



SIERRA
CLUB

February 2006
Volume 43 No. 2

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GENERAL MEETING

Hear Conner Everts on
desak and the future of
water on the Central
Coast, Jan. 14

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COMING IN MARCH:

**Mountain lions in our
midst: An evening with the
Mountain Lion Founda-
tion, March 21**

plus short film: Anima Mundi



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SANTA LUCIAN



Protecting and
Preserving the
Central Coast

The official newsletter of the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club • San Luis Obispo County, California

County Moves Against Climate Change

Air Pollution Control District passes sweeping resolution

Without fanfare, the Air Pollution Control District is moving to curb the emission of greenhouse gasses, the primary culprit in global warming, county-wide.

The APCD Board has approved a resolution recommending local actions to address the global problem of climate change. The resolution was based on the staff report entitled "Options for Addressing Climate Change in San Luis Obispo County."

The climate change action plan identifies seven actions that could be implemented to specifically address greenhouse gases (GHG) at the local level:

- Preparing a countywide inventory of GHG emissions;
- Targeting a percentage of mitigation grant funds for GHG emission reductions;
- Evaluating and quantifying the GHG reduction benefits from existing district programs;
- Developing public education and outreach campaigns on climate change;
- Encouraging and providing support for local governments to join the Cities for Climate Protection program;
- Developing partnership with Cal Poly for addressing climate change; and
- Joining the California Climate Registry and encouraging local industry participation.

The climate change action plan intends to "provide support in helping local entities calculate emission inventories and develop harmonized strategies for addressing climate protection through development of model ordinances and guidelines that each jurisdiction could tailor to their individual goals."

This is the heart of the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement (see "Ask Your Mayor to Cool Your City," January issue) which has been endorsed by the City of San Luis Obispo. SLO and the other six cities in the county, as well as community service districts, can now avail themselves of the APCD's assistance to inventory their own emissions, set their own targets, and chart a course for a green energy future that moves away from dependence on

polluting power plants and toward increased energy efficiency, lower emissions, lower energy bills, and the economic growth that comes with an expanded tax base and new local jobs.

COOL CITIES

Solving Global Warming One City at a Time

Becker Named to Radiation Committee



Rochelle Becker (right) at a meeting of the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility

The Sierra Club has formed a national Radiation Committee for public education on radiation hazards. The national committee's California member will be San Luis Obispo's Rochelle Becker, co-founder of the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility, who has been appointed to the eight-person team.

Becker, a long-time spokesperson for the San Luis Obispo Mothers for Peace before leaving the group to form the ANR, also chairs the Diablo Canyon Task Force of the Sierra Club's Santa Lucia chapter.

The Radiation Committee will track federal and state radiation-related legislation and submit comments on proposed regulations. In addition, the Committee will develop a curriculum and materials for campus radiation effects seminars and undertake development of community-based radiation monitoring campaigns, particularly in communities with nuclear facilities.

The committee is particularly concerned with communities faced with ongoing or expanded radiation hazards posed by existing facilities. The Committee will help find ways to reconcile the conflicts that arise

when a hazard is proposed to be removed to another location and when the proposed recipient communities raise objections.

"These are difficult issues, but radioactive waste and emissions are growing, will continue to grow, and must be addressed," said Becker.

Nuclear Power Had a Bad Year in 2005

By Peter Montague, Editor
Rachel's Democracy & Health News
#837, Jan. 12, 2006 (abridged)

Nuclear power did not have a good year in 2005, despite President Bush's and Congress's best efforts to revive the moribund industry with massive new federal subsidies.

Consider these facts:

- The U.S. currently has 103 nuclear power plants in service. They employ a controlled atomic chain reaction to make heat to make steam

continued on page 4

Read: *Has Your Mayor Signed
the Climate Agreement?* at
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great and small,
needs defense."

—John Muir



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Outings, events, and
more!

Santa Lucia Chapter General Meeting

WATER EVERYWHERE

An evening with Conner Everts of the SoCal Watershed Alliance

This month we are very pleased to host a talk by Conner Everts, the Executive Director of the Southern California Watershed Alliance, which works with community groups on watershed and conservation programs from Santa Barbara to Ensenada, Mexico. He is also chair of Public Officials for Water and Environmental Reform (POWER) and senior advisor for the Environmental Justice Coalition for Water. Elected to the Casitas Municipal Water District and president of the Ojai Groundwa-



ter Basin Management Agency, Conner is a member of the Prop. 50 Desal advisory group and the CALFED Water Efficiency, Reclamation, and Desal sub-committee, served on the State Desal Task Force, and helped organize the Coalition for Responsible Desal in Monterey.

Tuesday, February 14, 7:00 p.m.

Ludwick Center, Room A

864 Santa Rosa St. (corner of Mill)

San Luis Obispo

He has worked for engineering firms, non-profits, municipal utilities, and water agencies, works with community-based organizations as an advisor to the Los Angeles Water Conservation Council, and has been a lecturer in graduate programs at the University of Southern California and the University of San Diego. He has helped draft both state and federal legislation on desal, water quality and subsidies.

Needless to say, this a rare chance to hear from one of the foremost authorities in the state on issues extremely pertinent to life on the Central Coast.

Bring your questions!

Save the date!

I am making a donation

today in the name of Marlene Braun, the late Carrizo Plain National Monument Manager who died May 2, 2005. I would like to thank the Sierra Club, especially the Santa Lucia chapter, for its commendations of and support for Marlene. Protecting the National Monuments is a huge priority and I am pleased to see that the Sierra Club is working hard to do that. I also applaud your efforts to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina have a clean environment.

Sincerely,
Katherine Hermes, Trustee
The Living Trust of Marlene A. Braun
Torrington, CT



Marlene Braun

Corrections

On page 5 of our January issue, the photo of the snowy egret and Morro Rock is (c)Abe Perlstein - www.abes3dworld.blogspot.com. We regret the omission.

SANTA LUCIAN

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Water Board Postpones Morro Bay Plant Hearing

The Santa Lucia Chapter, ECOSLO, Surfrider, and other local and regional conservation groups joined the Natural Resources Defense Council in protesting the proposed location of the Regional Water Board's hearing on the upgrade of the wastewater treatment plant for Morro Bay and Cayucos.

The hearing was to take place in Salinas on February 3. We pointed out that it was highly unlikely that local residents could both take the day off from work and travel out of the county to speak on this critically important issue. The upgrade plan represents the first substantial movement towards compliance with the Clean Water Act by two of the last communities in the state that are still discharging waste water below secondary sewage treatment requirements. But, after being out of compliance with the Clean Water Act for three decades, the Morro Bay City Council and Cayucos Sanitary District want to take 9.5 years to upgrade the plant to secondary and partial tertiary treatment.

At our request, the Water Board re-agendized this issue for hearing at its March 24 meeting in San Luis Obispo.

TAKE ACTION!

Come to the Morro Bay-Cayucos Plant Upgrade Hearing, 8:30 a.m., March 24, Water Board Conference Room, 895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101, San Luis Obispo. Tell the Board that Morro Bay and Cayucos need to go to *full* tertiary, and nine and a half years is too long to take to upgrade the treatment plant!



Last Chance for SLO Natural Areas

If you are a resident of the City of San Luis Obispo and you are reading this before February 8, it would be a good idea to plan on spending that evening with the City Planning Commission as they prepare to put a ribbon on the update of the City's Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE).

After holding the line on protections in the City's Land Use Element under public pressure at its December meeting, on January 18 the Planning Commission reverted to a cursory review of staff-proposed changes to the COSE, undoing most of the good it had done.

Commissioner Andrew Carter admitted that he hadn't read the proposed changes and was not ready to comment on them, but the Commission proceeded regardless. The most critical failing of the process has been the lack of a legislative draft – a document containing all proposed deletions of the existing policy as struck-out text, and all proposed changes indicated in boldface or underlined. Several Commissioners opined that this would be too much work, and essentially took staff's word for it that the proposed changes will not weaken or delete significant protections in the existing policy.

"There was ample evidence to show that the new language often failed to retain the protective policies of the

1994 document," said Michael Thomas after the meeting. "In addition, the implementation measures are extremely weak, with many 'encourage this' or 'encourage that' statements, completely without any enforceability or incentives for developers to follow through on those measures. Some policies have no implementation measures at all, in violation of good planning practice and parts of the Government Code which require a strong implementation program for the Open Space Element."

Former planner Richard Schmidt is at least as unhappy with the results, pronouncing himself "ashamed and disgusted to have spent 18 years, including eight on the Planning Commission, trying, and succeeding, to build an enlightened and sensitive planning program." Schmidt was disappointed "to see the City's once stellar planning descend to such corrupted depths while still claiming to carry the flame we lit. The yahoos are ascendant, staff does their dirty work, and if everybody else sits back, they'll carry the day. We desperately need Commission and Council candidates."

The final draft of the COSE will have a hearing before the Planning Commission on Wednesday, Febru-

continued on page 6

Here Comes the Sun

California now has largest solar program in U.S. history, one of three largest in the world

By Sierra Club California

On January 12, the California Public Utilities Commission approved Governor Schwarzenegger's

Solar Roofs Initiative. The \$3.2 billion solar energy plan, approved on a 3-to-1 vote by the California Public Utilities Commission, would dole out subsidies over eleven years to encourage both business and residential customers to install enough rooftop solar energy systems to generate 3,000 megawatts of electricity. That's enough power to serve about 2.2 million homes and would eliminate the need for six modern power plants, according to the commission.

The plan will be funded by monthly surcharges paid by customers of investor-owned utilities - Pacific Gas & Electric Co., Southern California Edison Co. and San Diego Gas & Electric Co. - in California. However, customers of municipal utilities, such as SMUD, will be able to take advantage of this plan.

The Union of Concerned Scientists said "we can now celebrate a program that will reduce global warming emissions by tens of millions of tons, improve air quality, and create thousands of California jobs while further spurring the solar market."

This initiative was supported by the Sierra Club California. Thanks to all members who sent in emails and letters of support to the PUC.

Templeton Gets Organized

By James Wood
Citizens Concerned for Templeton's Future

The issue of development is a contentious one in Templeton because it seems to create a property rights dispute, pitting the old-time residents and ranchers against the newcomers and those who want the rural atmosphere of Templeton protected. The issue however, isn't one of property rights, but of following the County's own ordinances and planning guidelines when considering projects for development.

TAAG (Templeton Area Advisory Group) is an ad-hoc citizens' group supported by the County Board of Supervisors, which is charged with reviewing proposed real estate development and planning issues in the Templeton area and then giving recommendations to the supervisors and the Planning Commission concerning those projects.

TAAG has been embroiled in controversy since last summer when the Ramada Drive Mixed Use project was presented for comment. The Ramada Drive Mixed Use Development is a combined residential-

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Tour de Oso Flaco

by Jack Beigle

Oso Flaco Lake is rather small, beautiful, and very rich in wildlife. Most people, when walking across the footbridge, notice some of the birds but from a canoe or kayak you have an opportunity to see much more.

We had eleven boats that were portaged about 200 yards down the causeway to the put in spot just west of the footbridge. Some were carried and some were rolled on little two wheeled dollies that worked like a charm.

We paddled a little offshore so we could see into the willows, but not

close enough to disturb the creatures. We were treated to quite a show. We saw about 20 raccoons, eating, playing and doing raccoon things at various places around the lake. The water level was low enough that we could easily paddle under the bridge. Swallows have built mud nests under the bridge. It is well hidden from predators and close to a good food source.

Oso Flaco has resident birds that can be seen all year and it is in the migratory bird route so you can see many other birds in the spring and fall.

In addition to the dozens of gulls, swallows, mallard ducks, cormorants and coots we saw an American bittern, ruddy ducks, bufflehead ducks and least turns.

The most exciting sighting of all was the peregrine falcon that dove on a flock of ducks and coots. It was diving so fast that it made a sound like a jet aircraft in a steep dive. The ducks and coots panicked and tried



to take off. They only gained a few feet of altitude when the falcon struck. Feathers flew and birds were falling out of the air, back into the water.

The falcon emerged holding a ruddy duck in its talons. The ruddy was very much alive and struggling to escape. The ruddy was successful and flew off to live another day. The falcon flew off to rest and try for another meal. It was a spectacular show.

We can't guarantee a show like this on all of our outings but each outing is an interesting adventure.

Check the outing schedule and join us on the water. :o)

Nuclear

continued from page 1

to turn a turbine to generate electricity. The plants are very complicated and therefore prone to breakdown and operator error.

Because of the partial fuel meltdown at the Three Mile Island plant in Pennsylvania in 1979, followed by the serious fire at Chernobyl in 1986, no new nuclear power plants have been ordered in the U.S. for the past 29 years.

Everyone — even President Bush — agrees that the current generation of nuclear plants is too problem-prone to inspire confidence. On June 22, 2005, the President gave a speech at the Calvert Cliffs nuclear plant in Maryland saying, “Some Americans remember the problems that the nuclear plants had back in the 1970s. That frightened a lot of folks. People have got to understand that advances in science and engineering and plant design have made nuclear plants far safer.”

However, none of the President’s new “far safer” plants have actually been built. Indeed, their designs have not even been approved by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Furthermore, as the *Los Angeles Times* reported June 11, the new nuclear designs are not very different from the old designs. This is an industry that lost most of its talent during the “dry period” of the last 30 years, and bright young engineers are not flocking to design new nuclear power plants.

Still, three companies would love to build a new generation of nukes — if they can convince taxpayers to put up the billions of dollars needed because there are few eager customers for new plants.

President Bush said he would put up \$2 billion to help get four new power plants running. And the Idaho Engineering Laboratory has a \$1.25 billion project going to develop a next-generation atomic/hydrogen plant. But the industry says it needs much more in the way of taxpayer subsidies before it will thrive.

Private utility companies are reluctant to invest in nuclear power because they got badly burned once before. As the *Los Angeles Times* said June 22, “But the sober reality of nuclear power is that the U.S. will move slowly and cautiously, at best, because Wall Street financiers and the nation’s utility industry still have vivid memories of the legal, financial and regulatory debacles that resulted from the building binge of the 1970s.”

One of the things utility executives remember best is the nuclear accident at Three Mile Island in 1979. Peter Bradford, a former member of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, explained to the *New York Times* May 2, “The abiding lesson that Three Mile Island taught Wall Street was that a group of NRC-licensed reactor operators, as good as any others, could turn a \$2 billion asset into a \$1 billion cleanup job in about 90 minutes.”

For reasons that are not entirely clear, President Bush and Vice-President Cheney are exceedingly eager to revive the civilian nuclear power industry. President Bush says it is because nuclear plants represent the best way for the U.S. to wean itself from foreign sources of oil. In his Calvert Cliffs speech June 22, the President said nuclear power, “could play a big role in easing the nation’s dependence on foreign fuels,” according to the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. But even nuclear industry executives acknowledge that this argument doesn’t hold water.

Nuclear power generates electricity; oil is used to generate only 2.8% of all the electricity in the U.S., so a

few dozen new nuclear power plants can’t make much of a dent in our reliance on foreign oil. At some time in the hazy distant future — say 50 or 100 years from now— after a raft of untried technologies have been financed, developed, tested, and deployed, then nuclear power plants might substitute for oil by producing hydrogen, but at present new nuclear power plants will do almost nothing to diminish U.S. reliance on foreign oil.

Meanwhile, there are many other serious problems besetting the nuclear power industry:

- Shoddy workmanship continues to plague the nuclear industry. A leak of radioactivity at the Hope Creek Plant in New Jersey in March 2005 was not caused by excessive vibration in the reactor’s recirculation pump, as the plant’s operators first thought. It was caused by a faulty weld.

- Sloppy management continues to embarrass the industry as well. In March 2005, operators of the Crystal River nuclear plant in Florida discovered that three illegal aliens had falsified social security numbers and thus gained employment inside the plant.

It did not help when officials at the Los Alamos National Laboratory revealed in January, 2005, that they had lost 600 pounds of plutonium — enough to make dozens of atomic bombs. Laboratory officials tried to reassure the public by saying the missing plutonium may have been buried in landfills in the town of Los Alamos, or perhaps it was shipped to a salt mine for burial, without any records of the shipment having been kept, or perhaps it was stolen. If a gold-plated national atomic laboratory can lose 600 pounds of one of the deadliest substances on earth, what chance does the nuclear industry have of operating reliably or safely — given that it cannot weld metal reliably, or keep illegal aliens from entering the plant?

- Mysteries continue to crop up at nuclear power plants. In December 2005, federal regulators confirmed that radioactive water was showing up in storm sewer lines and in recently-dug wells near the Indian Point 2 nuclear plant on the Hudson River upstream from New York City. The plant’s routine radioactive releases into the Hudson River are deemed “acceptable” by regulators,

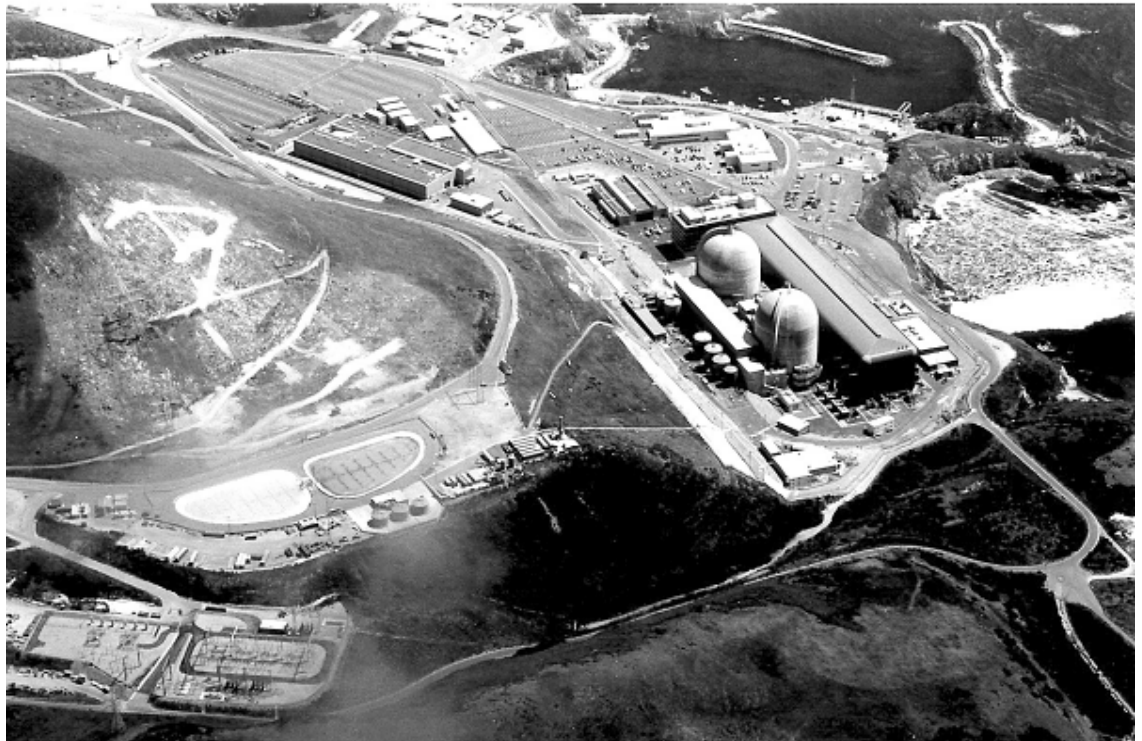
but the source of the underground radioactive water remained a mystery.

- The larger question of radiation safety came into focus in June with the publication of the BEIR VII report by the National Research Council. BEIR stands for Biological Effects of Ionizing Radiation and this seventh report in the series said there is no amount of radiation that can be considered safe. In other words, all radiation carries with it some risk of causing cancer.

and may never accept any waste. *The Philadelphia Inquirer* probably spoke for tens of millions of Americans when it editorialized April 17, “Before the U.S. can grow more reliant on [nuclear] reactors, it must solve the problem of disposing of nuclear waste.”

It was revealed mid-year that some of the technical data supporting the Yucca site may have been falsified by project scientists; the FBI is still investigating.

photo courtesy ECOSLO



“We’re Just Building a Building”

Planning Commission fumbles Diablo permits

On January 12, after an 11-hour hearing, the SLO Planning Commission on a vote of 3 - 1 abstention, denied PG&E building permits for its Diablo Canyon steam generator replacement project.

A “denial” in name only, it was a tactical move designed to break a deadlock and send the project to the Board of Supervisors. Two of the four Commissioners present demanded mitigations for the lost public access and environmental impacts that would result from the extension of the life of the plant. The other two demanded the project be permitted as-is.

The “no more mitigations” charge was led by Commissioner Bob Roos, a former PG&E employee who insisted “We’re just building a building”. Planning Commissioner Bruce Gibson spent about ten hours of the 11-hour meeting arguing that the steam generator replacement project didn’t adequately mitigate its environmental impacts. But he turned down a proposed conservation easement over all 12,000 acres of the property, as well as proposals to require the row crops on the bluff to switch to pesticide-free organic farming and require PG&E to buy back the 99-year leases held by a developer on PG&E land in adjacent Wild Cherry Canyon, which will otherwise be subdivided and developed. Then he broke the deadlock vote in order to “move the process ahead” to certain approval at the Board of Supervisors.

New steam generators will guarantee the re-licensing of the plant for another 20 years.

This report put the kibosh on a favorite theory of some in the nuclear industry, called hormesis. According to the hormesis theory, a little radiation is actually good for you. According to the conclusions reached by BEIR VII, this theory can now be permanently put to rest. All radiation must now be considered harmful, and to be avoided whenever possible. (Naturally, this includes medical radiation, so make sure you actually need that next x-ray or CAT scan your dentist or doctor offers you.)

- Nuclear waste disposal has still not been solved even though nuclear power plants have been producing super-hot, extremely dangerous radioactive waste since 1956 when the first plant went on-line (and the federal weapons program has been producing radioactive wastes since about 1940).

The federal government has committed to solving the waste problem on behalf of the private nuclear power industry, but so far without success. The feds have put all their eggs in a basket called Yucca Mountain in Nevada, but the project is mired in scientific, technical and management dis-

The U.S. so far produced 59,000 tons (54,000 metric tonnes) of high-level radioactive waste, most of it sitting in pools of water close to the reactors that produced it. Last year the National Academy of Sciences confirmed what nuclear critics have maintained for years — that these “spent fuel pools” are sitting ducks for terrorist attack and, if the water were simply drained out of such a pool, a ferocious fire could ensue, spreading large quantities of highly dangerous radioactivity into the air.

Independent analysts also revealed last year that even if the Yucca Mountain waste repository were opened by 2012 — the most optimistic projection for getting it open — it will by that time be too small to accommodate the waste it was meant to sequester. Dr. Frank von Hippel of Princeton University calculated that the nuclear industry could move about 3,000 tons of waste to Yucca Mountain per year, but the industry creates 2,000 new tons each year, so the inventory of waste held at power plant sites

would only be reduced by about 1,000 tons per year. At this rate it would take over 50 years to get rid of the "spent fuel" hazard at existing power plants. These calculations do not take into account any wastes created by the dozens of new nuclear plants that President Bush hopes will be built to, as he insists, reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

Actually the problems with high-level wastes go deeper still. In April the Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a stinging report accusing the nation's nuclear power companies — and their watchdog, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission — of failing to safeguard wastes now held at nuclear power plants — or even to keep track of them accurately. "NRC inspectors often could not confirm that containers that were designated as containing loose fuel rods in fact contained the fuel rods," the report said. Inadequate oversight

Yucca Mountain and the Skull Valley Goshute project are intended to handle "high-level" waste — the super-hot, super-radioactive spent fuel from reactors. But even the problem of "low level" radioactive wastes has mired the industry and government in controversy. For several years the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has been trying to "solve" the low-level radwaste problem by allowing them to be buried in municipal landfills. As part of its proposal, the NRC had proposed that certain radioactive metals could simply be sold to scrap dealers and recycled. The scrap dealers of the nation wanted no part of it, fearing that all metallic scrap would get a bad name because it might be (legally) radioactive after the government plan went into effect. No one wanted their child's braces made out of radioactive metal; no one wanted their forks

the nuclear club" is to acquire a nuclear power plant first, then make a few weapons. The U.S. is aggressively promoting a new generation of nuclear power plants and Vice-President Cheney is personally trying to convince the Chinese (and others?) to purchase new nuclear power plants from Westinghouse. Thus it seems clear that this administration is committed to getting more nuclear power technology into the hands of more people around the world.

In sum, the U.S. is working hard to revive the moribund nuclear power industry and export the technology abroad, where everyone knows it forms the basis for weapons programs in the hands of any nation determined to join the nuclear club. Meanwhile the Bush administration is dragging its feet, not taking the necessary steps to secure weapons-grade nuclear materials that are poorly-secured in 100 countries. And, finally, the administra-

The Philadelphia Inquirer probably spoke for tens of millions of Americans when it editorialized, "Before the U.S. can grow more reliant on [nuclear] reactors, it must solve the problem of disposing of nuclear waste."

and gaps in safety procedures have left several plants unsure about the whereabouts of all their spent fuel, the GAO said.

Because Yucca Mountain is in deep trouble and may never open, eight utilities formed their own private waste disposal company and struck a deal with the Skull Valley band of Goshute Indians, who live 50 miles from Salt Lake City. The Goshute tribe agreed to provide "temporary" storage of spent fuel from reactors, and in September the Nuclear Regulatory Commission gave the plan its official OK. No one is saying how long "temporary" might be if Yucca Mountain fails to open.

Even though this is an excellent example of the free market working its magic, the state of Utah has promised to sue in federal court to stop the Bureau of Indian Affairs from approving the contract, and to try to prevent the federal Bureau of Land Management from allowing construction of a needed rail spur to transport waste to the site. So it's not yet a done deal. When it comes time to transport wastes, several states may try to prevent shipment on their highways, and it is not clear that utilities want to spend the money to ship wastes first to Utah, and then, later, to Yucca Mountain in Nevada.

and spoons to be slightly radioactive; no one wanted a radioactive hammer or saw. And no town wanted radioactivity in the local dump.

The fight against this proposal was led by the Nuclear Information Resource Service in Washington, D.C., and by the Committee to Bridge the Gap in Los Angeles. Dozens of small anti-nuclear groups around the country told the NRC what a dumb idea this was, and in June the NRC abandoned its plan, saying the idea wasn't dead and might be revisited at a later date. In any case, it was a great victory for citizen activism — and yet another sign that the nuclear industry is desperate to solve its growing waste problem but clueless as to how to go about it.

In sum, the radioactive waste problem remains unsolved — indeed it seems further from solution at the end of 2005 than it did at the end of 2004 — and it continues to provoke extremely heated debate. So it is with all things nuclear.

• Meanwhile, the nuclear industry's biggest problem remains the inseparable connection between nuclear power plants and nuclear bombs. Everyone acknowledges that the best way for rogue states to "join

HopeDance

All films at the SLO Library on Osos & Palm. www.hopedance.org, (805) 544-9663.

Friday, February 10, 7pm

Girl in the Cafe
Donation

He's a shy civil servant working for the British delegation to the 2005 G8 Summit. She's an alluring young woman he meets at a café - and invites to the Summit on a whim. Together, this unlikely couple might just change history. Written by Richard Curtis. Directed by David Yates. For the trailer go to www.hbo.com/films/girlinthecafe/

"The Girl in the Cafe trumped my expectations on both counts. As it turned out, it's one of the better movies I've seen this year. Indeed, it is a worldchanging film."

— Alex Steffen at www.worldchanging.com

For details about Making Poverty History, go to www.hbo.com/films/girlinthecafe/watchthesenow/index.html

Friday, February 17, 7pm, \$6

(by arrangement with the producer)
Side Effects

A young woman fumbles with love and ethics as she navigates a career with one of corporate America's darlings...the pharmaceutical industry. Based on the true story of the writer and director of this remarkable dramatic expose, Kathleen Slattery-Moschkau.

To see the trailer go to www.sideeffectsthemovie.com/trailers.

The new HopeDance Store/FiLM Library/Activist Office is now open next door to Caffe Luna, 1804 Osos in San Luis Obispo. Buy things, "rent" from over 250 progressive films, browse publications available to the public ranging from sustainability to foreign affairs and spirituality. "Local" organic fair-trade chocolate (Sweet-Earth), Guyaki's new brand of juice and other green business products.

Mark Your Calendars!

June 10: Santa Lucia Chapter Awards & Recognition Banquet

The Pavilion at Atascadero Lake will be the setting for the 2006 Chapter Awards Banquet on June 10, from 5:30 – 9:30 p.m.

Special Guest: **Lisa Renstrom**, President of the Sierra Club

Jazz singer **Inga Swearingen** and her trio -- As heard on *A Prairie Home Companion*

Silent Auction

Reservations being taken now


To reserve your place or buy a table (\$125 per person; table for eight guests \$1,000.




e-mail Steven Marx at smarx@calpoly.edu or Karen Merriam at kmerriam@digitalputty.com

All proceeds go to the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club

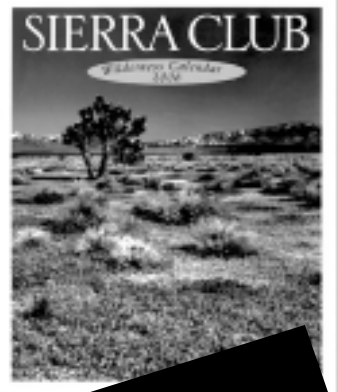
SIERRA CLUB 2006 CALENDARS



Sierra Club 2006 Wilderness Wall Calendar—Spiral bound, month-by-month format, featuring 12 majestic North American landscapes.



Sierra Club 2006 Engagement Calendar—Week-by-week format, featuring 57 spectacular photographs and "wire-o" binding.



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The calendars are now available, and they are gorgeous. Your proceeds go directly to funding the Santa Lucia Chapter's efforts for our land, air, and quality of life in San Luis Obispo.

Wilderness wall (spiral bound, picture every month)	cover	1-4	5 or more
	\$11.95	\$11.53	\$10.89
Engagement (spiral bound, picture every week)	\$12.95	\$12.50	\$11.81

- price includes tax and 10% discount (1 to 4) or 15% discount (5 or more).

For mail orders, write or call the Chapter office, p.o. box 15755, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406; (805) 543-8717. For in-town pick up, call Bonnie at 543-7051.

Taking Issue

- problematic recent environmental commentary & coverage in our local press



“Did climate talks signal the end of Kyoto?”
The Tribune, Jan. 3, 2006

Science and common sense tell us that global warming is real and critically urgent, that human activities are a major contributor, and the time for debate is past. Media “debates” such as the one the *Tribune* ran in its Jan. 2 edition are kept alive by a shrinking handful of contrarians and industry apologists who are given equal time and space against the scientific consensus represented by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and its hundreds of scientists who have been reviewing the data for two decades. (Most of the responses below are from RealClimate.org, winner of the *Scientific American* 2005 Science & Technology Web Award, a commentary site by working climate scientists that aims to “provide the context sometimes missing in mainstream commentary.”)

“By Dennis T. Avery”

Avery is a director of the Hudson Institute, a think tank bankrolled by Monsanto, Du Pont, Ciba-Geigy, ConAgra, Cargill et al. He is notorious for claiming that government research data showed that organically grown food is potentially dangerous. There is no such research or data.

“Wind farms [do not] produce much electricity when really needed, during daylight hours.”

Wind turbines can be, and frequently are, connected to batteries, which store energy for later use.

“Contrary to media reports, the ocean’s coral reefs aren’t dying from the heat.”

Acidifying the ocean is particularly detrimental to organisms that secrete shell material made of CaCO₃, such as coral reefs.... Because the fossil fuel CO₂ rise is faster than natural CO₂ increases in the past, the ocean will be acidified to a much greater extent than has occurred naturally in at least the past 800,000 years.

“The British grew grapes in the 12th century, but again it grew too cold for grapes during the ensuing Little Ice Age -- which lasted until 1850.”

Claims that global average temperatures during Medieval times were warmer than present-day are based on a number of false premises that a) confuse past evidence of drought/precipitation with temperature evidence, b) fail to distinguish regional from global-scale temperature variations, and c) use the entire “20th century” to describe “modern” conditions, fail to differentiate between relatively cool early 20th century conditions and the anomalously warm late 20th century conditions.

“Recent measurements show the ice sheets are growing, not melting.”

From the compilations of World Glacier Monitoring Service, (and many other groups and individuals), we know that glacier retreat is in fact an essentially global phenomenon, with only a few isolated (and well understood) counter-examples.

Templeton

continued from page 3

commercial project on forty acres north of town on the eastern frontage road to US 101. The land is 100 yards to the north of one of the most impacted freeway intersections in the north county, the Main St. exchange.

The project was presented to TAAG on a Mitigated Negative Declaration, in lieu of a full Environmental Impact Report. Appeals to Neg Decs must be formally filed within fourteen days of the project being listed by the county or they are accepted as an adequate replacement for an EIR.

Citizens Concerned for Templeton’s Future (CCTF) became aware of the development and began a hurried analysis of the Neg Dec in order to file an appeal if necessary within the mandated time frame. Several serious questions were raised concerning traffic and water impacts as well as the county criteria for mixed use. We became alarmed by the scope of the project and the potential negative consequences to Templeton inherent in its design and location, and made our best effort to inform the public of the project and encourage attendance at the September 15 TAAG meeting. Astoundingly, more

than 100 Templeton residents attended the meeting, which received a great deal of press coverage. The Ramada project was withdrawn before TAAG voted on it.

CCTF realized that citizens needed to be more politically involved in the community in order to prevent it becoming a mini San Fernando Valley—or as some say, “Pas-cadero.”

This year, eight candidates presented themselves to occupy four seats on the TAAG board and the two alternate positions. Citizen participation is encouraged. We endorsed one new candidate and two of the current TAAG members who were up for re-election.

Two hundred and thirteen residents presented themselves at the January 19 meeting for a candidates’ forum followed by the election, held under the auspices of the League of Women Voters. Of that group, approximately ninety arrived, voted a straight pro-development ticket and left before the forum began. The remaining 120 or so remained and cast their ballots at the end. Approximately 30 voted for our recommendations and the remaining 90 voted a combination as

dictated by their conscience.

The pro-development forces were obviously well organized. It was reported by several observers that they carried blue 3x5 cards indicating which candidates to support as they entered the polls. Of the three candidates supported by the CCTF, two were seated on the board, one as an alternate.

We are excited that so many Templeton residents came to listen and to vote for their candidates. The number of voters far exceeds anything that has ever been experienced in a TAAG election before. Even though all three of the CCTF candidates were not seated, no voter outreach was undertaken and no get-out-the-vote campaign organized—CCTF suffered from being a group of amateurs having their first go in politics.

To have over one hundred neighbors turn out for land use and planning issues bodes extremely well for Templeton. All of the candidates who were elected are civic-minded contributors to the Templeton community who will represent us all well.

CCTF intends to redouble its efforts

on a county-wide basis to positively affect land use issues coming before the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission. We want to preserve as much of our rural heritage and character as possible while respecting the property rights of our neighbors.

Open Space

continued from page 3

ary 8, your last chance to comment on the plan that will determine the future of the natural open spaces that define the quality of life in San Luis Obispo.

TAKE ACTION!

Contact Senior Planner Jeff Hook at 781-7172 for a copy of the final draft of the Conservation and Open Space Element. Then speak at the meeting of the Planning Commission at SLO City Hall, 990 Palm St., at 6 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 8.

Classifieds

Nov/Dec issue ad deadline is **February 14**. To acquire a rate sheet or submit your ad and payment, contact:

Sierra Club - Santa Lucia Chapter
 p.o. Box 15755
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93406
 sierra8@charter.net

Local Government Meetings

- City of SLO--1st & 3rd Tues., 7:00 p.m.; 781-7103
- Arroyo Grande--2nd and 4th Tues., 7:00 p.m.; 473-5404
- Atascadero--2nd & 4th Tues.; 466-8099
- Cambria CSD -- 4th Thurs.; 927-6223
- Grover Beach--1st & 3rd Mon., 6:30 p.m.; 473-4567
 Grover Beach Planning Commission-- 2nd Tues.
- Morro Bay--2nd & 4th Mon.
- Paso Robles--1st & 3rd Tues., 7:00 p.m.; 237-3888
- Pismo Beach--1st Tues., 5:30 p.m.; 773-4657
- Los Osos CSD board-- 1st Tues. & 2nd Mon., varies
- California Coastal Commission-- 3rd Tues., varies
- SLO County Board of Supervisors-- every Tues.; 781-5450
- SLO Council of Governments; 781-4219
 SLOCOG Citizens Advisory Committee--1st Wed. every other month, 6:00 p.m.
 SLOCOG Board--1st Wed. every other month, 8:30 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

highlights from recent Chapter meetings

The Conservation Committee
 January 10, 2006
 Present: Chair Pam Heatherington, Jan Marx, Jono Kincade, Susan Harvey, Lynne Harkins
 Staff: Andrew Christie
 Guest: Karen Merriam

Meeting called to order at 5:20.

Cool Cities: Nick Alter is working toward getting sign-on for the US Mayors resolution. Efforts will be made to engage local high schools in the Cool Cities project. Possibilities for contacts include at Arroyo Grande High School and Nipomo High School. Jono will contact math teacher at Atascadero High School, and Mark DiMaggio, science teacher at Paso Robles High School. Jono will approach the cities of Atascadero and Paso Robles and ask for support on the resolution.

Volunteers are needed to serve on the Morro Bay Power Plant Re-Use Ad Hoc Committee. The committee has 12 vacancies.

Andrew Christie has been invited to participate in the Eco-Farm conference in Pacific Grove on Jan. 25. Andrew will talk about the issue of testing for BT corn and availability of kits for testing corn plants in the field.

COSE: The SLO Planning commission packet will be available Friday. The Planning Commission did the right thing at last meeting and struck proposed weakening language from Land Use element. Will compare the language that was to be eliminated with the new language for Open Space element on Jan. 18.

The Chapter will participate with an information table at Sierra Vista Regional Center "Joint Success" tea On January 28. A volunteer is needed for the table.

It was noted that there were numerous

sewage spills during the heavy rains that contaminated many of the local beaches.

An environmental forum for candidates before the June primary and November general Supervisor election was proposed. We will invite other enviro groups to co-sponsor.

The Sierra Club has asked that the Regional Water Quality Control Board hearing on the Morro Bay/Cayucos waste water treatment plant be held on March 24 when the Board meets here instead of on February 9 as scheduled when it meets in Salinas.

The issue of the extension of the Marine Sanctuary to include the Central Coast is building momentum. Karen, Leslie Krinsk and Shoosh Crotzer will meet with Shirley Bianchi.

Resolution: The Chapter will appeal any Coastal Development Permit/Conditional use Permit granted to PG&E allowing replacement of the existing steam generators and construction of a staging area at the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, on the basis of a wholly deficient EIR. If permit is upheld by the Board of Supervisors and the Coastal Commission, the Chapter will consider seeking legal representation and state and national Sierra Club participation in CEQA litigation.

A motion was made by Pam Heatherington to adopt the Resolution, seconded by Jan Marx, approved by all present.

Meetings changed to first Tuesday of the month. Next meeting is Feb. 7. The meeting was adjourned at 7:30.

Respectfully submitted by
 Susan Harvey

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A Will . . .

. . . is a way to protect the environment as well as yourself. If you do not have a will, the state decides how your property and other affairs are handled. Decisions made now can later provide financial security for family, friends, and the Sierra Club. You may even direct your bequest to a specific Club program or your home Chapter.

For more information and confidential assistance, contact
John Calaway
Sierra Club Planned Giving Program
85 Second Street, 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA
94105-3441
(415) 977-5538.

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Outings and Activities Calendar

All of our hikes and activities are open to all Club members and the general public. If you have any suggestions for hikes or outdoor activities, questions about the Chapter's outing policies or would like to be an outings leader, call Outings Leader Gary Felsman (473-3694). For information on a specific outing, please contact the outing leader. Outings Leaders please get your outings or events in by the 1st for the next month's outings.

Hiking Classifications:

Distance: 1 = 0-2 mi., 2 = 3-5 mi., 3 = 6-9 mi., 4 = 10-12 mi., 5 = 12 mi. or more.

Elevation Gain: A = 500', B = 1000', C = 1500', D = 2000', E = 2500', F = 3000' or more.

Thur., Feb. 2nd, 9:30 a.m. Nipomo Creek Park: Meet at this new park, which is behind Adobe Plaza, which is a product of the Land Conservancy 544-9096

Sat., Feb. 4th, 10 a.m. Black Lake Butterfly Hike: Join naturalist Jack Beigle for a tour of the Land Conservancy's Black Lake property and to see clustering Monarch Butterflies that live on the property. This will be a very informative hike and butterfly numbers appear high this year. Bring water and dress in layers. Sorry, no dogs will be allowed on the hike. Call 544-9096 for more details. Sponsored by the Land Conservancy of SLO.

Sun., Feb. 6, 11 a.m., Superbowl Alternative Hike and Potluck: If bears, dolphins, and eagles sound like animals, not teams, join us as we hike Point Sal Road to our potluck lunch destination (5 mrt, 1300 ft. elev. gain). Bring a daypack with food to share, as well as a plate, utensils, and water for yourself. Meet at the Orcutt Long's Drugs parking lot at 11am. Always contact the leader. JIM 937-6766 (AR)

Feb. 10, 11 and 12, Backpack Trailwork Trip. Join the VWA Trail Crew for a 3-day backpack trailwork trip somewhere in the northern Santa Lucia. Location to be announced. For details or to reserve a place on this trip, contact leader Dave at dknapp1@gmail.com. (Sponsored by Ventana Wilderness Alliance)

Sat., Feb. 11th, 1 p.m., Surf Beach Walk: 3 MRT northward. Cross Santa Ynez river outlet into the Pacific Ocean and walk northward 3 miles along beach until blocked by cliffs. Walk features tide pools and caves. Minus 1.6 ft. tide at 3:30pm. Meet at 2pm in Ocean Park parking lot approx. 1 mile west of signed right turn off West Ocean before it heads southward toward Surf Station. Dogs welcome. Always contact the leader; hike particulars can change. CONNIE 735-2292. (AR)

Sun., Feb. 12th, 9:30 a.m., COAST HIKE: A 4-mile hike on coast. Call or e-mail Bill Denneen a few days before for details: 929-3647 or BDenneen@SLONET.org

Sunday, Feb. 12th, 1 p.m.- South Hills Open Space. Please meet at the South Hills trailhead off of Woodbridge Street. To reach the trailhead take South Street east and turn right onto Exposition Drive. Go straight and the road will turn into Woodbridge Street. The trailhead is on the right. Call 781-7302 for information on upcoming hikes. (Sponsored by the City of SLO.)

Sat, Feb. 18th, 10 a.m., Birding In Morro Bay: We will tour the Chorro Creek Delta to see how many shore birds we can find. Bring your boat and equipment, PFD, windbreaker, bird book, binoculars and a picnic lunch. Launch at Morro Bay State Park Marina, High Tide 12:37 PM 2.7', Low Tide 6:17 PM 1.5'. Details please call Jack Beigle 773-2147

Sun., Feb. 19th, 9:30 a.m., KAYAK Oso Flaco Lake, Meet at lake with kayak, pfd and mechanism to move kayak to lake. I have extra kayak but you have to transport. Call or e-mail Bill Denneen a few days before for details: 929-3647 or BDenneen@SLONET.org

Sat., Feb. 25th, 8:15 a.m., Big Sur Coastal Hike. I am not sure of the exact destination yet, but I may explore one of many areas in the Silver Peak Wilderness. Possibly Sur Sur Ranch, Salmon Creek, Cruickshank to Lion Den, Prewitt Canyon, or the Coastal Traverse along the Buckeye Trail. A lot will depend on the weather and whether it is clear. The hike will be at least a 2000-foot elevation gain, and at least 6 - 10 miles. Bring lunch, water, dress for the weather. Possible eats in Cambria after. Meet at Spencer's Market in Morro Bay. Rain Cancels. Details call Gary at 473-3694 (3D).

Sun., FEB. 26th, 9:30 a.m., DANA ADOBE HIKE. See riparian habitat, edge of Pre-flandrian Dunes, invasive exotics and a few of the 94 species of birds that inhabit the habitat. Visit the newly acquired oak woodland biome. Call or e-mail Bill Denneen a few days before for details: 929-3647 or BDenneen@SLONET.org

Sun., Mar. 5th, 9:30 a.m., COAST HIKE: A 4 mile hike on coast. Call or e-mail Bill Denneen a few days before for details: 929-3647 or BDenneen@SLONET.org

Sunday, March 12, 1 p.m. - Bishop Peak: Please meet at the Patricia Drive trailhead. To reach the trailhead, take Foothill Blvd. west and make a right turn at Patricia Drive. Continue north on Patricia Drive and the trailhead will be on the left just past Patricia Court. Call 781-7302 for information on upcoming hikes. (Sponsored by the City of SLO.)

Mar. 17th, Backpack Trailwork Trip. Join the VWA Trail Crew for a 3-day backpack trailwork trip somewhere in the northern Santa Lucia. Location to be announced. For details or to reserve a place on this trip, contact leader Dave at dknapp1@gmail.com. (Sponsored by Ventana Wilderness Alliance)

Sat. & Sun., Apr. 1-2, Antelope Protection Carcamp (Nature Study/Work Party) With little rainfall and few water sources, the species that live on the Carrizo Plain are both hardy and endangered. Particularly beautiful are the pronghorn antelope, which evolved in these wild, open spaces. Then cattle ranching left a legacy of endless fences - which are deadly to the pronghorn. Join us for a weekend in this remote area removing fencing for their benefit. Camp at KCL camp-ground; bring food, water, heavy leather work gloves, and camping gear for the weekend. Potluck Sat night. Rain cancels. Resource specialist: Alice Koch. For more information, contact Leaders: Cal and Letty French, 14140 Chimney Rock Road, Paso Robles, CA 93446, (805-239-7338). Prefer e-mail ccfrench@tcsn.net. Santa Lucia Chap/CNRCC Desert Com.

Wed., Apr. 5, 12, 19, 26, 5:30 p.m. Informal Hikes Return. 2 -3 hour hikes around the San Luis Obispo Area. Bring water, snack, and dress for the weather. E-mail gfelsman@onemain.com for meeting location.



Photo by Joaquin Palting

May 20-27, VOYAGE OF THE GLACIERS. Answer the call of the wild with your pioneer spirit as we explore the land John Muir said "was still in the morning of creation." Travel with your Angeles Chapter and Orange County Sierra Singles friends on the luxurious Sapphire Princess as we head north up the Inside Passage from Vancouver, Canada, to the Alaskan ports of Ketchikan, Juneau, and Skagway. View all the great maritime mammals and active tidewater glaciers with an onboard naturalist. Join us for onboard get togethers and brisk hikes around the promenade deck. On ports of call days, go ashore and see the totem poles of Ketchikan, the Mendenhall Glacier in Juneau, the Klondike Gold-Rush Trail of '98 from Skagway or join the leaders on hikes and frontier saloon explorations. Cruise Glacier Bay National Park and College Fjord.

After crossing the mighty Gulf of Alaska, we bid farewell in Whittier for transport to Anchorage and the flight home. Your cruise fare includes an astounding array of onboard facilities: ship stateroom, ocean transport, gourmet meals, quality entertainment, exercise opportunities and some beverages. Staterooms available from \$564 based on d/occupancy. Port charges, gov't taxes, transfers, tips, discounted airfare extra. Move fast, limited spaces in each category. Call Violet Calderon vcalderson@montrosetravel.com Montrose Travel's Group Division, 800-301-9673 for a brochure and the best cabin choices, or go online www.montrosetravel.com/sierraclub.

A post-cruise extension will be offered to Denali Nat'l Park. For information on either the cruise or the extension, please send a sase or e mail to Cruise Coordinator: DONNA SPECHT, 22221 Wood Island Lane, Huntington Beach, CA 92646, 714-963-6345 e mail donnaspecht@juno.com Co-Leader: ANA CADEZ (Angeles Chapter Fundraiser, Orange County Sierra Singles).

This is a partial listing of Outings offered by our chapter. Please check the web page www.santalucia.sierraclub.org for the most up-to-date listing of activities.