



SIERRA
CLUB

June 2009
Volume 46 No. 6

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FOCUS ON THE ENVIRONMENT A PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP FOR YOU

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

Photographing endangered
animals, people and
landscapes with

DAVID GARTH

Saturday June 13 (8:30 am - 10:30 am)



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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

Sanctuary!

The stars are aligned to extend the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary to SLO

The 14 national marine sanctuaries in the United States celebrate and safeguard the nation's richest underwater treasures. The National Marine Sanctuary Program is essentially the offshore version of our national park system: A way to designate marine environments within the waters of the United States that are notable for their biodiversity and cultural history, and ensure the proper management is in place that will allow the activities supported by that area's ecological integrity-- fishing, whale watching, beachcombing, tide pooling -- to remain part of our country's legacy.

In 1992, Congress pondered the creation of both a Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary and a Central Coast National Marine Sanctuary. SLO activists championed the significant oceanographic, geological, biological and archaeological qualifications of Central Coast waters as clearly deserving sanctuary status. We have the most significant wetland system on the central coast, rocky intertidal zones, coral communities, the highest coastal dunes in the state, magnificent kelp forests, marine mammal haul-out areas, a major sea otter population, and three whale and porpoise feeding areas.

But Congress opted for half a loaf, drawing an arbitrary line in the ocean just south of San Simeon, decreeing 5,300 square miles of the waters to the north of that line, from Cambria to the Marin Headlands, to be a national marine sanctuary, and the waters to the south to be out of luck.

For seventeen years, Monterey and Santa Cruz have reaped the benefits of national sanctuary status, including ocean tourism, federal marine research dollars, and a higher level of protection from marine pollutants. SLO has not, despite years of efforts by activists and local residents to win extension of those benefits to the Central Coast.

As a result, when San Joaquin Valley agricultural operations proposed to dispose of their toxic wastewater off the coast, the Bureau of Reclamation targeted Estero Bay for the dumping, not Monterey Bay.


When the cry "drill, baby, drill!" was heard across the land, it was our coastal waters in the cross-hairs, not Monterey's. The reason in both cases: Monterey is protected by a national marine sanctuary and we are not.

This year, we aim to change that. We're going to prevail on Congress to extend the southern boundary of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary to include the waters of San Luis Obispo County. This is the final stretch of a three-year effort to finally finish the unfinished business of 1992. Volunteers with Sierra Club, Surfrider and Cal Poly's Environmental Council are going door to door asking coastal tourism-dependent businesses to sign the statement on the flyer at right. (Individuals in favor of the idea can sign the version on page 7).

We now have the right Congressional representation and the right


**MONTEREY BAY
NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY
BORDER EXPANSION**

Protect San Luis Obispo's coasts from oil drilling and oil spills. The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Border Expansion will extend into San Luis Obispo to include the waters and marine wildlife of the Central Coast. Your support for the expansion will help to maintain our coastal tourism economy, protect endangered species, and prolong Central Coast resident's quality of life.



FACT:
Oil drilling and ocean dumping are prohibited in the Sanctuary. Monterey and Santa Cruz have this protection. San Luis Obispo does not.

FACT:
Local businesses are the basis of coastal tourism economies and would benefit from the Sanctuary's promotion of kayaking, diving, camping, and wildlife watching.



I support protecting the waters, tourism, and wildlife of San Luis Obispo.

Business: _____
Contact: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
Signature: _____

Business: _____
Contact: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
Signature: _____

federal administration. Now's the time to make a little history. And you can be part of it.

If you run a tourism-dependent business in San Luis Obispo County, please drop a note to barrie_valencia@yahoo.com or give us a call to request a flyer: 805-543-8717. Ask for Barrie or leave a message.

A Very Poor Plan for Pismo

There has never been a development in a canyon in Pismo Beach

By Francis Reed

Before my wife and I purchased our property at the southern end of Fresno Street in Pismo Beach in 2001, I inquired about the adjacent properties, especially the area flanking the eastern and southern portions of the lot. The Planning Department informed me this area was designated by the General Plan as Open Space and was not developable. When I inquired further as to why this was so, I was told Pismo Beach values its Open Space areas for the natural beauty and vistas to be shared by everyone. Additionally, the area contains scores of oak trees which are protected within the city limits of Pismo Beach.

Also, I was told the area contained natural grades well above 30 percent and was within the Coastal Zone. I

walked away assured Pismo Beach was protecting these resources for future generations and would not allow rezoning of this area for any purposes.

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Support Your Local Chapter!

Donate online, via PayPal:



at www.santalucia.sierraclub.org



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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Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to Sierra magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

Enclose check and mail to: **F94Q W 2500 1**
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Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

ENERGY TOWN HALL

YOUR COMMUNITY! YOUR CHOICE! YOUR VOICE!

Join Supervisor **Adam Hill**
Grover Beach Mayor **John Shoals**
and
Sonoma Climate Action Plan
Director **David Erickson**

7:00PM TO 8:30PM

Hors d'oeuvres and light refreshments will be provided.

Thursday, June 11
Ramona Garden Park Center
993 Ramona Avenue
Grover Beach



Join the Sierra Club and our guests for a stimulating discussion of how the South County can help build an affordable, clean, secure energy future for the Central Coast. Free admission; refreshments served. For more information, contact: chadnworth@gmail.com. 925-595-5539

Let's Clear the Table

"The government can't pick the winners."

"We can't take anything off the table."

These two political catch-phrases, are doing a log to prolong the transition from fossil fuels to a clean energy economy, thereby endangering life on the planet as we know it.

A lot of well-meaning folks believe both statements to be true and utter them frequently, as do the originators and promoters of these phrases and this mindset – namely, the economic special interests that are looking to hang on to and expand the turf of the dirtiest, most dangerous and least affordable or efficient energy sources of the 19th and 20th centuries. Those you hear arguing to keep "clean coal" or nuclear power or offshore oil (recovered via "advanced, environmentally friendly technologies") or corn ethanol "on the table" are generally either executives in those industries, lobbyists for them, or shining examples of the kind of public opinion-shaping that millions of dollars in public relations spending can buy.

This mentality needs to disappear, and quickly. So the next time you read or hear any variation on these themes, point out two basic flaws in the logic. First, the government's been picking winners for more than a hundred years. Coal, oil, gas and nuclear subsidies — in tax breaks, loan guarantees, R&D, depletion allowances, liability caps, and all the enabling legislation industry lobbyists could write and a compliant Congress could pass — picked those winners and kept them afloat, and have forced alternative energy to eat their dust.

Second, based on the three criteria for the results we need – energy sources which will reduce carbon emissions by the largest amount, for the least money, in the shortest amount of time — we can indeed start picking winners and taking losers off the table. Hearteningly, the increasingly obvious winners are becoming the center of national and international attention and policymaking. It is equally heartening to see the losers finally starting to slide to the edge of the table.

For example:
It's time to forget about nuclear power, which fails on all three counts of those criteria. And it's not Sierra Club and Greenpeace and the Mothers for Peace saying so all by ourselves;

it's the chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. (See "The News for Nukes," page 3.) When you hear a federal official say, as Jon Wellinghoff said to a U.S. Energy Association forum on April 22, that no new coal or nuclear power plants are needed in the United States, you know there's something new in the air.

It's one thing when the Rocky Mountain Institute says this sort of thing (see "Energy Efficiency Could Replace 60% of Coal Power Plants," page 8), RMI having long pointed out that \$1 of energy efficiency eliminates seven times more climate change emissions than \$1 of nuclear power, and ten cents worth of micropower (low- or no-emission energy production for individual buildings or communities) displaces up to ten times more coal-fired kilowatts than does ten cents of new nuclear power. It's another thing when federal officials start broadcasting the message that nukes cost too much.

The *New York Times* article that reported on this turn of events dutifully went on to interview academics who don't agree with Chairman Wellinghoff, but then, instead of leaving the matter at the he-said/she-said level of lazy journalism, actually went back to the FERC Chair for a response. Mr. Wellinghoff proceeded to patiently dismantle the stock "when the wind don't blow and the sun don't shine" arguments of the defenders of old-time energy, and showed that he knows his cookies and is in step with changing times. Pretty refreshing.

More refreshment came just two weeks later, when the administration announced that federal funding for the development of hydrogen fuel cells for vehicles will be terminated. Energy Secretary Steven Chu has concluded that it will be 10 to 20 years before such technology would be practical. It would take too long and cost too much, so the government is going to spend its money on things that will yield faster results (i.e. better batteries).

And for a kicker, Secretary Chu (who still believes in a glowing nuclear future, and should chat with Chairman Wellinghoff) told the *Times* "The Obama administration will also drop spending for research on the exploration of oil and gas deposits because the industry itself has ample

SANTA LUCIAN

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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.

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[www.santalucia.
sierraclub.org](http://www.santalucia.sierraclub.org)

Outings, events, and more!

A Light at the End of the Sewer

The County Planning Commission waded into the Los Osos sewer for the first time on April 23 and in two subsequent hearings in May, with more to come. And, so far, the water's fine.

What a difference a month makes. On March 15, after the SLO County Farm Bureau and the Environmental Center of San Luis Obispo published a *Tribune* Viewpoint in which they listed obvious flaws in the County's proposed plant site and disposal plan, County staff hotly editorialized that it was "inaccurate," "inflammatory" and "irresponsible" of them to have done so. Ten days later, the California Coastal Commission sent an 11-page letter to the County Public Works Department expressing many of the same reservations about the proposed project that ECOSLO and the Farm Bureau — and the Sierra Club and the Surfrider Foundation — have expressed, in great detail. Public Works has been subdued in its public comments since then.

The news flash in that missive from the Coastal Commission to the County boiled down to this: None of

the project alternatives you are proposing are approvable, including your "environmentally superior alternative," so you'd better come up with something else if you expect to get a coastal development permit.

That's why it's a very good thing that a spirit of genuine public inquiry has broken out at the Planning Commission, as Commissioners have

moved through the many thorny issues around each component of the giant project, including the conversion of agricultural lands, sealed versus unsealed pipes, sewage treatment technology and treatment plant location.

There have been no threats of ejection from the premises, no punches thrown, no need for the presence of Sheriff's deputies, and everybody has gotten to have their say for as long as they wanted to say it, if they need more than the standard three minutes and could find somebody else to cede their time at the microphone.

The planning commissioners are obviously listening to the local citizens and to independent voices. The prefer-

ences of the Public Works Department are not being treated as though carved on tablets brought down from the mountain, nor are commissioners allowing off-point or non-responsive answers to slide by. Staff's information is being questioned and tested against information provided by members of the public, including independent wastewater systems experts in attendance, who are invited to step up and provide feedback.

Nor does the Commission appear likely to give a free pass to the "alternatives analysis" in the Environmental Impact Report, which tended to analyze alternatives just enough, and in just the right unflattering light, to dismiss them.

A major case in point: Public Works says that it picked a gravity collection system as environmentally superior to a STEP/STEG system because it had lower greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions due to the need to add GHG-intensive methanol to STEP effluent in order to remove nitrates. Would that emissions assessment change if



Dana Ripley of Ripley Pacific Co. points out to the Planning Commission the benefits of using recycled wastewater for crops.

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The News for Nukes: Not Good

by the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility



"April is the cruellest month," wrote T.S. Elliot in his epic poem "The Wasteland."

And while the metaphor of a wasteland is certainly apt enough for the nuclear legacy, April was also a particularly cruel month for the proponents of nuclear power.

Among the news items suggesting

this:

In Japan, Tokyo Electric Power Co. reported that it remained in the red in fiscal 2008 with a group net loss of \$880 million (U.S.) due largely to restoration costs of its quake-stricken key nuclear power plant. Tokyo Electric incurred a net loss of 1.5 billion (U.S.) in fiscal 2007, as its

bottom line was hit hard after a powerful earthquake forced Japan's biggest utility firm to suspend operations at the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa Nuclear Power Station in Niigata Prefecture. Compounding the problem, a hasty attempt to restart one of the damaged reactor units resulted in a glitch when the operator found the level of coolant in the pool had risen. The level was lowered, and workers then found they were unable to shut down the cooling system, which pours coolant into the reactor in the event of an emergency. They eventually found another way to stop it. The reactor is still off-line.

And then there was the April 22 statement of Jon Wellinghoff, the chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), on the need for new nuclear or coal plants in the United States. "We may not need any, ever," he told reporters at a U.S. Energy Association forum. Along with President Obama's cancellation of funding that would have kept the proposed Yucca Mountain waste repository project alive, these are strong indications that nuclear's future is anything but glowing.

The Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility has been paying close attention to both of these developments, and

studying their relevance to our state's energy planning for the future. As such, we have been working to support Assemblyman Sam Blakeslee's AB 42, legislation that would require Pacific Gas & Electric to conduct the latest and most high-tech three dimensional seismic reflection mapping of the newly discovered "Shoreline" fault that runs 1800 feet from the Diablo Canyon plant. Since an unstudied fault at the Kashiwazaki plant in Japan has caused economic and reliability burdens for the Japanese utility and ratepayers, we are justifiably concerned about the prospects of a similar "unknown" fault and the potential affect on Californians. The good news is that, with supportive testimony from Alliance executive director Rochelle Becker, Dr. Blakeslee's bill has passed out of the Assembly Utilities, Resources and Appropriations Committees and is now headed to the state Senate. The Alliance representatives have been traveling to Sacramento to educate legislators on the cautionary tale of the Japanese situation and the need

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Left to right: Activists Eric, Sophia and Vanessa of HEAL Utah join ANR's David Weisman at the Earth Day premiere of "Everything Nuclear..." at the Brewvies cinema pub in Salt Lake City.

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:
planned.giving@sierraclub.org

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 FOUNDED 1909

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Gala Anniversary Celebration at Clair Tappaan Lodge

By Olivia Diaz

For three days this August, the Sierra Club will celebrate its two historic lodges at Donner Pass:

Clair Tappaan Lodge – 75 years
Hutchinson Lodge – 85 years

August 14-16 events will include stories with s'mores and brandy around the campfire in the meadow of Clair Tappaan Lodge, a lunch at the Warming Hut (now owned and being renovated by Donner Ski Ranch) with stories from veterans of the lodges, a wine and cheese reception, theme hikes and lots of new activities.

The committee is arranging for a horseshoe tournament, Bocce Ball, a fly-fishing demonstration, a scavenger hunt, ongoing raffles, and many more activities. Chair Ernie Malamud welcomes new volunteers. On Sunday

there will be a music festival with a beer garden, which will be open to the public. On Saturday night there will be a keynote speaker (TBA) and later, opportunities for star gazing.

Plan to join us for the weekend or for parts of the event:

Entire Event - Adult - \$195
Entire Event - Child - \$75
All Events for Sat and Sun - 1 Night - Adult - \$145
All Events for Sat and Sun - 1 Night - Child - \$50
All Sat Activities - Adult - \$75
All Sat Activities - Child - \$10
All Sunday Activities - Adult - \$25
All Sunday Activities - Child - \$10

Price includes overnight lodging, all events and meals. Please contact Peter Lehmkuhl, CTL Manager, at 530-426-3632 or 800-679-6775 or email ctl@sierraclub.org.



Our Coast is Not for Sale

Governor Schwarzenegger is attempting an end run around the State Lands Commission to hand a sweet deal to an oil company and gain approval of the first new oil drilling in California's waters in 40 years.

Known as the PXP Tranquillon Ridge proposal, it would increase oil deliveries from PXP's offshore platform to Santa Barbara onshore facilities from 7,000 barrels per day to 30,000 bpd, increasing the chances of a spill or blowout and extending the life of the platform beyond its current 2022 closing date. In exchange, PXP would donate lands and money for conservation projects. This would send a message to Washington that California considers financial contributions to its general fund a benefit that outweighs the risk of the contamination of our coastline. It would undermine efforts to reinstate the moratorium on drilling in federal



Not worth it: Offshore oil rig blowout.

waters.

The State Lands Commission determined that this agreement is unenforceable. The agreement would be confidential, any permit condition can always be amended, and any benefit from the funds would not be sufficient to offset the cost of dealing

with the impacts to the state's resources and coastal economy if there were a major spill.

Now the Governor is trying to slip the PXP deal through in a rider to a budget bill, resurrecting the rejected deal without going through the normal process and necessary vetting by

the appropriate agencies.

TAKE ACTION

Central Coast residents need to register their opposition to this ploy by letting the leaders of the state legislature know that our coast is too important to gamble with and should not be for sale at any price. Write *today* to Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg; fax 916-323-2263 (Attention: Kip Lipper), and Assembly Speaker Karen Bass; fax 916-319-2147 (Attention: Arnie Sowell).

Red-Legged Frogs Found at Stenner Springs

By Ken Hampian

A wildlife and botanical survey is being undertaken by local wildlife consultant Dan Duggan as part of the natural resources inventory work for the Stenner Springs Natural Reserve Conservation Plan.

Dan reported this week that he found at least one adult California red-legged frog at a spring on the property during a survey of the site. The California red-legged frog (CRLF) has been listed by both the state and Federal governments as endangered throughout its range. CRLF has been found in some areas near the City of San Luis Obispo, generally on tributary streams which do not provide suitable habitat for the non-native bullfrog, which is a predator on CRLF.

While this is not a total surprise, it is pleasing to staff to find that one of our City open spaces provides habitat for this highly endangered creature.

- SLO City Council Notes, May 8, 2009



Tell it to the Coastal Commission

The California Coastal Commission invites the public to submit personal stories of coastal stewardship in celebration of the 25th anniversary of California Coastal Cleanup Day, in conjunction with our Coastal Stewardship Pledge.

If you have taken part in something (small or large) to care for our coast and ocean, please share your story and/or pictures in order to inspire others to take action in their daily lives. Your stories may be posted on the Coastal Commission website!

Submit your coastal stewardship story by July 1st for the chance to win a "Coast-Lover's Prize Package" (a framed Coastal Cleanup Day poster – either current or from our archives, a 2009 Coastal Cleanup Day T-Shirt, and several other surprises...). Make your submission by email to coast4u@coastal.ca.gov (please keep any photos to under 500 Kb in jpg format) or by mail to: Coastal Steward Stories, California Coastal Commission, 45 Fremont Street, Suite 2000, San Francisco, CA 94105

Be sure to include your phone number, mailing address, and email (if available) in order to be eligible for the contest. Submissions will be posted on the California Coastal Commission's website (at CCC discretion) at www.coastal.ca.gov/publiced/steward/stories.html. A winner will be chosen by random drawing. The public will be invited to post comments on the stories once they are on the website.

For ideas on how to be a Coastal Steward, check out the Coastal Stewardship Pledge at www.coastal.ca.gov/publiced/steward/pledge_form.html (or click on the link at www.coastforyou.org).



Families that Hike Together

May's Sierra Club Family Hike to the Cal Poly Canyon Architectural Experimental Design Village was an exciting outing with 25 people participating.

The hike was led by Jennifer Bauer and assisted by Outings Chair Joe Morris. The group took a three-mile round trip walk into Cal Poly Canyon along the Brizzolari Creek to the design village, with hawk, deer, and wildflower sightings along the trail. At the design village, the kids enjoyed exploring, climbing on, and going inside the unique and original buildings, like the 50-foot geodesic dome designed by Buckminster Fuller, a Shell House, an underground house, and a cantilevered structure.



How to Help the Chapter

Charles Dickens wrote: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times..." This paradoxical quote accurately describes the current situation for your local chapter of the Sierra Club.

The best of times: The Santa Lucia Chapter has never been more organized, more active, and more prepared to meet the challenges for San Luis Obispo County. We have a productive Chapter Director, a vibrant and active Executive Committee, energetic volunteers, and a busy office staff. Together they push for environmental protection and good representation: and they succeed!

The worst of times: The country is in a prolonged recession. Money is tight everywhere. Like all organizations who depend on fundraising and grants, our income stream has reduced its flow. The national Sierra Club cannot support local chapters. The Santa Lucia chapter has seen a lower response to fundraising appeals.

In short, the Chapter is facing a financial crisis.

You can help! Here are some easy ways to contribute to the Chapter.

- ❖ Go to our website-- www.santalucia.sierraclub.org -- and you will see a donation button for PayPal (credit cards accepted). Click on that and fill out the form. Your donation will be sent directly to our bank account.

- ❖ Write a check and send it to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406.

- ❖ **Create a regular monthly donation** to assure sustainability for the Chapter. We could plan better for the future knowing that your donations will continue. You could do this in two ways:

- 1) Contact your bank and ask them to send a regular monthly check to the Sierra Club. Most banks provide this service.

- 2) Set up an online automatic payment to the local Chapter. To do

this, please call the Chapter office at 543-8717 and ask for the Sierra Club's bank account number. Then, using your bill paying service online you simply add the Chapter as an automatic monthly payment.

- ❖ **Advertise your business** in the *Santa Lucian*.

This income offsets the costs of the newsletter, published 10 months each year.

- ❖ Did you know that the Sierra Club may not e-mail its members unless we have a request from you to put you on our email contact list? Please drop a note to sierraclub8@gmail.com and let us know that you want e-mail from your Chapter. This will connect you more quickly with



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Thank you. Send your contribution to:

Sierra Club
P.O. Box 15755
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

our activities, events, and news.

Consider the value of the Sierra Club to the environment that surrounds you and the way of life that we value here in San Luis Obispo. Then, use one of the methods above and contribute to sustain this value and to fund your local Chapter.

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.

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

Taking Better Pictures with Jon Lomax: Aug. 15, 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. Free parking behind the building, off the

Morro Street driveway.

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.





Mt. McKinley, Denali National Park.

Our National Parks: A Vision for the Second Century

by John Byrne and Vicky Hoover

The Sierra Club's National Parks and Monuments Team wants to share with you our exciting vision for the second century of the National Park Service, which formally begins in 2016. National parks are America's uniquely marvelous contribution to the world.

Our vision focuses on three major concerns that people didn't have 100 years ago — but that today are prevalent in our society: natural areas disappearing, people separated from nature, and the onset of global climate change.

First, the disappearance of our natural areas — it used to be that development occurred as islands in a sea of nature, but today national parks are the natural islands in a sea of development. We see that national parks are needed to preserve important representative places of our natural environment. We envision a significant expansion of our National Park system — so that every major natural ecoregion in our country will be represented by at least one national park or equivalent reserve.

All major ecological regions in the United States should have a national park or similar protected area to represent it. Large areas of the country are presently left out. Let's fill these gaps. A preliminary gap analysis shows that we must create 38 new National Parks or similar areas, and expand or change designation in 28 others. This will protect habitat for the biodiversity of our flora and fauna that make up our natural world, as ecosystems evolve and adapt to global climate change.

By filling the gaps, by having protected natural areas represent all parts of our natural world, we can not only better enjoy nature; we can learn

what we must do to protect the world in which we and our fellow species live.

An expanded network of parks is also needed to provide nearby places to visit for more people — both to lessen generation of greenhouse gases from flying and driving to parks and to provide convenient close to home places for people to appreciate their natural and cultural heritage.

After reaching its peak 20 years ago per capita visitation to our national parks is down about 20 percent. Varying gasoline costs, economic constraints, and public awareness that traveling long distances to visit national parks generates greenhouse gases will aggravate this phenomenon. Well, if people won't come to National Parks — bring National Parks to the people: establish new ones, closer-to-home. Dorothy should not have to put on those glittery shoes and get on a tornado to Oz to experience nature.

Second, connecting people with national parks. Our heavily urbanized society is losing its connections to nature. A generation of children is growing up mostly indoors and often glued to the Internet, with a great problem of obese youth. Experience of nature becomes more virtual, less direct. We see national parks able to coax people, especially young people, out into nature, and we envision parks becoming more inviting and attractive to them.

We need to expand education programs in national parks to help all visitors learn about our natural world. The education programs should relate to all courses of study, academic and non-academic, and should be connected to the Internet so national parks can be learned about and appreciated by everybody, all the time. Programs for on-site visits should attract teachers and students. Classrooms should be linked to parks though the internet throughout the academic year — as an inducement to visit national parks.

Get on the Sierra Club Cal-Alerts List

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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Litigation update

Club Intervenes in Off-Roaders' Dunes Lawsuit

The court has granted the motion of the Santa Lucia Chapter to become intervenors in a lawsuit originally filed against the County of San Luis Obispo by the Friends of Oceano Dunes, an off-road vehicle lobby group.

The off-roaders, seeking to head off the Club's ongoing legal action to enforce the County's Local Coastal Program (LCP), argue that the LCP, which declares the 580 acres of county-owned land in the Oceano Dunes are off limits to riding, is "local law" and is therefore preempted because State Parks leased the County land as part of the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Riding Area (ODSVRA).

The Sierra Club contends that the LCP, mandated for all coastal communities in the state by the California Coastal Act, is the implementation of state law, and State Parks' General Management Plan for the ODSVRA must be updated to incorporate the provisions of the LCP, which clearly state that no vehicles are allowed on the County's dunes property — a proviso the state has ignored for more than twenty years.

Seeking to head off our intervention, the off-roaders argued unsuccessfully that the cash-strapped County, which has been eager to sell off its coastal dunes property to State Parks for a quick \$5 million payday, adequately represents the same interests as the Sierra Club, and therefore we should be barred from intervening in the case.

The Court found otherwise, agreeing, in accordance with the requirements of state law, that the Sierra Club has "a direct and immediate interest in the outcome of the litigation; the intervention will not enlarge the issues and the reasons for intervention outweigh any opposition by the existing parties."



We're Down to the Wire for Oceano Dunes and the Cayucos Viewshed...

The Chapter's lawsuits in defense of both the Oceano Dunes and the Cayucos Viewshed, filed in early 2008, are likely to be resolved this year. Right now is the most critical time, when we must maintain our ability to pay legal fees and expenses in order to see both these key pieces of public interest litigation through to a successful conclusion.



Because we engage in political activities, your donations directly to the Chapter are not tax deductible. **But your donation to the fund dedicated to these legal actions is tax deductible.**

Make your check out to "TSCF SLO Land Preservation Fund" and mail to:

Sierra Club
P.O. Box 15755
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

Letters

send to: sierra8@charter.net, or Sierra Club, P.O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406. Letters may be edited for space.

Nipomo Gardens are world class

I am a world traveler who has been traveling up the beautiful California coastline experiencing the wonders that nature has to offer during this time of year. I recently had the great pleasure to witness the Nipomo Native Garden and absorb all the efforts the locals have undergone to preserve the native plants and trees and educate the public about them. The stroll through the park was a living dream as the peace and serenity experienced reminded me that the natural preservation of the planet is of the utmost importance. Its beauty is not eternal and the ongoing evolutionary destruction is expanding and needs to be fought to come to a

balanced force where nature can still shine for future generations.

The conservation of the various plants has been well planned out and the park even has an informative pamphlet with a map. All the biological names were indicated and the oak trees were an impressive display of nature's majesty. It does not take huge finances to preserve the modest beauty and NNG was successful in doing this. I will recommend the park to other travelers and congratulations goes out to the individuals who made the park a beautiful reality.

Peter Hunter
Ontario, Canada

Lead On!

Outings Leader Training June 28

By Joe Morris, Chapter Outings Chair

Have you considered becoming a Sierra Club outings leader and sharing your passion for exploring the beautiful Central Coast? The training is easy, and the rewards many: meeting new people, introducing them to eye-popping scenery, exploring new terrain, raising environmental awareness. And, hey, impress your friends with your beautiful certificate.

The Santa Lucia Chapter is adding new leaders this year to increase the number and variety of its outings: longer "tiger" hikes and short "pussycat" walks, bike trips, picnics, wildlife watching, beach clean-ups outdoor concerts, activities oriented to families or to singles. So we welcome your involvement. Join us for an informative and sociable day when we will give you the tools of becoming a certified Sierra Club outings leader.

The Outings Leadership Training manual and refreshments are all free. If you are already First-Aid certified, then you are welcome to just show up for the OLT segment, and stay for the food and camaraderie afterwards. If you're not a Sierra Club member, applications will be available. Partial scholarships are possible on request.

Sunday, June 28th

Sierra Club, 547 Marsh St., SLO

First Aid course (morning) \$25

Here's the day's schedule:

* 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.: First Aid training hosted by the American Red Cross. Along with Sierra Club membership, this is a necessary step in leader training. At the end of this short class, you will be certified and receive your First Aid card in the mail. (CPR certification not required.) The fee of \$25 is payable at the door.
* 30 minute break. Bring bag lunch.
* 1 to 4 p.m.: An exclusive Outings Leadership Training seminar led by veteran leaders. This mini-course includes a curriculum of practical information for leading a safe, enjoyable, informative outing. The Sierra Club requires this of all outings leaders. Listen to sometimes hilarious examples of what to do — and not — when leading hikes in the great outdoors.
* 4 p.m. -on: Free munchies. Get to know new and old Club members a little better. You will also have a chance to meet a current outings leader, with whom you can go on a hike and "shadow" them to practice the nuances of good leadership.

To reserve a space or get more information, phone the Sierra Club office no later than Thursday, June 25, at 805-543-8717 and leave your name and contact information. There is a limit of 15 participants, and the last training filled up in less than two weeks!

Print your name and address at right (county residency not required), clip out & send to:

Sierra Club
P.O. Box 15755
San Luis Obispo, CA 3406

We will convey your wishes to our elected officials. This is this the year we can make this happen!

Clear the Table

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resources for that."

In the near future, it would be nice to see the Obama administration also forget about "clean coal," which, like the hydrogen fuel-cell dream, isn't worth the vast expenditure of funds to see if it might be possible to bring it into existence.

And it's time to forget about ethanol and most other biofuels, which will largely wind up starving and/or deforesting the world and do more environmental damage than fossil fuels (though blue-green algae biodiesel, just starting up, appears to have none of the drawbacks of most of its biofuel brethren and is looking very good).

What about natural gas? Proponents urging the construction of LNG terminals are blurring the distinction between the emission impacts of importing the liquefied version of this fossil fuel versus using domestic supplies via existing gas fields and pipelines. In doing so, they are arguing for the creation of a new infrastructure to perpetuate and extend the use of natural gas.

"There is a persistent idea that natural gas 'emits about half or less the carbon as coal,'" says Robert Freehling, co-chair of Sierra Club California's Energy-Climate Committee. "When it was last measured under the Clinton administration, emissions

were about 60% as much CO2 as coal. Not quite as good as claimed. Worse, however, is T. Boone Pickens' idea to substitute natural gas for diesel. Here the emissions savings would be far more modest, probably 20% or less.

"We need 90% or more greenhouse gas reductions in the U.S. by mid-century. If the approach is to build new natural gas plants to replace coal, that will take decades to accomplish, and the new plants will be around for another 20 to 50 years. Such carbon 'solutions' will seal our fate. Far better would be to take existing natural gas plants and operate them at fuller capacity.... This improves their efficiency, while at the same time avoiding the inherent time lag and capital drain to build new fossil fuel plants. Then the build phase could focus on renewables."

Demonstrating what that focus should look like, John Rizzo of the Sierra Club's San Francisco Bay Chapter reports that the San Francisco Board of Supervisors last month approved the nation's largest municipal solar power plant — a 5-megawatt project that will use 25,000 photovoltaic panels to cover half of the city's largest covered reservoir. As it's an urban project, no open space or habitat will be lost.

"The deal uses a common solar financing mechanism known as a power purchase agreement," says Rizzo, "an energy company builds the facility using federal tax credits, sells the power to the city, then sells the

facility to the city at a discount. The San Francisco Bay Chapter and the Vote Solar Initiative organized and led a diverse coalition of supporters that included the Ella Baker Center, the Apollo Alliance, and other green jobs advocates for the disadvantaged to push the project through. It will create 70 green jobs, 30 percent of which will be set aside for people in low-income neighborhoods."

So, do we have a winner? Freehling notes that the belief that "wind and solar power...aren't ready to shoulder more than a fraction of the nation's energy burden," as the *Wall Street Journal* recently asserted, "is grossly in error. Last year over 8,000 megawatts of new wind capacity was placed on-line in the U.S. This was 42% of all generation capacity installed that year, compared to zero nuclear and almost no coal. And it is capable of growing today at the rate of 100,000 megawatts every five years even without any further expansion of manufacturing capacity. (By comparison, an average nuclear generator is 1,000 megawatts.)

"This level of performance — the ability to install 100,000 mw every five years — looks likely to be duplicated by solar energy within about five years. Meaning that, with continued supportive policies, wind right now is on the verge of exceeding the ability of natural gas to meet the nation's electric power needs."

In a report in the January 14 issue of *New Scientist* on a Stanford University study that ranks alternative energy sources, Stanford researcher Marc Jacobsen concluded that "The philosophy that we should try a little bit of everything is wrong.... We need to focus on the technologies that provide the best benefit. We know which these are."

Yes, we do. The winners have basically picked themselves. And so have the losers.

Carrizo Solar: Not Behind Closed Doors

Don't cut environmental corners on the road to clean energy

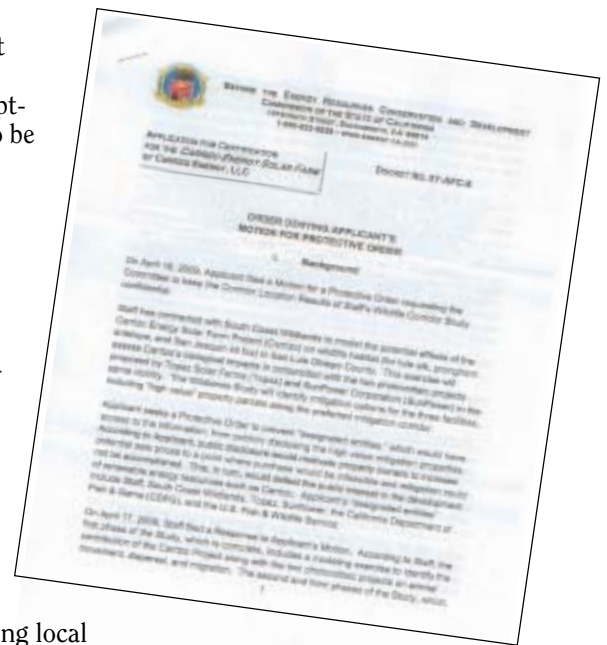
The solar energy companies racing to place power plants on the Carrizo Plain have been chafing at the legal requirements of environmental protection and the mitigation of biological impacts which their proposed projects have triggered.

This is an unfortunate and rather strange attitude for companies seeking to place utility-scale power plants in the midst of the highest concentration of threatened and endangered species in the state.

Further tarnishing the green rep sought by the Ausra, Topaz and Sun Power projects, the three companies recently asked the California Energy Commission to effectively impose a gag order on the results of an ongoing wildlife corridor study conducted by CEC staff to determine what lands in and around the proposed laydown sites are needed by the San Joaquin kit fox, pronghorn antelope and tule

elk, and what lands outside those areas possess sufficient habitat values to make them acceptable as parcels to be acquired and protected as replacement for habitat occupied or compromised by power plants.

On May 8, the Energy Commission ruled on the request for confidentiality, citing responses in opposition filed by intervenors, 68 petitions stating local



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Expand the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary!

Dear Supervisor,

I believe the Central Coast deserves the protection of a National Marine Sanctuary.

Please support expansion of the southern boundary of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary to include the waters and marine wildlife of San Luis Obispo County. This is the only way to permanently protect these precious resources from future harmful projects, including oil drilling and the construction of a pipeline for dumping toxic agricultural waste water into the bay.

Name _____

Address _____



Pismo Plan

continued from page 1

Last spring when I heard about a proposed development in the canyon below our property, I again went to the Planning Department and asked about the area. They gave me a very different response. Yes, there was a proposal being put forth for the canyon below, exchanging existing lots on Price Canyon Road for lots in the Open Space designation. When I questioned the legality of the proposal, I was told by the individual at the planning department, "Our policy is to put forth and present any and all proposals to the Planning Commission, illegal or not." I was shocked. I could not believe Pismo Beach would allow such a contradiction of city planning practices and violate its own laws in the General Plan. Other city planning departments simply say "no" to development in Open Space areas. Why does Pismo Beach allow such behavior to be considered? I do know that when citizens have to become personally involved in the business practices of a city to check questionable activities, something is very wrong.

The existence of a nice looking document consisting of mostly "boilerplate material" as put forth by Randy Bloom or Scot Graham of the Planning Department does not make the elements within the document necessarily correct, accurate or legal. I believe it to contain numerous flaws.

This proposal violates the General Plan in at least these areas:

- LU P5: No New Lots on Pismo Heights: "No new residential lots, shall be permitted to be created by subdivision of lands within the Pismo Heights planning area, including adjacent land area "E" as shown on Figure GM-10, in the event that area

is added to the City in the future." This is a violation of land use policy.

- CO 10: Slopes over a 30% Grade. "No buildings or grading shall be permitted on existing natural slopes over 30%. The areas over 30% shall be retained as permanent public or private open space." Contrary to the proposal, the area contains natural grades significantly over 30% in many places within the perimeter. Additionally, the soil is very unstable. While the General Plan permits exceptions for "existing legal lots of record," this new proposal does not fall under this category, nullifying any possible exemption. The professional conclusions reached by the hired soil experts studying this area appear to be flawed.
- CO 13 and LU P5 e: Oak Tree Protection: "Native species of oak (e.g. Quercus agrifolia, Quercus lobata, Quercus chrysolepis) should be preserved within the City of Pismo Beach, both as an aesthetic resource benefiting the entire community and for their ecological value." Development of this canyon will result in the removal of many native oak trees. The trees are not "diseased," present no "clear hazard," and demonstrate no "severe hardship." This is a violation of Conservation and Open Space policies.

- CO 22: Open Space and Study Area: "Any development in Price Canyon and the surrounding hills shall emphasize the open space aspects of the Price Canyon corridor. Preferred views from Price Canyon Road shall be of open space rather than development." Allowing this area to be rezoned for development is a violation of Conservation and Open Space Policy.

- CO 28: Natural Drainage Channel. "Drainage channels shall remain in a

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Energy Efficiency Could Replace 60% of Coal Power Plants

By the Rocky Mountain Institute

Rocky Mountain Institute's Energy and Resources Team has just published a report that shows the opportunity for 30 percent energy savings in the United States. Assessing the Electric Productivity Gap and the U.S. Efficiency Opportunity analyzed electric productivity state by state, and found a significant gap between the highest and lowest performing states.

Electric productivity measures how much gross domestic product is generated for each kilowatt-hour consumed (\$GDP/kWh). This finding is significant because if laggard states achieved the electric productivity of the top ten performing states through energy efficiency, we would achieve electric savings equivalent to more than 60 percent of U.S. coal-fired generation. According to Natalie Mims, Consultant on RMI's Energy & Resources Team (ERT), "closing the electric productivity gap through energy efficiency is the largest near-term opportunity to immediately reduce electricity use and greenhouse gases, and move the United States forward as a leader in the new clean energy economy."

The electric productivity of top performing states, like New York, Connecticut, and California, serves as an example of what's achievable. Those states show the nation how barriers to efficiency practices can be overcome, how state utilities can be regulated, and how new and effective technologies can be implemented. Conversely, lower performing states have a huge opportunity to learn from the successes of higher performing states by closing their electric productivity gap using known and tested technology and policy. This will be the focus of RMI's next step, as ERT concentrates on the efficiency measures that can cost-effectively have the largest impact.

To complement the report, RMI has also released an interactive map ranking each state's electric productivity, which illustrates the opportunities to catch up with the best performing states.

Sewer

continued from page 3

there was no necessity for the removal of nitrates, and hence no addition of methanol to STEP effluent; that is, if the ultimate destination of the effluent is tertiary treatment and reuse on crops that would take up the full nitrogen content of the effluent, rather than disposal? What does that do the EIR's assessment of greenhouse gas impacts and the selection of one collection system over the other on that basis?

It has become clear that the biggest single impediment in the way of a truly worthwhile project is psychological: The County is in the grip of the belief that this project cannot – and should not – do more to curb seawater intrusion into the lower aquifer and balance the groundwater basin. That's for later; all we should do now, they say, is treat wastewater and dispose of it via sprayfields at the Tonini site. If we do any more than that, it will be "trying to do too much," and thus the ancient curse will arise and the Los Osos sewer will fail again.

But, as Sarah Corbin, Central California Regional Manager for the Surfrider Foundation, points out: "It would be smarter to do it now than later. Seawater intrusion is estimated at 469 acre-feet per year. That means every year we don't do something, the problem will be 469 acre-feet worse. Simply offsetting 469 AFY will only keep the salt water from coming in farther than it has already advanced... which won't do anything to push the

ever-increasing saltwater intrusion back out. If we make plans to reuse wastewater now, we can save on capital costs of directing the wastewater to Tonini and, a couple years down the road, not using that any more and needing to put in an additional treated water pipeline to go to ag users. The effluent wouldn't need to be conveyed to the sprayfields on Tonini if it is conveyed to ag users."

The result of a genuine public process could be a genuinely worthwhile project, one with the kind of "green infrastructure" that attracts those longed-for grants of federal stimulus funds we've all heard so much about, the kind of project that the Sierra Club has been advocating for the last two years: A sewer that doesn't promise to leak sewage throughout the length of its collection system within a few years of

installation, institutes low-impact development features that retain storm water and clean and recharge groundwater, and which treats effluent to a level at which it can be recycled on local crops, thereby taking pressure off local wells and curbing seawater intrusion. Providing that nitrogen-rich water to growers instead of spending money and energy to pull the nitrogen out of the effluent would also cut the use of synthetic fertilizers and thereby reduce the run-off of nitrates into creeks and the Morro Bay Estuary.

None of these benefits were components of the project that Public Works submitted to the Planning Commission. With a little luck (and if ever a project deserved a little luck, it's this one), they will be conditions of the project's permit by the time it leaves there.



Los Osos resident George Taylor waits to deliver his message to the Planning Commission.

PUT YOUR CONSCIOUSNESS INTO ACTION!



Volunteers needed to deliver food on a regular or back-up basis to the Homeless Shelter in SLO.

Pick up and delivery around 9 p.m.

For more info, call Paul: 235-1302.

Sierra Club Launches Online Community

The Sierra Club has launched a new online community that should serve as a powerful tool for chapter and group leaders who want to do some online organizing, recruit new members, promote their events and action alerts – and have fun!

Sierra Club Online Communities is a “network of networks” that lets you connect with like-minded people in our area, across the country, and around the world if you like. The network currently includes:

- Climate Crossroads [<http://climatecrossroads.org>], for people in search of solutions to global warming;
- Sierra Student Coalition [<http://ssc.org>], for students who want to take action
- Sierra Club Trails [<http://trails.sierraclub.org/index.html>], for hikers, paddlers, and anyone who loves the outdoors. Coming next is an activist network, and a community for anglers and hunters.

In these communities you can add your events and outings to the community calendar; post action alerts; share recipes, photos, and your favorite trails; and start groups that can serve as a home base in the networks for your chapter.

Intrigued? Here’s what to do in Climate Crossroads:

1. Register [<http://community.sierraclub.org/join/>] and



fill in your profile – don’t forget to add a photo of yourself to replace the blue avatar!

2. Create a Group [http://connect.sierraclub.org/community/search/sierraclub_groups.htm] for your Sierra Club group or chapter so you can blog and post photos and events. You can also send bulletins to members of your group.

3. Add your group or chapter events to the community calendar [[\[connect.sierraclub.org/community\]\(http://connect.sierraclub.org/community\)\] and invite your friends to these events. Are you organizing an event? Post it on the network!](http://

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Meanwhile, over on Sierra Club Trails, we’re asking folks to help us seed the site with – you guessed it – trails!

You can register here:

1. Go to the Sierra Club Trails home page and click on “Join” in the green banner across the top: [<http://sierraclubtrails.sierraclub.org/index.html>]. Add a photo of yourself and fill in your profile if you like.

2. Then go back to the home page at [<http://sierraclubtrails.sierraclub.org/index.html>] and click on “Add a Trail.” Choose one you can describe well, and that you have a picture of to use as the trail’s “avatar.” To learn the advantages of being the person who posts a particular trail, or to see a step-by-step guide on how to add a trail, click here: [<http://trails.sierraclub.org/about/tutorials/index.html>].

We’re still in the early stage of launching this network and we appreciate your support in rolling it out. If you have any feedback, don’t hesitate to contact us at community.manager@sierraclub.org.

National Parks next 100

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We should consider reducing park entrance fees, not raising them. Entrance fees discourage use, aggravating an already significant decline in visitation, and they disproportionately affect people with lower income. Entrance fees contribute but a nickel to the National Park Service budget dollar. We can easily afford to expand our National Park system, make it more available to people, and reap the benefits,

Third, fighting global climate change. Not only was this not around 100 years ago— even ten years ago, it wasn’t a big concern for many people. We envision parks addressing global warming in at least three ways:

- by educating visitors on the problems and how they, as individuals can help out in their daily lives,
- by using national parks to do scientific research on changes that are happening so that we can see what nature is doing – and learn what we must not do - to mitigate the effects of climate change; and by assuring the wild areas in parks will stay wild — such as through wilderness designation — so that national parks can form the core of broad protected areas to make wildlife habitat more resilient. Ability to move as climate changes will allow wildlife adaptations essential for species survival.

- by making the parks themselves a model of zero emissions in their energy systems and particularly in transportation, which uses a lot of carbon-dioxide emitting energy. We see all our national parks vigorously promoting public transportation, so that people will be able to go to national parks on trains or other public transit and, once there, will be able to appreciate our natural world without a car.

The United States played the pioneering role in inventing the National Park idea and using parks to bring nature closer to life’s critical

needs. But today we lag behind other countries in using national parks to learn about, protect and perpetuate our natural world. National parks are ideal places to learn how our natural world reacts and adapts to change. As the potential consequences and the need to react to global climate change become more and more apparent, these natural areas will take center stage and assume a critical role.

Expanding our system of National Parks should be the prime goal of our Second Century of our National Park System. Please help us fulfill this goal so that national parks can play an instrumental role in making a better world for us, for our children and for our grandchildren.

To learn more about the National Parks and Monuments Team, join our efforts, propose new parks near you, or to share concerns for our national parks, contact chair John Byrne (jbyrne_97@yahoo.com) or liaison Vicky Hoover (Vicky.hoover@sierraclub.org).

And why not check out our new Handbook for Expanding National Parks at: <http://clubhouse.sierraclub.org/conservation/activist-network/national-parks/Default.aspx>.

Carrizo Solar

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opposition, and “extensive legal comments filed in opposition by the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club.” To its great credit, the CEC agreed that that “the analysis presented in the Wildlife Corridor Study must be developed in an open forum” and denied the applicant’s motion for a protective order to make the results of the study confidential. Granting the motion, the CEC noted, “would, as

Coastwalk Hiking Adventures Filling Up Fast

Take a hike, have fun and help save our coast. Proceeds help Coastwalk California work to protect our precious coastline

Coastwalk California is offering 14 hiking adventures during its 26th season of Coastwalks this summer. Coastwalks are multi-day hiking/camping adventures along the California Coastal Trail lead by volunteer hike leaders who are knowledgeable in coastal ecology, history and more.

The Walks range from “pure” backpacks where hikers carry their own packs, to “classic” Coastwalk “no-pack backpacking”, where a gear van transports heavy items and participants carry only a small daypack while hiking. Each day’s hike ends with happy hour and a gourmet dinner served by volunteers at the campsite.

New this year is the opportunity for public school teachers to earn continuing education units on three of the adventures.

Coastwalks are a fundraiser for Coastwalk California, a statewide non-profit organization that advocates for coastal protection, coastal access and completion of the California Coastal Trail.

For more information go to www.coastwalk.org/Hikes/hikes.htm or call (800) 550-6854.



the Intervenor’s point out, deprive the public of its opportunity for meaningful participation in our process.”

In its denial, the CEC went on to state that it was

“unconvinced that the facts presented justify a deviation from our normal open public process,” and that “the public is entitled to be aware of, and potentially chal-



lenge, the analytic underpinnings supporting a biological mitigation plan” and that “the Applicant has not persuasively shown that the public interest would be better served by designating the results of the Corridor Location Study as confidential.”

Let’s hope Ausra, Topaz and Sun Power have gotten the message.

Nukes

continued from page 3

for Californians to consider if renewing the license of a nuclear plant that sits on shifting ground is in the best interest of the state. The process will continue over the summer, and we invite people to visit our website for updates, and to join us in our visits to Sacramento.

The Alliance takes the "responsibility" in its name literally: if this new earthquake fault were to render the Diablo Canyon plant useless (as in Japan), how would California responsibly replace the lost jobs, revenue, and power? We are now spearheading a proposal to co-locate a renewable energy park and energy efficiency think-tank at the Diablo Canyon site. The benefits include existing transmission lines already coupled to a pumped-hydro storage facility, nine miles of windswept coastline, and a local polytechnic university for workforce training. The Alliance is facilitating meetings between legislators, union leaders, and solar, wind and tidal power vendors. After visiting congress in February 2009, the Alliance discovered that there was federal interest in finding mechanisms to fund such a project. And Congresswoman Lois Capps has introduced the Coastal State Renewable Energy Promotion Act, which will help to ensure that the U.S. develops offshore renewable resources such as wind, wave and ocean current energy in an environmentally friendly manner.

In addition to work in Sacramento, the Alliance's efforts also continue on a national level. Outreach Coordinator David Weisman presented the documentary "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Nuclear Power* but were afraid to ask" for the Oyster Creek reactor communities in New Jersey, as well as for an enthusiastic Earth Day audience in Salt Lake City. The video can be seen streaming 24/7 at www.everythingnuclear.org

As we move into summer, the Alliance invites you to join us in working for a renewable and sustainable energy future. Visit our website, www.a4nr.org and consider supporting our efforts through volunteering or making a contribution.

Harbor High

My elation is at its peak as I stroll by the boats and boardwalk. The harbor seals are numerous, performing their watery dance tumbling, their shiny bowling ball blackness spinning. I strain my neck, keeping my eyes on them for I am glued to their mesmerizing beauty.

The tiny white tugboat patrols the harbor mouth in endless loops and I feel loopy with joy at the water at the otter.

Ground squirrels squeak sharply as they dart among the rocks the seals bark triumphantly and the fog horn announces that this spot is glorious indeed.

- Kalila Volkov

Pismo Plan

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natural open space state with minimal or no use of concrete channels." This development would require significant and extensive use of concrete and artificial drainage channels, also violating the Conservation and Open Space Policy.



Additionally, there was recent cutting of Oak Trees in the canyon as early as this fall. Besides a violation of the General Plan, (LU P-5e and CO 13 e.) this activity may have violated one or more California Oak Woodland Policies and Laws. I do not believe it was done for fire protection as I was told, but as a convenient excuse to clear the area of beautiful oak trees because their existence prevented the lots from being developed as completely as shown on the current proposal presented. In addition, there has been significant illegal dumping of fill in an adjacent area.

The area as a natural habitat contains numerous species of wildlife cited in the General Plan (Coastal Foothills Background): "Terrestrial wildlife in the various foothill habitat include a wide variety of rodents...foxes, weasels, opossum, deer...mountain lion. Bird species include meadowlarks, finches, sparrows, turkey vultures...owls, hawks and falcons." While not mentioned in the General Plan, there is more wildlife present in this area, including coyotes. Development of this area would greatly diminish this natural habitat.

The current owner of this property purchased the land with the knowledge it was not to be rezoned or changed from its Open Space designation. The City of Pismo Beach is not indebted in any way to the owner, and should have no lawful motive to rezone or exchange Open Space area for already existing lots. While the owner does have the right to buy undevelopable Open Space property, he does not have the right to put forth an illegal proposal (courtesy of the Pismo Beach Planning Department), develop the land, and reap enormous profits from an Open Space area. He also does not have the right to cut down oak trees, and then subsequently show the Planning Commission how few trees need to be removed for a roadway and lot building envelopes.

While it is clear the property owner has no legal basis to pursue development of the Open Space land, he does have rights to pursue development of the existing 24 lots indicated on the General Plan, (LU P8), adjacent to Price Canyon Road. These lots are acknowledged to be difficult to develop in their current configuration due to access, density and other issues, which is why they were never developed previously. The Planning



Yeah, right: The Pismo Beach Planning Department says the habitat value of the land at left is equal to the value of the land above. Therefore the City can rezone the Open Space area at left and the owner of the property above can swap his lots for ones on the left and build on slopes in excess of a 30 percent grade

Space Element, p.2) for all future generations, in addition to the adjacent canyon to the east. Besides the numerous clear violations above, citizens will want to know why the Planning Department has approved such a questionable proposal.

No further evidence is necessary to negate this plan. All residents should voice their concerns when they see this project agendized for meetings of the Planning Commission and City Council. This is a very poor plan for all of Pismo Beach.

Department can and should work with the owner to reconfigure these existing lots to allow their development.

The canyon area is Open Space and should remain so permanently in the General Plan (Conservation & Open

Put yourself on the SLO Sierra Club E-Alert list

Get immediate news on events of environmental interest, public meeting and hearings where your attendance could make the difference, and the low-down on the issues that matter.

Drop a note to sierraclub8@gmail.com and ask to be subscribed to Sierra Club e-alerts for San Luis Obispo.

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Sunday, July 5:

3rd Annual SLO Downtown Criterium Festival

Unforgettable racing, big cash prizes, and family fun.

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Bring your family and friends downtown for this unique 4th of July Weekend experience!

All details at:
www.CenCalCycling.com

Classifieds

Next issue deadline is **June 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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Sierra Club Santa Lucia Chapter
 Executive Committee Meeting minutes - abridged
 May 15, 2009, 12 p.m.

Present: Karen Merriam, Cal French, Melody DeMerritt, Steven Marx, Linda Seeley.
 Absent: Mark Shefrin. Staff: Andrew Christie. Guest: Ken Smokoska

Board accepts resignation of Jack Morrow. Staff Report: 5/16/09 is the first photography workshop, facilitated by Paul McCloskey. 15 people have signed up. Dave Garth will teach the next workshop.

Our final Energy Town Hall meeting is scheduled in Grover Beach at the Ramona Garden Park Center June 11 at 7 p.m. Adam Hill and Mayor Shoals will attend. Local Power rep will present info about Sonoma Climate Action plan. The supervisors see Local Power as an asset in their mandated plan to assess local energy resources. County has \$2M block grant money from the stimulus plan, in conjunction with work of RESCO grant administrators.

COSE update: 5 Planning Commission hearings through July. Open Space section is weak. Energy section fairly good, but needs to be more localized. Air quality section needs to include Nipomo/Oceano Dunes particulate pollution challenges.

Los Osos sewer: next meeting is May 28th. P Com leaning toward greener model; ag exchange, possible AIPS or lagoon treatment.

The Creek Dogs are preparing document of their travails and victories around Nipomo Creek et al, which they will donate to us.

Green Jobs: Ken Smokoska reports 2 programs this summer. Jobs program for kids 16-24. CCC, Cuesta College, WIB lead agencies. 20-month CA Green Job Corps, with renewable energy and sustainable landscape programs, will begin this fall.

Respectfully submitted,
 Linda Seeley

Walk, jog, bike, ride or boat

**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 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.

(Outings leaders: e-mail your notices to Gary Felsman no later than the 15th of the month prior. Your listings may be edited for space and consistency.)

Wed., June 3, 10, 17, 24, 5:30 p.m. Informal Hikes around SLO, approx 5 miles with 1200 foot elevation gain. Bring water, dress for the weather. Check Website or e-mail: backpackingary1@gmail.com for details.

Sat.-Sun., June 6-14, Tonto Creek, Hellsgate Wilderness (Arizona) Level 2 Gorge Scramble. Spectacular four-day gorge scramble of Tonto Creek, a seldom visited granite canyon in the Mogollon Rim. It offers unadulterated wilderness and a desert riparian habitat with saguaro cacti at the lower elevations. Lengthy pools to float thru on your air mattress. Tonto Creek is one of Arizona's premier gorge scrambles. For more information on this activity go to: www.motherlode.sierraclub.org/delta/Sierra/GSPAGES/spage0.htm Call for requirements, available space, itinerary and outing details. Leader: Paul Plathe 209-476-1498. Delta Sierra Group.

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.

June 12-14, SANTA ROSA ISLAND BACKPACK: Santa Rosa Island is California's second largest island. We will leave on Friday morning, June 12, from Ventura Harbor via Island Packers, camp for two nights, returning late Sunday afternoon. The campground is an easy 1-1/2 mile hike. Hiking opportunities unlimited, with over 54,000 acres of rugged peaks, canyons and beaches. Be prepared for adverse weather - wind speed on the island averages about 20 mph. Exceptional beach-walking on white sand beaches. There's a great slideshow about the island at www.nps.gov/chis/photosmultimedia/rosa-slideshow.htm. We reserved 10 spots; if there's enough interest, we can still reserve for more. Cost is \$100 for boat transportation and campsite, due when you sign up (non-refundable unless replacement is found). No minors under 12 and minors must be accompanied by an adult. Send check to Kurt Preissler (263 South Pacific Avenue, Ventura, CA 93001). For more information, contact Kurt Preissler (kurtpreissler@gmail.com) or Suzanne Tanaka (suzanne@hiplaces.org) (SP) (Sponsored By Los Padres Chapter).

Sat.-Sun., June 13-14, Domeland Wilderness Basecamp. In the southernmost Sierras, this wilderness includes ponderosa pines, sage meadows, and the flowing South Fork of the Kern River. Elevation modest and weather should be comfortable. On Saturday we backpack four miles to Rockhouse Basin, set up camp, explore along the river. Sunday will be a leisurely return to our cars. An easy to moderate journey for learning backpackers. Leader: Craig Deutsche, craig.deutsche@gmail.com, (310-477-6670). CNRCC Desert Com.

Sat., June 13, 10 a.m., Islay Hill Open Space. Pole Cats is dedicated to leading local Sierra Club day hikes

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



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 polecatleader@gmail.com for upcoming activities. Biped welcome.

Sat, 9 a.m., Poly Canyon Ramble, Come take a morning hike through Poly Canyon. Explore the back reaches of the campus on this moderate 6 mile hike with 800 foot elevation Gain should be done by 1 p.m. Bring water, snack hiking shoes and dress for the weather. Meet at the entrance to Poly Canyon in the Staff Parking Lot near the large redwood tree east of the police station. Details call Gary 473-3694.

Sun., June 21, 5:00 pm -Sierra Singles Solstice Celebration hike. Montana de Oro Bluffs Trail: S Join Sierra Club hike leaders Stacy Talbert and Ken Smokoska for a leisurely exploration of the ocean bluffs at Montana de Oro. On this relaxed hike of four miles round trip on a flat dirt trail, you are likely to see great blue heron, sea otter, cormorant, rabbits, and maybe a snake or two. There will be time to browse tidal pools and mark the progress of the sunset. Wear layers for cooling evening temps. Meet at the Ranger Station parking lot. Possible gathering for a snack afterwards. Call Stacy (818-472-6827) or Ken (544-6628) for more details.

Sat., June 27, 8:45 a.m. Coon Creek to Oats Peak Fun with New and Old Friends Hike: This is a moderately strenuous 8 to 9 mile round trip hike with an elevation gain and loss of approximately 1,400 ft. Come enjoy a lush streamside environment and feast your eyes on wide ocean and mountain views. The trails will take us through three natural areas: coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and riparian woodland. Our lunch stop will be in a magical cypress grove. Bring plenty of water, lunch, sunscreen, hat, and proper hiking shoes. Dressing for the weather and in layers is advisable. There is poison oak (near trails) and ticks in this area. Assistant leader: Gary Felsman. Directions to Trailhead: From San Luis Obispo take Los Osos Valley Road to Los Osos, then continue on to the entrance of Montana de Oro State Park via Pecho Valley Road. Meet in the Coon Creek trailhead parking lot on the south end of Pecho Road Look forward to seeing you at the trailhead! For further info call Tracey at 805-704-2277.

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.



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.

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. Biped welcome.

Sun., June 28th, 8:00 a.m. Tentative Cruikshank Trail to Buckeye Trail to Alder Creek Camp. Join the leader on this early summer hike to Alder Camp. This is an 11 mile hike with about 2700 ft. of elevation gain. We hike from Highway 1 to Upper Cruikshank Camp. From there we will walk down to Villa Camp after crossing Villa Creek. We will then ascend a ridge and follow the trail into Alder Creek Canyon. There are great views of the coastline from the ridge. There is a possibility of poison oak, ticks and a few other pesky bugs. Bring lunch or snacks, water, insect repellent and dress for the weather. If the weather is hot or you want to go for a dip one may just stop at Villa Creek Camp. Meet at the Washburn day use area just north of Cambria. There will be a refueling stop at the Main St Grill in Cambria following the hike. For info call Chuck @ 441-7597. Call to confirm date and time of hike.

Sun., June 28th Outings Leader Training Seminar at the Sierra Club: See page 7.

Sun., June 28th, 7 p.m. Historic SLO Walk. Join us this early evening for a short, guided walking tour of the historic downtown of SLO, with tales of its early pioneers, rich & famous. Meet at corner of Monterey and Osos Sts. Children with parents welcome. 1 hr. Leader: Joe Morris, 772-1875

Other Local Outings

not sponsored by the Sierra Club

Art After Dark: Land Conservancy, 547 Marsh St., SLO, Friday, June 5th, 6-9 p.m. Come see many paintings of areas we are working to protect along with paintings of the Octagon Barn. This is your last chance to purchase SLOPE artwork! (Sponsored by The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County).