

Sierra Club Board of Directors Nominee Ballot Statement – Maya Khosla

NAME: Maya Khosla

CURRENT RESIDENCE: Sonoma County, California

CURRENT MEMBER SINCE: 2018

OCCUPATION: Biologist/toxicologist, writer and filmmaker

LEADERSHIP POSITIONS: Executive Committee Member, Sierra Club Redwood Chapter (2025); California Legislative Committee (2025), Member, Task Force on National Prescribed Burn Policy (2023); Member, Task Force on Forest Biomass Energy Policy (2024-present).

OTHER LEADERSHIP POSITIONS:

Film director (2015-present); Senior Biologist (2013-2023); Fund for Wild Nature Grassroots Activist Award (2023), Sonoma County Poet Laureate (2018-2020); Co-organizer, Sonoma County Climate Summit (2021); Turtle Diaries Project, India (2011-2013); 2020 Environmentalist of the Year Award (Sonoma County Conservation Council); 2020 PEN Oakland Award for “All the Fires of Wind and Light.”

PERSONAL STATEMENT:

After an inspiring in-person meeting of the Redwood Chapter, I joined the Sierra Club with a renewed understanding that voices can speak together to address climate change and environmental justice issues, and to protect wild places. I am a filmmaker and wildlife ecologist who documents the populations of rare species including Sierra Nevada red foxes and goshawks. Working in collaboration with other scientists, I investigated the abundant post-fire regeneration of giant sequoias in several groves (<https://www.mdpi.com/2571-6255/7/2/44>). My current project is a film about the impacts of biomass energy on communities and forests (<https://vimeo.com/1028788938?share=copy>). As Sonoma County's tenth Poet Laureate, I brought community members together for a series of poetry events, responding to the recent wildfires. I am part of an all-volunteer organization, Sonoma County Climate Activist Network, and a board member of Sequoia ForestKeeper. Thousands of hours of exploring forests and the wildlife they support, and coastlines where sea turtles nest, have informed my work.

Working with staff and volunteers in Sierra Club, I have served on the national task force that created the new Prescribed Fire Policy. I currently serve on the national Sierra Club task force formulating a policy to address threats to communities, health, climate, and biodiversity that result from the forest biomass energy industry. Working in collaboration with colleagues in the State Forest Committee, I drafted a Forest Biomass Resolution (a version of which was passed by the Council of Club Leaders, 2024) on these threats. I have safely led multiple private field trips and hikes with Sierra Club members across California.

With the Sierra Club growing into an increasingly inclusive organization, I look forward to accomplishing the goals below. As a Director, I would:

- Assist in making outings less complicated for leaders and participants.
- Focus on conservation priorities: keeping wild places intact, supporting the efforts of environmental justice groups, and expanding on the existing support for clean energy resources, as part of addressing climate change.
- Developing essential organizational priorities, including workable budgets for the conservation priorities.
- Offering expertise to Sierra Club members interested in assisting environmental justice (EJ) groups and communities overburdened by pollution impacts, by working together to create strong platforms where community voices can be heard.
- Strengthening our efforts in collaborations with established organizations large and small.
- Instituting robust procedures to address discrimination, while ensuring due process for all.

Recognizing that Sierra Club holds the collective wisdom of decades, I would be honored to serve.

Endorsements: Loma Prieta Chapter

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