



May 2010
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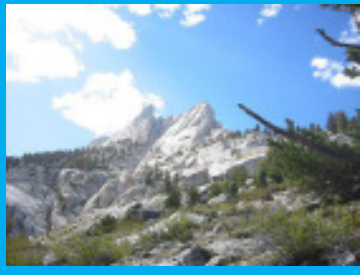
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The Eastern Sierra**

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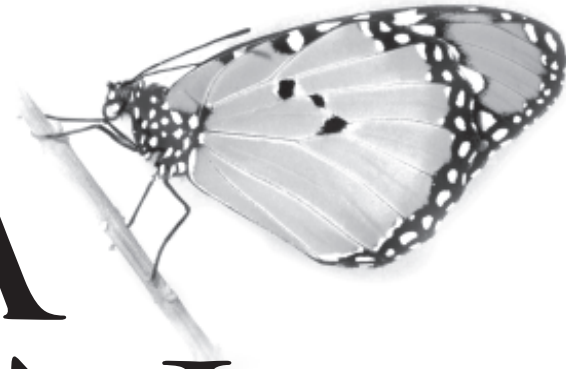


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SANTA LUCIAN

Protecting and Preserving the Central Coast



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

June 8 is Election Day

Sierra Club endorsements and recommendations

**Vote No
on
Prop. 16**

Proposition 16 is the most important item on the ballot, and likely the most fateful vote you will cast for decades to come. Even by the historical standards of pernicious, deceitful ballot initiatives powered by geysers of special interest cash and designed to shaft the public, Prop. 16 is something special. Kersten Communications, a public policy research group, has pegged Prop. 16 as an attempt by PG&E "to use the California initiative process to further solidify their monopoly of regional electricity markets and advance their own narrow corporate interests at the expense of all Californians." PG&E is prepared to spend \$35 million to kill any chance for new public power programs that can reduce the cost of renewable energy and allow local governments to meet goals for renewables, air pollution control, carbon reduction and energy security, and save millions on utility bills. Prop. 16 is PG&E's bid to strangle such potential competition in the cradle. Go to: www.powergrab.info.

For Congress, 23rd District: Lois Capps. There's not much we can add



to the environmental voting score of 100 percent Capps earned from the League of Conservation Voters last year, which included passage of the first-ever comprehensive climate change and clean energy legislation, public lands protection, and funding for promoting green building technologies. Capps is a key supporter of legislation to develop a national

early supporter of raising vehicle fuel economy standards. On the House Natural Resources Committee, she has been a leader in the fight to fully fund our national parks and has passed legislation to establish a federal program to protect coastal areas from harmful development. To help her campaign, go to: www.loiscapps.org.



policy for healthy oceans, co-founding the House National Marine Sanctuary Caucus. As a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Capps is a proven leader in promoting clean, renewable energy, and was an

For Attorney General: Pedro Nava. This is the second-most important position in the state government, next to Governor. As the top lawyer for the

continued on page 8

May 23: Save the Whales Again

Plan to be in Morro Bay that day

On May 23, from San Diego to Eureka, Californians will gather to send a message to the Obama administration: Do not consent to allow the legalization of commercial whaling and lifting of the global moratorium that has been in place at the International Whaling Commission since 1986. The Sierra Club is sponsoring the demonstration in Morro Bay.

A draft agreement prepared by a committee of the IWC would authorize commercial whaling by Japan,

Iceland and Norway for a ten-year period, erase the distinction between commercial and aboriginal subsistence hunting, leave enforcement of quotas to the same nations that have been in violation of the moratorium, and allow the killing of whales in the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary.

The so-called "consensus package," would result in hunt quotas on the California gray whale for a ten-year

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Wanetta Ayers



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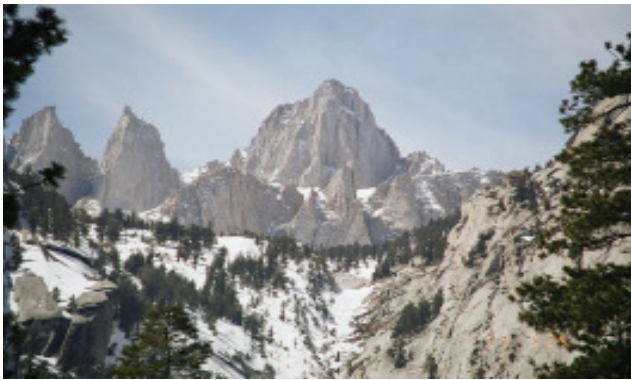
Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

General Meeting

Wednesday, May 12, 7 p.m.

Nature's Ballet: Eastern Sierra

This month, our bimonthly General Meeting features acclaimed local nature photographer Walter Robie, presenting his latest multimedia show, highlighting Mt. Whitney,



June and Mono Lakes, Alabama Hills, and other spectacles of the Eastern Sierras. Meeting begins with a tribute to Karen Merriam, recently retired chair of the chapter executive committee. Steynberg Gallery, 1531 Monterey St., SLO. No charge or reservations. Info: Joe Morris, 772-1875.

Open Space: the Final Frontier

by Sue Harvey, Chair, Conservation Committee

"Don't do it!"
 "Go back!"
 "You're going the wrong way!!"

These were basically the sentiments expressed by many speakers back in 2006 when the Board of Supervisors voted to split the combined Agriculture and Open Space Element of the county's General Plan and initiated an update of several elements of the plan. The process would become the Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE).

There were chapters on Air Quality, Biological Resources, Energy, Water Resources, Visual Resources, Cultural Resources, Mineral Resources, and Open Space — but no Ag. The Open Space portion of the Ag and Open Space Element would be revised, but there would be no review of the Ag Element.

Four years later, after considerable expense, effort, and controversy, the Supervisors were scheduled to have approved the COSE on April 20. Then they announce a postponement and continuance to the following week. So as we go to press, the Board is preparing to take another run at the COSE on April 27. As you read this, the Board presumably will have completed its labors. But we have no idea how they will have fixed the problems we've identified without major surgery.

For example, any change to the existing Open Space Zoning ordinance, if implied in the COSE or added to an adopting resolution, would require a thorough environmental review. If reclassifying land is proposed, significant mitigation would be required. And there is the potential of changing the status of thousands of acres in the county by lifting the requirement for a variance.

An Open Space Element is one of the state-mandated General Plan Elements. The County's General Plan is its blue print for how it will grow in the future. It describes our land use goals and the policies to achieve our goals. The Open Space element is no afterthought; the state directs that the Open Space Element must be as detailed as the Housing Element. According to California's General Plan Guidelines, published by the Office of Planning and Research:

"Along with the housing element, the open-space element has the most detailed statutory intent (see 65561 and 65562) and, next to land use, is the broadest in scope" (p. 81).

General Plan element updates such as the COSE are intended to expand existing policy, using existing elements, planning documents and ordinances as references and foundations for the updates.

The Sierra Club and North County Watch have followed and commented on the COSE since the Planning Commission hearings. We find the Open Space chapter to be inadequate as a document and inconsistent with state mandates. It ignores the existing policy and ordinance and weakens open space protections, and its Environmental Impact Report fails to address these problems or mitigate for the impacts of reduced protection.

Prior to April 27, efforts were underway by proponents of the 2006 separation of the Ag and Open Space Elements to remove the open space designation from agricultural lands, thereby making it easier to convert ag land to residential and urban development.

Such a move would have violated state law and the Open Space Zoning Ordinance, and would have removed thousands of acres from open space zoning. The state considers rangeland, agricultural lands, and areas of economic importance for the production of food and fiber as open space.

While it may be convenient to ignore pertinent documents to suit one's purposes, it doesn't contribute to good planning and leaves one open to legal challenges.

Why should we or the County care if the Open Space Element is inconsistent with state statutes? Because any land use application approved on the basis of local ordinances or policies that are inconsistent with state statutes is a violation of state law. *Ultra vires* – beyond the powers – is the legal concept that describes this kind of challenge. Local government cannot approve actions that violate state law.

It would be prudent to delay adopting the COSE and certifying the EIR because the existing conditions have not been fully analyzed, and there are multiple inconsistencies between the Framework for Planning and other adopted elements.

As we write, we don't know if the County will vote to adopt the COSE on April 27. If it did so, it will need to have somehow first resolved these outstanding issues.

SANTA LUCIAN

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Santa Lucia Chapter

2010 Executive Committee

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 Steven Marx
 TREASURER

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 MEMBER
 Megan Worthington
 MEMBER

Linda Seeley
 MEMBER

Jono Kinkade
 MEMBER

Liz Tracy cal.french@gmail.com
 MEMBER

Cal French
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The Executive Committee meets the third Friday of every month at 1:00 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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 Chuck Tribbey
Conservation
 Sue Harvey lfsusan@tcsn.net

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 Cal French

Litigation beckers@thegrid.net
 Andy Greensfelder

Nuclear Power Task Force
 Rochelle Becker

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Diablo's Uncool Problem

Mothers for Peace has filed objections with the California State Water Resources Control Board to proposed revisions to the policy governing use of ocean water for once-through cooling as it relates to the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant.

The proposed policy does not comply with the Federal Clean Water Act, but instead provides numerous loopholes for the two nuclear power plants in California – Diablo Canyon and San Onofre – to continue to degrade coastal waters indefinitely.

The Federal Clean Water Act requires that cooling water intake structures minimize the environmental impacts to aquatic organisms due

to impingement on intake screens and the killing of eggs and larvae as they pass through the cooling water systems. PG&E admits in its License Renewal Application that “For all regulatory and assessment purposes, entrainment losses caused by DCNPP are considered 100 percent of all organisms withdrawn from the Pacific Ocean with the intake flow under all conditions. Annual entrainment of larval fish is estimated to range between 1.48 and 1.77 billion.”

The Mothers for Peace are asking that the California State Water Resources Control Board enforce the Federal Clean Water Act by requiring both of the nuclear plants in Califor-

nia to use the best available technology to reduce the negative effects on the ocean as they continue to operate.

The Clean Water Act requires that the location, design, construction, and capacity of cooling water intake structures reflect the best technology available (BTA) to minimize adverse environmental impacts to aquatic organisms due to (1) impingement mortality on intake screens, and (2) entrainment of eggs and larvae through cooling water systems.

There has been a longstanding, concerted effort by state and federal agencies to implement this rule, which the Water Board's proposed policy would significantly undermine.



Genetically Engineered Pie in the Sky

By Jesse Arnold

The biotech industry is good at bragging about things it is going to do in the future. You might call it genetically engineered pie in the sky.

They promised better tasting crops. Instead, they gave us the Flavr-Savr tomato, which didn't have any flavor to save. It was a tomato with a flounder gene added to give it longer shelf life.

The biotech industry says it will bring us more nutritious food. More nutritious crops have already been developed by regular plant breeding because it is cheaper and easier to do it that way. I've grown three such crops: the carorich tomato, high in Beta-carotene; the Health Kick tomato, high in lycopene; and Nutri-Bud broccoli, high in free-glutamine.

The biotech industry has consistently claimed its crops are “substantially equivalent” to the non-genetically engineered version of the crop, thus no legal requirement for labeling is triggered. If a genetically engineered crop were higher in nutritional value, could it still claim to be equivalent to the non-genetically engineered form? Would labeling then be required? The biotech industry knows labeling would cut into sales because of the number of consumers who do not want their products.

The biotech boosters claim they are going to develop drought-resistant crops. However, just as with more nutritious crops, drought-resistant crops already exist. People in Mexico

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March 31, 2010

Chief, Rulemaking and Directives Branch
Division of Administrative Services
Office of Administration
Mailstop TWB 5B-01M
US Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington DC 20555-0001

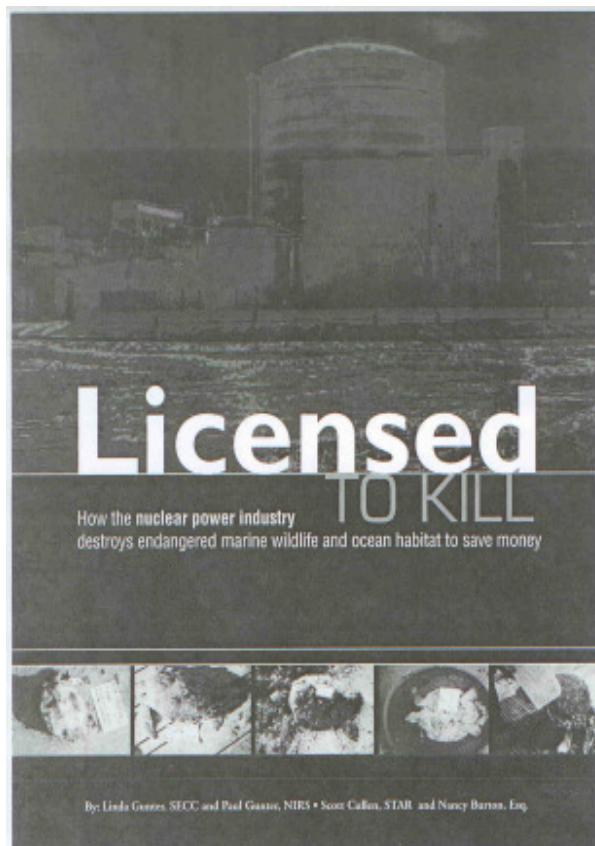
Dear Sirs:

The Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club submits these comments on the NRC's scoping of the Environmental Impact Statement for the renewal of the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant's operating licenses.

We have attached two documents:

1) Excerpts from the 2000 report “Licensed to Kill,” prepared by the Nuclear Information Resource Service, Humane Society of the United States, Safe Energy Communication Council, and Standing for Truth About Radiation

2) An excerpt from the December 14, 2006, California Coastal Commission staff report on the appeal of a Coastal Development Permit issued to PG&E for the replacement of Diablo Canyon's steam generators.



Both documents detail the nature and history of environmental impacts of the power plant's cooling system. This history stands in marked contrast to the assertions contained in the Environmental Report submitted by PG&E with its license renewal application.

In particular we draw to your attention the documented history in “Licensed to Kill” of attempted suppression of evidence of the cooling system's environmental impacts and the assessment of fines against PG&E by the State of California for withholding that evidence. The attempt to minimize and mischaracterize the environmental impacts of the plant continues in PG&E's submitted Environmental Report, which reflects the arguments made by PG&E when attempting to refute the conclusions of the 1997 study overseen by the technical workgroup of the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. When the Water Board reviewed a report submitted by PG&E that attempted to refute the findings of the technical workgroup and support a finding of less severe, limited impacts, the Board rejected those arguments, reaffirming the findings of independent scientists that the impacts of the plant's cooling system on the marine environment are significantly greater than PG&E maintained. Despite this, PG&E continues to make the same arguments today.

In light of this history, we strongly urge the NRC to discard the reporting of PG&E and researchers in its employ in its self-assessment of the nature and extent of the plant cooling system's impacts. Instead, we urge the NRC to accept the independent evaluations of the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, the California Department of Fish and Game, and the California Coastal Commission, described herein, as the appropriate authorities on which to base an assessment of the impacts on the marine environment that would result from the relicensing of the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant and an appropriate mitigations for those impacts.

Additionally, the scope of your review should include the results of all seismic studies required by the state of California. Thank you for your attention to these issues.

Sincerely,

Melody DeMeritt
Chapter Chair

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



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The Morro Bay-Cayucos Plan: Repeat Los Osos' Mistakes

The projected cost of the new wastewater treatment plant for Morro Bay and Cayucos, even though it is the most expensive project those communities have ever undertaken, is a fraction of the cost estimated for the Los Osos wastewater project at the other end of the estuary.

That difference aside, the uncanny similarities between the two projects are growing.

As with Los Osos, Morro Bay and Cayucos at first proposed only a secondary level of sewage treatment. In both cases, environmental activists and determined residents -- and, in the case of Los Osos, the California Coastal Commission -- brought pressure to bear and forced an upgrade to tertiary treatment.

But the Morro Bay City Council and the Cayucos Sanitary District still seem determined to take the project down the same road to disaster that the SLO County Department of Public Works was headed down with the Los Osos wastewater project before an enlightened County Planning Commission listened to public input and went on to make several other big changes in order to rescue the project's coastal development permit.

All of those changes were centered on the need for the Los Osos project to deal with a future of increasing water scarcity, and the biggest of those changes was the determination that the wastewater treatment plant could not simply treat sewage and throw it away. The Planning Commission ordered that the project must include a component for recycled water, over the vigorous objections of the Public Works Department, which stoutly defended their preferred narrow-focus, un-permittable project. The Commissioners blew up that project, added recycled water, major conservation and restoration of the aquifer, and turned it into a permissible project.

At their April 8 joint meeting as the governing bodies of the Morro Bay-Cayucos Wastewater Treatment Plant, The Morro Bay City Council and Cayucos Sanitary District refused to even consider hearing a presentation on the possibility of making a change in plans and doing anything with their plant's treated effluent other than throwing it into the ocean. They didn't want to hear about an alternative that could be done for one-third of the cost of the proposed plant, with a smaller footprint. They didn't want to hear about improved



We can't hear you At the April 8 joint meeting of the Morro Bay City Council and the Cayucos Sanitary District, only Morro Bay's Betty Winholtz and Noah Smukler were responsive so the testimony of the majority of their constituents.

treatment technologies in the five years since they had set course on the present plan. And it was just too late for other companies to bring up lower cost, lesser impact, higher quality alternatives because they had their chance when the Request for Qualifications was issued (with an erroneous deadline), so

A year ago, the Coastal Commission spelled it out for the County when the Los Osos sewer plan was headed in the same direction: Change or die.

it was "offensive" that any of them would request the opportunity to make a presentation now.

Morro Bay City Councilmembers Noah Smukler and Betty Winholtz registered laudable, vigorous dissent to this line of reasoning.

There will be no intervention of an enlightened Planning Commission to save Morro Bay and Cayucos. Only a public outcry is likely to prevent the entrenched leadership of those communities from sleepwalking all the way down a path at the end of which awaits the cold shower of permit denial. A year ago, the Coastal Commission spelled it out for the County when its Los Osos sewer plan was headed in the same direction. Their basic message: Change or die. Recycle the wastewater after you treat it, or forget about getting a permit.

The California Water Plan, issued by the Department of Natural Resources, also makes it clear. The second of its 13 listed objectives and goals is to "use water more efficiently with significantly greater water conservation, recycling and reuse to help meet future water demands and adapt to climate change."

This is the future. Alas for the residents of Morro Bay and Cayucos, their leaders are living in the past.

As we mention elsewhere herein, citizens of Morro Bay: on June 8, vote for Betty Winholtz for Mayor and Jack Smith for City Council!

Meet Our 2010 Executive Committee

The votes are in for the Chapter's 2010 Executive Committee election:

Jono Kinkade: 3-year term, ending Dec. 2012

Liz Tracy: 3-year term, ending Dec. 2012

Megan Worthington: 1-year term, ending Dec. 2010 (by appointment)

Linda Seeley: 1-year term, ending Dec. 2010 (by appointment)

Continuing ExCom members:

Melody DeMeritt, Chair: 3-year term, ending Dec. 2011

Steven Marx, Treasurer: 3-year term, ending Dec. 2011

Cal French: 3-year term, ending Dec. 2011

Hail and farewell to **Dawn Legg**, stepping down to devote herself full-time to her environmentally friendly lighting business.

Terms are determined on the basis of number of votes received and seats to be filled. The Chapter has term limits of two consecutive terms.



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This is Huge

On May 12, stand up for clean water

By Steve Shimek
Monterey Coastkeeper

Attention all Central Coast residents concerned about our environment: We need your voice at the podium and your butt in a chair on May 12!

On that day, the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) will hold the first of two hearings on the new "Conditional Waiver for Irrigated Agricultural Discharges." If you care about water quality, you need to be there.

As you may know, until very recent years, agriculture was nearly exempt from water quality regulation. Now there is a showdown on. Water quality is getting worse and RWQCB staff is asking: Are we going to regulate ag or not?

The new order will require:

- * Elimination of tailwater near impaired water bodies within two years
- * Elimination of toxic discharge near open water within three years
- * Elimination of sediment runoff near open water within three years

* Elimination of nitrate and salt in runoff above water quality standards within four years

* Elimination of discharge of nitrate and salt to groundwater above water quality standards within six years.

This would be huge. The California Farm Bureau Federation walked into the last meeting with a pack of lawyers in tow. The Farm Bureau is worried the Central Coast ag order will become the model for the rest of the state.

Let's hope it does!

But we'll have to do more than hope. This will not be easy, but the meeting should at least be entertaining.

We need your voice on May 12th. Please mark your calendar.

Everything you would ever want to know about this issue is at:

www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb3/water_issues/programs/ag_waivers/index.shtml#announce. Contact me for talking points, directions, crib notes, and RSVP for a free lunch: Steve Shimek, Monterey Coastkeeper, 831/646-8837 x114, steve@montereycoastkeeper.org.



Regional Water Quality Control Board Public Workshop
 May 12, 10:30 a.m.
 San Luis Obispo Elks Lodge
 222 Elks Lane
 San Luis Obispo
 (check Regional Board's website for last minute changes!)
www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb3/

The Facts: California's Waters and Agricultural Pollution

Agricultural discharges have been essentially unregulated for decades. Unlike thousands of other businesses in California, agricultural operations have been essentially free to discharge polluted runoff without regulation by the Regional Water Boards. Twenty-five years ago, state regulators "waived" most of the requirements of California's clean water law for farmers, rationalizing that agricultural discharges did not pose a threat to the environment and that growers would self-regulate.

Although some growers in the Central Coast region have taken the lead and are making good efforts to reduce pollution, overall, the increasing impacts of agricultural runoff demonstrate that stronger protection is necessary.

We Have a Historic Opportunity

There is overwhelming evidence that polluted runoff from agricultural lands poses a substantial risk to our waterways, fisheries, and community health. Consequently, the Regional Water Boards must impose waste discharge requirements.

More than 16 million pounds of pesticides are applied to Central Coast farmland annually. Millions of pounds of fertilizers are also applied throughout Central Coast counties. Agricultural runoff washes these wastes into Central Coast waterways and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. Pollution from agriculture is one of the largest sources of surface water contamination in Central California watersheds.

Agricultural pesticides, pathogens, nitrates and salts have been detected in drinking water supplies serving 16.5 million people in 46 California counties. Agricultural discharges threaten populations of threatened and endangered species and their critical habitats in the Central Coast region, including salmon and steelhead trout. The Department of Pesticide Regulation found pesticides in 96% of Central Valley locations tested, and over half of these detections exceeded unsafe levels for aquatic life and drinking water consumption.

There is also widespread groundwater contamination in the Central Coast region due to the impact of agricultural and other activities - such contamination presents human health risks and is extremely costly and difficult to clean up.

According to the Regional Board's 2008 list of impaired waterbodies, 167 waterbody segments in the Central Coast region, including the Salinas and Santa Ynez Rivers, San Luis Obispo Creek and Morro Bay and Elkhorn Slough estuaries, are so polluted by agricultural contaminants that they are unsafe for fishing, swimming, and drinking.



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Farm to City

The city-owned land next to the Dalidio Ranch – the prime farmland surrounded by shopping malls just south of downtown SLO – could become an urban farm incubator, an organic farming center in the heart of the city.

The target of this extraordinary effort is some 15 acres of City property adjacent to the portion of the Dalidio farm that is slated for preservation as open space. An ad hoc citizens group consisting of local café owners, potential growers, Cal Poly profs, grad students and others has brought an idea to the City of SLO that the City hadn't thought of: Why not lease this land to farmers who want to use organic farming practices? Why not take the opportunity to take action to strengthen our local food security?

The idea started to gain traction a year ago, when development of a Master Plan for City-owned agricultural land at Calle Joaquin was deemed an important objective for the City's 2009-2011 budget cycle. When the final Community Workshop on the City of SLO's Ag Master Plan was held last fall, the SLO City Farm group was ready with a proposal. City staff and the Central Coast Ag Network (CCAN) got interested and have since been working closely with the City Farm group, which is now integrated with CCAN.

There are a number of models the City could look at in pondering its options for SLO's farm incubator.

The Vermont nonprofit Intervale Center has been pursuing the mission of "supporting viable farms, increasing access to local and organic food, improving soil fertility, protecting water quality through stream bank restoration, and educating young people about agriculture and healthy food" since 1988. Raft Swamp Farms, 150 acres in Hoke County, North Carolina, is a non-profit that leases small tracts of land and provides incubator farmers with hands-on training in organic methods and farm business management, along with access to a community barn and shared farm equipment. The Carolina Farm Stewardship Association is working to create and sustain farm incubators to serve new Carolinas farmers, thanks to a \$15,000 grant from the Ben & Jerry's foundation and donor support.



Closer to home is the Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association (ALBA), a Monterey-based nonprofit with a mission to advance economic viability, social equity and ecological land management among limited-resource and aspiring farmers, who grow and sell crops on two organic farms in Monterey County.

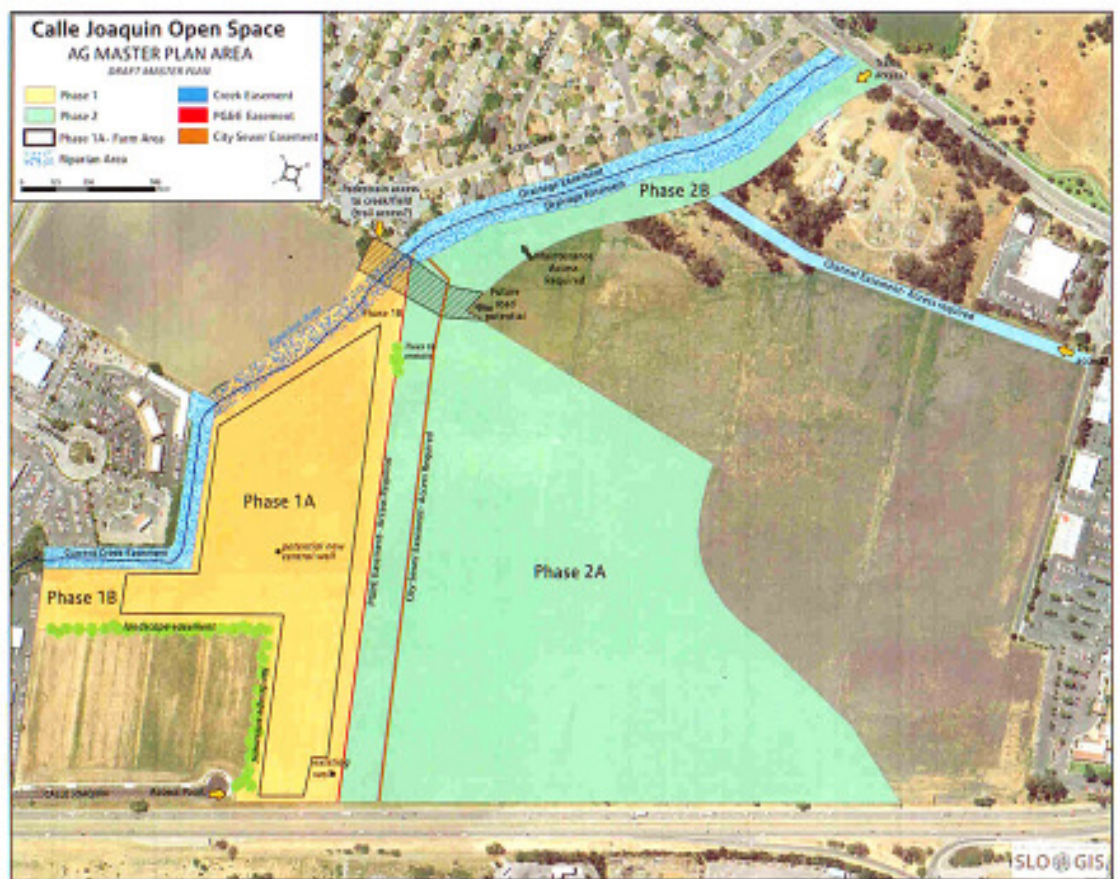
"We work to create opportunities for family farms while providing education and demonstration on conservation, habitat restoration, marketing and whole farm planning," says ALBA's website. In addition to providing opportunities for farm workers and other low-income people to create organic farm businesses in its small-farm incubator program, ALBA

works with both beginning and established farmers to advance sustainable agriculture and community food systems. ALBA created ALBA Organics as a licensed produce distributor to generate market access for participat-

and help students gain access to locally-produced, fresh food.

If the SLO CityFarm project gets the nod, the 25 acres owned or controlled by the City next to the Dalidio site would be leased to CCAN as an initial farming area, which would be leased in turn to local farmers, putting the profits into farm education grants and subsidizing underserved communities to enable the purchase of fresh, local produce. There would also be potential for a community garden or native plant nursery and riparian enhancements along Prefumo Creek.

In Phase II, if or when the Dalidio property develops in the City, half of the Dalidio site (approximately 65 additional acres) would be placed in a permanent ag and open space easement and the City would make that available to City Farm. The property's designated open space area could be used as an expansion area for farming activities and extension of the Bob Jones Bike Trail.



ing farmers while also providing sales and marketing education. Sales on behalf of participating farmers have grown almost 50% annually since its inception."

ALBA is part of the network of The Farm-to-College project at UC Santa Cruz, which links the Center for Agroecology & Sustainable Food Systems' farm on the UCSC campus with other local organic farms and with UCSC campus organizations to bring organic produce to the campus dining halls and restaurants.

The "farm-to-college" movement, like the K-12 farm-to-school movement, is bringing local produce to student dining halls through direct relationships between farmers and educational institutions. Farm-to-school or farm-to-college arrangements help farmers gain more of the food dollar, benefit local economies,

All phases would be undertaken pursuant to a capital improvement, management and maintenance plan between the City and CCAN. Under the formal title "Calle Joaquin Reserve Master Plan," hearings on the proposed project will likely take place before the SLO City Parks Commission and Planning Commission, and then the City Council, from July through October.

"We welcome broad community participation in this exciting project," said CCAN board president Louise Schiller. "We invite everyone to come out to the city meetings to help this project become a reality."



Bull session SLO City Farm meets with City staff to hash out the details of the organic farm incubator project.



A Big Green Solar Power System

...is already on the Carrizo Plain

By Eric Greening

When one stands on the Carrizo Plain on a windy day, watching the shapes of otherwise invisible gusts combing the grass, the vast grassland feels powerfully ancient, almost timeless.

While this is true on the scale of human life, when one looks at the full length of Earth's history, grasslands are a surprisingly innovative development.

The dinosaurs no doubt trod over plant life as they went about their huge business, but what they stepped on was not grass. The first grasses appeared at least 10 million years after their abrupt disappearance, and at first were only an occasional tuft in habitats dominated by trees, shrubs, and forbs. It is only in the last 20 million years, half a percent of the Earth's history to date, that grasslands as an ecosystem have existed, and during that time they have vastly grown in extent. Some paleoclimatologists have proposed that the increased contrast in temperature among different parts of the Earth's surface has increased the average wind speed, encouraging wind-pollinated grasses to spread over the windiest areas.

One of the last continents to be dominated by grass was Africa. Through the Miocene and into the Pliocene, most of the tropical part of that continent was forested, and large primates ancestral to apes and humans experimented with upright posture in the context of moving among branches. As the high latitudes became increasingly frigid, much of Africa became drier, and patches of grassland and savanna

opened up amid the forests, eventually expanding to cover vast areas. While many of the large primates stayed with the trees, others used their upright posture to venture into the grass and became hominids, including our ancestors. While millions of years of grassland adaptation preceded the appearance of *Homo sapiens*, we still are a grassland species; look at what we eat! Rice, wheat, corn, oats, barley, sorghum, teff, rye...the bulk of the human diet worldwide consists of grass seeds—and, for some, animal products from grass eaters.

While grasslands may not be as immediately dramatic as tropical rain forests, their soils are incomparably richer, supporting an incredible volume and diversity of life forms above as well as below the surface. A teaspoonful of healthy grassland soil is likely to contain a billion microorganisms, and their work is a fractal ramification of the ceaseless burrowing of grassland mammals. At multiple scales, living beings are constantly creating endlessly ramifying surfaces for the exchange of gases and the transformation of the Sun's energy into living and stored biomass.

The best place in California to experience, and learn from, grassland in all its scales, from vast horizons to microscopic activity, is the Carrizo Plain. As most readers of the *Santa Lucian* know, this grassland is now eagerly sought by corporations seeking to harvest solar energy; they see large level areas in locations that pencil out according to something far younger than grasslands: money. What they do *not* see is that the Carrizo Plain is already a powerful

solar production facility. Solar energy is transformed into kit fox and pronghorn, leopard lizard and burrowing owl.

Grasslands are one of the most innovative "ideas" the Earth has ever had, and we are privileged to live in a period of Earth's history when they have developed to such a height of complexity, diversity, and productivity. We would not be human beings if we did not live in such a time.

As we witness the gusts of wind combing the grass into ever-changing patterns, we should stop to realize that humans have been part of this productive ecosystem for many thousands of years; that for most of that time, human inhabitants felt their needs were so abundantly met that they considered the area deeply sacred, that they made paintings to let

the inner patterns of the land be seen and expressed, that speakers of different languages gathered here to honor and celebrate.

Now there is a new wave of humans washing across the landscape. Some of them entertain the idea that covering huge areas with rectangles is the way to "produce solar energy." I don't know where to begin in trying to make sense of such a notion. Best to leave explaining to the pronghorn and burrowing owls and swirling gusts of wind.



A Great Place for a Solar Power Plant

...is 50 miles north of the Carrizo Plain

The Carrizo Plain is the most biologically diverse habitat in California, with the largest remaining contiguous habitats and highest concentration of endangered and threatened species, including the San Joaquin Kit Fox and California Condor. The Carrizo is the largest protected habitat along the Pacific Flyway, home to successfully re-introduced Pronghorn Antelope and Tule elk, and is the largest remaining tract of the

Rebecca Plevin

Location, location, location Above: Carrizo in bloom. Inset: Kettleman City.

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Endorsements

continued from page 1

state, the AG enforces our environmental laws, from the Environmental Quality Act to the Global Warming Solutions Act and the Coastal Act.

As an Assemblymember, Nava has introduced important environmental legislation. He successfully fought the gun lobby to pass legislation banning the use of lead ammunition in Condor country, established a comprehensive oil spill prevention program, and strengthened watershed protection. Additionally, he has been a staunch opponent of offshore oil drilling in California Coastal Sanctuary waters. Prior to his service in the Assembly, Nava served on the California Coastal Commission for eight years where he had the highest coastal resource protection voting record.

Sierra Club California sent questionnaires to all nine viable candidates in this race. None of the three Republicans returned the questionnaires. All six Democratic candidates participated, and were interviewed by the Sierra Club.

The last two Attorneys General, Bill Lockyer and Jerry Brown, set a high standard for the protection of California's environment. Pedro Nava will continue in that tradition and enhance that standard. Go to www.pedronava.com to help make it happen.

For US Senate: Barbara Boxer. Senator Boxer has been an environmental leader for decades. As the Chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, she has even more clout to reduce the threat of global warming, promote green jobs and ensure that we have a safe and healthy environment for future generations. "The Sierra Club has been my partner on so many issues, from protecting wilderness to strengthening drinking water standards. I'm proud to have their endorsement and look forward to engaging Sierra Club members in my campaign," said Senator Boxer.

The Sierra Club joins a broad coalition of organizations and individuals supporting Boxer, including firefighters, sheriffs, nurses, technology industry and agricultural leaders. The Republicans are gunning for her big time. Help her prepare for November at www.barbaraboxer.com



For State Assembly, 33rd District: Hilda Zacarias. This is a candidate who does not need the term "environmental justice" to be defined for her. As a Santa Maria City Councilmember, Zacarias supported supermarket janitors forced to use toxic cleaning supplies, saying janitors are already "working at wages that most of us couldn't make it with. To ask them to take some of those hard-earned dollars and pay an increased cost in health care is unacceptable." Attendees at Sierra Club's June 2009 Energy Town Hall in Grover Beach heard Zacarias speak eloquently on transportation and energy issues in Santa Maria and her

vision for the region's clean, green energy future.

Zacarias has assisted community-based organizations in their financial and organizational development, most significantly the Dana Adobe in Nipomo and the Alliance for Pharmaceutical Access in northern Santa Barbara County.

The Sierra Club is pleased to join a list of Zacarias endorsers which includes Atascadero mayor Ellen Beraud, Morro Bay City Councilmembers Noah Smukler and Betty Winholtz, Cambria Community Services District boardmember Muril Clift, Los Osos Community Services District boardmember Maria Kelly, and former County Supervisors Shirley Bianchi, David Blakely, Evelyn Delany, and Bud Laurent. Get involved at <http://hildazacarias.com>

For Secretary of State: Debra Bowen. Bowen started out volunteering general legal services to Heal the Bay in Santa Monica, then expanded her practice to environmental and land-use cases. She went on to six years in the State Assembly and eight in the Senate, where she demonstrated an outstanding commitment to environmental protection. We are confident that she will continue to be a champion of California's air, water and wild places.

And it doesn't hurt that she has received the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award, an international honor bestowed on "public servants who have made courageous decisions of conscience without regard for the personal or professional consequences," as a result of her decision to halt the use of electronic voting machines after flaws were discovered. She also strengthened election fraud prevention efforts, and has never accepted gifts from those who may be trying to influence her decision-making.

For State Treasurer: Bill Lockyer. One of the most reliable votes for the environment during his 25 years in the California Legislature, Lockyer went on to a seven-year stint at Attorney General, where he did a great job of enforcing the environmental protections he had previously helped make into laws. He also recovered billions of dollars for defrauded energy ratepayers, consumers and taxpayers.

He's continued that record while running the State Treasurer's Office for the last four years, acting as California's chief asset manager and banker in financing a variety of public works, including transportation projects, parks, environmental projects, and pollution clean-up.

For State Controller: John Chiang. As Calitics.com put it: "This race isn't on the radar of most Californians, but we really have a stark choice. John Chiang will bring sensible ideas to the office. Tony Strickland, former Assemblyman, husband of current Assemblywoman Strickland, is the president of the California Club for Growth! You know, the guy that extracts all those 'No Tax Hikes Ever' pledges from every candidate, even if there is a serious reason why we need them. Strickland supports the Bush plan on economic reform, including his ridiculous tax cuts in a time of war."

For County Supervisor, District 2: Bruce Gibson. You want at least one person on a board of supervisors who knows land use policy like the back of his hand, and fully grasps the reasons why we have ordinances and regulations, and what's at stake when special interests urge changing, relaxing or

eliminating those rules or the cutting of corners. For our county, Bruce Gibson is that guy, and we are pleased to renew our endorsement in his bid for a second term.

Gibson insisted on accepting the findings of the Air Pollution Control District's recent Nipomo Mesa/Oceano Dunes air pollution study, despite attacks on the science and pressure from the



management of the State Vehicular Recreational Area and the Pismo and Grover Beach City Councils. He understands the need for a land bank as effective incentive to retain the character of our rural and ag land, and to develop the potential of our local "foodshed." During the recent board hearings on the Conservation and Open Space Element, he managed to retain crucial policy

provisions to aid in the shift of irrigation from potable to reclaimed water and develop a plan to secure county access for groundwater well monitoring.

And to our friends in Los Osos who have managed to read this far but are struggling with their blood pressure: In politics, as in life, making a decision with widespread, multiple ramifications on the basis of a single issue is never a good idea. As is well known, we have disagreed sharply with Gibson over the Los Osos wastewater project. But there are too many other pressing environmental issues in the county for anyone in Gibson's district to cast their vote on that issue alone. He remains the smartest, strongest voice on the Board when it comes to land use policy, and as such, he is the Board's indispensable man.

And if District 2 voters need further incentive to resist the single-issue impulse: from the available evidence, Gibson's opponent, Marshall Ochylski, was recruited to run by COLAB, the local alliance of developer-funded "property rights" extremists that is suing to overturn the County's smart growth principles. COLAB's Executive Director has made dire statements about air pollution caused by trees as a warning against

continued next page

Meanwhile At the Party of No...



On March 24, the potential Republican opponents of Hilda Zacarias in the State Assembly race and held a candidates' debate at the Madonna Inn: County Supervisor Kacho Achadjian, Santa Maria businesswoman Etta Waterfield, Paso Robles City Councilman Fred Strong, and perennial candidate Matt Kokkonen squared off.

Strong, representing the Colonel Blimp school of political windbaggy, pronounced Zacarias "a very charming little lady" who lacks his depth of knowledge and experience (a deficiency, Strong made clear, that he believes all of his opponents have in common). After thus characterizing Zacarias — an honors graduate of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, former district representative for Congressman Walter Capps, and the third woman to be elected to the Santa Maria City Council in the city's 105-year history — Strong then attempted to lecture the audience on the difference between Environmental Impact Reports and Environmental Impact Statements and got it wrong.

Kokkonen waxed eloquent on one of his favorite subjects — natural oil seeps and how their existence somehow equals a green light for offshore oil drilling. He flourished the statistic that natural seeps in the Santa Barbara Channel emit the equivalent of multiple Exxon Valdez spills... without seeming to take notice of the lack of local Exxon Valdez-sized oil slicks, dead seabirds and destroyed fisheries, or any other evidence of the void that separates the way the world actually works from the point he was trying to make.

Overall, the Party of No had just about one idea on offer: environmental regulations will destroy the world.

The candidates fell over each other in their eagerness to proclaim themselves walking environmental disaster areas, vying to show how passionately they agreed that California's groundbreaking law, AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act, must be struck down, along with the California Coastal Act and the California Environmental Quality Act.

And furthermore: drill baby drill, more nukes, and the two-thirds majority requirement to pass a state budget is the greatest thing since sliced bread.

In the effort to one-up each other on the anti-regulatory theme, the candidates came to collectively espouse a future vision of California as an

continued next page

leaving too many of them standing. As pro-sprawl and anti-environment as it gets, COLAB has one goal: tip the Board back to its previous majority and return to the pave-it-all days of Ryan, Ovitt, Lenthall and Achadjian. Mr. Ochylski is their man. If you don't agree with that plan, vote for Gibson. And help out at www.brucegibsonforsupervisor.org.

For Supervisor, District 4: no endorsement. No candidates sought endorsement by the Sierra Club.

For Mayor, Morro Bay: Betty Winholtz. Unwavering defender of her city's urban forest, councilwoman Winholtz has insisted on protection for nesting birds, water conservation, and a bike lane for North Main Street, to name a few items from her resume.



Her elevation to Mayor will bring the availability of recycled water from the Morro Bay-Cayucos wastewater treatment plant and a completed urban forest management plan closer to reality. Smart, politically savvy, open and eager to learn what she doesn't know, a bulldog when she knows she's right, and above all a tireless advocate of public participation and the democratic process, Winholtz is everything an elected official should be. She's someone Morro Bay has desperately needed as mayor for a long time. Go to: www.winholtzformayor.net.

For Morro Bay City Council: Jack Smith. In the great tradition of citizen politicians, Smith has thrown his hat into the ring and is braving

the political waters for the first time because he wants to make his city a better place to live. The Iowa transplant worked with the Iowa River Greenbelt committee to promote recreation and preserve wildlife along his stretch of the river, and has been cleaning up the Montana de Oro dunes since the early '70s.

Here's the other thing Morro Bay voters need to know: Smith favors reconsideration of the \$28-million sewer upgrade plan in light of a proposed alternative that could produce higher quality water for use in recycling, cost less, and have a smaller footprint. Councilmembers Winholtz and Smukler agree; the other three councilmembers don't. For common sense to prevail, a third vote is necessary. Smith is it. Go to <http://smithformbcouncil.ning.com/>

YES on Prop. 15, The California Fair Elections Act. Cleaning up our political system is crucial to cleaning up our air and water, curbing global warming pollution, and preserving our coast, parks, forests and deserts. Presently, wealthy developers, oil companies, utilities and other special interests hold too much influence over our elected officials, so Californians do not get the environmental policies we need. The Fair Elections Act on would create a pilot project to make voluntary public financing available initially to Secretary of State candidates in 2014 and 2018. Public financing is a way to get politicians out of the fundraising game and back to solving California's problems. Replacing special-interest money with clean money would ensure elected officials are accountable to voters, not donors, and open up the political process so the best candidates, not just the wealthiest candidates, can pursue elected office. Go to www.yesfairelections.org for more information and to volunteer or contribute to the campaign.

Carrizo Solar
continued from page 7

San Joaquin Valley biogeographic province with only limited evidence of human alteration.

For all of these reasons, the Carrizo Plain National Monument was designated on January 11, 2001.

Current proposals for thousands of acres of industrial-scale solar panel installations adjacent to the Monument threaten this unique habitat and vital connecting wildlife corridors. Fortunately, a much more suitable site is available just north of Kettleman City. Due to salinity contamination issues, a portion of the farmland in the Westlands Water District has been set aside for renewable energy development. The proposed "Central California Renew-

able Master Plan" will use permanently retired farmlands in Westlands for solar development. Approximately 30,000 acres of disturbed land, equivalent to 5,000 MW of solar capacity will be allocated for renewable energy development. Transmission Pathway 15 passes through Westlands and can transmit 5,400 MW from south-to-north. The transmission capacity from north-to-south is 3,400 MW. The Westlands is a low-impact "shovel ready" alternative to the Carrizo Plain site for utility-scale solar projects, requiring no new high voltage transmission to move up to 5,000 MW of solar power to California load centers with no delays.

The development of utility-scale renewable energy facilities on degraded/contaminated sites like

Westlands is an environmentally superior alternative to the siting of power plants in areas that involve potential impacts to threatened and endangered species. So is the decen-

tralized, distributed generation of energy in commercial and residential areas -- aka putting solar panels on roofs and building facades, and over parking lots.

We Approve This Message



Party of No
continued from previous page

unregulated paradise, not unlike London as described by Charles Dickens when the skies and the river Thames ran in several shades of industrial black.

"Do you want the government to tell you what car to drive, what color it should be...to tell your pastor what sermons he can preach?" asked Kokkonen, apropos of the regional Water Board's proposal to require that growers monitor irrigation runoff so as to not discharge water into the groundwater that is toxic to aquatic life.

Republican talking points against AB 32 are supposed to be based on (wrong-headed) economic arguments, but the candidates turned the topic into a revival camp meeting on know-nothing climate change denial. Said Waterfield: "I am not a scientist, but when the integrity of science is disagreed upon amongst scientists, why would I, as a future legislature [sic], create legislation that would desecrate our economy based on unproven facts?" She also asserted that there is only one nuclear power plant in California.

Katcho bemoaned the frustrating success of the California Coastal Commission, on which he serves, in preserving some portion of our shoreline relatively undeveloped and accessible to the public despite his best efforts, but he had an idea on how to solve that problem: "Let's get rid of them."

Twelve days after each candidate struggled to portray him/herself as more anti-regulatory than her/his opponents, 29 coal miners died in an explosion in a West Virginia mine that had been cited for multiple safety violations. The regulations had been ignored. And as attendees at the Madonna Inn Republican Assembly candidates debate heard, regulations are bad for business.

The debate was richly evocative of a time and a belief system in which natural resources were limitless, there was always a new frontier to move on to, atomic power was the future, and corporations and Wall Street should run on the honor system because they have our best interests at heart and will bestow endless increasing prosperity, so long as they are unfettered by oversight.

Come November, we trust the voters of the 33rd Assembly District will see to it that Ms. Zacarias's opponent stays safely sealed off in that fanciful realm.

One of our Chapter's most loyal members is a tea-partying fellow in Santa Maria who has come to take a dim view of the gulf that has opened up between conservatives and conservation, and the Republican Party's increasing environmental antagonism.

He keeps us informed -- and sends us a check -- every time the Republican National Committee sends him an urgent fundraising appeal.

The full text of the most recent message he sent back to the RNC in the additional comments section of the "leadership survey" form pictured above reads as follows:

"The Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club thanks the RNC for continuing to harass an 'Independent' with contribution mailers. Every time this member receives one of these envelopes (especially labeled 'Final Notice!'), he contributes to the local chapter of the Sierra Club.

"So RNC: Keep it up! Until you

return to your *Conserv*-ative roots, the Sierra Club wins!"

In view of the news stories that broke last month concerning the more exotic expenditures of the Republican National Committee -- spending their donor's money, in one month, on such items as \$17,000 on private planes, \$12,000 on limos, \$15,000 at the Beverly Hills Hotel and the Four Seasons, and an expenditure of \$2,000 at a West Hollywood strip club, followed by revelations of "office supplies" bought at a liquor store and the daughter of the RNC's co-chair being paid \$13,000 as a speechwriter -- he feels he's made a wise investment choice.

"Why waste hard-earned dollars on black holes of National Committees whose obscene carbon footprints are an offense to nature, and all but a penny disappears as gaseous extrusions?" he writes. "I urge my fellow members to financially support Santa Lucian chapter activism."

Save the Whales Again

continued from page 1

period without an updated population status report by the National Marine Fisheries Service, even though the evidence suggests that their population is crashing. This season is on track to mark the fourth consecutive year of low gray whale calf counts.

Setting a hunting quota that is not based on current population estimates and fixing that quota for ten years is not scientifically or morally acceptable, nor is officially sanctioning commercial whaling.

The Obama Administration announced on April 15 that the U.S. intends to support the proposal to resume commercial whaling.

On May 23, Californians will protest the IWC proposal to remove the moratorium on commercial whaling and allow the resumption of whaling. We will be gathering signatures on a petition to the President asking him to keep the promise he once made to oppose whaling and direct the U.S. delegation to the IWC to support the continuation of the moratorium.

The Sierra Club and virtually all worldwide non-governmental organizations that focus on marine wildlife issues are opposing this plan and asking President Obama not to allow the United States to agree to the deal.

The demonstrations held in every coastal county in California will send the message: "Mr. President: keep your word. Oppose the resumption of commercial whaling and the setting of quotas for ten years regardless of the population status of the species."

Simultaneous demonstrations will send a powerful message to the Obama Administration before the IWC meets in Morocco this June to decide the fate of the whales. Please join us in this effort.

Pie in the Sky

continued from page 3

have been eating cactus pads (*nopales*) and cactus apples (*tunas*) for centuries. Native Americans in the southwest U.S. have developed crops and methods to grow food in their low rainfall area.

So far, the biotech industry has not developed tastier, more nutritious or more drought-resistant crops. The biotech industry has mostly engineered one or two traits into six crops. Those traits are resistance to insect larvae and resistance to Monsanto's Roundup weed killer.

The industry has engineered major crops because that makes the most money for the industry. Corn, soy beans, cotton, canola and alfalfa are all major crops. It helps the industry that corn, soy beans and cotton are all subsidized by our tax dollars.

It also helps the biotech industry that sugar beets and all the above-named crops except alfalfa are typically processed. These processed ingredients are then combined in processed foods, which tends to hide the genetically engineered origin of the ingredients.

The biotech industry is not about serving consumers. It is about controlling major subsidized commodity crops. It is about giving more money and power to companies like the Monsanto Corporation.

Biotech fans will argue that "Golden Rice" is a more nutritious biotech product. However, it was not developed by the biotech industry and how nutritious it is is open to question.

I hope to discuss "Golden Rice" in more detail next month.

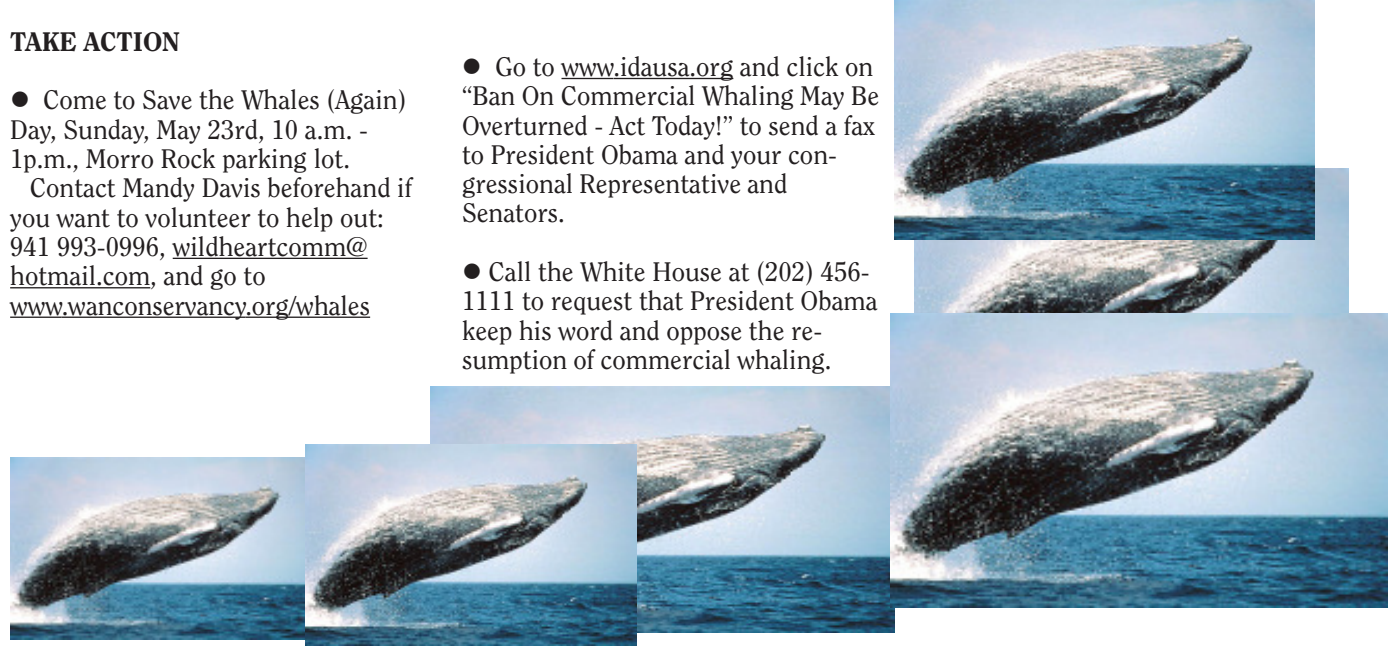
TAKE ACTION

- Come to Save the Whales (Again) Day, Sunday, May 23rd, 10 a.m. - 1p.m., Morro Rock parking lot.

Contact Mandy Davis beforehand if you want to volunteer to help out: 941 993-0996, wildheartcomm@hotmail.com, and go to www.wanconservancy.org/whales

- Go to www.idausa.org and click on "Ban On Commercial Whaling May Be Overturned - Act Today!" to send a fax to President Obama and your congressional Representative and Senators.

- Call the White House at (202) 456-1111 to request that President Obama keep his word and oppose the resumption of commercial whaling.



Inside a bad deal

Twenty-four years ago, the concerted efforts of environmental organizations worldwide, acting under the banner "save the whales," succeeded in rousing world opinion and putting in place a moratorium on commercial whaling at the International Whaling Commission (IWC), the signal achievement of the international environmental movement.

On February 22, 2010, a committee of the IWC issued a draft package of proposals titled "Consensus Decision to Improve the Conservation of Whales" (hereinafter referred to as the "Package"). Ratification of the Package will be sought at the annual meeting of the IWC, to be held in Agadir, Morocco, June 21-25, 2010.

If adopted, the Package would amend the international treaty governing whaling so as to lift the moratorium on commercial whaling for a period of ten years and legitimize the commercial whaling activities of Japan, Norway, and Iceland – currently undertaken under formal objections to IWC regulations (Norway and Iceland) or as special permit "research" (Japan). The European Commission would be unable to require the termination of Iceland's whaling program as a condition of its pending application for entry into the EU.

The Package makes no provision for reducing or phasing out whaling during the ten-year interim arrangement. There is no requirement that the number of whales killed after 2010 remain as low as the interim levels. Catch limits will not be calculated using the IWC's agreed precautionary scientific approach but would be based on historic catch levels, which have increased in recent years in apparent anticipation of this Package. The Package does not address what type of whaling will be authorized by the IWC when the interim arrangement ends in 2020 (or later if extended). Once the terms expire, the whaling nations will be able to return to commercial whaling by filing a formal objection or reservation. Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling is combined with commercial whaling. The Package legitimizes whaling in the established Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary.

The Package represents a step backwards for the IWC, and will eliminate or degrade decades of positive change, achieved in small increments, for the whales. The Package legitimizes commercial whaling for at least a decade, effectively rewarding, not penalizing, the whaling nations for decades of intransigence and disregard of the repeated requests of the international community to cease whaling. It does nothing to reduce or phase out whaling. It ignores the scientific evidence that special permit whaling is not necessary for knowledge or management of cetaceans. The end result is likely to be much higher levels of whaling than before or during the interim arrangement.

After having legitimized Norway, Iceland and Japan's whaling for ten years, the Commission will not then have either the political or legal momentum prevailing today to address it. The world will have moved on and the conservation of great whales would not have been advanced.

Organizations opposed to IWC adoption as drafted of the "Consensus Decision to Improve the Conservation of Whales" include the American Cetacean Society, Animal Welfare Institute, Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition, Asociación do Biología Marina Guatemala, Australians for Animals, California Gray Whale Coalition, Campaign Whale, Campaigns Against the Cruelty to Animals, Centro De Conservacion Cetacea, Cetacean Society International, Comité Ballena Azul Nicaragua, The Cousteau Society, Dolphin Connection, Environmental Investigation Agency, Equilibrio Azul, Fundacion Promar, Fundacion Yubarta, Global Ocean, Humane Society International, The Humane Society of the United States, In Defense of Animals, Instituto de Conservación de Ballenas, International Fund for Animal Welfare, International League for Protection of Cetaceans, Irish Seal Sanctuary, LegaSeas International, Natural Resources Defense Council, Ocean Care, Ocean Sentry, Orcalab, Pro Wildlife, Save the Whales Again, SELVA vida sin fronteras, The Sierra Club, Sociedad Ecológica Venezolana, Vida Marine Sea Vida, Society for the Protection of Marine Mammals, Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society, Whaleman Foundation, Whales Alive, and the World Society for the Protection of Animals.

Let's Hold Them to It

"The Administration reaffirms the United States' position that the commercial whaling moratorium is a necessary conservation measure and believes that lethal scientific whaling is unnecessary in modern whale conservation management....

For any package to be acceptable, it must result in a significant improvement in the conservation status of whales and be based on sound science."

- WILLIAM T. HOGARTH, U.S. COMMISSIONER, INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION
Before the U.S. House of Representatives, May 20, 2009

May 8 is National Train Day

Celebrate the most environmentally friendly mass transit technology ever devised! Refreshments, paper engineer caps for kids of all ages, scale model railroad exhibit from the SLO Model Railroad Association, railroad photography display, and musical entertainment provided by the local Red Skunk Dixieland Band.



Saturday, May 8th, 2010
Amtrak Station San Luis Obispo
(1011 Railroad Ave. at Santa Rosa)
Noon to 4 p.m.
Free parking & admission

Classifieds

Next issue deadline is **May 14**. 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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Graphic Artist

Got Graywater if You Want It

The Sierra Club has on hand a limited supply of *The San Luis Obispo Guide to the Use of Graywater*, the new manual produced by the Appropriate Technology Coalition -- SLO Green Build, the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club and the San Luis Bay Chapter of Surfrider.

Graywater systems turn a waste product that can comprise up to 80% of residential wastewater into a valuable resource for irrigation and other non-potable uses. Harvesting graywater to meet your non-potable water needs utilizes an appropriate technology that can recover initial costs quickly. No permit required.



\$10 each, while supplies last. E-mail sierraclub8@gmail.com, or call (805) 543-8717 to reserve your copy.

**CYNTHIA HAWLEY
ATTORNEY**

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
LAND USE
CIVIL LITIGATION**

**P.O. Box 29 Cambria California 93428
Phone 805-927-5102 Fax 805-927-5220**

hey, santa lucian readers!

We know a thing or two about our members' awesome creative powers! Send us photos of your favorite awesome places in SLO County, descriptive essays, and/or poems, and we'll print 'em. Beauty should be shared, so let's see what you've got.

Via e-mail: sierraclub8@gmail.com (jpeg or tiff files, at least 600K each)
regular mail: Sierra Club, P.O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406.

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 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 Chair Joe Morris, 772-1875. For information on a specific outing, please call the outing leader.

Sat-Sun, May 1-2, Fence Removal, Hiking, and Car Camp – Carrizo Plain. To allow pronghorn antelope greater mobility on the Carrizo Plain, we will remove fences left from earlier ranching days. Weather may be warm, flowers may still be in bloom. Work Saturday, camp and potluck dinner that evening. Hike Sunday. Leaders will be at Selby Camp on Friday night for those who want to arrive early. More information from leaders: Cal and Letty French, (805-239-7338). Prefer e-mail: lettyfrench@gmail.com. Santa Lucia Chapter, CNRCC Desert Committee, and Los Padres ForestWatch.

Wednesdays, May 5, 12, 19, and 26, 5:30 p.m. Informal Hikes Around San Luis Obispo. 1-2 hour hikes around San Luis Obispo, 5-6 miles, elevation gain around 1200 feet. For more information or to sign up for Hikers List send an e-mail to Gary Felsman.

Sat., May 8, 7:30 a.m. Santa Lucia Trail to Junipero Serra Peak. Strenuous hike to highest peak in the northern Los Padres Nat. Forest. 12-mile round trip, with 3800 ft elevation gain. Not for beginners. Travels through several ecosystems: meadow with rock outcroppings, open forest, chaparral, arriving at peak in a pine forest at 5862'. Bring plenty of water, lunch, snacks. Dress in layers as the temperature can vary greatly with altitude. Possibility of poison oak and ticks. Meet at the Templeton rideshare lot, just west of #101. Take the Las Tablas exit off the 101 and turn left. It is about 1/4 mile on the left. We will carpool for about 1 1/2 hours to the trailhead, near the Indians campground. Since we must traverse Fort Hunter-Liggett, everyone must bring I.D. and, if driving, proof of insurance and registration. Hunter-Liggett roads subject to closure, especially in heavy rains. If you plan on going on this hike, confirm with the leader. Info: Chuck, 441-7597.

Sun, May 9, 10 a.m., Poly Canyon and Yucca Viewpoint. Short hike through Poly Canyon, arriving at a ridge-top viewpoint with 360-degree views of SLO, hills and canyons to north and east. A gem of a hike, practically in the middle of SLO. 3 miles, gain 700 feet, est. time 2 hours. Meet in the parking lot near intersection of North Perimeter Road and Village Drive on Cal Poly campus, in the H-4 parking area along Truckee Road. No fee required. Bring adequate water, dress in layers, hat advised. Plants, animals, and geology of the area will be topics. Info: Bill, 459-2103, bill.waycott@gmail.com.

Sun, May 9, 5p.m., Sierra Singles - Cloisters Wetland to Morro Rock. Join leader Stacy on 3.5 mile walk/hike to majestic Morro Rock. This leisurely hike can get windy, so please bring appropriate attire, durable walking boots/shoes, and hydration. Drive Hwy 1 to San Jacinto

St., heading west towards ocean, left onto Coral Ave (first street), and park in the Cloisters Community Park parking lot on the right. Possible gathering afterwards in the Morro Bay area. Info: Stacy, 472-6827.

Wed., May 12, 7-9 pm. Bimonthly Meeting: Nature's Ballet—the Eastern Sierra. Acclaimed local


Sun, May 23, 5 pm. Sierra 20's/30's Networking - Froom Canyon Loop & King Trail - Meet other 20's/30's with hike leader Stacy on 4.5 mile hike, with a 700 feet elevation gain, in your own backyard of San Luis Obispo. Please dress for weather, wear sturdy hiking shoes, and bring poles (if you like to use them) and plenty of water. Meet at the southwest end of Madonna Road off of Los Osos Valley




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.

Road. Trailhead visible when you reach the intersection circle. Park along the curb. Possible social gathering to follow hike. Please contact Stacy at 818-472-6827 with questions or visit us at Santa Lucia or Sierra Social Outings through Facebook.

Sat., May 29, 9 a.m., Cerro Alto Loop Trail, Hwy 41 between Morro Bay and Atascadero. Hike to the top of Cerro Alto, one of the best places to view the Central Coast. The hike begins at Cerro Alto Campground off Hwy 41, climbing up coastal hills for spectacular views. Total distance is 6 miles, elevation gain of 1,600 feet, est. hike time of 4 hours. Meet at the trail head from Hwy 41, 8.7 miles west of Hwy 101 or 7 miles east of Hwy 1. Park at end of campground road in the parking area. A fee is charged for parking. Bring adequate water, energy snacks/lunch, and dress in layers for the weather. A hat is advised. The plants, animals, and geology of the area will be topics during the hike. Info: Bill, 459-2103 (bill.waycott@gmail.com).

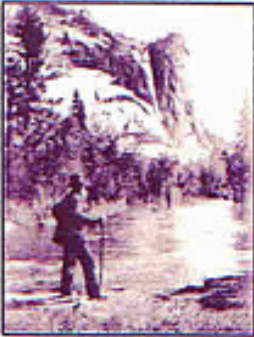


The Sierra Club Needs You!



Become an Outings Leader

- Lead hikes and camping trips
- Introduce others to nature
- Explore the outdoors
- Make new friends
- Protect the environment
- Get healthy exercise



John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club, in Yosemite

For further information contact:

Joe Morris, Outings Chair
Sierra Club, Santa Lucia Chapter
(805) 772-1875
djj1942@earthlink.net

▶▶ **Next Training: Thurs., May 13. 6:30 -9 p.m.**
 ▶▶ **Call Joe by May 10 to reserve space.**

nature photographer Walter Robie, gives his latest multi-media show, highlighting Mt. Whitney, June and Mono Lakes, Alabama Hills, and other spectacles of the eastern Sierras. Meeting begins with a tribute to Karen Merriam, recently retired chair of the Chapter executive committee. Steynberg Gallery, 1531 Monterey St., SLO. Info: Joe Morris, 772-1875.

Sat. May 15, 8:30 a.m., Stoney Creek Trail Hike. A somewhat remote trail into the beautiful Garcia Wilderness, sister to the Machesna Wilderness. We will access the north trailhead at the old Avenales Ranger Station by way of a locked gate. Little-used trail has poison oak and could be overgrown from abundant rainfall. About 10 miles up and back the same route, so you could do a shorter hike if desired. About 2,000 feet of elevation gain, a moderately strenuous hike. Bring lunch, plenty of water, protective clothing and plan to be out all day. Meet in front of the Pacific Beverage Co. in Santa Margarita. Extreme heat will postpone to later weekend. Info: Carlos, 546-0317.

Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park

May 7-9; Jul 16-19; Aug 6-9; Sep 10-12.

CA's Channel Islands are Galapagos USA! Marvel at the sight of whales, seals, sea lions, rare birds & blazing wildflowers. Hike the wild, windswept trails. Kayak the rugged coastline. Snorkel in pristine waters. Discover remnants of the Chumash people who lived on these islands for thousands of years. Or just relax at sea. These 3 & 4-day "live aboard" fundraiser cruises are sponsored by the Angeles Chapter Political Committee & Sierra Club California Political Committee. Depart from Santa Barbara aboard the 68' Truth. \$590 for May and Sep; \$785 for July & August, 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 point out interesting features. To make a reservation mail a \$100 check payable to Sierra Club to leaders Joan Jones Holtz & Don Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732. Contact leaders for more information (626-443-0706; jholtzhl@aol.com)

