

Vol. 23, No. 2 of 6

April - May 2023

Condor Call

Journal of the Sierra Club's
Santa Barbara - Ventura Chapter



Oil squared ... Sightings ... Tips ... Ormond ... Earth Days

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Alex Katz, EDC's new Executive Director said "I've lived and worked all over California, and I've always loved this part of the state. I'm a lifelong fan of the South Central Coast from Oxnard to SLO. This is one of the most beautiful places in the world, and it's a dream job to work with a group of people who are fighting so hard to protect it."

EDC hires Alex Katz an innovative leader

Environmental Defense Center (EDC) announced on March 7 that Alex Katz will become its new Executive Director, following the untimely death of Owen Bailey from cancer.

Just so happens Alex is a Sierra Club member (from Oakland) as was Owen.

The EDC is often hired by our Santa Barbara – Ventura Sierra Club chapter for legal challenges on environmental issues. It is one of the nation's longest-running public interest law firms working to protect the California coast, natural resources, and the earth's climate, formed in response to the 1969 oil blowout from Platform A in the Santa Barbara Channel.

Alex brings 25 years of experience in public service and communications to the fight for environmental protection. He is deeply committed to climate action, conservation, and justice for communities that are disproportionately harmed by the fossil fuel industry and other sources of pollution.

A California native, he is married and has an 8-year-old daughter "so we're trying to figure out schools and where to live." As soon as that happens, he'll be here full time starting in July. Meanwhile, he's part-time and brought his bike "so I'm riding around, trying to bet

a better idea of the town."

EDC Chief Counsel Linda Krop said, "He has been an innovative leader on environmental issues in California and will be a strong advocate for our mission to protect the South-Central Coast, preserve our open space and wildlife, and address the climate crisis."

He has held leadership roles at many levels of government, notably Chief of Staff of the Oakland City Attorney's Office, where he helped to initiate Oakland's groundbreaking lawsuit against major oil companies to hold them accountable for the costs of adapting to sea level rise.

He also served as a communications and climate policy aide to Rep. Barbara Lee, and last year completed UC Berkeley's Beahrs Environmental Leadership Program, which focuses on collaborative solutions.

EDC Board President Rob Tadlock noted that "as the climate crisis intensifies, the threats to the ocean, clean water, and life on the South-Central Coast are greater now than ever. EDC will continue to face those threats head-on as we move into the next phase of our history as a fierce defender of local communities and our natural environment."

with millions of members and activists, Sierra Club is bound together by our love of the environment, our commitment to justice, and our determination to find ways to slow and even stop the climate crisis. To do that, we must be guided by leaders who embrace our mission and values. It is up to members like you to choose those leaders.

Each year, 5 of the 15 members of the Sierra Club Board of Directors end their three-year term. A list of candidates is selected by a combination of a nominations process and a petition process. Sierra Club members have the opportunity to vote on 5 candidates to fill the empty seats.

This year's ballot has seven nominated candidates. There are no candidates running on petition.

To be eligible to vote, you must have been a Sierra Club member for at least one year as of January 31st, 2023.

All information, including videos of the candidates are here: www.sierraclub.org/board-directors-election-2023

If you did not receive your ballot by March 31st please contact Sierra Club's Member Care team at 415-977-5500 or member.care@sierraclub.org

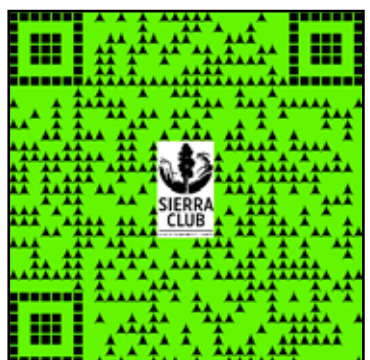
Vote for club directors

Editor's note: Those eligible to vote in the National Sierra Club election should have received a ballot in the mail (or by email) in early March. Voting will take only a few moments of your time, but the impact to our organization, our mission, and our planet will be far reaching.

By voting for the next members of the Sierra Club Board, you have the opportunity to help shape the future of our organization and build an even stronger Club by voting.

Please cast your vote today by April 26 at 9pm Western Time. And spread the word to members you know.

As a peer-driven organization



If you have a printed Condor Call in your hand, you can tap into this QR code to get a full color version that has hot links! Try it.



Story of oil hoisted by its own petard

By Katie Davis
Chapter Chair

The game is afoot

On March 1st dozens of public commenters spoke in opposition to Plains All American Pipeline's project that would install safety valves and pave a way to restart oil production along the Gaviota Coast.

Commentors explained that adding safety valves is fine; however, adding them to restart offshore oil and transport it through an old, leaky pipeline that caused a massive oil spill is not.

The Refugio oil spill in May 2015 shut down fisheries and beaches and killed hundreds of marine animals. It also shut down Exxon's oil production in the Santa Barbara Channel for the past eight years.

Sierra Club volunteer Bill Woodbridge shared a picture of the corroded pipeline and said, "This is comparative to putting new tires on a semitruck and trailer that has decrepit, old, rusted-out breaks, putting in on the freeway at 60 mph and seeing how fast it crashes."

Surprise Start

The proposal came as a surprise to many as the pipeline was widely considered unusable, and the County had previously tried to prohibit its use through the legal system.

In 2018 Plains was criminally convicted of negligence in failing to maintain the pipeline, which was constructed in a way that caused extensive corrosion. At the criminal sentencing in 2019, County Deputy District Attorney Kevin Weichbrod asked for a \$1.2B fine and a probation that would bar Plains to restart the pipelines or

even threaten to do so.

The judge agreed with the points but found that he could only impose a \$3.3M fine and couldn't impose probationary requirements because there was no way to enforce them.

Exxon and Plains had seemed to agree that the pipeline is unsafe and impossible to fix, which is why they proposed trucking the oil and building a new pipeline instead. Trucking the oil was rejected by the county due to the risk of spills and fires from hundreds of tanker trips on windy roads, notably Highways 101 and 166.

The Game

Exxon's latest plan seems to

EAVESDROP

"My favorite view of Santa Barbara is in my rear-view mirror."

~ Exxon's erasable Don Cornett in the late 1980's, disgusted with SB County Supervisors insisting it meet reasonable air quality standards. He also famously stormed out of that meeting telling them to "stick it in your ear."

be restarting the line but avoid the liability of doing so.

It wants to acquire ownership of the pipeline from Plains, then financing the sale of it and their whole offshore operation to a speculative, blank check company called Sable.

By loaning the money to this new entity, Exxon would pass off ownership and liability to a smaller

continued on page 2



Trouble spot: The notorious oil leak from Plains Pipeline Gaviota Coast, due to poor maintenance and delay in stopping it because it did not have an automatic shutdown. Oil spilled into the ocean, closing beaches, harming animals, sparking lawsuits, and adding to anti-oil sentiments. Photo by Bruce Reitherman - Santa Barbara County, 2015

Campaign donation debacle in Ventura

Despite an overwhelming 'no' from the public, three Ventura County supervisors ignored the calls not to increase campaign donations from the current \$750 cap to a whopping \$5,500, which is the figure in place by California.

It was the second required reading of the new ordinance on March 28, and the majority of three refused to even ask for a staff report. Those three who voted for it are conservatives from eastern Ventura County: Supervisors Jeff Gorell, Janice Parvin, and Kelly Long.

Supervisor Matt LaVere and Vianey Lopez stood fast against the raise. Both have been endorsed by our Sierra Club chapter, which also opposed the increase along with a coalition of environmental groups.

In essence, the majority repealed the lower limits (from a single source) that has been in place for 20 years.

"The three Supervisors knew they had the votes, so they saw no need to bother with the delays involved with requesting staff analysis. We shall soon see what else this new right-wing Supervisors' majority wants to see, though it's likely to be in favor of the oil lobby and other development interests, rather than in support of the citizens they represent," said Alasdair Coyne of Keep the Sespe Wild.

Our own vice-chair, Jim Hines, saw it coming too when, on March 2 an oil company appeal was approved on a 3-2 vote of the Ven-

tura County supervisors granting applications to ABA Energy Corp. to re-drill two wells near Oxnard's Lemonwood community.

"This 3-2 vote by VC Supervisors foreshadows votes to come over the next four years. The Ventura County environment lost (its majority) in the Nov. 2022 elections," Hines said.

It might also lead to a petition effort by those opposing the higher limits which could happen before the new raise takes effect in 30 days. If enough signatures are gathered, supervisors would then have to either reconsider or send it to a vote.

It may not work, it certainly didn't with an oil industry driven petition in June 2022 to overturn measures A & B, which supervisors approved to require environmental review on old oil permits to meet current laws, including setbacks from homes and schools.

The oil industry bankrolled the campaign to defeat those measures in what became the costliest campaign known in Ventura County. The industry raised \$8.2 million, environmental groups in support of the measures had raised around \$1.1 million.

"The 'yes' side ran a scrappy grassroots campaign, but it's tough to overcome \$8 million dollars," said Tim Allison, a political scientist at CSU Channel Islands. "This is something we've never seen in Ventura County before."

~ By John Hankins

COVER PHOTO

Our weather lately has ranged from snow to sun. Both photos are of the Santa Ynez Valley: top photo by Mike Eliason, bottom photo a painting from Wildling Museum's new exhibit: *A Conservation Story*, on view from April 8 - October 16. Painting of the Sedgwick Reserve by Dennis Curry.

EAVESDROP

"If we learned anything from amendment A & B in Ventura County, is that representative democracy means nothing to the oil industry when they have millions of advertising dollars to burn. Ventura was just a bellwether of what's about to happen statewide."

~ Jon Ullman, our chapter Executive Director, warning about the oil industry and its 'friends' who gathered more than 623,000 valid voter signatures to put a referendum on the Nov. 5, 2024, general election ballot, putting on hold Senate Bill 1137.

Story of oil...

continued from page 1

firm that could declare bankruptcy and dissolve in the event of another disaster.

That would leave us with the mess and the bill.

After hours of public comment, planning commissioners agreed that if adding valves leads to restarting the pipeline, then a lot more environmental review needs to be done. Commissioner John Parke also said that restarting would cause a massive increase in the county's greenhouse gas emissions as Exxon had been the largest facility source of pollution in the county.

It's Still Afoot

Planning staff will come back on April 26 with options for more environmental review and possible denial.

Activists want to see the project denied and decommission the damaged and ill-designed pipeline that caused the 2015 Refugio oil spill. The County could also deny or condition the transfers in ownership to Sable so that Plains and Exxon maintain responsibility for decommissioning their oil pipelines and platforms.

They can afford it, but we cannot.

As the UN Secretary General recently said, "It is immoral for oil and gas companies to be making record profits from the current energy crisis on the backs of the poorest, at a massive cost to the climate."

The Gaviota coast is a unique, biodiversity hotspot, worthy of special protection. The spill from this pipeline caused millions of dollars of economic damage. It shut down or tarred beaches all the way to Orange County. Hundreds of dolphins, seals, sea lions, pelicans and other birds and animals washed up dead.

We have learned the lesson from too many oil spills, and there should be no second chances for this pipeline and its negligent owners.

Some Good News

~ Getting off oil is good for us. California's electric cars are already leading to improvements in air quality and health outcomes. A study published in February in the journal *Science of the Total Environment* found that in California, every 20 zero-emissions vehicles per 1,000 people in a given zip code led to a 3.2 percent drop in the rate of emergency room visits due to asthma.

~ Energy benefits expanded when the County of San Luis Obispo voted 3-2 on March 21 to seek membership in Central Coast Community Energy. Sierra Club members commented in support, citing the benefits of more local renewable energy, and money for EVs, electric school buses, appliance rebates and more. SLO will join Santa Barbara County and others in the expanded agency. Ventura County is also in a similar community choice energy coalition.

HINES CHRONICLES

Lobby work: Wish me luck!

Editor's note: By popular demand, we continue with the Jim Hines Chronicles, which reflects the emails by our premier lobbyist on the ins and outs of environmental activism and its opponents. This covers the last two months (February-March). Jim is our chapter vice-chair and conservation director who belongs to many wildlife groups.

By Jim Hines

Feb 1: **I can't believe** how many members of the new Republican majority in the House are anti-America. Why do I say that? Well, there are plans for numerous bills to be introduced to defund the National Park Service and our treasured national forests, or as one congress member told me "rid America of its National Park problem."



National preservation lands are the only thing America as a nation owns and these refuges generate a whole lot of money for the local gateway communities, along with money made for the American government which these members of the House seem to hate.

But you notice that they take their paychecks, benefits and expensive travel trips from the government. Totally hypocritical. Once you take away the treasured natural beauty America owns you weaken us as a nation.

The reality is that many members of this Congress want to open these lands up to international corporations for mining and drilling. In the Los Padres National Forest, a mine is backed by a Washington DC firm with ties to Iran and other countries and offshore oil drilling by an Australian company backed by the same Russia that is killing people in Ukraine.

And I will be dealing with these members of Congress for the next two years . . . wish me luck.

Feb 7: **We have our work** cut out for us in 2024. (Jim cites the news that California oil drilling restrictions prohibit new or retrofitted wells within 3,200 feet of homes, schools, hospitals etc. as of Jan. 1. But the CA Independent Petroleum Assn. funded a ballot initiative to overturn it for a 2024 ballot. Oil's lobbying defeated a similar bill in 2019.

Feb 12: **Celebrating 50 years** of

wildlife protection since the passage of the Endangered Species Act, boosted by the Sierra Club's Wildlife Team and other advocacy groups. "99% of species listed under the Act have been saved from the brink of extinction, but the rate of habitat destruction and other threats to biodiversity have only accelerated," warned Bonnie Rice of the Sierra Club's Wildlife Campaign.

March 11: **Goals for the Club's** Wildlife Committee (Hines is its chair for our chapter) include designating mountain lions and their habitat as endangered, passage of the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary in federal waters off Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties for marine species, along with more wildlife corridors, protection of gray wolves and spotted owls, designating steelhead trout as endangered in central and southern CA and phasing out longline fishing nets.

March 12: **Dwindling wetlands** (both fresh and salt water) need advocates and Sierra Club California asked me to create a subcommittee within the Wildlife Committee. In our chapter region we have the Ormond Beach and Goleta Slough wetlands.

March 16: **We have identified** two areas within our region for wildlife corridors and crossings: Hwy 101 area of the Gaviota Coast and the 118 Freeway in the Santa Susana Pass and Simi Hills areas of eastern Ventura County.

March 16: **Into the dark abyss** of wolf killing in Idaho and Montana I will go as National has asked me to represent the club in protection of gray wolves. Upcoming hearings are on how to kill more wolves; of course I represent the side of no more wolf killing.

March 17: **Beaver Reintroduction Act** (AB-64) will go a long way in restoring one of the most valuable assets to our natural aquatic ecosystems in California. And beavers are the natural way to fight climate change. Beavers were common in the backcountry creeks of Ventura and Santa Barbara counties, but I have not seen one since 1998 along Sespe Creek north of Ojai.

March 21: **New actions** to conserve and restore the nation's lands and waters, announced by President Biden. Also establishes new national monuments in Nevada and Texas and considers expanding protections for Pacific remote islands.

EAVESDROPS

"I came to the Sierra Club to do big things. And right now, our planet is crying out for bigger changes from all of us."

~ Sierra Club's new Director Ben Jealous, asking everyone to chip in to fight, noting "House Republicans just released a flurry of legislation that would bind our nation to dated, toxic fossil fuels." Chip in here: <https://tinyurl.com/FundOurWork>

Ensure your environmental legacy by naming the Sierra Club Santa Barbara-Ventura Chapter in your will or trust. These gifts cost you nothing now, yet enable a powerful movement and vibrant outings programs for years to come.

What will your legacy be?

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SIERRA CLUB
SANTA BARBARA-VENTURA CHAPTER

Condor Call

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Photos, news, tips always welcome!

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Typography and production by Dan Fuller



Tanya Atwater is seen exploring some of the unique geology along Gibraltar Road. (Photo by Ken Owen)

Water wise Our quirky geology

Santa Barbara County Water Agency is accepting applications for the 2023 WaterWise Garden Recognition Contest.

Apply by April 30 to compete for an agency award and the county-wide grand prize. Winners will have their gardens featured online and receive an engraved stone boulder.

Residents of single-family homes can apply if they live in areas served by the Carpinteria Valley Water District, Vandenberg Village Community Services District, Montecito Water District, and the Cities of Santa Barbara and Solvang.

View contest rules and apply online at: www.WaterWiseSB.org/

A little knowledge of the geology and plate tectonic history of Southern California can go a long way toward understanding and enjoying the quirks and wonders of our dramatic landscapes.

Learn more about them with Tanya Atwater, an Emeritus Professor at UC-Santa Barbara, on Thursday, April 20 at 6:30pm, Santa Barbara Public Library at 40 E. Anapamu St.

Most of the rocks of California were formed during a long history of subduction, with lots of volcanoes and big earthquakes. During this time, coastal California accumulated a pile of flat sedimentary rock layers, made from the debris washing into the ocean from those volcanoes.

years ago, the San Andreas plate boundary began to break into the continental edge, shifting and rearranging chunks of the crust and their frostings of sedimentary layers: pulling open basins, smashing together mountains, and twirling some of the pieces in a giant, slow-motion bumper-car ride. And the ride continues under our feet!

In this lecture, Tanya will use maps, photos, animations, and a hands-on model to demonstrate and clarify this history and its topographic legacy.

Her work includes numerous oceanographic expeditions, including twelve dives to the deep-sea floor in the tiny submersible Alvin, and her research includes the history of the San Andreas fault.

Starting about 25 million



'Rolling Hills' next to the Arroyo Hondo Preserve is sought for purchase by the Land Trust for SB County. It starts a public campaign to raise \$750,000 to encompass the "Gaviota Overlook" within the preserve. You can help by going to: <https://www.sblandtrust.org/>

SIGHTINGS

Suits, solar and plans

By John Hankins

The weather continued to be wild during the last two months dumping more rain, causing considerable damage to infrastructure – tornado in Carpinteria March 22! – but filling up reservoirs and groundwater. Our environmental life and activism continued, notably gains against pollution and some advance for climate change locally. Check out the stories and links below.

Please join our activities and activism; see **Group News** box on page 3 for contacts and links where you can get involved or enjoy free hikes. We encourage all to go outside on your own or by MeetUp; check out lots of outings and outdoor news on pages 6&7.

Donations help a lot, and the money stays here at home doing good stuff. Donate here:

www.sierraclub.org/donate/1000



Alisse Fisher in her 'Pooh' tent, during overnight camping during our Wilderness Basics Course, of which she is a co-founder. See more photos of our March/April course on page 6 and a collage on the back page. (Photo by Patty Peinado)

Yosemite Alert! Yosemite Conservation Heritage Center is looking for Sierra Club members who would like to spend a week camping to assist with interpretation at the Center, which is the Sierra Club's home there, open May 1 – Sept. 30. Volunteers arrive on a Saturday and depart the following Saturday, receive free entrance and camping in the park and have Monday and Tuesday to explore on your own. All volunteers bring their own tent, food, and supplies. Contact Bonnie Gisel at 209 347-7300 or: Bonnie.Gisel@sierraclub.org

March 28: **Big Dollar** donations became special interests' dream when three Ventura County Supervisors ignored constituents when they blew up the campaign limit from \$750 for individuals to a whopping \$5,500. The three were East County Supervisors Jeff Gorell, Janice Parvin, and Kelly Long. Voting to retain the \$750 cap were Matt LaVere and Vianey Lopez. See story pg. 1.

March 27: "Serendipity to it." Carmen Ramirez was honored posthumously with a county building planned to house assistance for

crime victims whose needs are vital due to cultural barriers, language and others who are especially vulnerable. Carmen Ramirez Family Justice Center is eyed for the 500 block of A St., Oxnard. An environmental hero and activist, Supervisor Ramirez was killed in Aug. 2022 while walking in Oxnard, struck by an SUV.

March 22: **World Water Day**, honoring the role that water plays in our lives. Sierra Club launched its Clean Water Program on this day last year to fight, via its Water Sentinels Network Team, the weakening of the Clean Water Act. Check out a webinar on chemicals in drinking water on April 11, register here: <https://tinyurl.com/ForCleanerWater>

March 22: **Modoc Path** bike project in Santa Barbara approved by California Transportation Committee and it now goes into the design phase. Volunteers spoke in support and shared a multi-organization letter of support organized by the Sierra Club.

March 15: **Third annual** Santa Cruz Island hiking trip. The hike from Scorpion Harbor is 8 miles with a 1200 ft gain, lots of ocean views and coreopsis in bloom, sponsored by Ventura Sierra Club via Meetup.

March 14: **Six groups**, including the Sierra Club, filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court charging the Interior Department and multiple agencies with violating an array of laws when authorizing ConocoPhillips' Willow oil and gas project in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska. Mike Scott of Sierra Club's Wild Alaska campaign said: "If they're allowed to break ground, it would be a disaster for the climate, the effects of which would be felt for decades." For action go to: <https://tinyurl.com/NoToOilGas>

March 8: **Orientation call** for Sierra Club Chapter Leaders, an ongoing program (via Zoom) to guide the club's mission, vision and values, focusing on diversity, social justice and clean energy, among others.

March 2: **Oil company** appeal was approved on a 3-2 vote of the Ventura County supervisors granting applications to ABA Energy Corp. to re-drill two wells near Oxnard's Lemonwood community. "This 3-2 vote by VC Supervisors foreshadows votes to come over the next few years," commented Chapter vice-chair Jim Hines. "The Ventura County environment lost (its majority) in the Nov. 2022 elections."

March 1: **Climate Action Plan** for SB County was aired at two in-person community open houses in Santa Barbara and Santa Maria. It was fol-

lowed up on March 7 via Zoom. To check out the 2030 plan and comment, go to:

<https://sbco.mysocialpinpoint.com/oneclimatehome>

Feb 22: **Seek the Creek**, a community visioning process by the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy for the future removal of the Matilija Dam. It would return the critical waterway of Matilija Creek to its original flow, providing much needed public open space to our region, and more sand on the beaches. The last date was conducted in Spanish.

Feb 15: **WBC Begins**, rising from a three-year hiatus due to Covid. Our chapter's Wilderness Basics Course filled up as usual, although with a reduced size of 35 students to ensure a quality education that likely will continue next year with a larger class.

Feb 14: **'Rolling Hills'** next to the Arroyo Hondo Preserve is sought for purchase by the Land Trust for SB County. It starts a public campaign to raise \$750,000 to encompass the "Gaviota Overlook" within the preserve. You can help by going to: <https://www.sblandtrust.org/>

Feb 13: **Gas battle** goes national as reported via *LA Times*' Sammy Roth writing: "It all started in Berkeley." In July 2019, the city voted to ban gas hookups in most new homes due to indoor pollution. In our region, Ventura County and the cities of Santa Barbara and Ojai have ordinances banning gas appliances (with caveats). Our chapter has been an advocate for this since the beginning.

Feb 13: **Legal Deadline met:** ExxonMobil filed a lawsuit in federal court to challenge SB County's decision against restarting offshore platforms. EDC was allowed to join opposition to the lawsuit on behalf of Get Oil Out!, SBCAN, Surfrider Foundation, Sierra Club, and our own members.

Feb 12: **First time** that NEXT's solar window is being demonstrated outside the lab and on a building, notably at Ventura Patagonia headquarters at 96 S. Olive St. NEXT of Santa Barbara developed a transparent photovoltaic coating that turns commercial windows into energy-producing surfaces, opening the door to a whole new world of solar power.

Feb 8: **\$10 Million Investment** is coming from the feds for monarch butterfly and pollinator conservation. Thanks to our Reps. Salud Carbajal and Jimmy Panetta, citing the devastating drop-off of monarch populations in Goleta and Pismo Beach. The money will promote pollinator-friendly practices on roads, including native plants.

Feb 7: **Ormond Lagoon** and the vital importance of restoring Ormond Beach for migratory birds and snowy plovers was communicated by Joan Tharp of Surfrider Foundation. People may donate for equipment and/or help monitor the beach via Ventura Audubon Society. See story pg. 5.

Read our blog



Sierra Club California is a lean, savvy team

By Katie Davis
Chapter Chair

I volunteer with, and donate to, Sierra Club California because climate action is incredibly urgent.

We live in a state with the resources, technology, political will, and influence to transition to the clean energy economy of the future.

It will only happen if we demand it and it won't happen without a fight. In the last four years alone, fossil fuel companies spent \$77.5 million to lobby lawmakers in Sacramento. Meanwhile, the United Nations secretary general, António Guterres, said about its latest climate report that "it is a clarion call to massively fast-track climate efforts by every country and every sector and on every timeframe. Our world needs climate action on all

fronts: everything, everywhere, all at once."

Fortunately, we have Sierra Club California on our side.

It is a lean, hyper-effective, savvy, little team of environmental superheroes based in our state capital that knocks on those doors.

California is nearly the 4th largest economy in the world, and we MUST be a part of that solution. We can figure out how to do everything all at once, but it will take all of us, doing all we can.

Join me in giving Sierra Club California the support it needs to push the state as hard as it can in the right direction. The best day to act is always today. Please donate whatever you can here:

<https://tinyurl.com/SCcaDonate>

Bills on tap in Sac

This legislative session is ramping up, which means Sierra Club California (SCC) is releasing its 2023 Priority Bill List. You can view the full list, which focuses on reigning in the fossil fuel industry, defending environmental review, promoting climate change, and many other issues here:

<https://tinyurl.com/BillPriorities>

SCC needs Club supporters' help to push the bills that will help the environment and stop the bills that do harm. Writing letters, sending emails, or making calls to your state legislators about important bills are

excellent ways of helping.

You may also contact members of the Santa Barbara-Ventura Chapter for specific bills of interest. Also, SCC would appreciate donations for its intensive work in Sacramento and elsewhere. (See link below)

Since bills are often a moving target, you can keep apprised at SCC's priority bills website here:

<https://tinyurl.com/UpdateBills>

Out of the hundreds of bills its policy staff analyze, SCC identifies a select few bills - priority bills - that it will be lobbying extra hard on over the coming year.



Most meetings continue online for now

Group News

The public is welcome to our programs

CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

~ Meets 4th Thursday 7pm of every month, via internet for now.

Email Secretary Gerry Ching for the agenda: gching@cox.net

~ Chapter website and blog at:

www.SierraClub.org/SantaBarbara-Ventura

SANTA BARBARA GROUP

~ We meet 1st Tuesdays, noon to 1:30pm of each month. For details and to follow the South Coast area, contact:

<http://www.sbsierraclub.org>

<https://www.FACEBOOK.com/SBSierraClub>

<https://TWITTER.com/SBSierraClub>

<https://www.INSTAGRAM.com/SierraClubSantaBarbara>

<https://www.MEETUP.com/SierraClub-SantaBarbara>

<https://tinyurl.com/SBGGroupBlog>

ARGUELLO GROUP

Our North County Group will keep you informed on our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/SierraClubArguelloGroup. ~Volunteers needed; your talents could make a difference. Call 350-0629 or:

RebeccaAugust@mac.com

VENTURA NETWORK

~ For board meeting dates, times and location email:

sierraclubventura@gmail.com

~ Get latest info about the western Ventura County group via Facebook and a blog:

<http://tinyurl.com/VenturaSierraClubFB>

<https://tinyurl.com/VenturaSierraClubBlog>

~New MEETUP site for hikes, outings etc:

www.meetup.com/SierraClubVentura

CONEJO GROUP

~ Events, outings and meetings will be sent to you if you send an email request to:

ConejoGroupHiking@gmail.com.

Or view the Conejo Group website:

www.sierraclub.org/SantaBarbara-Ventura

www.sierraclub.org/SantaBarbara-Ventura/outings



Clothes pollute, even your suit

Editor's note: We continue to feature specific climate action ideas authored by UCSB lecturer in environmental studies, Deborah Williams. This report is on reducing the carbon, water and chemical footprint of clothing. Go to our blog for links to the info in this story:

<https://tinyurl.com/ChapterStoryBlog>

By Deborah Williams

The fashion industry is among the most polluting in the world, generating 10% of our greenhouse-gas emissions.

About two-thirds of our clothing contain oil and gas derived synthetics, using very carbon-intensive processes.

Representing about 30% of all textile fibers, cotton often uses a lot of water, pesticides and fertilizer. To make a single pair of jeans, it takes about 1,000 gallons of water -- from growing the cotton to delivering the final pants.

According to the *Handbook of Textile Effluent Remediation*, the textile-finishing industry also uses 20 - 25% of all globally produced chemical compounds. And roughly 20% of wastewater worldwide is generated from fabric dyeing and treatment.

What about microfibers? The equivalent of 50 billion plastic bottles of plastic microfibers are flushed into the ocean annually.

Here's the good news: There are great strategies to reduce the footprints of our clothing choices.

First, we can ask ourselves: Do I really, really need this additional item of clothing? If the answer is "no" -- bravo! Consider what you already have, including repairing when needed via businesses in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties.

If you truly need an additional item of clothing, buying or swapping pre-owned (used) clothes is the best option, via on-line and in stores. The second-hand clothing market is the fastest growing segment of the textile sector, expanding 21 times faster than conventional retail. Projections are that secondhand will be 1.5 times larger than Fast Fashion by 2028.

On-line used clothes shopping is fun and easy. Here are a few names to look up: *39 Online Thrift Stores for the Best Secondhand Clothing*, *Top Used Clothing Stores Online*, *ThredUp* and *Poshmark*.

There are also lots of options to buy pre-owned clothes in person in both Santa Barbara and Ventura counties along with Craigslist, NextDoor, Offer Up and garage sales. Condor John said, "a majority of my Patagonia and Lands' End gear comes from thrift stores."

If you cannot find pre-owned clothes, the next best choice is buying clothes from companies that use recycled materials, upcycled materials and organic cotton -- and provide livable wages and safe working conditions for their employees. Finding labels that do this is easy, just look at sites like *12 Amazing Brands That Make Clothes Using Recycled Plastic* or *Our Favorite Clothing Made from Recycled Materials*, as well as local based clothing companies like Patagonia, Decker's and Toad and Co.

Finally, before throwing away any used clothing consider selling them online; for good tips and sites check out *Good on You* and *How to Sell Clothes Online and Make Money Fast!* (2023).

Or sell them in person via garage sales, Craigslist, etc. When you donate them to places like Goodwill and Alpha Resource Center, they give you discounts to buy from them. You can reuse the material from your clothes for quilts, pillows, rags or other items.

According to the World Bank, 87% of the total fiber input for clothing is incinerated or disposed of in a landfill. While Germany collects approximately 75% of all used clothing (reusing 50% and recycling 25%), the US only collects 15%, and worldwide only 1% of used garments are recycled into new clothing.

We can -- and must -- do better. Here are two final carbon reduction strategies for your clothes: air drying and cold water. An aver-

Outdoor skills

Join Ojai author Lanny Kaufer and famed forager-survivalist Christopher Nyerges on Saturday, April 15, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Ojai for an "Outdoor Survival Skills" workshop based on the book of the same name by legendary survival expert Larry Dean Olsen. Nyerges edited the recent 7th Edition of this classic.

The workshop will begin with a morning plant walk led by Nyerges and Kaufer at Euterpe Farms, overlooking the Ventura River Preserve. The afternoon workshop will take place under an oak tree. Everyone will have a chance to participate in all activities.

Register at 805-646-6281 or: www.HerbWalks.com

Join oil resistance tour

Sierra Club California is just one of many groups sponsoring an Oil Resistance Tour, which will be in Ventura (April 29) and Santa Barbara (April 30), coming up from Los Angeles and across the state.

Organized by Last Chance Alliance, movement leaders like Bill McKibben, Nalleli Cobo, Cesar Aguirre, and more will be joining Alliance and traveling to seven cities across California.

Local supporters include Patagonia, Climate First: Replacing Oil & Gas (CFROG), CAUSE and Food & Water Watch.

The idea is to bring together community leaders, frontline residents, movement celebrities, issue experts, and elected officials to build the mass movement we need to win.

~ Ventura, Saturday April 29

age household can reduce its carbon footprint by 2,400 pounds per year by air drying their clothes. Because clothes dryers represent around 5.8% of residential electricity use, you will also save money.

Washing your clothes in cold water most of the time will also save money and reduce emissions. Up to 90% of the washing machine's energy use goes toward heating the water. You can save up to 864 pounds of emissions per year by washing four out of five loads in cold water and adding a water heater blanket (cheap and easy) will also save money.



Outdoor writer and photographer Ray Ford caught this wonderful photo of Manzanita covered with snow in the Los Padres Forest.

Climate change is here: Now what?

By Jon Ullman
Chapter ED

In 1996, the Miami Museum of Science leased a touring exhibit from the San Francisco Exploratorium called "Global Warming: It's getting hot in here" along with a sweating cartoon earth face with a thermometer's red mercury nearly to the top.

The exhibit through text and photos explained the science of the greenhouse effect in a matter-of-fact, and in hindsight insufficiently alarmist manner. As public relations supervisor coming off Robotic Dinosaurs, I knew this one would be a dud.

We needed to localize it. I found Dr. Hal Wanless, chair of Geology at the University of Miami who was talking to whoever would listen about the area being underwa-

ter at some point. I took photos of the handmade maps he kept, which in the mid-90s weren't online. I photographed them and reprinted them in our newsletter "Sci-lights."

Despite those efforts, the exhibit was still a dud.

Dr. Wanless' sea level rise predictions were always sooner than the U.N. consensus forecasts. Until the day that they were not.

The U.N. Climate report release last month felt like the day Dr. Wanless ceased to be an outlier. Here's the latest:

<https://tinyurl.com/UNfinalwarning>

The UN's tone changed. It wasn't the usual, 'we only have about a decade, but we can still change our path' spiel. This time the words were stone cold just like a National Hurricane Report saying imminent death will occur if you re-

fuse to evacuate.

The Arctic's ice had probably reached a tipping point in 2007, scientists said, and now it was melting uncontrollably from the inside out.

<https://tinyurl.com/GlaciersLow>

A week after the announcement some media outlets hopped on the idea that doom was an epidemic outpacing denialism, that the public was insufficiently optimistic.

<https://tinyurl.com/Doomerism>

Had I become a doomer?

Living in California, it can feel like we are making serious progress on climate change compared to the rest of nation and world. To some extent it's true. But to some extent it's not.

The skyrocketing Mauna Loa Observatory carbon graph has not bent a bit. Our goals for decarbonization are measured in decades, while climate chaos is here. It's now.

Octavia Butler, a Black science fiction writer from Pasadena was paying close attention to current events when she wrote the 1993 California climate dystopia "Parable of the Sower." Her teenage protagonist lives in a walled community before a climate-ravaged outside world closes in, forcing her and two friends to set on foot north. She forecasts what might happen based on what she saw socially and scientifically in the early 90s. The writer, just like the Miami scientist, were trying to warn every one of the futures they foresaw, so it could be stopped, slowed or soberly managed.

Tangible Difference

Our chapter is making a tangible difference. We've stopped gas hookups for new construction in many of our cities and counties. We've frozen proposed onshore and offshore oil expansions and helped pass laws that limit proximity of wells to schools and homes. We're buying more electric cars and biking and walking more. We're working in coalition to stop the doubling of natural gas pipeline pumps across the street from a West Ventura elementary school.

But we are aware that our climate victories alone will not stabilize the world's climate. We can only play our part.

In "Parable of the Sower," the main character finally ventures off the 101 and arrives at a beach near Santa Barbara. It's the only time in the book she really lets her guard down. Maybe because the beach is so bucolic, everyone chooses to pause from their dystopian life.

From our unique spot in the world, we can't afford to be deniers or doomers. We can't believe humans can build a giant machine to solve this or that things will magically work out.

We only have one choice. Bend the line.



Glacier Bay in Alaska proves that the glaciers are thinning out due to global warning. This glacier used to be all the way to the top of the mountain. (Below) Condor John in a selfie in front of the melting glacier for perspective. (Photos by John Hankins)

1-2:30pm at Topa Topa Brewing Co., 4880 Colt St.

~ Santa Barbara, Saturday April 30 10am to noon during Community Environmental Council's Earth Day event, Alameda Park, 1400 Santa Barbara St.

Get all details at: <https://lastchancealliance.org/>



Buy solar before April 15

Good Create your own solar energy

Better Store it securely

Swell Monetize your stored energy for a stronger local grid

Sierra Club members qualify for special discounts PLUS we'll donate to the Santa Barbara-Ventura Chapter on your behalf.

Find out how!

Go to swellenergy.com/sierraclub or call 888-465-1784

EAVESDROPS

"We are in the early stages of a 'Sustainability Revolution' that has the magnitude of the Industrial Revolution coupled with the speed of the Digital Revolution.."

~ Al Gore who is partnering with Sierra Club's new Executive Director, Ben Jealous.

ORMOND BEACH

The challenges of restoration

Editor's note: To learn more about the Ormond Beach and wetlands issues, the public is invited to a town hall meeting, April 24 from 6-8pm at the South Oxnard Center, 200 E. Bard Road, Oxnard. This article brings you up to date and the future awaits. The author is co-founder of Friends of Ormond Beach, and any opinions are hers. Follow them @friendsofornombeach on Instagram or contact them via email at: saveornombeach2019@gmail.com

fund site is closer to being decided. In Sept. 2022, the EPA held a community meeting to discuss the risk assessment of remediation. Currently, the EPA is conducting a feasibility study to determine the best way to remediate the site, and the remedy will be selected sometime between July and September 2024.

Coincidentally, since 2019, there have been four different EPA managers for the Halaco Superfund site.

By Christina Zubko

In 2019, Friends of Ormond Beach organized to bring awareness to the wetlands and to assess the impacts of human activities.

Camping, lighting fires, interfering with protected habitat areas, altering sand dunes, and operating motorized vehicles—all prohibited activities under Oxnard city ordinance 2906—were commonplace. But the city, county and state agencies paused their enforcement of wildlife protection laws, leaving it to volunteers.

Much has changed in four years. Public awareness increased and Friends of Ormond Beach teamed up with Ventura County Surfrider, Coastal Keepers, and the city of Port Hueneme to make a difference. Below is a review of the challenges and the progress that have occurred since 2019.

People and Trash

People who visit the beach and lagoon areas sometimes camp there, don't respect signs asking for no littering and the like.

Trash remains one of the biggest threats to the wetlands, and the bulk of it comes from people and from illegal dumping.

After scores of cleanups by hundreds of dedicated volunteers since 2019, Surfrider estimates that over 38 tons of trash have been removed.

The 12 atmospheric rivers this winter exacerbated the trash problem for the Ormond Lagoon, which is the terminal point for three local waterways. Trash that originated from sources upstream were ultimately discharged into the Lagoon and some into the ocean.

Unfortunately, at least a ton of trash remains in the wetlands area, but because the snowy plover nesting season began in March, the cleanups have stopped for now.

EPA and Halaco

The fate of the Halaco Super-

The Plan and Turnover

The three partners--State Coastal Conservancy (SCC), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and the city of Oxnard--completed phase one of the Ormond Beach Restoration and Access Plan (OBRAP). The phase, consisting of restoration planning, design and stakeholder outreach, was completed in June 2020. Check out the plan at: <https://tinyurl.com/OrmondPlan2020>

The \$1 million grant awarded to TNC in 2021 has helped fund phase two of the project: restoration site preparation, habitat protection, and community engagement, scheduled to occur at least until December 2024. Recently, two of the three partners experienced leadership turnover as both Chris Kroll of the SCC and Isidro Figueroa of the city of Oxnard retired.

Federal Management

The three partners recommended an agency to manage Ormond Beach permanently: US Fish and Wildlife Services. Specifically, the So Cal Urban Wildlife Refuge Program aligns with the vision of the OBRAP to grant access to the wetlands and to protect its sensitive environment.

A federal land manager comes with funding mechanisms and authority to enforce environmental protection laws and it can also engage with the EPA during the remediation process. This federal entity would also satisfy the 2008 goal of the Environmental Defense Center to find permanent protection for Ormond Beach wetlands.

While this recommendation seems promising, it is the first step in a lengthy approval process. The next step is for the three partners to hold their public town hall meeting on April 24 6-8pm at the South Oxnard Center (200 E. Bard Road, Oxnard, CA. 93033). The public is encouraged to attend to learn more and offer input.

Four Years from Now

Friends of Ormond Beach hope that four years from now the OBRAP will be near completion, the Halaco Superfund site will be close to being fully remediated, and US Fish and Wildlife Services will be managing all the human activities in the wetlands.

Until then, the Friends, like all those great stewards who came before them, will continue to advocate for the protection of the wetlands and be forever be grateful to all the organizations and their volunteers who made a difference in the last four years.



EVENTS

See All Earth Day events pg 7

May 7: **Blue Water Ball**, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper's 21st annual event to raise funds for its work to protect local beaches, creeks and coast which includes SB and Ventura counties. Ecologist Ben Halpern will talk on "Healthy Oceans in a Changing Climate" along with dinner, music etc. From 5-9pm; details here: <https://bluewaterball.org/>

June 4: **Ojai Wild**, the 15th year for Los Padres ForestWatch's annual bash is one of the most popular events supporting land and wildlife conservation. These are challenging times for our wilderness, it is more important than ever to come together and support our public lands by attending Ojai WILD! at The Thacher School, 5025 Thacher Rd. Ojai from 4-7pm. More information at: <https://OjaiWild.org>

June 11: **Green & Blue**, a coastal celebration is the Environmental Defense Center's event that brings hundreds of friends to celebrate all that we have accomplished together and to raise critical funds to continue the fight for our climate and local environment. Held at Rancho La Patera & Stow House 2-6pm; sponsorships are available. For all details go to: <https://tinyurl.com/EDCcelebration>

April 9: **Bike Clean & Fix It Day** Sunday 9am to noon at the Bike Hub, 490 N. Ventura Ave. An expert mechanic will be on hand to help, this is an ongoing event. RSVP at our Meetup site: <https://tinyurl.com/VtaSClubMeetup>

April 16: **Sedgwick Reserve:** A Conservation Story will be on view at the Wildling Museum in Solvang from April 8-Oct 16, but on this date (April 16) there will be reception celebrating the new show from 3-5pm. It features 11 artists. For details go to: www.wildlingmuseum.org

April 13: **Whales** in our SB Channel featuring marine biologist and educator Holly Lohuis who will share what she has learned about research on whales and their influence on the Channel 7 pm, Museum of Ventura County. She is currently spearheading an effort to get the Santa Barbara Channel designated as a Whale Heritage Site. Free to the public. [RSVP](https://www.facebook.com/RSVP)

April 22: **Patio Pop-ups** at the SB Maritime Museum, 10am-4pm, featuring a broad range of artwork focusing on our ocean. Shown is a sea glass assemblage by Gina Sylvia.

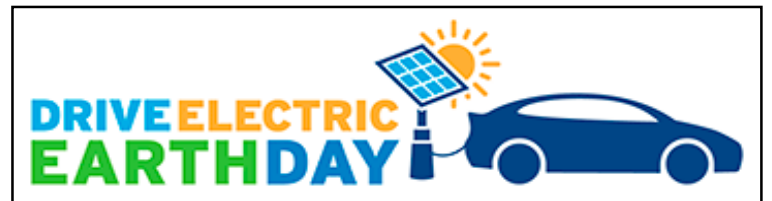


Graffiti on the Ormond Beach sign. (Photo by Christina Zubko)



Surfrider volunteers make progress cleaning up the Ormond wetlands on February 18. (Photo by Joan Tharp)

EAVESDROPS
"Figuring out an EV's energy costs is a lot more complex than doing the same for a gas-powered car. But the Department of Energy's Alternative Fuels Data Center has an easy-to-use calculator at: www.afdc.energy.gov/calc
 ~ Snippet from Consumer Report's recent article 'Will an Electric Car Save You Money?'



Editor's note: Kent is our chapter's Transportation Chair. We work with the EV Advocates of Ventura-Santa Barbara, Plug-In America and SB Community Environmental Council, among others. Feel free to join the movement. The call to participate is for EV owners to show and tell at these events.

By Kent Bullard

April is our time to celebrate Earth Day by participating with EV showcases and education at a variety of events. The public is able to see and talk to owners of EV and hybrids to answer your questions.

April 15: 9am – 1pm, Thousand Oaks Arbor Day. We will have 12 or more vehicles and our education booth under the solar array. Sign up to participate: @ <https://driveelectricearthday.org/3688> <https://tinyurl.com/TOaksArborDay>

April 16: 11am – 4pm. EcoFest Ventura Charter School, 2060 Cameron St. next to the Harry

Lyon Park and DeAnza Middle School. EV Advocates have participated here for the past 10 years. We have room for 12 or more EVs and our booth. Owners, sign up to participate: @ <https://driveelectricearthday.org/3689>

April 22: 10am – 1pm. City of Fillmore's Earth Day, 250 Central Ave. Located at city hall in the plaza park. There will be booths, food trucks and our EV Showcase and educational booth. Owners sign up to participate: <https://driveelectricearthday.org/3675>

Also submit this form to the city: <https://tinyurl.com/FillmoreEDay>

April 29 – 30: Santa Barbara Earth Day with Green Car Expo, Saturday 11am-7pm and Sunday 11am-6pm. Come on one or both days and enjoy this exciting and busy event, the biggest Earth Day in our region. Sign up to participate @ <https://driveelectricearthday.org/3690>



After the atmospheric river in late February, volunteers from the city of Port Hueneme, Coastal Keepers, and Surfrider fill four dumpsters of new trash on March 4. (Photo courtesy of Christina Zubko)



Here's a short video addressing which pollutes more, Electric Vehicles or Gas Cars: <https://tinyurl.com/EVvsGasPollution>



Take a Hike!

SANTA BARBARA-VENTURA CHAPTER

Panorama above Goleta by Robert Bernstein

UPDATES: www.sierraclub.org/santa-barbara-ventura



HIKE WITH CLUB



WELCOME HIKERS

The public is welcome at all outings listed, unless otherwise specified. Please bring drinking water to all outings and optionally a lunch. Sturdy footwear is recommended. If you have any questions about a hike, please contact the leader listed. All phone numbers listed are within area code 805, unless otherwise noted.

A parent or responsible adult must accompany children under the age of 14.

See updated listing of all outings via the QR code (above) or: <https://www.sierraclub.org/santa-barbara-ventura>

This website also contains links to Group web pages and other resources. Some regional Groups also list their outings on Meetup sites. See Group News on page 3 for links.



HIKE LOS PADRES

CONDITIONS

Campgrounds trails and roads in Los Padres National Forest can be closed, have restrictions due to habitat protection, repair or weather. Before you go into the backcountry ensure you check conditions with rangers. Numbers to call (805 area unless noted) are:

Los Padres Forest Districts

| | |
|---------------|----------------|
| Headquarters | 865-0416 |
| Ojai-Ventura | 646-4348 |
| Mt Pinos | (661) 245-3731 |
| Santa Barbara | 967-3481 |
| Santa Lucia | 925-9538 |

Other Areas

| | |
|-------------------|----------|
| Santa Monica Mtns | 370-2301 |
| Conejo Park | 381-2737 |
| Simi Valley | 584-4400 |
| Montecito | 969-3514 |

Forest Information

For updated info, maps, news releases, and other goodies:

<http://FS.USDA.gov/LPNF>

Regional Hike Info

Lots of local info on websites that give you varied info on outings, trail profiles, wildflower alerts, work opportunities and much more.

www.sierraclub.org/santabarbara-ventura

www.LPFforest.org

<https://LPFW.org>

www.HikeLosPadres.com

www.SBSierraClub.org

www.SantaBarbaraTrailGuide.com

www.SantaBarbaraHikes.com

<https://SBTrails.org>

www.VenturaCountyTrails.org

<http://Hikes.VenturaCountyStar.com>



Lots of smiling faces of students of our Wilderness Basics Course held in March-April, going on a La Jolla Canyon adventure. Join our free Outings, see links below. (Photo by Phung Tran)

From our Mountains to the Sea where to go?

“Maybe they shouldn’t be called hikes. Maybe that defeats the joy and the purpose. I don’t like either the word [hike] or the thing. People ought to saunter in the mountains - not ‘hike!’”

It’s a beautiful word and originated away back in the Middle Ages. People used to go on pilgrimages to the Holy Land, and when people in the villages asked where they were going, they would reply, ‘A la sainte terre’ (To the Holy Land). And so they became known as ‘sainte-terre-ers’ or saunters.

Given that Sierra Club’s co-founder John Muir was one of history’s greatest saunters, we should not only allow him his grumpiness, but give it profound consideration. And there is no better place than the Ventura - Santa Barbara region to amble in the great outdoors and give anything consideration.

As a wise soul once said, “It’s only in the great open spaces that we find ourselves.”

(Editor’s note: Taken from Visit Ventura website with light editing to include Santa Barbara! Photo:

<https://www.facebook.com/SteveACattanach>

Click to access all hikes

Most of the many free Sierra Club Outings are usually listed here for a two-month period. However, we have found that planning that far ahead may change due to weather, Covid restrictions, closures etc.

So, we ask that you now rely on the many Meetups and websites for the chapter and some others. For our chapter Meetups go to Group News box always on page 3, otherwise, here we go:

The chapter’s website:

<https://www.sierraclub.org/santa-barbara-ventura>

A very special personal website run by Diane Soini which includes our chapter hikes, blogs, connections and a dragonfly on the screen: www.SantaBarbaraHikes.com

Visit Ventura has a lot of information about hikes in the county and the Channel Islands. Go here: <https://visitventuraca.com/biking-hiking/>

Los Padres National Forest is the turf for Los Padres Forest Association and it’s the ‘bible’ for the forest as it shares amazing information gleaned from hikers and others outdoor sites.

Here’s its hiking site (see QR code too) www.HikeLosPadres.com

Ojai Valley Land Conservancy has a handy Trailfinder for our phone. Go to:

www.ovlc.org/trailfinder

Going a bit more afield, the LA Times has published a trail guide for the SoCal region here:

<https://tinyurl.com/NearUsGuide>

Even more! UCSB’s Deborah Williams created a new and expanded website as part of her “Public Lands and Waters” class. Here’s the link:

<https://50greatpubliclanddestinations.org/>

GREETING FRIENDS

Magic of spring is upon us

By Jim Hines

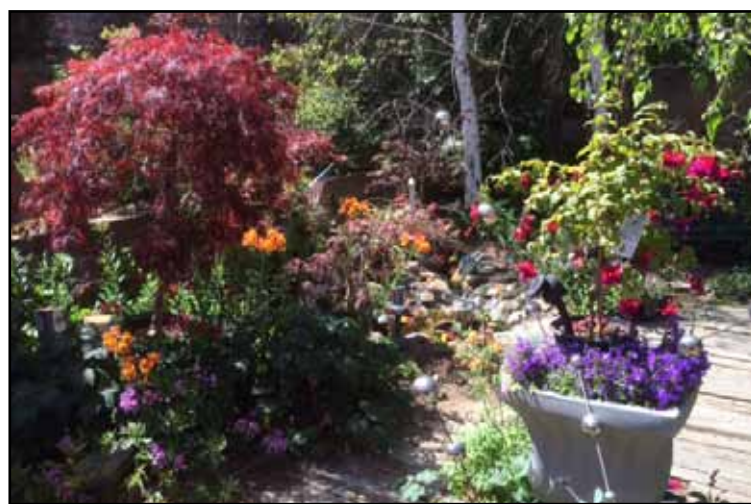
The magic of Spring is upon us. It’s all about renewal, recharging and reconnecting during this marvelous season.

Renewal of our commitment to the natural world, recharging by allowing ourselves to spend quality quiet time out among the natural world, and reconnecting by making sure that our deep connection to all that is wild is a top priority in our lives.

With our wonderful and powerful rains this past season the natural world around us is alive, hills and meadows are a vibrant green, creeks and rivers are flowing, and flowers and shrubs are blooming.

Thrill yourself, stimulate your senses, touch the goodness of life and feel the freshness of the land. Wander the footpaths, walk the roads, bike the parkways and kayak the lakes or in the ocean, this is the season we have been waiting years for, the dryness is behind us, the positive outcome of rain rules this Spring.

Plant a Spring garden, the soil is perfect for it now, grow vegetables and fruits the healthy organic way and fill your yard with the bounty of endless flowers in bloom, flowers in bloom give you a positive start to each day. My yard is in full bloom now, so much color and I am dazzled. Each morning I wake up and see flowers in bloom everywhere, the garden pond is full and all of my 25+ varieties of Japanese Maples are all leafed out with tender



Jim Hines’ garden: “I have found that living a simple life allows me the freedom to be free of so much that causes grief in our society. The gardens around my home are amazing right now and I hope your world is simple, calm and beautiful as well. Live a simple life, the rewards are amazing.”

new foliage. And the Hellebore portion of the yard has new varieties planted in it.

Yes, try something new this season, whether it be a new variety of squash, a new peach tree or a new camellia or rose, allowing newness into your garden is part of the enjoyment of gardening.

And out in nature explore a new trail or visit one of the Channel Islands you have not visited before.

The newness of life this season extends to wildlife, Spring is filled with the newness of birth, baby birds are hatching in their nests, newly born deer fawns are wobbling around

on their new legs and you may come across coyote or fox pups, babies give us hope for the future, may they be nurtured and protected and grow up strong and resourceful.

Share the natural world with a friend. Have a picnic lunch at the beach, walk holding hands with one you love by the lake, birdwatch to see who observes the most bird species and experience the joy of wildflower viewing with those you are close to.

This wonderful season draws out the good in all of us, we marvel, we are astonished, we seek, we care, and we spread that joy into our daily world.
~ for the wild, Jim

Forest opens a bit more

Under the modified closure order through May 9, some areas of the Los Padres National Forest have reopened for public use with the exception of certain trails, roads and campgrounds that require additional repairs.

The Wilderness Areas and backcountry trails are open, but visitors are strongly encouraged to exercise caution as winter storms have altered some trails and will present challenges to hikers.

Before you go, contact the relevant district office on this page, below left.

Los Padres Forest Association has also created a map app that gives specific information on trails it knows about. Go here:

<https://LPfw.org/trails>

You can do your part by letting the Forest Service or Forest Association know if you come across a downed tree or any other obstacle along the trails or roads. Please take a photo of the trail impediment, try to position an object or person in the photo for scale, record the location and share on:

www.hikelospadres.com

INFO@LPForest.org

Trail work needs you!

Heading into 2023, the Los Padres Forest Association (LPFA) work program was going to feature large scale trail projects on quite a few of the more remote trails located deep within the Los Padres backcountry.

Alas, the best laid plans often go awry and due to this year’s substantial storm damage and it’s looking very unlikely that we’ll be able to make it out this season to these more remote locations. Bummer... but those trails aren’t going anywhere, and we’ll get there eventually.

Meanwhile LPFA has pivoted to focus on trails a little closer to home. We’re hoping to host larger scale projects this season on the Manzanita, Sespe, Santa Barbara Canyon, Santa Cruz, Blue Canyon, Alder Creek (Sespe), Tinta and the trails located off the back of Figueroa Mountain.

LPFA’s first larger scale trail project of the season is set for April 5-9 at NIRA working up and down the Manzanita Trail.

Users are encouraged to donate as the work projects are extreme due to the 2023 storms and ongoing. Donate and/or volunteer here:

<https://LPForest.org>

Volunteer Wilderness Rangers provide critical volunteer opportunities on needs that can’t be met by the Forest Service. Annual training is available at:

Volunteer@LPForest.org



Class on wilderness hikes, plants

Santa Barbara Botanic Garden is hosting a class with local trail expert James Wapotich.

The series of four immersive hikes will explore some of the different trails and habitats in our local area. Participants will learn some of the skills and awareness needed to navigate our backcountry trails; learn about the native plants found on our trails; and deepen their connection to the natural world.

The classes are on Saturdays, April 15 - May 5, 9am - 1pm. Each class takes place on one of our local trails and is a mix of hands-on instruction, immersive exercises, and sharing circles that allow for learning on many levels.

Over the course of the series, participants will learn how to orient themselves to the local landscape without the use of a GPS or compass. See how habitats and plant communities are organized on the landscape. Learn about sev-



Little Pine vista, one of many areas trod, hiked and sauntered by James Wapotich, who took the photo.

eral plants commonly found on our trails and some of their edible and medicinal properties.

And through nature connection exercises learn how to see nature as an ally.

For more information go to:

<https://tinyurl.com/TrailPlantLearning>

You can also contact the leader at (805) 729-4250 or: jwapotich@yahoo.com

Do you really love animals?

What Is an Animal Lover?

Editor's note: this is one of a series of "Robert's Big Questions" published by the Montecito Journal. Robert is a hike leader for the Sierra Club and often contributes to the Condor Call. His Big Questions are available here:

<https://www.montecitojournal.net/author/robert-bernstein/>

By Robert Bernstein

Some topics are still taboo to discuss, and this may be one. Are you an 'animal lover'? What does that mean to you? If you say you don't like dogs, people are quick to ask if you like cats. Are those the only choices?

There are 10-30 million species of animals on Earth. When you "love animals" are you thinking about insects? Most animals on Earth are insects. Maybe you are thinking of vertebrates. Do you love snakes? There are many more species of reptile than mammal.

Maybe you just care about warm-blooded birds and mammals? What about rats? Maybe it is just the "cute" animals that you love?

The Endangered Species Act protects all species, fortunately. Even those that are not cute or cud-

dly.

In 2005, the National Park Service began eradication of feral pigs on Santa Cruz Island to prevent extinction of native species. One of my friends astonished me by saying she would rather let a species go extinct than to kill even one animal... even though she is not a vegetarian.

One acquaintance was a vocal vegetarian, but she had a large dog and bought whole chickens at the supermarket to feed her dog.

UCLA geography professor Gregory Okin found that cats and dogs are responsible for 25-30 percent of the environmental impact of meat consumption in the US. Two professors at Victoria University estimate that the ecological footprint of a medium-sized dog is greater than that of an SUV.

Dog walking in wildlife areas causes over one-third reduction in bird diversity and numbers, according to two Australian researchers. Even if the dog is leashed, and on our local trails and beaches most dogs are not even leashed.

I have been forced to give up hiking alone because of too many frightening encounters with unleashed dogs. I can only imagine the terror induced on animals far smaller than me.

A single dog chase can keep snowy plovers from breeding for an entire season, according to the caretakers at Coal Oil Point Reserve. No amount of signs or education of dog owners could stop these chases. These "animal lovers" are only thinking of the "freedom" of their dogs to run loose. It took Audubon organizing a constant presence of volunteers to protect the plovers.

Activists have rallied to stop windmill projects, claiming harm to birds. Properly designed and sited windmills have minimal harm to birds. But domestic cats kill over a billion birds and about ten billion mammals per year in the U.S., according to a 2013 Nature Communications article.

Many animal species only exist because humans raise them. Domestic sheep must be sheared, or they can die. Is it ethically better for pigs and cows to be raised for meat than for them not to exist? I have talked to vegetarians who refuse to have a conversation about raising food animals more humanely. One said this was like asking if the Nazis should have made their death camps more humane. Really?

Factory farming is so cruel and brutal that agribusiness has successfully passed laws forbidding any photos or videos showing these conditions. Yet there is relatively little organizing to change these conditions, compared to the huge concern about how dogs and cats are treated.

"Animal rights" organization PETA opposes any breeding of animals as pets and opposes the concept of "pet." In their ideal world such a relationship would not exist.

So, what is the answer? Sometimes the best answer is to start by asking questions.

What does it mean to "love animals"? Is the concern for the animals or for our own needs? Many people find comfort having a pet. But much of the psychological benefit comes from having something that depends on you. Much of this benefit can come from having a goldfish or even a garden of plants.

Everything we do has an environmental impact. Just as with a household budget, we can make priorities.

Perhaps it is worth considering how much we love the animal in our possession in comparison to the vast universe of animals that are just needing a sustainable habitat and planet to live on? And that maybe the domestic animals we love are having a negative impact on the animals we rarely think about?

EARTH DAY 2023

By John Hankins

Pitched as "The World's Largest Environmental Movement," the official Earth Day is April 22, with the theme of Invest in the Planet.

It is especially close to our region as "the first Earth Day was celebrated on April 22, 1970. The event was organized by Gaylord Nelson, a Senator from Wisconsin. He was inspired to action after witnessing the damage caused by an oil spill in Santa Barbara 1969, according to the official website.

During the '70's, momentum helped create the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, among others.

Besides Nelson, major proponents included his national organizer Denis Hayes and local activists Selma Rubin, attorney Marc McGinnes and Bud Bottoms (founder of Get Oil Out!); Selma and Bud have passed away.

So, Earth Day is particularly close to the heart and soul of the Santa Barbara extended region, and it is notable that the longest running celebration is the SB Community Environmental Council's 2-day event (details below).

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Santa Barbara

April 29 11am – 7pm and April 30, 11am – 6pm

Community Environmental Council's Santa Barbara Earth Day Festival is at Alameda Park, 1400 Santa Barbara St. The festival attracts upwards of 30,000 attendees each year. Enjoy live music, 200+ exhibitors, local food and spirits, a green car show, and a climate summit.

The recipients of its 2023 Environmental Hero Awards will be Nalleli Cobo and Cesar Aguirre, who both work to combat the devastating effects of the fossil fuel industry. That ceremony is Saturday from 2-3pm.

Details on all aspects are here: www.SBEarthDay.org

Santa Ynez

Chumash Earth Day at Kitiyepumu Park, 100 Via Juana Rd., Santa Ynez.

April 15, 10am – 2pm

Santa Ynez Chumash Environmental Office encourages families to come out and engage with other environmental groups with various nature activities. "We wish for everyone to take Earth Day as a time to really appreciate Mother Earth and all that she offers us."



VENTURA COUNTY

Editor's note: Many thanks to David Goldstein for using his list to bolster our list. He is an Environmental Resource Analyst with Ventura County's Public Works Agency. See his weekly column about the environment locally by following him on Facebook or LinkedIn (David Goldstein, Ventura County, Environment) or Twitter (@EyeOnTheEnviron). He can be reached at: david.goldstein@ventura.org

Ventura

April 8, noon to 4pm. Gear Garage sale at Topa Topa Brewing, 4880 Colt St., by the Ventura Land Trust. Used outdoor gear ranges from backpacks to car racks. Details at: www.venturalandtrust.org/events

April 13, 7-9pm about whale and dolphin adventures at the Museum of Ventura County, 100 E Main St. Sponsored by the Ventura Land Trust, free.

April 14, 9-11am Ventura Water Settling Ponds guided by naturalist educators, a Ventura Land Trust event.

April 15, 9-11am at Ventura Land Trust's Harmon Canyon guided by naturalists. Tickets for these two events are at: www.VenturaLandTrust.org

April 16, 11am to 4pm Dozens of Eco-friendly vendors and groups converge for fun and education at Ventura Charter School, 2060 Cameron St. Go to its Facebook for many details, including an EV car display with the owners.

April 21, noon to 1pm, Earth Day tour of the Ventura County Government Center' eco-sites. Register in advance at: <https://tinyurl.com/VCCountyTour>

Ojai

April 20, 3-7pm Farmers' Market and Earth Day features a \$2 voucher to anyone walking, biking or riding the trolley to the event at 414. E. Ojai Ave. Live music, booths and speakers on regenerative farming and more are featured.

Santa Paula

April 22 -23, 11am to 3pm Agricultural Museum, 926 Railroad Ave. celebrates with Native Plant sale and tours, Game booths, plant IDs etc. are featured.

Fillmore

April 22, 10am-1pm, "What's Up in Fillmore" showcasing nonprofits and groups on how the public can get involved in making a difference.

It promotes healthy/Earth-friendly habits & support, along with a chalk (provided) art festival by the Art Commission. Also, a yard sale.

Thousand Oaks

April 15, 9am-1pm, annual Arbor - Earth Day celebration returns to its Community Center Park, 2525 N. Moorpark Rd. Includes electric vehicle display,, educational workshops on drip irrigation installation, caring for landscaping in drought, water-wise ground covers, bicycle safety course and helmet giveaway, bicycle donation/collection, kids activities & bounce house, compost and plant giveaways, raffles, live music, etc. <https://tinyurl.com/TOaksEarborDay>



Santa Cruz Trail remains closed, it's one of many damaged by winter storms, notably a series of atmospheric rivers. You can help the Los Padres Forest Assn. repair these trails by donations of money, time, sweat and blood! Go here for details: <https://lpforest.org>

SIERRA CLUB

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P.O. Box 31241
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From “Estrogen Alley,” Egg McMuffins, helping hands, refreshing drink, night camping atop Nordhoff Peak, hiking there, classroom prep, solid friendships and ridge camping, Wilderness Basics Class students and leaders had a great time in March/April. We’ll do it again next year. Watch this space!



Photos by Phung Tran, Patty Peinado, Heather Nicksay, Frank Wahl, Scott Nelson, Dinh Thai & John Hankins

