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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

May 2009
Volume 46 No. 5

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Benefit Banquet
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Landscapes of Change
the 4th annual

Awards Banquet Celebration
for
The Santa Lucia Chapter

May 30 2009, 5:00-9:00 P.M.
San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden



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Ag Busters

The County's agricultural cluster policy is a case study in unintended consequences

According to Wikipedia, unintended consequences can be grouped into roughly three types:

- * a positive unexpected benefit, usually referred to as serendipity or a windfall
- * a negative or perverse effect, that may be contrary to what was originally intended
- * a potential source of problems, such as described by Murphy's law

Discussions of unintended consequences usually refer to the situation of perverse results. This situation can arise when a policy has a perverse incentive and causes actions contrary to the outcome the incentive was supposed to produce.

The county's agricultural cluster ordinance is real-life example of just such a policy, complete with perverse



incentives and perverse results. One need look no further than last year's decision by the lame duck Board of Supervisors to approve a sprawling agricultural cluster residential subdivision at Santa Margarita Ranch. The 3-2 decision to overturn the Planning Commission's denial of the project came at the end of several hearings during which the flaws, weaknesses and ways to exploit the county's ag cluster ordinance – and the public process -- were painfully exposed for all to see. Virtually everyone opposed the project, except for the Ranch owners, their cadre of paid consultants, and three Supervisors.

The onslaught of public testimony and letters from public agencies,

continued on page 9

Chapter Outings Leaders Get National Certification

Nine outings leaders in the Santa Lucia Chapter recently completed all requirements for National Sierra Club certification in outings leadership.

Shown at right are Carlos Diaz-Saavedra, Cal and Letty French, Outings Chair Joe Morris, Karen Merriam, and Ken Smokoska and David Georgi, receiving their plaques at a congratulatory ceremony on April 9. Not pictured: Gary and Darlene Felsman and Chuck Tribbey.

Would you like to experience the fun and rewards of being a leader? It's not difficult. National certification includes completion of a 2-hour First Aid course, an outings leadership seminar (3 hours), and demonstrated skill in leading a hike of your choice. As the Chapter expands our outdoor programs this year, we will be offering the training again soon.

Join us!



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See the variety and reach of issues the Sierra Club works on statewide. To sign up for the CAL-Alerts list, go to www.sierraclub.org/memberlists.

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photo/Steve Walsh

It's time for America to get smart about energy and be less dependent on dwindling oil reserves. We need to increase our use of clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar power.

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 SANTA LUCIA CHAPTER

A free interactive Atascadero workshop on our clean energy future, with Supervisor Jim Patterson, Mayor Ellen Beraud and Sierra Club energy interns

A Stockton Win

Two landmark legal victories for the Sierra Club are helping prod local governments to take action on global warming.

First, we obtained a legal settlement in October in a case challenging the city of Stockton's General Plan update, which had ignored the impacts of global warming.

Reinforcing this message, a court order issued on March 19 found for the Sierra Club in our challenge to the city of Tulare's General Plan update and agreed with the Sierra Club on all its global warming claims.

The Club had challenged Stockton's updated General Plan under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), arguing, among other things, that the Environmental Impact Report did not adequately address the increased greenhouse gas emissions from the proposed expansion of the city's sphere of influence and the large residential development projects proposed well outside existing city limits.

The groundbreaking settlement among the Club, the city, and the state attorney general, addresses these climate impacts through a Climate Action Plan, to be prepared by the city with oversight from a volunteer advisory committee with representatives from environmental, non-profit, labor, business, and development interests. The plan must include greenhouse gas inventories; a comprehensive transit program; "green building standards for all new residential, municipal, and commercial buildings, which must consistently achieve the top 25% of city green building measures in the state; proposed General Plan amendments that require and promote infill and downtown development projects; and amendments to the General Plan to ensure that growth on the outskirts of the city is not "out of balance with development of infill." (See "Smart Growth Saved," page 4, for an example of SLO County's smart move in this direction without the requirement of litigation). Many of these measures must be submitted to the City Council for approval within the one year from the date of the settlement.

This settlement will bring meaningful reductions in greenhouse gas emissions through the study of emissions, changes to transportation and building standards and reductions in sprawl development. This case demonstrates how a CEQA lawsuit, when brought as part of a

larger campaign, can have more than just procedural results and can lead to major substantive improvements.

The case also had political ramifications. When the city's old guard embarrassed itself by resisting a settlement that was clearly in the city's best interests, this made a great campaign issue for the Club and its Stockton allies. Voters elected a more progressive City Council, including a very green new mayor. Sierra Club Mother Lode Chapter leaders have reported a remarkable turnaround in the attitudes of top city staff, and the local political atmosphere has shifted so dramatically that the developer was forced to abandon an effort to pass a referendum aimed at killing the settlement.

Chapter leaders kept track of all other related land-use approvals and wrote comments objecting to the threatened additions of sprawl areas in the city's sphere of influence. Due to momentum from the settlement agreement, the Club was able to block the worst aspects of that "sphere of influence" amendment.

Factors that made the Stockton litigation such a huge success:

- * Chapter activists working with their attorneys to devise a comprehensive campaign strategy with litigation as one of a number of tactics;
- * Targeting of a General Plan, rather than individual development projects in isolation;
- * Involvement of a highly sophisticated law firm with a track record of dramatic results using CEQA litigation;
- * Effective work in advance of the litigation to build the administrative record (the chapter prepared its own "alternative plan" to the proposed General Plan);
- * effective outreach to, and coordination with, the state attorney general's office;

In short, the Sierra Club's multi-pronged strategy in Stockton was extremely effective, and a model for such results in other cities and counties.

The Sierra Club was represented by the law firm of Shute Mihaly & Weinberger in its Stockton litigation and settlement. Babak Naficy, currently representing the Santa Lucia Chapter in our challenge to State Parks over offroad vehicle use at Oceano Dunes, represented the Club in its challenge to the city of Tulare's General Plan.

SANTA LUCIAN

Andrew Christie
 EDITOR sierraclub8@gmail.com

Karen Merriam
Melody DeMeritt
Jack McCurdy
 EDITORIAL BOARD

The Santa Lucian is published 10 times a year. Articles, environmental information and letters to the editor are welcome. The deadline for each issue is the 11th of the prior month.

send to:

Editor, Santa Lucian
 c/o Santa Lucia Chapter, Sierra Club
 P.O. Box 15755
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93406.
 sierraclub8@gmail.com

Santa Lucia Chapter

2009 Executive Committee

Karen Merriam
 CHAIR karen@karenmerriam.com

Cal French
 MEMBER ccfrench@tcsn.net

Mark Shefrin
 MEMBER mshefrin@gmail.com

Steven Marx
 TREASURER

Melody DeMeritt
 VICE CHAIR

Linda Seeley
 MEMBER

Cal French
 COUNCIL OF CLUB LEADERS

The Executive Committee meets the third Friday of every month at 12:00 p.m. at the chapter office, located at 547-B Marsh St., San Luis Obispo. All members are welcome to attend.

Committee Chairs

Political
 Chuck Tribbey

Conservation
 Sue Harvey lfsusan@tcsn.net

Membership

Cal French

Litigation

Andy Greensfelder

Nuclear Power Task Force

Rochelle Becker beckers@thegrid.net

Water Task Force

Jack Morrow

Other Leaders

Open Space
 Gary Felsman 805-473-3694

Calendar Sales
 Bonnie Walters 805-543-7051

Chapter History
 John Ashbaugh 805-541-6430

Activities

Outings
 Joe Morris dpj1942@earthlink.net

Canoe/Kayak

open

Webmaster

Monica Tarzier mtarzier@sbcglobal.net

General Information

Santa Lucia Chapter
 P.O. Box 15755
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

Chapter Director

Andrew Christie
 805-543-8717
 sierraclub8@gmail.com

Coordinators

Admin and Development: Kim Ramos
 Education and Outreach: Barrie Valencia

**Office hours Monday-Friday,
 11 a.m. - 5 p.m., 547-B Marsh
 Street, San Luis Obispo**

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 85 Second Street, 2nd Floor
 San Francisco, CA 94105-3441

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Outings, events, and more!

Annual Sierra Club Benefit Banquet: May 30



B.K. Richard

The Santa Lucia Chapter invites you to attend our 4th Annual Awards Banquet Celebrating “Landscapes of Change,” on Saturday, May 30, 2009 5:00 – 9:00 pm, San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy Creek Road, San Luis Obispo, California. Your contribution of \$125.00 per person includes the garden tour, appetizers, Andalusian Mediterranean Cuisine with wine, dessert, and inspiring presentations, accompanied by the soothing sounds of jazz. To reserve your place(s), or a table for eight, send a check payable to the Sierra Club, P.O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406, or call Kim at 543-8717 M-F, 3-6p.m., by **May 22**.

Program:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>5:00 pm Tour of the Garden with Matt Ritter, Director, Cal Poly Plant Conservatory</p> <p>5:30 pm Appetizers & No Host Bar
Jazz Music by Lynn Manzella’s Band</p> <p>6:15 pm Welcome
Featured Speaker: Michael Fitts, Endangered Habitats League</p> | <p>7:00 pm Dinner and wine served
Dessert Buffet</p> <p>8:00 pm Chapter Awards</p> <p>8:15 pm Concluding Remarks</p> <p>9:00 pm Good night!</p> |
|---|---|



EPA Acts: Global Warming is a Threat

Sierra Club Launches “Big Picture” Effort to Support Obama Action

On April 17, the Environmental Protection Agency issued a finding that carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases represent a significant threat to public health and welfare. The “endangerment finding,” based on tens of thousands of public comments and years of work by EPA’s career staff and scientists, ends more than two years of uncertainty following the Supreme Court’s landmark *Massachusetts v. EPA* decision and brings to a close the Bush Administration era of climate denial. EPA now has both the authority and the obligation to regulate global warming pollution, with concrete action on motor vehicle emissions expected soon.

A decision on the California clean cars waiver is due in June and it is widely expected that EPA will either allow California and more than a dozen states to move forward with their own regulations or propose a similar national standard. The California standard calls for a 30 percent reduction in global warming emissions from new vehicles by 2016. Regulations for power plants, factories, and other emitters are likely to come later, and certainly no sooner than 12-18 months. Many factors, including pending action by Congress, will determine how and how quickly EPA moves forward with regulations for these sectors.

“Where the Bush administration lagged, the Obama administration is now leading. There is no longer a question of if or even when the U.S. will act on global warming. We are doing so now,” said David Bookbinder, Sierra Club Chief Climate Counsel. “President Obama is taking it to the hoop when it comes to our most pressing problems. This step will allow the administration to move forward while continuing to work with Congress to pass a strong clean energy jobs and climate plan.”

“EPA’s endangerment finding is...a testament to the success of industry in delaying real action to stop climate change. It took eleven states, ten years, two IPCC reports, two changes of presidency and one Supreme Court decision to reach the obvious conclusion that global warming endangers human health and welfare and EPA has a duty to do something about it. There is a clear lesson here for both the Administration and Congress as they craft a global warming bill this year: industry will exploit every ambiguity, every gap and every loophole in legislation to avoid real climate action as much and as long as possible. Fuzzy wording and big exemptions inserted to buy off industry support for a bill could delay real emission reductions for years or decades. The planet cannot afford that.”

- Carroll Muffett, Deputy Campaigns Director, Greenpeace USA

Under the Clean Air Act, EPA is now obliged to begin the process of regulating global warming pollution from all sources—vehicles, power plants, factories, etc. The law specifically states that EPA “shall” (i.e. must, not may) regulate dangerous pollutants once they are found to endanger public health or welfare. EPA, however, has wide discretion as to the timing, sequence, and scope of the regulatory process.

The announcement was the latest move underscoring the Obama administration’s comprehensive approach to building the clean energy economy. To demonstrate support for the administration’s ambitious plans for rulemaking, the Sierra Club will be mobilizing its activists through the new “Big Picture” campaign.

“President Obama sees the Big Picture—by shifting to clean energy, and cracking down on the corporations that pollute the water we drink and the air we breathe, we can restore our economy to prosperity and reduce our dependence on oil and coal, all while tackling global warming,” said Carl Pope, Sierra Club Executive Director.

Entitled “The Big Picture: Help

Obama Build Our Clean Energy Future,” the grassroots effort will employ online and off-line tactics to generate public comments and support for the numerous administrative findings, rules and regulations expected over the coming months and years.

“From cleaner cars and cleaner smokestacks to mining pollution and

directly addressing carbon pollution, all of these pieces fit together to form the Big Picture—a clean energy future that transforms our economy and protects the planet,” said Pope.

For more information on the Big Picture campaign, please visit www.sierraclub.org/bigpicture.

A Will is a Way
 Make a commitment to the next generation by remembering the Sierra Club in your will. Your support will help others preserve the intricate balance of nature.

Contact:
 John Calaway
 Director of Gift Planning at
 (415) 977-5639 or e-mail:
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Smart Growth Saved

County thwarts developer power play

“Elections matter.”

- Sen. Barbara Boxer, to Sen. James Inhofe

On April 14, 2009, after a broad and intensive two-year public process, the County Board of Supervisors considered several proposed changes to the draft “Smart Growth Amendments” to the County’s land use element.

Prior to the meeting, County Planning staff, under pressure from developers, proposed some “compromise” language which would have made numerous, seemingly minor changes throughout the draft, all of which would have had the effect of turning the Smart Growth principles into the opposite of what they were supposed to be.

Like mushrooms after a rain, repeated efforts to shoehorn in the concept of “expanded communities” -- directly opposed to the goal of directing new development toward existing communities -- sprouted up throughout the document at the developers’ behest. In accordance with smart growth principles, the expansion of communities should only occur under limited circumstances, after most urban infill options -- brownfields, redevelopment and land completely surrounded by development -- have been utilized, new infrastructure built or funded, and adequate resources identified to support new growth.

County Planning Commission

Chair Sarah Christie and Vice Chair Anne Wyatt weren’t having it. In an April 7 letter to the Board, the Commissioners told the Supervisors that the proposed changes would significantly undermine the intent of the smart growth amendments. Going down the list of the numerous developer-suggested changes, they noted that the proposed revisions would make it unclear that urban expansion is only to occur under the above-noted limited “post-infill” circumstances. As altered, the amendments would allow urban expansion to take place based upon

an “evaluation” of infill lands, whether they were largely built out or not.

Christie and Wyatt pointed out that developer-inserted changes mandating “appropriate and orderly urban expansion at the urban edge” were contradictory to the core smart growth policy of hard urban boundaries, which need to be just that, and was essentially new-speak for urban sprawl, potentially justifying the total merging of San Miguel and Paso Robles, or South Atascadero with Santa Margarita.

Finally, the Commissioners noted

that with respect to the conversion of agricultural land, developers had attempted to limit decision makers to consideration of a single policy within the Agricultural Element. That should be a non-starter, they said, as other policies in the Ag Element support the protection of ag lands and the smart growth amendments should not limit decision makers to referencing a single policy instead of evaluating the question of ag conversion in the full context of the Ag Element.

They also advocated for retaining language that specifically includes the participation of local advisory councils in land use decisions, which had been struck out of the draft. Advisory Councils are the first line of defense when it comes to analyzing the impacts of proposed development, and should be an integral part of the planning process.

Led by Board Chairman Bruce Gibson, the Supervisors took heed and changed the smart growth policies back into policies actually promoting smart growth -- creating compact, walkable communities; reducing vehicle miles traveled; reducing energy use; promoting public transit, etc. -- before voting them into the General Plan.

Let us give thanks for eternal vigilance.



Oh no you didn't: Planning Commission Chair Sarah Christie and Vice Chair Anne Wyatt.



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Cooling the Hot Button

The public debate over immigration and its connection to population issues has been most notable for its tendency to be reactionary, narrow and sterile.

The Sierra Club has consistently raised the level of that debate by emphasizing education, health care, and family planning, rather than higher fences and harsher punishment of victims, as the way to check population growth. In recent years, along with other public interest organizations, we have also pointed out the root cause of accelerated global migration: The dislocations caused by a skewed global corporate “free trade” system that throws farmers off their land, wrecks ecosystems and subsistence economies and demands the slashing of wages and social services, forcing millions to seek a living elsewhere if their families are to survive. “Elsewhere” is inevitably one of those nations whose trade policies have foreclosed the ability of the people they’ve disenfranchised to make a living in their own country.

Five years ago, when the debate over immigration within the Sierra

Sierra Club International Programs: Addressing the Root Causes of Migration

Migration happens when freedom, justice, economic opportunity, environmental degradation, and displacement are threatened or severely across the globe that people are forced to make difficult choices: stay and family survive, or leave and possibly thrive.

Sierra Club founder John Muir, a pioneer here in California, once noted that “there is no such thing as a free lunch, and that is true in the global marketplace.” Today, the Sierra Club notes the economic and ecological damage accompanying globalization, human rights for trade, and environmentally sustainable development.

Why People Migrate
Millions of migrants who, throughout human history, have moved across continents and seas for better living and opportunity.

Migrants seek out new lands because their home countries are overpopulated and their lands are overused. They seek a better life for themselves and their families and their children. They seek a better life for themselves and their families and their children. They seek a better life for themselves and their families and their children.

Addressing Root Causes is the Solution
Most migrants would not choose to leave their homes if they had the opportunity to improve their lives in their home countries. To improve people's lives and reduce migration pressure, we must address the root causes of migration: human rights, justice, economic opportunity, U.S. migration policy to develop and protect our agricultural, trade, energy, environmental, and development, and family planning, all of which have a tremendous impact on the process to migrate into the United States.

Increasing Access to Education, Healthcare and Economic Opportunity
Global population growth has increased environmental and social degradation, including migration. At the 1992 U.N. International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), 179 nations, including the United States, met in Cairo, Egypt to address both the challenges of world population growth, and to grasp the connections among population, health, gender, economic development, and sustainable development. The conference adopted a 211-point Program of Action, also known as the “Cairo Consensus,” which encouraged all participating countries to invest in and offer to people such as children, women, and vulnerable family planning, reproductive health services, and education for women and girls. When women and girls are educated and earning their own income, they tend to have smaller, healthier families. This has a ripple effect that benefits communities socially, economically, and environmentally.

In line with these international goals, the Sierra Club supports the highest levels of funding, technical assistance for voluntary international and domestic family planning programs, including the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United States

Club reached a fever pitch, the Santa Lucia Chapter was one of the first entities in the Club to underline the connection between global trade policies and international migration, passing a resolution declaring that “U.S. policies on trade, security and globalization have a greater bearing on how many people cross our borders than U.S. immigration policy or any reform thereof.” We passed the resolution with the intention of encouraging the national Club to “take a principled, humanitarian, environmental stance on an issue that has become a polarizing wedge for the membership.”

Last month, the Sierra Club updated the fact sheet, “Addressing the Root Causes of Migration,” connecting all the dots and driving all the points home. It’s available at www.sierraclub.org/population/downloads/migration.pdf

Mexican emigration to the United States has gone up in the 15 years since NAFTA went into effect. During this time, six million Mexicans immigrated to the United States, tripling the average of the pre-NAFTA years, and reaching five hundred thousand Mexicans per year. Weren't we promised that, with NAFTA, this pattern would stop, as it was the result of a lack of opportunity in Mexico and the asymmetry in salaries and labor conditions? Instead, doesn't the continued and increased immigration represent irrefutable evidence of the failure of NAFTA?

Sin Maiz No Hay Pais
Without Corn there is No Country National Campaign | Open Letter to the President of the United States, April 2009

National Train Day Arriving at SLO Station

Your train has arrived... and all of San Luis County is invited down to the San Luis Obispo train station on Saturday, May 9, to celebrate the second annual National Train Day. The date commemorates the 140th anniversary of the driving of the golden spike that linked the east and west coasts of the United States, and celebrates our railroad history and future.

The May 9 celebration will take place from noon to 4 p.m. at the Amtrak San Luis Obispo Train Station, 1011 Railroad

Avenue at Santa Rosa. It's free, with plenty of free parking at the station. There will be refreshments, as well as paper engineer caps for kids of all ages, a scale model railroad exhibit from the San Luis Obispo Model Railroad Association, a railroad photography display by Rich Hansen, whose photography at the SLO station won second place in Amtrak's national competition, and musical entertainment by the youth band of the Basin Street Regulars—with some jazzy railroad themed tunes.

Whether you are avoiding the fluctuating price of gasoline, frustrating traffic, airline hassles or reducing your greenhouse gas emissions, there's never been a better time to take the train. Trains are more energy efficient than domestic air travel and automobiles, and unlike planes, you can use your tray table, your cell phone, your laptop and recline your seat any time you want. Get up and move around, grab a snack or a full meal, or just take in the coastal scenery on the trip from San Luis Obispo to Los Angeles.

Amtrak has three trains each way daily, plus one train daily to and from the Bay Area and on to Portland and Seattle. In addition, there are frequent Amtrak California bus/train connections to the Bay Area and the San Joaquin Valley. Ridership is growing in popularity; last year over 4 million people rode the California Corridor trains—second only to the Northeast corridor in terms of passengers.

On May 9, along with the helpful station agents, hosts and volunteers will be available to answer questions and help with trip planning. Real trains will be arriving and departing at 12:45 p.m., 2:00 p.m., 3:07 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. Amtrak is offering many incentives and special deals for travel between now and train day. Visit them on the web at www.amtrak.com, or see www.nationaltrainday.com.



Focus on the Environment

Our popular photography workshops continue

Learn to communicate your passion for the natural world through still and video photography. The Santa Lucia Chapter of Sierra Club is offering a series of monthly workshops led by local professional photographers.

Photo-Painting with Paul McCloskey:

May 16, 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. McCloskey considers himself "a digital alchemist." His "photo-painting" represents "a convergence of today's digital photography/imaging technology with traditional printmaking and the fine art of plein-air painting...it's all about light." Learn the mystery and joy of bringing light to the images that capture your imagination. Cost: \$40.00

Photographing endangered animals, people and landscapes with Dave Garth:

June 13, 8:30 am – 10:30 am www.davidgarth.net/cm/Home.html When Dave Garth is not hard at work as the Executive Director of the SLO Chamber of Commerce, he's out in nature with his camera, at home and

abroad. During recent years, Garth has focused on helping endangered animals and peoples of the third world. His animal and wilderness photographs have been taken in North America, Central America and Africa. His humanitarian photography has been associated with the work of Rotary International to improve the human condition of the world's most needy. Cost: \$40.00

How to get your video message onto YouTube with David Weisman:

July 25, 9:00 am – 12:00 noon. Use your video camera advocacy—and make sure that your audience can really see and hear your subject! Award-winning documentary film maker David Weisman will offer a hands-on workshop in citizen video advocacy, so bring your camcorders, tripods, microphones, headphones and any accessories you have to learn how to better use them. If you don't have accessories, you'll learn how to turn ordinary household items into useful video tools. Cost: \$60.00

Susan Jordan's Courage

By Paul Mason, Deputy Director, Sierra Club California

In the rush to assign blame for the failure of the deal between some local environmental groups and the PXP oil company in Santa Barbara, some good people are being scapegoated, and some critical facts are being left by the wayside.

Like many groups, the Sierra Club initially was supportive of the broad goals of the proposal. However, our support was contingent upon the deal, primarily the end dates for offshore-oil production, being enforceable by the relevant state agencies. Enforceability is critical: It would be foolish to approve new oil-drilling leases without iron-clad enforceability.

Unfortunately, when the Attorney General's office and the State Lands Commission reviewed the deal, they concluded it was not enforceable.

Further, when the Minerals Management Service testified at the SLC hearing, it noted that shutting down oil production before all the economically accessible oil was fully extracted was in direct conflict with federal law.

Within this context of serious legal problems with the proposal, it's quite sad and frustrating to see Susan Jordan, one of the most well-respected coastal protection advocates in the state, come under attack for not supporting the deal.

Rather than just accepting the popular slogans that this deal would end oil production along this part of the coast, Susan dug into the details, where she found serious problems — problems that were confirmed many months later by the Attorney General and State Lands legal counsel. While it would have been easier politically to

ignore the problems and go along with popular opinion, that also would have been a tremendous failure in leadership.

We should expect and encourage our civic and elected leaders to pay attention to details and facts, and make decisions on that basis. It's certainly easier to just go with the flow, but that abdication of critical analysis and independent assessment can lead to rubber-stamping bad



Susan Jordan, Director of the Coastal Protection Network, and Sierra Club Coastal Director Mark Massara.

ideas.

If some members of the local environmental community still want the PXP deal, and think the benefits that could be provided are worth approving the first new oil lease in California state waters in 40 years, they should direct their focus on how to fix the flaws in the original proposal. They should not attack the people who had the courage to point them out beforehand.

Reprinted from the Santa Barbara News-Press, April 5, 2009

Taking Better Pictures with Gary Dwyer:

Sept. 12, 9-11 a.m. Learn how to eliminate many of the common errors made by casual photographers. Improve your photos by avoiding cluttered backgrounds, keeping your subject in sharp focus, using the "Rule of Thirds," and when to use flash in the daytime.

With this illustrated lecture, you will receive a detailed handout of all the topics covered.

All workshops will take place at First American Title Company, community room, Pacific and Morro Streets, San Luis Obispo. Size of workshop is limited to 40 participants. To Register e-mail Linda Brownson Linda.sierraclub8@gmail.com, or call Linda at 805-543-8717,

Mon.-Tues.; 9 a.m. - 12 noon.

To save your place, send your check, made payable to the Santa Lucia Chapter Sierra Club, to P.O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406.



National Call to Action on Global Warming

We call on President Obama and Congress to pass global warming legislation that meets the following objectives

The impacts of global warming on human and natural systems are now being observed nearly everywhere.

In 2007, the Nobel Prize-winning U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) predicted serious risks and damages to livelihoods, human infrastructure, societies, species, and ecosystems unless future warming is reduced. So far this decade, emissions, warming, and impacts, such as ice melt and sea level rise, have all been at the upper end of IPCC projections.

To avoid the worst effects of global warming, there is broad scientific agreement that we must limit additional warming to no more than 2 degrees Celsius over pre-industrial levels.

According to the IPCC, we have a reasonable chance of meeting this objective if developed countries as a whole cut their emissions by 25-40 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 80-95 percent below 1990 levels by 2050; within this time frame, major developing countries also must act.

More recent findings since the publication of the latest IPCC assessment suggest that even more urgent action may be needed. In 2008, the U.S. National Snow and Ice Data Center announced that summer Arctic sea ice had reached the second-lowest level ever recorded, following the record-breaking 2007 summer. This observed rapid Arctic melting is already far outpacing IPCC worst-case scenario projections. Two years ago, the IPCC projected that Arctic sea ice could disappear almost entirely by the latter part of this century. Now, scientists from NASA and other agencies warn that Arctic summers could be nearly ice-free within the next five years.

To meet the challenge of global warming, we must transform the ways America and the rest of the world produce and use energy, achieving dramatic improvements in the efficiency with which we use energy in our homes, businesses, and vehicles and moving to clean, renew-

able energy, like wind and solar power.

This challenge also brings enormous opportunity. Vastly improving the efficiency of our economy and moving to renewable energy will reduce our dependence on oil, help revive our economy, and create millions of green-collar jobs in many fields. The shift to a clean energy economy will put millions of Americans, including those most in need, back to work in the face of our deepest economic crisis since the Great Depression. Further, it will help address climate justice issues resulting from global warming.

We must protect our most vulnerable communities – and particularly communities of color – from the physical, economic, and public health effects of global warming, while providing pathways to prosperity. Fighting global warming and transitioning to a clean energy economy demands new resources, including education and training, for those most impacted. A fundamental change in our energy mix is necessary to both save the planet and provide opportunity for all Americans.

But special interests, such as the oil and coal industries, have controlled America's energy policy for more than a century. It now will take all Americans working together to bring the enormous change that our country needs.

This temperature increase is equivalent to 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit over pre-industrial levels or about 2 degrees Fahrenheit over the amount of warming that has already occurred. We, the undersigned organizations and individuals, have come together to ensure that U.S. action on global warming is commensurate with the scale of the challenge confronting us and that the path we choose benefits the public at large, not narrow special interests.

We know that the solutions exist today that can get us much of the way there. We can envision and achieve a world in which our homes and businesses are so efficient that they

use zero net energy; that the energy we do use is from clean, home-grown sources like wind and solar power; and that we transport ourselves in American-made plug-in hybrids that get 100 miles to the gallon.

If we take this path toward a clean energy future, we know we can stop the worst effects of global warming while reviving our economy, rescuing America from its dependence on fossil fuels, reducing pollution and threats to our health, protecting the natural resources that we depend upon for survival, and creating millions of good jobs right here at home.

To that end, we call on President Obama and Congress to pass global warming legislation that meets the following objectives:

Take Prudent Action to Reduce the Risk of Catastrophic Global Warming

Establish Science-Based Pollution Reduction Targets. Cut total, economy-wide global warming emissions by at least 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by at least 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

To achieve these targets, the United States should reduce its total absolute emissions from fossil fuels by at least 8-14 percent below 1990 levels by 2020, with the additional reductions achieved through appropriate incentives and programs for domestic and international forest protection and for other sound U.S. climate- friendly agricultural and land-use practices.

Enable Periodic Science Review and Update. Include a mechanism for periodic reviews of developments in the science and the effectiveness of the program and to require the Environmental Protection Agency and other agencies, as appropriate, to adjust the regulatory response and propose legislative changes if the latest science indicates that greater reductions are needed.

Special interests, such as the oil and coal industries, have controlled America's energy policy for more than a century. It now will take all Americans working together to bring the enormous change that our country needs.

Take International Leadership. Facilitate work with other nations to reach an equitable climate agreement at the Copenhagen climate summit at the end of 2009 that keeps further warming to below 2 degrees Celsius over pre-industrial levels. Lead a worldwide effort to finance clean energy deployment, protections for forests in developing countries, and adaptation to unavoidable climate impacts, including a robust U.S. program of international global warming assistance for developing nations.

These emissions-reduction targets are equivalent to a 35 percent reduction from today's (2006) levels by 2020 and an 83 percent reduction from today's levels by 2050.

This emissions-reduction range is equivalent to a 20-25 percent reduction from today's levels by 2020.

Be Effective and Efficient

Auction All Pollution Allowances and Devote All Proceeds to Mitigation and Addressing Impacts on Consumers, Workers, Vulnerable Communi-

ties, and Natural Resources. By placing a price on carbon, the auctioning of allowances should generate the maximum amount of revenue feasible, amounting to hundreds of billions of dollars a year.

These precious dollars should not provide polluting industries windfall profits nor should such industries be able to spend our public resources indiscriminately. Instead, the revenue should be used to most effectively achieve our nation's pollution-reduction goals, assist consumers and affected workers transition to a clean energy economy, protect our natural resources from the impacts of global warming, and finance mitigation and adaptation for developing countries.

Effectively Include and Fund Sound Land Use, Agriculture, and Forest Practices. A robust set of financial incentives and policies are needed to encourage American land owners to enhance the sequestration of carbon on private lands with healthy forests, sustainable agriculture, and other actions. The nation's public lands should be managed to preserve sequestered carbon. Further, financial incentives and other programs are needed to ensure reductions in domestic and international deforestation and forest degradation; international deforestation alone contributes about 20 percent of worldwide emissions. These incentives and programs should protect biodiversity and the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Ensure Strong Parameters for Any Offsets. Offsets within a cap-and-auction program should only be used with strong quality safeguards to ensure they are real, additional, verifiable, permanent, and enforceable. If offsets are included, they should be limited to a percentage of the required emissions reductions set in a manner to ensure that they do not undermine either the rapid transformation, beginning this decade, to a clean energy economy, or the pollution reduction targets,

including the need to reduce domestic emissions from fossil fuels by at least 8 to 14% from 1990 levels by 2020. This will create jobs, reduce our dependence on oil, and galvanize the made-in-America technologies that will be needed to accelerate emission reductions by nations around the world. In addition to meeting the quality criteria, international offsets should be allowed only if they result in emissions reductions beyond a nationally appropriate country emission-reduction commitment consistent with our global science-based emission-reductions goals.

Reject Mechanisms that Delay Pollution Cuts. Mechanisms that provide compliance flexibility cannot be allowed to interfere with the schedule for achieving the necessary reductions in pollution. Delays only serve to increase climate risks and costs to future generations.

Preserve the Ability of States to Act. State innovation has been critical to our environmental progress over the last four decades and

We cannot reduce U.S. global warming emissions to levels consistent with the science if at the same time we construct new sources of global warming pollution.

must be permitted to continue. States should be allowed to set standards for energy, transportation, and global warming emissions that go beyond what is required nationally, with the federal standard serving as a floor, not a ceiling.

Don't Dig the Hole Deeper. We cannot reduce U.S. global warming emissions to levels consistent with the science if at the same time we construct new sources of global warming pollution. A responsible carbon-reduction plan must prohibit the construction of new coal-fired power plants that do not sequester the vast majority of their carbon dioxide emissions.

Don't Offshore U.S. Global Warming Emissions. The United States has the world's largest coal reserves. If even a fraction of the carbon contained in these coal reserves is released, it will be impossible to prevent catastrophic effects of global warming. The United States should phase out the export of coal to countries that do not have a carbon control program comparable to that of the United States.

Provide for Strong Citizen Enforcement and Public Involvement. Ensure the vital check and balance of strong citizen enforcement and public involvement in order to help guarantee that our pollution-reduction goals are met and to guard against agency failure in implementation and enforcement.

Act in a Fair and Just Manner to Alleviate the Impacts of Climate Justice Issues

Help Low- and Moderate-Income Americans Transition to Clean Energy. Because low- and moderate-income households, especially people of color, spend a larger share of their budgets on energy and other basic costs of living than better-off households, ensure that any energy-related price increases are offset by direct consumer rebates that effectively and efficiently reach these households and workers, with the assistance delivered in ways that are consistent with energy conservation goals, and with particular attention to those most in need.

Protect American Workers' Transition to a Low Carbon Economy. Provide assistance to workers in older industries that are highly reliant on carbon-based energy – and the communities they live in, especially minority communities. Make available the tools necessary to make the transition to the clean energy economy and to be competitive for good jobs within it. In addition, ensure that American companies and workers do not face unfair competition from countries that fail to address global warming, providing worker and community transition benefits, including training, education, and job placement assistance, as well as wage replacement, health care, retirement bridges, and other forms of economic and social assistance.

Address Needs of Less Developed Countries. Assist developing countries that have contributed the least to global warming to increase their resilience, adapt to global warming impacts that are now unavoidable, and develop sustainable low-carbon

economies. Funding for adaptation and mitigation must be in addition to other overseas relief and development commitments. Expediently provide these countries appropriate technology for both adaptation and mitigation.

Accelerate the Transition to a Clean Energy Economy

Invest in a Clean Energy Economy. Invest a significant portion of the revenue from auctioning pollution allowances in energy efficiency and clean energy, targeted to the technologies and

Much of the language and concepts in this section are drawn from the Climate Equity Alliance principles. (www.greenforall.org/what-we-do/working-with-washington/climate-equity), practices that are the cleanest, cheapest, safest, and fastest at reducing pollution, as determined by the application of clear standards set by Congress.

Establish Clean Energy Standards. Move forward with aggressive clean energy standards including, but not limited to, stronger building codes, appliance standards, and vehicle and fuel standards; an energy efficiency resource standard for electric and gas utilities; and an aggressive renewable electricity standard.

Invest in Transportation Infrastructure that Reduces Global Warming Emissions. Reform transportation policies to focus on moving people rather than cars and trucks. Prioritize efficiency through mass transit, passenger rail, and bicycle and pedestrian options, and encourage more efficient land-use and development patterns, giving people viable alternatives to driving.

Expand Opportunity for America's Workers and Communities. The shift to a clean economy has the potential to create large numbers of quality green-collar jobs for American workers, grow emerging industries, and improve the health of low- and moderate-income Americans and people of color, who suffer disproportionately from cancer, asthma, and other respiratory ailments in the current pollution-based economy.

This shift represents a significant opportunity to make cost-effective public and private investments that help rebuild and retrofit our nation, and through training and job readiness programs, to ensure that those who most need work are prepared to do the work that most needs to be done.

Promote a Global Clean Technology Transition. A global clean technology transition is needed to avoid the worst impacts of global warming. Many developing countries will need support to transition to lower carbon economies without compromising basic development needs and without undermining basic rights. The United States should assist in this transition by investing in a global clean energy economy.

Plan for a Warming World

Prepare for the Changes We Cannot Avoid. Assist states, localities, and tribes in preparing to adapt to the

degree of global warming that is now unavoidable. Provide targeted assistance to low-income communities, especially people of color, which face distinct and disproportionate economic and public health threats from the impacts of global warming and climate justice issues.

Safeguard Our Natural Resources. Ensure that our natural resources, upon which all human health and

economic vitality depend, are protected from impacts of global warming that are now unavoidable. Investments should be guided by an interagency national strategy, based upon the best available science, and dedicated to efforts at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels to make our fish and wildlife populations, forests, coasts, and other ecosystems more resilient in the face of a changing climate.

Organizations Endorsing the National Call to Action on Global Warming:

1Sky - ACORN - Alliance for Climate Protection - Audubon - Catholic Healthcare West - Center for International Environmental Law - Ceres - Clean Water Action - Climate Law and Policy Project - Climate Protection Campaign - Climate Solutions - Defenders of Wildlife - Democracia USA - Earthjustice - Eco-Equity - Ecology Center - Energize America - Energy Action Coalition - Environment America - Environment and Energy Study Institute - Environment Northeast - Environmental Law and Policy Center - Green for All - Greenpeace - Health Professionals for Clean Air - Hip Hop Caucus - ICLEI USA - Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy - Interfaith Power and Light - International Forum on Globalization - Kyoto USA - League of Conservation Voters - League of Women Voters - League of Young Voters - Massachusetts Climate Action Network - National Hispanic Environmental Council - National Teach-In on Global Warming Solutions - National Wildlife Federation - Oceana - Oxfam - Physicians for Social Responsibility - Progressive Future - Public Citizen - Religious Witness for the Earth - Rock the Vote - SEED Coalition - Sierra Club - Southern Alliance for Clean Energy - Teleosis Institute - The Humane Society of the United States - The Student Public Interest Research Groups - The Wilderness Society - Union of Concerned Scientists

Atascadero Takes Action Against Green House Gas

by David Broadwater

On March 24, by a vote of 4 to 1, the Atascadero City Council decided to begin conducting an inventory of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and to join the "Cities for Climate Protection" (CCP) campaign of the international organization "Local Governments for Sustainability". The City will pay a \$600 per year membership fee and receive a \$15,000 grant from the Air Pollution Control District (APCD) to conduct the GHG inventory.

The "Benefits of Participation" include "financial savings" in the

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Can You Hear Them Now?

Telecom giant lays siege to the county, citizens and General Plan

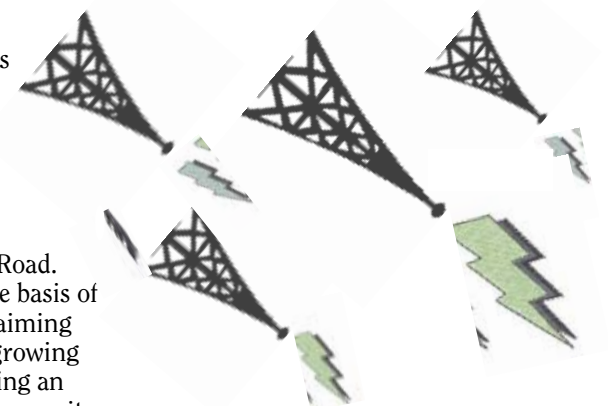
Last October, Sprint/Nextel found out that it can't always get what it wants – specifically, a nest of cell antennas, which an applicant proposed to build on his property eight miles west of Atascadero off Highway 41, up Toro Creek Road.

The land was graded on the basis of a permit gained by falsely claiming the land was to be used for growing pomegranates, thereby gaining an agricultural exemption from permit requirements. After massive grading, the applicant then requested a permit for the cell antennas, to be leased to the telecom giant.

The massive, blatantly illegal

grading under false pretenses, and the failure to determine the infeasibility of co-locating the antennas on an

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Another Pismo Night Heron Massacre

By Terry Lilley
www.saveourseas.org

On March 24, for the fifth year in a row, residents of Boeker Street in Shell Beach had active night heron nest removed from their large ficus trees, killing babies and eggs. The land owners did this last year, which I filmed and Teri Hickey from the Department of Fish and Game documented, leading to a successful conviction in court. This year, adult herons moved into the trees and started laying eggs in mid February. There were about 14 active nests in the tree as of March 23.

The next day, tree trimmers started to cut out active night heron nests. They proceeded to remove about five nests and grind them up in the chipper. I called the Pismo Police Department and they sent an officer

out to halt the operation. I also told the trimmers what they were doing was illegal, but they claimed Department of Fish and Game gave them permission to remove the nests(!) I called the DFG hotline and two wardens arrived within

an hour and documented the nests' removal. On the ground below where the nests were removed were fresh egg shell fragments and a dead baby night heron, proving the nests were active. Also on the ground below one of the trees that had not been cut yet was another smashed whole fresh egg, still wet. DFG took photos of this.

I filmed the trimmers cutting the nests out of the trees and putting the nests in the chipper. I also filmed about ten adult night herons flying above the trees in a panic as their nests, eggs and babies were being destroyed once again. I also filmed the smashed eggs on the ground below the trees and dead baby heron.

Last year, the land owner got fined for removing active nests. He did the removing himself. This year, it appears he hired a tree service company to kill the birds. This is a clear violation under the "take" clause of the Federal Migratory Bird Act.

The owners spent hours in court last year listening to my testimony about the MBA and were fully aware



of the law, plus the State DFG Codes. A fine obviously did not deter them from doing the same thing again. They have killed dozens of night herons and messed up an entire rookery once again. Last year in court they said on the witness stand that they wanted to get rid of the birds.



photos: Terry Lilley



have removed over 50 active nests that I have documented so far in seven different locations, but think about all the nests that have been destroyed that I am not aware of.

Until someone gets jail time or a serious fine, this will continue until the birds are

gone from the Central Coast forever.

DFG in Morro Bay requested my movies, which I delivered to them on DVD. I am very thankful that the police and DFG both responded quickly to this event. That is a real improvement over the last five years and I greatly appreciate it. I am sure the night herons do, too.



They are being very successful at doing so. Had I not been made aware of the March 24 activities by a concerned neighbor, all the heron nests in this *very* important rookery would have been destroyed, along with their eggs and chicks.

The land owners and tree trimmers

The Bears Thank You

The California Fish & Game Commission decided last month to withdraw its scheduled vote on two proposals to dramatically expand bear hunting throughout the state and permit bear hunting in San Luis Obispo County for the first time.

Both proposals were met with opposition from a broad coalition of organizations. A majority of the County's Board of Supervisors wrote to the Commission opposing the hunt, along with several City Council members. More than forty organizations joined in submitting comments. Hundreds of residents wrote and called the Commission urging them not to allow the hunt.

The week before the Commission met, Los Padres ForestWatch submitted a 94-page critique of the bear hunt proposal and the associated Negative Declaration. ForestWatch retained Dr. Rick Hopkins, a wildlife biologist with Live Oak Associates, to review the Fish and Game proposal.

"In light of the lack of information provided by CDFG about the existing black bear population in San Luis Obispo County, I believe that the harvest of up to 50 black bears in San Luis Obispo County may have a significant effect on the environment," concluded Dr. Hopkins.

"Thanks to the Commission's decision not to adopt this controversial proposal, black bears will continue to have the freedom to roam in San Luis Obispo," said Jeff Kuyper, executive director of ForestWatch, which led efforts to defeat the San Luis Obispo County proposal. "We applaud Fish & Game for stepping back and taking a closer look at this misguided plan."

The Department may resubmit both bear hunting proposals to the Commission as part of next year's re-writing of the state's mammal hunting regulations, a process that would begin in the Fall of 2009.



“Red Tape” Bill Threatens Health & Environment

Sierra Club opposes AB 1107

By Bill Magavern, Director, Sierra Club California

Sierra Club California opposes AB 1107 (Blakeslee) because it would impose costly and burdensome new requirements on the safeguard-setting process at the California Environmental Protection Agency.

The boards, departments and offices of Cal-EPA, under the authority delegated to them by the Legislature, have enacted some of the most effective safeguards in the United States to protect our air, atmosphere,

water, land and health.

AB 1107 would require economic analyses for every single rule proposed by the Air Resources Board, Water Resources Control Board, Integrated Waste Management Board, Department of Toxic Substances Control, Department of Pesticide Regulation, and Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, and allow any party to request a peer review of that analysis. These new

requirements would add considerable costs and delays to the rulemaking process, putting unnecessary roadblocks in the path of safeguards that are important to the health and environment of Californians.

This bill would ensnarl in red tape the implementation of many important laws passed by the Legislature to reduce harmful emissions, remove toxins from consumer products, and clean up our waterways.



Earth Day '09



Local Sierra Student Coalition president Alex Lehman and Sierra Club AmeriCorps intern Barrie Valencia served as intrepid booth warriors for the Chapter at the April 18 SLO Earth Day event in Mission Plaza.

Ag Busters

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organizations and individuals highlighted in great detail the project's multitude of sins, including inconsistencies with the county general plan and numerous county policies, as well as significant negative impacts on water supplies and air quality, rare plants and animals and wildlife habitat, important cultural and archeological sites, and the future viability of cattle ranching on the property. So it was no surprise when the decision triggered a lawsuit against the county, filed by North County Watch and Endangered Habitats League. (For more information or to donate to that effort, go to: www.northcountywatch.org)

In the wake of that process, many are asking how it is that the county's agricultural cluster ordinance -- a "tool in the toolbox" meant to support agricultural viability by allowing farmers and ranchers to subdivide a small portion of their land in exchange for permanent protection of the remaining farmland or rangeland -- could end up encouraging and facilitating projects that are not only bad for the environment but also bad for agriculture? Perverse incentives with perverse results.

The ordinance states: It is the policy of the Board to encourage the preservation of agricultural lands in San Luis Obispo County for the continuing and enhanced production of food and fiber through the use of a variety of policy and regulatory techniques. One technique, provided by this Section, is the clustering of allowable dwelling units on relatively small parcels in agricultural areas instead of the dispersal of such units on larger parcels. (SLO County Land Use Ordinance Section 22.22.150)

Yes, the ordinance was intended to be both a disincentive to subdivision of ag lands, while at the same time an incentive for preserving large swaths of productive ag land by allowing farmers and ranchers to pursue some modest development of clustered home sites on small portions of their land. The reality, however, is that the ordinance has been an utter failure in doing what it was intended to do. The projects approved for Santa Margarita Ranch and Laetitia Vineyards vividly illustrate its failure.

Simply put, the original intention was: Farmers and ranchers committed to staying in farming and ranching would use this ordinance to build a few homes on a small portion of their land -- five percent of the project area (which would include all necessary infrastructure and buffers between the home sites and the agricultural operations to adequately minimize future complaints from residents of those homes) -- for family members and others associated with the ongoing ag operations, while

agreeing to terms of an agricultural easement that prohibits future development on the remaining 95 percent in perpetuity.

In most cases, this has been the sad reality: developers (some calling themselves "farmers" or "ranchers") purchase large agricultural parcels to develop projects featuring gated communities and expensive home sites that depend on the property's groundwater, which is supposedly protected for agricultural uses. In some cases, new intensified and irrigated crops have been planted as a way to qualify for even more home sites by manipulating the formula used to determine the number of lots allowed. Projects include as many as 111 home sites (Santa Margarita Ranch) on large, non-contiguous lots, increasing the likelihood of complaints from future residents due to conflicts between agriculture and residential uses. The viability of agricultural operation in these situations is further exacerbated by the inadequate buffers separating homes from crops or livestock, and by including the areas directly around and between home sites when calculating the 95 percent (now called the "donut hole" calculation).

Fortunately, we may soon see some changes to -- or the complete elimination of -- this terribly flawed ordinance. In February, the Board of Supervisors directed county planners to solicit public input (interested parties were asked to complete an on-line survey) and to come back with recommendations for amending the ordinance, addressing specifically: reducing the houses allowed on ag parcels of 20 acres or more from two to one; reducing or eliminating the density bonus (additional home sites); requiring contiguous lots (as in clustered!); protecting water supplies for agriculture; requiring agriculture buffers located entirely on the residential lots to buffer prime soils, production areas, and operations on the site; and limiting ag cluster subdivisions to sites close to urban areas.

The Planning Department will come back to the Board with the survey results and recommendations for amendments in late June or early July before refining the amendments based on direction from the Board. The Planning Commission will review the resulting draft amended ordinance, tentatively in late September or early October.

The Santa Lucia Chapter will monitor the process as it evolves. If the ordinance cannot be amended to prevent the kind of unintended consequences it has so far enabled, let's hope that the Board of Supervisors will have the courage to eliminate it altogether.

Sludge Held Back

Board of Supervisors Extends Interim Moratorium Ordinance

By David Broadwater, Center for Sludge Information

On April 21, the SLO County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to extend the Interim Moratorium ordinance on the land application for sewage sludge for four years.

The Board also directed the Environmental Health Division (EHD) of the Public Health Department to continue development of a permanent ordinance and to pursue funding sources other than the County for an Environmental Impact Report on that ordinance.

The County Supervisors did not vote to include composts containing sewage sludge in the scope of the extended moratorium. The only Supervisor to express an inclination to include composted sewage sludge in an extended Interim Moratorium ordinance was Frank Mecham.

A total of sixteen people testified at the hearing, including four representatives of sewage plants (advocating Option #2 - moratorium extension as is for three years), eight individuals and organization representatives (advocating Option #3 - a four-year moratorium extension, the inclusion of compost, and an alternatives analyses), and one organic farmer advocating a ban on sewage sludge land application.

The Board seems to have concluded that an alternatives analysis conducted in the framework of an EIR will be sufficient, although under CEQA it would be restricted to analysis of direct physical ecological impacts, not economic effects or changes to land use or agricultural production and marketing.

The effect of the interim moratorium extension is likely to be the same as it has been since its first adoption in 2004 -- an effective ban on sewage sludge land application, even though it allows 1,500 cubic yards to be land applied per year in the county. The effect of neglecting to include composted sewage sludge in the extended interim moratorium ordinance means the spreading of this material will continue unregulated by the County, an unfortunate outcome.

I wish to thank all those organizations and individuals who took the time to write the Board of Supervisors on this matter and participate in the April 21 meeting. The Environmental Health Division will bring the interim moratorium ordinance extension back to the Supervisors for final approval sometime in the next few months.

Three Mile Island Plus Thirty

By David Weisman
Outreach Coordinator,
Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility

How many nuclear reactors have been ordered in the U.S. since the meltdown at Three Mile Island?

This sounds like the beginning of a joke, but the answer to "How many nuclear reactors have been ordered in the U.S. since the meltdown at Three Mile Island?" is "None."

And the reason: Money.

Today, 30 years later, we are suffering from another meltdown—a global financial one—complete with all the appropriate metaphors: "toxic assets" and "fears of ongoing fallout."

And this is the key reason we won't see any kind of nuclear resurgence any time soon. Nuclear power is expensive and risky—financially risky. As utility guru Dave Freeman once quipped, "Nuclear power was supposed to be too cheap to meter, and ended up being too expensive to

I compare our existing reactors to older automobiles that do not have airbags.... Our existing nuclear plants do not have the same range of safety features that new nuclear plant designs have, and the differences in the types and physical arrangement of the safety systems makes it impossible to upgrade the old plants to meet the same standards.

- Per Peterson, Diablo Canyon Independent Safety Committee
Professor, Dept of Nuclear Engineering, UC Berkeley
March 20, 2009

matter."

On this somber anniversary of the meltdown at TMI, when it took 90 minutes to melt down unit two, give the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility (www.anr.org) 90 seconds to remind you why nobody in the U.S. has invested a penny since.

In an ANR video clip, Peter Bradford, a commissioner of the

leadership skills, network and bond with fellow students, engage in fun activities and enjoy tasty vegetarian cooking (the low carbon diet for the climate).

Most sites allow you to enjoy activities like spending time in the woods, swimming, hanging out around a campfire, etc. Not only will you come away changed, you'll have the skills and confidence to be a FORCE for CHANGE!

This year's trainings in New Mexico, Puerto Rico and California (Loyola Marymount) are offered tuition-free, thanks to sponsorship by Building Bridges to the Outdoors program (www.sierraclub.org/youth).

LEARN TO LEAD:

* GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING: How to start and run an effective youth organization. We cover everything from recruitment, to running a meeting, to developing new leaders to ensure that your organization continues once you graduate.

* CAMPAIGN STRATEGY & PLANNING: How to plan, implement, and run an effective environmental campaign. We use the Sierra Club Matrix to teach the most essential skills needed to effect real change. Later in the week you'll get a change to practice your skills.

* COMMUNICATION SKILLS: How to define your message and get it across confidently and persuasively to the media, to fellow group members, and

to the public.

* GUEST SPEAKERS: Meet some amazing special guests—Sierra Club experts, leaders of the movement, and experts on various aspects of climate and energy justice.

Of course, the program isn't all work and no play. In addition to the main focus of the program, you can expect to enjoy:

* Most locations enjoy the beautiful surroundings of a serene location

* Hikes, games, and energizing evening activities

* That aforementioned delicious vegetarian cooking

* The company and friendship of like-minded youth

For information and applications, go to:

www.ssc.org/sprog



Nuclear Regulatory Commission at the time of the TMI accident, explains the economic fallout from the incident.

It's part of the devastating doc, *Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Nuclear Power* but were afraid to ask*, which can be seen in streaming video at www.everythingnuclear.org

How to Spend Your Summer Vacation



The Sierra Student Coalition's nationwide Student Environmental Leadership Trainings are week-long peer-to-peer programs led by the nation's top youth organizers. Develop your grassroots organizing and

Sprint Sues

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existing array elsewhere as the law requires, resulted in an appeal to the Board of Supervisors by the neighborhood, supported by the Sierra Club. On December 9, The Board took a final vote upholding the appeal. Simply put, our Land Use Ordinance said "no." ("Toro Creek Triumphant," Nov./Dec. 2008).

Now Sprint and the landowners are suing the County, claiming the Federal Telecommunications Act says "yes."

Sprint's lawsuit is legal throat-clearing, designed simply to exist and burden the defendant. The Telecommunications Act does not give cell phone companies carte blanche to put cell towers anywhere they want, and the County was clearly within its

rights and following the letter of local land use regulations in denying the permit. But the County thereby put itself between a large corporation and its pursuit of profits. If the County can't or won't spend the money to defend its decision, Sprint

wins, and our Land Use Ordinance -- and we -- will lose.

Last year, the Toro Creek Association, as neighbors defending their neighborhood from an illegal industrial development, poured their blood, sweat and cash into document review, report preparation and expert testimony. They won. In doing so, they overcame the opposition of a Planning staff too eager to serve the "client," and a Planning Commission too willing to look the other way. Their appeal was successful for that best of all possible reasons: They were in the right.

If a corporation successfully runs over them now, it will be for the worst of all possible reasons: Because it could.



Atascadero GHG

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public and private sectors and "economic development and new local jobs," according to the March 24 Staff Report.

By implementing a "Climate Action Plan", the City will further its top strategic planning priority -- economic development -- reconfirmed at the special council strategic planning meeting on March 25, during which CCP participation was also reaffirmed.

Four citizens spoke in favor of joining the CCP plan at the 3-24-09 Council meeting. None spoke against it.

Information about the impact of three state laws on local government regarding energy use and reducing GHG emissions is included in the 3/24 Staff Report.

Don't forget!

In March we sent out an appeal to each of our members, asking for contributions directly to our Chapter. These contributions really do make a difference to us, and are an important part of our Chapter's budget. When you make a donation to the Chapter, you support the Sierra Club's work in our own backyard. You allow us to continue our work to protect wilderness and wildlife, to improve the quality of life in our cities, and to promote the enjoyment of nature. Please be as generous as you are able—remember, these funds directly affect your way of life in your neighborhood.

Thank you. Send your contribution to:
Sierra Club
P.O. Box 15755
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Classifieds

Next issue deadline is **May 11**. To get a rate sheet or submit your ad and payment, contact:
 Sierra Club - Santa Lucia Chapter
 P.O. Box 15755
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93406
 sierraclub8@gmail.com



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Duna Vista Trail ♦ Lopez Lake Trail Work Party

Free Boat Shuttle & BBQ

Sunday, June 7th, 9:00am - 2:00pm

RSVP & More Info: 544.1777



National Trails Day®

National Trails Day provides an opportunity to show our appreciation for trails by working together to improve them. Join us in making a difference! Visit www.ecoslo.org or email info@ecoslo.org.



Outings and Activities Calendar

Seller of travel registration information: CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.

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 **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.

Sunday, May 3rd, 1:00-3:00 p.m. Sierra Club Family Hike Exploring Poly Canyon. Easy hike to the fascinating structures of the Experimental Design Village, 3 miles round trip. Children ages 3-12 (under 3 okay in pack or jogger stroller). Meet at entrance to Cal Poly Canyon, Parking Lot H-4 (free parking on weekends). Children must be accompanied by parent or legal guardian. Bring water and snack. No pets. Led by Jennifer Bauer, asst. Joe Morris. For more info: slobauers@charter.net. Or call 543-9655.

Directions: from Grand Ave. head North onto Campus to Perimeter Road. Turn right and go to the next Stop Sign. Park in the parking lot on your left. Look for the hike leader and group.

Wed, May 6, 13, 20, 27, 5:30 p.m. Informal Hikes around San Luis Obispo, approx 5 miles with 1200 foot elevation gain. Bring water and dress for the weather. Check Website or e-mail: backpackingary1@gmail.com for details.

Fundraising Cruises in 2009

Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park

July 17-20
August 7-10
September 11-14

Come and explore the wild, wind-swept islands of Channel Island National Park. In spring, the islands are ablaze with wildflowers. The pristine waters of the Marine Sanctuary will entice both snorkelers and kayakers in all seasons. Watch for the highly endangered Island Fox. Marvel at the sight of whales, dolphins, sea and land birds, endemic plants, and reminders of the Chumash people who lived on these islands for thousands of years. All islands are ringed with rugged shorelines and dotted with sea caves. Each island offers special charm: San Miguel for white sandy beaches and a huge congregation of elephant seals; Santa Rosa for a rare stand of Torrey Pines; Santa Cruz for high mountains, deep valleys and the famous Painted Cave, Anacapa for the brown pelican rookery, a picturesque lighthouse, excellent snorkeling waters and a colony of friendly sea lions who will swim with snorkelers and follow kayaks.

Sat., May 9, 10 a.m. Eagle Rock Nature Trail. Pole Cats is dedicated to leading local Sierra Club day hikes and modeling the benefits of using trekking poles (see Pole Cats Can Turn You Into a Quadruped). 2.2 miles/720 feet elevation change. The trailhead is located across from Cuesta College at El Chorro Regional Park. From SLO, take Highway 1 North and turn east (right) at the first of two turn signals to El Chorro Regional Park. Follow the signs to the Day Use area, passing the ball fields and Botanical Garden. Park in the Day Use area at the end of the road, just before the locked gate. Confirm with David Georgi at polecatleader@gmail.com 458-5575 for upcoming activities. Bipeds welcome.

Sun., May 10th, 8:45 a.m. Mother's Day Hike in Montana de Oro: Valencia Peak, Oats Peak, Coon Creek, and the Bluffs. Join the leader on this great 9 mile hike in Montana de Oro. This loop hike is a combination of several trails in the park. There is approximately 2700 ft. of elevation gain. We will get to explore many aspects of the park including peaks, grasslands, oak woodlands, a riparian corridor, and coastal bluffs. There is a possibility of ticks and poison oak. Bring lunch, snacks, water, sturdy hiking shoes, and dress for the weather. Meet at the Valencia Peak trailhead which is on the main park road just past the visitor's center. There is a possibility of a refueling stop for food after the hike. For info, call Chuck @ 805-441-7597

Sat., May 16th, 9 a.m. Exploring Cerro Alto Hike. Come take a 5 - 8 mile hike with 1600 foot elevation gain exploring the Cerro Alto Area off Highway 41. We may go just to the top or back or around the Boy Scout Loop. Bring water, snack and dress for the weather. Meet at the day use parking area at the end of the campground. There is a \$5 per car parking

Cruises depart from Santa Barbara aboard the 68' twin diesel Truth. The fee, \$950, includes an assigned bunk, all meals, snacks, beverages, plus the services of a ranger/naturalist who will travel with us to lead hikes on each island and present evening programs. The proceeds from these fundraising cruises will benefit Sierra Club's political programs in California. To make a reservation mail a \$100 check, payable to Sierra Club to leader: Joan Jones Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732. Contact leader for more information: 626-443-0706; jholtzhln@aol.com



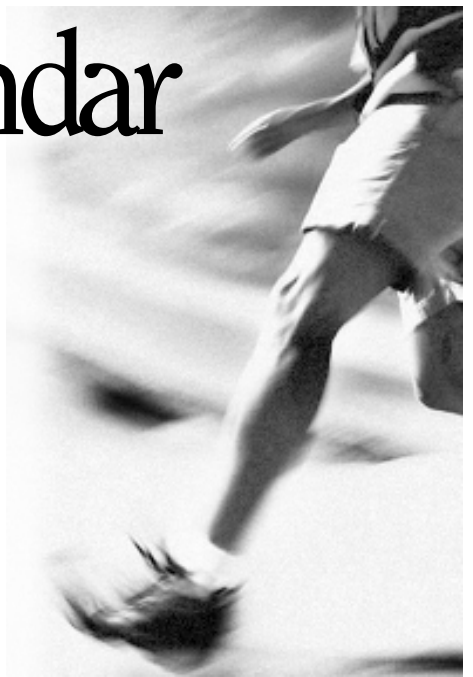
fee. Details call Gary at 473-3694. Carpoolers from SLO may meet at Santa Rosa Park at 8:15 a.m.

Saturday May 23 at 8:30 a.m. to Monday May 25, Informal Salmon Creek to Dura Flats Backpack/Camping Trip. This will be a short yet strenuous backpack to Dutra Flats Campground by way of the Salmon Creek and Spruce Creek Trails. It will be 4-1/2 miles to this camp with 1750 feet of elevation gain. Bring food and all the usual gear for such a trip. This is a primitive campsite. We will day hike to a yet to be determined place from this base camp on Sunday. The meeting place will be Santa Rosa Park on Sat. at 8:30 and Washburn Day Use Area just north of Cambria at 9:15. There will be poison oak and ticks in this area. The camp may have other partys using it due to the closures in much of the Ventana Wilderness due to fires last year. Please contact Carlos at 546-0317 so he can have an idea of how many people will be going and also if you have questions.

Sat., May 23, 10 a.m. Quarry Trail. Pole Cats is dedicated to leading local Sierra Club day hikes and modeling the benefits of using trekking poles (see Pole Cats Can Turn You Into a Quadruped). 2 miles/320 feet elevation change. Meet at the at the Cabrillo Peak trailhead. From SLO, go 12 miles north on Hwy 1 to Los Osos/Baywood Park exit just before Morro Bay. Go south on Southbay Blvd. and drive .7 miles to the State Park entrance. Continue straight for .2 miles and look for the dirt parking lot on the left. It is easy to miss. Do not wait at the Live Oak trailhead, which is shortly after the Quarry trailhead. Confirm with David Georgi at polecatleader@gmail.com 458-5575 for upcoming activities. Bipeds welcome.

Sat, June 13, 10 a.m., Islay Hill Open Space. Pole Cats is dedicated to leading local Sierra Club day hikes and modeling the benefits of using trekking poles (see Pole Cats Can Turn You Into a Quadruped). 1 mile/400 feet elevation change. Join us for an easy hike with spectacular views of Edna Valley to the south and morros to the north. From Broad, go east on Tank Farm, turn right on Wavertree, left on Spanish Oaks and veer right onto Sweetbay and park near cul de sac. Confirm with David Georgi at 458-5575 or orpolecatleader@gmail.com for upcoming activities. Bipeds welcome.

Sat, June 27, 10 a.m. Maino Open Space trail/Lemon Grove Loop. Pole Cats is dedicated to leading local Sierra Club day hikes and modeling the benefits of using trekking poles (see Pole Cats Can Turn You Into a Quadruped). 2.2 miles/400 feet elevation change. The trailhead is located off the Marsh Street onramp of southbound Highway 101. From downtown SLO take Higuera Street to the intersection with Marsh Street and proceed as if to take 101 South. Immediately after the freeway underpass, bear right into the parking lot. Confirm with David Georgi at 458-5575 or polecatleader@gmail.com for upcoming activities. Bipeds welcome



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.

Other Local Outings

Not sponsored by the Sierra Club

Sat., Sun., May 2nd and 3rd. Art at the Octagon Barn. The San Luis Obispo Outdoor Painter Enterprises and the Land Conservancy of SLO have teamed up to celebrate their 25th anniversary at the Octagon Barn. Live Music, Paintings, tours and much more as the organization moves forward. For more information call 544-9066, or click here. (Sponsored by the Land Conservancy of SLO)

Octagon Barn - South Higuera, SLO 2nd Saturdays, 9am-12pm. The Octagon Barn on Higuera - just south of San Luis Obispo. Restoration and development is ongoing at this Historic 108 year old building site. We are in preparation to open the Barn as part of our 25th Anniversary Celebration Come join us on the 2nd Saturday of each month. Learn first-hand how historical restoration works and be part of the transformation of San Luis Obispo's iconic Octagon Barn. Stop by to check it out! If you're not "handy" contact us about joining the Barn Committee to plan and strategize on opening the Barn for community use next year. Call 544-9096 for details. (Sponsored by The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County).

Sat., May 9th, 9 a.m. - Noon. City of SLO, Johnson Ranch Trail Work Party. Bring gloves, water, snack and dress for the weather. Meet at the Intersection of Ontario Road and S. Higuera Street. This City is trying to open up this are by next spring. But needs to build 3 miles of trail to make this happen. The more volunteers the better to make this happen. (Sponsored by City of SLO).

Fri May 15 - Sun May 17, Prewitt Loop- Big Sur Trail Restoration Work Party. A unique trail work project in a beautiful part of Big Sur. Ron and Joe are organizing a two night and two day campout/work party. Hike in Friday to Kelly Camp (near the back of Prewitt) and spend Saturday and most of Sunday doing trail work. Redwoods, huge vistas and an opportunity to spend a weekend outdoors doing good. Call Ron Dexter 528-7357 for info (Sponsored by CCCMB).