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Protecting and Preserving the Central Coast

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

Shaking It Up at Diablo

Nobody (but PG&E) wants the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant relicensed without considering new seismic information. We're doing something about that.

The Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility (A4NR) executive director Rochelle Becker and outreach coordinator David Weisman spent the first week of March in Washington DC, gaining congressional support for immediate seismic studies of the Shoreline Fault at the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant.

PG&E surprised California's ratepayers and oversight agencies when they applied to the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) for a twenty-year license renewal of the reactors in November 2009—fifteen years before the current licenses expire in 2024 and 2025.

They did so in defiance of the California Energy Commission (CEC) who recommended that "advanced 3-D seismic reflection mapping and other advanced techniques" be used to analyze the new fault. They did so in defiance of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), who as early as 2007 had made conducting these studies a requirement of any request for ratepayer funding for the license renewal process. And they seem to have surprised the NRC, whose chairman asked the A4NR representatives if they knew why PG&E was applying at this early date!

Why indeed is PG&E in such a hurry to push through the relicensing process ahead of the completion of new seismic studies?

At recent "scoping" meetings for the NRC license renewal process, concerned SLO residents demanded that the NRC make seismic studies a priority, only to be told that this is not in the purview of the NRC process. The Alliance brought this issue to NRC Chairman Gregory Jaczko during their DC meeting and proposed that the NRC form a joint panel with the California state seismic regulators to review any new studies. This would boost ratepayer confidence in the "independence" of the results and overcome the stigma of Diablo's troubled history — and the



Rochelle Becker and David Weisman of the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility outside the Supreme Court. In 1983, the Court unanimously ruled against PG&E, finding that the state of California has final jurisdiction on all issues of economics and reliability relating to the use of nuclear power.



Off-roaders' Oceano Dunes lawsuit gets buried

The Sierra Club has prevailed in the attempt by the local branch of the offroad recreation lobby to grease the rails for the sale of 584 acres of County land in the Oceano Dunes to the state (see "Club Intervenes in Offroaders' Dunes Lawsuit," June 2009). The off-roaders' action collapsed in court, and they asked the judge to dismiss their case. The action dealt a blow to the ongoing efforts of the California Department of Parks' OHV division to buy the land and lock it up permanently for off-road vehicle use. At issue in the off-roaders' lawsuit against the County were provisions in the County's Local Coastal Plan that bar off-road vehicles on the county's land, which is considered part of the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area under an operating agreement with State Parks. The Sierra Club has sued to enforce the longstanding but long unenforced policies that declare that land to be a vehicle-free buffer between the





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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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... shock follows shock! ... in the Haunted **Planning Department**

"We shouldn't be here. This is government at its poorest." - William Miller, the Board of Supervisors hearing, March 9, 2010

Surely the leaders of our county would never allow asphalt paying plants to be built on rural land? Or on agricultural land?

But it could and almost did happen. Because the County Planning Department tried very hard to make it happen.

It happened on March 9 at a Board of Supervisors meeting. The Planning Department wanted the Supervisors to "interpret" the county's Land Use Ordinance in such a way that the raw materials needed to manufacture hot mix asphalt could be trucked to a plant site on rural or ag land, getting around a requirement that such operations could only be established where the raw materials for the operation were available on site. Such a reinterpretation of policy would effectively commercialize all rural and agricultural lands in the county. It would also greatly aid an applicant who had come to the Planning Department seeking a permit for an asphalt plant just outside Santa Margarita. The planners argued that since the ordinance says "the raw materials," not "all" the raw materials, must be extracted on site, they could pull an on-site percentage out of the air - 80 percent - and call it good. (North County Watch dryly commented that, in asphalt production, "the percentage of asphalt petroleum hydrocarbons to aggregate [is] around 18%, conveniently below the suggested 20% imported material threshold.")

Yes: the planners' argument depended on what the meaning of "the" is. The planners had already made the same argument at the Planning Commission and lost, their make-believe percentage rejected by the commissioners. So they tried the argument again at the Board of Supervisors.

"If Mommy says no, ask Daddy" is not

supposed to be the model for the relationship of the Department of Planning and Building to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. The planners are staff. They are supposed to assist and advise the commissioners and supervisors in the planning process, doing the research and providing the findings in support of decisions made by the commission and the board. Obviously, that's not what's going on here. (Nor was it what was going on two years ago, when staff attempted to wrest the authority to review tract maps, the basis for all land use planning decisions, away from the Planning Commission.)

Through the end of 2008, former Supervisor Harry Ovitt ruled County Planning with an iron fist. For twelve

years, Ovitt's influence and constant presence in the department was akin to Dick Cheney's at the CIA in the run-up to the Iraq war. The need to rewrite or override County planning policies to accommodate every whim of developers was understood, just as CIA analysts had to "interpret" all intelligence to find evidence of nonexistent weapons of mass destruction. In 2008, the voters gave Ovitt an emphatic heave-ho, but his political ghost still seems to stalk the halls of the Planning Department. The hair-raising asphalt plant/LUO interpretation effort was just the latest in a long line of frights emanating from County Planning, horrors that did not halt when Ovitt left, and evidence that some ghost-busting is in order.

County supervisors can perform that necessary rite by hiring a planning director who understands the difference between private gain and the public good, and who can convey that understanding to staff in no uncertain terms. Such as: "Asphalt plants on ag land? Big projects sliding through with Minor Use Permits? A free pass for renewable energy projects? Claiming no environmental impacts for sand and gravel mining operations on the Salinas? No more of that. Not on my watch."

In other words, that hoped-for planning director should take heed of the unimprovable advice once given to the Board of Supervisors by the late, great Anne McMahon: Help staff figure out "how to save staff time and expedite public hearings by working with applicants who have unrealistic expectations and insist on pursuing development proposals that are inconsistent with the County's own general plan, policies and ordinances." Filling that job, and banishing the spirit haunting the Planning Department, will be the most important decision this board of supervisors ever makes.

SANTA LUCIAN

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Boo! Ovitt's political presence lingers on.

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www.santalucia. sierraclub.org

Outings, events, and more!

The Corrections

In our February issue:

- in "Los Osos: Let's Get It Right," the reference to the disposal of 5 million tons of septage from Los Osos septic tanks should have referred to 5 million gallons.

-in "Cambria Activists & Mercury Put Desal Plans in Retrograde," The correct URL for the website for precautionary principle champions Science and Environmental Health Network is www.SEHN.org .

- in "Solar Cheating," a reference to PG&E using the spelling "PG\$E" was not a typo, but an alternate spelling beloved of California energy activists and ratepayer advocates. It's a matter of context, and something we're likely to do again as the mood strikes us.

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A Two-Point Energy Plan

Energy storage—the Forgotten Fuel

by Stacey Reineccius, reprinted from the Sierra Club Yodeler

Energy storage is sometimes called "the forgotten fuel."

Better storage is essential both for improving the efficiency of the existing electrical grid, and for enabling the adoption of wind, solar, and other renewables. The link between energy storage and renewables is due to the inherent variability of solar and wind generation.

For off-grid solar or wind power at remote sites, some kind of storage is necessary for times when the sun doesn't shine, or the wind doesn't blow, and issues such as large expensive batteries, battery-acid hazards, and relatively short battery lifetimes limited the cost-effectiveness of early battery-plus-solar/ wind systems. The same issues limited home and business solar systems before grid-tied inverters allowed them to connect to the grid. Grid-connection enabled solar power to tremendously increase its penetration.

Even today, improvements in energy-storage technology are needed to allow renewables to reach their full potential.

Our current vast and century-old electrical system is very slow to change. It has been highly tuned, and it is constantly monitored to deliver power where and when it is needed, but unlike almost any other industry or infrastructure system, it has no storage or buffering mechanism for its output.

Electrical loads are volatile. Every time a switch moves (you turn on the light in your room, or an elevator starts up; your PC comes to full power, or the motor in your device comes on) there is a momentary surge in demand (see figures). Such variable loads eat into the energy efficiency of power plants and increase their production of greenhouse gases. The extreme cases are "peaker" power plants, which are run only 4% of the time yet have to be kept ready for use full-time and paid for full time. In California, during the winter, almost 50% of the total generative capacity in the state is idle yet continues to be a portion of our cost of electricity.

Renewable generation is also volatile (shade, clouds, gusts and calm). It can't provide steady full-time power.

Grid generators provide backup because the grid has to operate within certain power and voltage ranges, and as the renewable generation fluctuates, the gaps have to be filled in by other fast-acting generation. Today this means

that the more wind and solar get deployed, the more need there is for fast gas-fueled generation plants to smooth the power and keep the grid operating. This generation is often equal to or larger than (!) the rated power of the renewable system. For example, Sen. Ron Wyden (Oregon) developed his Energy Storage Act when a 600 megawatt wind farm for southern Oregon was required to have an 800 megawatt gas turbine co-installed in order to receive safety approval from the federal grid operator.

Consider a local generator of renewable energy. If at any moment there's no local load to consume it, the power goes into the grid. There's a lag before the grid can detect and respond to this new power coming in, and during this time excess power is being wasted. Then by the time the grid has

Increasing our energy FITness

By Ray Pingle, Sierra Club California Energy-Climate Committee reprinted from the Sierra Club *Yodeler*

By guaranteeing a fair price, feed-in tariffs can bring renewables on-line quickly.

So-called "feed-in tariffs" (FITs) offer the best opportunity for California to quickly increase the percentage of our electricity produced from clean, renewable energy sources. This is the most effective policy option for bringing renewables on-line rapidly, in reduced its base generation to compensate, as likely as not local energy use will rise again, the renewable power will cease entering the grid, and the local load will draw increased power from the grid. In effect, any power in excess of the local load is mostly wasted.

Added together, the volatilities of electrical use and of small-scale renewable generation result in an even more volatile system and more waste. This is why some utilities resist the higher penetration of net-metering to allow households and small businesses to be paid for feeding their extra renewables into the grid.

For these reasons, energy storage, especially when widely distributed, is key to making renewables more useful and valuable. Such storage is starting to come into being as a result of various technological trends:

• large-scale safe-battery development and production designed for electric vehicles;

• recognition by agencies such as the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, California Public Utilities Commission, and California Independent System Operator of the need for energy storage;

• business models such as demand response (lowering power use when utilities are reaching maximum load) that can support storage offerings outside of just load shifting (storing energy at night for use in the day).

Energy-storage systems coupled with renewable generation help in numerous ways:

From the standpoint of the generator, they keep locally generated power available for local consumption without having to go into the grid or sacrifice convenience or reliability. Energy storage allows businesses to reduce their peak power demands—lowering their power bills without disrupting their operations or losing business. Studies have shown that residential and commercial solar can increase their annual return on investment by as much as 34% and their annual energy generation by as much as 20% when a properly configured local storage system is attached.

From the point of view of the grid, they smooth overall demand, reducing the need for peaker plants. They smooth the input of renewably generated power, providing a smoother, more easily manageable load to the grid, reducing the volatility that creates fuel-consumption inefficiency.

Today energy storage is only partially supported in such programs as the federal Investment Tax Credit (which gives a 30% credit against your taxes for the price of a solar or wind system) or the California Self-Generation Incentive

Program, and is only now becoming recognized as a valid product within various Independent System Operator regions. If storage is to fulfill its potential, it needs to be integrated technically, administratively, and financially into renewable-generation deployments.

Today, the Solar Energy Act (S. 1091, sponsored by Sen. Ron Wyden of Oregon, and its companion bill HR 4210) is in front of the U.S. Senate. The act will elevate energy storage to equal status for financing with other renewable generation such as solar and wind.

Stacey Reineccius co-founded Powergetics Inc. to develop and deploy distributed energy-storage systems in early 2009. He is a member of the San Francisco Energy Stewards and the GoSolarSF Solar Task Force. He can be reached at: <u>Stacey@powergetics.com</u>



these people won't do it.

FITS can lead to local economic benefits since local developers can realize a reasonable profit, which they tend to spend locally, and the installation of the renewables creates local jobs. FITs won't magically lower the costs of electricity, but will get renewable energy for us at the lowest cost possible. While fossil-fueled electricity continues to increase in cost, most renewables continue to decline in cost. A recent study published by the California Energy Commission finds wind power to have the lowest average costs of any category of generation (\$.07/kWh)—lower than coal (\$.10) or gas-fired (\$.11)! The cost of solar power too (both polycrystalline, the most common type; and thinfilm) has dropped dramatically—by 33% in 18



volume, and at the lowest cost to ratepayers.

The most important feature of a FIT is that it pays a renewables generator a rate (tariff) based on the actual full cost of generating that electricity plus a reasonable profit. A well-designed FIT includes several other key features including:

- the contract is long-term—typically 20 years;
- the contract is standardized and simple;
- the contract is "must take"; the utility must sign a contract with any generator who meets basic requirements;
- almost any entity can become a generator;
- rates are based on such factors as the specific technology, project size, and location.

This set of features greatly reduces financial risk and is very investor-friendly. If generators are guaranteed a rate that allows a reasonable profit over 20 years, and the utility has to buy the power, lenders will be inclined to give loans, and at good rates. Since financing is a large portion of any renewable project's total cost, lower rates mean significantly lower costs. Largely because of these lower finance costs, FITs achieve lower costs for renewable energy than does competitive bidding (the main current method).

FITs especially help smaller "developers" who are not fundamentally in the renewable-energy business, such as a homeowner, a farmer, a church, a bicycle shop, or a grocery-store chain. If making money from installing renewable power, say a rooftop solar-energy system on a furniture store with some excess capacity, requires hiring attorneys, learning arcane utility contracts and interconnections processes, and entering into a long-term negotiation process,



months (to \$.14 - .21/kWh according to a recent report). Further, because local solar doesn't have the costs and energy losses of long, expensive transmission lines, this makes it even more competitive against remote forms of generation.

Opponents of renewable energy and FITS like to claim that they will dramatically increase electricity bills for everyone. Remarkably, in fact, FITs have a clear worldwide record of greatly increasing renewables at very low cost. In Germany, for example, the ambitious and highly successful FIT program increased electricity costs to ratepayers by a minimal \$3/month. A proposed new FIT program in the United Kingdom that could increase the proportion of renewables there by 6% by 2020 is forecast to add just \$3.83/year to each household's electricity bill. In short, increases in renewable energy via FITs may increase electricity costs slightly in the short run, but most likely will lower costs compared to conventional power in the long run. Throughout the world,

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Trail News

by the Statewide Trails Section Planning Division of California State Parks

25th California Trails and Greenways Conference

The only statewide trails conference that provides training and networking opportunities focused on hiking and riding recreation trails is coming to Cambria, April 21-23. For 25 years, the investment of knowledge and commitment by California State Parks and the California Trails Conference Foundation has helped ensure trail stewardship and leadership for generations to come. Follow us on Twitter at http://twitter.com/ CAtrails, and on Facebook. April 8 is the Conference Early Bird deadline. To register at the discounted rates and view full details about the Conference, log onto www.parks.ca. gov/trails/conference and follow the registration prompts. The next California Recreational Trails Committee (CRTC) meeting will be held at the conference site, Cambria Pines Lodge, on April 21 at 5 p.m.

California Trail Corridor Update

The 150th Anniversary celebration of the Pony Express National Historic Trail will be celebrated beginning in San Francisco in June. Click here for details: <u>www.nps.gov/poex/</u> <u>planyourvisit/placestogo.htm</u>. A map of the Pony Express National Historic Trail and the 26 other official California Recreational Trail System routes is available at: <u>www.parks.ca.gov/</u> default.asp?page id=25680.

Trail Technology

Trail information is exploding on the web. As an example, the choppy video at http://vimeo.com/4327883 records trail conditions on the highlyurbanized San Gabriel River Trail on an iPhone. The quality is not great, but it gives you an idea of how a common piece of technology (that trail volunteers might already have in their pocket!) is being used on trails. The iPhone can geo-reference photos, making it a valuable tool for mapping and publicizing trails. Watch for several sessions at the upcoming California Trails and Greenways Conference on how technology like this can help map your trails.

How Cool Is This?

First, San Luis Obispo signed onto the US Mayors Climate Action Agreement ("Sierra Club Names SLO a 'Cool City," April 2006).

Then they became the first city in the county to complete an inventory of their greenhouse gas inventory ("SLO Powers Up," Jan. 2009).

Now they are at the biggest Cool Cities step: preparing a Climate Action Plan, the policy document that is where the rubber meets the road for municipalities seeking to comply with AB 32, California's Global Warming Solutions Act, and switch from a fossil-fueled to a lowcarbon renewable energy future.

The Cal Poly Climate Team, a group of City & Regional Planning students, has taken the ball and run with it. They are conducting SLO's Climate Plan Preparation process, designed to engage the community in developing a proactive approach to crafting solutions for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

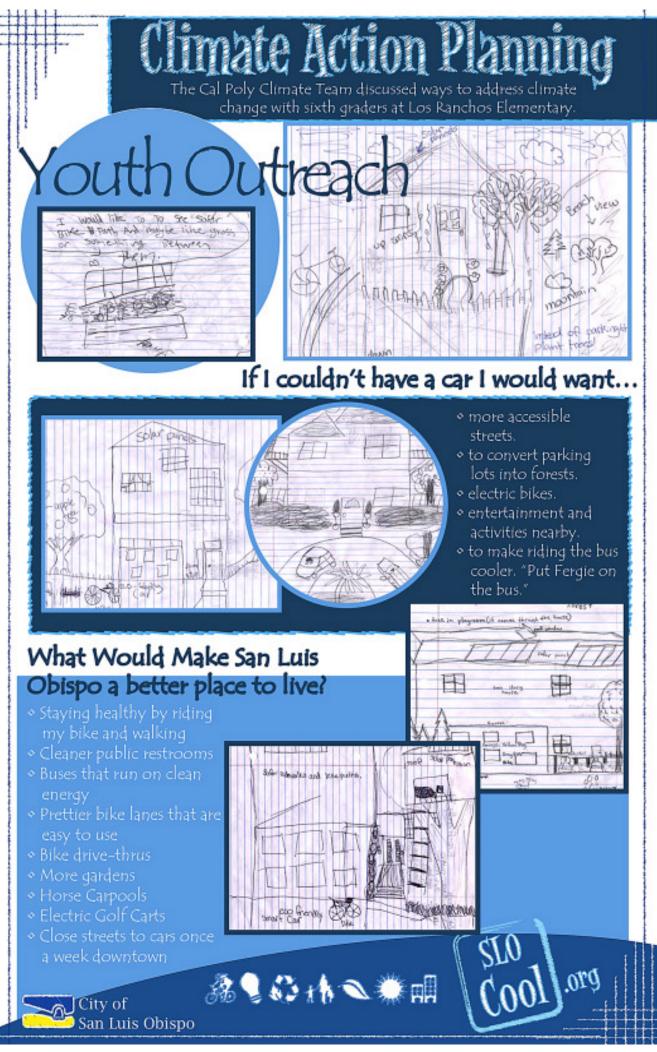
The Draft Climate Action Plan is being developed as part of a sevenmonth effort under the direction of Professor Adrienne Greve. The Climate Team's goals during this process are two-fold:

1. To conduct a policy audit that identifies and quantifies all steps that the City of San Luis Obispo has undertaken since 2005 that directly influence greenhouse gas emissions; and

2. To develop a Draft Climate Action Plan that will identify focus areas and develop strategies to reach emissions reduction targets.

Go, team!

Birth of the cool <u>www.slocool.org</u> is the City of San Luis Obispo's community portal for climate action planning and greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction strategies.



Support Your Local Chapter! Donate online, via PayPal:



at www.santalucia.sierraclub.org



Water We Thinking?

Cambria and Morro Bay hit by flood of excellent questions

Cambria: WHY are we getting a desal plant?!

On the evening of March 16, a panel of experts convened at Rabobank in Cambria to ponder the question "Water You Thinking?" The panel was put together by local residents who have been watching with growing concern the Cambria Community Service District's 15-year march to seawater desalination as the answer to the community's chronic water supply problem without a lot of evident consideration of the alternatives to desal.

Several panelists pointed out that desal is the most expensive, energy intensive and growth-inducing water source possible. The least on all counts is the recycling of water.

Lou Blanck, a former CCSD board member; Conner Everts of the Southern California Watershed Alliance; graywater expert Mladen Bandov; and retired UC Fresno earth science professor emeritus Jim Brownell covered Cambria water supply, storage, quality, and conservation issues over a fast two hours.

Audience members in the packed meeting room learned many interesting things:

• The energy required to power a desal plant represents 70 percent of its operating cost.

It doesn't make much sense to pay so much for water that you can't afford to pay your mortgage.
Landscaping and irrigation consti-

• Landscaping and irrigation constitute more than half of Cambria's

Morro Bay: We WON'T recycle water?!

When Morro Bay and Cayucos decided to upgrade the Morro Bay-Cayucos wastewater treatment plant from kinda/sorta secondary sewage treatment and finally comply with the Clean Water Act, it took several years of heavy lifting and teeth-pulling by the Natural Resources Defense Council, Surfrider, the Sierra Club et al to persuade the powers that be that this could be done 1) in less than fifteen years and 2) should upgrade wastewater treatment all the way to the highest treatment level: tertiary, not merely secondary, treatment.

Under intense public pressure, the Morro Bay City Council and Cayucos Sanitary District finally agreed to this plan (and then said it was what they had planned to do all along) but drew the line at including any plans to actually recycle the treated effluent – the fact notwithstanding that wastewater treatment plants all over the country are upgrading to tertiary treatment precisely because this allows the broadest potential array of water reuse scenarios.

The leaders of the towns beside the bay would have none of that: The treatment plant has an ocean outfall, and they decreed that the outfall shall continue to perform its function as always, only now dumping valuable reusable effluent into the ocean.

They stuck to those guns even when it became clear that major miscalculations had been made concerning the upgrade of the existing plant (turns out it's in a floodplain – who knew?), requiring major modifications to the plan, including an essentially rebuilt, relocated treatment plant. City staff and city council summarily rejected the idea advanced by Sierra Club and many voices in the community that the necessary redesign was a good opportunity to rethink the upgrade and incorporate elements like recycled wastewater (see "Morro Bay and Cayucos Flying Blind," Oct. 2009.) Then came the Troubles. Slashed state water allocations last November, combined with contaminated wells, resulted in a declaration of a water emergency by the City of Morro Bay and the revelation of the full extent of the city's extremely precarious position in terms of dependency on state water and restrictions on the use of its wells.

The Man from Monsanto

Justice Clarence Thomas is preparing to greet some old friends

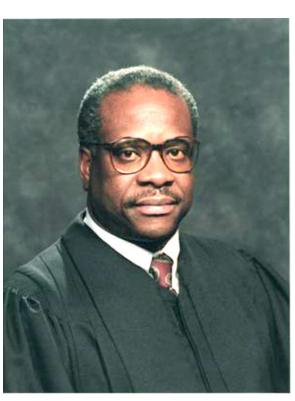
By Jesse Arnold

Since 2007, the Center for Food Safety, the Sierra Club, the National Family Farm Coalition and others have been engaged in a legal battle with the USDA and Monsanto corporation regarding the release of genetically engineered Roundup Ready alfalfa for general use. The Ninth Circuit of the U.S. Court of Appeals upheld the case for the plaintiffs, ruling that Monsanto's genetically engineered alfalfa could not be released until USDA did a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

"Roundup Ready alfalfa represents a very real threat to farmer's livelihoods and the environment," said Andrew Kimbrell, Executive Director of the Center for Food Safety. "The judge rightly dismissed Monsanto's claims that their bottom line should come before the rights of the public and America's farmers. This ruling is a turning

point in the regulation of biotech crops in this country." USDA completed a draft Environmental Impact Statement in early 2010. The public comment period on the draft EIS closed on March 3, 2010, after receiving some 200,000 comments. It is not known when USDA will release the final EIS.

Meanwhile the Monsanto Corporation is taking its case to the Supreme Court, complaining that there was no evidentiary hearing held to justify holding up the planting of its



Roundup Ready alfalfa. The case will be heard in late April.

We should not be surprised if the five Justices who gave us the recent *People United vs. FEC* decision expanding corporate power in politics would also roll over for the Monsanto Corporation.

But we should push back, particularly in light of the fact that Justice Clarence Thomas is a former Monsanto attorney (1977-1979).

Please join me in asking Justice Thomas to recuse himself from the Monsanto case.

Justice Clarence Thomas US Supreme Court 1First St. NE Washington, DC 20543

Refer to *Monsanto Co., v. Geertson Seed Farms*, Docket No. 09-475.



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

water use.

Desalinated seawater contains boron, toxic to a variety of plants down to one part per million.
Reservoir storage and stream releases would be an ideal, costeffective way to solve the region's seasonal water shortfall.

• One underground cistern can hold 200,000 gallons of rainwater.

The Santa Rosa Creek desal plan, involving discharge of both brine and wastewater into the ocean, looks kind of like recycling but not on purpose.
Desal proposals for Los Angeles, San Diego South Bay, and Moss Landing at Elk Horn slough have all been shelved.

• If Cambria doesn't take all the necessary steps now to maximize the use of its local water supply before it turns to an outside water source, and anything goes wrong with that



Thus, Steven Owen, Vice President of Infrastructure Development for PERC Water Corporation, found himself with a keenly receptive audience for his March 11 presentation: "PERC Recycling, Solution for Morro Bay's Water?," sponsored by the Morro Bay Business & Community Forum. It followed a longer presentation he gave to the City Council three days previously.

Owen revealed that he had proposed to the Morro Bay/Cayucos plant upgrade project consultants that the project provide for recycled wastewater, but couldn't get his calls returned. It was the same story a few years ago when he proposed that the County include recycling as part of the Los Osos sewer project, and got nowhere.

Worth noting: after the County made that bad call, environmental groups, concerned residents, and enlightened Planning Commissioners helped them to see the light. The Los Osos wastewater project now includes recycled treated effluent.

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For the Bears

Fish and Game hunting rule due April 21



Volunteer for the Bears

Du Dich and I Causia

Dear California Fish and Game Commission:

We, the undersigned organizations, vigorously oppose the California Department of Fish and Game's (CDFG) proposals to expand black bear hunting across the state. The agency recently unveiled plans to: allow an unlimited number of bears to be killed across California during the hunting season; permit the use of high-tech global positioning equipment and "tip switches" on hound collars to make it easy to locate and kill a bear; open the first-ever bear hunting season in San Luis Obispo county and expand the hunts in Modoc and Lassen counties; and significantly expand the hound training season, allowing hounds to harass bears nearly all year long. We urge you to reject these proposals because they are scientifically indefensible, unnecessary, and environmentally harmful. Specifically, we contend the Commission should oppose CDFG's plans for the following reasons:

• The agency has not demonstrated any need for these regulatory changes other than to placate hunting interests, nor does the CDFG provide sufficient information to assess the detrimental effects these changes may have on bears. According to CDFG data, the number of bears killed legally by hunters has steadily increased well beyond the agency's own 1,700 annual season limit. Yet, the CDFG has yet to analyze how these dramatic increases have affected state and local bear populations, behavior, social structure, reproduction, and cubs. Increasing the quota or eliminating the cap altogether will further stress the state's bear population and put some local populations at risk.

• There is no guarantee that expanding hunting into San Luis Obispo, Lassen, or Modoc counties will not adversely impact the black bear population in those counties. The CDFG has not conducted specific research in these counties to determine the size, distribution, or demographics of the populations to assess whether these local bear populations can withstand an increase in hunting

Illegal killing of bears has increased world-wide, fueled by a booming market, for bear parts, especially bear gallbladders used in traditional Asian medicine and bear paws, considered a delicacy in soup. Bear gallbladders can go for \$5,000 a pound. Poaching of wildlife has become epidemic across the state. Violations rose from 6,538 in 2003 to 17,840 in 2007. The illegal sale of California wildlife and wildlife parts generates an estimated \$100 million a year, second only to the illegal drug trade, according to CDFG officials. Yet, the state has just 358 game wardens patrolling 300,000 square miles of land and water. It makes no sense to expand bear hunting when state wildlife law enforcement capabilities are so crippled. Permitting hunters to use GPS devices on hounds will only exacerbate poaching.

Trophy hunting ignores the ecological value of bears. Apex species, such as bears, cougars, and wolves, play critical roles in maintaining ecosystems. Black bears often scavenge for food, playing an important role in recycling carrion. Bears also help transport berry seeds. Along salmon spawning streams, bear scat and the remains of fish carried into the woods contribute to the longterm nutrient cycle in old-growth forest. Even cambium feeding by bears, which sometimes kills trees, creates widely scattered snags that benefit other species of wildlife.

• Hound hunting of black bears is unsporting, unethical, and environmentally harmful. In California, bears can be legally chased by hounds, treed, and then shot by hunters. Hounds have been known to pursue bears with cubs, increasing the risk that cubs could be separated from their mothers, then orphaned. It is not uncommon for hounds to maim bears, especially cubs, and even more common for bears to maim or kill an entire pack of hounds. Pitting hounds against bears is essentially glorified animal fighting that can lead to violent, even deadly, results, for all the animals involved. In addition, hounds may pursue non-targeted animals, including imperiled species, putting additional stress on those species. Allowing hunters to place GPS devices and treeing switches on hounds will inevitably make it much easier for hunters, as well as poachers, to kill more bears.

By Richard J. Garcia

The newly established Black Bear Task Force of the Sierra Club's California-Nevada Regional Conservation Committee will be working to improve the management of California bears. This year the California Fish and Game Commission has proposed changes to mammal hunting regulations, and it is very bad news for bears. The Department of Fish & Game is proposing to increase the bear kill quota from 1,700 to 2,500 or eliminate a cap altogether, expand hunting into San Luis Obispo County, expand areas where dogs can be used, and permit the use of GPS devices on hounds, among other changes.

This year's priority campaign will be to put a stop to the state sanctioned practice of hounding bears with dogs. If you are interested in working with other Sierra Club activists to protect wildlife, join the Black Bear Task Force mailing list by e-mailing me at <u>richard.garcia@kernkaweah.sierraclub.org</u>.

can withstand an increase in hunting activity.

• Expansion of bear hunting will place additional pressures on bears, who face a host of increasing threats from poaching, habitat alteration, human encroachment into wildlife areas, aggressive government lethal control programs, and climate change.

• State wildlife officials have failed to assess the impacts of poaching.

• Hunting does not reduce conflicts with bears. Trophy hunters target the largest bears who may look good on a wall or as a throw rug, not the young males who are primarily responsible for conflicts. Furthermore, hunting takes place far from homes, while so-

continued on page 10



Last Chance to Save Our State Parks

If you are registered to vote, you can sign the petition to add \$18 to the annual state vehicle license fee and provide *permanent* funding to keep our state parks open, well maintained, and free to all California residents. If you have not yet signed the petition to put theState Parks Trust Fund initiative on the ballot: time's up! **Your signature must be on** a petition by April 9 in order to be counted. Look for petition-people at local stores, or call the Sierra Club at 543-8717 to schedule a time to come by and sign at our office.

Just Say No to Valero

Texas oil company messing with California climate law

On March 5, a coalition of environmental and clean energy advocates protested outside a Sacramento Valero gas station in response to the Texas-based company's bankrolling an initiative that would weaken California's clean air laws.

Environmental and clean energy leaders say that the oil company is behind the initiative, proposed for the November ballot, which takes

aim at the state's landmark antipollution law, AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act. Blocking implementation of the law will halt California's efforts to cut greenhouse gases to 1990 levels by 2020 and also destroy the state's fast-growing green economy more than 3,000 busi-



nesses and \$5 billion in investments in a clean energy future for the state.

The initiative is the reincarnation of Assembly Bill 118, a creation of State Assembly Republicans that died in committee in January. The initiative campaign needs to gather 434,000 voter signatures by mid-April to qualify for the November ballot. Needless to say, when you are asked

to sign that petition, don't.

"We don't need Texas oilmen coming into California, peddling their pollution and preventing our progress on clean energy," said Charlotte Glennie, Global Warming Associate with Environment California.

"These Texas oil companies should invest their windfall profits in cleaning up their fuels



and refineries instead of perverting our initiative process to buy themselves a bailout," said Bill Magavern, Director of Sierra Club California.

"This proposal would take a wrecking ball to our state's clean air laws," said Nidia Bautista, Policy Director for the Coalition for Clean Air. "It would undo much of the progress we are making protecting public health and moving towards a clean energy economy."

According to a recent University of

California study, AB 32 will generate 112,000 jobs and increase the state's economy by \$20 billion.

Valero, the nation's largest independent refinery, was named one of the worst polluters in the U.S. by the Political Economy Research Institute. The company was hit with \$711 million in fines by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 2005. According to the Associated Press, in

continued on page 9

They So Totally Rock

Surfrider and Central Coast Salmon Enhancement team up to restore the Edna Valley Watershed

At their March meeting, the San Luis Bay Chapter of the Surfrider Foundation decided to partner with Central Coast Salmon Enhancement in their enhancement and restoration project for the Pismo Creek and Edna Valley Watershed.

"Surfrider is proud to be in alliance with Salmon Enhancement. The chapter members look forward to assisting the Pismo Creek/Edna Valley Watershed Restoration Project," said Chapter President Jeff Pienack.

The mission of the Pismo Creek/ Edna Area Watershed Forum is to



produce and implement a watershed management plan that protects the beneficial land and water uses within the watershed, while enhancing the quality of natural resources. The plan will emphasize protecting fish and wildlife habitat, water quantity and quality, flood management, and erosion control through voluntary and collaborative measures, community education, and outreach and restoration projects.

You can read the summary prepared by Central Coast Salmon Enhancement on Behalf of the Pismo Creek/Edna Area Steering Committee. Visit the Central Coast Salmon Enhancement Site: www.centralcoastsalmon.com/ watersheds/pismo/pismo.html **Surf's up** At Surfrider's March 5 meeting at the SLO Down Pub, Arroyo Grande, from left: Karl Kempton, Education Coordinator Jennifer Jozwiak, Marine Sanctuary Alliance Coordinator Carol Georgi, Jason Coontz, Piper Reily, Vice Chair Laura Heiker, Laura Pickering, Steve Hennigh, Haley Hudgens, Treasurer Mary Fullwood, Secretary Jennifer Blonder, Volunteer Coordinator Brad Snook, Greg Salas of CalPoly Surfrider Club, Al Barrow, Central CA Regional Manager Sarah Damron.

Right: San Luis Bay Chapter President Jeff Pienack.





Peter Darbee's Dog of an Initiative

3 Tapeworms Eating Away at the Internal Logic of Prop. 16

By John Geesman

On February 25, I had the privilege of testifying on Proposition 16 before the joint hearing of the California Senate Energy, Utilities and Telecommunications Committee and the California Assembly Utilities and Commerce Committee. This is what I said:

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard in opposition to Proposition 16. I delivered my first legislative testimony to your predecessor committees in 1975. In the ensuing 35 years, beside spending two decades in the bond markets, I served as Executive Director of the California Energy Commission when Jerry Brown was Governor; as the Chairman of the California Power Exchange during our disastrous experience with incompetent market regulation; as a Board member of the CaISO when Governor Davis asserted the State's authority over that body; and as the attorney member of the California Energy Commission from 2002 to 2008. I'm proud to say we licensed 26 power plants and one transmission line during my most recent tenure at the CEC.

I'm retired now, but spend much of my volunteer time as the Co-Chair of the American Council on Renewable Energy, prodding governments around the world to re-calibrate their energy policies in order to accelerate the pace of technological change.

Never, in all of that time or in any of those venues, have I seen political activity by a regulated utility so far outside the bounds of acceptable conduct as PG&E's sole sponsorship of the Constitutional Amendment politely referred to as Proposition 16.

I am mindful of the contempt for the legislative process, reliance on deceptive wording, and resort to strong-arm tactics that are manifest in PG&E's campaign. But today I want to take Proposition 16 at face value, and focus your attention on three tapeworms that eat away at the internal logic of the measure itself.

Tapeworm #1 is the elimination of customer choice. Who among us in

today's economy doesn't recognize that fewer choices mean higher prices? That's true of any commodity. Yet Proposition 16 actually wants to restrict the ability of electricity consumers to buy from anyone other than for-profit monopolies. Has California ever faced a greater need to bring competitive pressures downward on the price of electricity? But PG&E wants to lock its monopoly advantage into the State Constitution.

Tapeworm #2 is the mystery of where all this campaign money is coming from. PG&E says it will spend up to \$35 million, and insists all of that money will come from its shareholders. You and I know that every nickel that passes through PG&E's books comes from its captive customers — its regulated utility is the only business PG&E has! The CPUC determines what PG&E's cost of capital should be in order to provide for investment in needed infrastructure. But it sure doesn't set that rate at a level calculated to provide a \$35 million slush fund for sole-sponsored political adventurism. It ought to be illegal to take ratepayer money and use it politically against ratepayer interests. If PG&E's making an excessive return, it ought to give the money back.

Tapeworm #3 is a serious drafting error in the "grandfather clause" of Proposition 16. The authors attempted to exempt existing municipal utilities operating within their current territories, but they used an outmoded and unworkable "sole provider" definition. That means that within the existing 48 munis, every new connection — every new home buyer, every new business - would be subject to an election requiring the approval of two-thirds of the voters. That's the kind of drafting mistake the legislative committee process is designed to prevent.

Three tapeworms are enough to kill even the meanest dog, and you ought to do what you can to put this mongrel down. Your colleagues in the Senate who signed onto the Steinberg letter in December had it right. PG&E should acknowledge its mistake, abandon its campaign, and bring whatever grievance it thinks it has back to the Legislature for further consideration.

Former CEC Commissioner Geesman blogs at <u>http://pgandeballot</u> <u>initiativefactsheet.blogspot.com</u>





Social distortion Top: PG&E CEO Darbee. Above: tapeworm.

For the second secon

Support our local chapter

Get informed and stay that way

Sign up for the Santa

Cambria Water continued from page 5

source, there will be no time to take those steps later.

Of great interest to the audience was the possibility that a supply of (expensive) desalinated water could result in a cut in the town's allotment of (cheap) creek water. At the end of the evening, an audience member profusely thanked the panelists and local citizens who put the event togehter, and pointedly observed that it would have been nice if such an effort, and such information, had been brought to the community by the Cambria Community Services District, several members and staff of which were sitting in the back of the room.



photo/Kenn Kise

We send out an appeal in March to each of our members, asking for contributions directly to our Chapter. These contributions really do make a difference to us, and are an important part of our Chapter's budget.

When you make a donation to the Chapter, you support the Sierra Club's work in your own backyard. You allow us to continue our work to protect wilderness and wildlife, to improve the quality of life in our cities, and to promote the enjoyment of nature.

Please be as generous as you are able—remember, these funds directly affect your way of life in your neighborhood.



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

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Send a "subscribe me to e-alert" e-mail to sierraclub8@gmail.com



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search: "Santa Lucia" and become our friend!

Diablo

continued from page 1

time when the NRC blindly agreed with PG&E's seismic claims and ratepayers eventually forked over four billion dollars to correct the mistakes that were ignored.

Californians can ill afford to repeat these lessons in today's troubled economy. Chairman Jaczko was receptive to the idea and took it under consideration.

Back in California, the Alliance is working on making sure that our state's rights and obligations are not overlooked. By ignoring seismic threats—with their potential impacts on economics and reliability of energy production—PG&E places its ratepayers at risk again. This time, Sierra Club, CALPIRG and Environment California's Research and Policy Center have joined with A4NR. This time, ratepayers are better prepared and have the weight of state agencies, the legislature and local governments beside us. And this time, citizens will not allow the CPUC to sit by and assume the NRC will ensure that the newly discovered earthquake fault near Diablo won't be able to cause the disruption that Japan experienced

when their largest nuclear reactor was disabled by an earthquake on a fault the utility knew existed, but refused to investigate. This year's devastating series of earthquakes, from Haiti and Chile to Northern California and Taiwan, should be a wake-up call.

PG&E asked the CPUC to expedite ratepayer funding for seismic studies—but they didn't expedite the completion date, which still remains 2013-2014 —two years after the NRC says that Diablo may be relicensed! A4NR, Sierra Club, et al support expedited funding **but only if the studies are completed before license renewal proceeds.** We can't know what those results will be, but why invest nearly \$100 million more in the full renewal process until this basic question is answered: Is Diablo Canyon on shaky ground?

PG&E's request at the CPUC for ratepayer funding for seismic studies and license renewal applications makes no connection between the two. A4NR and the Sierra Club have filed protests in both cases and intend to intervene. We believe that the CPUC has ample grounds to deny this funding to PG&E—a trail of evidence that runs from their own staff report of 1988 attributing the \$4.4 billion in original cost overruns to seismic neglect, all the way through CPUC President Michael Peevey's letter to PG&E in June 2009 requiring them to do the seismic studies (see below).

Filing in a CPUC case is no small task. The paperwork and coordination are daunting, and we welcome all who would like to volunteer.

It is worthwhile: In the 2006 CPUC case, SLO volunteers Paula Daillak and Mark Skinner assisted the Alliance in San Francisco by handling boxes of copies and exhibits needed for the hearings. As a result of that day's efforts, the transcripts show PG&E Vice President James Becker saying their license renewal application would cost four to six million dollars. Today, PG&E says it is \$85 million. Ratepayers can now demand an explanation for a 2000 percent cost increase. It's in the record.

It is time for PG&E to keep its hands out of our pockets. It is time for PG&E to complete state-required seismic studies. It is time for Sierra Club members to speak out. Visit <u>www.a4nr.org</u> to find out about the work being done, and to find action letters to the CPUC.

Case Dismissed

continued from page 1

riding area to the south and the nature preserve to the north.

The off-road group Friends of Oceano Dunes and the Department of Parks declared that State Parks' presumed right to use the land for offroad recreation preempts all other land use policies and that the County must reverse its 2007 finding that the sale of the County's parcel to the OHV Division would not conform with the General Plan.

At a December 11 court hearing in SLO, lawyers for the County, the California Coastal Commission and the Sierra Club contested with attorneys for the Friends of Oceano Dunes and State Parks. Under prodding from Sierra Club lawyer Babak Naficy and sharp questioning by Judge Barry LaBarbera, the lawyer for Friends of Oceano Dunes admitted that they had dropped their "preemption" argument, and now wanted the judge simply to nullify the provision of the Local Coastal Plan that declares the County land to be a buffer area.

"How do I do that?," the judge replied, pointing out that there didn't seem to be grounds for such an action.

Coastal Commission attorney Christopher Pederson pointed out that if the off-roaders wanted to challenge a provision of the Local Coastal Plan, they had 60 days in which to do so before the LCP was certified by the Coastal Commission – a window that closed in 1984.

A few days later, with their case collapsing around them and an adverse court ruling clearly in their future, the Friends of Oceano Dunes asked the County to agree to an "emergency dismissal" of their case.

Valero

continued from page 7

2009, as the company reported losses of \$2 billion, CEO Bill Klesse received \$10.9 million in compensation, a 64% increase over the year before.

It's a wonder they can still afford to try to kill California's renewable energy economy and clean air laws.

The protesters said they would step up pressure against the oil company at its retail outlets throughout northern California.

To watch a video from the protest, go to YouTube and type "sierra club valero." For the latest news and developments, visit<u>www.NoOnValero.com</u>.

Where to go in SLO to let them know:

Valero Corner Store

PUC to PG&E: Shape Up and Shake Out

All credit to the County Board of Supervisors -- specifically Supervisors Adam Hill, Bruce Gibson and Jim Patterson -- for their decision on March 9 to urge the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to get the results of the 3-D seismic survey of the geology around Diablo Canyon in hand before completing its review of the license renewal application for the nuclear power plant.

Hill, Gibson and Patterson stood up for public safety and sound planning. They tried to pin down PG&E's representatives at the meeting, who desperately tried not to appear that they were making an argument for *less information*. Let there be no doubt: If the seismic survey shows that the faults around the plant are more powerful or plentiful than assumed, and that continuing to operate an aging nuclear power plant on that site beyond the expiration of its initial licensing period would be unwise and unsafe for the people of this county, and would mean risking an incident that could collapse the county's and the state's economy, PG&E wants to be sure they have their license renewal in hand before they get the bad news, and all the



Well, no.

As a private, investor-owned utility, PG&E is entitled to its opinion on what the state needs and what the state wants to see happen regarding the renewal of Diablo Canyon's operating license to ensure those needs are met. But PG&E's opinion is wrong.

The state – specifically the California Public Utilities Commission – not PG&E, is in a position to say what it needs and wants, and, in fact, has made this explicitly clear to PG&E and also informed it that PG&E's position on the matter is diametri"That position, however, does not allow the CPUC to properly undertake its AB 1632 obligations to ensure plant reliability, and in turn to ensure grid reliability, in the event Diablo Canyon has a prolonged or permanent outage. Therefore, the Commission directs PG&E to perform the following tasks as part of its license renewal feasibility studies for Diablo Canyon. "1 Report on the major

"1. Report on the major findings and conclusions from Diablo Canyon's seismic/

tsunami studies, as recommended in the AB 1632 Report (pp. 6, 7, 10 and 13), as well as studies that are directed by any subsequent legislative mandates, and report on the implications of these findings and conclusions for the long-term seismic vulnerability and reliability of the plant. ... [Full list of additional itemized issues follows.]

"PG&E's rate case, D. 07-03-044, specifically linked PG&E's license renewal feasibility study for Diablo Canyon to the AB 1632 assessment and PG&E is obligated to address the above itemized issues in its plant relicensing application. This commission will not be able to adequately and appropriately exercise its authority to fund and oversee Diablo Canyon's license extension without these AB 1632 issues being fully developed."

money spent and inertia gathered will be sufficient to finesse any adverse findings so their nuclear power plant can keep the fully amortized ratepayer dollars rolling in.

Rather than buy into that argument, the Supervisors chose not to take the course of blissful ignorance, or place profit ahead of public safety, or stand by while PG&E blows 85 million ratepayer dollars on a study that could turn out to be moot because they did the license renewal first and the seismic survey second.

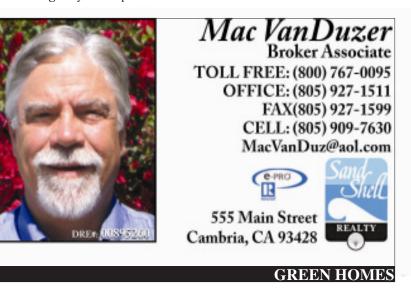
But PG&E is fighting hard to keep the seismic survey results out of its license renewal application.

In the March 4 edition of *SLO City News*, PG&E representative Emily Christensen Archer said that "to delay the application until the completion of that [seismic] study we believe... could jeopardize the state's ability to have long-term planning to meet the state's energy needs." cally opposed to the state's interest in long-term planning to meet its energy needs.

AB 1632 required a full survey of seismic issues in the vicinity of the Diablo Canyon plant, as urged by the California Energy Commission. A letter sent to PG&E by CPUC President Michael Peevey on June 25, 2009, clarified the matter for the utility:

"It has come to my attention that PG&E does not believe that it should include a seismic study, and other AB 1632 Report recommended studies, as part of its Diablo Canyon license extension studies for the CPUC. "Apparently, PG&E bases this position on the fact that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's license renewal application review process does not require that such studies be included within the scope of a license extension application. 900 Morro Bay Boulevard, Morro Bay

Arroyo Grande Valero 610 East Grand Avenue, Arroyo Grande



Energy FITness

continued from page 3

FITs have been tremendously successful at boosting use of renewables.

Recently, several jurisdictions from around the world including China, Brazil, Kenya, South Africa, Ukraine, Ontario, and Vermont have begun to implement FITs, joining at least 18 other nations already using them. Several other states, including California, are considering them.

In California there are two ways we

might get FITs. The California Public Utilities Commission is

considering a FIT rule. The current proposal, however, does not follow the critical best practice, developed from years of experience around the world, of using a

Morro Bay water continued from page 5

Morro Bay appears not to have learned the lesson the County learned in Los Osos.

Mr. Owen's audience was not amused. And this time, it was not a bunch of water-loving treehuggers loudly asking how it could be that the City is proposing to upgrade its wastewater treatment plant without including a component for recycling the water; it was members of the Morro Bay business community wondering aloud why this option is not even being considered, to the visible discomfiture of City staff present.

Staff will surely have opportunities to try to answer that question in the near future, as the citizens of Morro Bay take the opportunity to demand that the city's leaders do the right thing.

Bears

continued from page 6

called "problem bears" usually live in the urban-suburban interface. Shooting bears at random is as effective at reducing conflicts as shooting into a crowded room is at reducing crime. And using hunting as an aggressive and expansive lethal control of bears ignores the root cause of bear-human conflicts. Most encounters with bears are the result of irresponsible human behavior (e.g. cost-based rate, and instead uses an auction mechanism to set price. While better than nothing, it would be much more complex, risky, and off-putting to potential developers and investors than a straightforward published FIT based on the cost of generation plus a reasonable profit. It most likely would lead to fewer renewables projects, discrimination against smaller developers, and higher costs for renewable electricity

than a more straightforward FIT.

> A FIT bill (AB 1106, Fuentes) in the legislature was introduced last year and can be carried forward this year. Its foundations are good, but as currently written would apply only to projects up to

5 MW. We'd like it to apply to larger projects up to 20 MW. Sierra Club California is tracking it closely. If California can implement an effective FIT, our development of renewables will explode, creating many new jobs, reducing greenhouse gases, providing greener electricity to power plug-in vehicles, cleaning our

air, and securing our energy destiny.

TAKE ACTION

backcountry.

hunting in California.

We therefore urge you to reject the

CDFG's proposals to expand bear

As California moves forward toward FITs, there will be opportunities for you to help in advocacy with California legislators and regulators. To receive alerts, sign up at the Sierra Club California web site: <u>http://sierraclubcalifornia.org</u> Click on "Take Action" and fill out the web form. A Solar Save

The San Luis Coastal Unified School District has contracted with REC Solar to bring solar power to nine schools in the district.

One hitch: REC Solar has found that because the roofs of the schools would have to be strengthened at prohibitive cost to meet current building codes and support the weight of solar panels, the panels must be mounted on canopies over the school's parking lots and open spaces. As these areas are invariably surrounded by trees, a significant number of trees must be removed to ensure that enough sun gets to the panels.

On February 12, Chapter leaders convened a meeting with the REC Solar team and concerned community members to discuss the unfortunate trade-off of removing trees – nature's best carbon sinks – to accommodate a technology that will reduce carbon emissions.

At our urging, the REC Solar team went back to their panel location plan for San Luis Obispo High School, one of the campuses slated for the highest level of tree removal, and found that a "space on a small hill could accommodate ground mount panels and allow us to eliminate a set of parking lot panels in the west section of the parking lot," according to project consultant Brad Parker. "This would prevent approximately 24 trees being impacted by trimming or removal."

We're also urging the District to consider the option of thin-film solar membranes that would allow the panels to be light enough to be placed on school roofs, above the trees, without the major retrofits necessary to ensure the roofs are strong enough to support conventional photovoltaic panels.



A Coastal Close Call

Last February, the County Board of Supervisors met to vote on its annual legislative agenda – a local wish list that they authorize the County's lobbyists to push for every year in Sacramento and D.C.

Buried at the end of the draft agenda was an idea to add a few bucks to the general fund: a directive to get the California Coastal Act amended to require that anyone seeking to appeal a project permit issued in the county's Coastal Zone must pay the county's appeal fee – soon slated to be hiked north of \$800 – before their appeal could be heard by the Coastal Commission.

Central to the California Coastal Act when it was drafted and voted into law is the waiver of any fee to appeal a project permit. The appeals process is the way that coastal projects in local jurisdictions throughout the state are brought before the Commission, as arbiters of the Coastal Act, so that state law may be interpreted and applied to coastal planning issues that may appear to apply to a single project in a specific locale but which could, in fact, set precedents for coastal development statewide.

The Act ensured that there be no fee for such appeals in order to ensure that any party with concerns over a coastal project would have a direct and unencumbered path to the Coastal Commission, which would then determine whether the issues involved required its intervention and review.

The Santa Lucia Chapter spotted the Coastal Act amendment item in the board's legislative agenda a few days before it was scheduled to be ratified by the board. We alerted the Coastal Commission to the dagger aimed at the heart of the Coastal Act nestled in the legislative agenda of the SLO County Board of Supervisors. The Commission alerted the supervisors to the reasons why appeals to the Coastal Commission must remain free

at risk. Almost every area of California is densely populated with people and many of them recreate in bear country. Since hunting hounds are usually off-leash, packs of hounds may trespass onto private land, harass

country. Since hunting hounds are usually off-leash, packs of hounds may trespass onto private land, harass companion, farm, and ranch animals, and destroy private property. The presence of packs of hunting hounds also disturbs the peace and tranquility of those who recreate in the Santa Lucian • April 2010

landowners who refuse to dispose of garbage properly).

• Hunting of bears puts the public



California Federation for Animal Legislation **EPIC-** Environmental Protection Information Center Fund for Wild Nature In Defense of Animals Klamath Forest Alliance Latino Democrats of Stanislaus County Los Padres ForestWatch Luka's List of Just Causes Marin Vegetarian Education Group Ocean Defenders Alliance Ojai Wildlife League Paw PAC People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals Santa Cruz Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Sierra Club Kern-Kaweah Chapter Sierra Club Santa Lucia Chapter The Humane Society of the United States The Urban Cat Project United Animal Nations

of charge for all citizens of the state of California.

The next day, the Board dropped that item from its legislative agenda.





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Do Sierra Club Members Have More Fun?

Do you really have to ask? You do? Then obviously you did not get this copy of the Santa Lucian though the mail, but by dumb luck -- in a coffeeshop, a library, off your mother's credenza -- and have been enjoying it without benefit of membership. That's easily fixed! Fill in, clip out & send in the coupon under the wind turbine on page 2, or go to www.santalucia. sierraclub.org, click on the "join or give" button, and follow instructions. It will be worth it just for the burden of guilt that will be lifted from your shoulders and the free tote bag.



Graphic Artist

Outings and Activities Calendar

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

All our hikes and activities are open to all Club members and the general public. If you have any suggestions for hikes or outdoor activities, questions about the Chapter's outing policies, or would like to be an outings leader, call Outings Chair Joe Morris, 772-1875. For information on a specific outing, please call the outing leader.

Fri.-Sun., April 2-4, Carrizo Plain.

Visit the Carrizo for a rare and stunning displays of wildflowers. We have permission to use the house next to Visitors Center Friday after 5 p.m. until Sunday. Fri potluck 6:30. Those using the house are asked by the Dept. of Fish and Game to do 1 hour of work in or around it. You also can stay nearby at Selby Camp. Contact Carlos to stay in the house. Saturday, meet outside the house 9 a.m. for leader's choice hike or have free time on your own. Hike Sunday for those interested. Rain postpones outing to a later weekend. Info, contact Carlos at 546-0317.

Wednesday, April 7, 14, 21, and 28, 5:30 p.m. Informal Hikes Around San Luis Obispo. 1 to 2-hour hikes around San Luis Obispo, 5-6 miles, elevation gain around 1200 feet. For more information or to sign up for Hikers List send e-mail to Gary Felsman (see website listings).

Mon-Sat, April 5-10, Wildflowers And Fence Removal-Carrizo Plain National Monument. Outing includes three and a half days of service, removing/modifying fences to allow resident pronghorn to travel more widely. Our schedule allows at least a day for exploring, either hiking or driving backcountry roads. Because we are privileged to be staying at one of the old ranch houses, our trip is limited to 14 participants. \$30 covers five dinners. Contact leader: Craig Deutsche, (310-477-6670), craig.deutsche@gmail.com. CNRCC Desert Committee.

Sunday, April 11, 4 p.m. Sierra Singles - Montana de Oro Bluffs Trail Join bika laader Staay Talba

Trail. Join hike leader Stacy Talbert for a leisurely exploration of ocean bluffs at Montana de Oro. Relaxed 4mile round trip hike on a flat trail with possible excursion to stairaccess beach, browsing tidal pools, watching sunset. Bring layers for cool evening, sturdy shoes, water. Meet at trailhead parking past the ranger station, 2.6 miles after Montana de Oro entrance sign. Dinner gathering after. Call Stacy, 818-472-6827, for more details or questions.

Sat., Apr. 17, 9 a.m. Guided Walk of Mission-Era SLO. Come on an

Limit 20 people. For details, reservations and meeting place call Gary, 473-3694 (5F). Threat of rain cancels.

Fri-Sun, April 16-18, Mojave National Preserve Service Trip. Come help restore an historic water feature to provide water for wildlife. The work involves protecting several springs by earth work, stabilization work, putting up a fence and some infrastructure in and around a qanat. Sat-Sun, April 24-25, Owens Valley Work Project. Project will probably be bashing tamarisk along Owens River. Work on Saturday, extensive birding opportunities on Sunday. Camp at Diaz Lake, just south of Lone Pine. Group potluck Saturday night. Bring all camping gear, or stay in motel in nearby Lone Pine. For more information, contact leaders Cal and Letty French, <u>lettyfrench@</u> <u>gmail.com</u>. Santa Lucia Chapter and



"Reflections - Sweet Springs" Photo-Painting on Watercoker Paper (Mixed media: Pignent Print w/Acrylic)

"Painting With Light"

Paul J. McCloskey . Photo-Paintings

"New Visions of the Central Coast"

P.O. Box 13013 . San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

805.235.3001

email: paul_mccloskey@mac.com

http://web.mac.com/paul_mccloskey/

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Our effort will be directed by staff from Mojave National Preserve. Friday hike for those arriving in the morning. Plenty of wildflowers likely. We will work all day Saturday and until noon on Sunday. Ranger talk about the Preserve on Saturday evening. Camping will be rustic. Email or call leader for reservation information. Leader: Rich Juricich, <u>rich.sac@ pacbell.net</u>, 916-492-2181. CNRCC Desert Committee. This is a partial listing of Outings offered by our chapter. Please check the web page <u>www.santalucia.sierraclub.org</u> for the most up-to-date listing of activities.

CNRCC Desert Committee.

Sat-Sun, April 24-25, Exploring Mojave National Preserve. We will meet Saturday 9 a.m. at Teutonia Peak trailhead on Cima Road and hike out on Cima Dome. Primitive car camp at Sunrise Rock. Sunday morning, visit the museum at Kelso Depot and then on to Kelso Dunes -called "the singing dunes" due to their impressive sounds. Optional Sunday night camp at the Granite Mountains. For reservations contact leader: Carol Wiley at <u>desertlily1@</u> <u>verizon.net</u> or (760) 245-8734. CNRCC Desert Committee.

May 1-2, Sat-Sun, Fence Removal/ Hike/Carcamp in Carrizo Plain. To allow pronghorn antelope greater mobility, we will remove old ranching fences. Weather may be warm. Work Saturday, camp and potluck dinner that evening. Hike Sunday. Leaders will be at Selby Camp Friday night for those arriving early. More information from leaders: Cal and Letty French, (239-7338). Prefer e-mail <u>lettyfrench@ gmail.com</u>. Santa Lucia Chapter, CNRCC Desert Committee, and Los Padres ForestWatch.

Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park May 7-9; Jul 16-19; Aug 6-9; Sep 10-12.

CA's Channel Islands are Galapagos USA! Marvel at the sight of whales, seals, sea lions, rare birds & blazing wildflowers. Hike the wild, windswept trails. Kayak the rugged coastline. Snorkel in pristine waters. Discover remnants of the Chumash people who lived on these islands for thousands of years. Or just relax at sea. These 3 & 4-day "live aboard" fundraiser cruises are sponsored by the Angeles Chapter Political Committee & Sierra Club California Political Committee. Depart from Santa Barbara aboard the 68' Truth. \$590 for May and Sep; \$785 for July & August, includes an assigned bunk, all meals, snacks & beverages, plus the services of a ranger/naturalist who will travel with us to lead hikes on each island and point out interesting features. To make a reserva-

informative and easy stroll past the Mission, adobes, and Chinatown to learn about the beginnings of SLO and its early pioneers, famous and infamous. Families and kids over 7 welcome. Meet NW corner of Monterey and Osos Sts. 1 1/2 hrs. Leader: Joe Morris, 772-1875.

Sat., April 17, 8 a.m. Machesna Mountain. A 12-15 mile hike, 3000 foot elevation gain, through Machesna Wilderness. From American Canyon Campground, we will climb 1500' to an open meadow and pond below Machesna Mt. After lunch, climb to ridge overooking the Carrizo Plain and then descend to a lush green valley, before climbing up to our final rest stop. Bring lunch, water, sturdy hiking shoes, and plan to be out all day. Some of us may go to the Pozo Saloon after, if open. Meet at Pacific Beverage Company in Santa Margarita. Not a beginner's hike.

Sat., April 24, 9 a.m. Sierra 20's/ 30's-Montana de Oro Bloody Nose-Cable-Dune Trail Loop. Join leader Stacy Talbert to hike, meet, and network with other 20's/30's who enjoy all the Central Coast has to offer. This 4-mile loop hike, 400 foot elevation gain, explores the terrains of Montana de Oro State Park, from eucalyptus groves to sandy bluffs. Dress for the weather, bring sturdy hiking shoes, water, and poles if you like to use them. Lunch afterward. You can check in with Sierra Club 20's/30's on Facebook by searching for friend Santa Lucia. For more details or questions contact Stacy, 818-472-6827.

tion mail a \$100 check payable to Sierra Club to leaders Joan Jones Holtz & Don Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732. Contact leaders for more information (626-443-0706; jholtzhln @aol.com).

