



SANTA LUCIAN



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

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Diablo's Fate Awaits

State Water Board hearing set for Jan. 19

After a year of delay, the staff of the State Water Resources Control Board have written a report and recommendations for how Diablo Canyon should be required to comply with new state regulations phasing out the use of ocean water to cool coastal power plants.

On January 19 in Sacramento, the Board will hear the report. Staff will be looking for input from the board and the public on additional information the board should consider when determining whether to modify the state's policy for Diablo later this year.

The hearing could mark the beginning of the end of the road for "California's largest marine predator," as California Coastal Commission staff summed up the impacts of the plants cooling system on the marine environment at a water board hearing last year.

At press time, the staff report was not available. Go to www.swrcb.ca.gov/board_info/agendas/.



by Ethan Buckner,
ForestEthics Extreme Oil Campaign

In the final days of 2015, the victories for the climate justice movement came fast and furious - from fracking bans to pipeline wins to breakthrough climate policies.

And on December 8, after years of a hard-fought community-led campaign, the oil services company WesPac withdrew its permit applications to build the biggest oil terminal on the West Coast in Pittsburg, California.

That means 242,000 barrels a day of toxic and explosive extreme crude oil from the tar sands and the Bakken will stay in the ground and off the tankers, oil trains, and pipelines WesPac would have built to bring this dangerous crude to Bay Area refineries.

This is an extraordinary victory, and one that demonstrates that grassroots organizing can overcome the power of big oil. I remember two years ago hearing that "no one can organize in this town,"

California Crude Oil Project Stopped in Its Tracks



because for so long Pittsburg had been dominated by heavy industry, from petrochemical plants and waste dumps to power stations and oil facilities.

The campaign started out small, led by two courageous neighbors Kalli Graham and Lyana Monterrey, who started knocking on doors and enrolling more and more community members to the fight. I remember my first day canvassing outside the Pittsburg seafood festival in August 2013, thinking to myself *how the hell are we ever going to win this thing?*

But as these brilliant and resilient grassroots leaders

kept organizing, and it started working. Within months our volunteer base

PITTSBURG continued on page 5

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Just Say No to the TPP

The release of the once secret text of the Trans-Pacific Partnership makes it clear: this is a toxic trade deal

On November 5, the government of New Zealand published the text of the previously secretive Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a 12-nation international trade deal. The release came after years of closed-door negotiations by trade officials and select corporate advisers and years of opposition and demands of transparency from the Sierra Club and millions of Americans.

As predicted, the TPP turns out to be a very bad deal for the health of communities, the environment, and our climate. Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz said on *Democracy Now* "The irony is that the president came out and said, 'This is about who makes the trade rules, China or the United States?' But I think the big issue is, this is about who makes the rules of trade: the American people, our democratic process, or the corporations? And who the rules are made for, which is, for the corporations or for all of us?"

We now have concrete evidence that the Trans-Pacific Partnership threatens our families, our communities, and our environment. It's no surprise that the deal is rife with polluter giveaways that would undermine decades of environmental progress, threaten our climate, and fail to adequately protect wildlife, because big polluters helped write the deal.

The words "climate change" don't even appear in the text, a dead giveaway that this isn't a 21st-century trade deal. It sets us back further, empowering fossil fuel corporations to challenge our public health and climate safeguards in unaccountable trade tribunals while increasing dirty fossil fuel exports and fracking.

Many provisions in the deal's environment chapter are toothless and fail to offer any of the protections proponents of this deal have touted. Some provisions even fail to meet the minimum standards of environmental protection established in the "fast-track" law and included in past trade deals negotiated under the George W. Bush administration.

Congress must stand up for American jobs, clean air and water, and a healthy climate by rejecting the toxic Trans-Pacific Partnership.

While the range of conservation issues mentioned in the TPP is wide, the obligations-what countries are actually required to do-are very shallow. Vague obligations combined with weak enforcement, as described below, may allow countries to continue with business-as-usual practices that threaten our environment.

Rather than prohibiting trade in illegally

taken timber and wildlife - major issues in TPP countries like Peru and Vietnam - the TPP only asks countries "to combat" such trade. To comply, the text requires only weak measures, such as "exchanging information and experiences" while stronger measures like sanctions are merely listed as options.

Rather than banning commercial whaling and shark fin trade - major issues in TPP countries like Japan and Singapore - the TPP includes a toothless aspiration to "promote the long-term conservation of sharks...and marine mammals" via a non-binding list of suggested measures that countries "should" take.

The TPP would undermine efforts to combat the climate crisis, empowering foreign fossil fuel corporations to challenge our environmental and climate safeguards in unaccountable trade tribunals via the controversial investor-state

TPP continued on page 5



Rush to Sludgment

Haste will make waste in the County's push to permit sewage sludge on ag land

SLO County is proposing an ordinance allowing the application of sewage sludge on agricultural lands used to grow food for human consumption, feed for animals and provide grazing livestock. The ordinance would replace a current moratorium on the practice that will expire in 2018.

The proposed ordinance permits the spreading of excessively contaminated sludge and massive increases in soil contamination with toxic, carcinogenic, mutagenic, pathogenic and hormone-disrupting pollutants.

The draft ordinance does not comply with directions given to County staff by the Board of Supervisors about the type or ordinance that should be drafted to regulate sewage sludge land

SLUDGE continued on page 4



They thought they were kidding When John Stauber and Sheldon Rampton were trying to come up with a title for their landmark 1994 take-down of the public relations industry, they had no idea there was an actual p.r. campaign dedicated to convincing communities that disposing of sewage sludge (rechristened "biosolids") by spreading it on farmland is a wonderful thing.

Not So Fast on the Los Osos Basin Plan

Sierra Club's troubling questions get the Water Board's attention

With the October 14 certification by the court of a stipulated judgment in the adjudication of the Los Osos groundwater basin and approval of a deeply flawed Basin Plan (see "It's Crunch Time for Los Osos," April 2015), the future is looking grim for the basin, the 14,000 residents above it, and the wildlife and habitat of the Morro Bay Estuary that depend on it.

In a nutshell, after 35 years of severe overdraft due to lack of management by the water purveyors and the County - who ignored recommendations in the '70s, '80s and '90s to move wells and conserve water - seawater intrusion is knocking out key supply wells and threatening many others, with salt levels in the deep aquifer so high it may be beyond salvation. 90%

of the water in the Los Osos Basin is below the level needed to stop seawater intrusion (even before the worst drought on record lowered water tables further). The wastewater project is about to start up, and its benefits depend on saving the basin. After eight years of negotiations, we should be looking at a Basin Plan that will save the Basin -- which this plan won't because it lacks es-

sential elements of sustainable management.

Throughout the process, the Sierra Club was unable to get our concerns addressed by the County, the Regional Water Board or the water purveyors. As a result, the process produced a Basin Plan obviously and ominously dedicated to finding a way to lift the building moratorium in Los Osos and

LOS OSOS continued on page 6

Don't Miss:

January 28

2016 Environmentalists Rendezvous

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Time + Effort = Win



As you contemplate the year just past as summarized on the facing page, we hope something like a theme strikes you (in addition to the obvious rising tide of opposition to the Phillips 66 oil-by-rail project): The scorecard for several local environmental issues of long standing came out looking pretty good as 2015 came to a close. While significant progress on significant issues takes a significant amount of time and effort, actual progress eventually can and does occur.

Which leads to another theme: When our resident media outlets report on the vote of a local board or a decision by a federal agency, it often reports that story while locked in the grip of the Eternal Now – i.e. yesterday a group of officials took a notion into their heads to do something, so they did it. Which is like walking over a ridge, spying a 100-year old oak tree in the valley below, and assuming it descended from the sky five minutes earlier and is balancing on the base of its trunk.

That's not how it works. And that's why we go to the trouble every year of compiling the Year in Review, which we might subtitle "Here's What Really Hap-



action plans. Along with Surfrider Foundation and long-time local activists, we helped the Chumash shepherd their sanctuary nomination to acceptance.

CCE and the CHNMS would be huge items in the environmental plus column for this county, and the activists who have pressed for both for so long have achieved big wins. On both issues, we have miles to go before we sleep, but now we will be covering those miles with much more encouragement.

And as encouraging as those wins are, it's equally encouraging to contemplate who lost.

In the run-up to the Board of Supervisors' vote on the Community Choice feasibility study, the Coalition of Labor, Agriculture and Business (COLAB), reliably reactionary no matter the issue, devoted six pages of its member newsletter to invoking the scary monster of Creeping Socialism that would surely devour us all if the Board allocated funds to participate in a study and get information that might cause it to make an informed decision.

COLAB got its fear-mongering fanny paddled.

So did a clueless Port San Luis Harbor Commission when it earnestly tried to kill the national marine sanctuary nomination, approaching the Morro Bay City Council and Avila Valley Advisory Council and urging them to join it in opposition to the proposed

pened."

Two examples encompass both of those themes:

First, Community Choice Energy has been the subject of nearly a decade of education efforts for our local elected officials, city managers, planning staff, etc.. After two years of intensive outreach by SLO Clean Energy, the message finally broke through last October: The Board of Supervisors decided that perhaps lower electricity rates, cleaner energy sources, and local control of our energy destiny could be a good thing, and it would be nice to find out, so they decided to join a regional feasibility study dedicated to doing so.

Second, after a two-year drive for nomination that followed lord knows how many years of local efforts to get a national marine sanctuary established on the Central Coast, the nomination for the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary was accepted by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

The Sierra Club invested heavily in those nine years of public outreach on Community Choice, hosting clean energy town hall meetings and assisting cities with greenhouse gas emission inventories and climate

Sierra Club General Meeting

2016 Environmentalists Rendezvous

7 p.m., Thurs., Jan. 28

Thurs., Jan. 28th, 7-9 p.m. 7th Annual Environmentalists' Rendezvous: The Sustainable City. At this year's annual forum of local environmental activists, leaders of five prominent groups working to improve the urban habitat of our county will speak. This is a unique opportunity to hear reps from ECOSLO, SLO Clean Energy, SLO Foam Free, the City of SLO's Division of Natural Resources and, of course, the Sierra Club discuss their efforts and plans for 2016. Also learn the implications of the Paris agreement on climate change for our county. Bring your comments and questions.

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



sanctuary. Both Avila and Morro Bay refused, instead requesting more information. And they decided to go to the source for that information — NOAA — unlike the Port, which voted to oppose the sanctuary essentially because they know a guy who knows a guy who told another guy that a national marine sanctuary could cause warts and hooliganism. Pismo Beach refused to even agendize the Port's requested letter of opposition. The times, they may be a-changing.

As we go to press, NOAA's national marine sanctuary outreach/town hall is scheduled for January 6 in Morro Bay in response to that request for more information.

Hey, there's another theme! More information is good. Because when you find out what Community Choice Energy and the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary actually are and what they'll do – as opposed to listening to the voices of ignorance and reactionary political flacks spreading disinformation that actually describes what they're not and what they won't do – these turn out to be things people want.

A good lesson, and a nice way to start a new year.

Santa Lucian

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Santa Lucia Chapter

2015 Executive Committee

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Linda Seeley (12/17)
SECRETARY
Lindi Doud (12/17)
MEMBER
Greg McMillan (12/16)
MEMBER
Jon Alan Connerley (12/16)
MEMBER
Emily Miggins (12/15)
MEMBER
Karen Merriam (12/15)
MEMBER

Greg McMillan
COUNCIL OF CLUB LEADERS
Lindi Doud, Patrick McGibney
TREASURERS

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

Committee Chairs

Political
David Bouquin
Development
Greg McMillan
Conservation
Sue Harvey
Water Subcommittee
Keith Wimer
Energy Task Force
Karen Merriam
Intergenerational Task Force
Victoria Carranza
Nuclear Power Task Force
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This is Your Ballot for Our 2016 Executive Committee Election



It's time to select your Sierra Club chapter's Executive Committee for 2016. Three candidates are running for two seats.

All current members of the Sierra Club's Santa Lucia Chapter are eligible to vote. If there is more than one Sierra Club member in your household, you may photocopy the printed ballot and mail both in the same envelope. After the election, the ExCom will convene a brief meeting to elect board officers and set the monthly date for ExCom meetings for the remainder of 2016.

- Make an X or checkmark in the box for the candidate of your choice. You may vote for no more than two candidates.

- Ballots must be received by **5 p.m., February 1, 2016**, at the Chapter office.

- Sign and date the flap of the envelope. Do not write your name on the ballot.

- Mail your ballot to **Elections Committee Santa Lucia Chapter P.O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406** with sufficient time to arrive by the deadline, or drop it off via the door mail slot at the Chapter office at 974 Santa Rosa Street, SLO.

Karen Merriam



Karen joined the Santa Lucia Chapter in the early 1990's to acquaint herself with the trails into our beautiful wild places. She soon became a hike leader, and, from 1995-1999, served as a member of the Executive Committee, much of that time as Secretary, returning to serve as Chapter Chair from 2005-2009. She helped to establish a local office and staff for the Chapter, moving our work from living room floors to desks and shared spaces, then to our own office.

Her volunteer work has included K-9 Search & Rescue and Hospice of San Luis Obispo County's Community Crisis Response Program. She is the author of the book *Searching for Connection: An Exploration of Trauma, Culture and Hope*.

Karen's special interest in serving the Chapter has been to help coordinate our activities with other local groups who share our interests and commitments so as to achieve common goals.

Karen Merriam

Dr. Ted Case



Ted served on the Cleveland National Forest Foundation Advisory Committee when the Foundation and Sierra Club brought the recent landmark lawsuit forcing the San Diego Association of Governments to throw out its transportation plan due to its failure to adequately reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

A biologist with research interests in Evolutionary Ecology, Biogeography, Conservation Biology, and Community Ecology, Ted has authored or co-authored over 140 scholarly articles. He was selected by the President of the Ecological Society of America to review the management plan for the California spotted owl, received a Career Achievement Award from the University of Redlands, and was appointed to a National Marine Fisheries Service science review panel by the National Research Council to review recovery efforts for endangered salmon species.

Ted Case

Emily Miggins



The founder of Tikkun Foods, Emily has served on the Board of Directors of the GrassRoots Recycling Network, Amigos de las Americas, and the Native Forest Network and various committees for the Sierra Club. She created Earth Island Institute's award winning ReThink Paper campaign and was appointed to the White House Paper Task Force. She was an NGO Delegate to the United Nations Women's Conference in Beijing.

As senior sustainability manager for Safeway, she pushed for sustainable practices in palm oil and tuna production, reduced antibiotics usage in poultry, and certified humane eggs. As a senior environmental scientist for Science Applications International, she oversaw zero waste programs, business planning for bio-digestion technology and climate change research.

She represents the Santa Lucia Chapter on the Port San Luis Harford Pier Fish Cleaning Station Ad-hoc Committee.

Emily Miggins

Members who subscribe to the electronic newsletter may print out this ballot. Households with more than two members may make duplicate ballots.

2015: The Year in Review

January

Governor Jerry Brown begins his fourth term by outlining a vision for California's energy future that calls for increasing California's share of clean energy to 50%, slashing oil use by 50%, and doubling the energy efficiency of existing buildings.

The City of SLO holds a community forum to gather input on what the city's budget priorities should be for 2015-17 and gets an overwhelming message from the public, thanks to the organizing work of SLO Clean Energy, the Sierra Club and local energy advocates: Create a Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) Energy program. (See March.)

Oxnard, San Jose and Ventura County join the growing list of local governments along the Union Pacific main line through-out California calling on SLO County to deny the Phillips 66 oil train project.

Nuclear Free California convenes at the SLO Grange Hall and County Library over the weekend of January 24, a strategy session on how to bring the nuclear era to an end on the West Coast, featuring the Nuclear Information Resource Service, Sierra Club's Nuclear Free Campaign, Abalone Alliance, Nuclear Free Northwest, the Ecological Options Network and Code Pink

February

The Associated Press reports that California's Department of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) has been allowing oil companies to discharge oil field wastewater into groundwater aquifers protected by the Federal Clean Water Act across California, including a dozen injection wells in Freeport McMoran's Arroyo Grande oil field.

The Northern Chumash Tribal Council, with the assistance of Sierra Club, Surfrider, and local ocean advocates, files a nomination for the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The nomination calls for ecosystem-based management of the 140-mile stretch of marine habitat off the Central Coast, home to a mix of threatened and endangered species of plants and animals found nowhere else in the Pacific Basin.

On February 4, SLO Fire Chief Garret Olson and SLO City Councilwoman Carlyn Christianson speak at a public forum on the Phillips 66 oil train project at the SLO City Library sponsored by the Mesa Refinery Watch group, Sierra club, ForestEthics, the Center for Biological Diversity, SLO Clean Water Action, People of Faith for Justice and the Cal Poly Student Sustainability Coalition. Chief Olson said local fire departments are not equipped to handle a derailment and oil fire.

On February 7 and 8, local



residents travel to Oakland to represent SLO County in the March for Climate Leadership – urging Governor Brown to say no to fracking – then join with residents from communities threatened by multiple oil-by-rail projects around the state for a joint strategy session.



The City of San Luis Obispo joins other California communities in asking SLO County to deny the Phillips 66 oil train project "and thereby protect the health, safety and welfare of San Luis Obispo County residents, including over 46,000 City residents."

The Associated Press catches the Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) illegally permitting 2,500 oil fields around the state to dump oil drilling wastewater into protected aquifers, including Freeport McMoran's Arroyo Grande oil field. The Regional Water Board cites Cambria's desalination plant – which circumvented environmental review by way of an "emergency" permit – with 11 violations of the state Water Code

March

"Redacted: Transparency, Democracy and Nuclear Power," a civic-minded art exhibit, opens at the Steynberg Gallery in SLO, showcasing poster-size blow-ups of heavily redacted e-mails exchanged by PG&E executives discussing seismic safety at Diablo Canyon in a post-Fukushima environment, obtained by the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility through the Public Records Act, with pages of blacked-out text or blank white fields revealing a corporate

need to withhold vital information from public scrutiny.

The Board of Supervisors approves a Renewable Energy Streamlining Program. after the he Sierra Club secures a provision to ensure that renewable energy projects proposed to occupy potential habitat for endangered species will not be exempted from full environmental review.

The City of SLO resolves to "participate in an inter-jurisdictional investigation into the feasibility of Community Choice Aggregation."

NOAA declines the nomination for the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary, asking the Northern Chumash Tribal Council to provide more information in a resubmission of the nomination.

April

The Board of Supervisors, after a great deal of prodding, passes an ordinance barring the export of water from any of the county's groundwater basins.

State and federal agencies tell the Cambria Community Services District what they think of its plan to create an after-the-fact review of the environmental impacts of its Emergency Water Supply Project. The California Dept. of Parks summed up: "This project could have substantial direct and indirect impacts to public health and safety, from the direct impact of mist contaminants and creek contamination," and also noted that "project conditions must include the cost of relocating the San Simeon Campground, presently estimated at a value of \$35 million."

Sierra Club files an appeal of the County Planning Commission's approval of the California Flats Solar Project on the Monterey/SLO County line, noting that, as sited, the project would heavily impact biological resources, habitat and endangered species on 3,000 acres of grasslands.

May

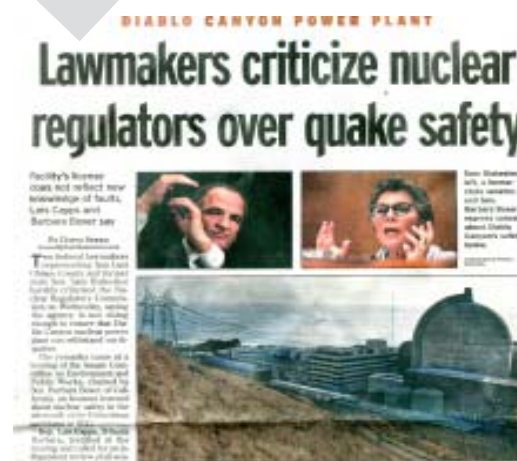
Sierra Club joins half a dozen other environmental groups in suing the Department of Transportation over its watered-down and inef-

fective new rail safety rules, the federal government's response to the increasing number of derailments, spills, explosions and inferno-like conflagrations plaguing the shipment of "extreme oil" – tar sands and Bakken shale crude – via rail. The new rules give railroads up to ten years to phase out the most dangerous tanker cars.

The Lucia Mar Teachers Association votes to oppose the Phillips 66 oil-by-rail project.

On May 16, Surfrider, Sierra Club and the Northern Chumash Tribal Council hold a "Hands Across the Sands" event to warn about the dangers of offshore oil and promote the permanent protections from proliferating offshore rigs that only a Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary could offer. Three days later, 100,000 gallons of offshore oil spills through a ruptured pipe in Santa Barbara, a shutting down fisheries and impacting 100 miles of coastline.

The Santa Lucia Chapter supports Senate Bill 657 extending the life of Diablo Canyon's Independent Peer Review Panel. The bill passes, thus PG&E will have to continue subjecting their "everything's okay at Diablo" assurances to inde-



pendent review despite its efforts to shut out, sideline and go around the IPRP.

June

Bill Denneen celebrates his 90th birthday with a few hundred friends at the Dana Adobe on June 7.

Assemblyman Katcho Achadjian does the bidding of Big Oil and votes "no" on AB 356, helping to kill a bill that would have ensured that the injection of toxic oil drilling fluids into the state's sources of drinking water never happens again. (See DOGGR scandal, April.)

SLO Foam Free persuades the SLO City Council to pass an ordinance banning Styrofoam and all other types of polystyrene from restaurants and businesses.

The California Teachers Association votes to oppose the Phillips 66 oil-by-rail project on behalf of its 325,000 educators.

The Santa Barbara City Council votes to oppose the Phillips 66 oil-by-rail project.

July

Throughout the week of July 6, the #StopOil Trains week of action, more than 5,000 people participate in 100 events across the US and Canada, including 400 at Mitchell Park in SLO, comprising the largest oil train protest in history.

August

Sierra Club and Mesa Refinery Watch Group get the word out on the Phillips 66 oil-by-rail project at the Stone Soup Street Faire in Grover Beach.

Our appeal of the permit for the Harbor Terrace project in Avila Beach alerts Coastal Commission staff to the threat to pelicans and other marine wildlife posed by practices at the adjacent Harford Pier fish cleaning station. We withdraw the appeal when Coastal Commission staff commit to actively encouraging efforts to resolve the issues around the fish cleaning station.

REVIEW continued on page 4



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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Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to Sierra magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

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Outings, events, and more!

With Thanks

~ Elaine Holder made a \$100 donation in honor of Linda Seeley.

~ ANONYMOUS has offered to match donations received by the end of January up to \$500.

Review

continued from page 3

September

Santa Barbara County joins with the 40+ California cities, counties and public agencies in asking SLO County to deny the Phillips 66 oil-by-rail project.

Neighbors of the Arroyo Grande oil field confront DOGGR and State Water Board officials over Freeport McMoran's request to legalize its ongoing disposal of oil drilling wastewater in a protected aquifer at a Sept. 21 public hearing in SLO. Sierra Club points out the proposed increase in injection wells will increase the potential for earthquakes and the flow of wastewater through fractures into the surrounding groundwater.

Pismo Beach Mayor Shelly Higginbotham sends the County a letter opposing the Phillips 66 project unless all its significant hazards and environmental impacts can be mitigated.

Under steady pressure from the Sierra Club and our allies over their continuing silence on the Phillips 66 oil train project, Grover Beach and Arroyo Grande schedule back-to-back city council meetings on the project for Sept. 22 and 23. Despite intense lobbying and turnout of refinery employees by Phillips 66, Grover Beach votes to oppose the project and Arroyo Grande takes no position.

The Sept. 4 *Tribune* prints the Viewpoint "In defense of local marine sanctuary study" by the Center for the Blue Economy authors of the economic study that found a national marine sanctuary has the potential

to add \$23 million annually and 600 new jobs to the local economy. They point out that critics who don't believe what they found "need to cite a good reason why."

On September 22, the Morro Bay City Council, defying pressure from its Harbor Commission and the Port San Luis Harbor Commission, declines to send a letter to NOAA opposing the sanctuary proposal, and instead directs staff to ask NOAA to come to town and give a public presentation on the subject. *The Bay News* takes a "dog bites man" approach (see headline), missing the real story: the Council, which hasn't voted to support the designation of a marine sanctuary in 25 years and routinely votes to oppose decided not to do so again, saying they didn't know enough to support or oppose.

October

The Port San Luis Harbor Commission, having failed to pressure the Morro Bay City Council into sending a letter opposing sanctuary designation, tries and fails again with the Avila Valley Advisory Council.

Rep. Lois Capps opposes the Phillips 66 oil train project.

Former Templeton fire chief Greg O'Sullivan straightens out supporters of the Phillips 66 oil train project with the scoop on just how dangerous and uncontrollable an oil train fire would be in an Oct. 24 *Tribune* Viewpoint.

On Oct. 6, the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors votes to allocate \$50,000 to fund their share of a joint study with

Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties to determine the feasibility of a regional Community Choice Energy program.

On Oct. 9, NOAA accepts the nomination for the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary, making it eligible for designation.



November

SLO County fields a Global Climate March and a kayak flotilla over Nov. 28-29, doing our bit along with the rest of the world in sending a message to the climate



conference negotiators as they convened in Paris.

December

The *Tribune* reports that an effort to restore 8,000 acres of wildlife habitat on the Carrizo Plain — "one of the biggest habitat restoration efforts in California history" — is underway thanks to endowments and land purchases by the two companies that built solar power plants there. "Settlements from several lawsuits re-

quired the two solar companies to conserve the land as mitigation for the environmental impacts of the plants." Sierra Club was one of the organizations that threatened to sue — and took considerable flack for doing so — securing the lands now being restored.

The County Planning Commission approves Freeport McMoran's request for an extension of its 10-year-old permit to drill wells in the Arroyo Grande oil field, skirting the need for an Environmental Impact Report. The Center for Biological Diversity appeals the permit to the Board of Supervisors.

Letty French, a longtime Sierra Club activist who founded the Chapter's Kathleen Goddard Jones Award in recognition of



outstanding work on behalf of the environment by Sierra Club volunteers, passed away in July and was posthumously named the 2015 recipient of the Kathleen Goddard Jones award.



Do We Want a Wind Farm?

On December 10, Trident Winds LLC held a public information meeting in Morro Bay on their proposed offshore wind farm.

The project is bidding to become the first utility-scale offshore wind project in California. Project output is planned to satisfy a portion of California's goal requiring utilities to generate 50% of their electricity from renewable sources by 2030.

As described by Trident founder Alla Weinstein and Eric Markell, former Chief Financial Officer for Puget Sound Energy, the Morro Bay Offshore Project would involve 100-plus floating turbines anchored to the ocean floor, each 600 feet tall, within an area of about 70 square miles about thirty miles west of Point Estero. The permitting process, expected to take five to seven years, requires obtaining 33 permits from state and federal agencies as well as the City of Morro Bay for the use of the outfall structure of the defunct Dynegy power plant, and interconnection studies to determine the existing interconnect and transmission system that would connect the project's power to the PG&E substation behind the power plant.

The Sierra Club advocates for renewable energy as a means of countering climate change, and we approach any proposed offshore renewable energy project from that starting point. We would be likely to support projects that can be shown to have minimal adverse environmental impacts, or with adverse impacts that can be mitigated. As protection of the environment remains our overarching goal, we will oppose



projects with major unavoidable, adverse environmental impacts and will work to direct resources to better alternatives.

In making that evaluation, we are dealing not only with rapid technological changes and an evolving regulatory process, but also a shifting baseline in the marine environment due to the combined effects of climate change and fisheries harvesting on marine biota and their habitats. One consequence is a need for regional monitoring programs to describe these shifting baselines and provide a context for site-specific monitoring programs for renewable energy projects.

Unlike a coal, gas, or nuclear plant, the size of the project need not be determined at the outset and additional turbines can be added if the transmission infrastructure can accommodate the power. The environmental assessments and surveys for the Trident project will cover a larger area than needed. The project would occupy a fraction of the 70 square mile site, but future expansion should be assumed.

The United States got off to a slow start compared to

IND continued on page 6

Sludge

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application on SLO County lands. The failures of the draft ordinance to conform with those directions means it is not ready for a review of its potential environmental impacts and the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

The Sierra Club agrees with the Center for Sludge Information that proceeding further with the EIR process that has been initiated for this grossly deficient draft ordinance would be a waste of time and money and should be suspended while the County goes back to the drawing board.

Here's the problem, as laid out by CSI. The County directed the Environmental Health Division to form a Sewage Sludge Land Application Task Force in 2000. The EHD convened a broad, multidisciplinary task force consisting of the Farm Bureau, two local sewage plant managers, a Cal Poly soil scientist, CSI, an Agriculture Commissioner representative, the Sierra Club, a sewage sludge composting company, the UC Cooperative Extension, a sewage sludge spreading company, the Air Pollution Control District, a Health Commission member, a Central Coast Water Board representative, a geologist, ECOSLO, a microbiologist, two citizens-at-large, and the Planning Department. Experts from the California Farm Bureau, Cornell University Waste Management Institute, US EPA, UC Riverside, and the State Water Board attended meetings and presented their analyses. Representatives from three California counties informed the Task Force about their own land application ordinances.

The task force produced a final report the following year. On March 12, 2002, the Board of Supervisors adopted the recommenda-

tions of the task force and directed staff to follow those recommendations in drafting an ordinance.

Thirteen years later, the draft ordinance is at hand, but staff seems to have misplaced the directive from the board as to what it was supposed to contain.

The 2002 board directive required the ordinance to set limits on contaminants in sewage sludge at levels "more stringent" than those in federal and state regulations, set limits on the accumulation of contaminants in soil "considering local soil pollutant levels," and use a range of contaminants broader than those used in federal and state regulations for setting limits on sewage sludge contamination and soil pollutant accumulation.

The draft ordinance doesn't do those things.

The board directed that the ordinance should ensure that SLO County doesn't blindly forge ahead with land application as the preferred means of sewage sludge disposal without analyzing other methods of disposal or use; that the public will be notified of any pending land application projects and provided the opportunity to comment on them; that landowners be informed of the potential dangers and benefits of land application and provide informed consent prior to receiving such material on their property; that County property records document the depositing of any sewage sludge so as to inform potential buyers and appraisers of that activity prior to sale; and that performance bonds and liability insurance be required to protect landowners from remediation and litigation costs.

It doesn't do any of those things, either.

Another problem: The draft ordinance relies on a 2014 assurance by the Integrated Waste Management Authority that the recycling

A 2015 Turning Point

Open Space in SLO

In 1994, Sierra Club activists succeeded in persuading the City of San Luis Obispo to convene an Environmental Quality Task Force that provided input into the City's update of its General Plan. The result a year later was the creation of the Natural Resources Protection Program and the position of Natural Resources Manager, which led to the creation of SLO's celebrated greenbelt. Over the next twenty years, the number and close proximity of SLO's natural open space areas became the primary reason for SLO's famous Oprah-approved designation as "one of the happiest cities in the United States" in Dan Buettner's book *Thrive: Finding Happiness the Blue Zones Way*.

But even before *Thrive* was published in 2010, SLO city staff seemed to have embarked on an earnest campaign to wreck the reason for its ranking. In 2006, the "streamlining" of the city's Conservation and Open Space Element took dead aim at the city's natural open space areas, threatening to develop them into active recreation zones, the equivalent of city parks. Sierra Club activists and aroused citizens, pointing out that the first priority of the City's Conservation and Open Space Element is the "protection of existing wildlife and natural habitat," not recreation, beat back that effort.

In 2009, the protection of open space fell off the list of Major City Goals, the list that determines funding and budget priorities. For the next six years, the city's staff bowed to the desires of the Chamber of Com-

merce and the Economic Vitality Corporation to jack up tourism and ignored the pleas of local neighborhoods and the directive in

SPACE continued on page 7

This is Clear Cut

Governor Brown is allowing California's forests, water and climate to be degraded. California forests are being clearcut at an alarming rate, mainly by a few large timber industry companies. At a recent meeting of the Sierra-Cascade Logging Conference, timber companies were gleeful at the prospect of making billions selling wood from our forests to Asia.

Before that occurs, we need to take stock of what is happening to the climate, water, and forests in California.

The California Public Trust Doctrine obligates government to protect and preserve waterways for public use. The rights of California citizens are being ignored when clearcutting projects are approved.

TAKE ACTION

We need to speak out loudly and clearly and tell Governor Brown to protect the public's rights rather than timber industry profits. Sign our petition to Governor Brown now. <http://tinyurl.com/hvrhrxe>

of sludge through land application and current methods of disposal in landfills are the most viable alternatives for the use and disposal of sludge. This assurance was based on a brief verbal account by IWMA manager Bill Worrell on his experience with sewage sludge disposal, which did not include any recent research. But it became the basis for County staff's analysis of alternatives.

"I called Bill Worrell after that report was presented," said David Broadwater of CSI. "I pointed out that Bill said he hadn't studied sewage sludge for ten years and his information was thirty years old. County staff now represents this thirty-year-old information as a current assessment of management alternatives and omits the use of gasification, pyrolysis, and fluidized-bed incineration in the production of

liquid, solid and gaseous fuels, methane extraction for electricity production, etc. Ventura and Bay Area Biosolids-2-Energy projects are using these alternatives right now. I provided the Board with a half-inch stack of materials on these and other alternate means of sludge management, but the County has neglected to assess any means of sewage sludge management other than land application."

On December 15, after getting a raft of complaints from citizens, the County Supervisors decided to place the question of suspending processing of the draft sewage sludge land application ordinance on an upcoming agenda.

Congratulations to all who wrote to the Board and testified at the hearing. Every effort counted, and it worked. Now a bigger battle looms.



TAKE ACTION

When County staff places this on the Board's agenda, those wanting to blindly forge ahead on land application without looking at the available options, and with a seriously flawed ordinance, will be out in force. At that time, we'll need to push even harder to get the County to act rationally and in accordance with their own directives.

When that time comes, you'll need to know when, where and how to effectively influence the Board's decision-making. Drop a note to csi@thegrid.net to get sludge alerts.

Tell the Board of Supervisors:

- Stop, go back, and get it right
- Don't waste any more staff and agency time on the current process
- Don't expend taxpayer money on hiring a consultant to write the EIR (estimated cost: \$200,000)
- Conduct an examination of all methods of sewage sludge management prior to selecting any method for environmental review, and re-initiate the CEQA/EIR process when such an ordinance is formulated.

Sierra Club at the Summit

The final text of the Paris climate negotiations was released on December 12. In a dramatic step forward, countries agreed to pursue efforts to limit warming to below 1.5 degrees Celsius, and are now compelled to develop increasingly ambitious plans to stay within

that boundary. "The Paris agreement is a turning point for humanity," said Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune. "For the first time in history, the global community agreed to action that sets the foundation to help prevent the worst consequences of the climate crisis while embracing the opportunity to exponentially grow our clean energy economy. "Decisive leadership and action from President Obama and other world leaders, an increasingly powerful climate movement, and strong progress in the U.S. and globally to move off coal cleared the

way for every nation to come to the table. The global community has now agreed to do its part to protect the millions of people already confronting the climate crisis' extreme droughts, storms, and flooding and to better safeguard the planet we turn over to our children and grandchildren. "Paris marks the beginning and not the end of the work that must be done. We now have strong transparency and accountability mechanisms, as well as robust climate financing for developing countries, that builds undeni-

able momentum towards a just society that is powered by clean energy. Anyone in Washington or in the board rooms of fossil fuel companies around the world who attempts to stand in the way will have the full weight of the international community, global markets, scientific consensus, the climate movement, and public opinion firmly pushing back against them. This historic international agreement is what the American people demanded, what future generations deserve, and what the world needs."



At COP 21 The Sierra Student Coalition held a joint press conference at the Paris climate conference with their partner group, the China Youth Climate Action Network (left), to issue a US-China Youth Statement for the Paris agreement. SSC delegate Caroline Engle of Richmond, Kentucky, said "The United States needs to take a larger role in making sure that we can have a livable planet in the future."

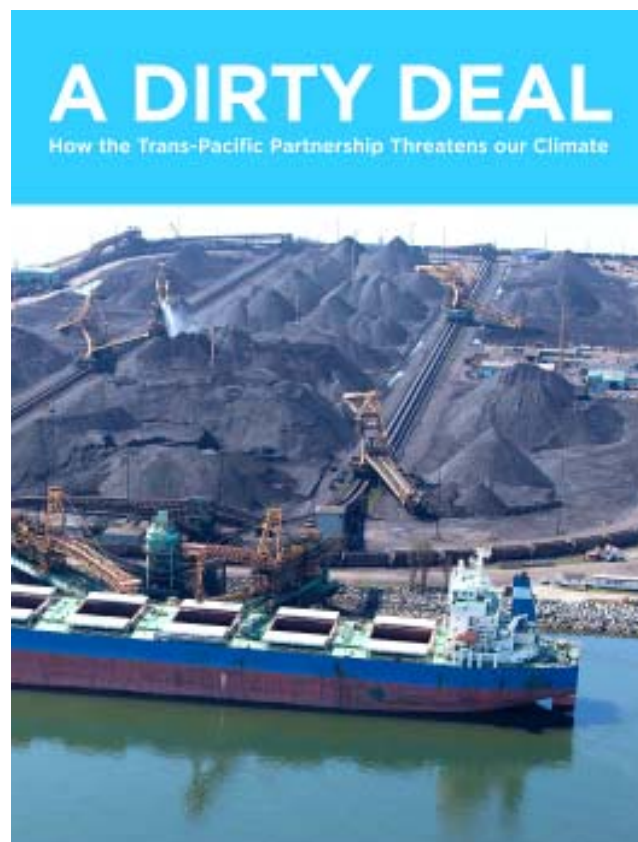
Don't trade away the climate Ilana Solomon (below), director of the Sierra Club's Responsible Trade program, traveled to the global climate conference in Paris to meet up with counterparts from Friends of the Earth and the Institute for Agriculture and Trade, buttonhole delegates and host strategy sessions and other public events in opposition to the climate-killing Trans-Pacific Partnership.



TPP

continued from page 1

dispute settlement system. The TPP's extraordinary rights for foreign corporations virtually replicate those in past pacts that have enabled more than 600 foreign investor challenges to the policies of more than 100 governments, including a moratorium on fracking in Quebec, a nuclear energy phase-out in Germany, and an environmental panel's decision to reject a mining project in Nova Scotia. The TPP's provisions regarding natural gas would require the U.S. Department of Energy to automatically approve without review all exports of liquefied natural gas to all TPP countries. Increased natural gas production would mean more fracking, which causes air and water pollution, health risks, and earthquakes, according to a litany of studies.



Read it and weep, then take action Everything you need to know about the TPP is at www.sierraclub.org/trade/trans-pacific-partnership.

TAKE ACTION

2015 saw demonstrations, rallies, and actions opposing the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership with Pacific Rim nations, the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership between the U.S. and the European Union, and the corporate "free trade" model they both represent. Those actions grew in both quantity and scope in the lead-up to the December COP 21 climate talks in Paris, where the Sierra Club urged world leaders to come to a strong agreement on climate. Alongside bold action at COP 21, stopping the TPP and other bad trade deals is critical to averting climate chaos. We know what we're up against — you can read the Sierra Club's analysis of the TPP in the online report above. The deal is now getting close to a vote from our Senators and Representatives, and it's critical that we build on the momentum and stop the TPP once and for all. You can join this movement by taking action here: www.sierraclub.org/trade/activist-toolkit.

Come and Get Your Sign

Want to save your neighborhood from an onslaught of oil trains hauling tar sands crude through the county? As the dirty and dangerous Phillips 66 oil-by-rail proposal nears its first hearing at the County Planning Commission, it's time to send a message. We've got your sign, and it's suitable for your front yard or for carrying to the Planning Commission. And it's free. Just drop us a note at sierraclub8@gmail.com or leave a message at (805) 543-8717 to arrange for pick-up at a location near you.



Pittsburg

continued from page 1

jumped from a handful to dozens, and then to hundreds. Petition signatures jumped from dozens to hundreds to thousands. At nearly every door I knocked on, I met another community member sick of Pittsburg's reputation as an industrial wasteland, tired of industry control. I don't think I've ever been anywhere where opposition to industry was so strong. When WesPac brought a company man to town to host a three hour informational meeting, community members showed up en masse and drove him out of town. Hundreds of citizens showed up at city council meetings, week in and week out. We hosted a toxic tour, dozens of community meetings, and the biggest march Pittsburg has seen in many years. We turned the WesPac campaign into a regional and statewide issue, leveraging the power built in Pittsburg to inspire and support other campaigns fighting extreme oil infrastructure in the Bay Area and beyond.

In January 2014, WesPac

agreed to take oil trains off the table. That was a big victory, but they still wanted to build a crude oil tank farm, tanker berth, and pipelines. We stood ready to continue the fight. But WesPac was not, and officially pulled their applications prior to a city council meeting on December 14. Hats off to everyone who contributed to this extraordinary effort: especially the community leaders at the Pittsburg Defense Council and Pittsburg Ethics Council, and at Communities for a Better Environment, Sunflower Alliance, Sierra Club's SF Bay Chapter, Natural Resources Defense Council, and 350 Bay Area, among others. This victory belongs to our movement, but most of all to the tireless, resilient, creative and courageous people of Pittsburg. Let WesPac's demise serve as a warning to Valero, Phillips 66, and other oil giants that are trying to build oil train terminals in California now: our movement will not stop until all oil trains projects are halted in their tracks, and extreme oil stays in the ground where it belongs.

Portland Has Had Enough

By Ted Gleichman, Political Director, Climate & Energy Program, Center for Sustainable Economy; National Strategy Team, Sierra Club Beyond Dirty Fuels Campaign

Last November, the Portland City Council approved two ground-breaking resolutions as binding city policy: — Opposition to Increased Crude-by-Rail, focusing on advocacy for health and safety. — Prohibition on New Fossil Fuel Infrastructure, focusing essentially on preventing major projects for transport or storage or export. The second resolution is the first of its kind in the United States. Here's the sign-on state-

ment for other elected officials: *The following local, state, and provincial leaders have endorsed the principles expressed in Portland's Fossil Fuel Resolution — that fossil fuels pose inherent health and safety dangers throughout their entire life cycle — and commit to creating similar restrictions on new fossil fuel infrastructure in their jurisdictions.* So far, 29 elected officials from Oregon, Washington,

PORTLAND continued on page 8

No Support? Just Lie! Phillips 66 p.r. team tries trickery

In the movie *Beau Geste*, outnumbered and dwindling French Foreign Legionnaires desperately prop up the bodies of their fallen comrades in the parapets of their besieged fort, rifles shoved into their hands, in an attempt to fool the irate natives outside into believing their numbers are greater than they are. Behold below the website created to support the Phillips 66 Santa Maria Refinery rail spur project and its attempt to drum up support -- or, failing that, the appearance of support -- for the proposal to transport dirty and dangerous tar sands crude oil through San Luis Obispo County by rail. The first odd thing one

might notice are the prominent words of support for the project attributed to *The Tribune*, which is officially opposed to the project. Every quote from the "news" looks like rote repetition of the standard obfuscations cited by Phillips' p.r. pros. "Egad!," you say to yourself, "have these august publications decided to trade in their reporters for public relations flacks?" Give yourself a gold star if you've figured out the solution to the mystery: None of the quotes were ever "In The News" or anywhere close. They are taken from letters to the editor -- several of them penned by the same Phillips 66 employee.

Oh what a tangled web they weave... Bad projects call for desperate measures.

Whiffing Away

In 2015, our supervisors let big problems get bigger



Affordable housing: not this year

The concept of inclusionary housing grew from failed experiments in warehousing low-income residents in project housing that soon deteriorated into slums. Inclusionary housing is based on what history has shown: that individuals, communities and economies are better served when neighborhood design creates a housing mix that includes a range of socio-economic status, improving the quality and diversity of the neighborhood and reducing the vehicle miles traveled between work and home, easing the burden of pollution and traffic in everyone's daily lives.

Inclusionary housing ordinances require developers to design and build a certain percentage of affordable units alongside their upscale homes, and make them available to qualified buyers through deed restrictions. Ideological opponents of inclusionary housing claim this is "social engineering." Builders claim it eliminates their profit margin. But successful inclusionary programs around the country have provided a reliable source of workforce housing — in the most inclusive definition of "workforce" — for hundreds of communities without bankrupting the building industry.

San Luis Obispo County has a markedly unsuccessful inclusionary housing program, having passed an Inclusionary Housing Ordinance that doesn't actually require developers to include affordable units in their projects. Instead, they can build the units somewhere else in the county, or buy some land and donate it for somebody else to build affordable housing somewhere else in the county, or write a check for someone else to build some houses somewhere else at some point in the future, in lieu of providing any houses or land. Offering the option of in-lieu fees as an escape hatch for developers to avoid building affordable units makes for lousy planning, but if they are offered, in-lieu fees should be high enough to both discourage their use and provide funds adequate to purchase land and build units.

In 2008, the supervisors approved a five-year phase in plan to get to the goal of requiring that developers make 20% of new homes affordable, with incremental increases each year. In year one, 4% of new units had to be affordable; in year two, 8% would have to be affordable, and so on. Likewise, the in-lieu fee was supposed to be increased by 20% each year for five years until the target of approximately \$20,000 per home was reached. This gradual phase-in approach was taken despite the urgency of the affordable housing problem in the county at the request of the

Homebuilders Association, which argued that it was needed because of the declining economy and the need to adjust their financing models.

It costs about \$100,000 for the County to build an affordable home with in-lieu fees. But because the ordinance only required one-fifth of the required fee, by the end of the first year of the five-year plan, the County had collected only \$6,500 in fees.

In 2009, when the Board was set to embark on year two of the phase-in plan, they heard testimony from the Homebuilders that be-

cause of the declining economy, they should delay the implementation of the second year of the phase-in. Supervisors Gibson and

Offering the option of in-lieu fees as an escape hatch for developers to avoid building affordable units makes for lousy planning, but if they are offered, in-lieu fees should be high enough to both discourage their use and provide funds adequate to purchase land and build units.

Patterson pushed to keep to the approved schedule, rightly pointing out that the economy was sputtering

when they approved the phased approach the previous year at the request of the Homebuilders, and that if they didn't move ahead with it, they would never meet their target. Supervisor Hill sided with Supervisors Mecham and Achadjian and gave the builders another pass, precluding the construction of untold numbers of affordable units or in-lieu contributions toward the construction of affordable units.

If much of the above looks familiar to longtime members, it should. Most of it is lifted verbatim from a six-year-old issue of the *Santa Lucian* that evaluated the performance of the Board of Supervisors after the 2008 election ("How

Are They Doing?" March 2010.) Today, three years after the in-lieu fee of the inclusionary housing program was supposed to have achieved full funding, eight years after the passage of the ordinance, it has yet to reach year two of its phased-in funding plan. At their November 17 meeting, Supervisors Compton, Mecham and Arnold elected to keep the in-lieu fee frozen at year-one funding levels, with Supervisors Gibson and Hill dissenting.

In the December 12 issue of *The Tribune*, John Fowler, president of People's Self-Help Housing, provided details of the human cost of the ongoing saga of failure to provide affordable housing. He wrote: "These in-lieu fees represented an opportunity to address an ever-growing crisis, but the board instead pushed the issue off to another year by a 3-2 vote. We just hope it won't be too late."

So do we.

Wind

continued from page 4

Europe and has no offshore wind energy production. At least 14 projects have been proposed on the east and west coasts, in the Great Lakes, and off Texas, according to OffshoreWind.net.

As with wind turbines on land, the turning of offshore turbine blades can potentially pose a threat to birds, which must be considered in the environmental assessment. Other concerns, generally less understood, include acoustic impacts during construction, electromagnetic field (EMF) impacts from buried or surface power lines, conversion of sand/mud habitats to hard surfaces, and the alteration of migratory pathways for marine mammals and birds.

We must be mindful of the fact that there is much we don't know about the ocean. New research will inevitably affect the evaluations of projects. The marine environment poses challenges different from the land environment—for developers, for regulators, and for the environmental community. It is a fluid world with different organisms and habitats in the water column (the pelagic zone) and on or in the sea floor (the benthic zone).

Los Osos

continued from page 1

start issuing permits, and not so much with actually saving the basin from destruction from the growing threat of sea water intrusion. The stipulated judgment sets a purveyor allocation of 1,430 acre feet per year, which represents an increase in production of about 200 AFY over 2014 levels. This allows the "sustainable yield" to be exceeded and means purveyors don't have to meet the Governor's order to reduce 2013 use by 25%. It could also be used to justify about 1,000 new homes in purveyors' service areas without any infrastructure programs in place or any demonstrated improvement in seawater intrusion.

The court-approved plan would appear to lock in this whimsical increase in water use in a highly threatened basin and place the Basin Plan's half-hearted conservation measures beyond reach for modification and improvement. But even though the legal process has concluded, there may be a way to save the basin in spite of the Basin Plan.

At the November 19 meeting of the Regional Water Quality Control Board, the parties to the adjudication presented an update to the Board. It was assumed that no action would be taken. But then Keith Wimer, Chair of the Water Subcommittee of the Santa Lucia Chapter, stepped to the microphone and made the point about a 200 AFY increase over the previous year's water production, blowing past the basin's sustainable yield—a feature of the plan the purveyors had neglected to mention in their presentation.

Some eyes opened wide, and some board members started leaning forward and took up the questions we had submitted to them, directing them at the County's representatives and the purveyors (such as why are no private wells to be included in monitoring, and why will 40% of the basin go unmetered?)

Unsatisfied with the answers they got, the board directed their staff to prepare a report for the board's January 28-29 meeting which will determine what actions the Board can take on five issues suggested by the Sierra Club as areas where the Water Board can

and should exercise its authority as regulators of water quality:

1. The Stipulated Judgment states that the parties will still have to comply with state and federal laws for the projection of water quality. The Water Board should determine if it can implement a water quality objective and control plan for chlorides. An enforceable, time-specific objective for reducing chlorides in the Basin is a bottom line for sustainable management of the Basin.

2. Implement or modify the salt and nutrient management plan, recycled water master plan and septic system management plan so that they require conservation, recycled water use, and metering and monitoring. All of these improve water quality.

3. Require a storm water management plan that captures and infiltrates the runoff now flowing into the estuary and Los Osos Creek. The Basin Plan rejects storm water recharge as a supplemental water source, but low cost, low impact development (LID), recognized by the Water Board as Best Management Practice, could infiltrate and clean up a substantial amount of water that now pollutes the estuary and creek.

4. Request that the parties to the adjudication make improvements in the Basin Plan agreement.

5. Request that the State Water Board seek legislation to place the Los Osos Basin on probationary status and intervene in the near future to ensure the Basin Plan is improved.

Santa Lucia Chapter Chair Patrick McGibney laid out these five areas where the board could exert some beneficial influence, saying "There is no excuse for the Water Board to stand by and watch the Basin disappear due to a basin plan that fails to commit the parties to stopping seawater intrusion as soon as possible."



Special events: still out of control

It's time for the Board of Supervisors to revisit the Special Events ordinance.

Actually, it's time for them to re-visit, or re-re-visit it, depending on when you start counting (See "Ag Land or Disneyland?," April 2007).

After much back and forth and kicking of the can, an Events Ordinance was approved by the Planning Commission and heard by the Supervisors in October 2011 and then put on hold. Four years passed, marked by the ever-increasing concern and alarm of rural residents seeing their neighborhoods turn into event centers. There was a lot of discussion about the impacts of events on rural areas, with traffic and noise and hazard to life and limb increasing and the quality of life eroding due to the proliferation of more and larger events and tasting rooms and wedding venues and the construction of things like museums and convenience stores on ag land under the catch-all of "visitor serving uses."

Residents in the Adelaida area, which has been particularly hard hit by the impacts of the growing numbers of rural events, have met with California Highway Patrol personnel to see what can be done about numerous accidents, near misses, property damage and drunk drivers. (There have been two separate fatal accidents linked to increased event traffic on weekends.)

The Avila Beach Advisory Committee and others in the Avila area, facing many of the same issues, have been seeking a county solution to events that put life and property at risk due mainly to clogged roads and inadequate parking facilities that impede the access of emergency vehicles to the area during special events. Residents from both areas have contacted supervisors looking for relief.

Last July, as the pleas of residents got louder, Supervisor Frank Mecham told *New Times* "I think it's gotten to a point where we as a board need to take it on and start figuring out how are we going to deal with this, because it can't go on unending like this."

On October 13, the County Planning Department presented their overview of long-range priorities to the Board of Supervisors for consideration. The Special Events Ordinance was listed with an "applicable guiding priority" rating of 4, meaning work on the Events ordinance should be a focus of the department. The report also listed the Special Events Ordinance as 95% complete.

The Board told staff that their priority issues are to be a resource capacity survey of traffic for Avila Beach, an inland vacation rental ordinance and an update of the sign ordinance to consider billboard retirement and scenic highways. They directed staff "to work on other appropriate projects as time allows," once again kicking the Events Ordinance down the road rather than taking it on and figuring out how they are going to deal with this.

The County was presented with many good ideas and solutions during the years of development of the ordinance language that went to the Planning Commission and over the course of multiple hearings. An ordinance that protects the Public's health, safety and right to peaceful enjoyment of their property and reasonably accommodates event venues is achievable.

The Special Events Ordinance should be brought back and finalized.

Space
continued from page 4



the city's Open Space Ordinance that natural open space areas are to be preserved for use by residents.

Local neighborhoods have paid the price for this marketing success in bumper-to-bumper parking, trashed yards, and areas like Bishop Peak getting loved to death. Conflating interests and blurring policy to the advantage of economic interests by omitting crucial policy elements or pretending different things are the same thing (open space = parks, residents = tourists) became a routine feature of City planning documents and staff reports.

Then in 2012, the City sent a survey to residents and business owners as part of its General Plan update.

Survey recipients were asked: "On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being less and 5 being more, do you think the city should provide less, about the same, or more of each of the following services? If you think the city should provide more or less of a certain service, indicate whether you would be willing to pay more for it."

Of the 2,000+ replies, the majority of respondents supported "provide more" in just four service categories: acquiring and maintaining open space to protect peaks and hillsides (58%), acquiring and maintaining more open space land for the city's greenbelt (54%), more open space

land to protect creeks and marshes (53%), and 50% would like more bike lanes. The only categories in which a majority said they would be willing to pay more were open space to protect peaks and hillsides (54%) and open space for the city's greenbelt (52%).

Asked to rank the most and least important aspects of "quality of life," respondents overwhelmingly rated the natural environment (air quality, open space) as having the highest impact on their quality of life (71.1%).

The top priority of city residents was clear, as was the role those 2012 survey results should have played in the City's 2013-15 goal setting and budget planning. But City staff worked mightily to exclude those 2,000+ responses from the City's goal setting process.

For two years, Santa Lucia Chapter leadership and our members in the City of San Luis Obispo repeatedly placed those survey responses before the City Council and staff. Finally, the City got the message. In 2014, "Open space preservation" was the first funding priority listed in the text of Measure G, the City's sales tax renewal measure. We suggested that, in con-

formance with the Open Space ordinance's requirement that the City's over-used open space areas shall be acquired and maintained for the use of residents, tourism marketing programs developed to highlight SLO as a visitor destination should not include the national marketing of the City's designated Open Space areas. In response, the City Council deleted tourism marketing program development from the 2014 General Plan update.

In 2015, the City Council restored "Protect and Maintain Open Space" to its former status as a Major City Goal and created an Open Space Maintenance Plan. Bishop Peak trailhead residents overcame staff opposition to hiring more rangers to patrol and maintain the City's open space properties. Rangers are now enforcing the Open Space Ordinance in the city's natural areas.

It turns out that open space protections protect neighborhoods, too.

And a Natural Resources Roundtable, *The 20th Anniversary Proceedings of the San Luis Obispo Greenbelt*, will convene over the first six months of 2016 to lay out the future of conservation, enhancement and restoration of important community natural resources in the City of San Luis Obispo. Good timing!

Classifieds

Next issue deadline is **January 15**. To get a rate sheet or submit your ad and payment, contact: Sierra Club, P.O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406 or sierraclub8@gmail.com

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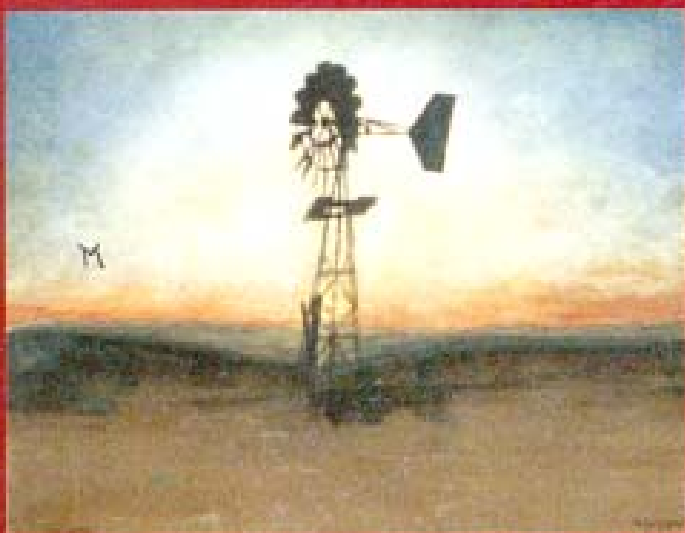
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Outings and Activities Calendar

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.

Sat., Jan. 9th, 9 a.m. Mediterranean Flora Tour at Cal Poly Arboretum. Staff leads tour of gardens with flora of five Mediterranean regions: Australia, California, Chile, Mediterranean basin, and South Africa. Directions: enter Cal Poly campus from Santa Rosa St., entering Highland Drive and turning left on Via Carta, parking in last parking lot on left. Walk across Via Carta to Environmental Horticultural Science facilities and follow green signs to Leaning Pine Arboretum. Purchase visitor parking permit at kiosk on entering Highland Drive. Leader: Bill Waycott, 459-2103.

Sun., Jan. 10th, 2 p.m. Historic Walk of San Luis Obispo: Post WWII to the Seventies. Imagine downtown San Luis Obispo before its tree-lined streets and Mission Plaza, but with soda fountains, pool parlors, and auto dealers. This guided stroll past vintage buildings will discuss how this unremarkable town in the forties evolved into a dynamic city by the seventies. Duration about 1 1/2 hrs. Meet at the corner of Santa Rosa and Pacific.

Sun., Jan. 10th, 9 a.m. Gibraltar Reservoir and Canyon Hike. Moderate, six-mile loop hike from Paradise Rd. to Gibraltar Dam with option to continue to Sunbird Quicksilver Mines for another six miles. See Los Padres mountains, vistas, river pools, and rock formations. Road creek crossings possible if much previous rain. Bring hat,

water, snacks, sunscreen, and dress in layers for weather. From Hwy 101, take Rt. 154, then left on Paradise Rd for 10 miles to end. Meet in in restroom area near parking lot. \$5 user parking fee. Significant chance of rain cancels. Leader: Andrea Ortiz, 934-2792.

Sat., Jan. 16th, 8:30 a.m. Big Sur Coastal Hike. Eight-mile, 2400 ft. gain, hike along Big Sur Coast with great views. We start near Ragged Point heading south to Bald Top for ocean views. If low clouds, we may head to Dutra Flat instead. Bring lunch, water, nonslip hiking boots and dress for the weather. Meet at the Washburn Day Use Area, San Simeon State Park, 2 miles north of Cambria. Threat of rain cancels. Leader: Gary Felsman, 473-3694.

Thurs., Jan. 28th, 10 a.m. Hazard Peak Hike in Montana de Oro State Park. Five-mile, 1000-ft. gain, hike to summit for stunning views of mountains and coastline. Meet at Hazard Canyon parking lot, 1.6 miles from park entrance. Rain cancels. Leader: Vicki Marchenko, 528-5567.

Thurs., Jan. 28th, 7-9 p.m. 7th Annual Environmentalists' Rendezvous: The Sustainable City. At our annual forum of local environmental activists, leaders of five prominent groups working to improve our urban habitat of our county will speak. Come for a unique opportunity to hear reps from ECOSLO, SLO Clean Energy, the City's Division of Natural Resources, SLO Foam Free, and, of course, the Sierra Club discuss their efforts

and plans for 2016. Also learn the implications of the Paris agreement on climate change for our county. Your comments and questions welcomed. Meets at Steynberg Gallery, 1531 Monterey St., SLO. Info.: Joe Morris, 549-0355.


Sat., Jan. 30th, 9 a.m. Backcountry Hike in Montana de Oro State Park. Moderately strenuous, nine-mile, 1600 ft. gain, loop hike to Hazard Peak with stunning views of morrow and coastline. Some poison oak along trail. Bring lunch or snacks, water, and dress for the weather. Meet at Hazard Peak (Ridge Trail) trailhead, 2.3 miles from park entrance. Possible food stop afterwards. Rain cancels. Leader: Chuck Tribbey, 441-7597.



Couldn't do it without you A splendid time was had by all at the Nov. 22 appreciation event for the Chapter's Cal French Circle supporters.



This is a partial listing of Outings offered by our chapter. Please check the web page www.santalucia.sierraclub.org for the most up-to-date listing of activities.




The Sierra Club Needs You!

Become an Outings Leader

- Lead hikes and camping trips
- Introduce others to nature
- Explore the outdoors
- Make new friends
- Protect the environment
- Get healthy exercise

For further information contact:
 Joe Morris, Outings Chair
 Sierra Club, Santa Lucia Chapter
 (805) 772-1872
 dj1942@earthlink.net



John Mink, leader of the Sierra Club in Yosemite

How Do You Like the Broadsheet Santa Lucian?

A new year, a new look! Yes, we know we're disappointing fans of smudges and two-tone paper, but we haven't refreshed the format since 2004 and it was time to say goodbye Modified Tabloid and hello Broadsheet. Our dimensions are now approximately the same length/width as *The Tribune*. That means we get a break on postage, and when you sit down to your coffee and donuts and say "Let's see what's in the news," you get that satisfying full upper-body coverage!



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2016 Sierra Club Calendar

Accept no substitutes. Your desk will thank you. Your wall will thank you. Your friends and family will thank you. And when you buy direct from the Chapter, you support the Sierra Club's conservation work in San Luis Obispo County. We thank you.

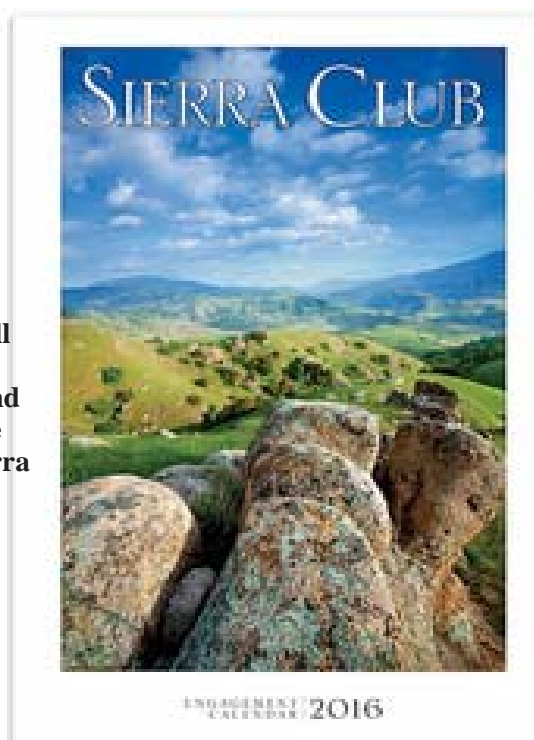
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Activities sponsored by other organizations

The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County and Central Coast Concerned Mountain Bikers are excited to invite you to join the trail building team at the Pismo Preserve.

Trail building began January 5 and will continue for 3 or 4 months. The goal is to have the 11-mile trail system completed before the opening of the Preserve in late 2016.

We need your help to create this amazing community asset which will provide spectacular outdoor opportunities for years to come. No matter what your trail work experience, your age or physical strength, we have an important volunteer position for you!

Of particular importance are volunteers to work directly in support of the trail machine, crews to do the finish work after the machine has done the heavy

lifting and volunteers to support the build crews.

We particularly need folks who can volunteer multiple days to do rock and finish work.

As a participant you will be a volunteer for Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County in partnership with the Central Coast Concerned Mountain Bikers, Becker Landscaping, trail builder Drew Perkins of Mountain Bikers of

Santa Cruz and the San Luis Obispo Parks, Open Space and Trails Foundation.

You will find the full range of opportunities on our website, a map of the proposed trails, pictures of the ongoing construction and progress updates.

Sign up to be a volunteer and invest in the future by going to the Pismo Preserve Trail Project Website at www.pismopreservetrailproject.org.



Jan. 30: Art of the Carrizo. Inspired by the current exhibit Legacy and Loss: Landscapes of the Santa Barbara Region, the Wildling Museum of Art and Nature is hosting an artist panel about the Carrizo Plain. Artists will share amazing images & stories of our national monument. 1511-B Mission Drive, Solvang. \$10/\$5 Wildling members. Limited seating, purchase tickets by calling (805) 686-8315.



"Carrizo 1 05 scarp b" by Bill Dewey.

Portland

continued from page 5

California, Idaho and B.C. have signed on at www.nonew ffi.org/elected-official-sign-on/. Connect with & Like the No New Fossil Infrastructure Facebook page.

These are huge for us here in Oregon, but also offer opportunities as models and examples nationally and internationally in stepping up the local fights against fossil fuels and the climate crisis.

The No New Fossil Fuel Infrastructure resolution, approved on November 12, includes a specific requirement for future, near-term amendments to

the municipal statutes to implement the policies embodied within it. I suspect we will see dozens of specific changes to the City Code over the next few months as a result.

The City of Portland, in conjunction with Multnomah County, established the first Climate Action Plan in the United States, and updated it this year.

These two resolutions and the Climate Action Plan are a beginning, not an end — a huge and unprecedented beginning of a new phase, and a major step along our path for a Just Transition.

Our coalition assembled some 500 people in City Hall for the November 4th

launch of consideration of these resolutions, and generated thousands of calls and emails. Some 250 of us came back on November 12 for the completion of the Fossil Fuels resolution. (It's been hectic!)

Both resolutions passed the City Council unanimously, despite strong opposition from the traditional business community leadership (including the state's leading newspaper) and the traditional leadership of the building trades.

Our coalition included almost all of the major eco organizations in Oregon and Southern Washington, with only a couple of no-shows. Sierra Club provided im-

portant participation and leadership. We also had critically-important support from many Tribal and Indigenous leaders, and from International Longshore & Warehouse Union locals.

And these accomplishments came out of a long history of movement-building and local action on many fronts, especially this year. (You may remember "the Blockade at the Bridge" at the end of July against Shell's Arctic ice-breaker.)

See Daphne Wysham's blog post "Portlanders and Mayor Charlie Hales: World Leaders on Climate Change" at Huffington Post.com.