



Sept. 2014
Volume 51 No. 8

Inside

BOS & Paso: A basin too far	2
SLO & LUCE: Vision wanted	3
Cambria CSD: Still crazy	5
Los Osos basin: Last chance	6
Help Heidi Run!	8
Classifieds	11
Outings	12

Don't Miss:

Sept. 18:
SLO Nature through
Artists' Eyes
- see page 2

Your chance to be an
elected Chapter
leader
- see page 8



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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

A Weekend to Bend the Course of History

Are you concerned about the many oil projects developing in our community?

Are you concerned about the growing climate crisis?

Do you want your representatives to take action on the most important issue of our day?

Then come to Mitchell Park in San Luis Obispo on Sunday, September 21, at 2 p.m. Bring a sign to tell this community why you want action on climate change.

This event is being held in conjunction with millions of people who will be gathering that day all over the world.

Contact Heidi Harmon for questions and details:
sacredheart9395@yahoo.com
805-550-8444.

PEOPLE'S CLIMATE MARCH SLO 9/21
2PM
MITCHELL PARK
Contact: Heidi
heidharmon4assembly@gmail.com

WE NEED SYSTEM CHANGE TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE!

“Since we’ll never have the cash to compete with ExxonMobil, we better work in the currencies we can muster: bodies, spirit, passion.”

- Bill McKibben



In September, global heads of state -- and the global media -- will be in New York City for a historic summit on climate change.

With our future on the line, we will take a weekend and use it to bend the course of history.

New York City will see a climate mobilization unprecedented in size, beauty, and impact. But this moment will not be just about New York or the United States.

Our demand is for Action Now, Not Words: take the action necessary to create a world with an economy that works for people and the planet -- now. In short, we want a world safe from the ravages of climate change.

We know that no single meeting or summit will “solve climate change,” and in many ways this moment will not even really be about the summit. We want this moment to be about us -- the people who are standing up in our communities, to organize, to build power, to confront the power of fossil fuels, and to shift power to a just, safe and peaceful world.

To do that, we need to act -- together.

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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.

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Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Sierra Club General Meeting

7 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 18

SLO Nature Through Painters' Eyes

An evening of pure pleasure! Five eminent artists from SLOPE, San Luis Outdoor Painters for the Environment, will

display their favorite depictions of land and seascapes throughout our county. Each will also briefly discuss how they went about creating their works. There will be time to chat with the artists and Denise Schryver, the president of SLOPE, which represents more than 15 professional painters.

Go to www.SLOPE-Painters.com to see more. Conservation news will begin the meeting.



Steynberg Gallery, 1531 Monterey St., SLO.
 Info.: Joe Morris, 549-0355.



A Basin Too Far

Balancing the Paso Robles groundwater basin may be above the pay grade of the SLO County Board of Supervisors

In his August 8 *Tribune* column ("Government a boon to the people"), Phil Dirx neatly summed up the official story of AB 2453, the bill to establish a Paso Robles Basin Water District:

Local government listened, and we now stand a good chance of forming a district to manage the dwindling Paso Robles groundwater basin. The state Legislature seems ready now to approve a basin management plan.

It's based on a compromise proposed by two organizations, one representing the basin's large landowners and the other the small ones. They originally opposed each other but then found common ground.

They were acknowledged by local government — our county supervisors — who forwarded their proposal to our state assemblyman, Katcho Achadjian. The state Legislature is now reported ready to approve a Paso Robles basin management plan derived from the original compromise.

Five days later, the Senate passed the bill and it went off to the Assembly, which passed it to the Governor for his signature. It's a nice story, due to the omission of details. In truth, Mr. Dirx couldn't have picked a better example of the failure of local government and local control.

Here are the parts of the story that the *Tribune*, our County Supervisors and Assemblyman Achadjian have resolutely ignored:

●**The perils of false compromise.** The Paso Robles Agricultural Alliance for Groundwater Solutions — representing the largest landowners over the basin and insisting on a one-acre, one-vote district — rolled Pro Water Equity, which abandoned its position that district elections should be based on the basis of one-person/one-vote and settled for a permanent three-seat minority for non-landowning voters, with the other six seats elected on the basis of acreage. Multiple PRO Water Equity board and committee members subsequently resigned in protest. The Board of Supervisors and local media

embraced the notion that the cave-in of Pro Water Equity to PRAAGS represented the will of the people.

●**Actual public opinion.** It pleased the Board majority to believe that the overwhelming opposition to the "hybrid" district that they heard at every Board hearing on the subject came from a few obstructionists. Those alleged obstructionists included North County Watch, Sierra Club California, California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation, the Planning and Conservation League, California Teamsters Public Affairs Council, Defenders of Wildlife, Center for Biological Diversity, Clean Water Action, Food and Water Watch, Southern California Watershed Alliance, Community Water Impact Network and California Coastal Protection Network. As we wrote in the June 13 edition of the *Tribune*: "None of these organizations oppose management of the Paso Robles groundwater basin. All have been involved in the problem of how best to manage the rights to safe, clean water sources for humans and wildlife. None of the groups oppose local management of groundwater basins, and all support water management districts based on the election of directors and formation vote based on the principle of one person, one vote."

On its first vote in the Assembly, AB 2453 received 150 letters in opposition and 10 in support. The broad unpopularity of the bill will likely come back to bite when the time comes for residents to vote on whether to form a district.

●**Democracy matters.** The biggest landowners over the basin have made their position clear, in public hearings and in flyers circulated by PRAAGS: They want a district to underwrite the infrastructure to bring in more water to make possible the endless expansion of vineyards, and they are adamantly opposed to any restrictions on their pumping from the basin or any measures that might otherwise tame their water consumption in any way. Their numbers are small but their influence is great, and with the one-person/one-vote model

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

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Can LUCE Change?

The update of San Luis Obispo's Land Use and Circulation Elements needs some vision

For the next twenty years, development and transportation planning in the city of San Luis Obispo will be guided by the policies the City adopts in the update of its Land Use and Circulation Elements (LUCE). Which is to say, the nature and character of the city and the quality of life for its residents is being determined right now by the City Planning Commission and City Council.

To our SLO members: This is going to happen with or without your participation. We strongly suggest you opt for "with."

That's because there is a considerable gap between aspirations and outcomes in both the updated plans and the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) that accompanies them.

We are urging the City to do more in the way of crafting specific measures in all three documents that will serve to provide additional mitigation of currently unmitigatable Class 1 significant impacts identified in the EIR and continue to raise the bar for protection of the environment, public health and the quality of life. SLO is nationally known for its planning legacy. (First city in the world to ban smoking in the workplace and bars, bans on outdoor smoking and drive-thru windows, the decision to create Mission Plaza rather than build a parking garage, the creation of a Natural Resources Manager position and programs to acquire open space and create a green belt.) Twenty years ago, SLO was at the leading edge of the American planning renaissance and created the quality of life that made SLO "one of the happiest cities in the United States." It did not get there by adopting a policy of adherence to the status quo.

The focus of the LUCE update in planning for the next twenty years should be to match or exceed the legacy of the last twenty years, laying out a future for San Luis Obispo commensurate with the accomplishments of the past.

Whose Values?

San Luis Obispo prides itself on city planning based on community values and goals.

The beginning of the Land Use Element, the core of the City's General Plan, lists the following Community Goal:

Protect and enhance the natural environment...protect, sustain, and where it has been degraded, enhance wildlife habitat...protect and restore natural land forms and features in and near the city, such as the volcanic morros, hillsides, marshes, and creeks.

City residents have made it very clear, in extensive 1994 and 2012 surveys conducted in the course of preparing the Land Use Element and its current update, that they value this goal above all others.

Unfortunately, the highest priority of city residents has not been reflected in the budget process, the City Council's goal-setting (open space preservation disappeared as a Major City Goal in 2009 and has been downgraded to the "other goals" category ever since), or the expenditure of some three percent of collected Measure Y funds on open space acquisition and maintenance over the eight years since the sales tax measure was adopted. The Council failed to compensate for this departure from the values of its citizens when it designed the oversight committee that's supposed to assure voters their values will be reflected if the sales tax measure is renewed. In 2005-06, city staff made a concerted effort to undo the 1994 Open Space Element, unilaterally dumping major environmental and open space protections in their staff-written draft.

The Sierra Club is urging the City to get back on track and recommit to reflecting the values of its residents by adding several policies to the draft LUCE Update and amending or deleting proposed policies that are at odds with residents' values.

- In conformance with the City's Open

The EIR, in its consideration of measures to mitigate the impacts of future development, offers sad evidence that the few attempts by the LUCE Task Force to do so have been struck out of the public review draft and replaced by generic directives to comply with existing ordinances, specific plans and design standards.

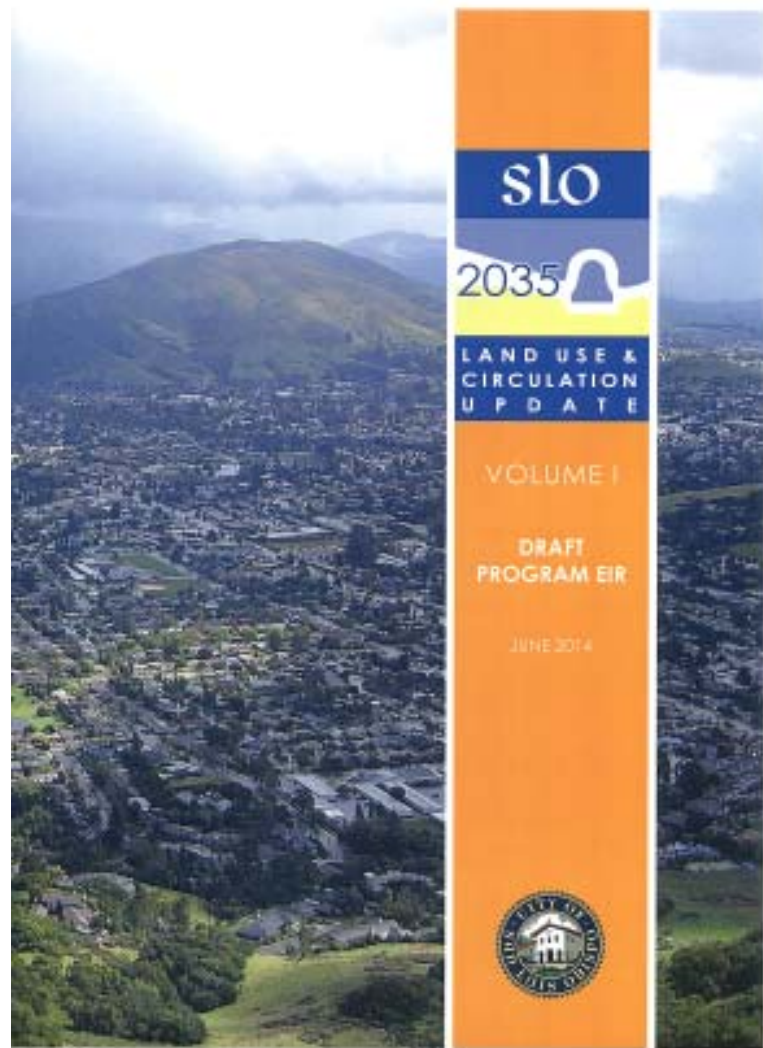
The requirement of providing mitigation for potential impacts provides the City with an opportunity to innovate. This update will serve as the planning bible for the next twenty years, but in analyzing mitigation measures the EIR offers more of those generic directives, hewing to the standard practice of simply citing compliance with the Building Code,

Space ordinance, which mandates that the City's open space areas shall be acquired and maintained for the use of residents, tourism programs should not include the state or national-level marketing of the City's designated Open Space areas, thereby sparing overburdened neighborhoods and an equally overburdened resource that was intended to serve the open space needs of residents.

- Delete language implementing the Economic Development Strategic Plan

The LUCE Update Plans to Make Climate Change Worse

SLO's current greenhouse gas emission reduction strategies should result in reduced GHG emissions by 2020. But the LUCE Update projects that its proposed land use and transportation policies will result in the City exceeding its Target Emissions Limit by 86,200 metric tons by 2035. The City will need to adopt additional GHG reduction measures if it is to stay on track to meet the state's long-term emission greenhouse gas reduction goals, which call for emission cuts 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.



policies in existing elements and "reliance on establishment of project-specific mitigation measures" and calling it done.

Rather than reaffirming the status quo, the City can and should go beyond these minimum requirements. The LUCE update should be setting the bar and establishing a planning vision for the next twenty years.

We suggest that specific mitigations which go above and beyond the requirements of the City's current management plans be made a prominent feature of the EIR. Those that have been suggested and deleted in the Task Force process should be restored, and more should be added. These should augment the standard directive of adhering to the policies found in other planning documents to achieve minimum required levels of

and all references to its concept that new development should pay a subjective "fair share" in impact fees, a developer subsidy that represents a significant departure from the long-standing policy that development pay its own way. "Fair share" potentially shifts much of the cost of new development — new streets and maintenance, sewerage, police and fire protection, bike lanes, sidewalks, pedestrian paths, bus turn-outs, reconstructing existing facilities, etc. — from private developers onto the public. This is just one of multiple sweeping changes to City policy that would be triggered by the casual incorporation by reference of the Economic Development Strategic Plan in one sentence in the Land Use Element. The LUCE Update does not propose to implement any comparable documents from organizations advocating for the preservation of the City's established neighborhoods or natural resources, and there has been no comparable opportunity for those stakeholders to produce a "strategic plan" and have their goals implemented by fiat in the Land Use Element.

- The City should require, not "encourage," the use of methods to facilitate rainwater percolation for roof areas and outdoor hardscaped areas.

mitigation that will reduce the environmental impacts of future development.

We expect City to argue that specific mitigation measures are best left to the specific plans because they will themselves be updated over the next twenty years, presumably with revised measures that will require the implementation of new techniques based on improved knowledge that will strengthen environmental protections, therefore the Draft EIR's regimen of citing these plans as mitigation will produce the desired result. We submit that this amounts to the tail wagging the dog. Future updates of the City policies should be guided by the vision the City provides in the LUCE Update. This guidance is all the more necessary because those future plan updates will be conducted on a much smaller scale than the LUCE Update, with nothing like the public outreach component that has been part of the LUCE Update process. For that reason, mitigations that exceed current minimums should be central to this update, rather than settling for status quo citation of existing plans in the EIR. If the City is to build on its public planning achievements of the last five decades, this document is the place where that must happen.

Vision is the critical element the LUCE update must have if it is to succeed. We remind the planning commission and city council of the legacy that is in their charge, and we urge them to bring the vision and values to the LUCE update necessary to preserve that legacy.

Our full comments are posted at santalucia.sierraclub.org/news/news.html.

TAKE ACTION

Read the LUCE Update at slo2035.com. Tell the Planning Commission and the City Council that **Significant Class 1 Traffic and Air Quality impacts and a projected spike in greenhouse gas emissions support adoption of the Reduced Development Alternative.**

Planning Commission meeting Wed., **Sept. 10**. City Council meetings: Tues., **Sept. 16**, and Tues., **Oct. 7**. Go to slocity.org/citycouncilmeetings.asp or slocity.org/communitydevelopment/plancom/agenda.asp a week prior to the meeting to check the agenda.

Dear County Health Commission...

On May 20, SLO Clean Water Action delivered 4,000 signatures to the Board of Supervisors asking them to ban fracking in SLO County.

At their August 11 meeting, the SLO County Health Commission got an earful on the potential impacts of fracking on human health. About twenty people showed up to voice their concerns and ask the Commission to contact the Board of Supervisors with a recommendation to ban fracking.

The Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club submitted the document at right as our comments.

The Board has directed Assistant County Administrative Officer Guy Savage to prepare a report on the impacts of unconventional oil and gas well stimulation — including hydraulic fracturing and acidization — and the response of local governments to the spread of this practice in California.

As we go to press, the staff report is expected to be heard at the Board of Supervisors in late summer or early fall, at which time staff will seek guidance from the Board — i.e. whether to move forward with a ban, moratorium or other action.

Community + Choice = Clean Energy + Local Control

On July 24, with an assist from the Santa Lucia Chapter, SLO Clean Energy held a key forum in the long-term effort to bring Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) to the Central Coast.

Cordell Stillman, chief engineer for the Sonoma Water Agency, came to the SLO City Library to tell attendees about the benefits of CCA.

Sonoma County is the second jurisdiction in California to get a CCA program up and running, and Stillman quickly laid out the case: Having a CCA means you can determine the source and content of the energy a community consumes, providing rate stabilization and local control of energy programs, competition for the big utilities and choice for the customers, encouraging innovation. Net revenues go back into the community, stimulating the local economy with job creation and energy efficiency programs.

Sonoma Clean Power has already cut the county's greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent, delivering 33 percent renewable energy, 1.5 times more clean power than PG&E, at 5 percent lower rates (a percentage that's bound to grow as PG&E's rates are set to head skyward over the next three years).

The state's first CCA program, Marin Clean Energy, encountered "vicious" resistance from PG&E, said Stillman, showering their prospective customers with trumped-up CCA horror stories, but a law was subsequently passed "saying you can't do that anymore." With the success of the Marin and Sonoma programs, getting a CCA up and running has become easier, faster and cheaper.

His talk was very well received by the room. The day after Stillman spoke, SLO Clean Energy arranged a luncheon with local elected officials and representatives of local business community, where Stillman received an even warmer reception.



Fracking's Human Health Impacts

Fracking for oil and gas is pumping and dumping contaminated water, mud, toxic chemicals and air pollution into our communities and environment. While human health impacts have gone largely unmeasured in California, active fracking in other states shows that fracking is a human health hazard for both oil and gas field workers and people living near oil and gas fields.

Overview

Hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, is the process of injecting large quantities of water, toxic chemicals, sand and other materials ("proppant") under high pressure into the ground to break up and dissolve rock and soil to extract oil and gas. Increasingly, dangerous concentrations of acids, including hydrofluoric acid, are used in a process called "acid well stimulation" that is essentially a variation on fracking.

Both processes—fracking and well stimulation—have been largely unregulated in California until very recently. Moreover, the health and environmental impacts here have not been routinely catalogued and reported. However, enough reporting exists from California and other states where fracking is also occurring to indicate that fracking's health impacts can be and have been disturbing and profound.

Water and Fracking Fluids

Oil companies in North Dakota reported more than 1,000 accidental releases of oil, drilling wastewater or other fluids in 2011, according to data obtained by ProPublica. Many more illicit releases went unreported, state regulators acknowledge. In several cases, spills turned out to be far larger than initially thought, totaling millions of gallons. Releases of brine, which is often laced with carcinogenic chemicals and heavy metals, have wiped out aquatic life in streams and wetlands and sterilized farmland. The effects on land can last for years, or even decadesⁱ

Fracking routinely employs numerous toxic chemicals, including methanol, benzene, naphthalene and trimethylbenzene. It can also expose people to harm from lead, arsenic and radioactivity that are brought back to the surface with fracking flowback fluid.ⁱⁱ

Cathy Behr, an emergency room nurse at a Colorado medical center spent ten minutes with gas field worker Clinton Marshall, who arrived complaining of nausea and headaches after a "fracturing fluid" spill. The fumes were so overpowering the emergency room was evacuated. A few days later Behr was diagnosed with multiple organ failure, including liver failure, respiratory distress and erratic blood counts. She was admitted to the ICU with the presumptive diagnosis of poisoning from an unknown chemical. The chemical was and is still considered to be a proprietary formula by the producer, Halliburton, a gas industry leader. It was later revealed to be a product with the trade name, Zetaflow.ⁱⁱⁱ

Over five decades of oil drilling in Poplar Montana have contaminated Poplar's drinking water to the point that, "Between 1999 and 2010, the Environmental Protection Agency issued five emergency orders to three oil companies, forcing them to, among other things, build a drinking

HEALTH COMMISSION continued on next page



Here's how it works Cordell Stillman told the crowd at the SLO Library what a CCA program is doing for Sonoma and can do for us.



Health Commission

continued from page 4

water pipeline to certain residences and deliver bottled water to others.”^{iv}

In California, wastewater from oil and gas development has already resulted in contaminated groundwater through surface storage leakage. In 2008, a Kern County farmer was awarded \$8.5 million in compensatory damages for groundwater contamination from oil industry wastewater stored in open pits.^v

Toxics and Air Quality

Air sampling near fracking sites in Texas and California has detected concentrations of hazardous air pollutants high enough to make people sick. Smog and soot pollution from heavy-duty trucks and other equipment also contribute to local and regional air pollution problems.^{vi}

Vintage Production, a subsidiary of oil giant Occidental, revealed that the company fracked 36 wells around Shafter, CA, from the beginning of 2011 to April of 2013, and a total of 85 wells in Kern County. The company’s arrays of pipes and tanks and trucks are punctuated with a tower that has been flaring gas since 2011, sometimes 24 hours a day. A study of gas flaring by the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District shows that gas flaring can emit numerous pollutants such as benzene, formaldehyde, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs, including naphthalene), acetaldehyde, acrolein, propylene, toluene, xylenes, ethyl benzene and hexane.

“Gas field ozone has created a previously unrecognized air pollution problem in rural areas, similar to that found in large urban areas,” according to a 2011 study published in the journal *Human and Ecological Risk Assessment*^{vii}. In 2012, documents submitted to the San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District show that Vintage’s gas flare in 2012 emitted 68 pounds of nitrogen oxides and 88 pounds of volatile organic compounds.^{viii}

The 12 most commonly used air toxics in unconventional oil development in the Los Angeles basin are (1) Crystalline Silica, (2) Methanol, (3) Hydrochloric Acid, (4) Hydrofluoric Acid, (5) 2-Butoxy Ethanol (6) Ethyl Glycol (Monobutyl Ether) (7) Xylene (8) Amorphous Silica Fume (9) Aluminum Oxide (10) Acrylic Polymer(Acid) (11) Acetophenone (12) Ethylbenzene These disclosures demonstrate that air toxics — chemicals considered among the most dangerous air pollutants because they can cause illness and death — are being used routinely in extreme energy-recovery techniques in Southern California.^{ix}

ⁱ <http://www.propublica.org/article/the-other-fracking-north-dakotas-oil-boom-brings-damage-along-with-prosperity>
ⁱⁱ http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/campaigns/california_fracking/faq.html
ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.psr.org/environment-and-health/environmental-health-policy-institute/responses/the-big-secret-fracking-fluids.html>
^{iv} <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2013/05/26/beckoning-bakken-will-oil-boom-reach-montanas-impoverished-fort-peck-tribes-149535>
^v Wheeler Institute for Water Law & Policy Center for Law, Energy and the Environment
^{vi} <http://www.environmentcalifornia.org/programs/cae/no-fracking-california>
^{vii} Theo Colburn, Carol Kwiatkowski, Kim Schultz & Mary Bachran (2011) natural gas operations from public health perspective, *Human and Ecological Risk Assessment: An International Journal*, 17:5, 1039-1056
^{viii} <http://www.alternet.org/fracking/are-we-trading-our-health-oil-new-fracking-induced-california-gold-rush-slideshow?paging=off>
^{ix} http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/campaigns/california_fracking/pdfs/LA_Air_Toxics_Report.pdf

Cambria CSD Still Crazy After All These Years

It’s a shame no one’s giving out medals for environmental insanity, because the Cambria Community Services District has been competing so hard for so long they deserve to take home the gold, silver and bronze. While the entire county has earned a special statewide reputation for intransigence and incomprehension when it comes to compliance with the California Coastal Act (see: attempts to turn Hearst Ranch into a golf resort, build Morro Bay’s new sewer plant in a flood plain, build sea walls and restrict coastal access in Pismo Beach on a shoot-first-ask-questions-later basis, the fencing of Ontario Ridge, etc.), of all the coastal jurisdictions notorious for trying end-runs around the coastal protections voted into law by the citizens of California, nobody can match the Cambria CSD. Their latest effort just might be a personal worst. But before we get to that, some historical context is required. Let’s review the CCSD record of epic environmental fails:

The law is a ass!
 In 2004, the CCSD sued the Coastal Commission over its denial of a water storage tank expansion plan that would have decimated a rare Monterey pine forest and violated the Coastal Act’s protections for Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHA). The Coastal Commission issued a cease and desist order and told the CCSD to scale back their plan for giant water tanks and get them out of the ESHA. (The tanks had to be huge to accommodate “quality of life bonus” water, an undefined but fairly transparent scheme to bust the moratorium on new development.)
 The CCSD board spent hundreds of

CRAZY continued on page 8

Los Osos: Last Chance

Can this basin be saved?

Twin landmarks in the long struggle to save the Los Osos groundwater Basin – the adjudication of the basin and the approval of a sewer project – are about to be joined by two more: a basin plan prepared for the Superior Court by Los Osos water purveyors and the County as parties to the adjudication, and a Resource Water Management Plan to be presented to the California Coastal Commission as a condition of the County’s permit to build the Los Osos Wastewater Project.

The Sierra Club and the Los Osos Sustainability Group were on the front lines of the fight to make the County do the sewer right, circa 2005-2010, forcing the County to scrap its plan to dump treated wastewater outside the aquifer, inevitably depleting the basin, and instead recycle and reuse the water. The LOSG reevaluated the official calculations of the rate at which seawater intrusion is contaminating the aquifer, persuading the County Planning Commission to discard the outdated, overly conservative figures

it was relying on and put the urgent need to halt seawater intrusion front and center in a drastically revised sewer project.

On August 11, the Sierra Club, following up on a detailed technical submission the LOSG sent to the Coastal Commission last May, sent the County a letter — cc’ing the Coastal Commission, the Regional Water Board, Golden State Water Company, S & T Mutual Water Company and the Los Osos Community Services District — urging them to take specific actions to improve the Los Osos Wastewater Project’s Recycled Water Management Plan (RWMP) and adjudicated Basin Plan.

The sewer project’s Coastal Development Permit requires that the recycled water plan “maximize the health and sustainability of the ground and surface waters.” We pointed out that the RWMP programs the County has been proposing to implement, by themselves or in

LOS OSOS continued on page 10

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Executive Director Greenspace – The Cambria Land Trust
 Greenspace seeks a candidate who understands the ecological attributes and challenges to the environment on the Central Coast. Its mission is to protect the area’s ecological systems, cultural resources and marine habitats through land acquisition and management, public education and advocacy.

Full time with an initial one-year contract. The current executive director will remain on staff part time to support the transition. Pursuing funding for conservation and related projects will be a job priority. Energy and commitment are a must. Salary will be negotiated.

For a full job description contact Wayne Attoe, President, Greenspace – The Cambria Land Trust, PO Box 1505, Cambria CA 93428, or wayneattoe@gmail.com. For more background, go to www.greenspacecambria.org. Application deadline is Nov. 1, 2014.



The Bioneers are Coming

by Stacey Hunt, Ecologistics Inc.

It's back!

Bioneers, the environmental and social justice idea celebration, returns to the Central Coast on Friday and Saturday, October 24-25 at a new venue, the SLO Grange Hall.

With something for everyone, CCBioneers will feature speakers, workshops and field trips on eleven different topics over the two days, including ecosystem restoration, youth activism, food and farming, indigenous knowledge, economics and biomimicry.

New this year will be a World Café, led by David Shaw, a permaculture and whole systems designers, facilitator, educator and co-founder of the Common Ground Center at U.C. Santa Cruz. He will be assisted by local graphic recorder Ruth Rominger in helping conference participants synthesize what they are seeing at the conference to actively shape the future of our community.

Featured Bioneers keynotes recorded at the National Conference in Marin the weekend before will include Naomi Klein on capitalism vs. climate, Paul Stamets on how mushrooms can help us survive Extinction 6x and Eve Ensler on One Billion Rising for Justice. Local workshops will feature Dreaming a Sustainable SLO County, a panel headed up by local visionary architect Ken Haggard, will show us what it would take to make San Luis Obispo a prototype sustainable county. Check out his amazing conceptual drawing of giant wind machines on the Duke Energy Plant smokestacks at the Central Coast Bioneers web site www.centralcoastbioneers.org.

On the youth activism scene, three Brower Award winners from the National Bioneers stage will leave no doubt there are capable hands prepared to take on the fight from some of us who are ready for a little rest. 14-year-old Xiuhtezcatl Martinez, youth director of Earth Guardians will explain why Our Generation Was Born to Change the World. Arielle Klagsbrun's talk will be on Why People Need to Get Arrested: the Climate Crisis Requires Bold Action. And Chloe Maxmin, the force behind Divest Harvard, will give us Lessons from the Grassroots Climate Movement. Individuals and businesses are stepping up to provide scholarships so that local high school

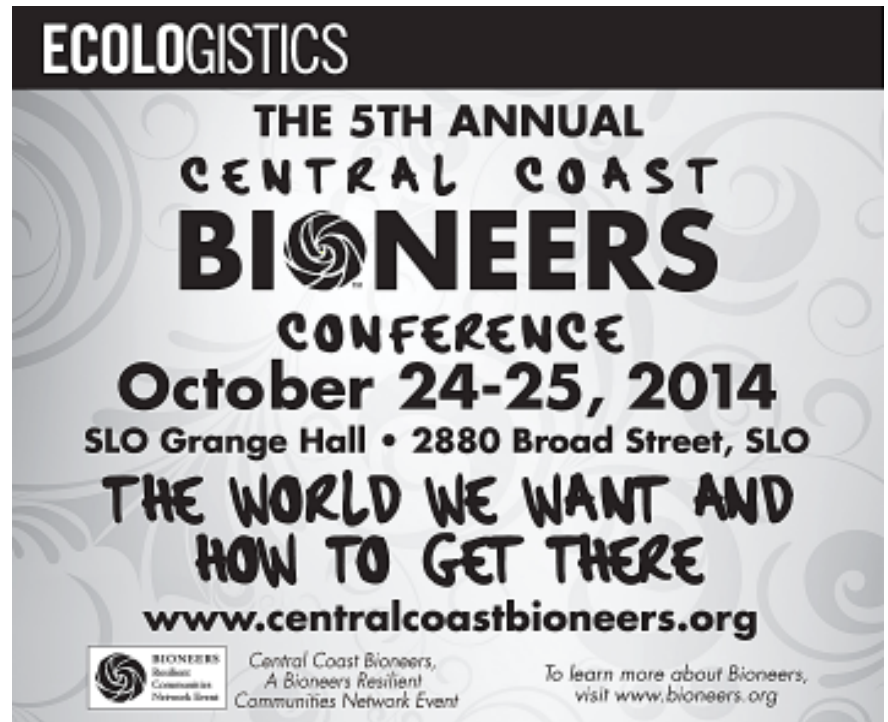
and college students can attend the conference.

Speaking of the climate movement, this year's local keynote address on Friday, October 24, on The Climate Justice Project, will feature UCSB Professor of Sociology John Foran and UCSB doctoral candidates, Corrie Ellis and Summer Gray. They will talk about their trip to the Warsaw COP 19 and the Global Youth Climate Justice Movement. Summer will premiere her new film *Not Yet the End of the World*.

Field trips this year will feature an all-day pre-conference trip on October 23 to see the Hi Mountain Condor Lookout above Pozo. Your reward for the rugged ride up will be a spectacular 360° view that stretches from the Carrizo to Point Sal to Pismo Beach. Docents will talk about the condor recovery program, show you how to use the telemetry equipment to track tagged condors, and talk about the millions of years of geology you are viewing. Cal Poly students will discuss the work they do at the lookout while school is out, trapping and counting wildlife.

On Friday morning we will see the future of farming in drought-stricken Paso Robles when we visit Kukkula Winery, where the vines and walnut trees are completely dry-farmed. Kevin Jussila will explain how he manages on 85,000 gallons of water per year while the neighboring vineyards use over 200,000 per week. You will have the opportunity to taste the difference in the wine. On Saturday you will have a chance to see how cohousing works during a tour of Tierra Nueva Cohousing.

The program rounds out with a conference bookstore hosted by Volumes of Pleasure, the Green Marketplace on Saturday, featuring eco-friendly businesses, products and nonprofits, and local organic food provided by the Centrally Grown food truck. Afia Walking Tree, a world class percussionist who appears on the National Bioneers stage, will be on hand to perform on our stage and give a drumming workshop during lunch on Saturday. Tickets for the Friday afternoon National Bioneers keynotes are only \$30. For more information go to www.centralcoastbioneers.org or call (805) 548-0597.



About those Big Dumb Concrete Pipes...

Central Coast Bioneers will feature a workshop presentation by the Sierra Club on alternatives to the risky and expensive Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP), aka the Twin Tunnels, proposed by the Brown administration as a solution to the ongoing drought.

Charming Evelyn, Water Committee Chair of the Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter, will discuss better ways to address California's water challenges.

"Alternatives to the Giant Bay Delta Tunnels" will be held Saturday, October 25, at 1:30 p.m., at the SLO Grange Hall.



Pulling for the Pismo Preserve



On July 30, SLO Land Conservancy biologist Brooke Langle came to our general meeting at the Steynberg Gallery in SLO to talk about the Conservancy's campaign to acquire the Pismo Preserve.

In addition to the benefits that the purchase of the 900-acre ranch would confer by preserving water quality, chaparral, coast woodlands and habitat for the steelhead and red-legged frog, the acquisition would open up ten miles of new public trails and provide "views you don't get anywhere else – all of Edna Valley, Bishop Peak, Sierra Romauldo, the Irish Hills and down to Point Sal."

The Sierra Club has sent letters of support to decision makers and testified before the County Parks Commission to urge the donation of funds toward the purchase.

As we go to press, the Land Conservancy is hoping to receive a \$4 million award from the Wildlife Conservation Board at an August 28 board meeting in Sacramento, and is working to locally raise the remaining \$1.1 million toward the \$12 million purchase price.



Bioneers keynote Hear about the Warsaw COP 19 and the Global Youth Climate Justice Movement on October 24, and preview *Not Yet the End of the World*.

A Wild Time Was Had by All

Sierra Club supporters converged on the Tolosa Winery south of San Luis Obispo on the night of August 3 for the Santa Lucia Chapter's annual fundraiser.

The theme of the event was "The Face of the Wild," with live and silent auctions of nature art and masks by local artists, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Wilderness Act, which has resulted in the preservation of 110 million acres of public land as unspoiled wilderness since 1964.

Guests were serenaded by the music of Moonpie while indulging in grilled market vegetable skewers, Peacock Farms tomato mezzo sauce, bacon-wrapped dates, mini smoked fish tacos, rosemary chicken skewers and more, catered by Two Cooks Catering, and, of course, Tolosa Wines. Members of the Cal French Donors Circle enjoyed a VIP tour of the winery with winemaker Larry Brooks and a barrel tasting.

Volunteer event coordinators Sandy Simon and Victoria Carranza oversaw the logistics of the event, including live and silent auctions. Under the organizing hand of former Chapter Chair Karen Merriam, community members young and old expressed their "faces of the wild" by creating hand-held masks that were displayed, worn and sold. Three masks judged the most creative by the jury panel were auctioned off in the live



mask and photo: Mary Fullwood



Voice of the wild Matt Sayles of the California Wilderness Alliance told our guests assembled at the Tolosa Winery about the Central Coast Heritage Protection Act.



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and the Carrizo Plain National Monument, and establish the 400-mile Condor Trail from Los Angeles to Monterey. Representatives Julia Brownley and Sam Farr are co-sponsoring the legislation.

Congresswoman Lois Capps, a long-time environmental advocate and chair of the National Marine Sanctuaries Caucus was the keynote speaker.

"We have some of the most diverse habitats and ecosystems, right on the Central Coast, of any place in North America," she said. "We have a responsibility to protect these places for future generations."

Matt Sayles of the California Wilderness Coalition spoke on the Central Coast Heritage Protection Act, a bill that Capps introduced in May to protect 245,500 acres of wilderness, safeguard 159 miles of wild and scenic rivers in the Los Padres National Forest

and the Carrizo Plain National Monument, and establish the 400-mile Condor Trail from Los Angeles to Monterey. Representatives Julia Brownley and Sam Farr are co-sponsoring the legislation. Santa Lucia Chapter Executive Committee member Greg McMillan said, "My family has lived in this area for six generations and it is my heart. I own and operate a small scale grass-fed beef operation on family land and have planted an olive orchard. We are blessed to live in an area that contains some of the most rural and wild lands in the West, but the pressures on this land are great. The Central Coast Heritage Protection Act will ensure that our wildest lands and rivers remain intact."

Denny Mynatt Wins Chapter Founder's Award and Congressional Recognition

Denny Mynatt has been serving as Print Media Coordinator for the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club for over ten years. As such, he's the reason why the *Santa Lucian* gets into the mail and correctly delivered every month.

At the Face of the Wild event, the Chapter honored Denny with our Founder's Award, the Kathleen Goddard Jones Award.

"Ninety percent of everything in life is about showing up," said Executive Committee member Victoria Carranza, who elaborated on Denny's tasks: "He puts all 2,200 printed copies into his car, hauls them to the Senior Center, unloads those 2,200 copies for the volunteer labeling group, tags the bags, matches the mail bags and the labeled copies in zip code order, checks to see that all those copies get into the right bags, puts those 2,200 copies back in his car, hauls them to the post office, hauls those 2,200 copies back out of his car and onto a loading dock, and hands over the bulk mail forms — which make an IRS Form 1040 look like a child's poem — perfectly filled out. He shows up at the office every single day, and every month he oversees a complex, physically demanding process, with no supervision, no complaints, no mistakes, and not much in the way of reward — until now. It's my great personal pleasure, on behalf of the executive committee, to bestow the Santa Lucia Chapter's highest honor, the Kathleen Goddard Jones Award, on Denny Mynatt."

Congresswoman Lois Capps then presented Denny with a Certificate of Congressional Recognition.

Saying "There are unsung heroes in every organization," she recalled that in all her Congressional campaigns, "the people that you know you're going to remember forever are the people like Denny, who show up and will do anything to get the job done. The Sierra Club couldn't be more privileged, more honored, than to have a person like Denny available to help."

What she said.



Congratulations! Congresswoman Lois Capps presented Denny Mynatt with a Certificate of Congressional Recognition, saying "Denny represents the best of our nation's principles and values."

Crazy

continued from page 5

thousands of ratepayers' dollars on a legal crusade against the Commission and the County based on the absurd claim that the Coastal Commission had no jurisdiction over water projects in the Coastal Zone. The CCSD lost every legal motion, lost the case, and ended up building the tanks to the design specs worked out by the Commission. Had they prevailed, the CCSD would have set a statewide precedent opening up environmentally sensitive habitat for development and destruction throughout the coastal zone. And there can be little doubt that this was the ultimate goal of the district's legal adventure. Then CCSD president and real estate lawyer Greg Sanders was a partner in the law firm Nossaman Guthner Knox & Elliott, whose website boasts of its ability to "overcome the raft of legal, environmental and political obstacles that stand in the way of development" and successfully defend "development projects against environmental challenges."

Sanders said that the Coastal Commission "cost us \$400,000" in the fight over the water tanks (much of it, he did not add, due to the legal maneuvers needed to bust a conservation easement), perpetuating the myth that the Coastal Commission was to blame for the CCSD's steep expenses. But it was the CCSD that sued the Commission over the tanks, not the other way around.

The CCSD lavished further funds on lobbyists and the services of two outside legal firms in the quest to somehow make the California Coastal Act not apply to them. The District could have saved all that money if it had submitted a project designed to comply with the County's Local Coastal Plan in the first place instead of being forced to do so at the end of an extended legal process of their own making.

Terrorists, schmucks, and do-overs

Then the district board contemplated serving subpoenas on citizens who had dared to criticize the project in public hearings. A board member defended the subpoena threat as similar to "investigating a terrorist."



Not a good sign Dead fish were turning up in large algae blooms in San Simeon Creek in August. Highly toxic methylmercury thrives in these conditions, where the Cambria CSD proposes to put its emergency desal facility and then make it permanent, no matter what future environmental review may find.

Then the board denied they had made any such threat.

Future SLO Mayor Jan Marx pointed out to the board that their legal counsel had in fact informed the state Attorney General of the CSD's intent to issue those subpoenas. Marx informed the CSD that "the Anti-SLAPP statute protects any written or oral statement or writing made in a place open to the public or public forum in connection with an issue of public interest or any other conduct in furtherance of the exercise of the constitutional right of free speech," and that "no other governmental entity in this County has ever abused the subpoena power the way the CCSD is doing right now. The

community will not tolerate this kind of governmental intimidation against citizens who are exercising their freedom of speech."

In 2006, the CCSD proposed conducting geophysical surveys at San Simeon State Beach for desalination test wells. The Coastal Commission noted that the District's plan violated Coastal Act provisions for public access, environmentally sensitive habitat areas, marine biological resources, visual resources, etc. The CCSD coyly withheld information about plans to build a desal facility in the immediate vicinity if the test wells produced the desired results. The Commission looked past the test wells and deemed the location unacceptable for a desal plant, the siting and construction of which was the obvious goal of the survey project. ("We've made it very clear, time and again," said Executive Director Peter Douglas, "that we do not believe this is an appropriate site for a permanent facility.") Permit denied.

With Cambria's desal project dead, the *Tribune* published an op ed by Santa Lucia Chapter Director Andrew Christie urging the CCSD to break off from its single-minded pursuit of desalination and start considering other water conservation and reclamation options, pointing out that no desalination plant in the United States has ever been brought to scale and been able to produce potable water at the volume promised, or otherwise function as advertised. CCSD engineer Bob Gresens retorted that many desal facilities have been functioning just fine...in Singapore, Australia and Saudi Arabia.

At a September 2007 meeting, CSD Director Ilan Funke-Bilu, still smarting over the water tanks, called the Coastal Commission "a bunch of schmucks" and complained that "we spent \$400,000 of our money to placate these schmucks who felt that we were somehow violating some sort of natural habitat, and therefore you've got delay, delay, delay."

Funke-Bilu made these remarks as the district was in the midst of requesting the favor of reconsideration of the Coastal Commission's denial of their

permit, frantically offering to provide information they had previously withheld about the plans for the desal facility. As reconsideration of a Coastal Commission permit only occurs when new information has come to light that could not have been known to the applicant at the time of the original hearing — not when the applicant realizes

that its prior strategy of piece-mealing and concealment was a bad idea — their request was denied.

Let's try it on another State Beach!

In 2008, the District conducted ground penetrating radar studies for desalination test wells at Santa Rosa State Beach — "without necessary Coastal Development Permits or landowner approvals," as Coastal Commission staff noted. The district tried (and failed) to declare that its plan to drill desal test wells at the mouth of Santa Rosa Creek should be exempt from environmental review. Citizen

Now's the Time: Help Heidi Run!

By Joe Morris, Outings Chair

By now, most chapter members probably know that Heidi Harmon, endorsed by the Sierra Club, has taken on the challenge of running for State Assembly District 35, representing SLO County, Santa Maria and Lompoc.

She faces a comfortable incumbent, Katcho Achadjian, who "has both private and political ties to the oil industry and thousands of dollars in contributions from the fossil fuel industries" (*Santa Maria Sun*). His Assembly votes have reflected that allegiance in their consistent opposition to legislation for clean energy. Katcho voted against Assembly Bill 650, which would have improved access to public transportation, and voted for AB 2145, which would prevent local communities from making their own decisions about energy rather than continue at the mercy of the big utilities.

And if you hate any move toward gun control, you will love Katcho's 100% rating by the NRA.

As Heidi has pointed out, Katcho is an affable man, who may show up for your son's birthday party, but not for his future. People (including myself) who talk with her are enthused about her articulate grasp of today's social problems and her commitment to solve them. Her passion is the environment and doing something about climate change, which is fast becoming the defining issue of our time.

Katcho has never had to really fight for his seat before. But things are different this time around. With great energy and an ability to connect to people, Heidi is crisscrossing the District and speaking at house parties, fundraisers, fairs, and other events. Her articles about climate change and clean energy, drought solutions, a living wage and education have appeared repeatedly in local papers like the *Tribune* and *New Times*. She's been interviewed several times on local radio. Katcho has been noticeably absent.

As you read this, we are in the crucial post Labor-Day months of September and October — the final campaign stretch before the November 4 election. We have a unique chance now, probably our only one for years, to elect someone who has the potential of becoming the environmental conscience in Sacramento.

If people like you and me don't support her, who will? If we don't do it now, when? Here are some ways you can help:

1. Go to her website, www.heidiharmon.org and learn more about her: the issues, the people who endorse her, her platform, and her next appearances.
2. Donate, and please be generous. You can do it online with a credit card. Running for office is expensive these days.
3. Contact Heidi and put in some hours volunteering — two, twenty, or whatever. There are a bunch of things to do right now, like sending out letters, helping out at a house party, putting up signs, etc.

I'm having fun working on a grassroots campaign with people who really care about the things I do. I bet you will, too.

Call for Candidates**2015 Executive Committee nominations open**

The world's most democratic environmental organization needs you! Yes, Santa Lucia Chapter member, you can run for Executive Committee and have a say in decision-making in the Sierra Club as an elected Club leader. The ExCom is an administrative body; we need people who can take minutes, organize committees, inspire participation and/or organize members. Conservationists are welcome, but the Chapter also needs volunteers who like to handle the needs common to all organizations. If you have some time and would like to help this great organization, please volunteer to run for a seat on the ExCom. Each winning candidate will be elected to a three-year term. The Executive Committee meets monthly at the Chapter office in SLO.

You may nominate yourself or

suggest anyone else to any member of the committee. Members may also run by petition, signed by 25 members of the Chapter in good standing. Nominations will be accepted until 5 p.m. Monday, September 22.

You may submit nominations to sierraclub8@gmail.com or Sierra Club, P.O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo, CA 934304.

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continued from page 3

●The City should require, not “encourage,” project designs that minimize drainage concentrations and impervious coverage.

●Drop the biologically dubious concept of “offsite mitigation.” The idea that protecting land elsewhere will make up for habitat reduced or destroyed by development is a recipe for habitat fragmentation, violating the fundamental principle of wildlife biology: the value of open space as an ecosystem and habitat increases when the size of the contiguous area increases, and declines as size is reduced. Unless the City is prepared to show that off-site lands always provide not only equivalent acreage but equivalent environmental values and identical biota, and the research and confirmation of such values can be shown to be a regular staff function when determining mitigation, performed by credentialed personnel with the ability to carry out such an evaluation -- including monitoring and follow-up to ensure those values continue in perpetuity -- the concept of

off-site mitigation should be removed from City policy.

●Implement a builder incentive program that will encourage new homes to be built with onsite water recycling system included. Earlier this year, the City of Lancaster and KB Homes created the “Double ZeroHouse,” which achieves net-zero energy and uses zero fresh water for irrigation, recycling 95% of drain water via a gray water system, and 80% of the energy via a gray water heat recovery system that extracts energy from drainwater and uses it to preheat water in the home’s water heater. Lancaster is pursuing the goal of become America’s first net-zero city. San Luis Obispo should join it.

●Support the use and development of biodiesel fueling stations, EV recharging stations, and other alternative fuel stations in the San Luis Obispo area, not just compressed natural gas fueling stations. A policy favoring a single type of alternative fuel is clearly inappropriate as policy and inadequate to meet the City’s overall planning goals for energy

use and pollution reduction.

●Introduce unbundled parking, congestion pricing, shared parking, fair price policies, positive transportation demand management (TDM) and the other components of an Intelligent Parking program for schools and government buildings, with the goal of creating a Request for Proposal process for full implementation. There is no such thing as “free parking,” which always increases the cost of housing and reduces wages due to higher employer costs of providing parking. Unpriced parking is often “bundled” with building costs, which means that a certain number of spaces are automatically included with building purchases or leases. Unbundling parking means that parking is sold or rented separately. Parking policies that eliminate or reduce minimum parking requirements have been shown to be one of the least costly tools to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). Per the Victoria Transport Policy Institute, unbundling car parking costs has

reduced parking requirements up to 30% in cities where this has been implemented, reducing vehicle traffic, congestion, accidents, energy consumption, pollution emissions and consumer costs. Reducing parking subsidies promotes equity, so transit users and other non-drivers are not subsidizing drivers. People who take public transit or walk do not have to pay higher prices at stores to pay for parking or receive reduced wages because their employers spend money to provide parking to employees.



30th Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day

The California Coastal Commission has announced the 30th annual California Coastal Cleanup Day, the state’s largest volunteer event.

The event will take place at more than 800 locations around the state on Saturday, September 20, from 9 a.m. to noon. The Cleanup is the State’s largest effort to remove the debris that has accumulated on our beaches and inland shorelines over the past year, bringing tens of thousands of volunteers out annually to protect the marine wildlife and habitat that can be badly damaged by marine debris.

ECOSLO has been organizing Coastal Cleanup Day locally since 2005. Last year, over 1,600 volunteers removed over 5,700 pounds of marine debris from 29 beaches throughout San Luis Obispo County. Statewide in 2013, nearly 60,000 volunteers picked-up nearly 750,000 pounds of debris. Marine debris can be harmful and even fatal to wildlife, which in turn can damage our state’s economy, and can even become a human health hazard.

Organizers are urging all participants to take part in the BYO (Bring Your Own) campaign, designed to encourage volunteers to help decrease the ecological footprint of the Cleanup. Volunteers are encouraged to bring their own bucket or reusable bag, gloves, and reusable water bottle so that they won’t have to use the disposable items that the Commission supplies.

To sign up for the SLO County Coastal Cleanup, go to theecoslo.org/volunteer.com/ccd_2014, or contact Krista Burke at (805) 544-1777 or membership@ecoslo.org.

Basin

continued from page 2

discarded, once they get control of the board of a water district there’s no mystery as to how they’ll vote on matters before the board. (The most telling moment in the legislative process came when a Senate committee amended the bill to require actual management of the basin, including water meters and monitoring, and PRAAGS and PRO Water Equity immediately withdrew their support, claiming the bill had become “complicated.”)

●Stewart Resnick is in the mix.

Lawyers and lobbyists in the employ of the billionaire lord of a Central Valley almond dynasty — and current owner of Justin Vineyards — were all over AB 2453. Google “kern water resnick,” minus quotation marks, to view the unique history of the relationship between this water district take-over artist and California’s groundwater. You will get a pretty good idea of why the biggest player over the Paso basin might want this district structured in such a way that the guys with the most acres stand to control the most votes. Our County Supervisors call this a conspiracy theory. Water speculators call it a business plan.

All of the above foretells the likely outcome of the process the County Board of Supervisors opted for and on which they have bet the farm. That outcome was also foreseeable when a majority of the Supervisors refused to consider three simple amendments to AB 2453 that the Sierra Club proposed as the bill neared a vote on the Senate floor in August:

Add: “*The import of foreign water to the basin, export of native water from the basin, and the storage of excess State Water allocations in the basin by other entities is prohibited.*” (The storage of excess State Water allocations in the basin is the neat trick whereby another district can store its “paper water” in this

basin via its theoretical storage capacity when that water’s not needed, then lay claim to real water when it is needed.)

Add: “*District board elections shall transition to registered voter elections. In two years, three of the six directors in the three landowner classes shall be elected by registered voters living within the district; in 4 years the remaining three directors in the landowner classes shall be elected by registered voters living within the district.*” (The Supervisors claimed this would disenfranchise non-resident landowners. But regardless of who’s on the district board, all water projects would require passage of a Proposition 218 vote. Prop. 218 votes are acreage-based. When projects are proposed, those who will pay the most will have the most votes.)

Amend the bill to read: “*Candidates for the six directors elected pursuant to this subdivision shall be within the same landowner class as the electors for that class.*” As the approved bill reads instead, “*Candidates for the six directors elected pursuant to this subdivision may be within any landowner class.*” With that language

intact, the largest landowners can run candidates for all the seats in all three landowner classes — small, medium and large. Guess which candidates will have all the money they need to blanket the district, get out the vote, and secure a majority? That’s called seizing the advantage to protect your interests, and when the law allows it, that’s what is done by entities with the resources to do so. Why would they not?

Including any one of these amendments would have gone a long way to cure what ailed AB 2453 and greatly allayed the trouble that lies ahead. As none of those provisions were included, it’s not hard to see where this is going: A district that, as structured, inevitably will be run by people whose main purpose will be importing water for a few vineyards and ensuring that rural residents pay for it, and whose demonstrated lack of interest in managing the basin could cost the state one of its major aquifers. A dozen local, state and national public interest organizations saw the serious problems with the bill; our county supervisors and newspaper of record did not.

Only a failed district formation vote, the State of California, and/or an adjudicated basin can save us now.



Frozen out Democracy didn’t make it into the Paso Robles groundwater basin bill.

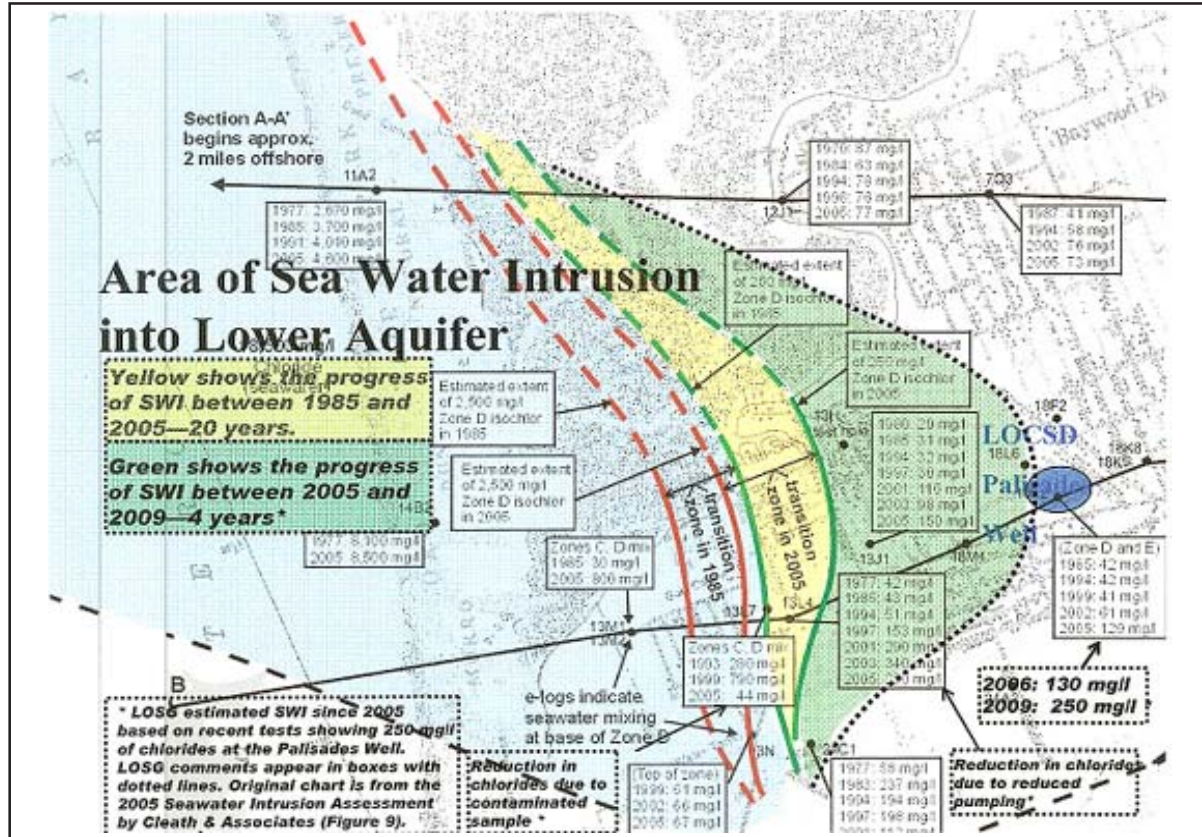
Los Osos
continued from page 5

conjunction with the provisions of the Basin Plan, will not maximize benefits on the Basin.

This is the chance for all parties to address the severe, long-term seawater intrusion problem in the Los Osos Basin, reverse it, and establish a sustainable water supply for the community and vital habitat of the Morro Bay National Estuary.

We asked for:

- A requirement for an immediate and thorough seawater intrusion assessment with semi-annual updates. The assessment should measure and evaluate the condition of each aquifer and the entire Basin, providing adequate data and analysis to show current conditions and changes since the 1970's, along with predicted impacts from the drought and climate change (less rainfall/higher sea levels).
- Designation of the Basin as a high-priority, threatened basin.
- A County Basin Management Ordinance as provided for in the Basin planning agreement, with measurable, time-specific, and enforceable objectives set to reverse seawater intrusion as soon as possible. The ordinance should also ensure all pumping in the Basin is monitored, conservation and recycled water use is maximized, and pumping is limited if necessary.
- A provision that conservation, recycled water use, and low impact development (LID) are maximized and given ample opportunity to reverse seawater intrusion before outside sources of water or desalination are pursued. (LID provides the triple benefit of reducing water use, reducing polluted runoff, and increasing Basin



That was then In 2009, the Los Osos Sustainability Group showed the County that the rate of seawater intrusion into the Los Osos basin over the previous four years was at least four times faster than had been thought. And now...?

- recharge with clean rainwater.)
- Improvements to the LOWWP recycled water use program to prioritize recycled water reuse in the Western and Central Basin in order to maximize pumping reductions and seawater intrusion offset. Improvements should include added recycled water pipes and connections to allow a greater reduction in potable water use. They should also maintain/improve water balance in all parts of the Basin and optimize management options.
- Improvements to the LOWWP conservation program to achieve an aggressive conservation target and encourage the elimination of potable water for outdoor use. The program should include a stronger outreach program to the community informing residents of the seawater intrusion problem (including radio and TV spots), a stronger indoor program (e.g., a stronger washer replacement program, more options, leak detection and

- repair), and a complete outdoor conservation program with grey water, rainwater harvesting, and LID options. We suggested that the County ask SLO Green Build to expand the septic system repurposing program into a comprehensive outdoor program. The \$5 million the Coastal Development Permit requires for conservation should be spent to maximize this program, with any remaining money spent on improving recycled water programs.
- Consistent with permit conditions,

The State Legislature is emphasizing water use efficiency via conservation and recycled water as the first priority in managing threatened supplies. With the Los Osos Basin facing the threat of severe seawater intrusion, the worst drought on record, changes in pumping regimes and increasing sea level rise from climate change, we are urging actions we feel are necessary to allow the Los Osos Basin to continue to support estuarine and riparian habitat in Coastal Zone, the Community of Los Osos, and the farmland over the Basin.

there should be no new building over the Basin, inside or outside the wastewater service area, until seawater intrusion is reversed and conclusive well tests show ample surplus water exists to sustainably support added development, with a margin of safety to account for impacts from the LOWWP, climate change, and other impacts and uncertainties.

- The community and agencies should be able to review the final draft of the Los Osos Basin Management Plan prior to its submission to the Superior Court for approval.

Crazy
continued from page 8

activist Lynne Harkins proposed, and the Sierra Club funded, testing for mercury in Santa Rosa Creek, downstream from the abandoned and unremediated Oceanic mercury mine. She found mercury at four locations, with the highest concentration at the mouth of the creek.

The CCSD's new trick: stepping aside as lead agency and replacing themselves with the Army Corps of Engineers, hoping thereby to get around the California Coastal Act and the Coastal Commission by turning the desal plan into a federal project. But the Coastal Commission invoked its authority to determine if the project was consistent with California's Coastal Management Program. In December 2011, the Commission unanimously determined that it was not, blasting the district for the lead agency switcheroo, terming the test wells project "a complete waste of public funds" and noting the "avoidance of proper procedure" in the attempt to gain a permit.

Why spend years on securing permits for a desal test project at a site where you know you will not be allowed to build a desal plant — twice? Why not design water storage tanks correctly in the first place?

This is just a highlights reel of the CCSD's greatest whiffs. In August, Cambria Water Watch posted a very

long list at www.cambriawaterwatch.org.

The piece duh resistance

None of the above can compare with the trouble the Cambria CSD is asking for with its emergency desal project, aka Advanced Water Treatment Plant (AWTP), and its decision, after receiving an emergency permit, to plow ahead with a long-term financial commitment to a permanent facility without first obtaining a Coastal Development Permit for it.

A few of the things wrong with that decision: A boundary dispute over adjacent State Park land has arisen for a portion of the project site. Coastal Commission staff and other agencies have submitted comments on the CSD's application for their regular Coastal Development Permit and pointed out a significant number of glossed-over areas which need substantial improvement in order to protect sensitive coastal resources and threatened species. To the dismay of many in the community, the CSD Board and staff are shrugging off compliance guidance, particularly from Coastal Commission staff.

Writing in the August 7 edition of *The Cambrian*, reporter Kathe Tanner cited e-mails to the CSD from Coastal Commission staff scientist Tom Luster warning the CSD that the project "will likely cause 'take' of listed species and cause long-term harm to sensitive



habitat" and recommending that the district start showing "an interest in working with the key resources agencies to identify needed changes." Luster pointed to potential environmental impacts that could have serious consequences for Cambria and concluded "I believe the district would want to know these answers before locking into a long-term project and its associated liabilities."

At its August 4 meeting, a few hours after the Coastal Commission sent them that warning, the CSD directors cast caution to the winds and voted to direct CSD General Manager Jerry Gruber to sign a twenty-year financing agreement, putting the community on the hook for a \$13 million loan to render the temporary project permanent, despite the lack of a permit for a permanent facility.

To all appearances, the CCSD is pressing forward to get infrastructure in place under its County-issued six-

month emergency permit and parlay that into a *fait accompli*, no matter what a future environmental review process may reveal.

The *Cambrian* reported "discontent was so profound" at the "outburst"-filled 2 1/2-hour meeting "that someone apparently set off a small stink bomb."

Gruber said "This is a criminal activity and shows the outright disrespect that certain members of the community have for the elected officials, general manager, staff and the general public."

It's a well established fact that respect must be earned. Yes, outbursts and stink bombs normally don't have a place at public meetings. When one notices such things starting to pop up at one's meetings, the entity holding those meetings should take notice of this as a symptom of something awry in the body politic, do some group soul-searching, and perhaps reconsider the way they do business.

Classifieds

Next issue deadline is **September 15**.
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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.

Sun., Sept. 7th, 9 a.m. Irish Hills Hike. Join us on a slightly strenuous 6-mile hike, 1500 ft. gain, treading a new trail in the Irish Hills, leading to an abandoned manganese mine. Trail was built mostly by members of Central Coast Concerned Mountain Bike Organization. Bring water, snacks, hat, sunscreen, sturdy shoes, and dress in layers for changing weather. Meet at southern end of Madonna Rd., next to DeVaul Park, at trail entrance to Irish Hills. Leader: Bill Waycott 459-2103 or bill.waycott@gmail.com.

Sat., Sept. 13th, 9:30 a.m. Guadalupe/Paradise Beach Hike. Moderate 6-mile hike along pristine Guadalupe Beach to Mussel Rock and beyond, duration about 5-6 hrs. Bring water, lunch, windbreaker, hat, and dress in layers for varying weather. Lunch also afterwards for those interested. From Hwy 101 in Santa Maria, take Main St./Hwy 166 to end at Guadalupe Beach. Meet near interpretive signs and picnic tables. Rain cancels. Leader: Andrea Ortiz, 934-2792 or kenya683@msn.com.

Sun., Sept. 14th, 10 a.m. San Simeon State Beach Hike. Three-mile, 300 ft.

Sept. 14-16, Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park. Join us as we explore these enchanting islands! Hike wild, windswept trails bordered with blazing wildflowers. Kayak rugged coastlines. Marvel at pristine waters teeming with frolicking seals and sea lions. Train your binoculars on unusual sea and land birds. Watch for the highly endangered island fox. Look for reminders of the Chumash people who lived on these islands for thousands of years. Or just relax



at sea. A ranger/naturalist will travel with us to help lead hikes, point out items of interest and present evening programs. All cruises depart from Santa Barbara. 3 islands in 3 days. The \$590 cost includes an assigned bunk, all meals, snacks, and beverages plus the services of a ranger/naturalist.

To reserve space, send a \$100 check, written to Sierra Club to leader Joan Jones Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732. For more information contact leader: 626-443-0706; jholtzhln@aol.com.

Field Tripping

Hello fellow Santa Lucians. My name is Greg McMillan. I serve on your Executive Committee and am the co-chair of the Development Committee for the chapter. I have some ideas for future events that might be of interest to you and will make a few bucks that we can use to further the efforts of the Chapter. I am asking for your input to see if this interest exists.

My proposal is to arrange a series of field trips to some of my favorite places in the world. These trips might be local and only a day or two in duration and range to multi day (up to two weeks) trips to more exotic and distant places. They would be limited to a small groups and would be escorted by yours truly and utilize local experts to interpret the local habitats.

The local trips might vary from 1-day small bus field trips to the Carizzo Plain or other places nearby to 2 or 3-day trips to Yosemite, Death Valley, or other wild and environmentally important areas. The more far flung projects might go anywhere in the world. The Pantanal of Brazil is one of my favorite places for wildlife, a place of amazing flora and fauna and wonderful people. Another site of great interest to me is the Northern Jaguar Preserve in Northern Sonora, Mexico. It's very difficult to get to but has been described to me as one of the wildest places in the world.

These trips would give you a chance to travel with like-minded folks and help your Chapter at the same time. Please get back to me at greg@flyingment.com. Please put "field trips" on the subject line. I await your input.



gain hike through meadows, pine forest, grassy mesa, and coastal scrub. Enjoy a variety of footbridges, boardwalk, and dirt trail, viewing mountains, valleys, and ocean. Duration about 3 hrs. Meet at Wash-burn Day Use Area, about 2 miles north of Cambria, left off Hwy. 1. Leader: Vicki Marchenko, 528-5567 or vmarchenko57@gmail.com.

Thurs., Sept. 18th, 7 p.m. SLO Through Painters' Eyes. An evening of pure pleasure! Five eminent artists from SLOPE, San Luis Outdoor Painters for the Environment, will display their favorite depictions of land and seascapes throughout our county. Each will briefly discuss how they went about creating their works. There will be time to chat with the artists and Denise Schryver, president of SLOPE, which represents more than 15 professional painters. Go to www.SLOPE-Painters.com to see more. Conservation news will begin the meeting. Steynberg Gallery, 1531 Monterey St., SLO. Info.: Joe Morris, 549-0355.

Sat., Sept. 20th, 8:30 a.m. Vicente Flat to Nacimiento Summit Hike Versus previous there-and-back hikes on the

Vicente Flat trail, this time we walk the trail in its entirety and then down road to the intersection. Thus there will be a car shuttle. This is a scenic but strenuous 11-mile, 3100-ft. experience, not for beginners. There is poison oak on or adjoining the trail. Bring lunch and sufficient water. Leader will have a water purifier to replenish at Vicente Camp. Meet at Washburn Day Use Area off Hwy 1, about 1.7 miles north of Main & Windsor in Cambria. Extreme heat will postpone this outing. Leader: Carlos Diaz-Saavedra, 546-0317.

Sun., Sept. 21st, 10 a.m. Sycamore Springs Trekking Pole Hike. Polecats is dedicated to leading local Sierra Club hikes to model the benefits of using trekking poles effectively. This is a 2-mile, 600-ft. elevation change, hike. Meet near the entrance to Sycamore Springs Resort, 1215 Avila Beach Dr. Need to confirm beforehand with Leader: David Georgi, 458-5575 or hikingpoles@gmail.com.

Sat., Sept. 27th, 8:30 a.m. Salmon and Spruce Creek Trails to Dutra Flat Camp. Moderate 8.4 mile, 2200-ft. gain hike in southern Big Sur. Beginning at the Salmon Creek trailhead, we will ascend through Spruce Creek Canyon, viewing Silver Peak, winding around grassy hills, and then dropping down into Dutra Camp. Possibility of ticks and poison oak on the trail. Bring lunch, water, and dress for the weather. Meet at Washburn Day Use Area in San Simeon State Park, off Hwy 1, about 2 miles north of Cambria. Probable stop for eats afterwards. If it is too hot, we will choose another destination, but rain cancels. Leader: Gary Felsman, 473-3694.

Sun., Sept. 28th, 2 p.m. City Walk: Jazz-Age San Luis Obispo to World War II Where is the hotel where Hearst entertained his guests, the speakeasies of the twenties, and the

Activities sponsored by other organizations

Sat., Sept. 6th, 9:45 a.m., Citizens Climate Lobby. Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 2201 Lawton Avenue, SLO. Learn what you can do to slow climate


change and make a difference in our community. Become a climate activist and be part of the solution to the most pressing issue of our time. For more info, email: citizensclimatelobbyslo@gmail.com.




Sat., Sept. 13, 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. Botanical Illustrations at SLO Botanical Garden. Discover the art of observing and depicting nature structurally and aesthetically while enjoying fresh air and the outdoors. Join artist Barbara Renshaw, at the San Luis Obispo Botanical Gardens as we stroll through the Garden sketching your favorite plants. No experience necessary. Bring a sketch book and watercolors, colored pencils, or pastels. Meet at the Garden's purple entrance bridge. \$5 for members/\$10 public. More info at slobg.org/art. \$3 county parking fee April - Sept. For more info, call 805-541-1400x304 or email education@slobg.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

John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club, in Yosemite

For further information contact:
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original French Hospital? Find out and much more on a guided downtown stroll past historic stores, theaters, and hotels. Learn about SLO city life from the years of the Model T to Prohibition and Pearl Harbor. Meet at corner of Marsh and Toro Sts. Leader: Joe Morris, 549-0355.