



Restore Hetch Hetchy

IN YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

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THANKING ASSEMBLYMAN IRA RUSKIN FOR WITHDRAWING AB2659

Earlier this year, Assemblyman Ira Ruskin (D-Redwood City) introduced AB2659, a bill that would have prohibited the State of California from studying the restoration of Hetch Hetchy Valley until the 13-year infrastructure repair and upgrade of the San Francisco water system was completed by its Public Utilities Commission, and the levees in the Delta and Central Valley were substantially repaired. If the bill became law, the Schwarzenegger Administration would be prohibited from completing its study of Hetch Hetchy restoration options currently being done by the Department of Water Resources.

Many organizations in the environmental community were surprised that Assemblyman Ruskin would introduce such a bill, given his 100% voting rating from the California League of Conservation Voters. Along with Restore Hetch Hetchy, the bill was opposed by Environmental Defense, Sierra Club, Friends of the River, Planning & Conservation League, Clean Water Action, Mono Lake Committee, Natural



California State Capitol

Heritage Institute, National Wildlife Federation, Sierra Nevada Alliance, Sierra Nevada Adventure Company, South Yuba River Citizens League, and Tuolumne River Trust. The *Sacramento Bee* also editorialized against the bill. No organizational or individual letters of support for the bill were filed with the Committee.

Many members and friends of Restore Hetch Hetchy communicated their concerns about the bill to Assemblyman Ruskin [see sample of letters accompanying this article] and to members of the Assembly's Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee, Chaired by Assemblywoman Lois Wolk (D-Davis), to which the bill was referred. Fortunately, as a result of these heartfelt communications, Assemblyman Ruskin has withdrawn the bill from consideration by the Committee.

Letters thanking Mr. Ruskin for withdrawing the bill would certainly be appropriate. His address is: Assemblyman Ira Ruskin, State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814.

SAMPLE LETTERS TO ASSEMBLYMAN IRA RUSKIN OPPOSING AB2659

I am a resident in your district and I just learned of the bill you have recently introduced, AB2659. I would like to inform you that I oppose this bill. I am a supporter of ensuring that California's levees are safe and up to state of the art engineering standards and that the San Francisco Bay Area have a robust and reliable water delivery system; however, I am also a strong supporter of restoring Hetch Hetchy to its original unflooded state. I do not see these projects as being related and I am stunned to learn that you have tied the future of Hetch Hetchy Valley to state flood control and water infrastructure projects. – Linda in Los Altos.

I am writing to you as a constituent who voted for you. I was just made aware of your bill AB2659 which would prohibit the State of California from studying

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the restoration of Hetch Hetchy Valley. I am strongly opposed to your bill. We definitely must address the problems with our levy system and San Francisco's water system, but both of those things can happen simultaneously with a study of restoring Hetch Hetchy Valley. There is no logical reason that one should preclude the other. The first time I saw the O'Shaughnessy Dam I had trouble understanding how the dam builders and politicians of that time could have conceived that damming such a place was appropriate. As an avid backpacker I would like to see Hetch Hetchy Valley restored to its former grandeur. – Michelle in Los Gatos

Water is a major issue for everyone, especially for Californians. I applaud your concern for the condition of the Bay Area water supply and Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta levee systems. However, improvements in these areas should not preclude continued study to restore the Hetch Hetchy Valley. Hetch Hetchy happens to be a part of the San Francisco water and power grid, but its true place is a natural (and national) treasure unique to the Sierra, and rightfully it should be restored. To study that restoration would not conflict with your stated priorities. Instead, it would complement an overall water plan for California. – John in Alameda

I agree with you, that we need to overhaul our vulnerable levee system and the San Francisco water supply infrastructure, but not at the expense of prohibiting the State of California from conducting a study on the restoration of Hetch Hetchy Valley. Hetch Hetchy Valley is a beautiful place where literally millions of people could visit and enjoy. California as well as all of America, is entitled to at least a comprehensive study of Hetch Hetchy Valley. We don't need to prohibit a study of Hetch Hetchy Valley in order of repair our levees and the San Francisco water supply infrastructure; both can be accomplished simultaneously. AB 2659 would impose an indefinite delay on a Hetch Hetchy Study, I therefore strongly oppose AB 2659. – Bob in San Jose

The O'Shaughnessy Dam that creates a big flood of water covering Hetch Hetchy Valley has been there for much too long a time, and needs to be removed. Your bill interfering with even a study to make this happen while the State and San Francisco try to solve the overall water supply situation in California makes no sense . . . The great momentum this wonderful, reasonable, imminently inspired idea to create a "new" Hetch Hetchy valley has engendered in the hearts and minds of reasonable people should be FULLY SUPPORTED . . . GIVE US HOPE FOR THE FUTURE! RESTORE HETCH HETCHY SOON! -- George in San Jose

I am writing to express my disappointment at your decision to sponsor AB2659. It is unwise to try to prohibit the mere study of the restoration of Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park. The study should be part and parcel of the state's efforts to shore up the vulnerable infrastructure of the SFPUC water system. As a resident of Redwood City who relies on this system, I am behind this effort as much as anyone. But I also understand that now is the time to right the wrong that was committed 100 years ago when the Hetch Hetchy Valley was flooded. Restore Hetch Hetchy and Environmental Defense have clearly shown that it is possible to restore the Valley while providing the users of the water from the Hetch Hetchy system with a clean, reliable water supply. It would be foolish to dismiss this possibility out of hand and not even study it. To quote the *Sacramento Bee* editorial of March 5, with which I wholeheartedly agree: "Restoring Hetch Hetchy, with spectacular waterfalls and granite cliffs, would be like rediscovering a lost Yosemite. Deciding whether to do that is a task for all Californians, indeed all Americans." – Kathy in Redwood City

MEET OUR BOARD – Felicia Woytak

Felicia Woytak is a member of the Board of Directors of Restore Hetch Hetchy and served as Vice Chair during her last term. She is currently working on fundraising strategies and “getting the word out.”

Felicia Woytak’s first river trip was rafting on the Youghiogheny in Pennsylvania in the spring of 1978. With a group of friends, she formed one of the first rafting co-ops in Philadelphia, sharing equipment and experience of trips on eastern rivers from the “Yough” and the Cheat in Pennsylvania, the New and the Gauley in West Virginia, the Penobscot in Maine, and the Nantahala in North Carolina. From those early river trips, she learned not only about the beauty of river canyons and the special relationships that are formed among a group of fellow adventurers, but she also learned about the tenuous environmental situation that many of the country’s rivers face.

Felicia found the environmental destruction of natural ecosystems driven home quite clearly along the river beds and canyons of West Virginia. “The stream and river beds are bright orange. The run-off from mining and the topping of mountains in that state is unbelievable. It’s heart breaking when you realize the massive impacts that human beings can have on the environment.” Those river rafting experiences sensitized Felicia to the often unseen, but incredibly negative results human activity can have on a landscape.

Moving to California in 1981, Felicia and her husband Steve Rasmussen had the incredibly fortunate luck to move next door to fellow rafter and future RHH Board Member, Spreck Rosekrans and his now-wife Isabella Salaverry. “My husband Steve couldn’t believe it. Here we were, moving from the east



Felicia Woytak

coast knowing almost no one and we see these folks loading up their rafting gear for a week long trip. It was amazing synchronicity.”

Several river trips and years later, based on her interest not only in rivers and preserving their “wildness,” but also based on her love of the crown jewel of our National Park system, Yosemite National Park, Felicia was asked to join the Board of Restore Hetch Hetchy. “When my children were little, you could often find me as a parent volunteer with The Yosemite Institute, helping to introduce young children to the beauty of the Park through the lenses of both science and art. Those trips with children of middle school age were tremendous. It’s just wonderful to see the faces of children exploring the mists of Bridal Veil and yelling over the roar of Yosemite Falls. You can’t help but smile when you see kids, particularly city kids, getting into the great outdoors. It’s what makes life and being a parent so worthwhile.”

In her professional life, Felicia is an investor and developer of commercial real estate, owning property in San Francisco, the East Bay and New York. “I don’t believe

that commercial interests and environmental interests are diametrically opposed to one another. Rather, I believe that it is the responsibility of those with commercial interests to look out for the public benefit, as well as their own commercial benefit, whenever possible. As land and resources become ever more precious, we must look for ways to preserve, and in the case of Hetch Hetchy, to restore those environments that are truly special or are tremendously threatened. That is why I am working with Restore Hetch Hetchy. I believe that we cannot continue to imperil national treasures such as Yosemite. Yes, the dam was built with much wrangling in 1913, but that doesn’t mean that we have to live with it in perpetuity. We can right a wrong that was done almost 100 years ago. If we do, we will have something of immeasurable value to hand down to our children. I look forward to the day when restoring Hetch Hetchy is a reality and we can walk in the valley again.”

Felicia Woytak is hosting a house-party fundraiser at her home in Berkeley on Sunday afternoon, October 8th. Along with the good food and good times, Pulitzer Prize winning editor of the *Sacramento Bee*, Tom Philp, will be on hand to bring us up-to-date on Hetch Hetchy restoration issues. Please contact the RHH office for more information: email: info@hetchhetchy.org; phone: (209) 533-4481

How to make charitable gifts to Restore Hetch Hetchy through IRA, retirement or tax deferred accounts (including IRA, 401(k), 403(b) & others)

[editor's note: If you should decide to make a charitable gift to Restore Hetch Hetchy, a 501(c)(3) organization, through IRA, retirement or tax deferred accounts, here is some useful information and a possible format. Please check with your legal and financial advisors for the proper wording. RHH cannot give legal or financial advice.]

Did you know that retirement plan assets may be taxed twice at rates in excess of 70%? One of the simplest and most "tax-wise" ways to make a gift to Restore Hetch Hetchy is through your IRA, 401(k), 403(b) or other retirement plan. Why? Considerable taxes may result when your retirement plan is distributed directly to an estate or to heirs.

Gifts from a retirement plan passing after an individual's lifetime to Restore Hetch Hetchy avoid federal estate taxes. As a result, your heirs will not be subject to federal, and possibly state, income taxes on retirement plan assets. A gift of some

or all of these plan assets could be your lowest cost method to support the work of Restore Hetch Hetchy.

Options

Specific Designation. You may name RHH as the direct beneficiary of a stated percentage or the entire amount of your retirement plan.

Contingent Designation. You may name Restore Hetch Hetchy as a contingent beneficiary of all or a portion of your retirement plan. That is, RHH would receive assets if, through unforeseen circumstances, family or friends named as beneficiaries do not survive you.

How to Name RHH in Your Plan

Legal Designation. For gifts that will take effect in your lifetime, RHH should be named as: "Restore Hetch Hetchy, a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, organized under the laws of the State of California, and with the principal business address of P.O. Box 3538, Sonoma, California 95370, Tax ID number 0551533."

Can I "Rollover" My Plan or IRA Now to Restore Hetch Hetchy?

Not yet. Legislation has been introduced in Congress but existing law still applies. An individual can distribute funds from a retirement plan during his/her lifetime. However, under current law, funds withdrawn from the plan will be taxed at some level. If you then make a cash gift to Restore Hetch Hetchy after you pay the relevant taxes, you will be entitled to future tax deductions. Today, however, Congress has provided no provisions to make a tax-free transfer from an established plan to a charity.

Remember, you must designate your charitable beneficiary through your plan administrator and not your will or living trust. The directions you have provided the plan administrator will be those followed when the time comes.

Can I Use My IRA Funds to Make a Gift to Restore Hetch Hetchy?

Since retirement plan assets are subject to tax upon withdrawal or distribution, you or your estate will have to pay income taxes first and make any contribution from the remaining amount. As a result, you will likely wish to use other assets to make gifts to Restore Hetch Hetchy.

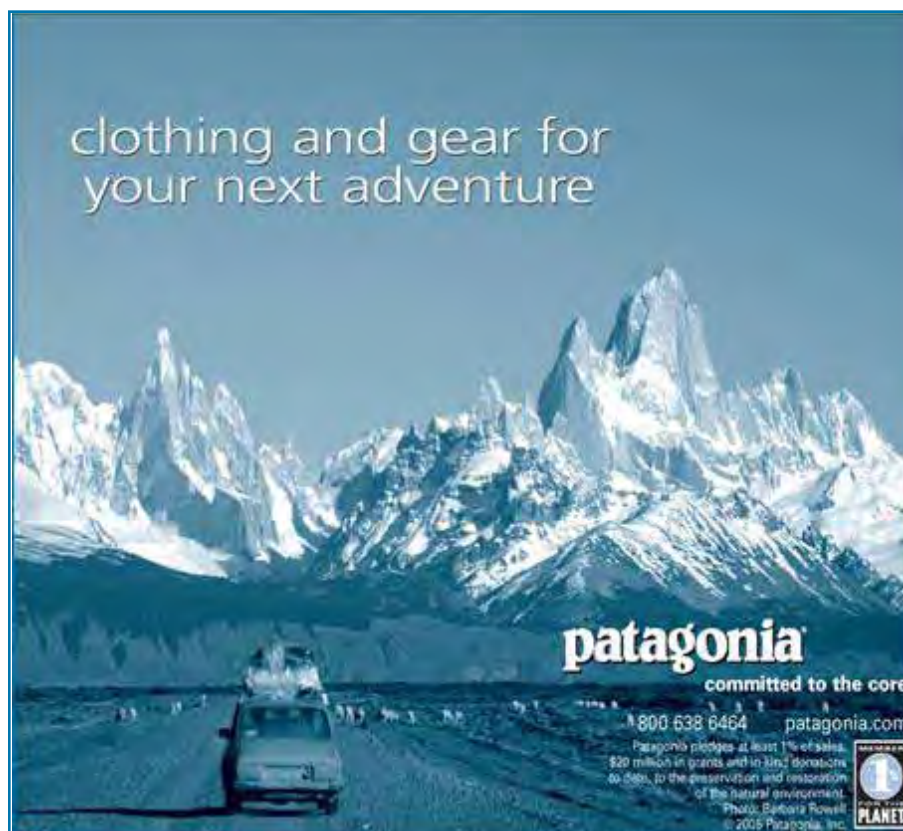
We'd Like to Say Thanks.

If you include us in your plan, we strongly encourage you to share this information with us so that we may acknowledge your invaluable support.

We Can Help.

Estate planning can be a complex subject. This information is necessarily general in nature and intended as educational. It is important you work closely with your legal and financial advisors to structure your estate to best meet your personal needs and objectives. We welcome any questions you or your advisors may have about this information. Please feel free to contact RHH at: (209) 533-4481; info@hetchhetchy.org.

Thank You for Your Support!





RHH volunteer James Gearhart (with hat), a retired physician, talks with people attending the Fremont Earth Day celebration in April.

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Here's Your Opportunity to Advertise Your Business and Help Restore Hetch Hetchy! Each ad will run for one year, 4 issues, and will be distributed to around 3,000 subscribers.

- \$1000.00 Full Page
- \$600.00 Half Page
- \$400.00 1/4 Page
- \$250.00 1/8 page
- \$150.00 Business Card

Please contact Ron Good at:

info@hetchhetchy.org

or by calling **(209) 533-4481** for more information.



Wildnesswithin.com

was created in 1998 by environmentalist web designer Robert Brower in partnership with his father, conservationist David Brower. The website promotes the principles of conservation, preservation, and restoration of the Earth's natural resources. It is also a tribute to the late David and Robert Brower. Both David Brower and Robert Brower were avid supporters of the Restore Hetch Hetchy movement and were members of the Board of Directors.

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Jay Johnson, Mariposa-Yosemite Tribal Elder, gives a prayer and blessing to the Ancient Ones at Hetch Hetchy Valley, with Kolana Rock in the background. The reservoir level was low in April 1991.
 Photo permission from Jay Johnson and courtesy of NPS.



New, Color, Blank Greeting Cards.

Inspirational artwork by (left to right) James McGrew, George Pettit, Brooks Anderson, Jennifer Fosgate. Please use order form on page 7

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Send your e-mail address to: info@hetchhetchy.org.

You can read our newsletters on-line. If you would prefer not to receive a "hard copy" please send an e-mail to: info@hetchhetchy.org

RHH occasionally exchanges its membership list with like-minded organizations. Please notify us if you do not wish to have your name shared in this way: e-mail to: info@hetchhetchy.org, or call (209) 533-4481, or write P.O. Box 3538, Sonora, CA 95370.

Please Use Our Website Catalog To View the Items Described Below at www.hetchhetchy.org.

Prices include shipping & sales tax.

- Please send copies of Restore Hetch Hetchy's new 20-minute documentary video in __VHS format or __DVD format. I am enclosing \$16 for each video or have entered my credit card information below.
- Please send __ copies of landscape artist Albert Bierstadt's poster/painting of Hetch Hetchy Valley. I am enclosing \$20 for each poster or have entered my credit card information below.
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- Please send __ copies of Brooks Anderson's matted, color poster "Requiem for Hetch Hetchy Valley." I am enclosing \$50 for each poster or entered my credit card information below.
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- Please send ___ copies of Bill Oliver's song, "*Hooray for Hetch Hetchy*" on CD. I have enclosed \$5 or have entered my credit card information below.
- Please send ___ copies of the Feasibility Study and ___ copies of the Executive Summary of the study. I am enclosing \$20 for each copy of the Feasibility Study, \$5 for a CD of the Feasibility Study, and \$2 for each copy of the Executive Summary or have entered my credit card information below.
- Please enroll me as a new member of Restore Hetch Hetchy.**
- Please renew my membership in Restore Hetch Hetchy. *The expiration date of your membership is located near your name and address on page 8.***

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Enclosed is my tax-deductible **Restore Hetch Hetchy membership donation** of:

\$30 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ \$250 _____ \$500 _____ \$1,000 _____ \$ _____ other
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Please make check payable to **RESTORE HETCH HETCHY**
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Restore Hetch Hetchy, Membership Office, P.O. Box 3538, Sonora, CA 95370.

Please charge my credit card: _____ Master Card _____ VISA

Signature _____

Card # _____ Expires _____

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One Magic Cup



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The movie:
Hetch Hetchy: Yosemite's
Lost Valley

- ☐ For renewing at the \$250 level, as a premium gift you will receive the book, *The Yosemite*, with beautiful pictures by Galen Rowell and text by John Muir.
- ☐ For renewing at the \$500 level, as a premium gift you will receive a color picture, mounted and matted, of Wapama Fall in Hetch Hetchy by professional photographer Jenny Ross.
- ☐ For renewing at the \$1,000 level, as a premium gift you will receive a color picture, mounted and matted of Hetch Hetchy Waterfalls and Wildflowers by professional photographer James McGrew.

The expiration date of your membership is located near your name and address at the bottom of this page. Use the form on page 7 to renew.



Hetch Hetchy Waterfalls & Wildflowers

SOLICITATIONS FOR SUPPORTING RESTORE HETCH HETCHY

The Board of Directors and staff of Restore Hetch Hetchy wish to thank sincerely our over 2,000 members for their very generous financial support for our movement to restore Yosemite National Park's Hetch Hetchy Valley. As a grassroots, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, we depend on your tax-deductible contributions to allow us to continue our work for Hetch Hetchy Valley. **We ask for your financial support only three times a year:** membership renewal, spring special appeal, and year-end appeal.

However, we do send out monthly reminder letters to those of you who haven't gotten around to renewing your annual memberships! Renewing your membership on a timely basis would help us tremendously, so that we don't have to go to the expense of sending the reminder renewal letters.

Thanks again for all of your wonderful support for Hetch Hetchy Valley, the place John Muir called "a grand landscape garden, one of Nature's rarest and most precious mountain temples."

**Planning and Conservation League Foundation
Restore Hetch Hetchy Membership Office**
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Sacramento, CA 95814
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