



Nov./Dec. 2012
Volume 49 No. 10

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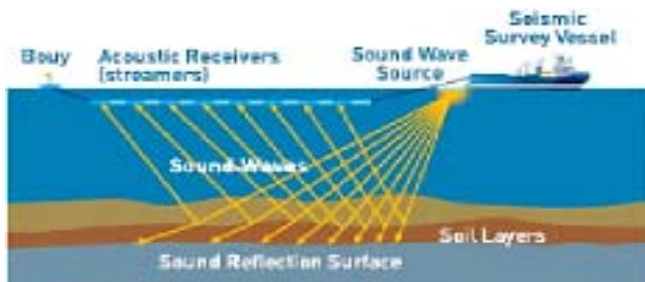
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SANTA LUCIAN



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



Seismic Survey Goes to Coastal Commission Nov. 14

We need to know about Diablo Canyon's seismic hazards, but this project is all wrong



The California Coastal Commission is scheduled to meet in Santa Monica on November 14 (rescheduled from October 10) to hear public testimony and vote on the issuance of a Coastal Development Permit for PG&E's proposed Central Coastal Seismic Imaging Project. In order to issue the permit, the

Commission must also find the project to be consistent with the California Coastal Zone Management Act. The Sierra Club, Natural Resources Defense Council, Otter Project, Surfrider, Ocean Conservancy and California League for Coastal Protection have filed comments separately and submitted a joint letter to the

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A Faulty Analysis

By the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility

On Oct 12, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission announced that "based on our review, the NRC has confirmed our preliminary conclusion that the Diablo Canyon Power Plant's (DCPP's) ground motions from the Shoreline fault are at or below those for which the plant was evaluated previously and demonstrated to have reasonable assurance of safety."

But the NRC's "Confirmatory Analysis of Seismic Hazard at the Diablo Canyon Power Plant from the Shoreline Fault Zone" had some major caveats and one huge omission: the NRC based its assertion on old data, as no data from yet-to-be-undertaken offshore seismic studies has been acquired or analyzed.

Buried 35 pages into the report, "faulty" assumptions rupture to the surface:

"Several other important aspects of the Shoreline fault remain poorly characterized and

therefore subject to uncertainty. These uncertainties include (1) the surface or subsurface rupture length of the fault, (2) structural relationships of the Shoreline fault to other faults, in particular the faults of the San Luis Bay fault zone, and (3) whether the Shoreline fault is capable of producing large enough earthquakes to affect the hazard at the DCPP."

PG&E was supposed to provide the NRC with a comparison of the Shoreline fault to the original Double Design Earthquake (DDE) and Safe Shutdown (SSE) earthquakes identified in the plant's 1960s license. These earlier criteria postulated a magnitude 6.5 earthquake six miles beneath the plant. There is no evidence that PG&E ever provided this analysis to the NRC

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How safe? A4NR attorney John Geesman disputed the NRC's determination to conduct a "Level 3" hazard analysis of Diablo Canyon, which would ascribe no special significance to the location of Diablo Canyon in the most seismically active state in the nation.

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photo:Kevin Walsh

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

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Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Sierra Club General Meeting

Tuesday, Nov. 13, 7 p.m.

Preserving SLO's wide open spaces

Come meet the man who created SLO's greenbelt legacy. Recently retired from his position as Natural Resources Manager for the City of San Luis Obispo, Neil Havlik spent 17 years leading the city's effort to preserve over 6,500 acres of open space and wildlife habitat. (See "How Mr. Havlik Made Us Happy," Sept.). So what does he think should come next? Neil will give his vision for SLO's natural heritage—the problems and the prospects. Conservation news will begin the meeting.

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



What Shark?

When big money met environmental reality over the Paso Robles groundwater basin, a familiar tale unfolded

On September 25, the County Board of Supervisors heard public testimony and voted to put in place an ordinance to halt the subdivision of land over the Paso Robles groundwater basin as a way to begin addressing the emergency of the basin's rapidly dropping water level. Banning future subdivisions over the basin is projected to conserve 350 acre feet of water over the next twenty years.

The 3-2 vote may have been this board's finest hour. Our favorite maxim, "the economy is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the environment," is providing everyone with an immediate, real-world demonstration over the Paso basin. The truth of that maxim is starting to bite down, and it is being felt by property owners who are seeing their wells run dry and their homes become worthless. In dealing with this reality, Supervisors Jim Patterson, Bruce Gibson and Adam Hill were steadfast and suitably incredulous in the face of ferocious opposition to the ordinance from the county's powerful ag interests, who tried to dismiss the need to take immediate action.

Those interests – primarily the Farm Bureau, the Cattlemen's Association, the big Paso vineyards and the far right Coalition of Labor, Agriculture and Business (COLAB) – called for delay. They cautioned against haste. They demanded more study, irrespective of the fact that the county has been studying the decline of the Paso

basin for ten years.

What they wanted most was the ordinance killed.

This was no boat accident

Right next door to the County Government Center, about ninety minutes after the vote on the ordinance, the Fremont Theater screened the classic film scheduled as that evening's installment in its "SLO Rewind" series: *Jaws*.

You may recall the story.

The New England town of Amity, economically dependent on the summer tourist trade, is unwilling to admit that an existential threat with big teeth has risen up from the depths and is preparing to consume them.

After a girl is killed, the commerce-minded mayor dismisses it as a boating accident. At a chaotic town meeting, outraged business owners shout down any suggestion that the beaches be closed. The mayor tells the sheriff he can put on extra deputies and a helicopter spotter if he wants, but the beaches will stay open for the Fourth of July. This turns out to be a bad idea.

The film is almost forty years old, and the Paso Robles groundwater basin is not a giant shark, but life was definitely imitating art that day at the County Government Center -- just before art came back that night and

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

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

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Come On a Tree-Huggers Walk of San Luis Obispo with Matt Ritter



Join Matt Ritter for a tree walk through downtown San Luis Obispo on Saturday, December 1st, 2:30-4:30 p.m.

Dr. Ritter is a professor in the Cal Poly Biology Department and director of the plant conservatory, chair of the City of San Luis

Obispo's Tree Committee, and the author of *A Californian's Guide to the Trees Among Us* and numerous scientific papers and botanical treatments, including the second edition of the Jepson Manual, the Flora of North America Project.

Meeting at a central point, we will stroll along the city sidewalks, seeing about 100 species and discussing about 20 of them. An amazing diversity of plants grow in our local parks and along our streets. Dr. Ritter will share his favorite natural history stories and identification tips, and reveal the secrets behind San Luis Obispo's many beautiful Heritage trees. Wear comfortable shoes and warm clothing. Rain cancels the walk.

To come on the walk, you need to reserve by email to the co-leader, Bill Waycott -- billwaycott@gmail.com -- since the number must be restricted to avoid overcrowding city sidewalks. Bill will reply with the meeting spot if yours is one of the first 30 requests.

Matt Ritter's Sierra Club presentations always fill up fast. The deadline for reservations is noon, Friday, November 30th. Reserve early to guarantee a spot for yourself and up to two companions.



No Reply from SLO Farmers Market



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August 22, 2012

Peter Jankay
SLO Farmers Market
PO Box 16058
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

Dear Mr. Jankay,

We are writing out of concerns arising from the sale of genetically engineered Bt corn at the SLO Farmers Market.

Genetic engineering, unlike traditional breeding methods, breaks down the natural barriers that have protected the integrity of species for millions of years, allowing the transfer of genetic material from one organism into a host organism of an unrelated species.

Though GMO's have been approved for human consumption in the United States without experimental tests to determine whether such consumption was safe, there is growing evidence from observations of animals that consuming GMOs may cause injury or disease.

Beyond theoretical harms, there is the immediate problem faced by organic growers when pollen drift comes from fields of GE crops planted in proximity to organic crops. The organic plants may become crossed with the GE plants, contaminated with the transgene from the GE crop. A crop grown from seed saved from what had been an organic field will contain the transgene and must be considered genetically engineered. It can no longer be certified organic.

Another serious issue for organic growers is the inevitable resistance that insect pests will develop to Bt toxin. Organic farmers have been using Bt bacteria applied to crops in a spray as an organic method of controlling damaging insects. By applying Bt bacterial sprays occasionally, and because of the naturally limited quantity of the toxin present in the bacteria, organic farmers have avoided pest resistance problems. But genetically engineered Bt crops have the gene that codes for Bt toxin production spliced in. With massive quantities of Bt toxin present in fields throughout the growing season, most of the insects susceptible to the toxin will be killed off, leaving a proportionately greater number of resistant insects alive. Bt-resistant survivors will pass resistance traits into future generations and render this organic method of insect control useless.

The Precautionary Principle is of the greatest importance when the damage from a new technology would be irreversible. This is the case with genetic engineering. Under the Precautionary Principle, genetically engineered farm crops should not be released into the environment or allowed to be part of the food supply until extensive, rigorous research is done to determine the long-term environmental and health impacts of each GMO and the need for the use of each GMO intended for release into the environment.

We urge the SLO Farmers Market to support the Precautionary Principle and remove genetically engineered food products from sale as a matter of policy until such time as safeguards and monitoring procedures such as those listed above are in place.

We look forward to your response.

For the Executive Committee,

Greg McMillan, Chair

An Affront to Democracy

By Allison Chin, President, Sierra Club

Virginia, the birthplace of American democracy, recently played host to international trade negotiations that challenge democracy as we know it.

From Sept. 6-15, representatives from the United States and eight Pacific Rim countries met in a private and secluded resort in Leesburg to advance a trade agreement that could impact nearly every aspect of our lives. The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade pact could subject environmental and public interest laws and safeguards to attack by foreign corporations, threaten our air and water with toxic pollution, and lead to more American jobs being shipped overseas. Possibly most troubling, however, is that the TPP is shaping up to be a stealth affront to the principles of our democracy.

As President of the Sierra Club, elected by the membership of the nation's largest grassroots environ-

mental organization, I value the fundamental elements of democracy—including openness, transparency, and participation—that help ensure fairness and equity in how rules are made and who they protect.

So I was bothered to learn that while the negotiations for the TPP were taking place just a short distance from my home in Leesburg, I couldn't actually participate in—or even observe—any of the talks. In fact, none but TPP government trade negotiators, hundreds of elite business executives, and a handful of non-corporate advisors can even read any of the draft texts. It's all hidden from the public, and negotiations are conducted behind closed doors. Members of the public who register with the U.S. Trade Representative were allowed limited face time with

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NRC

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prior to the NRC's issuance of the new report, in spite of a request by the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility to the NRC's new chairman, Allison Macfarlane.

In the fact of all that absent data, the report concludes that "Evaluation of the current dataset indicates that it is sufficient to move forward with the new Senior Seismic Hazard Analysis Committee (SSHAC) Level 3 PSHA." This is the level of seismic analysis required of all nuclear power plants in the U.S., meaning the NRC believes there's no difference in the level of seismic hazard between Diablo Canyon and a nuclear plant in Ohio. The NRC's highest level of seismic analysis is Level 4, which takes longer

and costs more than Level 3. Maybe they're saving it for a special occasion.

At the October 10 meeting of the Diablo Canyon Independent Safety Committee at the SLO Embassy Suites, Alliance attorney John Geesman pointedly observed "If we are going to conduct this exercise we deserve the very best expertise we can summon. The seismic survey has encountered a process that has imposed at least a one-year delay. I don't think time or money are worthy reasons any longer for not insisting on the very best review."

We recommend that readers watch a brief interview with Masaki Kito, a Tokyo attorney. Mr. Kito is suing the directors and executives of TEPCO,

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Shark

continued from page 2

imitated life next door. An existential threat with big teeth is rising up under North County, and the response to the crisis looks familiar to the discerning filmgoer — who, thanks to his or her cinematic education, should be able to provide a ready answer to the biggest question posed and left hanging in the air at the Sept. 25 board meeting: why were the county’s most powerful economic interests and their political friends opposed to a modest measure constituting a first step in dealing with the crisis?

At the hearing, a parade of folks stepped up to the podium to claim a nonexistent “right” to the gift of subdivision, as if lot splits were in the Constitution.

A young Libertarian skinhead railed against “big government” — he didn’t know anything about the groundwater basin, he admitted, but he knew he didn’t like government.

The Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance admonished “We have continually expressed our position that these efforts are premature.”

A letter from the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Steering Committee (aka the Blue Ribbon Committee), threatened that the subdivision ban “would have a negative impact on our efforts to work collaboratively with all stakeholders to implement the Groundwater Management Plan. We have received very strong opposition of total prohibition of land divisions from the majority of our Committee.” They

A parade of folks stepped up to claim a non-existent “right” to the gift of subdivision, as if lot splits were in the Constitution.

wanted the ordinance squelched in favor of the Blue Ribbon Committee’s activities (such as “efforts of the education committee to produce and circulate a Water Conservation brochure to 4,000 rural landowners in the basin.”)

Big Ag lawyered up and threatened to sue the County for not evaluating the potential “environmental impacts” of conserving 350 acre feet of water. (The same abuse of the California Environmental Quality Act deployed by the plastic industry when seeking a legal pretext to challenge plastic bag bans.)

All such testimony presented a dramatic contrast to the words of North County residents:

“Little did we know that while enjoying the view s from our window of the beautiful vineyards we were not noticing the noose tightening around our necks.”

“You may not have had the experience of what it is like to turn on the hose and have nothing come out. No kink in the hose. No valve to switch. No water. At all.”

“I’m 12. I would like to get to grow up here in my home.”

The Sierra Club and North County Watch pointed out that when a basin is certified at Level of Severity III, the General Plan requires the Board of Supervisors to take specific actions, including “adopt growth management or other urgency measures to initiate whatever restrictions are necessary to minimize or halt further resource depletions,” and “a moratorium on land development.” Those are the rules, and they don’t allow any wiggle room.

North County Watch President Sue Harvey said “We challenge the ag community to come forward with

enforceable amendments to the general plan that would require conservation in the ag industry. The amendments today are a minimum step.”

Toward the end of the meeting, Supervisor Gibson sought an answer to the mystery of the fierce opposition by quizzing an increasingly agitated Supervisor Mecham.

The transcript of that exchange is worth printing in full:

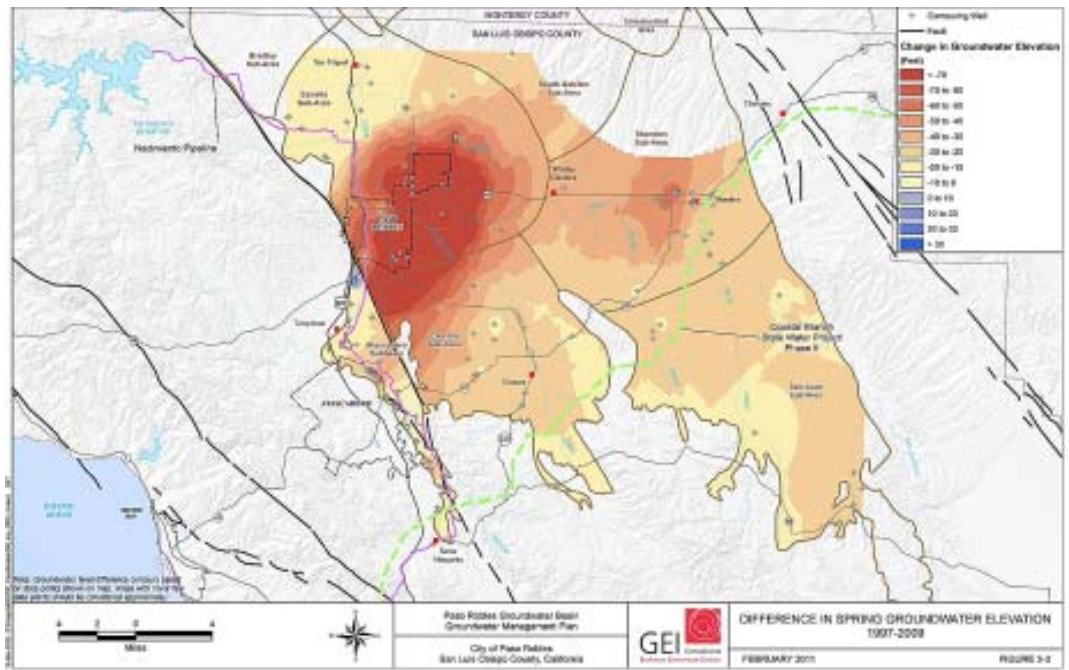
GIBSON: I would ask you, Mr. Mecham, what do you think we should do today?

MECHAM: Well I don’t have a problem with some of the things that are being suggested; I do have a problem on the land use issues. And I think that if we were to pass this in whole, I guess it’s almost like shooting a BB gun at an elephant: it’s not gonna hurt him, it’s gonna piss him off. And I’m afraid that we’re gonna...the steering committee and the... Supervisor Patterson mentioned those that supported this. John Neal from Atascadero Mutual

Water did not support this. And a whole list of ‘em: City of Paso Robles did not, Templeton did not. They did not support this ordinance, mainly the land use portion of the ordinance. Other than that, if we were to put in here, in the land divisions, that say “the divisions of lands that would result in a net increase in the amount of water when nonagricultural purposes are intended...” I don’t have a problem with putting something in there, language to make them do that. But to just say “the General Plan amendments in a 2 to 1 ratio”... I don’t know what we’re gonna accomplish; I don’t see a mad rush of development anywhere. So I’m not quite sure what we’re gonna be able to accomplish with that.

GIBSON: So we heard an extensive discussion from Mr. Caruso; we’ve been studying this for over ten years now; and it’s very clear, the relationship between development, particularly residential development, and water use. So I guess the question I’d have to ask you, based on the information in the record here: we have a proposal that the board directed the preparation of that will reduce the consumption of water over the Paso Robles groundwater basin. You speak to larger solutions. I agree completely. But why, today, would we not act to do what we can — which is all about, all of these things are about land use; why would we not act today to do what we can to start the process of bringing this basin into balance?

MECHAM: Because, in my opinion, it doesn’t do anything. We are saying “we gotta do



Bleeding out For those not reading this in our full-color web edition, that big dark blotch indicating the 70-foot+ drop in the groundwater level below Paso is in red ink, and it means what red ink always means.

something.” But what are we actually doing?

GIBSON: Staff has given us the exact acre feet of —

MECHAM: 350 feet over twenty years.

GIBSON: Okay, that’s 350 acre feet less consumption. That is something to do. Why would we not do that?

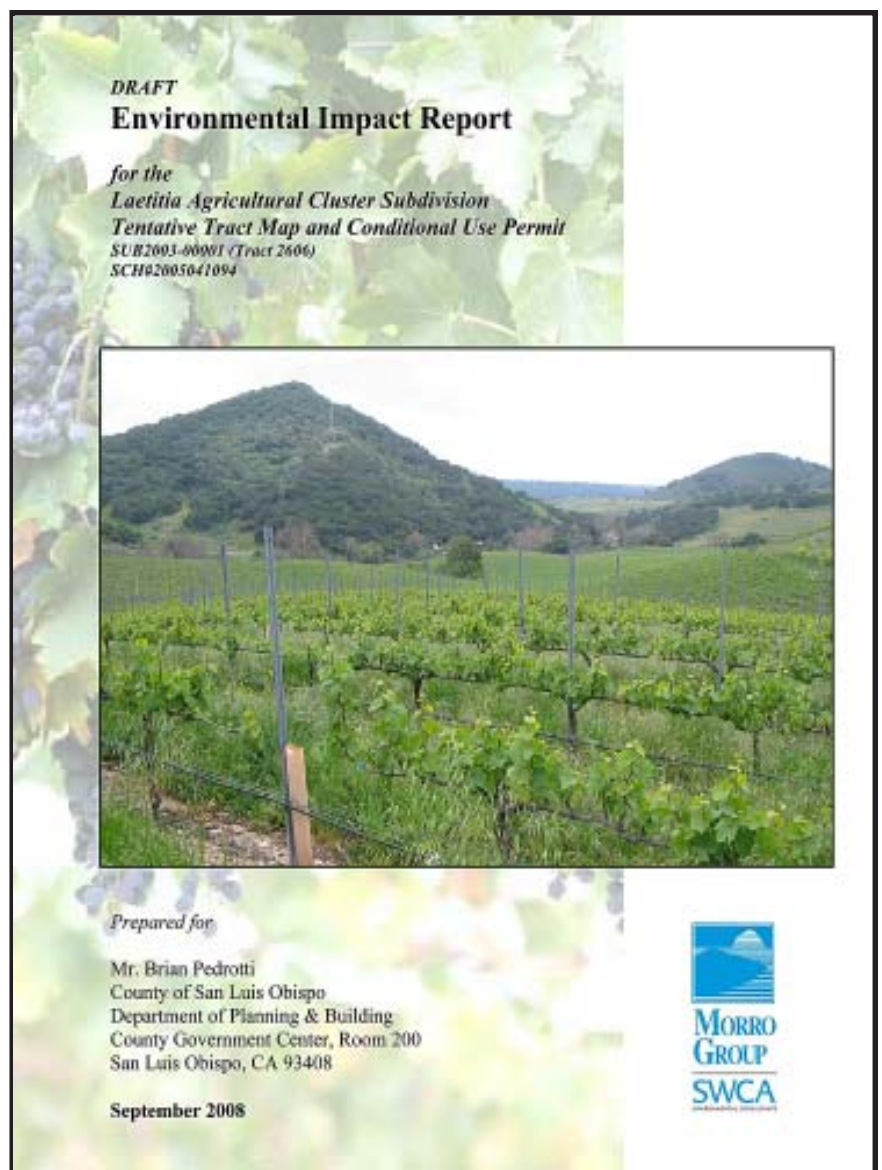
MECHAM: Because I think there is an opportunity for other solutions out there from the blue ribbon committee that has almost unanimously said that we want more time to deal with this. Another question that I have for staff: when this was taken to the planning commission and after that discussion, why wasn’t it taken back to the Blue Ribbon Committee? It was taken to WRAC [the Water Resources Advisory Committee].

GIBSON: I want to get back to the dynamics of the Blue Ribbon Committee in a minute here because frankly I don’t understand this at all, their recommendation coming forward. But to you, I’d ask: why don’t we do both? Do what we can today and continue to seek bigger solutions?

MECHAM: Because you have a group of people that, a very diverse group of people that have been at the table, and Supervisor Patterson can attest to this, we have different interests that are at the table talking about this, and I have heard from them, they’ve said they’re gonna walk away from this if we enforce this ordinance.* So my answer is why would we dissolve that, why

SHARK continued on next page

* In the month since the passage of the ordinance, no participant has “walked away” from the basin management plan process.



Mystery solved The EIR for the proposed subdivision of the Laetitia Vineyard provides 1,200 pages of reasons why big wineries would oppose a ban on subdivisions.

Avila Ponders Bird Sanctuary



At the October 8 meeting of the Avila Valley Advisory Council, the Sierra Club joined Avila Beach resident Shirley Goetz in a presentation of the proposal to declare the Avila Valley a bird sanctuary.

The declaration would provide a launch pad for Goetz's vision of building a Mission San Juan Capistrano-style nesting wall for the population of cliff swallows that are drawn to the area every year for its abundant food and

housing resources -- i.e. mosquitos and mud -- and direct them to the outskirts of the community and away from clashes with some residents and businesses that their not always welcome presence brings .

We are pleased to support this worthy initiative, as we were pleased to assist a few years ago, along with Morro Coast Audubon, when the Avila Valley Community Center needed to re-install swallow netting and learn the rules about nest removal vis a vis federal law. We all worked together and achieved a good outcome. Here's another opportunity for an excellent outcome provided by a remarkable little bird.

For the Sierra Club, our primary concern is the fact that increasing urbanization has caused the cliff swallow population in Southern California to fall 50 percent in the last four decades, so we'd like to see them accommodated everywhere as much as possible to protect their role in the ecosystem and their place in the web of life along the Pacific flyway. But we assured the Council that we are not unmindful of the economic benefits of the project being proposed, that it would be a boon to tourism, and that those complaining of swallows nesting on their property should get behind a project that has the goal of encouraging the swallows to build their nests elsewhere.

Council members were given copies of the bird sanctuary ordinance of the city of San Juan Capistrano, adopted in recognition of that city's appreciation for the very same famous feathered residents. The ordinance is very simple, primarily recapitulating existing protections and exemptions. It's main value is in the fact of the proclamation and providing the opportunity to post signage proclaiming the area a bird sanctuary -- giving an assist to the proposed project, and that aforementioned boon to tourism. That's why San Juan Capistrano has one, why San Clemente has one, and why Morro Bay has one.

We suggested AVAC convey the San Juan Capistrano ordinance to their county supervisor as a model, with the request that the county do likewise for the Avila Valley. The Council agreed to take the matter up for a vote at its December 10 meeting. AVAC meetings are held in the PG&E Community Center, 6588 Ontario Road, Avila Beach, starting at 7 p.m.

If you'd like to put in a good word for the region's avian population, this is your chance!



Electrifying Left to right: Shawn Marshall, Paul Fenn and Lane Sharman wow the Bioneers with the scoop on CCA, a revolution in local power.

CCA Makes Hay

This year's Central Coast Bioneers Conference, convened at SLO's Monday Club over the weekend of October 19, was host to a powerhouse panel on Community Choice Aggregation (CCA), the state law that allows communities to break the century-old utility monopoly on the generation of electricity and take advantage of a new model of energy generation: localizing their energy production and dramatically cutting carbon emissions. Communities can gain millions of dollars in new revenues that formerly flowed into the coffers of private

utilities and use the funds for energy efficiency programs, renewables, and the "distributed generation" of energy

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through means such as rooftop solar. Andrew Christie, director of the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club, was joined on the panel by Paul Fenn, the father of Community Choice and author of California's CCA legislation and similar bills across the country over the last twenty years; Sean Marshall of LEAN (Local Energy Aggregation Network) and a board member of the Marin Energy Authority, the first operational CCA program in California; and Lane Sharman, co-founder of the San Diego Energy District Foundation, which has the goal of forming local energy cooperatives in San Diego.

Fenn led off by announcing that CCA is a revolution in the way energy is generated and the way customers relate to it, a model that now accounts for 25% of the energy generated in the U.S. in thousands of communities across the country, and it could enable the County to raise \$100 million a year without subsidies or raising taxes, which got everybody's attention.

Marshall followed up with the news that the Marin Energy Authority is now taking 40,000 tons of carbon out of the year annually and is on track to reach the state goal of reducing carbon emission to 1990 levels by 2020 five years ahead of schedule. Of all green house gas reduction measures used by Marin, she said, CCA "blows everything else out of the water."

Sharman gave a talk on liberal vs. conservative ideas of freedom (liberal: freedom from; conservative: freedom to), and said he had found that in the conservative precincts of San Diego, getting community buy-in to CCA across the political spectrum meant putting forward three concepts: affordability, choice, and environmental responsibility.

Christie concluded with a whirlwind

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Shark

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would we run the risk of not getting continued collaboration from those different entities?

GIBSON: That threat seems to me entirely hollow, and I'd like to explore why that is. Why is the passage of these particular land use issues, which are not the main mission of the blue ribbon committee, who's looking for physical solutions of those much larger things, why would that disrupt their ability to collaborate? Can you give me any specific reason?

MECHAM: I wish they were all here to answer that question. All I got was the letter from them that basically said that they don't support the land use portion of this, and I don't have the chair here --

GIBSON: Can you identify which of those interests would walk away from this committee?

MECHAM: The Farm Bureau, for one.

GIBSON: The Farm Bureau would walk away from the larger solution of agricultural water use over this basin that's in crisis? Is that true?

MECHAM: That's what was told to me.

GIBSON: You know, I find that really disturbing. I mean, here's

the preeminent representatives of agriculture interests over this basin, and they're saying that a land use issue that absolutely does not affect agriculture at all would cause them to walk away from a collaborative solution. Does that make any sense to you?

Sense was not forthcoming. Mecham went on to ding the County's Senior Planner -- and demonstrate his own unique interpretation of the principle of cause and effect -- for saying that dropping water levels and dry wells would result in depopulation of the rural area. This wouldn't happen, said Mecham, because if people left the area they'd no longer be drawing water from the basin, so how could they cause water levels to drop?

The answer to Gibson's questions, however, was not hard to grasp. The county's most powerful ag interests fiercely opposed this modest initial attempt to save the aquifer because of their desire to execute a business plan -- one that returns a profit when acreage is planted in wine grapes or used to graze cattle, but brings the biggest payday later, when those profits start to decline and real estate prices get high enough, and owners subdivide and sell off or become developers themselves (see: Laetitia Ag Cluster). A halt to future subdivisions kills the second half of that business plan.

The unspoken issue at the hearing was profit at any cost, an argument which always tries to conceal itself, whether the issue is "streamlining" the environmental review process or delaying implementation of "job killing" regulations that will prevent

premature deaths but might crimp the profits of big polluters, or keeping the beaches open and let's deal with the giant shark later.

Turning aside legal threats and calls for delay from the county's biggest special interests in order to do the right thing, Patterson, Gibson and Hill became the kind of board that county voters were hoping to get in 2008.

The legal harrumphing and saber-rattling of Big Ag looked like a less candid version of the local business interests demanding that Sheriff Brody and the town council keep the beaches of Amity open for the Fourth of July. But this time, only two local officials were inclined to give in to that pressure: When the vote was taken, Frank Mecham and Paul Texiera voted no.

In *Jaws*, after the town sheriff has given in to those local business interests and a little boy has become the shark's second victim, the boy's grieving mother approaches the sheriff and slaps him across the face. Then she says:

I just found out that a girl got killed here last week, and you knew it! You knew there was a shark out there! You knew it was dangerous but you let people go swimming anyway! You knew all those things. But still my boy is dead now.

As more wells and homes and farms over the Paso basin fall victim to the threat coming up from below, we trust SLO County voters will remember the names of the supervisors who knew there was a shark out there but wanted to let people go swimming anyway.

Thank You!

The October 13 Santa Lucia Chapter Sustainability Strategy Meeting was ably facilitated by Naomi Blakely and attended by all current Ex-Com members, Chapter Director Andrew Christie, Conservation Committee Chair Sue Harvey, Outings Director Joe Morris, Political Committee member Richard Kranzdorf, and more than a dozen interested Chapter members who turned out on a Saturday morning to roll up their sleeves and don their thinking caps. (See "We Need You Now," October.)

After a warm welcome by Chapter Chair Greg McMillan and a roundhouse introduction by all attendees, Treasurer Lindi Doud laid out the history of our financial situation and our current dilemma: we have bare bones monthly expenses of roughly \$5,868, not including stationery, postage stamps and computer services. Monthly income is a more complicated calculation, but its been averaging roughly \$500 per month. So we are losing over \$5,000 per month.

Over the eight years that we have employed our sole staff member, our Chapter has transformed from a hiking club into the most effective environmental voice in the County, benefitting all of our lives. Our finances have been buoyed temporarily by fund-raisers, grants, contribution drives, and periodic generous gifts by our members. But without a steady source of income, it has been, and is, unsustainable.

In March, we sent a letter to all our members with a plea for financial help. Response was generous, but still fell short of a sustainable level. We find ourselves now with only a month or so left before we can no longer pay our bills. So the task at hand is either to seriously downsize (as in cutting staff, switching to an electronic newsletters and closing the office) or seriously increase our income by at least \$5,000 per month.

As facilitated by Naomi, the October 13 meeting resulted in a lively brainstorm of 3-minute ideas, thoughts, and comments, ranging across every possible fundraising idea. Joe Morris reminded us that our mission, as laid out by John Muir, is to "explore, enjoy, protect." All agreed that monthly donations by many members is vital, either by monthly check, clicking "Donate to our Chapter" on our website, or setting up monthly bill pay through one's bank.

Naomi's poster paper transcriptions and *some* of the ideas submitted by participants yielded the following:

Morning Session

What's Working

- * Andrew! Representing the needs of Mother Earth in SLO = better quality of life for us

What's Not Working

- * Our Chapter must raise its own funds & p.r: don't expect any help from National or State Sierra Club for this
- * Not enough money coming in!
- * Local Chapter seems too structured: Executive Committee & Conservation Committee seem isolated from member participation. Announce & open up meetings.
- * When people donate to National Sierra Club, they mistakenly think our local Chapter gets the money. Be sure to push the "Donate to our Chapter" button in the center of our website's home page if you want your money to stay with our local Chapter.

Money Ideas

- * Professional fund-raiser for suggestions/input – National will send one for free
- * Need to be more pro-active
- * Send "Quick Money" request to Members for urgent situation like this
- * Electronic Newsletter instead of paper - save \$800 per month
- * Make \$ from some special outings events
- * March Window – Santa Lucia's only month when National Sierra Club is not soliciting funds
- * Annual dinner or fundraising event
- * Direct input to members as to where \$ is spent
- * Movie night
- * Form a Financial/Development Committee
- * Ongoing contributions as monthly investment in the well-being of our environment, not just annual donation

Other Ideas

- * Encourage walk-ins and their issues
- * Post times/dates of upcoming



All hands on deck Naomi Blakely (center) facilitated at our October 13 meeting.

Committee meetings in Santa Lucian and website

- * Increase contact with and acknowledgment of major donors
- * Partner with others locally who share our issues
- * Share an office with other non-profits
- * Regular local contribution reminders, like dues
- * Ask for input on interests/needs from members in questionnaire form on March Window envelopes

Short Term

- * Try to re-engage major Donors
- * \$ to continue beyond next month
- * Increase ability to contact members beyond mail: update Member lists with e-mail addresses and phone numbers

Long Term

- * Discuss how to engage the other members of our Chapter
- * Outreach to youth (under 50!)
- * Generate money on a regular and recurring basis

After-Break Session

Money

- * Set up a Fundraising Committee
- * Start a Foundation
- * Host a "GMO-Free Dinner" Fundraiser, seeking produce donations from organic producers, restaurants, markets

- * Ask folks to commit to phoning five friends to become monthly donors
- * "Underwater Film Festival." Include underwater photos/art for sale Coordinate with marine groups/businesses, guest speakers.
- * Special (private) location guided hikes for fee
- * Schedule the National Sierra Club fundraiser to come to an ExCom meeting
- * Volunteer to write personal "thank-you" notes to every donor
- * Speaker fees. Special film events Special 1-3 day tours (like Sierra Club California Channel Islands trips)
- * Look for local green business sponsors
- * Hire a professional fundraiser willing to work on commission
- * For monthly donors who don't want automatic withdrawals, send packet of envelopes & reminder cards.
- * Contact supporters who aren't members for donations. Make Excel sheet of additional donors who aren't members
- * Donation of commercial space?

This is a great trove of ideas and directions. I am convinced that the path we need for this task lies in this information. All we need to do is to organize the information and do the work to implement the great ideas.

Keeping this energy in motion is our highest priority. We hope that we can count on all of you to continue this flow of ideas and information. With such a great start, I am sure we will carry this mission out to its logical end.

Our first order of business is to form the Development Committee. It would not be a huge time commitment, but I see a great need for this group.

Beyond the hopefully continuing participation of the folks who came out and sat down with us on October 13, we were overwhelmed by the generosity of the folks who wrote a check on the spot or went to our website when they got home and signed up as automatic monthly donors via Paypal or their bank. It was not something we had anticipated. It is humbling and gives us great faith that we can move our Chapter forward as the most important voice for the protection of the earth in our corner of the world.

- Greg McMillan, Chapter Chair

Short Term

- * Have a “cash mob” to support the Chapter
- * Quick Money: Send out a letter very soon, documenting our Chapter’s 1) contributions 2) financial straits. This was useful for the Angeles Chapter.
- * Get folks to call members and ask for \$\$
- * Monthly donations
- * OOMA to reduce phone costs. Tied to internet connectivity.
- * Create centralization of like-minded agencies to reduce costs, ie. Surfrider, Morro Bay National Estuary, Mothers for Peace, Bioneers, others?

Long Term

- * Semi-annual potluck for members
- * Do planning meeting like this once per year
- * People love to feel part of a community. Create more community through socials or expanded meetings
- * Energize volunteer force. Volunteer Coordinator?
- * Continue to find ways to have younger Chapter members participate
- * Raise profile in community
- * More member meetings
- * Professional fundraising that reaches folks on an emotional level
- * Paid events/outings
- * Annual rummage sale or store selling used sporting/hiking goods
- * Standing phone banking group
- * Explore SPOKES (Organization for non-profits. Great support.)
- * Bioneers would love to collaborate with the Chapter on events/outings

Other Issues To Tackle

- * Form coalitions with other enviro organizations for specific purposes.
- * May attract younger members via Facebook & other social media.
- * Charge a subscription fee for a hard copy newsletter to be mailed to Members

- * Instead of one annual dinner or potluck, several by geographic location may give more interaction and more sense of community
- * Use Survey Monkey to poll members
- * Get list of experts for issues – to prepare comments
- * Hard copies of newsletters are important for outreach – libraries, etc. Include donation envelopes?

Getting the Message Out!

- * In *Santa Lucian*, need a “Director’s Calendar” talking about whom Andrew is collaborating with on what over the past month
- * Membership solicitations – include a brief survey/questionnaire of priority issues
- * Tell your friends!
- * Set up a Publicity Committee
- * Periodic phone banking to remind member about Club/events, etc. Maybe quarterly.

Real Outcomes From Today

- * Sue will put together an Excel spreadsheet of those who aren’t Chapter members but are donors, through hikes and outings, and phone calls
- * Linda will write personal thank you notes to all donors who have not yet been acknowledged, and new donors as they arise
- * Greg, Pat, and Sue committed to calling 5 friends
- * Underwater Film Festival – Richard K. will contact Jim Dee
- * Greg will type up the list of those who attended this Strategy Meeting, and send it to all of us
- * Greg will donate the next year of his life to our Chapter of the Sierra Club
- * Two members volunteered to fill the ExCom vacancies
- * In addition to all these great ideas today, our Strategy Meeting members generously contributed a total of \$1350 on the spot toward keeping our doors open today and looking toward the future. Thank You!

Interested in helping out with some of the above? Drop us a note at sierraclub8@gmail.com, or P.O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo, 93406.

Morro Bay Mollusk Snags Coastal Commission Prize



Smile! Gary Powell's *Hermisenda crassicornis nudibranch*, Morro Bay.

The California Coastal Commission and the California Thank You Ocean Campaign have announced the winners of the 14th Annual California Ocean and Coastal Amateur Photography Contest.

The contest features photographs that reflect the importance that the coast and ocean has for California residents and the role that the Coastal Commission, Natural Resources Agency and Ocean Protection Council have played in preserving coastal and marine resources.

Three winners won Judges’ Choice prizes while another two won Viewers’ Choice prizes based on on-line voting by the public. The prizes were generously donated by Fairmont Hotels & Resorts of California and Hornblower Cruises & Events. The judges also recognized thirteen pictures with Honorable Mentions.

The third place Judges’ Choice winner is Gary Powell, who in 2010 won first place for a photo of a nudibranch. This winning picture is also of a nudibranch, which he photographed underneath the North T-Pier in Morro Bay, where there is an abundance of sea life.

Mr. Powell is retired and has been diving in Morro Bay and taking photographs with his friend and former brother-in-law for over twenty years.

All of this year’s winners and honorable mentions, as well as the winning pictures from the previous 13 years and information about the Coastal Commission’s other public education programs, can be seen at www.coast4u.org or <http://mycoastalphoto.com/>

Be Afraid

We live in troubled times. And historically troubled times have meant an upsurge in reactionary bad ideas (always in line with the corporate agenda of maximum exploitation for maximum profit), and conspiracies conjured and offered up to scared, angry people as focal points for their rage and fear.

The event advertised at right was part of a “Defend Rural America” tour that wound through the rural counties of northern and central California this fall and landed in Atascadero after rolling out of Yreka a year ago. It’s promoted on the website of the Save America Foundation, which issues warnings against one-world government, one-world currency and a one-world military, and urges people to buy gold bullion and join the Tea Party.

Defend Rural America appears to be an outgrowth of the Wise Use movement of the ‘90s – aka the Sagebrush Rebellion – but with a wider range of concerns. It is not, as yet, as violent as Wise Use eventually became, earning itself a listing in the report “Domestic Terrorism and Incident Management: Issues and Tactics,” but it shares the same affinity for rolling back the Endangered Species Act and many other environmental and public health regulations; ending the concept of wilderness; drilling, mining and clear-cutting public lands; and promoting the deeply nutty “Agenda 21” U.N.-takeover conspiracy theory.

Keep your eyes peeled, pilgrim.



Kirk MacKenzie
Founder
Defend Rural America™
650-380-3027
Skype: kirkmack1

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San Luis Obispo County
Defend Rural America Launch • October 13, 2012

Register online to bypass onsite registration lines and qualify for a door prize drawing at the event.

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Defend Rural America™

CA Central Coast Counties

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A Panel of Experts will discuss
issues of critical importance to the future of our communities.

- Sheriff Dean Wilson, Del Norte County – coastal issues, public land closures
- Dr. Richard Gierak, Siskiyou County – the Siskiyou County story
- Prof. Douglas Piirto, California Polytechnic State University – forest mismanagement
- Kevin Rice – Impact of new clean air & water standards
- Walt Heer – eminent domain and property rights
- Mike Brown, COLAB – government regulations

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FAIA

Sierra Club Marks 40 Years of the Clean Water Act with Clean Water Voting Record

The Sierra Club marked the 40th anniversary of the Clean Water Act this October by releasing a Clean Water Voting Record for the U.S. House of Representatives.

The online report card features an interactive map and issues letter grades for U.S. Representatives' voting records on clean water issues. As it turns out, this Congress has voted to endanger the drinking water sources of 117 million Americans, allow toxic pesticide discharges into our waterways without oversight and halt strong protections for toxic coal ash and destructive mountaintop removal, just to name a few.

"Americans rely on clean water – we need it to drink, grow our crops and

supply our food. Many of us depend on it for the things we enjoy most – swimming, boating, hunting and fishing," said Michael Brune, Executive Director of the Sierra Club. "For forty years, the Clean Water Act has helped protect our water. But in the 112th Congress, we've seen an unprecedented attack from House Leadership on clean water policy."

The Sierra Club's Clean Water Report Card highlights which members of Congress side with Americans who care about clean water and who sides with big polluters.

"The Clean Water Act is one of America's great success stories," said Brune. "Take the Cuyahoga River in Ohio, which at one time was one of the

most polluted rivers in the nation. The Cuyahoga was so polluted, that it actually caught fire multiple times in the late 1960s. Since the passage of the Clean Water Act in 1972, the Cuyahoga – once devoid of fish – now supports 44 species and is recognized as an American Heritage river."

"Today we should celebrate that success and move forward to build on that progress to ensure that our children and our children's children will have safe, clean water."

View the Sierra Club's new Clean Water Report Card at www.sierraclub.org/coal/reportcard/

	Name: Kevin McCarthy State: California District: 22 nd Political Party: Republican Committee Assignment: Majority Whip and Financial Services	
Prevents the Interior Department from updating rules to protect streams from the destructive practice of mountaintop removal mining.		Fail
Blocks efforts to clean up the Chesapeake Bay.		Fail
Prevents the EPA from protecting Florida's waters from harmful algal blooms, dead zones, fish kills and declines in wildlife habitat.		Fail
Stops the EPA from protecting Appalachia's environment and the health of its residents from mountaintop removal mining.		Fail

For example... We need to talk about Kevin.

Trade

continued from page 3

the negotiators: They could display information at a table for a couple of hours, make a short presentation, and attend a briefing by trade negotiators.

I appreciated these opportunities, and I took advantage of them.

However, presence is not the same as transparency and participation.

And when nearly every American is shut out from seeing the language of the pact, it's impossible to call this an open process.

While even Members of Congress can't see the specific contents of the pact, hundreds of business executives—from Halliburton to the National Coal Council—are all actively involved in shaping the TPP.

And, just like the trade negotiators, these corporate executives are sworn to secrecy by law, creating a deeper rift between this inner circle and the public.

Since corporations are shaping the trade pact, it's no surprise they're the ones being protected by its rules. A leaked version of this pact's chapter on investment reveals that it would allow foreign corporations to sue governments for unlimited cash compensation



over nearly any law that the corporation argues could hurt its expected future profits. That means in back-room, closed-door tribunals without public comment or participation, corporations would be able to bypass domestic court systems and challenge policies put in place democratically by elected officials.

What will that mean? Imagine, for example, a foreign oil corporation suing the American government in a foreign tribunal for hundreds of millions of dollars over new American regulations that protect our land and water from drilling. The oil, gas, and mining industries are likely to chomp at the bit over the potential of this pact. The gas industry, in particular, could profit and pollute even more under the TPP. That's because the pact would likely mean automatic approval of

liquefied natural gas export permits to participating countries without any economic or environmental review or federal approval from the Department of Energy. Increased exports would mean a significant increase of domestic hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, the dirty and violent process that dislodges gas deposits from shale rock formations and is known to contaminate drinking water and pollute the air we breathe.

It's time to have a real conversation about how to engage in responsible trade. Government officials tout the TPP as a "21st-century agreement" – but there's nothing innovative about keeping the public in the dark. We must restore the basic principles of democracy in order to protect the public and the environment – even if it's inconvenient for some large corporations.

Senators Say No to Bad Trade Deal

By Ilana Solomon, Sierra Club Labor and Trade Program

A bipartisan group of 10 U.S. Senators says that a strong and binding environment chapter of the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade pact is critical to their support of the deal. This signals that we have firmly entered into a new era of trade in which many in Congress will only accept agreements with strong and enforceable environmental chapters.

The October 17 letter to the U.S. Trade Representative was signed by Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR), Chairman of the Senate Finance Subcommittee on International Trade, and Olympia Snowe (R-ME), also on Senate Finance. Among others, it was co-signed by John Kerry (D-MA), the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Chairwoman of the Environment and Public Works Committee.

A strong environment chapter is especially critical when viewed in historical context and in the current context of the TPP negotiations.

Simply put, expanded trade without binding environmental protections would put the rich biodiversity and natural resources of the Pacific Rim at significant risk. The Pacific Region includes Australia's Great Barrier Reef, home to more than 11,000 species, and Peru's Amazon Rainforest, one of the most biologically diverse areas on Earth. Tragically, the biodiversity of the Pacific Rim is being threatened by, among other things, commercial exploitation linked to expanded trade.

In fact, the Asia-Pacific region includes 13 of the world's 34 identified "biodiversity hotspots," or regions with a significant biodiversity that is threatened with destruction. The region accounts for about one third of all the threatened species in the world. The numbers of several species of oceanic sharks, including reef sharks, are declining rapidly. And illegal logging persists in a number of TPP

member countries, contributing to climate change and threatening natural forests, biodiversity, and the communities who live in and rely on the forests.

A primary goal of the TPP is to facilitate and expand trade in the Pacific Rim. Unfortunately, history has shown that as overall trade expands, so does illegal and unsustainable trade. That's why we need an environment chapter that, as the Senate letter states, "should be binding and subject to the same dispute settlement provisions as commercial chapters; should ensure that countries uphold and strengthen their domestic environmental laws and policies and their obligations under agreed multilateral environmental agreements; and should include binding provisions to ensure the sustainability of trade in natural resources and wildlife, including through provisions to combat illegal trade."

Still, a robust environment chapter is not all that we need to protect the environment. The Senate letter also makes clear that "it is important that other provisions in the agreement, including those in the investment chapter, do not undermine efforts to protect the environment."

This point is absolutely critical, as the currently drafted investment chapter would allow foreign corporations to attack governments' environmental laws and policies in private tribunals. Similar trade deals that follow this model, like the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), allow corporations to attack vital environmental laws and safeguards that protect communities and the environment from things like harmful chemicals or mining practices.

As negotiators work toward the next round of TPP talks in Auckland, New Zealand, at the beginning of December, they should keep the messages of this letter in mind. Members of Congress and members of the public will not accept a trade deal that puts our environment at risk.

Topaz Solar Farm construction is underway and will continue for the next three years.

For Project Information:
www.topazsolar.com

Questions?

Construction Liaison, Dawn Legg:
(480) 390-6256

To register anonymous comments:
Toll-free Hotline: **(877) 228-3331**

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Farming Rain

Rainwater harvesting is a technique used for collecting, storing, and using rainwater for landscape irrigation and other uses.

This ancient practice is growing in popularity our due to interest in reducing the consumption of potable water and the inherent qualities of rainwater. When rainwater is collected from various man-made above-ground hard surfaces, the result is reduced flooding, storm water runoff, erosion, and contamination of surface water with pesticides, sediment, metals, and fertilizers. It reduces the need for imported water and is an excellent source of water for landscape irrigation, with no filtration system required, no chemicals such as fluoride and chlorine, and no dissolved salts and minerals from the soil. Home systems can be relatively simple to install and operate and promote both water and energy conservation. Which, of course, means lower bills.

Rainwater systems come in all shapes and sizes, from a simple catchment system under a downspout to large above and/or underground cisterns with complex filtration systems that can store thousands of gallons. Most rainwater collection systems are comprised of these basic components: catchment surface (your roof, or other raised solid surface), distribution system (gutters and downspouts), leaf screen, roof washer (a device that diverts the polluted "first flush" of rain before it enters the storage tank), delivery system (grav-



Here's how A rainwater catchment project takes shape at the September 23 SLOCOAT event at Cambria's Camp Ocean Pines.

ity-fed or pumped to the landscape or other end use areas), purification/treatment system (if for human consumption), and a storage tank.

In general, the storage tank is the most expensive component of a rainwater harvesting system. There are numerous types and styles of storage tanks available. Storage can be above-ground or underground. Storage containers can be made from galvanized steel, wood, concrete, clay, plastic, fiberglass, polyethylene, masonry, etc. They can be cisterns,

barrels, tanks, garbage cans, and swimming pools. Storage tank prices vary based on size, material and complexity. To inhibit the growth of algae, storage tanks should be opaque and preferably placed away from direct sunlight. The tanks should also be placed close to the areas of use and the supply line to reduce the distance over which the water is delivered. Also consider placing the storage at an elevated area to take advantage of gravity flow. The tank should always be placed on a stable and level area to

prevent it from leaning or collapsing. The San Luis Obispo Coalition of Appropriate Technology (SLOCOAT) — SLO Green Build, the San Luis Obispo Chapter of the Surfrider Foundation and the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club — was organized in 2007. We've produced local guides to Graywater Systems and Rainwater Management for Low Impact Development (see ad on page 11). Watch for the imminent release of the Guide to Rainwater Harvesting.



After a background briefing from SLO COAT members, September 23 event attendees spent the afternoon playing with rocks, water and dirt and built a system to capture rainwater from the roof, collect it in a channel, and retain it in a catch basin to irrigate the landscaping at Camp Ocean Pines.



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Seismic

continued from page 1

Commission urging denial of the permit. We have met with Commissioners to discuss our concerns, given the Commissioners binders of extensive information on potential environmental impacts and project alternatives, and spoken with staff.

Those concerns and the understudied nature of project alternatives with significantly less potential for harm to the marine environment are largely summed up in two recent papers authored by Dr. Lindy Weilgart, a research associate at Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia and expert on undersea noise pollution from military sonar, oceanographic projects, and seismic surveys and their effects on marine life. The following is a summary of Dr. Weilgart's conclusions from her papers "A Review of the Impacts of Seismic Airgun Surveys on Marine Life," and "Alternative Quieter Technologies to Seismic Airguns for Collecting Geophysical Data."

- Noise from a single seismic airgun survey can blanket an area of over 300,000 square kilometers, 4,000 km from the sound source, raising background noise levels 100-fold (20 dB), continuously for weeks.
- Seismic surveys can obliterate any biological sound, forming a ubiquitous, dominant part of the background noise.
- Impacts from airgun surveys on marine species from mammals to fish are well documented and can range from hearing or organ damage, displacement from important feeding or mating areas, reductions in fisheries catch rates, masking or obscuring of sounds, to behavioral effects.
- Seismic air guns extensively damaged fish ears at distances of 500 m to several kilometers from seismic surveys. No recovery was apparent 58 days after exposure.
- Contrary to the conclusions of the Diablo Canyon project's environmental review, the International Whaling Commission concluded in 2005 that "repeated and persistent acoustic insults [over] a large area... should be considered enough to cause population level impacts."
- The energy from airgun impulses is mostly concentrated in the lower frequencies, but includes substantial energy in the tens of kiloHertz (kHz). Geophysicists do not make use of, nor even record, any energy over circa 100

Hz. This energy therefore needlessly impacts marine life, especially animals with mid- or high-frequency hearing.

- High peak pressure is a characteristic of sound believed to be harmful to organisms. A far-reaching and thorough alternative is marine vibroseis (MV), which uses signals of drastically lower peak pressure than airguns, representing a 1,000-fold reduction in intensity, and about a 10,000-fold reduction in the presumed area of impact.
- An MV system can reduce wasteful geophysically unwanted higher frequencies (> 100 Hz), suppressing these frequencies while still producing satisfactory geophysical results.
- With MV, the necessary seismic information can be extracted using lower levels of energy, e.g. through improved signal processing, again reducing environmental impact. MV can be used over a broader range of depths than airguns can — in deep water, shallow water, and transition zones.
- In general, MV surveys would be expected to cause less of an impact (behavioral, physiological, auditory) than airgun surveys in all habitats and environments regardless of water depth or environmental conditions.
- Stephen Chelminski, the inventor of the airgun, believes MV to be more benign than his invention. He states, "Though airguns have been an improvement over high explosives to the well-being of marine life, I would very much like to see a more benign sound source such as the MV come into use."
- Deep Towed Acoustic Geophysical Systems (DTAGS) is also a controlled source, like MV, being developed at the Naval Research Laboratory, Stennis Space Center. DTAGS can achieve commercially useful sound pressure levels in the sea floor while keeping sound levels in the ocean to a minimum, especially in the shallower parts of the water column where sensitive marine life is concentrated.
- While there is currently no commercial technology available to replace seismic airguns, with sufficient funding, this could change quickly. We owe it to the marine environment to do our utmost to keep impacts from seismic surveys to an absolute minimum.

The Coastal Commission should heed Dr. Weilgart's comments on the viability of alternative seismic survey technology with the potential for

significantly reduced impacts to coastal resources.

We urge the Commission to consider the scientific consensus among marine biologists, who, like the inventor of the airgun, have for years been urging a transition away from airgun technology to alternative means of geophysical surveys due to the likely cumulative impacts of extremely loud sound pumped into the marine environment by airgun arrays, now ubiquitous in the world's oceans.

In view of the above, and the unknown nature of the project's long-term and population level impacts, we believe the Commission should deny a Coastal Development Permit and federal consistency certification, while advising PG&E to more thoroughly

evaluate alternatives that can produce data on the critical seismic hazards faced by Diablo Canyon's reactors, infrastructure and nuclear waste storage facility, while posing the lowest level of threat to marine wildlife.

TAKE ACTION

Public testimony will be taken by the Coastal Commission on November 14 at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium – East Wing, 1855 Main Street, Santa Monica. Exact time TBD. Check www.coastal.ca.gov for updates.

Send e-mail comments to pgeseismic@coastal.ca.gov.

Dear SLO: If It Ain't Broke, Don't Let Developers Fix It



Santa Lucia Chapter
P.O. Box 15755
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406
(805) 543-8717
www.santalucia.sierraclub.org

October 16, 2012

TO: SLO City Council

FROM: Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club

Pursuant to the recommendation for "permit streamlining" in the Draft Background Report on the Land Use and Circulation Element that's on your agenda tonight, we reiterate our comment on this issue from last August when you reviewed the Draft Economic Development Strategic Plan (EDSP).

The staff report on the draft EDSP claimed that "permit streamlining," would "optimize the City's development review process," and that "based on community input, this would also include a review of City environmental review procedures." On Page 43 of the EDSP, you will recall, we learned that "community input" and "public engagement" consisted of interviews with 31 individuals primarily from the business community, and that they were consulted in search of "an insider perspective."

In Appendix A of the EDSP appeared the finding that in comparison to other regional governments, **"the City appears to process permits efficiently with some of the shortest processing times."**

Hence it appears that "permit streamlining" is a solution in search of a problem. The "streamlining" of the environmental review process is of a piece with previously expressed desires to lower standards for the construction of infrastructure and "incentivize" development. The EDSP has noted that the city's permit process is efficient. We urge the Council not to allow the non-issue of permit streamlining to migrate into the LUCE update.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,

Andrew Christie, Director
Santa Lucia Chapter

CCA

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tour through the last six years of the Santa Lucia chapter's CCA activism, a campaign that introduced most local residents to the concept and succeeded in getting the evaluation of CCA programs written into the County's General Plan update and the Climate Action Plans for both the City and County of San Luis Obispo.

TAKE ACTION

Join the regional public engagement program that's informing the selection of greenhouse gas reduction measures by all the cities in the county, and make sure CCA is one of those measures! Go to www.centralcoastghgplanning.com and sign up for the e-newsletter. This is the web portal for the collaborative planning effort among Arroyo Grande, Atascadero, Grover Beach, Morro Bay, Pismo Beach, Paso Robles and the San Luis



Obispo County Air Pollution Control District (APCD) to prepare climate action plans. The development of a model greenhouse gas reduction plan toolbox of reduction measures is happening right now. Check the site for the location and time of the November 15 Workshop (there are two planned simultaneously in North and South County), go to the one nearest you, and get the message to participants and the APCD that CCA needs to be in the Climate Action Plans!

NRC

continued from page 3

owners of the Fukushima plant, for their negligence in allowing that nuclear disaster to unfold. As the Associated Press reported on October 13, 2012: "Tokyo Electric Power Co. said in a statement that it had known safety improvements were needed before last year's tsunami triggered three meltdowns, but it had feared the political, economic and legal consequences of implementing them."

Mr. Kito, representing 1,300 Tokyo residents, is very knowledgeable about the damage that disaster caused to the

fishing industry and marine life off of Japan. His video interview is at <http://a4nr.org/?p=2392>.

TAKE ACTION

The SSHAC (Senior Seismic Hazard Analysis Committee) will meet at the Embassy Suites, San Luis Obispo, November 6 through 8. A4NR's seismologist and witness in our CPUC case, Dr. Douglas Hamilton, is slated to present his views on the afternoon of the 6th, time to be determined. The public is invited. Check www.a4nr.org for any updates.

Classifieds

Next issue deadline is **December 6**.
 To get a rate sheet or submit your ad and payment, contact:
 Sierra Club - Santa Lucia Chapter
 P.O. Box 15755
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Outings and Activities Calendar

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

All our hikes and activities are open to all Club members and the general public. Please bring drinking water to all outings and optionally a lunch. Sturdy footwear is recommended. All phone numbers listed are within area code 805 unless otherwise noted. Pets are generally not allowed. A parent or responsible adult must accompany children under the age of 18. If you have any suggestions for hikes or outdoor activities, questions about the Chapter's outing policies, or would like to be an outings leader, call Outings Chair Joe Morris, 549-0355. For information on a specific outing, please call the listed outing leader.

Fri-Sun, Nov. 2-4 Death Valley Service Trip. Restoration activities, including eradication of off-road vehicle tracks, led by Death Valley NP Wilderness Coordinator Charlie Callagan. Arrive Friday afternoon to camp at either Texas Springs or Furnace Creek. Work part of the afternoon and on Saturday with an evening potluck. Sunday—a work day or recreational. Leader: Kate Allen, kj.allen96@gmail.com, 661-944-4056. CNRCC Desert Committee.

Sun., Nov. 4, 10 a.m. Los Flores Ranch Family Hike. Easy, kid-friendly 2-mile hike among rolling hills east of Santa Maria. Explore native plants and wildlife. Bring water, hat, sunscreen, and dress in layers. From Hwy 101, take Clark Ave. east to dead-end at Dominion Rd and turn right for 2 miles to 6271 Dominion Rd. Meet in parking lot. \$3 fee for nonresidents of Santa Maria. Leader: Andrea Ortiz, 934-2792, kenya683@msn.com.

Sat., Nov. 10, 8:30 a.m. Stoney Creek Trail Hike. Eight-mile walk on seldom used trail in the Garcia Wilderness, 2,000 ft. gain. Probable poison oak on trail. Outing will last most of day. We must pass through a locked gate to the trailhead, which is within Avenales Ranch. Meet in front of the Pacific Beverage Co. in Santa Margarita. Leader: Carlos Diaz-Saavedra, 546-0317.

Sat., Nov. 10, 10 a.m. Shell Beach/Ontario Ridge Trail Loop. Starting in Shell Beach, hike over Ontario Ridge, "The Backbone," for great coastal views, then down to Cave Landing to explore bluffs and cave tunnel. Finally, a cliff walk above Pirate's Cove back to cars. This is a moderate, 4-5 mile hike, lasting 2-3 hrs. Bring hat, sunscreen, sturdy shoes, and dress in layers for varying weather. Meet at trailhead in Shell Beach. From Hwy 101, exit on Avila Beach Dr., turning south on Shell Beach Rd for 1/3 mile, then turn right on El Porto Dr. Continue west for .4 mile to end of road, making a slight right on Indio Dr. Continue to the cul-de-sac outside the private Bluff Drive and then left to the parking lot. Leader: Andrea

Ortiz, 934-2792, kenya683@msn.com.

Sun., Nov. 11, 9 a.m. Felsman Loop to Bishop Peak. Celebrate Veteran's Day with a hike to one of our favorite morros. Round-trip distance is 6 miles, about 1,000 ft. gain, and duration: 3 to 3 1/2 hrs. Plants, animals, and geology of the area will be discussed. Bring adequate water, snacks, hat, and sturdy shoes, and dress in layers for varying weather. Meet at trailhead on west side of Patricia Dr in SLO, between Patricia Ct. and Anacapa Circle. Leader: Bill Waycott, 459-2103 or bill.waycott@gmail.com.

Sun., Nov. 11, 10 a.m. Trekking-Pole Hike at Sycamore Springs. PoleCats is dedicated to learning local hikes and modeling the benefits of trekking poles. Hike is 2 miles, 700 ft. elevation change. Meet near entrance to Sycamore Springs Resort, 1215 Avila Beach Dr. Please confirm with Leader: David Georgi, 458-5575 or polecatleader@gmail.com.

Tues, Nov. 13, 7-9 p.m. Bimonthly Meeting: "Preserving SLO's Wide-Open Spaces." Tonight we are especially privileged to welcome Neil Havlik, the recently retired Natural Resources Manager for the City of San Luis Obispo. For 17 years, Neil spearheaded the city's efforts to preserve over 6,500 acres. So what could, should be next? Neil will give his considered vision for SLO's natural future—the prospects and the problems. Come and meet the man who created SLO's greenbelt legacy. Conservation news will begin the meeting. Location: Steynberg Gallery, 1531 Monterey St., SLO. Info.: Joe Morris, 549-0355.

Sun., Nov. 18, 4:30 p.m. Sunset Saunter: Terrace Hill. Come on a sociable walk up Terrace Hill in SLO for 360-degree views of the sun setting over the city and three morros. It's an easy one-mile hike, 130 feet gain, and the walk will be accompanied by several readings from nature writers. Wear sturdy walking shoes. Rain cancels. Meet at corner of Bishop and Augusta Sts. Leader: Joe Morris, 549-0355.

Sat., Dec. 1, 9 a.m. Anniversary Hike to Cerro Alto. Moderate 7-mile, 1700 ft. gain hike in the Los Padres Nat. Forest. From Cerro Alto campground, will climb through forest and chaparral to Cerro Alto summit, with panoramic views. Return through eucalyptus grove, passing the junction to the old Sweetwater mine. Meet at Cerro Alto campground, 8 miles east of Morro Bay and 12 miles west of Atascadero on Hwy 41. Drive to the day use area in back of the campground. \$5 day use fee. Bring water, lunch or snacks, and dress for varying weather. Ticks and poison oak are possible. Heavy rain cancels. There will be a refueling stop at Taco Temple after the hike. Leader: Chuck Tribbey, 441-7597.

Sat., Dec. 1, 2:30-4:30 p.m. Tree Huggers' Walk of SLO, with Dr. Matt Ritter. Join Cal Poly Botany Prof Matt Ritter in an exploration of the trees of San Luis Obispo, walking past about 100 species and discussing about 20 of them. Dr. Ritter will share his favorite natural history stories and identification tips, and highlight SLO's notable Heritage trees. Wear comfortable shoes and clothing for this easy walk. Rain cancels. The walk will meet at a downtown location in SLO. To avoid overcrowding sidewalks, attendees must reserve by email to the co-leader, Bill Waycott, who will reply and send you the meeting place, if you fall within the quota of 30 attendees. Deadline for reservations is Friday noon, November 30. Reservations are limited to no more than three spots per person responding. Email: billwaycott@gmail.com.

Sat-Sun., Dec. 1-2 Explore and Serve in the Carrizo Plain. Work on project to remove or modify fences for pronghorn antelopes, who will not jump them to escape predators. Saturday is a work day, with camping and a potluck dinner. Sunday is leader's choice of a hike in the Carrizo Plains or a tour of viewing areas. Leader: Craig Deutsche, craig.deutsche@gmail.com, 310-477-6670. CNRCC Desert Committee.



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.

Sun., Dec. 9, 10 a.m. Trekking-Pole Hike at Sycamore Springs. Polecats is dedicated to exploring local hikes, modeling the benefits of using trekking poles. Hike is 2 miles, 700 ft. elevation change. Meet near the entrance to Sycamore Springs Resort, 1215 Avila Beach Dr. Confirm you are coming with Leader: David Georgi, 458-5575, polecatleader@gmail.com.

Sun., Dec. 16th, 2 p.m. City Walk: The Mill Street Historic District. An easy, guided stroll through neighborhood of splendid century-old homes to reveal San Luis Obispo in the era of Hearst, the coming of the railroad, WW I, and the twenties. Hear the stories of the rich and also the not-so-famous who shaped the city of today. Duration about 1 1/2 hrs. Meet at corner of Monterey and Johnson Sts. Leader: Joe Morris, 549-0355.

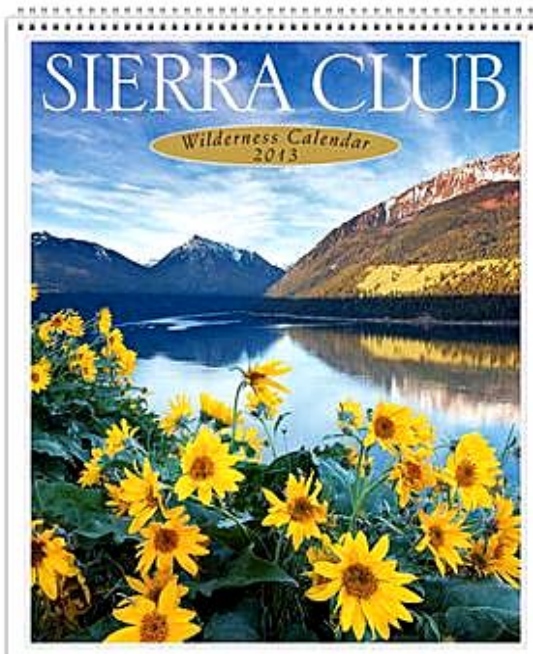
Sat., Dec. 22, 9:30 a.m. Point Buchon Trail, Montana de Oro SP. 5-6 mile hike on trail along coast, elevation gain 400 ft. and lasting 3-3.5 hrs. Local plants, animals, and geology will be discussed. Bring water, snacks, hat, and sturdy shoes, dress for varying weather. Meet at the parking lot at southern end of Montana de Oro SP at the start of the Coon Creek trail. Leader: Bill Waycott, 459-2103, bill.waycott@gmail.com.

Here for the holidays!

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For further information contact:

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John Muir, founder of the
Sierra Club, in Yosemite