



Bringing the Adventure and Science Communities Together

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

High school students to collect scientific data along Tahoe Rim

Lake Tahoe, CA July 29, 2013 - [Adventurers and Scientists for Conservation](http://www.adventureandscience.org) (ASC) invites member of the press to join us as we lead a group of high school students on a scientific expedition along the Tahoe Rim. ASC will be leading a group of high school students from Marin Academy in San Rafeal, CA on a week-long High Sierra Climate Change Traverse from August 3-10. Students will be guided by ASC through the Desolation Wilderness above Lake Tahoe where they will be empowered to become citizen scientists by collecting valuable and usable data for research projects focusing on climate change. Students will work on ongoing ASC projects including collecting water samples containing [diatoms from high mountain lakes](#), documenting [pika observations](#) and recording presence of [rare plants of California](#). Students will be joined by scientists Joseph Stewart and Daniel Slakey, lead researchers on the pika and rare plants studies, respectively, and will hear first-hand the benefits of this research to the scientific community.

Pika are the smallest member of the rabbit family and are both keystone species and indicators of ecosystem health. These cold-obligate animals thrive in cold alpine environments like the High Sierra, but populations struggle in warm temperatures. Because coyotes, foxes, hawks, eagles and other animals rely on this prey species, understanding how they will be affected by a rapidly changing climate is an essential piece of any management plan. Diatoms are single-celled algae with silica cell walls. They are also an indicator species for climate change as an important

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organism at the bottom of the food chain. Many diatom populations are largely uncharacterized and there remain great possibilities for discovery and improved understanding of freshwater ecosystems across the world. In 2012, ASC was integral in the discovery of two new diatom species, with more expected in 2013. Lastly, researchers are in desperate need of observations of rare plants of California, some of which have not been seen for decades. Each plant has unique climate-specific habits and respond to climate change in different ways.

Students will be trained in scientific protocols by trained ASC staff to successfully collect data for each project. This will include teaching students backcountry skills, plant and wildlife identification and proper scientific technique as well as educate students on the larger scientific and conservation context of these projects.

ASC has two spots available for this trip and we invite members of the press to join us. If you are interested please contact Jordan Holsinger (jordan@adventureandscience.org) for more information.

For more information about how to be involved with ASC's pika, diatom or rare plants projects or other projects please visit www.adventureandscience.org. Follow up with the High Sierra Climate Change Traverse and other ASC programs on our [blog](#), [facebook](#) and [twitter](#).

About Adventurers and Scientists for Conservation

Adventurers and Scientists for Conservation was founded in January of 2011 with the understanding that many people traveling in the outdoors genuinely want to do more for the places they visit but often struggle with how to help. ASC exists to bridge this gap by pairing adventure athletes already traveling to some of the earth's most difficult-to-reach places with the scientists who need information from these areas. ASC also has the goal of creating unique and innovative learning experiences about science while also saving the scientific and conservation communities millions of dollars in data collection costs. For more information visit www.adventureandscience.org

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