

# Condor Call

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



**Sierra Club thanks  
all trail workers**  
See story pg5



© Photo by Cassy Ballwin

**Advocacy ... 'Woke' Wild ... Beat Heat ... Invasives ... Ormond**

**Pg. 1**

**Pg 2**

**Pg. 4**

**Pg. 7**

**Back page**

**JOIN THE CLUB - ONLY \$15 - FREE BAG - SIERRACLUB.ORG**





Earth Day in Santa Barbara was wonderful and full of energy, but we think our Sierra Club booth was the most fun. Folks could 'decommission' three oil rigs by hitting each platform's image. Get all three and the pitcher wins. Here, Tamara Sack, new in town, tosses the bean bag. (Photo by Robert Bernstein)

## Leaders added to Ventura network

The Ventura Network of the Santa Barbara/Ventura Chapter of the Sierra Club is back and stronger than ever.

The Network's new Executive Committee, formed on May 15 via Zoom, includes current leaders along with several new members and experienced environmental mentors.

"The new 2023 Ventura Network executive committee is a very impressive group of experienced environmental leaders, including some newcomers to the Sierra Club bringing fresh perspectives and energy. I'm looking forward to seeing what happens next in Ventura," said Katie Davis, Chair of our Santa Barbara-Ventura Chapter.

The Chapter ExCom later unanimously appointed Julie Hensz as the Chair and Jim Hines as Vice-Chair, along with members Elisabeth Lamar, Nina Danza, Steve Colome, Marie Martin, John Hankins, Joe Connett, and Larry Older.

The meeting included discussions on current issues, actions, and campaigns, such as plans for a booth at the World Ocean Day on June 6th at Harbor Cove Beach, an update on the Cabrillo Bike Path, and the Sierra Club's participation in the West-side Clean Air Coalition.

ra Club's participation in the West-side Clean Air Coalition.

Ventura Network is one of four elements of our chapter. Its purpose is to foster, within its territorial limits, the purposes of the Club and to undertake activities that are consistent with the purposes of the Club.

'Condor' John Hankins, editor of *Condor Call*, will also serve on the ExCom.

"The good work done by the Ventura Network in recent years ranged from stopping offshore LNG,

lobbying for onshore oil to meet modern environmental reviews, EV education via shows, obtaining and fixing bikes for kids, working for clean energy and battery storage, opposing a gas 'upgrade' too near an elementary school, and so much more. The work is ongoing, and this expanded team is up to the task."

If you're feeling disheartened about the state of the environment, the Ventura Network is looking to gather support and take action to protect and enhance the environment.

Don't hesitate to get involved!

See page 2 Group News for links on how to get involved.

~ By Joe Connett, Secretary

## Patagonia reaches a pinnacle

The Environmental Defense Center (EDC) will present its 2023 Environmental Hero award to Patagonia, Inc.

That simple statement about the Ventura-based clothing/outdoor store comes from a long line of firsts about a reluctant business-

man, Yvon Chouinard and his wife Malinda founding the forward-looking company on May 9, 1973.

And yes, the iconic Tin Shack where Yvon crafted new 'clean climbing' gear still stands.

But there's so much more. EDC is honoring Patagonia for its longstanding commitment to responsible business and action to protect nature and biodiversity, support thriving communities and fight the climate crisis.

The EDC's ethos is similar, as it is one of the nation's longest-running nonprofit law firms working to protect California's coast and the earth's climate.

Patagonia CEO Ryan Gellert will accept the award at EDC's annual fundraising event, *Green & Blue: A Coastal Celebration*, June 11-5:30pm at Stow House in Goleta. Get tix and more details here: <https://www.environmentaldefensecenter.org/>

The award presentation will be followed by a conversation between Ryan and Leah Stokes, UCSB professor of political science, and a leading expert in energy, climate, and environmental politics.

"If we are going to save our 'Home Planet' as Patagonia calls it, we are all going to have to work together to make change — as indi-

### EAVESDROPS

"If you want to understand greenwashing, this scam scam is the alpha story."

~ Bill McKibben of 350.org in an essay on how Exxon was fooling the public by claiming algae would "be a meaningful part of the solution" in 2019. But today they've scrapped the idea and stopped boasting.



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.

# Condor Call

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



June - July 2023

## ENERGY RAP

# Renewable advocacy works

By Katie Davis  
Chapter Chair

### 100% Renewable!

Sierra Club advocacy for 100% renewable energy across our region is paying off.

Ventura County and most of its cities have joined the Clean Power Alliance (CPA) which is actively procuring renewable energy for Ventura and Los Angeles. Fillmore is hearing a presentation about joining on June 13.

Santa Barbara County and most of its cities have joined Central Coast Community Energy (3CE) which is on track to reach its goal of 100% renewable energy by 2030. With the recent decision by San Luis Obispo County to join 3CE, it now covers most of five counties from Monterrey to Santa Barbara.

### Giving Back

In addition to accelerating renewable energy above state targets, these publicly owned programs can cost less and/or invest in the local communities.

For instance, PG&E customers enrolled in 3CE have saved 18% on average on billing costs and SCE customers have saved 2% on average. And 3CE has already invested \$4.8 million in Santa Barbara County in the form of rebates for electric cars and school buses and, electric agriculture machinery and buildings.

### Free AC?

3CE isn't the only giver of rebates for those of us wanting to get

off oil and gas.

I decided to test this on myself by installing an electric mini split heat pump in an upstairs bedroom that can provide both air conditioning and heating. It replaces a gas furnace that only provided heating. I am eligible for a \$2000 federal tax credit (which I claim when I file taxes) and \$3000 in rebates from 3CE and the Tech Clean California program.

Another Central Coast energy program called 3C-REN offers ad-

ditional money depending on how much energy my upgrade saves. (These rebates go to the installer who will pass on the savings to me.) All together, I found that adding AC for the increasingly hot summers is virtually free.

Need to upgrade your water heater or furnace? Want to avoid tossing, turning and sweating through the summer heatwaves? Check out these helpful resources to see how

*continued on page 2*

## Climate Hub funded

The Santa Barbara Community Environmental Council closed a Historic "Protect Our Climate Campaign" with \$16.97 Million Raised, exceeding the \$15 Million goal.

The news came after CEC hosted more than 22,000 community members back to Alameda Park for the SB Earth Day Festival at the end of April — the first time since 2019 due to Covid.

A cornerstone of the campaign was the creation of the first-of-its kind Environmental Hub — centrally located on Santa Barbara's State Street. CEC's new Environmental Hub is a 10,000 square-foot state-of-the-art facility designed to be an epicenter for community activism, education, entrepreneurship, media, and art.

A Grand Opening community celebration will take place on Thursday, July 6, at 5:30 p.m. as a part of downtown Santa Barbara's 1st Thursday Art Walk.

In addition, the campaign, which launched in 2021, kick-started CEC's five-year effort to accelerate regional climate solutions through climate justice, regional and state policy, climate resilience, climate smart agriculture, a new Climate Stewards certification pro-

gram, and other programs.

"We are incredibly inspired by our community, which understands the pivotal moment we are in and sees CEC as a beacon of hope for protecting the Central Coast," said CEO Sigrid Wright. "By investing the funds as we've raised them, we've been able to double down with some incredibly bold goals — meaning that we've doubled staff, doubled programming, and expanded our geographic reach."

Over 300 donors pledged to reverse and repair from climate change in San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. Most of the money (\$10 million) will go to the Hub and the rest will be fulfilled in coming decades through long-term legacy gifts, ensuring the future sustainability of the organization.

### COVER PHOTO

Olive from BSA Troop 1121 learns proper sawyer technique and safety practices from USFS volunteer Mark Subbotin along the North Fork Trail, Chumash Wilderness, LPNF. It illustrates that young and old find common ground while working the trails. Read our feature on pg. 5. (Photo courtesy Cassy Baldwin)



Regional Energy is a big deal and is actively procuring renewable energy for Ventura and Los Angeles. Meanwhile, Santa Barbara County and most of its cities have joined Central Coast Community Energy (3CE) which is on track to reach its goal of 100% renewable energy by 2030; see story above. Recently San Luis Obispo County hopes to join it too. (Photo by Condor John at the Ventura Charter School's Earth Day)



## Renewable... continued from page 1

you can save on efficient electric appliances:

<https://switchison.org/>  
<https://cecsb.org/electrify-your-life>

### 2024 Oily Preview

Watch for the oil industry's November ballot battle.

Last year, California passed SB1137 – a historic bill that would end neighborhood oil drilling by creating 3200-ft setbacks between oil infrastructure and homes, schools, and hospitals.

Then the oil industry imme-

diately got to work to try and reverse this legislation. The industry shelled out \$20 million to pay for enough signatures to successfully put the issue on the ballot in November 2024 – effectively stalling the implementation of this health and safety measure.

Sierra Club and our allies are already starting the work to ensure that every California voter knows that the oil industry is doing everything in its power to keep drilling next to people's homes—despite abundant evidence that the practice is making people sick—and we all need to vote to protect setbacks next year.



What's that smell? Call the Gas Company! Sign shown at the Big Oil Resistance Tour April 9 in Ventura at Topa-Topa Brewery. Event was coordinated by Haley Ehlers, director of CFROG. We also got together with the Westside Alliance on March 8 to protest SoCalGas 'greenwashing' of its West Ventura facility, a block from the Boys'-Girls' Club and an elementary school. (Photo by Condor John)

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?

(805) 617-3106  
Jonathan.Ullman@sierraclub.org

SIERRA CLUB  
SANTA BARBARA-VENTURA CHAPTER

## Condor Call

[SierraClub.org/SantaBarbara-Ventura](http://SierraClub.org/SantaBarbara-Ventura) ~ All phone numbers 1-805 area code

EDITOR: 'Condor' John Hankins, 452-2885  
260 Pacos St. Ventura CA 93001 • [John@gnusman.com](mailto:John@gnusman.com)  
ADVERTISING: Contact Editor (above)  
DEADLINES FOR ALL ISSUES:  
Copy Deadline: 20th — Advertising Deadline: 22nd of month preceding publication.

PUBLICATION SCHEDULE:  
February/March, April/May, June/July, Aug/Sept, Oct/Nov, Dec/Jan  
SUBSCRIPTIONS: Free to members  
Non-members, \$15 per year. Contact Editor John Hankins

Photos, news, tips always welcome!

## Sierra Club

[SierraClub.org/santabarbara-ventura](http://SierraClub.org/santabarbara-ventura)  
Post Office Box 31241, Santa Barbara, Ca 93130-1241  
Santa Barbara 617-3106 • Ventura 988-0339  
Change of Address: [address.changes@sierraclub.org](mailto:address.changes@sierraclub.org) or (415) 977-5653

NATIONAL OFFICE & MEMBER SERVICES: (415) 977-5500  
2101 Webster St. Suite 1300, Oakland CA 94612  
WASHINGTON LEGISLATIVE OFFICE: (202) 547-1141  
50 F Street, NWW, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor Washington, D.C., 20001

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
[Jonathan.Ullman@SierraClub.org](mailto:Jonathan.Ullman@SierraClub.org)  
• EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE •

Katie Davis (Chair): 451-4574, [kdavis2468@gmail.com](mailto:kdavis2468@gmail.com)  
Jim Hines (Vice-Chair): 340-9266, [jhcasitas@gmail.com](mailto:jhcasitas@gmail.com)  
Gerry Ching (Secretary): 964-5411, [gching@cox.net](mailto:gching@cox.net)  
Treasurer: 805-617-3106  
Alex Pujo (at large): 962-3578, [alex@pujo.net](mailto:alex@pujo.net)  
David Gold (at-large): 642-7748 x6, [davidgold4@aol.com](mailto:davidgold4@aol.com)  
Rebecca August (Arguello Group Rep): 350-0629, [rebeccaugust@mac.com](mailto:rebeccaugust@mac.com)  
Niki Stokois (Conejo Group Rep): [ConejoGroupHiking@gmail.com](mailto:ConejoGroupHiking@gmail.com)  
Jim Taylor (Santa Barbara Group Rep): (408) 666-7356, [jim@carpedata.com](mailto:jim@carpedata.com)

• GROUP CHAIRS •

Arguello: Rebecca August 350-0629, [rebeccaugust@mac.com](mailto:rebeccaugust@mac.com)  
Conejo: Niki Stokois, [ConejoGroupHiking@gmail.com](mailto:ConejoGroupHiking@gmail.com)  
Santa Barbara: Luz Reyes-Martin, [Luz.ReyesMartin@gmail.com](mailto:Luz.ReyesMartin@gmail.com)  
Ventura Network: Julie Henszey 805-657-2793: [juliehenszey@gmail.com](mailto:juliehenszey@gmail.com)

• CLUB SERVICES •

Forest issues: Jim Hines, 340-9266, [jhcasitas@gmail.com](mailto:jhcasitas@gmail.com)  
Wilderness Basics Course: Sean Coles, [venturacoales@gmail.com](mailto:venturacoales@gmail.com)  
Air Quality: Michael Stubblefield, 216-2630, [motodata@roadrunner.com](mailto:motodata@roadrunner.com)  
Conservation SB: Kate Mullin, [mullin@shelter-vet.com](mailto:mullin@shelter-vet.com)  
Conservation Vta: Jim Hines, 340-9266, [jhcasitas@gmail.com](mailto:jhcasitas@gmail.com)  
Legal: David Gold, 642-7748 x6, [davidgold4@aol.com](mailto:davidgold4@aol.com)  
Outings: Maureen Hernandez, [Moenandez@gmail.com](mailto:Moenandez@gmail.com)  
Political SB: Alex Pujo, 962-3578, [alex@pujo.net](mailto:alex@pujo.net)  
Political Vta: David Gold, 642-7748 x6, [davidgold4@aol.com](mailto:davidgold4@aol.com)  
Transportation: Kent Bullard, 218-6945, [KentBullard@yahoo.com](mailto:KentBullard@yahoo.com)

Typography and production by Dan Fuller



The Big Oil Resistance Tour by the Last Chance Alliance <https://lastchancealliance.org/> stopped in Ventura April 9 and Santa Barbara April 10 before it continued its 7-stop state-wide tour to galvanize CA's Climate Justice Movement to End Oil Drilling. The industry has far out funded the movement, recently in Ventura County over EIRs. While the SB stop featured Jane Fonda, we had these local heroes on the panel. From left: Theo LeQuessne, Center for Biological Diversity; Haley Ehlers, Climate First: Replacing Oil & Gas (CFROG); Molly McCoy, local youth activist; Gladys Limón, Environmental Justice attorney; Tomás Morales Rebecchi, Food & Water Watch, and Cesar Aguirre, Central California Environmental Justice Network. (Photo by Condor John)

## HINES CHRONICLES

# Jim is 'woke' about wildlife

*Editor's note: We continue with the Jim Hines Chronicles, which reflect the emails by our premier lobbyist on the ins and outs of environmental activism and its opponents. This covers the last two months (April May). Jim is our Chapter and Ventura Network vice-chair and a conservation leader who belongs to many wildlife groups.*

### By Jim Hines

April 6: **I had a wonderful time** speaking last night to the 2023 graduation class of our Chapter's Wilderness Basics Course.

It was WBC's 15th year and I have spoken each year to the graduating class. WBC does so much to educate people on the safety and enjoyment of our natural area.

April 21: **Political pushback** from several members of Congress has delayed for a year the designation of the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary until sometime of 2024.

April 30: **When I speak** to various groups around our region the greatest number that elicits passionate interest is when I speak about my Sierra Club campaign to protect wolves. There are no wolves in our chapter region, but the second greatest interest is protecting mountain lions, which we do have.

So, let's adopt the southern California population of mountain lions as the Santa Barbara-Ventura chapter wildlife symbol. Lions penetrate all issues we work on, climate, habitat, development impacts, highway overpasses and more. CA Dept of Fish and Wildlife are working on designating the lions as endangered status, which should come later this year.

May 3: **First black bear** in the Ventura County portion of the Santa Monica Mountains sighted and we need to protect black bears. Our Wildlife Committee is working on getting the state to ban the hunting of black bears and we hope to succeed this summer. Here's the story: <https://tinyurl.com/BB12bearSMM>

May 4: **Good News:** Biden Administration has announced the southern California population of steelhead trout will maintain its status as an endangered species, which we worked to make it happen. But, there is currently a lawsuit by the United Water Conservation District challenging those protections in the Santa Clara River of Ventura county.

May 4: **Political alert:** The BRAVE Coalition (Businesses Representing America's Values and Enterprises)

is focusing on keeping the 3-2 conservative majority on the Ventura County Board of Supervisors and getting voter support for the Oil and Gas Well Regulations Referendum of 2024. That ballot would remove all major restrictions on the oil and gas industry.

May 9: **A first for me,** I was referred to as a "woke environmentalist" while speaking to a group of people today in Ventura about the positive economic benefits of protecting the environment.

May 10: **Well, that didn't go** very well, our efforts to stop the Utah from slaughtering mountain lions failed. Now all it takes to kill mountain lions in Utah is some poison, some leg traps and lots and lots of guns, although you must be at least aged 12 to get a year round licence.



BB-12, a young male black bear was captured and collared in the west portion of the Santa Monica Mountains. (Photo courtesy National Park Service)

But here, we have great plans for protecting lions in our region and thanks to those who contacted me about our Mountain Lions FOREVER! Campaign.

May 11: **Trouble is brewing** for the protection of ocean waters which make up the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary, 3000 miles away in Washington DC. Some House members propose a massive decrease in federal funding for CINMS and others, notably McClintock, Hageman and Boebert.

Next week I will meet with staff of that Subcommittee. Biden Administration is not pushing back hard enough . . . time to speak with his officials.

May 12: **Rough Week But** a positive ending. We were defeated in our work to protect cougars in Utah, to protect marine mammals,

wolves, Lake Casitas from uranium mining, and Rim of the Valley legislation.

I'm tired of being defeated. But I do see so much positive hope too, for we are environmental activists, and we have a passion and fire within us which allows us to move on past our defeats. We will turn defeat into victory.

So, I am going to end this week in the serene beauty of my yard and the seedlings sprouting . . . which gives me hope. And like those seedlings your support for our campaigns will continue to sprout and grow with positive results.

May 15: The land I wandered as a child, the ranch land is so beautiful, vast open space grasslands, oak woodlands, creeks. The land I was born and grew up on I walk today knowing that these lands saw the sweat and toil of enslaved black

and Latin American people.

I have been doing research on my family's history and this is one of the tragic sides to our human history here.

Sierra Club has expressed strong support for black reparations (policy adopted in 2021), though some members have pushed back on that policy. I, as a lifelong Sierra Club member, fully support its adopted policy of reparations .

This all fits into the vast framework of our greater work.

May 16: **Your passion** and commitment to helping protect our environment here in western Ventura County is inspiring, I told the new and returning members of the Ventura Network (see story pg. ?)

While the Sierra Club is a large national organization. The most important part of the Sierra Club is YOU. The four groups of our chapter are grass roots: you help decide

*continued on page 3*



# 'Miracle cars' are not enough

*Editor's note: this is one of a series of "Robert's Big Questions" published by the Montecito Journal and allowed to be reprinted here. Robert is a hike leader for the Sierra Club and often contributes to the Condor Call. His Big Questions are available here: [www.montecitojournal.net/author/robert-bernstein/](http://www.montecitojournal.net/author/robert-bernstein/)*

**By Robert Bernstein**

Soon after I was first elected to the Sierra Club board, a fourth-grade teacher invited me to speak to her class. I came prepared with a list of questions, rather than a speech.

I asked the class to imagine a car that runs on an unlimited source of energy, and to imagine that it puts out no pollution. Call it a Miracle Car. Then I asked them what the environmental impact of such a car would be.

Before reading on, please pause and ask yourself the same question.

Years earlier, I asked my high school physics students this question and they drew a blank. Same for most of my environmentalist friends. But the fourth graders' hands shot up in the air. One boy eagerly offered this answer: "You would still have to cut down the trees and pave everything over for roads."

Yes! Such a Miracle Car would still create most of the impacts of fossil-fueled "Fossil Cars". The biggest impact of private motor vehicles is creating sprawling land use. Which in turn causes forced dependency on cars.

Miracle Cars would also still injure millions of Americans in collisions. One third of the US population does not drive. They would still be stranded by Miracle Cars. In fact, this explains why the fourth graders knew the answer, but the teens and adults did not: For fourth graders, cars are an obstacle: Cars make it dangerous for them to walk or bike to school.

Miracle Cars would still sit in the same traffic jams as Fossil Cars. The average speed of cars in Los Angeles during "congested times" is 9.9mph . . . slower than the average bicyclist. And that does not even account for the time it takes to earn the money to drive. Motorists drive to work, but they also work a lot just to drive.

And that does not count the hidden subsidies for private motor vehicle use that I covered in a previous article. We all pay these costs even if we don't drive.

## 'woke'...

*continued from page 2*

our policies, develop and carry out local campaigns and you inspire others.

May 18: **Designate wilderness areas** at Channel Islands National Park, an idea that I discussed with our Rep. Salud Carbajal's staff.

A wilderness study a few years ago found that lands on 4 of the 5 national park islands qualify for wilderness protection.

The staff is researching ways we can advance that, but we are realistic and will keep sight of it.

May 25: **Working together** we are winning for the lions. Our Sierra Club Mountain Lions Forever! campaign worked closely with Ventura County supervisors Jeff Gorell and Kelly Long and we have secured a position in the County's Transportation Plan to include a much-needed wildlife overpass in the 5-year plan to widen the 101 freeway, Thousand Oaks to Ventura. The overpass will be constructed in the Conejo Grade area, this location is where several radio collared lions have crossed and unfortunately some have been hit and killed.

~ Edited by John Hankins



A 'miracle car' is already in process, the Aptera, with a predicted EPA test-cycle range of up to 1,000 miles or more because of its solar panels on its skin. Meanwhile, writer Bernstein has been seen on a unicycle.

What is to be done? If congestion is the problem, can't we just widen and add more roads? Right now, approximately half of all urban land in the US is already paved over for roads and parking. At what point do we agree that there is no place left worth going to, because it is all paved over for the means to get there?

Canadian song writer Joni Mitchell arrived in Hawaii and was inspired to write the famous line, "They paved paradise and put up a parking lot".

Civilized countries have helped solve this problem by investing in good public transit. And providing safe and pleasant spaces for pedestrians and bicyclists. Traffic congestion is not some mysterious force of nature. It is caused by too many cars.

Singapore began "congestion pricing" in 1975 to charge motorists for the delays they caused other motorists. When London proposed such congestion pricing there were predictions of riots or even revolution. Instead, the 15-pound fee to enter the congestion zone was quietly embraced and found to be successful.

What about electric self-driving cars used as taxis? Yes, this could be part of a solution. Currently, there are eight parking spaces for each car in the US. Self-driving cars could almost eliminate this use of land. They also could travel in tight pods, reducing land needed for roads. But such vehicles do not yet really exist for most real-world situations. And they could also lead to more sprawl, without proper planning and incentives.

Am I telling people they should not buy an electric car? No. They do use less energy and create less local pollution than Fossil Cars. But please don't think buying one

eliminates your transportation environmental impact. On the contrary, most of your environmental impact is still there.

As with most such problems, there are limits to what we can do as individuals. If you can commute on transit or on a bicycle or electric bicycle, that is far better than buying an electric car. Even if you keep your Fossil Car for occasional needs.

But we also really need to think about investing as a country in the infrastructure of the future. That may include some Miracle Cars. But it mostly means investing in good public transit and creating an environment that is friendly for pedestrians and bicyclists.

## Uranium mining real?

**By Jim Hines**

IP3 International is very interested in development of uranium mining sites on America's national public lands, which would include a uranium mine in the Lake Casitas Watershed of the Los Padres National Forest.

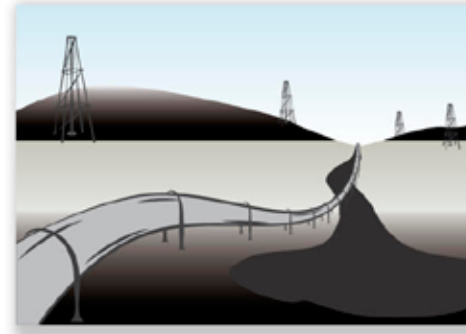
This site has known uranium deposits and was threatened with uranium mining in the 1980s.

The company works to advance the development of nuclear energy for its clients which are mainly in the middle east. Though the focus of IP3 is a massive uranium mine on the north rim of the Grand Canyon, they still attempt through working with friendly members of Congress to mine on smaller, less known uranium deposits sites on your national public lands such as the site above Lake Casitas.

The Lake Casitas site was advanced by the Trump Administration but was abruptly put on hold when President Biden took office.

But in recent discussions with

# No Pipeline No Platforms No Problem



ExxonMobil is attempting to re-open the corroded Plains pipeline that ruptured in 2015, spilling 123,000 gallons of crude oil at Refugio Beach.

Since then, with no access to market, platforms Hondo, Harmony and Heritage have been idled. Trucking the oil up Hwy101 and 166 wasn't approved for obvious reasons.

Re-opening the disastrous pipeline in desperation is foolhardy. It's time to retire the aging platforms.



Read our blog



several congressional staffers, I have learned that several bills are in the hopper with a compromise to protect the North Rim of the Grand Canyon from uranium mining in exchange for approval of several smaller uranium deposit sites around the western U.S.

IP3 and similar companies are now working with a friendly congress (both House and Senate) and are eyeing a change in the White House in 2025 . . . a friendly change which would help advance uranium mining on public lands.



**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](mailto:gching@cox.net)  
~ Chapter website and blog at: [www.SierraClub.org/SantaBarbara-Ventura](http://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](http://www.facebook.com/SierraClubArguelloGroup). ~Volunteers needed; your talents could make a difference. Call 350-0629 or: [RebeccaAugust@mac.com](mailto:RebeccaAugust@mac.com)

### VENTURA NETWORK

~ For board meeting dates, times and location email: [sierraclubventura@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:ConejoGroupHiking@gmail.com).  
Or view the Conejo Group website: [www.sierraclub.org/SantaBarbara-Ventura](http://www.sierraclub.org/SantaBarbara-Ventura)  
[www.sierraclub.org/SantaBarbara-Ventura/outings](http://www.sierraclub.org/SantaBarbara-Ventura/outings)



Patagonia was honored very much because of this ethic.

## Patagonia...

*continued from page 1*

"Patagonia has pushed boundaries to redefine how a business can operate," he said. "Rather than just extracting value from nature and transforming it into wealth, Patagonia is using the wealth it creates to protect the source."

"For the past 50 years, Patagonia has modeled a different version of a for-profit business," said Ryan Gellert, CEO of Patagonia. "We have a lot to be proud of, but we can't get sentimental while also facing the threats of the climate and ecological crisis."

In 1985, Chouinard created 1% for the Planet, and the company has donated 1% of its revenue every year since, donating more than \$140 million to grassroots environmental nonprofits like EDC.

Patagonia has also become di-

rectly involved in issues facing the local environment and communities, including joining EDC and a coalition of environmental and recreation groups in a lawsuit challenging a commercial logging project in Los Padres National Forest that would destroy cultural and natural resources, habitat for endangered wildlife, and some of our communities' treasured recreational areas.

The celebration brings together 500 guests from across the tri-county region to raise funds for the organization to continue its work protecting the region's clean air and water, open space and agricultural lands, marine resources and wildlife, and the climate for generations.

Sierra Club will be there. By the way, our chapter was also an EDC recipient several years ago and we continue to use EDC to help fight for our local environment.



# Climate Watch

## Slash energy costs at home

*Editor's note: We continue to feature specific climate action ideas authored by UCSB lecturer in environmental studies, Deborah Williams. Subject this issue is energy-efficiency at home.*

Thanks to the effective advocacy of Sierra Club members and others, the Inflation Reduction Act contains new, significant tax savings for energy-efficient home improvements. There has never been a better time to insulate, replace windows and doors, and utilize heat pumps.

About 50% of the energy used in an average US household is for heating and cooling. Fortunately, there are many excellent strategies to reduce heating and cooling energy consumption -- from simple and inexpensive options to actions that require more up-front costs, but also save money over time. And now, most of these options benefit from 30% tax credits, subject to certain caps.

### Simple Options

Saving energy and reducing your carbon footprint in your house or apartment, including:

~ Dress for it, the first best option: Wear warmer clothes around the house in the winter and cooler clothes in the summer, modifying for temperature comfort.

~ Clean or replace furnace and air conditioning filters as recommended by the manufacturer and/or home conditions. During smoky periods, this could be monthly. Also, ensure your air vents are not blocked by furniture or artwork.

~ During summer, keep blinds, drapes or shades closed during the

day, blocking the sun's heat. And, in winter, keep blinds, drapes or shades open on south-facing windows to allow warm sunlight and then close them at night to help keep the warmth in.

~ We can also improve energy efficiency and reduce drafts by repairing and/or modifying our existing windows through caulking and/or weatherstripping to fix air leaks. As a bonus, caulking helps seal off access points for termites and ants. Furthermore, energy efficient window treatments such as solar control films, awnings, exterior blinds and overhangs, are also great options.

~ Finally, California has a Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) which provides funding to assist low-income households for heating and/or cooling. LIHEAP has numerous programs and can provide free energy efficient upgrades, go here:

<https://tinyurl.com/EnergyAssistProgram>

### Replacing Windows -Doors

Almost 30% of a home's heating energy is typically lost through windows in the winter; and in the summer, about 76% of the sunlight through a single-pane window enters our homes to become heat. Overall, heat gain and loss through windows represents 25-30% of home cooling and heating energy use. Poorly insulated and installed doors are also energy loss culprits. Actions include using new tax rebates to replace single pane windows, including skylights, with new, more energy efficient options.

In warm areas like ours, look for window coatings that reduce heat

gain.

Energy efficient exterior doors also are eligible for tax rebates, subject to maximum rebate levels.

### Insulation

EPA estimates that homeowners can save an average of 15% on heating & cooling costs by properly sealing and adding insulation to their homes.

According to Energy Star, 90% of US homes are under-insulated and have significant air leaks. There are also tax rebates for insulation materials. Furthermore, [www.Energy.gov](http://www.Energy.gov) offers an excellent general guide to adding insulation, which helps you decide what type of insulation to add, and the costs and payback of doing so.

For do-it-yourselfers (DIY), the Family Handyman has a guide to installing blown-in attic insulation.

### Heat pumps

Heat pumps are energy efficient options for furnaces, air conditioners and water heaters, and have many other benefits, including reducing indoor air pollution. Ground source heat pumps (a/k/a geothermal heat pumps), can reduce energy use by 30-60% over a typical electric furnace.

As depicted in a recent Sierra Club magazine article, heat pumps are especially effective in California:

<https://tinyurl.com/HeatPumpArticle>

Heat pumps and water heater pumps are now eligible for significant tax rebates, as are electric panel and circuit upgrades for new electric equipment.

### Final Notes.

It is a good idea to always choose products (insulation, windows, heat pumps) that have the Energy Star rating.

[www.EnergyStar.gov](http://www.EnergyStar.gov) has lists of products for many categories, including heating and cooling. The Dept of Energy also provides a very helpful Home Improvement Expert Checklist to plan energy-related projects around your home.

Feel inspired and motivated? Let's put the Inflation Reduction Act to work in our lives and reduce our home heating and cooling carbon footprints.

## Heat wave threatens our region

*Editor's note: This event occurred after we went to print, but this important webinar is posted on Community Environmental Council's website in English and Spanish. They will be ready to view on June 9. Go here:*

<https://tinyurl.com/CECbeatHeat>

<https://tinyurl.com/CombateElCalor>

Ventura County is warming faster than any other county in the contiguous U.S., with neighboring Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties not far behind.

Higher temperatures put the health and well-being of the most vulnerable—including agricultural workers, youth, and the elderly—in serious jeopardy. Animals and plants are also affected.

Experts shared how to prepare for upcoming heat waves at a webinar on June 1 hosted by the Community Environmental Council (CEC) which gathered local and national experts who are on the frontlines of developing solutions. They included CEC's Executive Director, Sigrid Wright, and its Director of Climate Resilience, Em Johnson, Fabiola Gomez of CAUSE and Kurt Shickman, Director of the Extreme Heat Initiative for Arsht-Rockefeller Foundation Resilience Center.



Oh yes, we did have Super Blooms this year after the storms, so much so that officials had to work traffic control at places like Figueroa Mountain and Carrizo Plain. Here Granddaughter Charisma Tanaka revels in the outdoors at Poppy Preserve. Just another reason why we fight so hard for the environment. (Photo by Suzanne Tanaka)

## 'Wishtoyo' is a bridge

*Editor's note: "Wishtoyo" is the Chumash word for "rainbow" - as such, Wishtoyo serves as a "rainbow bridge" linking Chumash and First Nations culture, history and lifeways to pressing issues of natural and cultural resource protection. Below is a short summary of its work locally and a link:*

<https://wishtoyo.networkforgood.com/>

In the mid-2000s, Wishtoyo advocated and litigated for the banning of lead ammunition for hunting in California, to protect the endangered species, one of the biggest threats that the condor faces.

Since that time, we have pursued dozens of CEQA, Clean Water Act, and Endangered Species Act cases in the Utom (Santa Clara River) watershed to protect sensitive wildlife and habitats that support the restoration of the condor

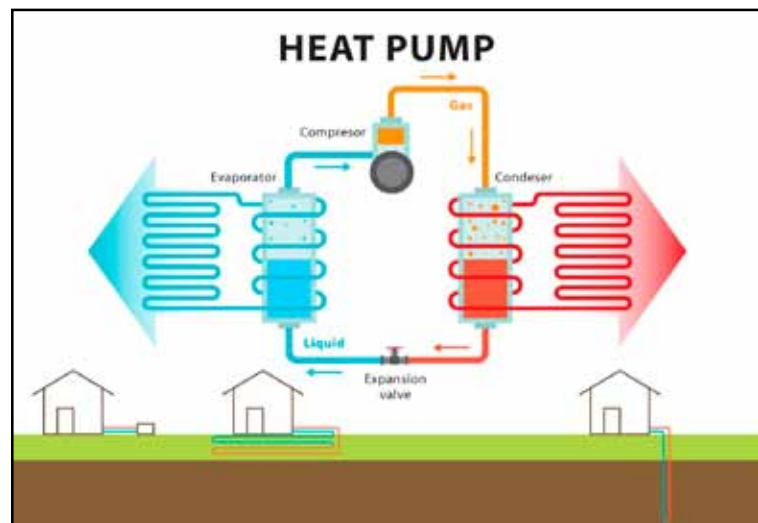
population.

Along with a consortium of other advocacy groups, Wishtoyo successfully advocates against irresponsible oil industry projects, like the Exxon Trucking project and Plains Valve Upgrade project that could have had substantial negative impacts on Condor habitat, see article here:

<https://tinyurl.com/SBoilHistory>

Wishtoyo also advocates for better forest management and conservation decisions in the Los Padres National Forest. The Forest Service has recently proposed at least three ecologically detrimental projects under the guise of "fuel reduction" and "fire management" that would clear-cut old growth chaparral and coniferous forests that make up thousands of acres of critical Condor habitat and foraging acreage.

~ By Tevin Schmitt, Watershed Scientist



## Visitors from the sea



**What are they?** Debbie Kort wondered while patrolling the sand at Hendry's Beach in late May. They are Velella velella, "a cosmopolitan free-floating hydrozoan that lives on the surface of the open ocean, moving with its sail." Common names include by-the-wind sailor and purple sail. She was blessed, as they left soon after.





SIERRA CLUB'S

# Tribute to Trail workers

By John Hankins

The quiet peace and thrill of sauntering along our forest and local trails with a nice, solid tread with perhaps flowers along the way, tree canopy overhead, a meandering creek below and magnificent views is well known by thousands of hikers, often led by the Sierra Club on any given day.

Let's give profound thanks to the professional and volunteer trail crews who make that happen, sometimes at their own peril. The best way to give thanks is to donate to trail crews and/or lend a hand (see adjacent box).

Teen-aged scouts are doing it and gnarly veterans like Trail Crew leaders Mike and Jenn Smith. Mike's been doing it for 20 years since he was a scout and "it's the love of the backcountry and my sense of stewardship that keeps me involved," adding that he trained five pack goats to carry equipment to remote areas.

But the earth moves and since the January storms their work on such trails has been like the Myth of Sisyphus eternally pushing a rock up a mountain. Crew found trees toppled, falling rock, holed-out paths that threaten safety, and that meandering creek became mean, washing away campsites and roads. It forced the Forest Service to close portions of the forest for months, citing severe risks, and even now portions are impassable or unreachable.

"We are talking about damage that will be in the millions, perhaps even in the tens of millions," said Andrew Madsen, Los Padres Forest spokesman told the press.

Trail crews numbering in the hundreds were called to action by the Los Padres Forest officials, notably its non-profit partner Los Padres Forest Association (LPFA). Others in and outside the forest pitched in, groups like For-

estWatch, Montecito Trails Foundation, Sundowners, the CREW, Channel Islands Restoration, Ventura Land Trust, Ojai Valley Land Conservancy, Sage Trail Alliance, Runners for Public Lands, city of Santa Barbara, scout troops and 'unofficial' heroes like Mike Gourley's Get It Done motley crew. There are many others.

The atmospheric river storms and snow ravaging Santa Barbara and Ventura counties slammed the trails and camps, but as soon as it was safe, eager volunteers came to help wherever they could. Or as Gourley said, "we give them Gator Aid and beer and they'll do almost anything."

They are there now as you read this, still working on the devastation that Bryan Conant, Executive Director of LPFA, said was so 'gnarly' he's never seen it on this scale. "It would be like a massive fire throughout the whole forest."

Ironically, the lovely snow that covered our hills was responsible for downing some trees and trampling the chaparral. Conant said LPFA worked for months behind Figueroa Mountain funded by grants, but the March snow event "is making us rework it over again."

The LPFA is the official non-profit partner for the Forest Service whose budget has been whittled down over the years. The LPFA helps coordinate volunteer projects across the Los Padres Forest. Its volunteers work to keep trails open, report and assess forest conditions and provide public education on how to safely use the forest. Its headquarters are the Visitors' Center at Wheeler Gorge above Ojai.

A special shout-out to scout troops. Backcountry author and teacher Craig Carey calls out his troops where they are needed. His Troop 111 ("There can only be one 111") has been "constantly vol-

unteering at Ventura Land Trust's Harmon Canyon and all over the Los Padres Forest and Pt. Mugu State Park these past few months."

Some of my own long-time go-to places are no longer there or severely damaged, notably San Ysidro Trail in Montecito and the swimming hole and trails of the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy and VLT's Harmon Canyon.

"Trail damage at the Ventura River Preserve is substantial," OVLC's Brendan Taylor told *Condor Call*, noting that one of my summer favorites, the natural swimming hole along the Ventura River, "has been filled in with sediment and river rock," and the trail to it "ends in a dangerous 10-foot drop."

Dan Hulst of Ventura Land Trust's Harmon Canyon said it was staff and volunteers who were able to open five miles of single-track trails, but the upper fire road portion needs heavy equipment to bring it back to use, hopefully partnering with SoCal Edison which can't access their lines without the road.

The VLT volunteers "commit time, energy and effort for no pay, and we very much appreciate it," Hulst said, especially since Harmon was visited by 100,000 aficionados during the last year.

Good news though from Ashlee Mayfield of Montecito Trails Foundation (MTF), asserting "we will bring San Ysidro Trail back." The front portion is passable, but not yet the route to Camino Cielo Road. With over 90 miles of trails through Montecito, Summerland and Carpinteria, Mayfield said "there's always a trail for you," maintained every Tuesday by volunteers or when needed.

"Storms are the re-wilding of nature," she mused, and others urged the public to be patient as the Trail Crews rally to bring back solid and safe trails everywhere.

Let us applaud and appreciate all these individuals and crews and take another step to donate your time and/or money.

Because, as we know, the earth moves.



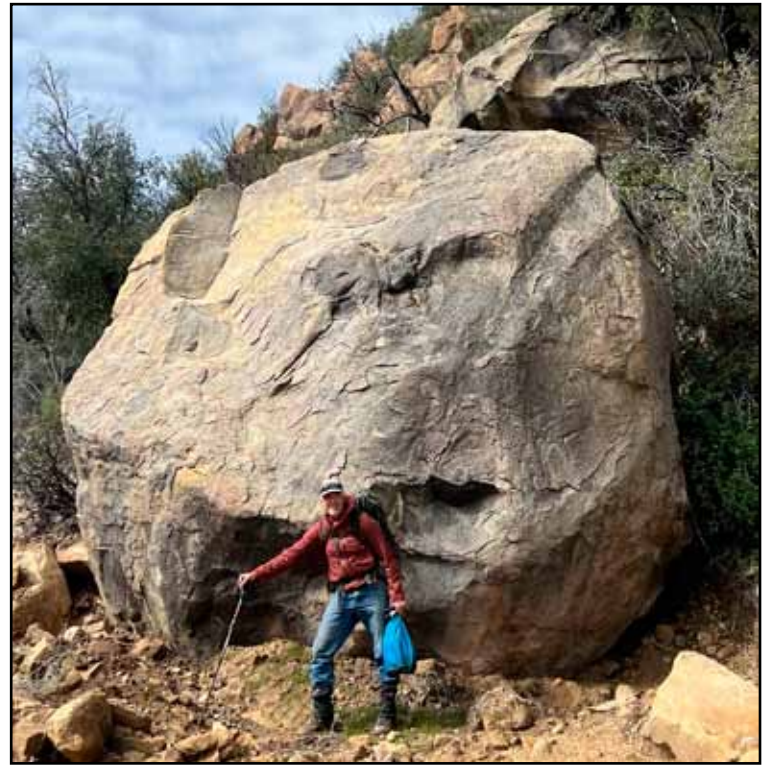
Veterans (Ojai Sundowners) and scout teenagers at Danielson Ranch both have made strides in bringing back our trails. Taking a well-needed break, they pose between trail work, the Sundowners on Horn Canyon Trail (Photo LPNF) and the scouts at Danielson Ranch, Santa Monica Mountains during Trail Days (Photo by Craig Carey)



OVLC volunteers, still repairing its land with smiles. (Photo by OVLC)



LPFA volunteers clearing trails and using saws. (Photo by Mimes)



Trail work may just be like the Myth of Sisyphus pushing a boulder up a hill over and over, but that was never the point. This behemoth boulder was stuck on the fire road from Matilija Tailhead to Murieta Divide after the January Storms. Shown is Mike Gourley, head of the Get It Done trail crew.

## HOW TO TRAIL

"The best part is the people you work with; it becomes a community." – Bryan Conant LPFA executive director. LPFA is the forest's official non-profit partner. A panorama for info:

<https://lpforest.org/>

What's Up and What's Open?

See the scope of the damage with photos here and the update link:

<https://tinyurl.com/StormDamageLPNF>

Latest info LPNF:

<https://tinyurl.com/ForestUpdates2023>

Visit Hike Los Padres for shared information on trails, camps and location, including your own. Take a picture and note locations. Together we can better track conditions and figure out what sections, trails and/or locations are safe to use and which need maintenance.

<https://lpforest.org/trails/>

### Watch Out

ForestWatch - Volunteers of all ages are the backbone of our organization. It's our way of giving something back to the places we love, while getting our hands dirty and directly improving wildlife habitat and recreation areas in our local backcountry.

More than 900 volunteers are involved with ForestWatch, and our strength in numbers produces big results.

<https://lpfv.org/get-involved/volunteer/>

### Other Trail Friends

Maintaining, repairing and adding to trails doesn't just happen. The best way is to donate your time and/or money so we can 'Get It Done' and you can Get Out (credit to Mike Gourley). Here's a short list, if you know of others in our chapter region, email:

[john@gnusman.com](mailto:john@gnusman.com)

Channel Islands Restoration: <https://cirweb.org>

CREW: [www.crewojai.org](http://www.crewojai.org)

Get It Done: [Mikebike45plus@yahoo.com](mailto:Mikebike45plus@yahoo.com)

Montecito Trails Foundation: [www.montecitotrailsfoundation.org](http://www.montecitotrailsfoundation.org)

Ojai Valley Land Conservancy: <https://ovlc.org>

Runners for Public Lands: <https://runnersforpubliclands.org/>

Sage Trail Alliance: <https://sagetrail.org>

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

Ventura Land Trust: <https://www.venturalandtrust.org/>



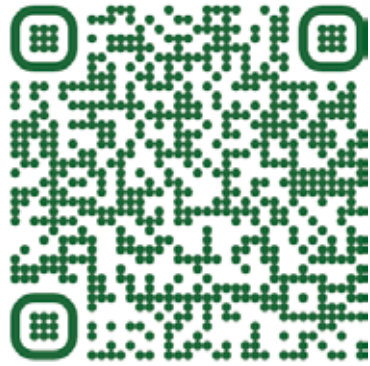
Ventura Land Trust staff and volunteers assessing a creek crossing at the popular Harmon Canyon. (Photo courtesy of VLT)





Panorama above Goleta by Robert Bernstein

UPDATES: [www.sierraclub.org/santa-barbara-ventura](http://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](http://www.sierraclub.org/santabarbara-ventura)
- [www.LPForest.org](http://www.LPForest.org)
- [www.LPFW.org](http://www.LPFW.org)
- [www.HikeLosPadres.com](http://www.HikeLosPadres.com)
- [www.SBSierraClub.org](http://www.SBSierraClub.org)
- [www.SantaBarbaraTrailGuide.com](http://www.SantaBarbaraTrailGuide.com)
- [www.SantaBarbaraHikes.com](http://www.SantaBarbaraHikes.com)
- [www.SBTrails.org](http://www.SBTrails.org)
- [www.VenturaCountyTrails.org](http://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](http://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](http://www.HikeLosPadres.com)

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

[www.ovlc.org/trailfinder](http://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/>

**Groups publish Cuyama guide**

Los Padres ForestWatch and Cuyama Buckhorn have co-created a 56-page Guide to the Outdoors in Cuyama Valley.

From condor sightings to

springtime wildflower blooms, and sustainable wine tastings to scenic trails for hiking or cycling, this is the only comprehensive guide to outdoor activities in the Cuyama

Valley—a remote and picturesque region straddling Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Ventura, and Kern counties.

Designed by the Cuyama Buckhorn, it features trails, hiking tips, scenic drives, and other nearby destinations. It also includes safety tips, how to recreate responsibly, what gear to bring, and information about the area’s ecosystems, wildlife, Chumash culture, and resources to help plan your trip.

Popular destinations in the Guide include various trails and backroads in Los Padres National Forest and Carrizo Plain National Monument, as well as local waterfalls, pine-studded mountains, wine tasting, and the best spots for viewing wildlife and wildflowers.

For each trail or point of interest, the Guide includes trailhead coordinates and a link to look up the location on a smartphone, difficulty rating, detailed directions, and more. Many of the trailheads in the region do not have signs, making this guide essential to navigate the area.

This guide is available in paper or digital format for \$20. If you select paper, the booklet will be mailed to you. If you select digital, you will be prompted to download the file after checkout, and a download link via email. The zip file you receive will have several file formats. Get it here: <https://tinyurl.com/CuyamaGuide>



Message in the Bottle: Cash and awards await your artistic vision. Shown is “Plastic bottle Santa Cruz” by artist Mariah Reading. (Photo courtesy of Wildling)

**Water theme contest**

Attention all artists, here’s a chance to gain cash prizes and showcase your art with the theme: *California National Parks: Stories of Water.*

Hosted by the Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, this third juried exhibition will be a showcase of fine art inspired by the nine National Parks located within the state of California. See Wildling’s website: <https://wildlingmuseum.org/>

The goal is to bring awareness to the wealth of national parks found in our state as well as the various forms of water that can be found in them, or evidence of a lack of water. Lakes, waterfalls, dew, rain and fog are just some of the ways water makes its mark throughout these parks. And the impacts of a lack of water are equally important, as

persistent drought remains a critical issue, and will be an important discussion thread throughout the exhibition.

Artists are invited to submit works for consideration through July 10. Cash prizes for first, second and third place will be awarded at the opening reception held Sunday, Sept. 24, 2023, 3 – 5pm.

The exhibition will be on view from Sept. 23, 2023, to Feb. 19, 2024 in the Wildling Museum’s first-floor gallery.

The exhibition will be juried by Nathan Vonk, owner of Sullivan Goss, an American Gallery in Santa Barbara.

For full submission guidelines, download the prospectus here: <https://tinyurl.com/ArtWaterParks-Details>

**EVENTS**

June 4: **Ojai Wild**, the 15<sup>th</sup> 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: <http://OjaiWild.org>

June 8: **Synthetic Seas** with Dr. Andrea Huvard, enlightening us about her studies of the accumulation of microfibers in marine sediments, invertebrates, and fish. Part of the Ventura Land Trust’s speaker series, this one at the Museum of Ventura County 100 E. Main St, Ventura, from 7-8:30pm, RSVP here: [www.venturalandtrust.org/microfibers](http://www.venturalandtrust.org/microfibers)

June 10: **World Ocean Day** co-hosted by the Merito Foundation with Paso Pacifico and Hokuola Outrigger Canoe Association with presence by the Ventura Sierra Club Network. Event is from 11am to 5pm at Harbor Cove Beach (across from Island Packers) to learn how to care for our blue planet and the outstanding work done by the participants. It features keynote speaker, Chris Mobley, Superintendent of Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary, after a Chumash blessing by Julie Tumamait; great live music, a stage, marine-themed trivia, beach games, a silent auction, fishing lessons for children, touch tanks, watershed models, etc.

June 10 **Cowboy Cookout** for free: An experience and volunteer opportunity in the Los Padres National Forest alongside environmental educators, volunteers, and the Channel Islands Restoration community. Learn more and sign up here: [www.cirweb.org/cowboy-cookout](http://www.cirweb.org/cowboy-cookout)

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>

June 17: **Cowboy Cookout**, second opportunity, see June 10 for details.

July 4: **Electric Vehicle** show downtown Ventura sponsored by the Sierra Club and EV Advocates of Ventura County, 10am – 4pm. This is the annual Push-Pull parade with booths. For more details and signups: <https://tinyurl.com/VtaJuly4Event>

July 6: **Grand Opening** community celebration of Community Environmental Council’s Environmental Hub at 5:30pm. as a part of downtown Santa Barbara’s First Thursday Art Walk. Details at: <http://cecsb.org/>



## SIGHTINGS

## Fish, farms and fighting back

By John Hankins

Our weather has calmed down a bit, but it can't stop our enjoyment of the outdoors and lobbying to save and conserve it. So many good things are happening, mixed in with battles over eco-issues. 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 on page 6-7. We encourage all to go outside on your own or via our free hikes with leaders via MeetUp and internet lists.

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

[www.sierraclub.org/donate/1000](http://www.sierraclub.org/donate/1000)

May 27: **EV Curious**, an introduction sponsored by local EV owners, notably our Chapter's Transportation Chair Kent Bullard in Newbury Park, at Chalice Unitarian Fellowship. EV Advocates of Ventura County sponsored the event with a panel.

May 23: **"Fight Back, No Drilling Where We're Living"** action Zoom meeting by Sierra Club's *Setbacks Referendum Action Team*. It cites the industry shelling out \$20 million to overturn SB1137 which requires 3,000-foot setbacks from neighborhoods. It sends the issue to a ballot vote in November 2024.

May 19: **Ventura Land Trust's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** celebration that went from a small group of activists to a conservancy over 20 years. It first acquired 100 acres along the Ventura River and now has over 4,000 acres of conservation land, Harmon Canyon and Mariano Rancho, notably above city of Ventura. Sierra Club has been a strong supporter of the work of the Ventura Land Trust and members have served as trustees and on the Advisory Council.

May 13: **They're Animals!** All in a day's work:

~ **Rattlesnake bites hiker** along Romero Canyon Trail; Montecito firefighters and SB County Search & Rescue responded and airlifted the injured via helicopter. Be hyper vigilant! Learn snake safety here: [www.wikihow.com/Avoid-a-Rattlesnake-Attack](http://www.wikihow.com/Avoid-a-Rattlesnake-Attack)

~ **Bears here too:** During the rescue a brown bruin was spotted on a nearby trail. Montecito Fire Department warns "bear sightings have been increasingly frequent in our community in recent weeks."

~ **Meanwhile,** Montecito Fire responded to a grey fox kit tangled in a soccer net off School House Rd. It was freed and reunited with its family.

May 9: **30,000 people +** expressed their support for the proposed Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary during public comment periods. On this day, Rep. Salud Carbajal (CA-24), U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein and Alex Padilla, and a group of 12 other CA Reps urged the U.S. De-

partment of Commerce to prioritize completing the process for the proposed Sanctuary off the central coast of California. Go here to support and learn more:

<https://chumashsanctuary.org/>

May 6: **Sierra Club** launches a new Community Advocates program to support teams of volunteers to harness the federal funding of the Inflation Reduction Act at state and local levels, especially in the communities most impacted by climate and environmental injustices.

May 3: **Judge orders** an environmental review over the county's controversial plan to create parking at the trailhead of the Hot Springs Trail along East Mountain Drive.

May 3: **Furious eco-groups** filed suit asserting the California Public Utilities Commission acted illegally when it slashed compensation payments for power generated by solar panels. If the lawsuit fails and reduced incentives remain in place, it could mean more large solar farms and lengthy transmission lines — and higher profits for the utility companies building them.

May 2: **Microplastic pollution** is found on our streets, in our creeks and ocean, the water we drink, the food we eat, and the air we breathe. Well, the city of Santa Barbara got a \$1.26 million research grant to trap that kind of pollution from stormwater runoff. UCSB is involved as is San Francisco.

April 27: **Climate Champions** Hillary Hauser (Heal the Ocean co-founder) and Dr. Leah Stokes (UCSB professor) were honored by the Association for Women in Communications. "This year's honorees are powerful women leading the way in changing how we view and respond to the climate crisis through their bold storytelling . . . Inspiring hope rather than despair."

April 26: **No to Pipeline** being retrofitted with safety valves on a 3-2 vote of the SB County Planning Commission.

April 20: **Vital River: The Virtually**

*Unknown Santa Clara River* was offered at Oxnard College with a program and round table connections, hosted by Prof. Jim Danza. The pitch was: "Learn how Ventura County's unknown river supports nearly everything on the Oxnard Plain and how you can help decide the river's future...and your own."

April 14: **Conservation center** announced on the Cal State University – Channel Islands campus by the Santa Barbara Zoo. "It's game-changing because it enables us to scale up what we are doing in terms of direct conservation interventions on behalf of species recovery," said Estelle Sandhaus, the zoo's director of conservation and science.

April 6: **Farm Out!** About 150 acres of prime farmland near the City of Lompoc will be protected from development following a successful campaign by the SB Environmental Defense Center, and its client Santa Barbara County Action Network (SB-CAN), and local agricultural partners.

April 5: **RIP Whales – Fish:** Signs on 'gravestones' during a protest at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The issue was a notice to identify 19 sites nationally (eight in the SB Channel) to allow for seafood farming. NOAA believes it can be done responsibly; however, our Chapter Chair Katie Davis said, "The pollution surrounding fish farm sites such as these can create dead zones where there isn't enough oxygen in the water to support even basic marine life. These pens can entangle migrating marine mammals . . . and pose a massive risk to native fish populations."

April 3: **Forest and Fire:** A new report (see link below) asserts: "A central finding of high-severity fire recently exceeding its historical rates was not supported by evidence." This relates to the Forest Service's plans for the "Ecological Restoration Project," the Pine Mountain Project, and similar proposals in the Los Padres Forest.

[www.mdpi.com/2571-6255/6/4/146](http://www.mdpi.com/2571-6255/6/4/146)



Invaded! Rapidly developing invasive shortpod mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*) shown overtaking native seedlings (*Lupinus bicolor*), California primrose (*Eulobus californicus*), California sunflower (*Encelia californica*), and deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*) Photo courtesy of the author.

## Cadence of diversity

*Editor's note: Laura Pavliscak is Conservation Director of Ventura Land Trust. She is a field biologist, specializing in ecological research, restoration, and mitigation.*

By Laura Pavliscak

What an extraordinary winter! Looking in any direction here in our coastal refuge, emerald slopes capture the eye and lift the spirit. Even in urban backyards, well above average rainfall this 'water year' (Oct. 2022 to Sept. 2023) has boosted life beyond our usual spring unfurling in unexpected ways.

Our Mediterranean climate (warm, dry summers and cool, wet winters) drives an exceptional array of species diversity and ecological processes. We marvel as the tawny blur of dry season dormant vegetation on our hillsides transforms after winter rains into a vibrant wonderland of color, texture, and fragrance.

Our native species have evolved over millennia to often endure eight months of the year with no precipitation, and sometimes only a fraction of average rainfall during drought. For instance, our coastal sage scrub shrub species manage by dropping leaves to preserve resources of earth's botanical diversity.

This beautiful cadence of seasonal growth, species diversity, and community composition is made more dynamic by natural disturbances like intermittent fires that prompt a successive wave of complexity and interactions among species.

Although invasive ecology isn't generally a kitchen table issue, it should be.

Native species aren't the only organisms benefiting from this abundant rainfall. Livestock grazing, high frequency fires, agriculture, and urban development have created unique conditions for introducing, distributing, and encouraging the dominance of introduced plants. They are often from other parts of the world with a Mediterranean climate—highly adapted to our unique resource conditions but without natural population checks.

Several species of non-native mustards, thistles, and annual grasses are some of our most prolific invasive species, often able to grow faster, earlier, and denser than native species and thereby excluding native populations (see photo).

When this happens, it isn't just native plants that are affected. As the

foundation for the ecological system, plants provide the scaffold for all the other interacting webs of life.

When their populations are impacted, native wildlife are affected too. Successful life cycles of invertebrates, the basis of the food chain and pivotal conductors in ecology's orchestra, are often very closely associated with specific native plant species. Invasive dominated areas provide poor habitat to sustain their populations.

Reptiles, amphibians, birds, and mammals are also negatively impacted by the rippling effects from invasive plants.

Fire frequency and intensity is magnified in invasive dominated landscapes. Effects from heavy precipitation are amplified when shallowly rooted invasive plants cannot hold soil on steep slopes or embankments in riverine floodwaters, and while non-native honeybees are utilized as a managed commercial pollination resource in our food systems, native pollinators including bees, butterflies, flies, bats, and birds provide crucial pollination services for crops worldwide, with an estimated \$3 billion of US agriculture reliant on native bees alone.

Without intact native plant communities to support these vital pollinators, our very food system is at risk.

So, while we are all in awe at the extraordinary processes at play in our wildlands, let's take special notice of the amazing diversity, beauty, and ecological services native plants provide, and support them by building our awareness of and active engagement with invasive species.

Correctly identified invasive plants in your neck of the shrublands can be managed, and every effort contributes to stemming the tide of their impacts (check out the excellent online resources of the California Invasive Plant Council: <https://www.cal-ipc.org/>)

Support your local land trusts that are working towards effective conservation management of wildland preserves, stewarding a future for our diverse and complex native systems to flourish in abundant times and endure through scarce ones.

Together we can ensure a diverse and productive future for the extraordinary wildlands in our backyard.

## Walkabout at a secret garden

Join Ojai author-naturalist Lanny Kaufer for a Summer Solstice Walkabout at Taft Gardens and Nature Preserve on Saturday, June 24, from 9am to noon.

"Walkabout" is an Australian term for a temporary return to traditional Aboriginal life, taken especially between periods of work or residence in modern society and usually involving a period of travel through the bush.

That is what Kaufer has planned for the participants in observance of the summer solstice. They will take a break from modern life for 3 hours to

experience Nature as their ancestors did.

A project of the nonprofit Conservation Endowment Fund, Taft Gardens and Nature Preserve was described for years as one of Ojai's best-kept secrets. Not anymore! This botanical gem was featured last year in an L. A. Times article on "The 16 Most Beautiful and Inviting Public Gardens in Southern California" and recently included in the Redbook Magazine list of "The 12 Most Beautiful Botanical Gardens in the United States." See photos and the Times

story here:

<https://tinyurl.com/TaftGarden>

As he does on his monthly Natural History walks at the Taft Ranch, Kaufer will lead the group in identifying and discussing useful plants and observing birds and animal signs in the context of the local ecology. His intention is to create a space for people to connect with the natural world by learning the language of Nature.

To register for the event, email or visit:

[www.TaftGardens.org](http://www.TaftGardens.org)  
[taftgardensvisitors@gmail.com](mailto:taftgardensvisitors@gmail.com)



Covid stopped Earth Days for 3 years, but above, Ventura Charter School attracted booths, Jane Fonda urged visitors in Santa Barbara to resist fossil fuels and (below) Katie and Gordie staffed the Sierra Club's booth. (Photos by Condor John, Robert Bernstein and Jim Taylor)





# SIERRA CLUB

SANTA BARBARA-VENTURA CHAPTER  
P.O. Box 31241  
Santa Barbara, CA 93130-1241

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U.S. Postage PAID  
Santa Barbara, CA  
Permit No. 9

## Ormond Beach gets partners & plans

By Christina Zubko

There was overwhelming support for a new Ormond Beach Land Management Proposal during a town hall meeting April 24.

While the plan is not yet final, there were many positive actions, and some concerns were not yet fully addressed.

The city of Oxnard hosted the meeting to inform the public about a proposal to have US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) become the land manager for the area of the Ormond Beach complex that is currently considered for the Ormond Beach Restoration and Access Plan (OBRAP). See details here:

<https://tinyurl.com/Ormond-BeachPlan>

If accepted by USFWS, they would make the area a wildlife refuge.

In the meantime, the CA Coastal Commission on May 12 approved a permit that would allow The Nature Conservancy to begin removing invasive species,

which was another win for Ormond Beach.

There was still concern about encampments around Ormond Beach and Ventura Audubon member Joan Tharp shared her questions about not including the property currently owned by the Ormond Beach Generating Station -- that is soon to be demolished -- in their discussions. She emphasized that critically endangered species do not know property boundaries.

The partners noted these comments and reminded the community that some of these concerns were beyond the scope of the evening's agenda. Oxnard City Manager Alex Nguyen also emphasized that the proposal is just that and much must happen before this proposal comes to fruition.

Nearly 100 people attended the meeting in person and virtually and based on the public comments, support for the proposal is overwhelming. Members from



The public overwhelmingly supported a new beach plan in front of an Oxnard panel; shown are city manager Alex Nguyen, Peter Dixon of the Santa Clara River and Coast Restoration, and Project Manager Anne Jansen. (Photo contributed)

the Sierra Club, Saviers Road Design Club, Ventura Audubon Society, Ventura Surfrider, CAUSE, Coastal Keepers, Earth Alert!, Friends of Ormond Beach, and the city of Port Hueneme representatives all spoke favorably about the proposal.

Currently, three partners are stewards of the area: city of Oxnard, The Nature Conservancy, and State Coastal Conservancy. These three partners, however, do not act as land managers but instead are the lead agencies tasked with finding one. After careful consideration, the three partners finally found a potential land manager in USFWS.

Notable community members addressed the town hall: Anne Jensen, Oxnard city manager Alex Nguyen and Peter Dixon, Restoration Project Manager for The Nature Conservancy. A representative from Ventura County (District 5) attended and reporters for the VC Star and VC Reporter were also present.

Friends of Ormond Beach thank everyone for their support and believe advocates are making a difference. They also ask all Or-

mond Beach enthusiasts to stay tuned and to keep reading *Condor Call* for the latest developments around Ormond Beach.

*Editor's note: Christina Zubko is Co-Founder of Friends of Ormond Beach. Follow them on Instagram and Facebook. Any opinions expressed in this article belong solely to the writer. Reach the Friends of Ormond at:*

[saveormondbeach2019@gmail.com](mailto:saveormondbeach2019@gmail.com)

### EAVESDROPS

**"Public lands need our support now. Submit a public comment today and help put conservation back in the conversation..."**

~ Pitch by Patagonia Action Works (and supported by Sierra Club) asserting, "For nearly 40 years, the Bureau of Land Management has prioritized resource extraction over conservation, recreation and wildlife." GOP is fighting the change, so send comments here:

<https://tinyurl.com/BLMbattle>



Ormond Great Blue Heron is part of the diversity of Ormond Beach, which now has a better chance for restoration (Photo by Joan Tharp)