

SIERRA·FOOTHILL



SFC's 25th Anniversary Series: Reflections on SFC's Hikes and

Classes Program

This month's 25th Anniversary article was contributed by Craig Poole, retired Geology Instructor from Fresno City College. Craig is one of the founding and current board members for SFC

SFC's Hikes and Classes program has been helping connect people to the land since the beginning. It is through this program that we reach a broad cross section of the communities we serve. Our goal is to engage our communities with SFC's conservation work through outdoor education and by providing meaningful, land-based experiences on protected lands. All events are led by experienced local docents who are experts in their field and trained to provide a fascinating and safe outdoor experience. Thank you to all of our volunteer docents—the heart of our community engagement program. Craig Poole reflects on the beginnings of the SFC Hikes and Classes Program: "We had a small group of volunteers and would brainstorm classes, look at the calendar and then put together the class and hike calendar. These were "friendraising" opportunities that also raised some money for SFC. I remember doing several "Sights, Sounds, and Supper" events on the McKenzie Preserve with Rodney Olsen. I would put in an order for food at Sam's Deli and pick it up on the afternoon of our hike. I think on our first one we hiked to the top of Table Mountain with some student volunteers helping carry ice chests with sandwiches, salads, and drinks to the top. We had dinner and the coyotes started howling and the tree frogs were chirping, and we watched the sunset and moon rise while overlooking the McKenzie Preserve. While hiking down in the dark with our headlamps, we saw a glow worm which was something new for almost everyone there. Then we had coffee or hot cocoa and dessert before heading home. One year Mary Biskup, our board president, offered to bring her llamas out and pack the dinner to the Tabletop. I think fun was had by all and seeing the preserve at night and all the lights of developed areas nearby reemphasized the importance of conserving these spaces." – Craig Poole, SFC Board Member



