Matula
9. Phil Lanza: Phil went home well prepared for mining. Phil won the complete Grizzly Panning Kit including the video on how to use it along with a gold prospectors handbook. He should be well prepared. With the Grizzly Kit you can get your concentrates in the field with the pan, and process them at home in the kitchen sink with the mini-slucice. Slick and it works.
10. Pete Harvey
11. Steve and Bill Letlow: Steve went home with a magnetic necklace and a Nevada Gold Mining Atlas. Good health to you Steve.
12. Charlie and Barbara Brown
13. Jerry Randall and Iris Geisner
14. Tom and Christa Eastland
15. Wesley Smith
16. Pat Avilla
17. Bill and Carol Eastland
18. Richard and Carol Worthington
19. Gerald Hurt
20. Chet Chastain: A small pocket knife which was donated back to the raffle after being won by Bill Reboin your Ed/Pub.
21. Bobby and Lisa Whitworth: It appears that Bobby was the lucky one of the pair. He claimed two prizes; a Garrett pan and a pewter miners pin.
22. Bill Reboin: I won a really nice half dollar necklace and a pocket knife that Chet ended up winning.
23. Other best friends there were Bootsie, Howard, Samantha, Lady and Tucker.

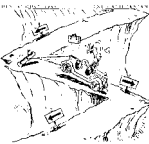
Counting the best friends I come up with a total of 43 present for the potluck and raffle.



Left: Bill Greymont, winner of the big nugget, blue shirt, with UPI Prez Don Siegel.

Right: Susan Bassell winner of the small nugget, with the Prez.

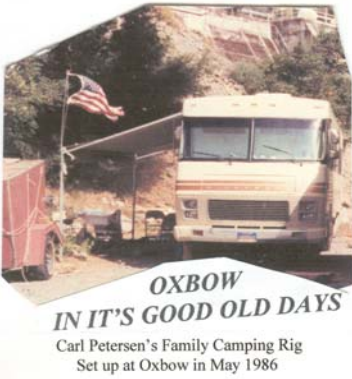
Them nuggets sure be pretty.



The old miner sez: Golly- -- - Da weather aforen da outin waz sure stinky. Rain, rain, rain an wind. Probly kepted a few at home where da be sure da stay dry. Well as usul da weather straighten out an we had a dry time. Dis seem ta be da way wit Oxbow.

The next outing will be at Bull Creek. Be sure to file your NOI if you plan on mining other than by hand.





Following is a note I received from Carl Peterson. Linda Doyle received one also. This is UPI history: (Notes slightly edited.)

Wednesday April 20, 2005
Arthur, North Dakota 58006

Hi Bill:

Just finished reading the March 2005 issue of Locating Gold, Gems and Minerals. I was saddened to read of Henry Henry's passing. Henry was a dear friend of thirty years. We spent many days at Oxbow during

December, January and February, an experience supreme.

Henry loved California Gold Country. He was an experienced miner and I gained my mining expertise from him. I have thanked God many times over for causing Henry's and his charming wife's path to intersect with Bernadine's and mine. Our sympathy pours out to Mrs. Henry.

Bill - - The photos on the cover page - more good friends and a granary full of memories - we all dearly loved Oxbow. I miss the outings and envy all of you enjoying those great "POTLUCKS."

Good Panning and God Bless,

Carl W. Petersen

A Bit of History and Condolences

Following is a short note that Linda Doyle, Membership Director received from Carl Peterson. Early in 2000 an article on the evolution of the Potluck appeared in the newsletter. That article was by Carl and supplied some history of UPI. Thank you Carl. I'll see if I can find the archives and reproduce it next issue.

Hi Linda:

I believe this will be my thirty-fifth year as a member of UPI. I first joined in 1970. Wendell Harrel was president, Bill Sanger was Wagon Master, V.P. was John Kennedy and the Editor was Walt Price. I served as V.P. for many years.

I miss the Outings, Gold Panning, and the Comradeship of the members, the POTLUCKS, and the evening circles around the campfires. Like old Elephants, Bernadine and I came back home to the North Dakota to enjoy our golden years, that's why we have not been to the outings the past eight - ten years.

I was deeply saddened at the learning of Henry Henry's death. He and his wife were dear panning friends of Bernadine and I. Henry and I spend many days together at Oxbow over the years.

Sincerely:
Carl Petersen

If you have bits of history like this please don't hold them back. They will help in filling in the blanks in the long history of UPI as well as demonstrate the continuity of the group.

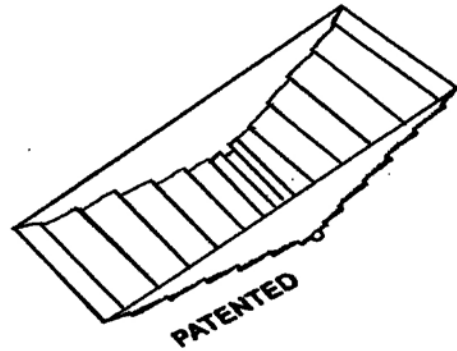


The old miner sez: There be more ta UPI den meets da eye or what collect in da pan. Looky da peoplez ya git ta meet. Lookie at da frens ya make an da history too.



The old miner sez: Only in America do we use the word "politics" to describe the process so well: "Poli" in Latin meaning many, and "tics" meaning blood sucking creatures. Supplied by Steve Barnett.

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More from the Outing!



Cleaning up the mess somebody (ies) left at Oxbow

POTPOURRI

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS OF INTEREST©

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Your responses to this column and the newsletter in general may play a part in the content of the newsletter and the way I vote as a Director. Please feel free to contact me.

This is my playground! Some may like it, some may not. I hope it starts you thinking, taking responsibility for the group, and enjoying life and livingness and finding Au.



Bill Reboin, Ed/Pub and his pooch Samantha.

Neither I nor does UPI have any copyright to the following information. It is definitely an item of interest in light of the current Oxbow scenario and other scenarios that have appeared in this column in the past. This information is from Western Slope No-Fee Coalition and one of their Associates:

Subject: USFS to flout law/close sites - Update/Action Alert

As you all know, when Congress authorized the Recreation Access Tax as part of the Omnibus Appropriations Bill on December 8th, Fee-Demo was officially repealed. Fee-Demo was replaced by the RAT, a new law which some said would be fairer and less egregious in its implementation than the unpopular program it replaced. Unfortunately, they were wrong.

The USFS's RAT implementation guidelines were issued on April 25th and with its publication, much of the uncertainty regarding how that agency intends to interpret the new law is resolved. We now know that the USFS has no intention of making the recreation program either more fair or any less egregious. In fact, the USFS has no intention of following the law! What they intend to do is to charge the widest variety of fees for the widest variety of recreational activities by stretching the RAT far beyond what the law permits. They must not be permitted to do so!

Pasted below is an Action Alert prepared by our friends at the Western Slope No Fee Coalition. I have modified it to the extent that I've added web-links to documents that were not available on the internet when their alert was distributed yesterday morning and which I have since made available

There's a lot of important information here. I hope you find it helpful.
Scott

----- begin forwarded alert-----

Action Alert - USFS Plans Illegal Fees!

May 5, 2005

[This alert was prepared by the Western Slope No Fee Coalition (WSNFC)]

At the end of this alert is a press release that went to nationwide media on May 3, 2005. It is in response to the Forest Service's release of Interim Implementation Guidelines for the RAT Act. We think you will find it shocking. It is now available online at www.wildwilderness.org/docs/reaguide.doc

The WSNFC worked hard last year with the House Resources Committee to have over-broad authority removed from the RAT bill, and to add more restrictions on where fees can be charged. The agencies, in turn, pushed for unlimited fee authority with little public or congressional oversight. The bill that was rushed through behind closed doors at the end of the lame duck session pleases neither side.

The newly released guidelines reveal that the Forest Service plans to ignore restrictions on fees in the new law and proceed as if they had gotten everything they wanted. To achieve this, they have MADE UP two fee categories that appear nowhere in the law and are using them to charge fees at sites that do not meet the law's minimum criteria. In other words, they are blatantly charging ILLEGAL FEES.

At the same time, the Forest Service has begun a program called

Recreation Site Facility Master Planning (RS-FMP). They will be evaluating every site nationwide for "financial sustainability." SITES THAT CANNOT GENERATE ENOUGH FEE REVENUE TO BE SELF-SUPPORTING WILL BE CLOSED. The scale of closures appears to be vast, with campgrounds, access points, visitor centers and trailheads reportedly on the block. OUR PRECIOUS PUBLIC LANDS HAVE NEVER BEEN IN MORE DANGER FROM THOSE ENTRUSTED WITH MANAGING THEM!

It is time to take action. There are THREE things you can do:

ONE: Contact Congress and demand that all fees outside of developed campgrounds be suspended and that the RAT be repealed. Here is a sample letter:

"I am outraged that the Forest Service plans to continue all existing fee sites and establish many new ones in total disregard of the limitations contained in the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act. This law was passed as a rider, without congressional debate or a recorded vote, in the face of nationwide opposition by citizens and elected officials. It is poorly written and contains contradictory and ambiguous language that the Forest Service is interpreting over-broadly.

In addition, the Forest Service is inventing fee authority for themselves that does not appear anywhere in the law, and planning to close sites that are financially unprofitable.

I request that Congress direct the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to suspend all fees outside of developed campgrounds until oversight hearings can be held by Congress. The FLREA is substantive legislation, including criminal penalties, that did not undergo a full legislative process, and it should be repealed." (Please vary the wording and add your own thoughts.)

Here is what you need to do:

- 1) Contact House and Senate leadership list by phone and fax. Contact information below.
- 2) Contact the President by phone, fax, and e-mail. Contact information also listed below.
- 3) IMPORTANT: Write letters to the editors of your local and state newspapers.
- 4) Contact your state's Representatives. We have listed the Capitol Switchboard. Just call and ask for your Congressman's office.

Here is who to contact:

Your Senators and U.S. Representative

Capitol Switchboard: For contacting your Congressperson

Phone only: 202-224-3121

Sen. Larry Craig, Chair, Public Lands Subcommittee

Phone: 202/224-2752

Fax: 202/228-1067

Sen. Conrad Burns, Chair, Interior Appropriations Subcommittee

Phone: 202/224-2644

Fax: 202/228-8594

Sen. Craig Thomas, Chair, National Park Subcommittee

Phone: 202/224-6441

Fax: 202/224-1724

Rep. Jerry Lewis, Chair, Appropriations Committee

Phone: 202/225-5861

Fax: 202/225-6498

Rep. Richard Pombo, Chair, Resources Committee

Phone: 202/225-1947

Fax: 202/226-0861

Rep. Greg Walden, Chair, Forest and Forest Health Subcommittee

Phone: 202/225-6730

Fax: 202/225-5774

Rep. Devin Nunes, Chair, National Parks Subcommittee

Phone: 202/225-2523

Fax: 202/225-3404

Rep. Charles Taylor, Chair Interior Appropriations

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

Phone: 202/225-6401

Fax: 202/226-6422

Rep. Ralph Regula

Phone: 202/225-3876

Fax: 202/225-3059

TWO: Participate in our Fee Site Survey. We have launched an on-the-ground review of thousands of FS and BLM fee sites nationwide to identify those that do not comply with the requirements of the new law. You can obtain instructions, survey forms and a list of FS sites from us at feesitesurvey@hotmail.com (see also <http://www.aznofee.org/aznofee/home.php>)

THREE: Ask your local and state elected officials to pass resolutions calling for repeal of the RAT. Colorado and Montana have already done this. The Oregon Senate has also, and their resolution is pending in the Oregon House. Eight Colorado counties have weighed in as well. Contact us for examples and advice at wsnfc@earthlink.net

The national outrage over the way this law was passed, and now with how the agencies plan to implement it, **MUST** be heard in Congress, and it does have a huge effect!

Thank you for your support.
Robert Funkhouser, President

Begin Press Release

WESTERN SLOPE NO-FEE COALITION

P.O. Box 403, Norwood, CO 81423

May 4, 2005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information:

Robert Funkhouser, 802/235-2299, rfunk9999@earthlink.net

Kitty Benzar, 970/259-4616, wsnfc@earthlink.net

FOREST SERVICE GUIDELINES REVEAL PLANS FOR ILLEGAL FEE SITES

Unprofitable Recreation Sites Nationwide To Be Closed: The U.S. Forest Service has issued Interim Implementation Guidelines to local forest managers instructing them on how to implement the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA), better known as the Recreational Access Tax (RAT). These guidelines purport to guide managers in following congressional intent as they transition from the previous Fee Demo program to the new law.

Instead, they do just the opposite. They instruct local managers on how to bypass congressional constraints and illegally charge fees for dispersed areas, general access, and recreational use of undeveloped land. The guidelines are written so as to modify existing fee programs as little as possible, while extending new fees to millions more acres of public land.

Fees will be charged for whole or nearly whole National Forests in California and Arizona as well as vast tracks of forests in Colorado, Washington, Oregon, New Hampshire, and other states. Fees will be charged for trailheads, OHV routes, mountain biking trails, equestrian trails, and wilderness areas. All of this is in clear contradiction to congressional intent and to the letter of the law.

The Western Slope No-Fee Coalition has released an analysis of the Forest

Service guidelines. It charges that the Forest Service is inventing two categories of fees that are not authorized in the law: High Impact Area Fees and Recreation Permit Fees. These categories are being used to bypass the restrictions in the law that forbid the agency from charging entrance fees for National Forests or for "dispersed areas with low or no investment." The restrictions were meant by Congress to rein in the agencies from having broad, unlimited fee authority.

At the same time, the Forest Service has undertaken a nationwide

review of all recreation sites under their management. Those that cannot achieve "financial sustainability" will be slated for closure.

This program, Recreation Site Facility Master Planning (RS-FMP) calls for Regional and Forest managers to identify all the sites in their jurisdiction that do not meet standards for sustainability and mark those less profitable for closure. And, in a concept borrowed straight from Madison Avenue, each Forest must identify its marketing "niche" and consider closing any sites that do not fit that niche. The process is already underway and will be completed by 2007. The scale of closures on National Forests appears to be vast with campgrounds, access points, visitor centers and trailheads reportedly on the block.

The relationship of the RS-FMP to the fee program is clear. The agency will be denying access to more and more of the National Forest system outside of fee areas. Even fee areas will be closed if they are not sufficiently profitable or don't fit the marketing niche. RS-FMP documents state that "Recreation fee authority has created higher visitor expectations," resulting in a ratcheting-up effect of higher fees chasing higher expectations. By allowing a public agency to tax the public directly, Congress has changed the incentive of forest managers from land stewardship to revenue generation.

Congressional funding of recreation budget line items has not kept up with inflation, but these operations and maintenance budgets have not been heavily slashed either. The biggest obstacle to the maintenance of Forest Service areas is the systematic de-funding of operations and maintenance by the agency themselves. While appropriations from Congress go up, generally 1% or 2% annually, funding from the Washington Office and the Regions to the Forest and District levels has been dropping by double-digit percentages every year. Some Forests report drops as high as 20% last year.

So where are the funds going? Indications are that money is being pulled from recreation and maintenance budgets and used for weed programs, relocating staff and for fire-fuel reduction. Some managers claim that the cost of administration has risen. Whatever the reason, the bottom line is that the Forest Service's priority is not the public's use of their public land.

Closing recreation sites and trails will cause enormous harm to local economies. Before limiting public use, an outside audit of all related budget line items should be conducted to find out where the money has gone. Past audits of the Forest Service by the Government Accountability Office have revealed widespread financial mismanagement that has never been corrected.

To read the agency's Implementation Guidelines www.wildwilderness.org/docs/reaguide.doc

To read WSNFC's analysis of the guidelines www.wildwilderness.org/docs/analysis.doc

Information about the RS-FMP process is available at www.fs.fed.us/r3/measures/Prioritize/RS-FMP.htm.

USFS guidelines for off-loading facilities is available at www.wildwilderness.org/docs/wcfplan.pdf

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More of the Outing!



Claim Stake

It looks like our Oxbow situation is in good hands. Don and Gerald have put in a lot of effort and deserve a pat on the back from all members of UPI. We may still lose the Oxbow claims but it won't be because we resigned our rights. Thank you both.

It rained all but about 2 hours last week in Quincy. The Feather River looks more like the American River. It's about 3 feet higher and 20 feet wider than at our Twain outing last year. Greenhorn creek is just ridiculous - - any higher and it is going to undercut Hwy 70. Spanish Creek is very high too. All of them look really muddy - lots of material moving around out there. Dredging and mining overall this year should be very productive.

Chet Chastain
UPI Claims Manager

Editors Note:

UPI Political Advocacy, Gerald Hurt, and President Don Siegel, have been working with PLP, Public Lands for the People, with this Oxbow incident. PLP is giving us guidance with the situation.

There have been a couple of documents filed with the Government and it is hoped that we, UPI, will come out on top. That is all that is

known at this time and we are not speculating on the outcome.

PLP

PLP is requesting donations from its membership to firm up the legal fund for fighting a number of issues with the USFS. UPI as a member is assisting as we can. There are also some UPI members that are also members of PLP have been donating additional as well.

If you are not a member of PLP just joining as a member will help the legal fund. The cost for individuals is only \$25.00 and family is \$40.00. If you mine and detect on open FS or BLM land, or if you have your own claim it would be a good idea to join. They have saved the bacon for a number of people. A membership application can be downloaded at www.plp2.org/

PLP is also holding an Interim Rule Raffle, remember CFR 228? The fight is on. There are a total of \$6484.00 worth of prizes including a Strapp rock winch, a Keene dry washer, a Minelab and a Whites detector and two nuggets totaling almost 10 grams.

Tickets are 12 for \$10.00 and can be obtained by calling Barry Wetherby at (818) 957-1455 or e-mail bhwetherby@aol.com The drawing is June 16, so you better hurry. I'll see if I can have some at the Bull Creek outing for you to purchase.

See ya at Bull!!!!

SEE YOU AT THE NEXT OUTING!

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