

by Christine Pearson

After weeks of rain and stormy weather, we gathered on a beautiful winter's day in January, full of sunshine, for a work weekend at Meherana. The grounds are covered with a luxuriant blanket of short velvety grass which is an incredible vibrant green that gives the impression that the whole world was just made. Each rock and the leaves and barks of all the trees have been washed clean by the abundant rains and they sparkle and shine in the sun.

This is one my favorite times for hiking at Meherana when it is like walking around a beautifully manicured park. The grass is short and easy to walk across as if it has been mowed and cared for. There are no sticky burrs and our friends, the reptiles, are in hibernation. Also, most importantly, the poison oak is not in leaf at all and the bare branches are easy to go around. We [can hike with total freedom](#) to the most inaccessible parts of Meherana. And there are many of those. In the far reaches of the property there are places that I would never feel free to venture to in the late spring, summer or fall. Now they are open. Of course to visit some of those places you have to get across Agua Fria Creek and that proved difficult with the full flow of water from the rains.

The creek has risen a full five to ten feet in some places and is very wide in others. Taking off our boots and wading across did not seem inviting as the water is moving really fast and is very cold. So we hiked up the creek towards the highway and found that, surprisingly, [a huge tree had fallen across the entire creek bed and created a bridge](#), seven feet in the air, to the other side. With some care, you could walk across it. Nine-year-old Adam thought this was great fun and that the new bridge was just high enough to be scary and challenging. Roxy, the caretaker dog, ran back and forth at least ten times on the fallen tree while we were contemplating it. So, one at a time we went across, and the log never even budged. These hiking conditions should continue through late March, and I am looking forward to more hiking during the February work weekend. The snow on the Sierras is a breathtaking sight from the lookout point at the top of the Meadow trail.

[We also did some work!](#) Four cords of wood were split and stacked. Does anyone need wood for their fireplace? Next time you are up please plan to give a donation and take some wood home. There will still be a substantial amount of wood left for those evening campfires. We also cleaned up the Sahavas kitchen cupboards and did some "spice management" updating and cleaning out the spice bins. There was plenty of time for [chai](#), lunch, and a community dinner at the caretaker's house ([rice and dal!](#)).

Please check out the photo gallery at www.meherana.org for pictures of the activities. At the end of the weekend I felt as if I had been on a real adventure that energized me for my upcoming week in the office.

[The next work weekend will be held February 19th and 20th. We hope to see you then!](#)