



October 2013
Volume 50 No. 9

Inside

No mystery in Morro Bay	2
Our sustaining members	3
Katcho kicks the coast	4
A watery compromise	7
Nukes, lies, and CNN	8
Classifieds	11
Outings	12

Don't Miss:

October 7

Nuclear Regulatory
Commission
"waste confidence"
hearing in SLO

- page 8



Please recycle

This newsletter printed on
100% post-consumer recycled paper with soy-
based inks

SANTA LUCIAN



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

Mike Brune in SLO

Sierra Club chief will speak at Cal Poly on November 4

Mark your calendar now to join the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club and Cal Poly's Biomimicry Club and Green Campus Program for a memorable evening.

Michael Brune, Executive Director of the Sierra Club, is coming to SLO at 5:30 p.m. on November 4 to speak at Cal Poly's Chumash Auditorium.

Under Brune's leadership, the Club organized our Beyond Coal campaign (part of "a grassroots rebellion that won the nation's biggest climate victory" - *Mother Jones*), and Beyond Oil and Gas campaigns. He is the author of *Coming Clean — Breaking America's Addiction to Oil and Coal* and blogs for the Huffington Post and Daily Kos.

Tickets are \$20 general admission, \$10 for students with i.d. You can purchase tickets at www.santalucia.sierraclub.org. Click the "Donate" button and select student or general & number of tickets. Or send an e-mail to sierraclub8@gmail.com to request tickets and pay at the door.

All proceeds will go to supporting the work of the Santa Lucia Chapter.



Walking the talk Sierra Club Executive director Michael Brune, handcuffed to the White House fence in opposition to the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline, Feb. 13, 2013. Brune is the first Sierra Club leader to be arrested in an act of civil disobedience in the Club's 120-year history.



Part of the plan The endangered Morro Bay kangaroo rat is one of four federally listed species proposed for inclusion in the Los Osos HCP, along with the Morro shoulderband snail, Indian Knob mountainbalm, and Morro manzanita.

Los Osos Habitat Plan Gets Underway

After a long delay, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service has begun the process of creating a Habitat Conservation Plan for Los Osos, with the goal of maximizing the benefits of conservation measures for multiple species.

When completed, the HCP will cover approximately 3,560 acres bordered by the Morro Bay Estuary, Morro Bay State Park, Los Osos Creek, and Montana de Oro State Park -- some of the most environmentally sensitive habitat in the county.

The plan will set the maximum development-related "take" allowed for federally listed threatened or endangered species. The law defines "take" as any action that would harass or harm listed species. Harm includes significant habitat modifications or degradation or impairment

of essential behavior patterns. Any permitted take must be minimized and mitigated and must not reduce the likelihood of the survival and recovery of the species.

Two public scoping meetings will be held to provide the public with a general understanding of the background of the proposed LOHCP and activities it would cover, and alternatives for the draft Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement. Suggestions on the scope of issues and alternatives for the USFWS to consider when drafting the EA or EIS will be solicited. The meetings will be held at the South Bay Community Center, 2180 Palisades Avenue, Los Osos, on **Tuesday, October 8**, from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., and from 7 to 9 p.m.

For more information, contact Julie Vanderwier at (805) 644-1766.

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 84
SAN LUIS OBISPO
CA 93401

Santa Lucian
Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club
P. O. Box 15755
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406



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.

Add your voice to protect the planet. Join the Sierra Club today.

Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!



My Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____
Phone # _____
email _____

Exp. Date ____/____/____
Cardholder Name _____
Card Number _____

Membership Categories: INDIVIDUAL JOINT
INTRODUCTORY \$25
REGULAR \$39 \$47

Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts.

Enclose check and mail to: Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Let's clear up

THE MYSTERY OF MORRO BAY

As we go to press, Morro Bay City Attorney Rob Schultz and City Manager Andrea Leuker have not been dismissed from their positions. The image of a city up in arms against the city council majority contemplating this action has been spread across multiple front pages.

Sudden self-made legal scholars have proclaimed their right to know the details of a confidential personnel matter. The Tribune has threatened to hurl a dreaded brickbat if it doesn't get some answers soon on exactly why Mayor Irons is seeking the termination of the City's senior staff.

The cry has resounded throughout the city: Why is this happening?

As the Morro Bay City Council doesn't confide in us any more than it informs anybody else about the details of personnel matters, we can't definitively answer that question. But we have been paying attention for the last few years.

We suspect it is pertinent to note that Mr. Schultz and Ms. Leuker oversaw the total botch of version 1.0 of the attempt to replace the Morro Bay/Cayucos wastewater treatment plant, the most expensive public works project in the history of either community.

city council and Cayucos Sanitary District they were going the wrong way: The project's Environmental Impact Report was defective; the project as designed contained multiple violations of the city's Local Coastal Plan and the California Coastal Act; failing to include the recycling of treated wastewater was a mistake, etc. Most fundamentally: this is no longer the 1950s and the City would never get a permit to put a new sewer plant on a beach.

Two consecutive city councils ignored these warnings because city staff assured them that everything would be okay. Staff continued to make those assurances even after the Coastal Commission found that appeals of the project raised substantial issues of conformity with the Coastal Act and put the City on notice that the project was highly unlikely to receive a Coastal Development Permit.

The voters saw what was coming, and in June 2012 voted out every city council incumbent on the ballot who had gone along with the project.

With every light on the board flashing red, and all the changes in hand that the Coastal Commission had explicitly told them needed to be made in order to create a valid project, senior staff instead led the City over the cliff, taking a virtually unchanged project to the January 2013 Coastal Commission permit hearing.

The Coastal Commission staff report pronouncing the project dead on arrival noted "the practical reality of where the Applicant finds itself at this juncture... because they pursued a project in the existing location notwithstanding the issues associated with it that have been highlighted for many years, including prominently that alternative siting was necessary." The more than \$2 million cost of the design work, Environmental Impact Report, consultants and lobbyist went down the drain. The question that all mystified residents of Morro Bay should be asking themselves now is: "What would my employer do if I was responsible for an outcome like that?" On October 7, 2010, PERC Water, representing the only potential alternative design that had been allowed into the staff-preferred project, told the city manager that due to "the lack of

MYSTERY continued on page 9



Tell 'em that you told 'em The Santa Lucia Chapter warned of the inevitable Morro Bay-Cayucos sewer debacle from the beginning. "Staff's Captive," from the February 2011 Santa Lucia, on line at http://santalucia.sierraclub.org/lucian/2011/02Feb.pdf, was especially prophetic regarding the current political situation in Morro Bay.

Change of Address?

Mail changes to:

Sierra Club National Headquarters
85 Second Street, 2nd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105-3441
or e-mail:

Visit us on the Web

www.santalucia.sierraclub.org



Now on Facebook

search: "Santa Lucia" and become our friend!

SANTA LUCIAN

Andrew Christie EDITOR sierraclub8@gmail.com

Greg McMillan Lindi Doud Linda Seeley Thomas A. Cyr EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Denny Mynatt PRINT MEDIA COORDINATOR

The Santa Lucian is published 10 times a year. Articles, environmental information and letters to the editor are welcome. The deadline for each issue is the 13th of the prior month.

send to:

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

Santa Lucia Chapter

2013 Executive Committee

- Greg McMillan (12/13) CHAIR
Pat Veasart (12/13) VICE CHAIR
Linda Seeley (12/14) SECRETARY
Patrick McGibney (12/14) MEMBER
Lindi Doud (12/14) MEMBER
Michael Jencks (12/15) MEMBER
Victoria Carranza (12/15)

Cal French COUNCIL OF CLUB LEADERS
Lindi Doud, Patrick McGibney TREASURERS

The Executive Committee meets the second Monday of every month at 5:30 p.m., and the Conservation Committee meets the second Friday at 1p.m. at the chapter office, located at 974 Santa Rosa St., San Luis Obispo. All members are welcome to attend.

Committee Chairs

- Political: Michael Jencks
Conservation: Sue Harvey
Membership: Cal French
Nuclear Power Task Force: Rochelle Becker,beckers@thegrid.net, Linda Seeley,lindaseeley@gmail.com

Other Leaders

- Calendar Sales: Bonnie Walters,805-543-7051
Outings: Joe Morris,dpj1942@earthlink.net
Canoe/Kayak open
Webmaster: Monica Tarzier,monica@tarzier.org
Trail Guide: Gary Felsman

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

Coordinator
Kim Ramos, Admin and Development
kimlramos@yahoo.com

Santa Lucia Chapter
P.O. Box 15755
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406
Office hours Monday-Friday, 12 p.m.- 6 p.m., 974 Santa Rosa Street, San Luis Obispo

Printed by University Graphic Systems

Our Thanks to the Cal French Donors Circle

Without you, we wouldn't be here

Named in honor of the Santa Lucia Chapter member who has been a prominent activist and much-honored state and national leader in the Sierra Club for more than 40 years, the Cal French Donors Circle includes Sierra Club members who contribute to the Santa Lucia Chapter in an amount of \$20 or more every month or give a donation of \$240 or more annually.

Donors Circle members:

- are recognized annually in the *Santa Lucian*
- receive invitations to special Donors Circle events hosted by the Chapter
- enjoy the satisfaction of being sustaining members of the chapter.

Richard Alberts
 Jesse Arnold
 John & Patricia Ashbaugh
 Penny Baron
 John Beccia
 George Bekey
 Barbara Bell
 Valerie Bentz
 Ralph Bishop
 Sheila Blake
 David & Naomi Blakely
 Ray & Sonya Bracken
 Duane & Sharon Budge
 Joan Carter
 David & Linda Chipping
 Philip Christie
 Sarah Christie
 Bonita Churney
 Tom & Mary Cline
 Polly Cooper & Ken Haggard
 David Cox
 Katy Crawford
 Kenneth Curtis
 Thomas Cyr
 Bill Denneen
 Myra Douglas
 Jill Denton & Caroline Hall
 Valerie & Leland Endres
 Cal & Letty French
 Charles French
 George French
 David & Carol Georgi
 Richard Giffin
 Marvin Gross
 Diane Halsted
 Marilyn Hansen
 Lynne Harkins
 Sue & Richard Harvey
 Edward & Holly Hoffer
 VL Holland
 James Hopp
 Stacey Hunt
 Susan Lee Jamele
 Richard Johnson
 Randall Knight
 Penny Koines

Richard Kranzdorf
 Richard Kresja
 Sally & Eugene Kruger
 Gary Kuris
 Carroll Leslie
 George Lewis
 Kathleen Long
 Maria Lorca
 William Luffee
 Tim Lytsell
 Douglas Mannon
 Patrick McGibney & Lindi Doud
 Liz & Edward McQuarrie
 Steven Marx
 Greg McMillan
 Vita Miller
 Lanyce Mills
 Joe Morris
 Ryan Mortensen
 Christine Mulholland
 Nicholas Murphy
 Paul & Barbara Murphy
 Stacy Murphy
 Denny & Kitty Mynatt
 Paulette Petersen
 Michael Phillips
 William Power
 Kim Ramos
 Roy Reeves
 Linda Reynolds
 Sharon Rippner
 Coraline Robinson
 William & Sandra Rumbler
 Gar & Elizabeth Salzgeber
 Carla Saunders
 Robert & Peggy Schotz
 Klaus Schumann
 John & Julia Schutz
 Linda Seeley
 Eugene Spruill
 Bert & Elaine Townsend
 Pat Veesart
 Kalila Volkov
 Alice Welchert
 Lyn Wickham
 Mary Lou Wilhelm

~ for CFC Members Only ~



All current members of the Cal French Donors Circle and new members who join by October 12 will receive a personal invitation to a private reception with Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune following his speech at Cal Poly's Chumash Auditorium on Monday, November 4.

To join the Cal French Circle

- go to www.santalucia.sierraclub.org, click the "Donate" button, and sign up for an automatic contribution of at least \$20 per month or \$240 annually.
- or*
- set up a monthly donation with your bank using a monthly bank check. This "bill pay" service is free to anyone with a bank account. Tell your bank the date on which you want the check sent every month and our address: **Sierra Club, P.O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406.**

Andrea Fischer-Ortiz



Loaded SBMMC volunteer Luke Murtha (second from left), SBP ranger Melissa Kelly and Sierra Club hikers prepare the injured sea lion for transport to the Marine Mammal Center.

Sierra Club Hikers Save Sick Sea Lion

by Bill Waycott

On Sunday morning, August 25th, eight Sierra Club hikers set out from Guadalupe Dunes County Park on a trek south to Mussel Rock. As we departed, we met and exchanged greetings with the two Santa Barbara County Park (SBP) rangers, not knowing we would see them again in a few hours.

As we headed south, the tide was rising, with a high tide expected by the early afternoon. The beach was wide open and devoid of humans, but throngs of sea birds, (gulls, curlews, whimbrels, godwits, and the occasional snowy plover) blanketed the sand. We also noted seals bobbing in the surf.

On our return after reaching our destination, we walked north. Low clouds and fog had lowered the visibility to around fifty feet. With about two miles to go, we noticed ahead of us some persons trying to move what looked to be a large wooden log onto a small cart. When we reached them, we saw the two SBP rangers, along with a volunteer from the Santa Barbara Marine Mammal Center (SBMMC) were trying to load a netted female sea lion onto a small platform

RESCUE continued on page 5

It's All About the Food

A conversation with John DeBruin

By Stacey Hunt, EcoLogistics

"It's all about the food, Stacey," said Santa Barbara organic rancher John deBruin, who will present a workshop on The New Model of Getting Back to Farming Basics at the Central Coast Bioneers Conference October 26.

At the workshop, John will discuss the new breed of farmer coming on the scene in the U.S. who is turning his/her back on the conventional agriculture practices currently taught in schools. Farming at its best, according to John, provides animals a full life with humane treatment, protects the environment by rebuilding soils and avoiding pollution, and provides nutritious food. John retired from his engineering career in 2003 and settled in Santa Barbara to raise grass-fed beef. I sat down recently to talk to John about his ranching philosophy.

You said that farming is your chosen retirement, but I've heard others claim that farming is the hardest work there is. What made you chose something so strenuous for your "golden years?"

I've always loved hard work. As a boy I spent a couple of summers on a cattle operation and it always stuck with me as something I wanted to do, because I liked being outdoors. I entertained the idea of living in the country and commuting to the city to work, but that never happened, so instead, I dreamed of having a ranch when I retired. We found this place in Santa Barbara. At first my wife said she would sit on the porch and drink mint juleps while she watched me work, but now she's become sucked into our business, Best Beef Ever, and is involved in sales and marketing.

You are one of the new farmers who has turned his back on "traditional ranching." Seems to me what you are doing is traditional and that it is modern ranching that is the anomaly. How did thing get the way they are?

Modern ranching practices are commonly attributed to Earl Butz, who was Secretary of Agriculture under Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford. His goal was to lower food prices in the U.S. to leave more disposable income for the middle class to increase its standard of living. During the 1970's, 20-22% of a family's income was spent on food. By starting government subsidies, Butz and his followers were able to lower that amount to only 9%. Of course, these lower food costs come at a great cost to the environment and to our health, and society has largely been blind to these impacts.

Please describe some of those impacts.

First, we are creating food in a non-renewable way. The standard feed lot today has thousands of cattle concentrated on 220-500 acres, eating synthetic – and by synthetic I mean GMO – foods. Huge amounts of waste are concentrated there, which poison the water supply. If these same cattle were spread out over a much wider area, the waste would be spread out and put back into the environment, to feed the growing grass. Petrochemicals are used to grow crops and nutritional values are dropping, not only for us, but for the animals they are being fed to. Second, we have a health crisis in this country, not a health care crisis. Many of our problems are what I call diseases of affluence – heart disease, diabetes, autoimmune diseases. Traditional societies, who are eating the diets that have been handed down through generations, do not have these types of problems. We have not made the connection to modern agriculture and our health problems.

What interested you in farming in a more traditional way?

When I started, I knew nothing about the cattle industry. This was a great advantage, because I had no biases of doing things a certain way to overcome. I became acquainted with people who were farming in an environmentally friendly way. I read Alan Nation's books, including *Grass Fed to Finish* and *Stockman's Grass Farmer*, and Joel Salatin's books on raising chickens, and I raise and market my beef and chicken the same way. You know, when I retired, I was actually a vegan and took a lot of ribbing as a cattle rancher. I had turned away from red meat because of its connection to cancer, but what I didn't get at the time was that it didn't have anything to do with the meat, per se, but with how the cattle were raised. Traditional grass-fed raised beef is just as healthful for you as fish, and now I am back to eating meat.

Why are your farming methods better for the planet? I have always heard that raising cattle has a high carbon footprint.

That is true with modern agricultural practices, however traditional methods don't have such an impact. The discipline of biomimicry is to copy things as nature does it, and this can be practiced in agriculture. Buffalo in the Midwest roamed the plains in huge herds and would mob graze everything in sight. In the process their waste was left behind. As the herd moved on, the next thing that would happen was that flies would lay their eggs in the manure and larvae would hatch. That attracted birds who would fly in to eat the larvae. As they did this, the birds would scratch around the manure and distribute it so that it could better incorporate into the soil, aiding the return of the natural flora. I mimic this natural process on my ranch by keeping my cattle moving as they feed, and then following them with chickens. Now I don't need to put the manure in a fertilizer spreader, saving on diesel and heavy equipment. The chickens do it for me naturally.

How can small, local farmers create an economic climate where they can make a living, but still sell affordable products?

There is a small town back East where the local farmers grow 92% of the products eaten locally. Only 8% is imported from the outside area. In comparison, Santa Barbara County exports over 90% of its ag products and then imports



the same amount. The current model of modern efficiency results in maximizing the commute of our food. Restaurants buy their food from big suppliers like Cisco or Jordano, who buy it from anywhere. There doesn't seem to be much concern about where the food comes from. The other day I wanted to buy a large quantity of local tomatoes. It took me two hours on the phone to find someone to buy from. The average person isn't going to spend that much time. We need to make it more convenient and create a system where local farmers can easily market our products. My big market is Los Angeles, not Santa Barbara, where I live. Most of the farmers in our local farmers markets here aren't even local! It can get very political, who is allowed to sell, and limitations are placed on farmers selling the same types of produce. I would like to see a rotation program for contracts with farmers for the markets so different farmers can rotate in and out. I don't want to have to burn the fuel to travel to L.A. to sell my beef. Another help would be to have an organization that promotes local availability, perhaps an online system. Farmers can come together through co-ops to sell their products.

Thank you, John. We look forward to hearing your talk at the conference.

Great, Stacey, and don't forget – it's all about the food!

John deBruin is part of the Food & Farming program at Central Coast Bioneers this year. Also featured will be a pre-conference screening of "Food Patriots" on October 16 at the Palm Theater, a workshop on October 26 on Access to Capital for Small Farmers: Financing the New Food System Economy with presenters from California FarmLink, Slow Money SLO and Farm Credit West, followed by free one-on-one financing consultations, a workshop on Growing Nutrient Dense Foods, and a Green Chef Cookoff dinner/dance with music by The Mother Cornshuckers. For more information or for tickets go to www.centralcoastbioneers.org or call 548-0597.

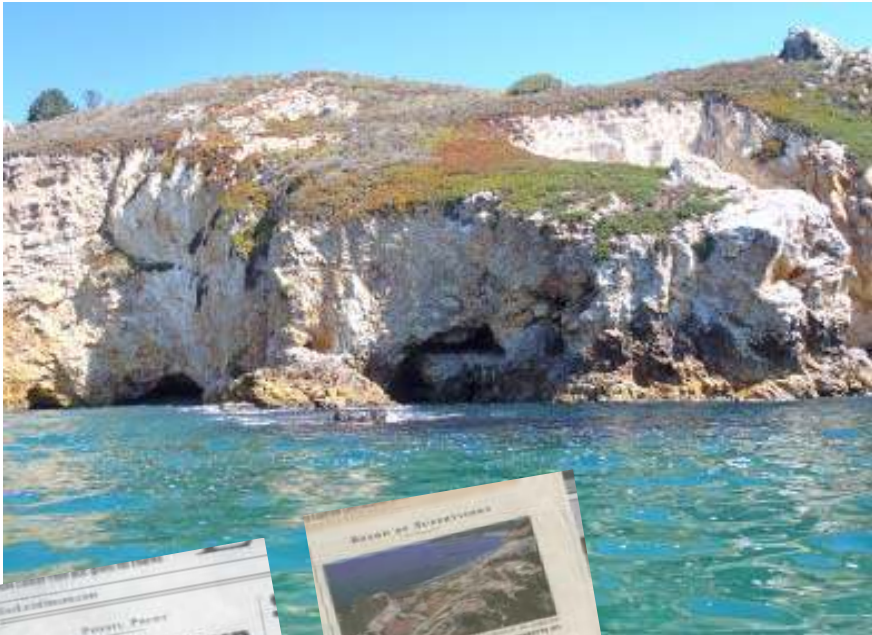
ECOLOGISTICS

**THE 2013
CENTRAL COAST
BIONEERS
CONFERENCE
October 25-27, 2013
Historic Monday Club, San Luis Obispo**

TURNING VISION INTO ACTION
www.centralcoastbioneers.org

Central Coast Bioneers Conference is a local, self-organized Bioneers Network Event.
To learn more about Bioneers, visit www.bioneers.org

JJ Holzman



Then and now In 2007 (far left), a developer-funded advisory committee went off the reservation, took a vote and told the developers what they didn't want to hear: There is overwhelming local support for Fossil Point as public open space with hiking trails, and virtually no support for its development as a resort area. Today (left), the unfortunate voting incident has been forgotten.

Why Are We Talking About a Hotel on Fossil Point?

A funny thing happened on the way to the development of Fossil Point. The striking promontory, the contaminated site of the Union Oil tank farm that was responsible for the dismantling of Avila Beach, once cleaned up would become massively lucrative coastal real estate.

In 2007, an advisory group, funded by developers Chevron and Rob Rossi, convened by pro-development county supervisor Jerry Lenthall and facilitated by his hand-picked facilitator, failed to yield the desired result. As supervisor-to-be Adam Hill wrote in the February 2007 Santa Lucian: "These facilitated focus groups are paid for by the developer, to achieve a particular outcome—support for their project. One can scarcely imagine Mr. Rossi or any other developer paying upwards of \$30,000 for a process that concluded with a recommendation that the project should not go forward."

But instead of what was supposed to happen, the opposite happened. The members of Lenthall's Fossil Point Advisory Committee, infected by a spirit of democratic empowerment, ranked about a dozen potential options for the future use of the property and voted on them. Natural open space with hiking trails was ranked number one, with hotels and other resort destination amenities dead last on the list, before the facilitator could shut them down. The committee was immediately disbanded.

Six years later, at the September 10 County Supervisors meeting, the County obliged Chevron, minus Rossi, by initiating the process of rezoning Fossil Point as recreational, "the first step in a long process that could lead to a hotel resort being built on the coastal bluffs overlooking Avila Beach," as the *Tribune* put it, along with a restaurant, spa, shops, and cottages.

This, the *Tribune* concluded, would be "a long, involved process that will require consultation with many state and local agencies as well as the public and the Chumash tribe."

It will also involve many more attempts to spin, massage, lobby, buy off or co-opt those agencies and that public. We trust the former members of the abruptly terminated 2007 Fossil Point Advisory Committee will be enthusiastic participants in that process. They should have much to say about the level of regard in which Chevron holds the wishes of local residents.

Green My Ride



Sierra Club rolls out car donation program

The Sierra Club Foundation's new national vehicle donation program is an opportunity for Sierra Club supporters and the general public to get rid of old, polluting vehicles they no longer use, helping to clean the air and open up greener transportation alternatives while supporting the mission of the Club through the proceeds from their car donation.

All cars (with the exception of collectible cars) that have an MPG of less than 27 miles per gallon will be scrapped and recycled.

Our program partner CARs will accept cars, trucks, motorcycles, RVs, ATVs, trailers, boats, planes, or farm equipment from any location in the continental U.S. To make a donation, go to www.scf-cardonations.org or call 855-33-SIERRA.

Rescue

continued from page 3

with four small wheels.

It turned out that the sea lion was suffering from Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning, a phenomenon caused by a neurotoxin (domoic acid) secreted by a plankton (genus *Pseudo-nitzschia*). Filter feeding fish such as anchovies and sardines concentrate this toxin at high levels, which in turn is further concentrated in pinnipeds, such as sea lions, as they ingest those small fish in quantity.

The neurotoxin causes disorientation in sea mammals, which leads to erratic behavior and inadequate food intake, putting the animals at serious risk of malnourishment. The treatment of affected animals starts with an intravenous feed to flush out the toxins and restore energy, followed by a rich fish diet to rebuild the animal's strength.

With the hikers ready to lend a hand, the 300-pound animal was lifted

onto the cart, secured with straps, and then hauled north along the high tide line through soft sand. This process took about an hour and a half and a lot of get-up-and-go.

Once at the parking lot, the sea lion was scooted into a large kennel enclosure, secured with zip-ties, and then lifted onto the SBMMC vehicle for transport. At that point, a second sea lion was added to the cargo, having been rescued earlier in the day. Both were then taken to the shelter for rejuvenation.

In speaking with the SBMMC employees recently, they told me the mammal in question had been initially treated at the Marine Mammal Center in Morro Bay and later transferred to a center in Marin County for further observation. They had not yet been advised of her current status.

After feeling a special connection with this fellow mammal, we are all relieved to know she is in good hands and hopefully doing much better.

Andrea Fischer-Ortiz



Haul out SBMMC volunteer Luke Murtha (second from left), SBP ranger Spencer Riffle (right) and Sierra Club hikers escorting the injured sea lion.

Katcho to Coast: Drop Dead

Our Assemblymember bowed to big money, passed over coastal protection and the public



So bogus Nothing in Katcho's explanation of his failure to vote for AB 976 bears any resemblance to reality.

Assembly Bill 976 was the most significant piece of environmental legislation to be considered in Sacramento this year. It would have given the California Coastal Commission authority to levy fines on those who destroy coastal wetlands, block public access to beaches, or otherwise flout the rules designed to protect California's coastal resources from inappropriate development and preserve them for future generations.

Without that fining authority, the Commission must take violators to court to enforce the Coastal Act, a process that is lengthy, expensive and infrequent, resulting in a backlog of 1,800 enforcement cases and much gaming of the system by violators.

AB 976, as written and amended by the Assembly and Senate, would have assured due process for all violation actions under the state's administrative law procedures. Passing it to assure protections for California's coast was

"a no-brainer," as the the *San Jose Mercury News* put it.

But it went down to defeat on September 10 thanks to the actions of a handful of "abstaining" members of the State Assembly, including Katcho Achadjian, who wanted to keep economic special interests happy but avoid the stigma of a "no" vote.

The Sierra Club urged San Luis Obispo County residents to urge their Assemblymember to vote for the bill.

KATCHO continued on page 10

How Compromise Works at the Board of Supervisors

The County has managed to look like it's doing something to save the Paso Robles groundwater basin



On August 27, the County Supervisors deliberated on an emergency ordinance to try to save the Paso Robles groundwater basin from total depletion.

At the outset of the meeting, representatives of the big north county vineyards made their position clear: they did not want any ordinance passed, and did not want their rate of pumping or new planting restricted in any way.

But if an ordinance *did* pass, they wanted exemptions for the creation of huge agricultural ponds and no requirement for a two-to-one offset of water use for new plantings or development, meaning the land owner would have to show that he has eliminated two gallons of water from current use for every gallon of proposed future use, thereby actually taking some of the current pressure off the basin and beginning to allow it to replenish. The vineyards preferred a one-to-one offset – i.e. status quo.

Within minutes of the conclusion of that marathon meeting the consensus had formed: a successful compromise had been forged; everybody had given a little to get a little; hard-won unanimity had produced an emergency ordinance that will “stop the bleeding” of the stricken Paso basin until the Board will meet to consider extending the ordinance and/or establishing a groundwater management district.

Except that's not really what happened.

One of the most crucial measures proposed in the draft ordinance was the two-to-one offset of water use. Supervisors Bruce Gibson and Adam Hill argued for it; Frank Mecham and Debbie Arnold held out for a “water neutral” one-to-one offset that would simply ensure the basin continues to bleed out at the current rate and would entail the least amount of potential inconvenience for any irrigated ag operations.

Here's the gist of how that conversation went:

GIBSON: A two-to-one offset...provides the necessary buffer to assure one-to-one, and that's what we're really after.

MECHAM: You just mentioned that if you did the offset on ag there's a lot of work that has to be done to try to figure that all out, and why would we make it even more difficult?

HILL: Anything that we're going to do with an interim ordinance is going to be an exercise in caution, obviously. We're putting up guard

rails right now is essentially what we're doing, and if we are doing that, we should make sure that the offset does not worsen the problem, and the only way we can ensure that is to have it beyond the one [to one]. If the two-to-one is not acceptable to you, I could see one & a half.... There's just a couple of things to me that are critical. One is that. The other is projects in the pipeline. I think if we don't cut the pipeline, if stuff's not in the ground we need to say this is a true time-out. Those are the things that I think are most important.

MECHAM: I'm willing to move ahead with this.... If we're gonna try to bring compromise to this whole situation, then we need to be able to give a little on one side, give a little to the other side. I'll go with, I just, I can't move off, I can't even do one and an eighth. I just think: one-to-one offset, and leave it at that, and I'm good.

GIBSON: You talk about the spirit of compromise; I think what Adam was speaking to just then is the essence of compromise because, to

me, we have two ways to go on this. Do no harm. If you want to propose that we stick to one-to-one, before anybody offsets I want to see how we actually verify the water savings before that water is spent on a new planting.

MECHAM: Well they have to do the offset on a one-to-one —

GIBSON: No, I'm saying that I believe in order to verify that we're doing no harm, we need to have a verifiable system to show that water was actually saved and that no more than that savings of water go on the plants. I think it would be simpler, and in fact less expensive, for both the County and the landowner to simply say “look, if you

way, which I think is the easiest way, is to simply require a two-to-one offset on assumptions.... If new plantings go in, we have to be convinced they're not making the situation worse. That's the essence of this temporary ordinance we're putting into place.

ARNOLD: The problem is, you mentioned this does not affect business, but in this case it does affect this kind of business, it affects just, a lot, and it affects the ability for someone to change or do a different crop or do something they need to do. So if you're water-neutral, and you have evidence that you're using the same amount of water, and you've just adjusted and you've planted something else over



Give me everything I want Supervisor Mecham (left) explains his version of the spirit of compromise to Supervisor Gibson.



can, on a reasonable series of assumptions, say that you're offsetting at one-and-a-half to one, that simplifies this for everybody. That speeds it up. Again, we're trying to work together on a point of compromise. I think that's a more than adequate point of compromise.

MECHAM: I think that other things to, you know.... I just forgot what I was gonna tell you. Go to the next one.

GIBSON: The goal has been to offset water use. And the simple

here, it's so simple and we're making it too complicated.

GIBSON: The nature of that evidence —

HILL: I think that we should move on. I think that if we have verifiable evidence —

GIBSON: Of actual savings —

HILL: Of actual neutrality at this point, is what they're saying. I would prefer savings; I think if we

COMPROMISE continued on page 9

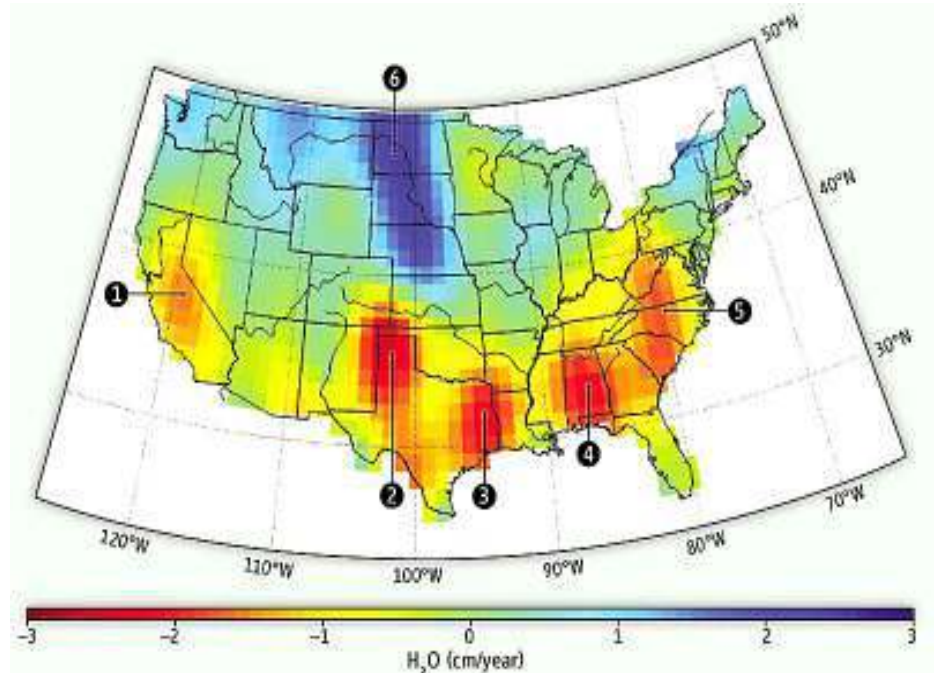
The Big Bad Picture

A June 15 article posted to mydesert.com noted the publication of a research paper in that week's issue of the journal *Science* that tracked changes in water supplies across the U.S.

The researchers found that “groundwater reserves, the traditional backup for water supplies during extended periods of drought, are in decline globally.”

This map from the report shows 2003-2012 satellite data on “water losses in regions such as California's Central Valley and the Southern High Plains Aquifer, caused by overuse of groundwater for irrigation.” The image data is from GRACE — the Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment mission — two satellites that are able to detect total amounts of water, above and below ground, and measure changes on a monthly basis.

Co-author James Famiglietti said “This is really a regional problem. It's really happening all over the southwestern U.S., and it's happening all over Southern California, and we can quantify it.”



We are not alone The state of the nation's aquifers due to overpumping for irrigation.



The fine print Farmers Market, San Luis Obispo, September 26, 2012.

GMOs Do Not Belong in SLO Farmers Markets

By Jesse Arnold

Last year, the Monsanto Corporation and its ag biotech allies spent millions to defeat Proposition 37, which simply called for the labeling of genetically modified food in California. Monsanto sues 10,000 farmers a year for “patent infringement,” which their lawyers will allege if pollen from one of their genetically modified organisms drifts into a farmer’s organic or conventionally grown crop nearby.

In light of the callous disregard and complete contempt for consumers and organic farmers shown by Monsanto and friends, enlightened farmers markets make a point of not allowing the sale of the ag biotech industry’s GMO produce.

But throughout the month of September, Monsanto’s “GMO BT” corn was -- again -- prominently on sale at the Thursday night farmers market in downtown SLO.

The growing acknowledgment by Farmers markets of the incompatibility of ag biotech and what a farmers market is supposed to represent is summed up in the Arcata farmers market policy on GMOs, drafted by the North Coast Growers Association: “We believe that GMO technology goes against the very foundations of sustainable agriculture.” The policy goes on to list the issues related to pesticides, corporate control, patent liability, lax government monitoring, and the threat to seed banks and food diversity raised by GMOs. Other California farmers markets that do not

allow GMOs include Berkeley, Santa Cruz, Menlo Park and Orange County, and, across the country, the markets in Westport and Hartford, Connecticut.

Sierra Club policy on GMOs (www.sierraclub.org/biotech) is in accord with that of Arcata’s North Coast Growers Association, and also notes the environmental damage done by the intensified use of the herbicide required for GMO crops.

For more on why genetically modified produce should not be in farmers markets and we should not be growing such crops in the first place, see *GMO Myths and Truths*, an evidence-based examination of the claims made for the safety and efficacy of genetically modified foods, available on line from earthopensource.org.

TAKE ACTION

Here are the people you can contact to urge that they adopt a policy of excluding genetically engineered produce from our local farmers markets:

- Phillip Langston, SLO County Farmers Market Association, zeamaize@yahoo.com, 481-1040
- Mike Cirone, SLO County Farmers Market Association, 459-1829
- Sandra Dimond, North County Farmers Market Association Mgr., sandra@createabang.com, 748-1109

If you have any questions, please call Jesse Arnold at 927-3096.

ParksForward, March



On September 11, The SLO County Library was the site of one of ten statewide workshops to solicit new ideas from the public on the future of the State Park system.

The Parks Forward Commission was created by the Natural Resources Agency to conduct an independent assessment of the current State Parks system.

Many speakers at the Sept. 11 meeting brought forth good ideas and pointed

critiques. But, as might have been expected, a small fringe contingent of off-road enthusiasts and Tea Partiers – inevitably led by Grover Beach Mayor Debbie Peterson (see “The Dusty Trail,” September) -- also turned out, with bad ideas and silly critiques.

No longer content with just urging the sale of county land in the Oceano Dunes to State Parks’ Off-Highway Vehicle Division and demanding the repeal of the dust rule put in place to control hazardous emissions from the off-road playground, Peterson & co. urged Commissioners to place all state parks above the law and beyond the reach of state regulatory agencies -- specifically the California Coastal Commission and SLO County Air Pollution Control District -- charged with protecting the state’s natural resources and the public health.

We predict zero traction for this novel notion.

Sign Up Your Business

Now’s the time for a central coast National Marine Sanctuary



In February 2012, more than two dozen local small business owners came to the Sycamore Springs Resort in Avila Beach to hear our invited panel of staff from the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, the former Mayor of Santa Cruz, and Monterey County business owners describe how the national marine sanctuary to our north came to be, and how their businesses and communities have benefited from its presence and operations.

The Channel Islands Marine Sanctuary was designated in 1980. In 1992, Congress pondered the creation of both a Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary and a Central Coast National Marine Sanctuary. Congress opted to draw 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 to be a national marine sanctuary.

That left the coast of San Luis Obispo and part of Santa Barbara, from Point Conception to Cambria, as the hole in the doughnut; the area that will be in the cross-hairs the next time the cry “drill, baby, drill!” is heard... followed by spill, baby, spill. As oil supplies get tighter and fracking spreads offshore, national marine sanctuary designation is the only way to permanently protect our waters and their priceless cultural and biological treasures.

The take-home message from that panel discussion: 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. Everywhere that national marine sanctuaries are designated, local businesses that depend on coastal tourism benefit from the sanctuary’s promotion of kayaking, diving, camping, wildlife watching and other coastal recreational activities.

After that galvanizing discussion, we promised excited attendees that we would follow up to let them know what they could do to help make the same thing happen here.

Here it is: Support the proposed Chumash Cultural Heritage National Marine Sanctuary. The Chumash people are the first inhabitants of the central and southern coastal regions of California, and one of the few ocean-going bands among the First Peoples of the New World. Their ancient submerged sacred sites extend 13 miles offshore. More than a dozen coastal sites have been continuously occupied for more than 9,000 years.

This cultural heritage, along with the most significant wetland system on the central coast, the highest coastal dunes in the state, magnificent kelp forests and corals, a major sea otter population, sea lion haul-outs, and three whale and porpoise feeding areas, combine to form a clear message, and we need your help to get that message to the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries: **the waters of the Central Coast deserve marine sanctuary status.**

The Office of National Marine Sanctuaries has revived the sanctuary site designation process and is now reviewing criteria for designation. It will soon be accepting and evaluating nominations for new sanctuaries from coastal regions around the country.

TAKE ACTION

We are pleased to support the Northern Chumash Tribal Council and Bakersfield Tribal Council in this initiative and are assisting in gathering the names of individuals and businesses who support this designation. Please send an email with the subject line “Chumash Sanctuary support,” and your name & city and the name of your business in the message section, to sierraclub8@gmail.com.



Here’s your vision Former Morro Bay City Councilwoman Betty Winholtz told Parks Forward Commissioners “I don’t look at programs, I look at whether you’re protecting our resources, the original intent of state parks. This should not be seen as an industry, but a service.”

Pandora's Timing

It's always been lousy

Every time the nuclear power industry starts handing out cigars to celebrate the birth of the “nuclear renaissance,” the cigars explode.

As we've noted previously (“Diablo: You're Done,” April 2011), the March 14, 2011, issue of *Newsweek* – which hit the stands about a week prior to its cover date and a few days before the Fukushima disaster on March 11 – printed a rapturous profile of “Atomic” Anne Lauvergeon, CEO of French nuclear energy giant Areva, entitled “Nuclear Powerhouse: France's most powerful business-woman believes now is the time for the next atomic boom.” The boom that destroyed the building housing the reactor at Fukushima Dai-ichi Unit 1 a few days later was not what *Newsweek* and Atomic Anne had in mind.

Now comes the pro-nuke pseudo-documentary *Pandora's Promise*. An admiring full-page review in the July 8, 2013, issue of *Time* magazine (“Glowing Green: A documentary makes the case for nuclear power”) included the confident announcement that “there will likely be no detectable health impacts from the radiation released by the Fukushima meltdown.”*

The magazine hit subscribers' mailboxes just before the news broke that, contrary to longstanding official denials, highly radioactive water is leaking from Fukushima at the rate of 300 tons per day. A month later, the world learned that 400 tons of fuel rods must be removed from the top of the damaged Unit 4 reactor building -- a delicate, unprecedented year-long operation in which one mistake could result in the release of 14,000 times as much radiation as the bomb dropped on Hiroshima.

Meanwhile stateside, the nuclear renaissance has been imploding. As the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility recently noted in the *Santa Maria Times*:

Since 2013 began, five nuclear reactors nationwide, including two in Southern California, have been withdrawn from service by their owners for various, but ultimately economic reasons. The economic fallout has wreaked havoc with counties in Vermont, Wisconsin and Florida. None had anticipated that their golden goose would ever stop laying golden eggs, all of which their local leaders had been putting in one basket.”

If you work in public relations for the nuclear industry, right about now you must be feeling like you can't catch a break.

Concerning *Pandora's Promise*, Mark Hertsgaard's contribution to the article “Can Nuclear

Power Save the Planet?” in the July 8 issue of *The Nation* is worth seeking out. Hertsgaard, in dialog with a befuddled Terry Tempest Williams, lays bare the film's bogus pro-nuke claims and exposes it as a propaganda effort comprised of equal parts deceit, distortion and sophistry.

But Williams' befuddlement is the hoped-for response to the film, and what the nuclear industry and its apologists are counting on.

At the center of *Pandora's Promise* is Michael Shellenberger, co-founder of the Breakthrough Institute and a past master of the art of wrapping the corporate imperative in philosophical-sounding greenspeak — up to a point. As Joe Romm, has noted on his Climate Progress blog: “Breakthrough has tried to create the impression they are a progressive, environmental organization dedicated to promoting clean energy — so that when they launch their umpteenth attack on progressives and environmentalists and climate scientists and clean energy, they can be seen as ‘contrarians.’ Stop the presses: here's an environmental group saying environmentalists are doing the wrong thing.”

Energy blogger David Roberts also is not buying what “the Breakthrough Boys” are selling. “Nuclear's main problem is economics,” he wrote in a bemused *Grist* essay on the film. Roberts skewers the central theme of *Pandora's Promise*, the notion that environmentalists are changing their minds and coming around to the idea that nuclear power is the answer to the planet's prayers.

Roberts writes, “The roster of enviros in this purportedly burgeoning movement: Stewart Brand, the Breakthrough Boys, and ‘Greenpeace cofounder Patrick Moore,’ who has been a paid shill for industry for decades.... More recently George Monbiot and Mark Lynas have been added to the list. This handful of converts is always cited with the implica-

tion that it's the leading edge of a vast shift, and yet, it's always the same handful.

“As of now, of the ten leading enviro groups in the U.S., zero support new nuclear power plants. In the movie, Shellenberger says, ‘I have a sense that this is a beautiful thing ... the beginning of a movement.’ I fear he has once again mistaken the contents of his navel for the zeitgeist.”

Roberts surveys a sampling of critical responses to the film, starting with the *New York Times*' advice for filmmaker Robert Stone: “You need to make an argument. A parade of like-minded nuclear-power advocates who assure us that everything will be all right just doesn't cut it.”

Variety: “The viewer might almost come away thinking that what he or she needs in the morning is a healthy dose of nuclear radiation. But this is a zealotry issue, and Stone is a convert.”

Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists: “An audience discussion after a preview at the University of Chicago made it clear I was not the only one who sensed the self-righteous tone of the newly converted in the film's narrative. In the end, by dismissing the protestors and

failing to engage them in significant debate about the pros and cons of nuclear energy, the film undermined its own message.”

Roberts concludes: “Confronted by the obvious travails of the actually existing nuclear industry, supporters inevitably wave their hands at the Nukes of the Future: thorium reactors, small modular reactors, integral fast reactors, and the like.... To hear supporters tell it, within a few years you'll have a reactor in your backyard that consumes nuclear waste from past reactors and emits nothing but fresh air, clean water, and the scent of jasmine.”

The snake oil on offer in *Pandora's Promise* notwithstanding, the Sierra Club, Mothers for Peace, Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility and hundreds of other groups and energy experts have pointed out that the production of nuclear energy as it is practiced in the real world, risk aside, is the most expensive, least effective way to go about reducing carbon emissions. We will continue to advocate for the much -- *much* -- preferable options at hand that will get us to a future of clean, safe, renewable energy.

TAKE ACTION

In November, CNN is set to air *Pandora's Promise*, with its gross factual errors, straw man arguments and blatant shills for the nuclear industry unchallenged. CNN needs to balance the film's pro-nuclear propaganda by broadcasting a discussion after the film with independent scientists, medical professionals and nuclear power experts who can present an accurate and honest assessment of the nuclear industry. CNN is a news network with a responsibility to present factual content. To air what is essentially an advertisement for the nuclear industry without a balancing discussion that features independent experts would be profoundly dishonest and taint CNN's reputation.

Go to www.beyondnuclear.org, click on “Pandora's false promises,” and sign the petition to ask CNN to feature a panel discussion after the film that will fact-check the picture it presents.

Tell NRC: We Have No Confidence in Your Radioactive Waste Policy

Make the reactor licensing moratorium permanent

by Michael Mariotte, Nuclear Information Resource Service

Since the summer of 2012, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has been unable to issue licenses for new reactors, or renewals for existing licenses. A federal court threw out the underpinning of the agency's radioactive waste policy—its “waste confidence” rule. That rule had stated that the NRC was confident that high-level radioactive waste always would be stored or disposed safely, and thus could continue to be generated.

But the court found that with the proposed Yucca Mountain nuclear waste site effectively cancelled and no alternative in place, the NRC could not be “confident” of permanent disposal. Moreover, the court ruled that the NRC had no technical basis for asserting that current on-site storage practices in fuel pools and dry casks would be safe for the indefinite future. This ruling forced the current moratorium on licensing.

The NRC has now prepared a Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) as part of the process of replacing its “waste confidence” rule and it hopes to finalize this document and resume licensing during 2014. During October and November, the agency will hold 12 public meetings around the country to explain and receive

NRC continued on next page



Losing Sleep and Waking Up Worried?

For confidential professional help, call

Jill Denton, LMFT

Experienced Trauma & Anxiety Therapist

805-534-1101

www.accesspt.com

Serving our community since 1978

*A claim contradicted by a Japanese government study released in February which found that more than 25 times as many people in the Fukushima region have developed thyroid cancer compared with data from before the disaster. Per the July 15, 2013, issue of *Stars & Stripes*, fifty U.S. sailors and Marines who were involved in humanitarian operations after the disaster are now suffering from leukemia, testicular cancer and thyroid problems or rectal and gynecological bleeding and are suing Tokyo Electric Power Co. for lying to the U.S. military about the level of danger involved in exposure to radiation from the plant.

We Miss Shane Krogen

By Tom Hopkins

In 1995, Fresno outdoorsman Shane Krogen adopted a 12-mile segment of the California Riding and Hiking Trail in the vicinity of Huntington Lake via the U.S. Forest Service "Adopt-a-Trail" program, which enables individuals, businesses and groups to maintain trails within the National Forest. In the summer of 1997, the Forest Service approached Krogen with a challenge: they needed additional volunteer help maintaining over 400 miles of trail between Yosemite and Sequoia - Kings Canyon. This included 27 miles of the Pacific Crest / John Muir Trail, in some of the most scenic portions of the John Muir Wilderness. His response was the formation of the High Sierra Volunteer Trail Crew in the spring of 1998, which he served as executive director. Shane Krogen died in a helicopter accident in Tulare County on September 12 while working with crews on cleaning up and restoring toxic abandoned marijuana grow sites in national forests and wilderness areas. Our local outings leaders and Cal Poly Sierra Student Coalition members who have worked with the Ventana Wilderness Alliance mourn his death.



Shane Krogen's tragic death is a big loss to the conservation of our public lands. He was an untiring and totally committed leader bringing grassroots volunteers to restore public land and public trails.

I met Shane in late 2006 when I volunteered for a weekend grow site cleanup with the High Sierra Volunteer Trail Crew (HSVTC) in the North Fork of the Kings River near the Dinkey Creek confluence. I wanted to see how Shane and his folks, who truly pioneered public lands grow site restoration work, were organized and got the job done.

I had been picking Shane's brain via email and phone to learn how to get Forest Service approval to clean up grow sites here in the Monterey Ranger District. Shane was a big help and made use of all of his credibility with the Forest Service to help us get our first clearance to clean up a site in the Ventana.

The actual HSVTC clean up was quite different than the ones the Ventana Wilderness Alliance ultimately did in the district. In that region of the Sierra, the grow sites are mostly at 4-6,000 feet elevation and usually not in wilderness. So the volunteers would go into the site, package up all of the tubing, trash, etc. into chopper sling loads, and local CHP choppers would pull them out. The HSVTC had a number of volunteers trained to work the sling load under the chopper.

They had a deal with the local CHP chopper base and crew to pull the trash out of the sites to provide external lift practice and continuing certification for the CHP chopper pilots.

Turns out, even though Shane was successful in persuading the Paso Robles CHP chopper crew to work with Ventana Wilderness Alliance, our grow sites were all in wilderness and not suitable for chopper support. So with the help of many of you, we ended up pulling everything out the old fashioned way — backpacks and mules.

The HSVTC is also a major player in maintaining the Pacific Crest Trail in the central Sierra, which was the initial reason Shane organized the crew and then jumped from owning an outdoor gear store in Fresno to being the full-time Executive Director and driving force behind the HSVTC. Let's hope that the organization he left behind can continue the passion and commitment for preserving and restoring public wild lands and trails that Shane so ably embodied.



Get a Grand for Going Solar

Throughout the month of October, get a free solar evaluation of your home via Sungevity's partnership with Sierra Club. And if you elect to have panels installed, Sungevity will send \$1,000 to you and another \$1,000 to our chapter!

Most solar owners save money on their electric bills immediately, and powering your home with solar is often the single best way to shrink your carbon footprint. Find out if your home is suitable for solar at sierraclub.org/solarhomes.

Mystery

continued from page 2

cooperation of City staff...we will no longer continue our efforts on the wastewater project." The previous April, the hapless Mayor Janice Peters defended the city council's decision to go along with staff's preferred project: "We can't make decisions as informed and wise as the people we pay to give us advice."

The current city council — having been given a very expensive gift of hindsight and hard experience — does not seem inclined to agree with that philosophy. Good for them. As we noted in our March 2013 issue, after the Coastal Commission's inevitable denial of the Morro Bay/Cayucos sewer project permit: "It is now the job of the current city council to clean up the mess left by the previous two."

Morro Bay is now attempting to do a wastewater treatment project the right way. The people the City depends on to get it done probably should not include those who for years were hell-bent on doing it the wrong way.

Through a Poet's Eyes



Poet up SLO Poet Laureate Jerry Smith was joined by former poets laureate Bonnie Young (2012) and Rosemary Wilvert (2007), along with Evy Cole, Lisha Perini and Ivan BrownOtter, for an evening of nature-celebrating at the Santa Lucia chapter's Sept. 18 meeting at the Steynberg Gallery.

Compromise

continued from page 6

can't get to agreement on savings, then verifiable evidence of water neutrality, meaning that there's no more water use than currently being used. Let's move to the next thing.

After vanquishing 2-to-1 offsets, it was a simple matter to fudge the definition of "projects in the pipeline" to go past vines in the ground and include anyone who thinks they're "vested," with no definition of what "vested" means (a landowner who has ripped the soil? Ordered vines? Installed trellises?) Vesting exemption claims are now being filed.

Mecham also demanded that big ag ponds be exempted from the ordinance. They were.

All in all, it was a unique interpretation of the concept of "give a little on one side, give a little to the other side." At the end, a satisfied Supervisor

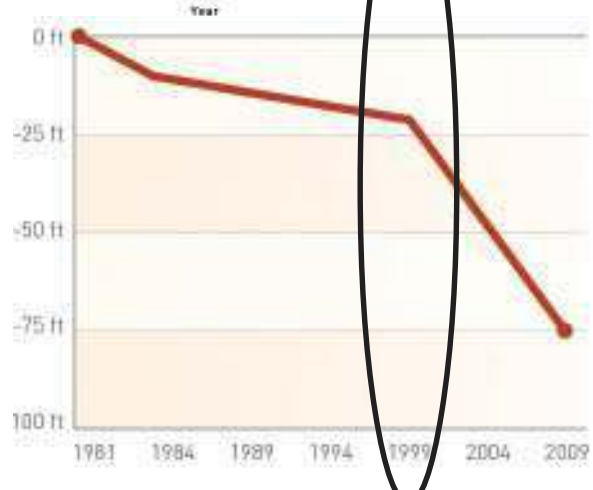
Mecham announced: "I got everything I wanted" -- an echo of John Boehner's proclamation of victory when he rolled President Obama in the 2011 debt ceiling fight. In Mecham's case, the announcement was a signal to the big vineyards that he had delivered the goods for them.

All of which bodes ill for the potential creation of a permanent ordinance that would contain any provisions that will do anything to actually restore the Paso Robles groundwater basin, or the establishment of a water management district created by and for the big wineries, in which voting rights for water allocation would be based on the amount of acreage owned.

At this point, the politics of our north county supervisors are dimming any hope of saving the basin or the rural residents and ecosystems that depend on it.



Pay no attention to those graphs behind the curtain The big vineyards would consider it "demonizing" to note that the meteoric rise in winery licenses (above) and the Paso Robles groundwater basin's fall off the cliff (right) began in the same year and constitute a mirror image.



NRC

continued from previous page

public comment on this document. The NRC is accepting written comments through November 27.

These meetings are our opportunity to point out the many technical and logical shortcomings in this new document, and to call for making the licensing moratorium permanent. The only radioactive waste option we have confidence in is to stop making it! There will be protests outside and public involvement inside each one of these meetings. We hope you will join us and help pack every meeting!

At, www.nirs.org/radwaste/wasteconfidence.htm you will find draft press releases, alerts and other information for each meeting, a link to download the entire DGEIS if you'd like, and more.

It's time to join together and make the strongest public statement possible at every one of these meetings.

TAKE ACTION

Come to the Courtyard Marriott in San Luis Obispo at 6 p.m. on October 7. Open house with meeting starting at 7 p.m. Let the NRC know how "confident" you feel about storing highly radioactive waste on our seismically active coastline for the next 300 years. Keeping Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power plant running is causing harm to marine life every day it operates. All the other issues we care about pale in comparison to an earthquake at Diablo Canyon.

Taking Issue

Reviewing problematic environmental coverage & commentary in our local media

“Fracking emits less methane than previously estimated,” by Michael Wines, *New York Times*, reprinted in *The Tribune*, Sept. 17, 2013.

Summary: A new study by David T. Allen et al, funded by nine oil & gas companies and the Environmental Defense Fund, finds that fracking for shale gas emits less methane, the most damaging greenhouse gas, than other studies have found. All responses below are from the analysis of the study done by Physicians Scientists & Engineers for Healthy Energy (PSE).

This is a finding at odds with other researchers’ work that shows much higher rates. The fugitive losses reported by Allen and colleagues are 10 to 20 times lower than those calculated from more complete (field-level) measurements. Allen and colleagues do not address this large discrepancy or even reference these other studies.

Drilling for shale oil...appears to cause smaller leaks of the greenhouse gas methane than the federal government had estimated, and considerably smaller than some critics of shale gas had feared.

...a number of companies already capture escaped gases at wells being prepared for production.

It is in the interest of industry to select lower emitting wells for sampling. Studies carried out by NOAA and other independent researchers which report significantly higher rates of emissions rely on atmospheric measurements and chemical analysis of atmospheric samples to assess emissions across the entirety of a production field rather than a small subset of selected wells. As such, these studies are more likely to reflect accurately real-world emissions from the industry as a whole.



“Can we do it? Thanks to new EPA regulations coming online, the answer to that is good news,” Eric Pooley, a senior vice president at the Environmental Defense Fund, said.

This is a very small sample size. The study measured emissions from just 489 gas wells and only 27 hydraulic fracturing events. These measurements represent 0.11% of the total conventional and unconventional gas wells in the United States. Emissions reported in this paper reflect a very small subset of sources at a single stage of a multistage industrial process. It is not a complete life-cycle emissions study. Methane is also emitted as gas travels to consumers through compression, processing, storage, transmission, and distribution sectors (i.e. full lifecycle). Independent scientific research has indicated that these additional emissions are larger than previously thought

The study...bolsters the contention by advocates of fracking that shale gas is cleaner and better than coal, at least until more renewable-energy sources are developed. More than 500 wells were analyzed.

Many state oil and gas regulatory agencies in the United States have too few inspectors to monitor the large numbers of wells, and regulatory oversight is, thus, greatly limited. In the real world, gas production operators may not take all precautions necessary to limit fugitive methane loss.

In particular, it indicated that containment measures captured 99 percent of methane that escaped from new wells.

The study’s results are based on evaluations of sites and times selected by the oil and gas industry rather than random and independent sampling of sites. Thus, this study must be viewed as a best-case scenario, based upon wells selected by industry, a party undoubtedly interested in a particular outcome.

Upshot: “Policy-makers and society in general are in great need of robust scientific measurements of methane emissions from modern gas development. It is disappointing that Allen and colleagues seem to have failed to employ basic scientific rules, including transparent criteria for the selection of study sites to measure, sufficient sample sizes, and the attempt to place their results in the context of other scientific studies to date. This study falls short in its attempt to help answer questions about methane emissions from modern gas development beyond the small number of gas industry-selected wells where measures were taken.” -- Seth B. Shonkoff, PhD, MPH, executive director, Physicians, Scientists, & Engineers for Healthy Energy (PSE), University of California, Berkeley.

Katcho

continued from page 5

Those of you who did so received a letter from Katcho informing them that their elected representative believes that “state agencies must be held accountable for their actions” and it is not “appropriate to allow an agency to be the prosecutor, judge, and jury in cases where it is alleged that a violation of agency regulations or state law has occurred.”

But Katcho wanted you to know that he had a lot of respect for the bill’s author, Toni Atkins, and he really wants “to ensure that those who are guilty of violating the Coastal Act are held accountable. Therefore, to demonstrate my commitment to working with her to find an appropriate way to clear the back log of pending

enforcement actions, I abstained rather than voting in opposition to her measure.”

There are four problems with this statesmanlike explanation.

First, more than 20 regulatory agencies in California have the authority to levy fines if the regulations they enforce are violated. Due process is followed; no abuse occurs. No word from Assemblymember Achadjian on how he intends to make all those agencies “accountable for their actions” and stop them from acting as “prosecutor, judge, and jury.”

Second, Katcho’s abstention was the equivalent of a “no” vote. It didn’t demonstrate any kind of commitment; it ensured that the bill did not receive the number of votes it needed to pass.

Third, there isn’t “another appropri-

ate way to clear the back log of pending enforcement actions.” The way to do that is to make it more expensive to resist compliance than it is to comply, which can only be done by giving the Coastal Commission authority to fine violators until they comply.

Fourth, Katcho has long treasured his self-image as a reasonable moderate conservative, an image his actions continually betray.

AB 976 is now a two-year bill, which means it can come back for a vote in 2014. If it does, all SLO County residents should remind Katcho that he still needs to vote for it, and the fig leaf of his transparent excuses for not doing so will never suffice to cover his cave-in to business interests at the expense of the people of California and our natural heritage.

Classifieds

Next issue deadline is **October 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

Les Kangas
 Solar Energy Consultant
 REC Solar, Inc.
 775 Fiero Lane, Suite 200
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93401



Office: (805) 528-9705
 Cell: (805) 305-7164
 Toll Free: (888) OK-SOLAR (657-6527)
 Fax: (805) 528-9701

SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTING



NATURAL INVESTMENTS LLC
 Financial Advisor
SCOTT SECREST AAMS®
 (805) 235-3031

San Luis Obispo, California
www.naturalinvesting.com

Fee-only Sustainable Investment Advice

Natural Investments, LLC
 An investment adviser registered with the SEC

slosolstice.com
 green directory



Be smart... be green!
 CONTACT us... to be SEEN!
 ph: 805-473-5064 or email: Solstice222@aol.com

Helmholz Consulting
Business Computer Networks

PHONE: (805) 547-0293
 E-MAIL: dave@helmholz.net

Providing personalized computer service to businesses in San Luis Obispo county



Mac VanDuzer
 Broker Associate
 TOLL FREE: (800) 767-0095
 OFFICE: (805) 927-1511
 FAX: (805) 927-1599
 CELL: (805) 909-7630
MacVanDuz@aol.com



555 Main Street
 Cambria, CA 93428

GREEN HOMES
 Pismo to San Simeon

A portion of any commission donated to the Sierra Club

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


Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

CYNTHIA HAWLEY
ATTORNEY

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
LAND USE
CIVIL LITIGATION

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

FLYING M FARM PRODUCTS



FROM THE RED HILLS

2012 Crop Grass Fed Beef
Estate Grown Extra Virgin Olive Oil
 Available Now-Delivery Available
 Please Get in Touch For More Information
 Greg and Linda McMillan

805-238-4820 greg@flyingment.com

USE IN AND FOR GOOD HEALTH

Rainwater Management




Low Impact Development

Hold Your Water

“Slow it, sink it, spread it” is the mantra of enlightened water managers who know that water works best when it stays on the land where it falls.

Now that mantra can be yours, too, along with healthier soils, happier wildlife, and reductions in your water bill, thanks to the tips and techniques in **Rainwater Management for Low Impact Development**, a publication of the Appropriate Technology Coalition -- SLO Green Build, the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club and the Surfrider Foundation, available for \$10 postage paid, while supplies last. Mail your check to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 15755, SLO 93406.

LAW OFFICES OF BABAK NAFICY
 Babak Naficy - Attorney at Law



1504 Marsh Street
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

ph: 805.593.0926 - fax: 805.593.0946
babaknaficy@sbcglobal.net

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. Please bring drinking water to all outings and optionally a lunch. Sturdy footwear is recommended. All phone numbers listed are within area code 805 unless otherwise noted. Pets are generally not allowed. A parent or responsible adult must accompany children under the age of 18. 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, 549-0355. For information on a specific outing, please call the listed outing leader.

Sat.-Sun., Oct 5th-6th Hot Springs Tour in Black Rock Desert. Camp in remote country at a spring close to Gerlach, about 100 miles north of Reno Friday night, then re-locate to a prettier spring on Emigrant Trail on Saturday. High-clearance vehicle required, 2-WD okay. Primitive camping, so no RVs or trailers. For more information, call Leader: David Book, 775-843-6443. Great Basin Group.

Fri., Oct. 11th, 10 a.m. Guided Walk: The SLO Railroad Historic District. To whet your appetite for the fun of the Railroad Festival this weekend, join us on this morning stroll past 15 sites in the old commercial district, the depot area, and century-old boardinghouses. Hear the stories about the heyday of the Southern Pacific during the steam age, 1890s to 1950s, when the "SP" dominated public life in San Luis Obispo and transformed it from a cow town to a boomtown. Duration about 90." Meet at Gus's Grocery, corner of Osos and Leff Sts. Leader: Joe Morris, 549-0355.

Sat., Oct. 12th, 8 a.m. Vicente Flats Trail Hike. A long coastal drive to the trailhead, but worth it. A moderately strenuous hike, 10 miles rt, 1800 ft. gain, through very scenic area in southern Big Sur. In and out on the same trail, so you may sign out early. An all-day excursion, so bring lunch, water, and good hiking shoes. Poison oak by trail. Meet at Washburn Day Use Area, north of Cambria. Leader: Carlos Diaz, 546-0317.

Sat-Sun, Oct. 12th-13th. Explore and Serve in the Carrizo Plains Car camp and help on project Saturday in wilderness area to aid in mobility of pronghorn antelope by modifying fences in Carrizo Plain National Monument. Sunday, at choice of group, may include touring popular viewing areas in the plains or a hike in the Caliente Range. Leader: Craig Deutsche, 310-477-6670 or craig.deutsche@gmail.com CNRCC Desert Committee.

Tues., Oct. 15th, 10 a.m. Hazard Peak Trail, Montana de Oro. 3.5-

mile, 1000 ft. gain, gentle climb to summit of Hazard Pk., to enjoy coastal views. Duration about 2 hrs. Meet at Ridge Trail/Hazard Peak trailhead parking lot, about 2.2 miles from park entrance on Pecho Valley Rd. Leader: Vicki Marchenko, 528-5567 or vmarchenko57@gmail.com.

Sat., Oct. 19th, 9:30 a.m. Oaks Peak/Coon Creek/Bluffs Trails in Montana de Oro. Moderately strenuous 10-mile hike to top of Oaks Peak, then easy after that, for a beautiful walk along the coastline past meandering streams. Bring hat, sunscreen, plenty of water, and dress in layers for varying weather. Meet at Visitor's Center at Spooner's Cove in Montana de Oro State Park Leader: Andrea Ortiz, 934-2792, kenya683@msn.com for further information or to arrange carpools.

Sun., Oct. 20th, 5 p.m. Elfin Forest Evening Walk. Enjoy an easy, one-mile walk in this nature preserve overlooking the ocean in Los Osos with over 200 plant species. Directions: from South Bay Blvd., turn west on San Ysabel going forward to the ocean, then right on 16th St and park at the end. Leader: Vicki Marchenko, vmarchenko57@gmail.com or 528-5567.

Sun., Oct. 20th, 10 a.m. Sycamore Springs Trekking-Pole Hike. 2-mile hike to model the benefits of using trekking poles, 700 feet elevation change. Meet at entrance to Sycamore Springs Resort, 1215 Avila Beach Dr. Confirm beforehand with David Georgi, hikingpoles@gmail.com or 458-5575.

Thurs.-Sun., Oct. 24th-26th. Death Valley Wilderness Restoration. Restore wilderness, work on Darwin Falls trail, in this beautiful and remote national park. Meet early Thursday afternoon to begin work, then drive to primitive camping area and set up camp. Friday work to clean up debris from plane crash. If needed, we will continue work on Sunday; otherwise participants are free to explore the Park. Leader: Kate Allen, kj.allen96@gmail.com or 661-944-4056. CNRCC Desert Committee.

Sat.-Sun., Oct. 26th-27th. Ghost Town Extravaganza Halloween weekend with ghosts of California's colorful past. Primitive camp near ghost town of Ballarat near Death Valley. Saturday, challenging hike to Lookout City ghost town with historian Hal Fowler, then return to camp for Happy Hour, potluck feast, and a midnight visit to Ballarat's graveyard. Sunday, quick visit to infamous Riley town site, then home. Group size strictly limited. Send \$8 per person (check payable to Lygeia Gerard), 2 large SASE, H & W phones, email and rideshare info to Leader: Lygeia Gerard, P.O. Box 721039, Pinon Hills, CA 92372. Phone: 760-868-2179 CNRCC Desert Committee.

Sun., Oct. 27th, 10:30 a.m. Montana de Oro Bird and Plant Walk. Join Audubon Society and California Native Plant Society leaders for walk along coastal strand, looking for shorebirds and coastal dune plants. We will walk along beach, by dunes and estuary. Low tide at 12:32 p.m. so beach walking and birding sighting should be easier. Bring water and dress in layers for changing weather, hat, sunscreen, and good shoes for walking in sand. Leader: Bill Waycott, 459-2103 or bill.waycott@gmail.com.

Sat., Nov. 2nd, 9 a.m. Morro Bay Hills Hike. 7-mile hike, 1600 ft. gain, exploring hills above Morro Bay to the summit of Cerro Alto, then descending via W. Cuesta Ridge Rd, and Boy Scout Trail to cars. Bring snack, water, and dress for the weather. \$5 Adventure Pass parking fee if no Golden Age or National Parks pass. Stop at Taco Temple for dinner on way home for those interested. Meet at Cerro Alto Campground Day Use Area. Leader: Gary Felsman, 473-3694.


Activities sponsored by other groups

Sat., Oct. 19, 10 a.m. Birding at the Garden with the Morro Coast Audubon Society. San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden is pleased to welcome Kaaren Perry of the Morro Coast Audubon Society for a family-friendly birding walk. This engaging walk through the San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden and the surrounding environs will get you acquainted with the wide variety of feathered friends found in SLO County. We will look for returning wintering birds and fall migrants including sparrows, warblers, raptors, and others. October is prime time for rare migrants when nearly anything can show up. Walk will begin at the Garden's second parking lot. For more information contact education@slobg.org or 805-541-1400 x304.

Sun., Oct. 20, 9 a.m. Central Coast Concerned Mountain Bikers - Oats Peak Trail work, MDO. Over 5 miles of new trail at Montana de Oro will be open to cyclists and equestrians in March after winter rains. In order to open it, we have to finish a 200-yard section of the Beebe Trail which still needs considerable dirt work. We can knock that work out in one workday with 40-50 volunteers, so please plan on attending. We are proud to report that cyclists (and equestrians) have stayed off the new trails. That responsible behavior has been a big topic of discussion at the State Parks Trails Committee meeting and has really helped to make the case that mountain bikers can be responsible trail users. Looking forward to seeing you on Oates & Beebe in October for trail work and in March for a ride! Meet at Park Headquarters above Spooner's Cove. For more info, contact tim@cccmb.org.



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.




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

For further information contact:

Joe Morris
Sierra Club
(805) 549-0355
dpj1942@earthlink.net



John McE, benefit of the Sierra Club, in Yosemite

Sat.-Sun, Nov. 2nd-3rd, Carrizo Plains Explore/Serve Weekend. Saturday, car camp in Monument, modify fencing to increase mobility of pronghorn antelope. Sunday either Caliente Ridge hike or tour of popular areas in the plains. Leader: Craig Deutsche, craig.deutsche@gmail.com or 310-477-6670 CNRCC Desert Committee.



Steynberg ceremony Vicki Marchenko received her certificate of completion of Sierra Club outings leader training from Santa Lucia Outings Leader Joe Morris at our Steynberg Gallery bimonthly meeting.