



SIERRA
CLUB

- 40 Years on the SLO Coast -
Santa Lucia Chapter
1968-2008

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General Meeting

Our General Meetings are on their annual summer hiatus. See you in September!



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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

Carrizo: Sun and Shadow

The Darkling Plain

By Cal French
Executive Committee

I met a traveler from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert . . . Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies,
whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed.
And on the pedestal these words appear:
"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

- Ozymandias

by Percy Bysshe Shelley (1818)

The Carrizo Plain, known to some as the Carissa Plains, stretches for hundreds of thousands of acres between the Caliente Range and the Temblor Range in southeastern San Luis Obispo County. It is a historic place where thousands of years ago the first among us gathered and shared. The mysteries of their symbolic art par-



tially remain today at Painted Rock, a sacred place for peoples from the Pacific shore and the vast inland. By foresight and chance, its southern half has been rescued into the Carrizo

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What Price, Solar?

by Sue Harvey
Conservation Committee

On April 11, the California Energy Commission (CEC) held a meeting -- one in a series -- dealing with the proposed thermal solar energy facility proposed for Carrizo Plain.

The Carrizo Energy Solar Farm (CESF) is designed to generate 177 megawatts. The electricity will be generated with a stream generator. The plant would use curved mirrors to focus the sun on a system of water filled pipes, creating steam to run the generators. The facility would have a 115-foot cooling tower and 40-foot observation towers. The plant would cover one square mile and be enclosed by a 10-foot chain link fence. Ausra, the applicant, has an option to buy an adjacent 2,000 acres for its construction lay-down site and future expansion. Construction could take up to three years, involve hundreds of employees on multiple shifts, and have 50 permanent employees. The Plain is remote and difficult to access.

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San Joaquin Settlement: PG&E Must Cool It on CCA

Implications for SLO as we develop our own Community Choice plan against opposition from giant utility

from Power Connections, Mar.-Apr. 2008, Kings River Conservation District

On April 10, the San Joaquin Valley Power Authority (SJVA) and Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) jointly filed a settlement agreement with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). The agreement represents a proposed settlement of the complaint filed by the SJVA in June 2007 regarding PG&E's marketing conduct against SJVA's community choice aggregation program.

Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) allows California cities and counties to supply electricity to their citizens, increase the amount

of non-polluting, renewable energy they use, and maintain local control

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photo:Kevin Webb

It's time for America to get smart about energy and be less dependent on dwindling oil reserves. We need to increase our use of clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar power.

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SIERRA CLUB
 CALIFORNIA

I'd Rather Not Know That

Denial is not just a river in Egypt, but it does have several intriguing tributaries. When it comes to environmental issues, two or three of these have been running high in our neck of the woods recently, so what say we hop in the kayak and shoot the rapids of treacherous logic? Hang on tight!

1. *I want to keep doing what I'm doing.* It is hard to find an off-road aficionado who will ever admit to the possibility of significant environmental impacts from his chosen sport. "I will give anyone a box of sand and a hammer -- and \$100 if they can cause any damage!," one local exponent of the hobby wrote recently, dismissing the notion of the Oceano Dunes could be anything other than a sand-covered automotive playpen. The findings of biologists that coastal dune ecosystems are rare and fragile; the fact that vehicular destruction of vegetation at the Oceano-Nipomo complex has resulted in accelerated sand encroachment on the stream and wetlands ecosystem there; the decision by SLO County and the California Coastal Commission to designate portions of the Oceano Dunes -- including the County land currently used as part of the riding area -- as especially sensitive natural areas that must be set aside as buffers for habitat protection... none of this makes an impact on the rationale "I want to keep doing it, therefore what I'm doing is not a problem."

2. *Pay no attention to that policy behind the curtain.* The proponents of Proposition 98, seeking to amend the government's eminent domain powers, were especially aggrieved by the ballot argument mounted against their initiative by opponents (and by the state Legislative Analysts Office in simply summarizing what the measure said) which pointed out that, in addition to being fake eminent domain reform and gutting environmental laws protecting our air, water, coastline and wildlife, the proposition would wipe out low-income housing by abolishing rent control. "Proposition 98," its authors wrote carefully, "will never cause renters who **now** have their rents limited to lose their

current rent control [emphasis added]. Read Proposition 98, Section 6...and you will see that...everyone now covered by rent controls is fully protected." But a perusal of Section 6 revealed exactly how Prop 98 was crafted to abolish all current and future rent control immediately, and abolish rent control measures in effect prior to January 1, 2007, as current tenants move away or die.

Why would anyone cite supporting evidence that directly contradicts their position? Such is the power of belief -- including the belief that no one will be able to see through your clever argument.

Which brings us to:
 3. *I like big, shiny, simple solutions.*

Paul Ehrlich, erstwhile *Population Bomb*-er and developer of the simplistic equation $I=PAT$ -- environmental Impacts equal Population times Affluence times Technology -- was once a hero to the proponents of taller fences and increased deportation of undocumented workers as a population reduction measure, but he was disowned by the simple-shiny-solution- to-illegal-immigration cohort in 2004 because they are allergic to underlying causes and Ehrlich has impermissibly deepened his analysis: "What we want to do is develop a foreign policy that reduces the need of other people to come here," he said; "change our agricultural policy so that farmers in poor countries, instead of having to send their children to the United States to get money, would be able to thrive on their own. But, right now, our trade policies, which are free trade for the rich and high tariffs for the poor, are just hurting the poor people of the world and forcing them to try and come and make a living in our country." The Sierra Club agrees.

The biggest benefactor of big simple solution syndrome today is the nuclear power lobby. When the *Santa Lucian* noted that it would require the improbable construction of at least 1,000 new nuclear power plants -- with attendant impossible nuclear waste storage challenges -- to make any significant reduction in green house gas emissions, a reader wrote

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The Executive Committee meets the fourth Tuesday of every month at 3:30 p.m. at the chapter office, located at 547-B Marsh St., San Luis Obispo. All members are welcome to attend.

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Tom Schweich

Save the Salinas

Help deflect a sand & gravel sandbagging

San Luis Obispo County must weigh and mitigate the impacts of removing massive amounts of sand and gravel from the bed of the Salinas River in the San Miguel area.

There are six applications going through the Planning Department that could permit a total of 492,000 cubic yards of material annually, including current permitted mines in that area.

County Planning was seeking to approve the applications individually with Negative Declarations — i.e. statements that the projects will have *no* environmental impacts! The only thing that stopped this from steam-rolling straight through at the May 8 meeting of the Planning Commission was a letter from the California Department of Fish and Game stating that upon the agency's review of the Pankey Sand Mine application, they had concluded that the a full Environmental Impact Report should be



The Salinas in Monterey County -- which SLO County did not bother to inform of its massive river mining plans.

prepared. The applicants are now looking at a choice between separate EIR's for each project, or one EIR analyzing the cumulative impacts of all the projects. The first permit hearing has been continued to an October Planning Commission meeting.

The applicants and the County don't like either of those choices, and the pressure is on DFG to change its mind and let the projects go through as-is.

TAKE ACTION

Please write, call or send him an e-mail of support and thanks to William E. Loudermilk at Fish and Game. A simple thank-you and support for the Department's comments is sufficient. It is very important to thank the Department for requiring a full Environmental Impact Report on Salinas River sand and gravel mining operations in San Luis Obispo County. Encourage them to continue to stand by the science and not yield

to pressure from County officials or the project applicants.

Send your message of thanks to:

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New Voices, New Stories: Sierra Club 2008 Convention, Jun. 21-22

By Colleen Flannery, Sierra Club California Outreach Coordinator

Sierra Club California turns a respectable 21 years old this year — and you're invited to celebrate.

The Sierra Club California Convention takes place June 21-22 at Rancho El Chorro in San Luis Obispo. Watch Sierra Club California's website, www.sierraclubcalifornia.org, for details.

Seasoned conventioners will be pleasantly surprised by the delicious menu and drawn in by engaging programs and entertainment.

Did you think that you had everything figured out when you turned 21? Sierra Club California sure

doesn't. That's why our 21st birthday party will include an effort to bring "new voices" to our membership.

You'll hear from Jon Schwedler, organizer for the "Sierra Sportsmen," who's trying to bring nontraditional allies to the Club. We're also pleased to welcome Paul Okamoto, a San Francisco architect with Okamoto-Saijo Architecture. Since the building sector contributes to about 30 percent of the greenhouse gas emissions via the energy it uses, building designers have a real impact on our contribution to global warming.

We'll also focus on bringing new

leaders to the club, and on cultivating the next generation of young members.

Were you just finding your own voice at 21? All across California, many voices make up the Sierra Club. While we speak as one club, everyone has their own reason for joining.

If you'd like to do so, you can share your own "Sierra Club Story," that will become an asset to the club and an important reminder of why we're all here. Come prepared to be interviewed by a Sierra Club California representative who wants to hear about your unique commitment to our natural resources.

Our delegates rank among our most committed environmentalists, and we want to share their stories.

Of course, we'll have plenty of business to attend to as well. Sierra Club California will give all of its members an update on the important battles we're fighting at the state Capitol on your behalf. California truly is birthing a new green age, and like most births, it's a painful process.

Your Sacramento representatives will do their best this year to protect the Global Warming Solutions Act, AB 32, from attack. Republican lawmakers and some California industries want to delay this important law, which will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by billions of metric tons.

Sierra Club California also will continue to sponsor a measure that will bring more children into our natural places. Do you remember the first time you heard an owl hoot in the

woods, or watched a spiral of water shimmy past the paddle of your kayak? Sadly, today's kids are more likely to be indoors, hearing electronic noise or watching a digital screen. It's what Richard Louv, in his landmark *Last Child in the Woods*, calls "Nature Deficit Disorder."

You'll learn more about these efforts — and how you can help — at the convention. Keep tracking www.sierraclubcalifornia.org for information.

Painting of the Month



Susan McKee's acrylic & collage "Visitors to Shanghai" is the latest canvas to grace the walls of Chapter HQ in downtown SLO, courtesy of the San Luis Artists' Collective. All the paintings on loan from the Artists' Collective can be viewed during Sierra Club office hours, M-F, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.



Sierra Club camping event, circa early 20th century.

Charles Webber © California Academy of Sciences

240,00 Acres of Tejon

Sierra Club Makes History

Tejon Ranch Co.



by Elizabeth Saas, Editor, Southern Sierran - Angeles Chapter

On May 8, the Sierra Club and four other leading environmental organizations announced a historic land conservation agreement with the Tejon Ranch Company.

"The Sierra Club's Tejon-Tehachapi Park Task Force has worked toward the protection of the unique and critically important ecological treasures at Tejon," said Task Force Chair Katherine Squires. "This historic agreement achieves that protection. I just think this is extraordinary."

The agreement protects ninety percent of the 270,000-acre ranch in perpetuity. Tejon Ranch is "the largest contiguous private property remaining in California and the keystone for southern California's natural legacy," says Sierra Club leader Jim Dodson, who represented the Sierra Club in the negotiations.

Vast in size, Tejon Ranch is equally vast in its biodiversity, as it marks the

intersection of the Sierra Nevadas, the coastal range, the San Joaquin Valley, and the Mojave Desert. Tejon Ranch offers a quintessentially Californian experience of nature. "In one day, a visitor can see fields of poppies in the Antelope Valley, travel through a Joshua tree forest, roam ridgetops of white fir and cedar incense, descend through oak woodlands and cross a vast plain with views to distant peaks at the western edge of the Central Valley," said Bill Corcoran, who joined Dodson in the negotiations as Sierra Club's Senior Regional Representative.

The agreement safeguards the enjoyment of this unique combination of Californian environments forever, and will also preserve habitat for threatened and endangered species on the Ranch, including California condor, San Joaquin kit fox, blunt-nosed leopard lizard, San Joaquin antelope squirrel, striped

adobe lily, Bakersfield cactus, Valley elderberry longhorn beetle and Tehachapi slender salamander. Scientists who have worked on condor recovery for decades have reviewed the development and found it to be consistent with the bird's recovery, particularly given the large scale of permanent habitat protection won through the agreement.

The agreement marked the culmination of twenty months of negotiations with the Tejon Ranch Company. "These were very difficult negotiations," said Dodson. "An outstanding team of some of the state's best land use, real estate and environmental law attorneys as well as locally knowledgeable scientists worked with the conservation organizations to achieve this agreement."

The crucial achievement of the negotiations was Tejon Ranch Company's agreement to maintain the ecological integrity of ninety

percent of the Ranch almost entirely as one contiguous habitat. The preserved lands will consist of conservation easements in donated and purchased areas totaling 240,000 acres—seven times the size of San Francisco. These conservation easements mean that we have removed forever the possibility of development on those lands.

There are two components to the easements. First, the Ranch will dedicate without cost 178,000 acres for conservation. In addition, through the state bond fund, and based on a fair market price determined by state appraisal, conservation easements will be purchased for five potential development areas on the ranch totaling 62,000 acres. From the governor down, state officials have assured the Sierra Club and its partners that the purchase of easements on Tejon Ranch will be a top priority.

Eventually, when the state budget allows, approximately 50,000 acres of the conserved lands will be acquired in fee by the state.

The agreement establishes a conservancy with a board of 12 directors (Four of the directors will be members of the environmental groups party to the agreement; four will be from the Ranch. These eight will choose the remaining four.) The conservancy will own the easements, enabling it to manage, restore and enhance native diversity on the land protected through the easements. Ongoing Ranch activities on the conserved lands will be subject to a Ranch management plan developed by the Conservancy.

In exchange, Sierra Club, the Natural Resources Defense Council, (NRDC), Audubon California, the Planning and Conservation League, and the Endangered Habitats League agreed not to oppose the proposed developments on the remaining ten percent of the Ranch. "Not opposing the developments was a very difficult decision for the Club, said Corcoran. "It was agreed to in this specific instance because of the once-in-a-

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A "Full Service" Weekend

By Letty French

We call them "service" trips, usually because participants are serving the environment in some beneficial way. Our recent trip to the Owens Valley to bash tamarisk certainly provided an unusual service: Invasive tamarisk removal.

Spring was breaking out all over the valley; lots of flowers and lots of birds. Our group of nine met Mike Prather at Diaz Lake near Lone Pine early Saturday morning. After looking for waterfowl on the lake and yellow-headed blackbirds among the rushes, we carpooled down to the Northwest Seep area. We had worked there last year, but some of the bashed bushes were waving their feathery leaves at us. Drat, that tamarisk is tough.

Cal and Tony got out their chain

saws and attacked the tree-sized plants, while others took loppers and handsaws to use upon the smaller plants. Jackie and Jackie did most of the pulling of the cut brush off towards the grassy areas. Evidence of cattle (cow pies) was everywhere, but the plan was that the cattle disliked the loose brush and would avoid the brush-covered grass. Mike furnished most of the tools and he also brought the Garlon to spray on the cut stubs. This herbicide is specific for tamarisk, but must be applied within 15 minutes after a plant is cut. He and I both followed the others, using spray bottles to apply the Garlon very specifically. We took a lunch break and had demolished the last of the patch before 2 o'clock. Hooray!

Mike took us up in the Alabama Hills, where the wildflowers bloomed profusely. Scarlet locoweed and Indian paintbrush competed with yellow desert dandelions and phacelia for most colorful. Little brown-eyed evening primrose hid among the sagebrush. A newly made trail led to two nice natural arches overlooking a lot of the Movie Flat area. Mike encouraged us to visit the Movie Museum which records many of the motion pictures filmed here. Then we returned to Diaz Lake campground for dinner and early to bed.

Sunday was again warm and beautiful. We drove around to Keeler and entered the lakebed where LA Dept of Water and Power is doing their huge rewatering project. The shallow water

was filled with birds: thousands of avocets, a few stilts, scoters, wimbrels, curlews, yellowlegs, and other waterfowl. Small brown birds hung out among the saltgrass; savannah sparrows and others. Gulls swarmed in some areas, including a Franklin gull. The morning passed rapidly, and at lunch time we headed back to camp.

One last service was in order. Two of our co-workers and friends had all the paperwork done to get married, but needed someone to do the honors. . Mike is an amazingly versatile person: he could do it. So, on a beautiful spring day, there at a picnic table at the base of the snowy Sierra Nevada range, he pronounced them husband and wife. Really a "full service" trip.

Smart Growth or Dumb Development?

You can help make the choice on July 15

by Eric Greening

In the January *Santa Lucian*, I wrote an article that left the readers to help determine if smart growth in this county would actually mean something or only be a matter of lip service (www.santalucia.sierraclub.org/lucian/2008/Jan08.pdf). Now, we can no longer take even lip service for granted; we must struggle first for the bare survival of the policies, and then for the implementation that will actually move forward.

When the Board of Supervisors received the Planning Commission's recommended implementing language for Smart Growth policies, they also faced a seething crowd, many of whose members claimed to have been given inadequate notice that the Board was about to cram these policies down their throats. Given that the Board had adopted the policies two years ago at a fully noticed public hearing, and that the Planning Commission had held no fewer than six well-noticed public hearings as they created the implementations they were recommending to the Board, it is hard to see how smart growth opponents could perceive an element of surprise (many of the smart growth opponents were familiar POPR faces from the Cayucos viewshed debacle), but at that Board hearing not only the implementations but the policies themselves were attacked. Although there were also smart growth supporters in the crowd, the overall tone of the meeting led the Board to postpone action until July 15.

It is not clear how the choices will be framed on July 15, but it is abundantly clear that if there is a "great silent majority" that believes that the smart growth principles need to be retained in letter and implemented in practice, such a majority needs to attend this hearing in great numbers and change the tone of the discussion.

Most of these principles are simply about facing reality. As an economy based on cheap oil must either crumble or be reinvented, we can no longer afford to fragment rural lands for sprawling development. If sprawling development and long commutes require the construction or widening of many miles of road, a huge bill will fall to *someone* to pay. Although the present administration in Sacramento has managed to partially shelter drivers from the cost of roads by chopping the vehicle license fees and

raising the replacement road money from bonded indebtedness (Proposition 1B, to be paid, with compound interest, over the next 30 years, by today's young people), the rapid escalation of those costs will soon overwhelm even that huge effort at denial. According to a recent report by the Council of Governments, the cost of the major highway projects in this county has inflated by 131% over barely three years, driven by surges in the cost of energy, asphalt, and steel.

An additional cost of sprawl is now receiving considerable attention. Both state legislation (SB 865) and our Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (revisions to Basin Plan Criteria for onsite wastewater systems) are forcing users of septic tanks to confront the true long-term costs of depending on such systems. It behooves jurisdictions with land use authority (cities and counties) throughout the Central Coast region to halt, or at least greatly slow, the creation of new development that would depend on septic systems.

Even if owners of septic tanks could handle the considerable costs that come with the new requirements, the increased rates of septic tank pumping contained in these new requirements will create an overflow of septage beyond the capacity of wastewater plants to deal with, unless new ones are built (do you want one in your neighborhood?) or new solutions are applied to the problem. And this is true even if further septic-tank-dependent development is halted—even moreso if such development continues or accelerates.

For those who can't attend a daytime hearing on July 15 (we won't know what time of day until about July 9), be sure to contact your Supervisor in advance and make your wishes known. If you can attend, let's *be* the change we want to see in the world, and arrive on foot, by bicycle, by carpool and by bus! But most important, let's *be there* in numbers to show our support for reality-based decision making!



I'd Rather Not

continued from page 2

to let us know that he considered nuclear power essential to counteract global warming and stated his opinion that the "1,000 new reactors" statistic was "fallacious." The statistic comes from a 2003 MIT study. It was a stat our correspondent disliked.

Nuclear power emits less carbon than burning coal and oil – the mining-to-decommissioning fuel chain puts it about on a par with natural gas. Therefore, per the nuclear lobby's p.r. efforts, we should embrace nukes as the solution to global warming. But new nukes cost too much, take too long, and reduce emissions too little to be the answer to global warming. And they drain funds away from conservation, energy efficiency technology, distributed, renewable sources of electricity and combined heat & power, which beat nukes on all the above counts and therefore really *are* the solution, but they don't look like one big, shiny, simple solution, and they do not make as much money for investor-owned utilities invested in nuclear power plants.

That's why the nuclear snake-oil salesmen have been able to make some headway with their multi-million dollar p.r. blitz. But in California, they are up against a study by the California Energy Commission, now underway, on the costs, benefits and risks of continuing to rely on nuclear power for a portion of our state's electricity generation. The Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility, home-grown here in SLO, can take a lot of the credit for bringing that study into

being. The ANR and the Santa Lucia Chapter have brought to the CEC's attention existing studies that they need to take into account in weighing the full cost of nukes versus alternatives. Those studies include "Energy Innovations: A Prosperous Path to a Clean Environment" by the Union of Concerned Scientists, and "Carbon-Free and Nuclear-Free: A Roadmap for U.S. Energy Policy," published in 2007 by the Nuclear Policy Research Institute and the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research.

Grover Beach resident Rochelle Becker, ANR co-founder and vice-chair of the Sierra Club's Nuclear Power Task Force, has little doubt as to the outcome of the CEC study, provided that it is A) fair and B) comprehensive. "The future of nuclear power as an economically viable energy source just isn't there," she says. "All the costs of nuclear are going up, and the costs of clean, renewable energy are coming down."

The wealth of data in these studies make the conclusion unavoidable. It may be unwanted information for those who don't want to know what they don't know, but if they do some reading outside their "we need nukes" comfort zone, they might learn that you can't have too much information.

And then they might turn some useful outrage against those who have been fibbing to us in so many ways for so long for the benefit of their industry, and at the expense of the public welfare and the planet.

Help fund the missing link!

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THE MISSING LINK

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THANK YOU

The Rotary Club of San Luis Obispo is appealing to the community to help raise \$307,000 to fund the "Missing Link" section of the Railroad Safety Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail to connect Cal Poly to the rest of the Trail and the Downtown – car free. Please donate whatever you can – every dollar will help. Along with support from other residents, organizations and businesses in San Luis Obispo who also value healthy community and clean environment, we will finish this trail and create a safe, convenient path everyone can use. LET'S MAKE IT HAPPEN! DONATE NOW: www.RRtrailfund.org INFO: Jan Howell Marx 541-2716

Taking Issue

problematic environmental coverage & commentary in our local media

“Lawmakers portray nuclear as the key part of future U.S. energy,” by David Whitney, *The Tribune*, April 24, 2008

Summary: It's full speed ahead for lots more nuclear power plants everywhere, with only minor issues to be resolved. Everyone at this Congressional hearing, including a senior scientist at the Natural Resources Defense Council, is on board...unless you take a closer look.



“Nuclear power is in the mix,” said Thomas Cochran, a senior nuclear scientist at the Natural Resources Defense Council. “It’s a mature industry. When it can compete, we should let it. The problem is that new nuclear plants are not economic.”

This quote is so far out of context, it is questionable whether the reporter attended the hearings or read the statements of those he quoted. Dr. Cochran said far more than just that nuclear plants are not economic, and the missing pieces are revealing both

of industry and media bias. When told of this article, Dr. Cochran said of the reporter, “He did not read my written statement.”

In his Summary of Recommendations, Dr. Cochran wrote: “Stop subsidizing the construction of new nuclear power plants, and reject further subsidies for new nuclear plants in climate mitigation legislation. The economically inefficient way to mitigate climate change is to continue to subsidize new nuclear power plants. This will penalize and slow investment in improved energy efficiency and energy supply technologies that can mitigate climate change in less time, with less cost and risk.” Under the heading “Why Congress should cease subsidizing the construction of new nuclear power plants,” Dr. Cochran wrote: “Given their high capital costs, and all the other non-carbon environmental liabilities and risks that attend reliance on the nuclear fuel cycle, new nuclear plants are obviously not the first, second, or even third option this body should turn to stem the buildup of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Put bluntly, anyone or any organization pushing for more taxpayer-funded largesse for nuclear power plants in a climate bill is either seeking inappropriate windfalls for their clients, or is pursuing a poison pill strategy to protect carbon polluters by trying to kill the bill.”

James Asseltine, a former managing director of Lehman Bros. concentrating on the electricity business, predicted that the cost of new nuclear plants “will be in line with coal generation.”

Dr. Cochran was not the only person quoted out of context in the article. Aside from the fact that this statement is unsubstantiated, it is also misleading. Mr. Asseltine in his testimony stated over and over that subsidies totaling tens of billions of dollars today and more in the future would be needed to ensure the nuclear industry’s success. Those

wishing to seek out the facts on their own can read his full testimony at: http://democrats.science.house.gov/Media/File/Commdocs/hearings/2008/Full/23apr/Asseltine_Testimony.pdf

Upshot:

The nuclear industry has plenty of our ratepayer and taxpayer dollars with which to influence the public without reporters going out of their way to misrepresent the words of those who question the wisdom of continuing down a radioactive path.

“Let bygones be bygones in Mitchell Park,” editorial opinion of the *Tribune*, May 9, 2008

Summary: SLO Mayor Dave Romero and councilmen Paul Brown and Andrew Carter disregarded three advisory bodies and the overwhelming majority of public testimony in order to junk a planned community garden and put in ten parking spaces for the Senior Center @ \$19,500 per space. The *Tribune*’s take: Get over it, and don’t make a political issue out of the Council’s vote. We can’t improve on the public responses, as posted to the *Tribune*’s website:

Wrong, wrong, wrong decision. Carter, Romero and Brown made a serious error in judgement. An overwhelming majority spoke against this decision to ignore the Master Plan and put in a parking lot instead of a garden. Three advisory bodies voted against it (Architectural Review, Cultural Heritage, and Parks & Recreation Commissions), Obispo Beautiful voted against it. Most of us who were there are permanent residents - not Cal Poly students as one of the posters here continues to insist, despite the facts (though I for one am glad to have their involvement). No one at all spoke against seniors. Many of those speaking against the parking lot were seniors themselves. - *chickadee*

Do not, we repeat, do not inflate parking into a major issue in the upcoming council election.

Let me understand this. More than 5-1 in the audience were against the parking spaces. 3 Advisory Bodies voted against the parking spaces. There is a probability that a new Senior Center at another location is in the master plan. And yet, a 3-2 majority voted to support paving a parking lot. Hmmm....what is wrong with this picture? Well, I hope the voting citizens of San Luis Obispo show how they truly feel during the elections - where their voice will matter. -*caringcitizen*

There were lots of other ways proposed, by staff and citizens alike, that would also “help” the issue - but these seemed to fall on stubbornly deaf ears. Real solutions require leadership: a cooperative and responsive Mayor, and council members that will do some critical thinking instead of just bemoaning this “difficult” decision in an election year. ... I trust many voters will see through this charade in November. The council’s individual comments were so illustrative and I urge everyone to review the transcripts or videos of the meeting. These are our elected officials: we should expect a little more than “honor thy elders” as a reason to reject the recommendations of three advisory boards and overturn the Master Plan of a beloved park. -*Ellyn*

Upshot:

At a moment when food security is becoming one of the world’s most critical issues and “buy/consume locally” the watchword of the day, the City Council opted for more pavement over a community garden. The *Tribune* and the majority of the SLO City Council failed to grasp what was at stake in the Mitchell Park issue, and the necessity of having a vision for the future of one’s city beyond “pave it all and let God sort it out.” They also don’t seem to grasp the meaning of the phrase “the will of the people.” Come November, voters have every right to remind those who ignored it just what that principle means.



Cambria's Water Plan is All Wet

Deficient analysis spells unfettered growth and serious harm to marine environment

It should come as no surprise to anyone who's been following the desal follies of the Cambria Community Services District that the recently issued Environmental Impact Report for the Cambria Water Master Plan is virtually all about the District's determination to build a desal plant and is filled with confidence in its ability to do so, despite the evidence.

In January 2007, the Cambria Community Services District tried to get approval from the California Coastal Commission to construct test wells for a desalination plant. As it became obvious in the course of the hearing that the Commission was going to deny the permit due to its failure to conform with the California Coastal Act, the CCSD managed to snatch it off the table with a promise to come back with a new, improved project in a few months. They came back, the project was still found to be in violation of the Coastal Act, and the Coastal Commission denied the permit. Going down for the third time, the CCSD asked for a reconsideration of the Coastal Commission's denial on grounds of insufficient information: The District had chosen not to mention the nature of the connection between the test wells and the desalination plant that would be built if the well data showed that a desal plant would be feasible. ("Fragmenting" a proposed project masks its impacts or makes them appear less significant.) They failed again.

When reading the Master Plan EIR, three things quickly become clear: 1) As with the ill-fated beach wells project, the CCSD is once again attempting to gain project approval without submitting the details of the project for review, 2) the Cambria CSD has done a great job of convincing everyone that it needs to build a desalination plant, and 3) Cambria doesn't really need to build a desalination plant.

Here's why: The state and national average for water consumption is 95-100 gallons per capita per day; Cambria's is 90 gpcd. The Master Plan proposes that this be increased to a massively unsustainable 135 gpcd, based on a concept, never defined, that the draft EIR refers to as a "quality of life" bonus. This apparently entitles one to 50 percent more water per year than what would be calculated otherwise from the baseline set in 2000 by the Coastal Commission for limiting diversions from Santa Rosa and San Simeon Creeks. With-

space – The Cambria Land Trust, Surfrider Foundation, the Desal Response Group of Environment NOW and the Sierra Club have submitted comments on the Water Master Plan that pointed out the foregoing, as well as the following imminent violations of the California Environmental Quality Act contained in the Master Plan's Draft EIR:

- No evaluation of the cumulative impacts of the project's contribution to increased traffic, population, urban

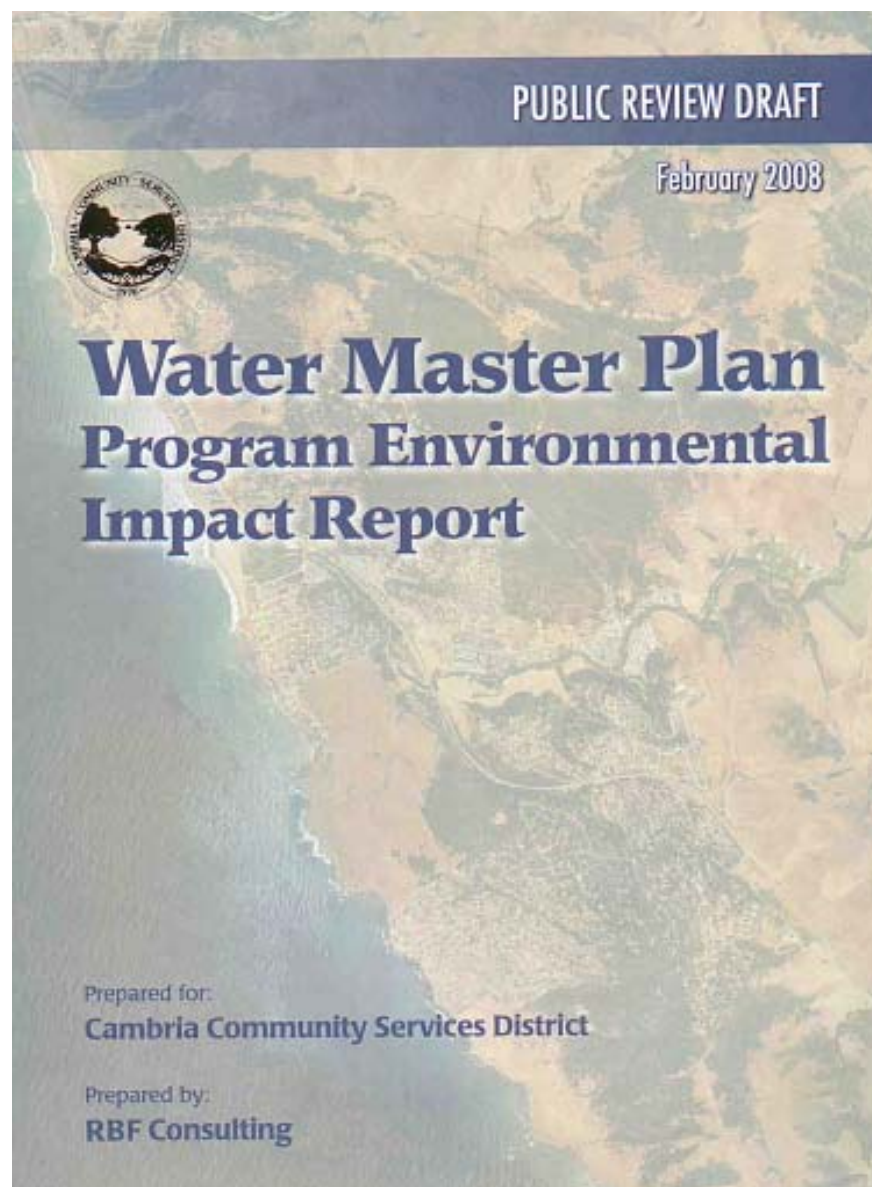
for landscaping and irrigation would, conservatively, reduce by 15 percent the water drawn from the aquifer.

- No semblance of objectivity in scoring possible long-term water supply strategies, with desal jiggered to come out on top despite the fact that local, smaller scale, less expensive, easier-to-permit projects could provide additional water for both residents and groundwater supply if designed appropriately.

We pointed out the numerous pub-

derstated."

In trying to make the case for desal without fully assessing its environmental impacts, the CCSD repeatedly runs afoul of the legal requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act throughout the Water Plan's Draft Environmental Impact Report. The Final EIR needs to address and correct all of the serious deficiencies noted above, and take a very close look at the "quality of life" bonus.



footprint, air pollution, demands on public services, etc. Impacts are considered only within separate categories — Land Use, Biological Resources, Water Resources, etc. — minus the legally required evaluation of the impacts of, say, a change in land use on biological and/or water resources.

lic sources for funding of water recycling and conservation programs that the draft EIR omitted, thereby making it appear that public funding of a desal plant is virtually a sure thing by comparison.

We have little confidence that Cambria's growth will stop at 4,650 connections given that the desalina-

And Then There's the Mercury...

Nine years ago, the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board released the report "Inactive Metal Mines in Four San Luis Obispo County Watersheds: Surface Water Quality Impacts and Remedial Options." Several of the operations listed were mercury mines that discharged into Santa Rosa and San Simeon creeks for decades.

David Schwartzbart of the regional board agrees that "common sense and natural processes" would indicate that there may be legacy mercury-tainted deposits of sediment at the mouth of San Simeon Creek and where the creek mouth has changed over the years of active mining, as well as down-current.

Might the establishment of desal pumping or test well sites disturb buried deposits of mercury contaminant at the nearshore base of the food chain? Might source water obtained from any such site in a desalination operation that pulls water through sand into beach wells disturb and/or carry legacy mercury?

The Water Board is not listed as a consulting agency for the Cambria Water Master Plan EIR, which refers to this subject exactly once, in the section on Geology and Soils, where it simply notes that "there are a number of abandoned mines near Cambria," and that the mines that produced mercury were abandoned in 1992.

On the implications of this for human health and the marine environment, the Cambria Community Service District's plan to build a desal plant near the mouth of San Simeon Creek is silent.

When the average Californian uses 95 gallons per capita per day, is it appropriate to sacrifice any public resource or endure any impact so that the people of Cambria can have 135 gpcd?

out this "bonus," Cambria's future water needs can be met by water reclamation and recycling, conservation and local storage. (This conclusion requires updating the CCSD's baseline water supply figures from the ones used in the EIR to reflect the fact that, after the baseline was established, Cambria gained access to water from retired ag irrigation rights in both its water basins.)

The Otter Project, ECOSLO, Green-

- No description or analysis of changes the project will bring (i.e. 864 new water connections and homes built).
- No numeric targets for easily achievable reductions in indoor water use or requirement for natural landscaping, which would require no fertilizer and no additional water.
- No acknowledgment that replacing potable water with recycled water

tion plant would be operating at approximately 50 percent capacity (about half the year) and will be built in a modular fashion so that it can be easily enlarged.

We concluded: "The project description overrates desalination and underrates living within local means through local solutions, water recycling and conservation. The growth-inducing aspects of the desalination proposal are un-

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Carrizo

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Plain National Monument. Its northern half is an admixture of two and a half acre ranchettes, productive farmland, and large ranches and rangeland. On this plain, loneliness and death mix with opportunity and hope.

In the southern, Monument-half of the plain a new but all-too-familiar Ozymandias has come again. Vintage Petroleum, a subsidiary of Occidental, wants to see if it can find oil and gas in the 30,000 acres of sub-surface mineral rights it retained during the purchases of old ranches by the Nature Conservancy, lands that now form part of the national monument. Vintage has notified the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) that it wants to test, to thump and pound with mechanical rabbits and to explode underground charges. The feedback, recorded on sophisticated, state-of-the-art screens and strips of paper, could trigger the growth of an iron forest of drilling rigs and pumps within a few miles of those ancient symbols hand painted long ago on rock.

The Vintage proposal, based on certain concepts of law, clashes with the monument-creating presidential proclamation, which was based on other concepts of law. Within this legal thicket, a fight to protect the monument might be fought. The BLM has an obligation to protect what are called the "objects" on the monument: the threatened and endangered animals and plants, the Native American sites, the vistas, and other "objects." The Wilderness Society (TWS), which has been the leading national environmental organization speaking on behalf of protecting the basic values of the monument, is challenging this proposed exploration. Joined by the Sierra Club, the Natural Resources Defense Council and the local Los Padres Forest Watch, TWS says that, according to the National Environmental Protection Act, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) needs to be prepared for the oil testing program because of "context" (society as a whole), "intensity" (severity of the impact), and "unique characteristics" (cultural resources, ecological critical areas). The project could be highly controversial—who wants to see "thumper trucks" or feel test explosions or see the associated equipment on a national monument?

Also, if the testing is allowed on the monument, how would that set a precedent for testing on other federal land? Other controversies are likely regarding the "loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources." The threatened and endangered species—especially the giant kangaroo rat—on the monument could be adversely affected by vibrator trucks, pads, explosives, and associated activities.

Imagine now that the legal challenges and protests about the testing for oil fail to stop the thumps and explosions, which could begin in the summer of 2009. Imagine that oil is found. Imagine that Soda Lake Road, which runs for 40 some miles through the monument, looks like the roads from Maricopa to McKittrick western Kern County, a plain of jarring, occasionally nodding, occasionally rusted and abandoned pumping rigs, webs of roads, gates, fences, and weed patches. In some distant future when the heavy crude oil is sucked out of the earth. This will be what a national monument

PG&E vs. CCA

continued from page 1

of electric rates, taking rate-setting out of the hands of investor-owned utilities. Public utilities nationwide have been able to offer rates up to 20 percent lower than investor-owned utilities. All CCA decisions are accountable to local customers.

"The settlement agreement is in the best interest for the customers that we seek to serve and the communities that we represent," stated SJVPA Chair Tom Haglund. "It acknowledges that PG&E has changed its position from neutrality to one of opposition and therefore establishes rules of conduct that must be followed as we move forward."

Key features of the settlement:

- PG&E agrees that it will provide functional separation between its marketing activities and its utility activities. Separation of activities addresses a key concern raised by SJVPA, that PG&E's use of its status as the incumbent, monopoly utility has caused customer confusion and unfairly thwarted competition. PG&E will provide an explicit disclaimer stating, among other things, that PG&E's shareholders are paying for its marketing activities and that such activities reflect the views of PG&E's



shareholders, not PG&E's customers. SJVPA also agreed to provide a disclaimer noting that the services provided by SJVPA are provided by SJVPA, not its participating cities and counties.

- PG&E acknowledges that participating cities and counties have transferred to SJVPA their respective rights to serve customers, and that SJVPA's board of directors is responsible for governing the Community Choice program. PG&E agrees to make good faith efforts to address concerns regarding the Community Choice program directly with SJVPA's board of directors, instead of indi-



was created for. This will be part of the National Landscape Conservation System. The trunkless legs of iron will remain. The well-heads will be empty. Across this landscape lie abandoned and dented grain storage tanks, empty barns and farmhouses, and wrecks of combines, all testaments to the harshness of the climate and the remoteness from markets. More hopeful are the increasing herds of elk and prong-horns and the spread of native bunch grasses and forbs from seed banks in the nearby mountains.

The Carrizo Plain National Monument could become another monument of failure and to death: the death of a culture that preserved itself for millennia without destroying its natural roots and the more recent death of something that lasted but a few years in the plans of environmental preservers and restorers and in the dreams of Marlene Braun, the monument's first manager. It could just as well become a monument to our capacity to treasure and preserve our heritage of wild places.

North of the national monument, the traveler in this "antique land" will find the scattered community called California Valley, which extends several miles in all directions. It is a community service district of San Luis Obispo County. Fueled by speculation in the 1960s and squared off by mainly untraveled roads, its occasional neat bungalows contrast with rusty house trailers or campers used as residences, horse corrals, and accumulated debris. Community life, from many reports, is rife with dis-

putes and unhappiness with neighbors and with the county.

To the north of this community and Highway 58 (the Carissa Highway) are large holdings that extend for miles north, east and west. These ranches all have a long history. Following the end of the Spanish mission system with its scattered cattle herding, the acquisition of California by the United States, and then the Civil War, Americans—including recent European immigrants—moved into California. On and around the Carrizo Plain, descendants of original families from the 1870s still farm and ranch. They have bought old homesteads, raised cattle, farmed wheat and barley, and lived lives few people these days comprehend or appreciate. Their neighbors and relatives to the drier south sold their ranches and farms as hard times set in. Low rainfall, low grain prices, and high fuel costs made farming a losing battle for some. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and California Fish and Game acquired ranch after ranch and TNC donated land to the BLM that became Carrizo Plain Natural Area and, in 2000, a national monument.

In this northern part of the plain the Ausra Corporation, based in Palo Alto, has purchased more than a square mile of land and plans to build a solar power plant using mirrors, tubes, towers, and turbines to generate 177 megawatts of electricity. Two more companies have followed suit (see "What Price, Solar?" in this issue). A set of two 230-kilovolt lines runs through this part of the plain; whether or not the lines can contain

rectly with the councils and boards of participating cities and counties.

"Without the interim code of conduct that the settlement provides, PG&E would be able to use its inherent advantages as a monopoly utility to unfairly market against the SJVPA without properly identifying that its strategy is one of serving its shareholders," said Haglund. "Without the agreement, PG&E's activities would continue to disrupt the implementation of the SJVPA program. It gives the SJVPA the ability to move forward with bringing the benefits of Community Choice to customers and other cities and counties."

The agreement between SJVPA and PG&E will likely have carryover effect to other cities and counties that are working on implementing community choice aggregation. The SJVPA is aware of efforts by PG&E to market against other programs in Marin County and the City and County of San Francisco.

This is an interim settlement. The CPUC may develop overall marketing standards for community choice aggregation at a later rulemaking procedure, and neither SJVPA nor PG&E is precluded from participating in the development of those marketing standards.

all the electricity from the projects is debatable. Meanwhile, desert activists and others are questioning this entire push for solar in remote areas, wondering if projects such as Southern California Edison's solar roofing of warehouses in San Bernardino and Riverside counties could generate the needed power during late afternoon and early evening hours that would offset the need for additional power plants fueled by natural gas, nuclear fission, and other non-renewables. Certainly, solar plants are needed as well. Yet environmentalists continue to ask, Why can't solar electricity be generated close to where it will be used?

And so the lands of the Carrizo Plain National Monument, partially restored to natural life by a presidential proclamation in 2000, are threatened from within by the prospect of oil exploration and drilling and from without by the changes that will accompany industrialized solar generation. One of Barry Commoner's "laws of ecology" is that there is no free lunch. We cannot reduce our consumption of carbon and nuclear fuel without conservation and without substitution of renewable energy. On this "lone and level" plain we will see in whose favor notes of promise written in the presidential proclamation of 2000 and the accumulated deficits to the stewardship of our natural heritage will balance out. We will see if a few more drops of heavy crude can be sucked from the earth. We will see if in our urgency to save the planet, we have buried our heads in the sand and neglected its beauty.

Solar

continued from page 1

Ausra estimates that the plant will use 22 AFY of water and infrequently a peak daily usage of 700,000 gallons per day. CEC staff is concerned that Carrizo Plain may currently be in an overdraft situation. According to CEC documents, the safe yield of the aquifer is 600 AFY. The existing water demand is 930 afy and projected to rise in the future.

The Carrizo has been the ancestral home of the Chumash Indians for as long as 15,000 years.

The environmental impacts will be assessed by the CEC under a process called Preliminary Assessment which closely parallels a CEQA review.

The environmental impacts are extensive. The Carrizo Plain and the Carrizo National Monument are home to several federally endangered, threatened and rare species including the San Joaquin Kit Fox, blunt-nose leopard lizard, San Joaquin antelope squirrel, and the giant kangaroo rat. It provides habitat for many listed species including the California jewelflower, Hoover's wool-star and San Joaquin woollythreads.

Other state and federally listed endangered species or species of concern that could be affected by the project include the Tulare grasshopper mouse, Tipton kangaroo rat, and Pallid bat.

The Carrizo is critical habitat for the condor, and has thriving herds of reintroduced pronghorn antelope and Tule elk. The location proposed for the plant and the lay-down area are favorite pasturing and calving sites for the antelope. Fencing will impede the movement of these and other animals. A variety of raptors use the area for roosting, nesting, foraging and wintering.

The site and construction lay-down area are bisected by an environmentally significant water carrying swale. If it is determined that this drainage is under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service through the Endangered Species Act Section 10 process, the preparation of a Habitat Conservation Plan will be required.

Incidental Take Permits and Streambed Alteration Permits may be required and would be under the jurisdiction of California Fish and Game. Fish and Game has determined that this project would likely result in a "take" of the California listed and Federally endangered San

gate habitat loss. Habitat of equal or higher biological value would be required for off-site mitigation

California Department of Fish and Game has determined that "The project would create a substantial, permanent, impermeable barrier for pronghorn at the highway (58) and within the core of one group's home range. It would further degrade connectivity between all of the pronghorn groups in San Luis Obispo county." (Document submitted to CEC by DFG, March 26, 2008.)

In addition to this proposal, Opti-solar has initialized discussions with the county for the permitting of a 550



On May 18, Anne McMahon (left) moderated an EcoSummit panel discussion on the solar power proposals for Carrizo Plain with Ken Haggard, Pat Veasart and Cal Poly physics professor Peter Schwartz.

Joaquin Kit Fox and may affect other listed species. Impacts to State listed species under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) must be fully mitigated, a standard much more stringent than CEQA's requirement to mitigate to less than significant level. The site impacts Wildlife and Habitat Corridors and would likely require habitat mitigation at a ration higher than 4:1 to fully miti-

MW photovoltaic facility adjacent to the CESF site. The Opti-solar plant would cover eight square miles. This facility would be likely to generate similar environmental impacts. The cumulative impacts of the two facilities on the Carrizo Plain would be considerable.

The approval process will take up to a year.

Tejon

continued from page 4

lifetime opportunity to protect 90% of the Ranch."

The Conservancy will ensure the public's enjoyment of the Ranch. Plans for public access include a new 49,000-acre state park and realignment of the Pacific Crest Trail through the heart of the Ranch. The new conservancy will offer managed public access throughout the conserved areas of the Ranch.

According to Graham Chisolm of Audubon California, the agreement "included some pullbacks in development on some important foraging ridges" for condors. At the press conference announcing the agreement, Chisolm also noted that "during the course of negotiations, we had the opportunities to engage with and work closely with a number of condor experts [which] really allayed our concerns about the impact that the projects on the Ranch would have for the California condor."

There are several reasons why Sierra Club activists pursued a negotiated settlement. Tejon Ranch is already divided into over one thousand legal parcels, and there was nothing to stop the publicly traded corporation from selling off parts of the Ranch to developers. Had that happened, it would have been virtually impossible to arrive at the conservation outcome of this agreement. The limited availability of state and federal funding for a full acquisition of the Ranch, coupled with an unwilling seller, would have made it very difficult to acquire the entire ranch outright. Tens of thousands of acres of the ranch that are protected under the agreement are readily developable, and fighting developments one at a time likely would have resulted in more development across the Ranch.

Kate Allen, Chair of the Antelope Valley Group, said "I voted in favor of it. [Those involved in the negotiation] worked very hard, and the Antelope Valley Group supports the agreement. It's a great achievement." Kent Schwitkis, Chair of the Outings Management Committee, said of the public access the agreement calls for, "I heartily support this agreement, which will one day enable our membership to visit and explore this too little-known place."

Gordon Nipp, Vice Chair of the Kern-Kaweah Chapter, added "A couple of years ago, I wouldn't have thought anything like this was possible. We're talking about preserving 240,000 acres of incredibly important land, incredibly beautiful land, and that's where the focus should be."

Jennifer Robinson contributed to the reporting of this story.

Hero of the Hour

David Kirk, ESOSLO

Bill Denneen embraces thoroughly surprised County Planning Commissioner Sarah Christie at the May 18 EcoSummit after naming her the recipient of the 2008 Environmental Hero award. Bill gives out the award every year at the annual forum, hosted by the Environmental Center of San Luis Obispo, designed to connect individuals and organizations working on environmental issues facing the Central Coast.



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What You Can Do to Stop Global Warming

By Kathy Seal, Angeles Chapter, Global Warming, Energy & Air Quality Committee

Global warming got you down? Worried about ice caps and glaciers melting, species disappearing, hurricanes, floods, and tornadoes? (Not to mention possible water shortages in southern California.)

If you're like me, you often use the very human mechanism of denial to cope with this fear. Sometimes I simply skip over newspaper articles about the latest bird species annihilation or prediction of coral death. There's a limit to the bad news I can take in one day!

At the same time, however, as humans we all have a "fight or flight" impulse when faced with danger. Since we can't flee the Earth—in fact we love it and don't want to — most of us southern Sierrans also fight against global warming. You buy your compact fluorescents, use cloth shopping bags, maybe walk or ride your bike more or even get a Prius.

Do you ever wish you could do more?

The Global Warming, Energy & Air Quality Committee of the Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter is offering a new way to fight global warming—one that utilizes our collective clout to oppose special interest lobbyists who don't seem to take seriously the heating up of the earth.

Here's what you can do: two years

ago the California legislature enacted a global warming bill, AB 32, which created a model for the nation. What you may not know is that while passing the bill is a huge victory, the details of implementing it are not yet specified. As you read this, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) is making implementation decisions that will make or break this law. If oil and auto industry and other special interest lobbyists have their way, they'll gut the bill.

The Club has a great lobbying staff in Sacramento, but you and I and the thousands of others Club members in our state also have a great deal of potential power. To make that power reality, we are asking you to participate in a series of email campaigns telling CARB the specific, strong measures that we want them to include in the implementation of AB 32.

If you email us at: globalwarmingaction@gmail.com, I'll send you the suggested text of our first email to send to CARB. It's a message to insist that, if the state sets up a cap and trade system for carbon emissions — as is very likely — that the right to emit greenhouse gases be sold at auction, rather than given away to polluters in a "cap and trade" scheme. Revenue from these permits

could then go for the public benefit, such as for promoting clean energy and helping low income people pay high utility bills. If you don't use email, please see the "For Snail Mail Users" box below for the suggested text of a snail mail letter you can send.

You can learn more about this issue by watching Sierra Club Executive Director Carl Pope explain "cap-and-auction" in 45 seconds at www.sierraclubcalifornia.org or by reading our Cap and Auction Design Position Paper at www.sierraclubcalifornia.org/globalwarming.html

The future of life on this planet depends on controlling greenhouse gas emissions. You can play a crucial role in making sure Califor-

nia lives up to the promise to control those emissions. Please email us today at globalwarmingaction@gmail.com.

For Snail Mail Users:
If you'd like to send a snail mail letter, please personalize this text:

Mary Nichols, Chair
California Air Resources Board
1001 "I" Street
P.O. Box 2815
Sacramento, CA 95812

Dear CARB Chair Nichols,

If California, as seems likely, sets up a system requiring large polluters to hold permits for their emissions, it is essential that polluters pay for permits to emit greenhouse gases. Permits to pollute should not be given away free. A good way to set prices of these permits would be through an auction to provide a real incentive for polluters to reduce carbon emissions. An auction will also raise needed revenue for promoting clean energy and for program administration.

Thank you for your work on this important issue.

Your name and address

Please send copies to Global Warming E & AQ Committee, Angeles Chapter, 3435 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 320, Los Angeles, CA 90010.

Pismo Beach: Carbon Bigfoot

By Terry Lilley, Save Our Seas

In the rainforest of South America the Nature Conservancy is planning on planting over one billion trees to help save the planet while at the same time in Pismo Beach hundreds of trees have been cut down with City approval. In its role as gateway to a tourist mecca for off-roaders who pollute the air with their four-wheel drive vehicles, Pismo can claim one of the largest carbon footprints in the state of California.

In the USA, the average "carbon footprint" per person is over ten tons per year. In China it is about 2 tons per person per year. The rest of the world is much less. In Pismo Beach, the average carbon footprint per person is **one hundred tons**, thanks in large part to the individuals who help tear up the beaches with their vehicles. Robert Swan, skipper of the *Voyager For Cleaner Energy*, which docked recently in Morro Bay, has a carbon footprint formula he uses in his talks around the globe. Plugging in emissions figures for off-road vehicles and Swan's figures on the total number of vehicles that visit the Pismo dunes produces this staggering stat.

The City is very happy to take in tax monies from off-road tourism, but they spend next to nothing to purge the carbon left behind that is polluting our once beautiful environment. The 4-wheel-drive tourist spends \$300 on his stay leaves behind a mess that us citizens will need to clean up.

Truly, Pismo needs to clean up its act. I am a biologist and graduate of Cal Poly. I have studied the environ-

ment along our coastline above and below the sea for 25 years, almost every day. I have published many articles, give lectures worldwide, own a private zoo, am doing a TV series on our undersea environment and have a DVD series about our local wildlife. I also help run a non profit organization that studies the ocean and educate children at www.saveourseas.org. In the last twenty years, this is what I have seen and documented in the Pismo Beach area:

- 80% of the trees cut down
- 90% of the black crowned night

herons killed.

- 90% of the best wetland and bluff habitat built on.
- Millions of gallons of polluted runoff washed into the tide pools from development projects.
- More than 50 illegal seawall additions built on our coastal bluffs.
- The sensitive dune ecosystem basically destroyed.
- The creeks filled with silt, bacteria and plastics.

Illegal fireworks have scared off all of the nesting peregrine falcons and many of the night herons, despite

more than 100 complaints filed with the police department and the City.

The City of Pismo Beach needs to catch up with the rest of the state and the coastal communities that are becoming keenly aware of the threat of green house gas emissions and taking serious steps to curb this disastrous form of pollution.

Pismo needs to plug its black hole of carbon emissions and carbon-sink destruction. It is time for citizens to demand a change.

Train Day Rocks!



Amtrak volunteer station docent David Weisman (above, center) with assistants at the San Luis Obispo Amtrak station, one of a dozen across the state that marked the first national celebration of Train Day on May 10. Hundreds of train fans packed the station and toured the trains. As all good Sierra Clubbers know, rail travel is the most energy-efficient transportation option going, taking 20 percent less juice than airlines and 27 percent less than cars per passenger mile, and emitting up to 12 times less pollution per mile than trucks.

Railroads reduce the amount of paved roads and parking lots. The U.S. desperately needs more modern rail corridors and less airport expansion for short-haul air traffic. Get on board!

Classifieds

Next issue deadline is **June 11**. To get a rate sheet or submit your ad and payment, contact:

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sierraclub8@gmail.com

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Bryan Bowers
Graphic Artist

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CFLs contain 1/100 less mercury than a thermometer. It's illegal to throw CFLs in the trash. Return UNBROKEN used CFLs to a local participating "take back" store. BROKEN fluorescent bulbs, or any mercury containing products, should be disposed of with hazardous waste. If a CFL bulb breaks, treat it like any toxic product; be careful not to inhale the mercury. Use a wet rag for clean up; put all pieces, and the rag, into a plastic bag to take to a hazardous waste disposal site listed in the back of your phone book.

Recycle mercury containing Fluorescent Tubes and CFLs at county "Take Back" locations. See complete listing of locations at Integrated Waste Management (IWMA) links below
<http://www.iwma.com/>
<http://www.iwma.com/directory-aj/fluorescent%20tubes%20and%20bulbs.html>

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Local Government Meetings

City of SLO--1st & 3rd Tues., 7:00 p.m.; 781-7103

Arroyo Grande--2nd and 4th Tues., 7:00 p.m.; 473-5404

Atascadero--2nd & 4th Tues.; 466-8099

Cambria CSD -- 4th Thurs.; 927-6223

Grover Beach--1st & 3rd Mon., 6:30 p.m.; 473-4567

Grover Beach Planning Commission--2nd Tues.

Morro Bay--2nd & 4th Mon.

Paso Robles--1st & 3rd Tues., 7:00 p.m.; 237-3888

Pismo Beach--1st Tues., 5:30 p.m.; 773-4657

Los Osos CSD board-- 1st Tues. & 2nd Mon., varies

California Coastal Commission-- 3rd Tues., varies

SLO County Board of Supervisors-- every Tues.; 781-5450

SLO Council of Governments; 781-4219

SLOCOG Citizens Advisory Committee--1st Wed. every other month, 6:00 p.m.

SLOCOG Board--1st Wed. every other month, 8:30 a.m.

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If you have loved ones in a nursing home or about to enter a nursing home – do not “spend down” their assets. Nearly **ALL** the assets of nursing home residents can be **SAVED**. Their care will remain the same. Nursing home residents have legal rights. Learn federal and state health insurance laws that work for the resident.

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Outings and Activities Calendar

All of our hikes and activities are open to all Club members and the general public. If you have any suggestions for hikes or outdoor activities, questions about the Chapter's outing policies or would like to be an outings leader, call Outings Leader **Gary Felsman (473-3694)**. For information on a specific outing, please contact the outing leader. Outings Leaders please get your outings or events in by the 1st for the next month's outings.

Hiking Classifications:

Distance: 1 = 0-2 mi., 2 = 3-5 mi., 3 = 6-9 mi., 4 = 10-12 mi., 5 = 12 mi. or more.

Elevation Gain: A = 500', B = 1000', C = 1500', D = 2000', E = 2500', F = 3000' or more.

JUNE 1, Sunday, POTLUCK BBQ. NIPOMO NATIVE GARDEN I provide the meat (my pig) with other folks doing the fire, bringing the rest plus own plates/silverware/drinks. Nature walk into back area & trails at 10 AM with non-participants setting up the BBQ & organizing. Gathering at noon for awards etc with actual eating to follow probably at one o'clock. Call 929-3647 or <bdenneen@kcbx.net> a few days before to confirm and for details.

Wed., June 4, 11, 18, 25, 5:30 p.m. Informal Hikes. Approx. 2 hours around SLO. See website, or e-mail Gary Felsman for details. E-mail is located on the Website.

Sat., June 7th, 9 a.m. Informal Oats Peak Trail Hike. This is a leaderless hike for those that like Montana de Oro. If you decide to go down to Coon Creek, that will be up to the group. How fast you go will be up to the group. Bring lunch, water and dress for the weather. Look for lost soles at the Visitor Center, MDO State Park.

June 14th, 10 a.m. Pole Cats is dedicated to leading local Sierra Club day hikes and modeling effective techniques for using trekking poles. Join us on June 14, 10 AM for an easy hike on the **Maino**

Open Space trail. The Maino Open Space trailhead is located off the Marsh Street onramp of southbound Highway 101. From downtown SLO take Higuera Street to the intersection with Marsh Street and proceed as if to take 101 South. Immediately after the freeway underpass, bear right into the parking lot. Contact David Georgi at polecatleader@gmail.com for upcoming activities. Bipeds welcome.

JUNE 15, 0930, SUN., 0930 OSO FLACO LAKE Head to Pacific. Bring Binos & Ref.Bks. Learn about the history of the area. Call 929-3647 or <bdenneen@kcbx.net> a few days before to confirm and for details.

Sat., June 21. 9:00 a.m. Hike: Islay Road-Barranca-Ridge Trail Loop.

Join the leader on this summer solstice hike on the coast. The hike is 7 miles with about 1500 ft of elevation gain. This is a pleasant summer hike that takes us through chaparral and grasslands. There is an incredible view of the coastline from Hazard Peak. There is a possibility of ticks and poison oak. Bring water, snacks, and dress for the weather. There will be a refueling stop after the hike. Meet at the Ridge Trail parking area across from the Ridge Trail trailhead. The parking area is 2.3 miles from the park entrance. For info contact Chuck at 441-7597.

JUNE 22, 1000, Sun. BIKE GUADALUPE Meet at Dune Center parking lot. Tour Guad. to see wetland, murals, ag. land & slurbanization. If group wants we might bike to Dunes. Call 929-3647 or <bdenneen@kcbx.net> a few days before to confirm and for details.

June 28th, 10 a.m. Pole Cats is dedicated to leading local Sierra Club day hikes and modeling effective techniques for using trekking poles. Join us on June 28, 10 AM for an easy hike on the **Eagle Rock Nature Trail**. The trailhead is located across from Cuesta College at El Chorro Regional Park. From SLO, take Highway 1 North and turn east (right) at the first of two turn signals to El Chorro Regional Park. Follow the signs to the Day Use area, passing the ball fields and Botanical Garden. Park

in the Day Use area at the end of the park, just before the locked gate. Contact David Georgi at polecatleader@gmail.com for upcoming activities. Bipeds welcome.

Fri.-Sun., July 4-6, Schell Creek Backpack – Nevada: The 121,497-acre High Schells Wilderness was added to the National Wilderness System in December 2006. The Schell Creeks are one of the longest and highest ranges in the state. On this overnight backpack we'll cruise the crest line, including the two high points, North Schell Peak and South Schell Peak. Fairly strenuous, but there should be enough snow on the crest to replenish our water bottles. Possible day hike of Cleve Creek Baldy. To sign up, contact John Wilkinson, (408) 947-0858 or johnfw1@mac.com. CNRCC Wilderness Committee & Desert Committee.

JULY 6th, 10:00 DANA ADOBE We'll meet to tour the grounds & creek followed at noon with the regular tour of the facility itself by Arron. Call 929-3647 or <bdenneen@kcbx.net> a few days before to confirm and for details.

Sat. – Mon., August 2-4, Backpack the High Toiyabe Range (S): This trip in central Nevada will explore the east side of the Toiyabe Range, crossing a 10,000-foot pass between the South Twin Creek and Jett Creek farther south. The canyons have water; temperatures should be comfortable; views east and west across the Great Basin are guaranteed to be spectacular. Using a car shuttle our trip will be one-way, starting at 6100 feet and with a total distance of 19 miles, some on trail and some cross-country. For more info contact leader: Craig Deutsche, deutsche@earthlink.net, (310-

Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park

Sierra Club California Fundraising Cruises Scheduled for 2008

July 18-21;
4 islands (\$775)
August 23-27; September 13-17;
5 islands (\$925)

Explore the wild, windswept islands of Channel Island National Park. In spring the islands are ablaze with wildflowers. In summer, the pristine waters of the Marine Sanctuary entice swimmers, snorkelers and kayakers. All year long, enjoy unusual plants and flowers, seals and frolicking sea lions, sea and land birds.

All cruises depart from Santa Barbara aboard the 68' twin diesel *Turth*. Fee includes an assigned bunk, all meals, snacks, beverages, plus the services of a ranger/naturalist who will travel with us to lead hikes on each island and point out interesting features.

To make a reservation mail a \$100 check, payable to Sierra Club, to leader: Joan Jones Holtz, 11826 The Wye St.,

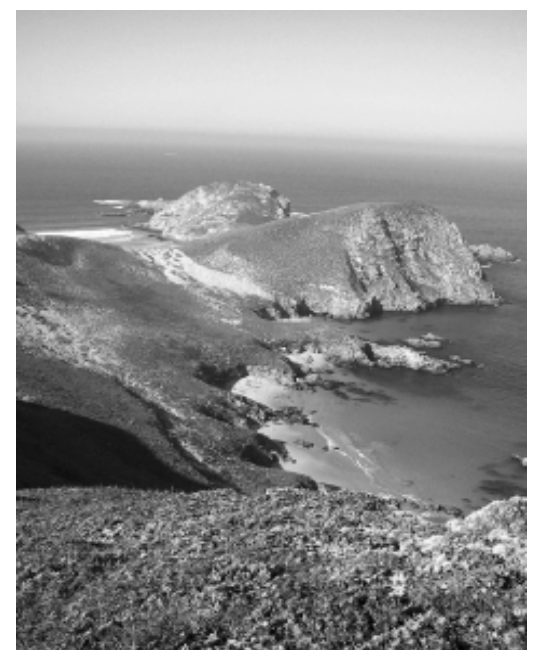


Photo by Joaquin Palting

477-6670). CNRCC Desert Committee.

Wed.-Sun., August 6-10, Mt. Moriah (12,067') - Central Nevada Backpack: Moderate, 24 miles rt, about 18 with backpacks. This little visited area on the north end of the Snake Range is about 5 hours north of Las Vegas. We will start at Hendry's Creek trailhead (6000'), and hike for two days along the creek through pine, aspen and fir to 10,000'. Day hike on third day to the Table and the peak. Next two days going out, distance on the last day is short, to allow for travel time home. If there is an active thunderstorm pattern at Mt. Moriah, an alternative trip to the Toiyabe Range is planned. Group limited to 15. David Hardy (e-mail preferred) hardyhikers@embarqmail.com or (702-875-4549).

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.



Corral Creek

Jim Wilson

El Monte, CA 91732. Contact leader for more information (626-443-0706; jholtzhln@aol.com)