



# Restore Hetch Hetchy

IN YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

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## CONGRESSMAN DAN LUNGREN (R-Gold River, CA) SUPPORTS RESTORATION OF HETCH HETCHY VALLEY

**C**ongressman Dan Lungren (R-Gold River, CA) has become the first member of the U.S. Congress to endorse the restoration of Yosemite National Park's Hetch Hetchy Valley.

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, the following op-ed piece from Congressman Lungren was published in the *Sacramento Bee*:

*Yosemite Valley- with all its resplendent beauty - be dammed!*

*Let's flood it now! After all, there are plenty of other national parks for Americans to enjoy.*

*Increasingly, The City of Los Angeles is in desperate need for this water source. Besides, even though Yosemite Valley would be submerged, the granite peaks and their waterfalls would still be visible from the dam's state-of-the-art observation deck.*

Imagine if the City of Los Angeles made this claim today. Although this scenario is fictitious, this argument was made on behalf of The City of San Francisco in the early part

of the last century.

Eighty-four years ago the Hetch Hetchy Valley- the smaller twin to Yosemite Valley which is



*Congressman Dan Lungren (center) meets in Washington, D.C. with RHH Executive Director Ron Good (left) and Dave Mihalic (right), former Superintendent of Yosemite National Park and a member of the RHH Advisory Committee*

completely contained within the boundaries of Yosemite National Park- was converted to a reservoir to serve the water needs of the City of San Francisco. At that time John Muir, the famous preservationist and founder of the Sierra Club, fought this decision and said, "Dam

Hetch Hetchy! As well dam for water tanks the people's cathedrals and churches, for no holier temple has ever been consecrated by the heart of man."

So how did one of nature's most beautiful sanctuaries, a jewel for millions of Americans, get converted into a water source for a single city? The short answer is that a ready supply of water was available with no apparent practical alternative at a time when our frontier still seemed endless.

What about now?

The restoration of Hetch Hetchy is about more than water and definitely more than politics. The restoration of Hetch Hetchy is about the return of a national treasure to all of the American people, and the addition of a prized piece of the fabric back into the quilt that is our National Park system.

Opposition to restoring the valley has been strong. However, claims about disrupting the

*Continued on page 2*



Restore Hetch Hetchy is:

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*Continued from page 1*

Tuolumne River system and equating the removal of a dam to closing down of an interstate highway are understandable only if a viable alternative is not presented. Fortunately, a recent study by the Schwarzenegger Administration confirmed that it is "technically feasible" to have the water supply from Hetch Hetchy be fully recovered, along with the current level of power generation, without depriving the citizens of San Francisco of either. For example, water from the Tuolumne River, currently feeding the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir could be allowed to flow into an expanded Don Pedro Reservoir, which is now six times the size of the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir. Alternatives like Don Pedro Reservoir and improvements in engineering technology did not exist in 1923 when the dam was completed in the Hetch Hetchy Valley.

A number of environmental groups such as National Wildlife Federation, Earth Justice, Friends of the Earth, Environmental Defense, Restore Hetch Hetchy, and the Sierra Club have joined in support of a study of the prospect of a restored Hetch Hetchy. President Bush has allocated \$7 million of the federal budget proposal as well. The largely unspoken possibility of resurrecting this hidden- but not forgotten- valley now has a real chance to enter the national debate.

For eight decades Americans has been deprived of this national treasure; now it is time to restore the Hetch Hetchy Valley. In order to move in this direction the federal study is imperative. And that is just the first step. Ultimately, it will take enormous cooperation between local, state, and federal officials. And the cost of this endeavor will be substantial -- probably into the billions of dollars. Yet the gift we would present to our children, grandchildren and the world would be priceless.

This letter to the editor of the *Sacramento Bee* was published (with slight modifications) on April 12th:

I am writing to applaud Congressman Dan Lungren (R-Gold River) for his foresight and courage in supporting the restoration of Yosemite National Park's Hetch Hetchy Valley. In his March 30<sup>th</sup> op-ed piece for the *Bee*, he demonstrated his foresight on this issue by stating "the gift [of a restored Hetch Hetchy Valley] we would present to our children, grandchildren and the world would be priceless"; and, he demonstrated his courage by being the first and, so far, only member of the U.S. House of Representatives or U.S. Senate (Democrat or Republican) to state publicly his support for Hetch Hetchy's restoration.

Two recent letters to the editor of the *Bee* suggested that people should be skeptical of Congressman Lungren's motives or chastise him for positions on other environmental issues. Years ago, when President Reagan's Interior Secretary Don Hodel supported Hetch Hetchy's restoration, similar statements were made. However, Dave Brower, one of the world's leading environmentalists and a member of the Sierra Club's Board of Directors asked Club leaders: "Would they rather curse a man for his ... sins than reward him ... for his demonstrated virtue?"

Regarding Yosemite's Hetch Hetchy Valley, let's reward Congressman Lungren for his "demonstrated virtue."

Ron Good  
Executive Director  
Restore Hetch Hetchy

# Why do we let San Francisco keep a swamp in our back yard?

By DICK HAGERTY

May 9, 2007, *Modesto Bee*

Springtime in Yosemite — does it get any better than this? Roaring waterfalls, rushing rivers and streams, dogwood trees in blossom, towering walls of granite.

Nature at its finest!

Oh yes, and the San Francisco cesspool known as Hetch Hetchy Reservoir.

How did we who love the mountains ever allow that self-centered city by the bay to steal our great, pristine Hetch Hetchy Valley?

It simply is beyond my comprehension to know that this marvelous valley is filled with a stagnant pool of water that is off-limits to every visitor who takes the time to visit this lovely place.

You go through a gate that says "national park" and you pay the park fee, but when you arrive at the dam, you are notified that:

No swimming allowed

No boating allowed

No camping along the lake allowed

No overnight stays allowed

What kind of national park is this?

Well, for starters it seems there is an exception to the above. Rumor has it that VIP guests of San Francisco and certain local utility districts have access to a private lodge, as well as a boat for cruising

the lake, but only those invited guests, not us regular taxpayers.

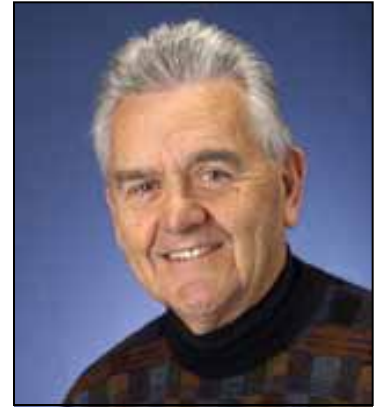
Where is the outrage? How can a city that prides itself on ultra-liberal thought and on cutting-edge environmental protection perpetrate such an obvious defilement of a natural treasure?

The justification is ... well, we know we need the water and the dam is already there, so it needs to stay there. But, simply stated, it does not need to stay there.

Studies have shown that there are alternative ways to capture and retain this water. Expensive, you say? Well, the city of San Francisco is spending billions to upgrade this system, why not spend it on something that does not defile a national treasure.

Better we drain Lake Tahoe for water (since it is not protected by national park status) than to continue to defy all the rules in place to protect Yosemite. (Now that little comment should infuriate a lot of cabin owners and casino players.)

Every year, I take a group to Hetch Hetchy in the spring to have a hike and to enjoy this low-elevation, easily accessible wonder of nature. The waterfalls are within easy strolling distance, the flowers are in bloom, the rattlesnakes are mostly still lying low — well, mostly. And, I require each and every fellow hiker to make a small personal deposit in the lake, just to show that we cannot be run over by this city by the bay.

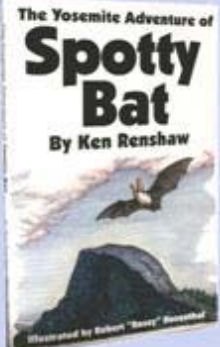


One wonders how San Franciscans would react if we all moved into their beloved Presidio, set up tents and campers and spent the season. Or better yet, an RV campout in Golden Gate Park. All free of charge, of course. Sound ridiculous? No more ridiculous than San Francisco parking its swamp in our national park.

Or, as a final compromise, since San Francisco can spend billions on the upgrade, how about paying fair market value for the use of "our water" and "our canyon" and pay our national park a reasonable annual rental for use of the above. I am thinking that about \$500 million per year would just about cover it — with annual inflation increases built in, of course.

**Hagerty is an Oakdale real estate developer active in community nonprofits.**

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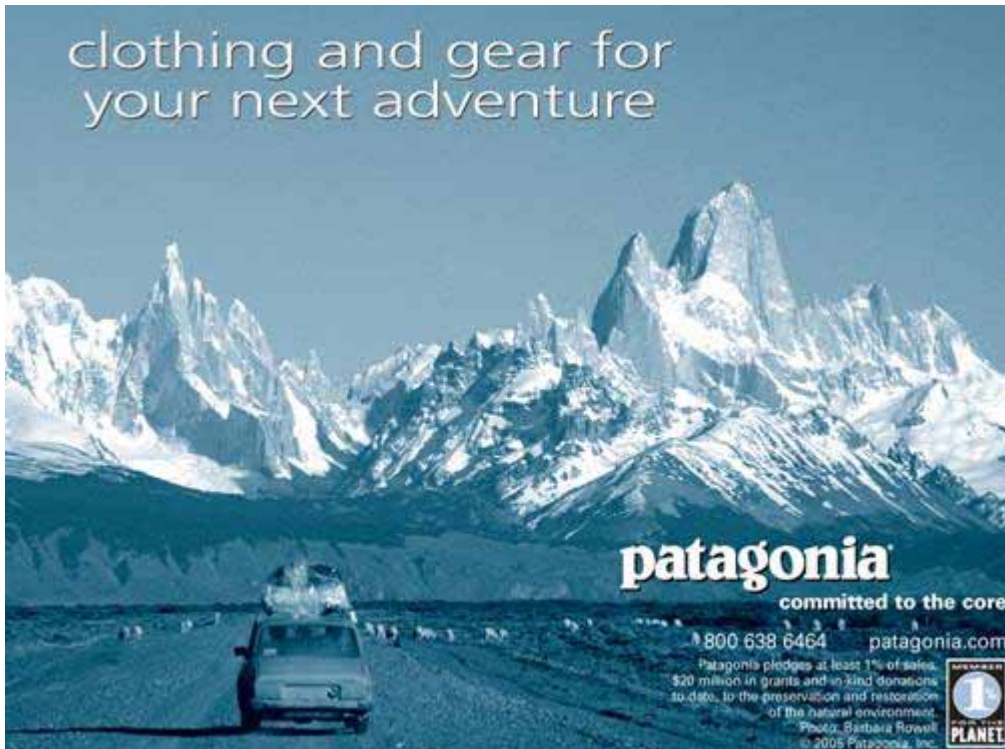
www.snaeattack.com



### 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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Dark navy blue cap, with RHH LOGO; 100% cotton with soft brushed finish; PE visor board (pre-curved); unstructured, crown band, two side brass eyelets, same-fabric tuckaway adjustable strap with antique buckle closure.

Please use order form on page 7.

# MEET OUR NEW SAN FRANCISCO FIELD DIRECTOR:

## TUAN NGUYEN

**T**uan Nguyen is not your average politico. In fact, his family's harrowing escape from Vietnam and their rescue by a Norwegian oil tanker 17 days later, is nothing short of a "Hallmark Mini-series." Emigrating from Viet Nam when he was 2 years old, Tuan grew up in San Francisco's Sunset District. As a youngster, he would always accompany his family on spring and summer trips to Yosemite National Park. He was always thrilled about hiking the trails, climbing over the granite boulders, and camping in the valley. Tuan's avid love of the outdoors and his diverse background have led him to join Restore Hetch Hetchy as the new San Francisco Field Director.

Tuan's backpacking travels have taken him to Yosemite, Sequoia, Yellowstone, Mt. Shasta, Mt. Lassen, Hawaii, and Mt. Whitney. Nguyen hopes to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro one day.

"Of all the places in the world, I love coming home to San Francisco and visiting Yosemite. The scenery of El Capitan, Yosemite Falls, with Half Dome and Clouds Rest in the background brings me back to my childhood. This is a place that is synonymous with 'paradise.' There's something about the granite monoliths getting carved by the thunderous onslaught of pristine, glacial water from the Merced River. It's downright spiritual for me to be in Yosemite."

Nguyen, a graduate of San Francisco State University, was always a high-energy, well-liked person with many talents and hobbies including music, snowboarding, sports, landscaping, traveling and entertaining. Tuan had hoped to use his talents in the news-broadcasting field. He interned for TechTV's "The Screen Savers," where he had the opportunity to meet Willie Nelson and Lily Tomlin.

Previously, Tuan worked for the United Way of the Bay Area as a campaign advisor. His tireless support of social justice issues and his extro-

verted personality served the non-profit community well. He became the pr/marketing coordinator to VEMAA (Vietnamese Elderly Mutual Assistance Association) to mobilize the Vietnamese Community. In 2002, Tuan quickly caught the political campaigning bug after he worked with the Gavin Newsom for Mayor campaign as a Precinct Campaign and outreach person for his district. Tuan worked at San Francisco's City Hall as the High School Coordinator for the Department of Elections, where he recruited and trained pollworkers for the election. He gained a strong foothold in the campaign community in San Francisco, where he often attended neighborhood and political functions. In 2006, Tuan worked for Assemblywoman Fiona Ma as the Field Organizer in her state assembly bid, mobilizing volunteers and constituents to help her win by an impressive margin. As the Campaign Manager for the Ron Dudum for Supervisor Campaign in San Francisco's District 4, Nguyen led an impressive grassroots campaign with widespread community support.

Nguyen has always believed that Asian Americans living within the Bay Area should feel privileged to live in an area that is diverse and welcomes active municipal participation. He hopes to be the conduit that provides that spark and connection to community empowerment. With his stock rising as one of a handful of Asian-American campaigners in the city, Tuan has often kept people guessing about his next endeavor. Whatever it is, he has a reputation of maximizing any campaign with his ambitious personality and his group of friends that has no choice but to "go along for the ride."

"I affectionately call my friends and supporters my 'Tuantourage'



because of their unwavering backing of my campaigns to civically galvanize the twenty-somethings to participate in San Francisco politics. My friends have been very supportive of my efforts to bring about positive change for San Franciscans. That's why I believe that working with Restore Hetch Hetchy to resurrect the valley of the past is a worthwhile endeavor. We have an obligation to study the possibility of efficiently bringing clean water to the Bay Area with minimal effects to our beloved national park, Yosemite. This is a unique opportunity to passionately advocate for something that has a lasting legacy for all people to enjoy."

Tuan remembers visiting Hetch Hetchy Reservoir and immediately recognizing that there is a noticeable geographical similarity to its bigger twin, Yosemite Valley. He believes that the restoration of Hetch Hetchy is an inevitable goal that will happen. If he has anything to do with it, it will be a "Win-Nguyen" opportunity for Restore Hetch Hetchy!

*Thanks to RHH member Marty Smith from Concord for sending us this e-mail:*

When I joined RHH, I did so because I believe in Yosemite. I did so after seeing, first hand, half of a great valley, half of a great treasure. I never thought that in my lifetime anyone would even consider restoring the valley. I really joined to help start the process so that maybe my children's children might be able to enjoy Hetch Hetchy Valley, not the reservoir.

To be honest, the reason I first went there was to see the dam and the reservoir. I grew up in Fremont and wanted to see what was connected to that pipeline that runs through the Central Valley and Niles canyon. When I got there, I did see the dam and the reservoir, but then I "looked up" and saw waterfalls and another beautiful granite-walled Sierra valley. The same kind of valley that took my breath away as a child. The same kind of valley that still makes me smile with anticipation every time I come out of that tunnel or round that last corner and see that valley open up in front of me. The same valley I have enjoyed seeing the same expressions come over the faces of family and friends that I have showed the valley to for their first time!!

I realized that what I was seeing here was only half of what I should be seeing and I really felt cheated. I hiked over and touched that first waterfall on the north side and realized that I was touching it at its midpoint, from a road carved into the walls of the valley halfway between the bottom and the rim. It then occurred to me that no one has seen the full glory of any of the falls or the valley itself since the dam was built. I wondered how anyone could be so selfish as to think that it was OK to use such a place for wa-

ter storage. No community or city should have that right.

My family and I sat there and watched a very beautiful orange California sunset over Hetch Hetchy Valley that evening. I couldn't help but feel quite upset at the very notion that there was a "second Yosemite Valley" drowned under hundreds of feet of water.

I love the fact that it is starting to look like it might just happen in my lifetime. At 45, I really do hope that I am able to see the bottom of the Hetch Hetchy Valley before I go. I would love to actually be able to visit the valley, but I would settle for just



seeing the floor and the river once again running free across it.

Keep up the great efforts and thank you for continuing the work of some truly great people.

Marty



*RHH volunteers Subhash Chand (left) and Dan Lucas (right) talk with a visitor at the RHH information table at the Cal State Stanislaus Earth Day event in April 2007.*

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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.
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- 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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Hetch Hetchy Waterfalls  
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### 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."

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