

Sacramento Branch Holds Earth Democracy Workshop

By Ellen Schwartz

Please put in the Caleen Sisk, the Dan Bacher and few other photos in this report page.

The Sacramento Earth Democracy Workshop took place over two days, April 12-13. A diverse group of 34 people attended the opening meeting on Friday night, where Caleen Sisk, Chief and Spiritual Leader of the **Winnemem Wintu Tribe** www.winnememwintu.us shared the episode "Pilgrims and Tourists" from the film, "**Standing on Sacred Ground**," www.standingonsacredground.org and talked about native peoples' connection to water, Native American tribal wisdom and guardianship of Mother Earth. She explained why we must stop the proposed raising of Shasta Dam to 18 feet and restore natural water systems at their source, in this case the springs on Mt. Shasta in northern California, the source of the Sacramento River. Raising Shasta Dam would flood out the cultural and religious sites that were not put under water when the dam was built in 1942. At that time, the Winnemem's status as a Federally recognized tribe with legal claim to their land was mysteriously dropped so they could not contest the taking and flooding of their land. Thus, they now have no standing in court to contest this second dam raise.

Caleen was joined by Dan Bacher, investigative journalist and editor of the *Fish Sniffer* magazine, who outlined why we should oppose the plan, supported by Gov. Brown and big ag, to build two huge tunnels under the Sacramento-San Joaquin-Bay Delta at a cost of \$50 billion with bond interest and operating costs. Dan has worked tirelessly to expose that the tunnels, and the Shasta Dam, are not the solution to the state's water supply and management problems, particularly with **Restore the Delta** www.restorethedelta.org/stop-the-tunnels/ on the campaign to recognize the Sacramento-San Joaquin-Bay Delta as part of California's natural heritage, deserving of **guardianship and restoration**. www.restorethedelta.org/about-the-delta/

On Saturday, 15 people from the previous evening returned to participate in a workshop which shared practical tools for environmental protection that is collaborative, forward looking and intergenerational. First three small groups discussed among themselves the readings on one element of the Workshop program – and then "taught" that element to the entire group. All were inspired to know how other communities had adopted guardianship and the precautionary principle into local policy. Possible next steps in Sacramento are to be discussed further.

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