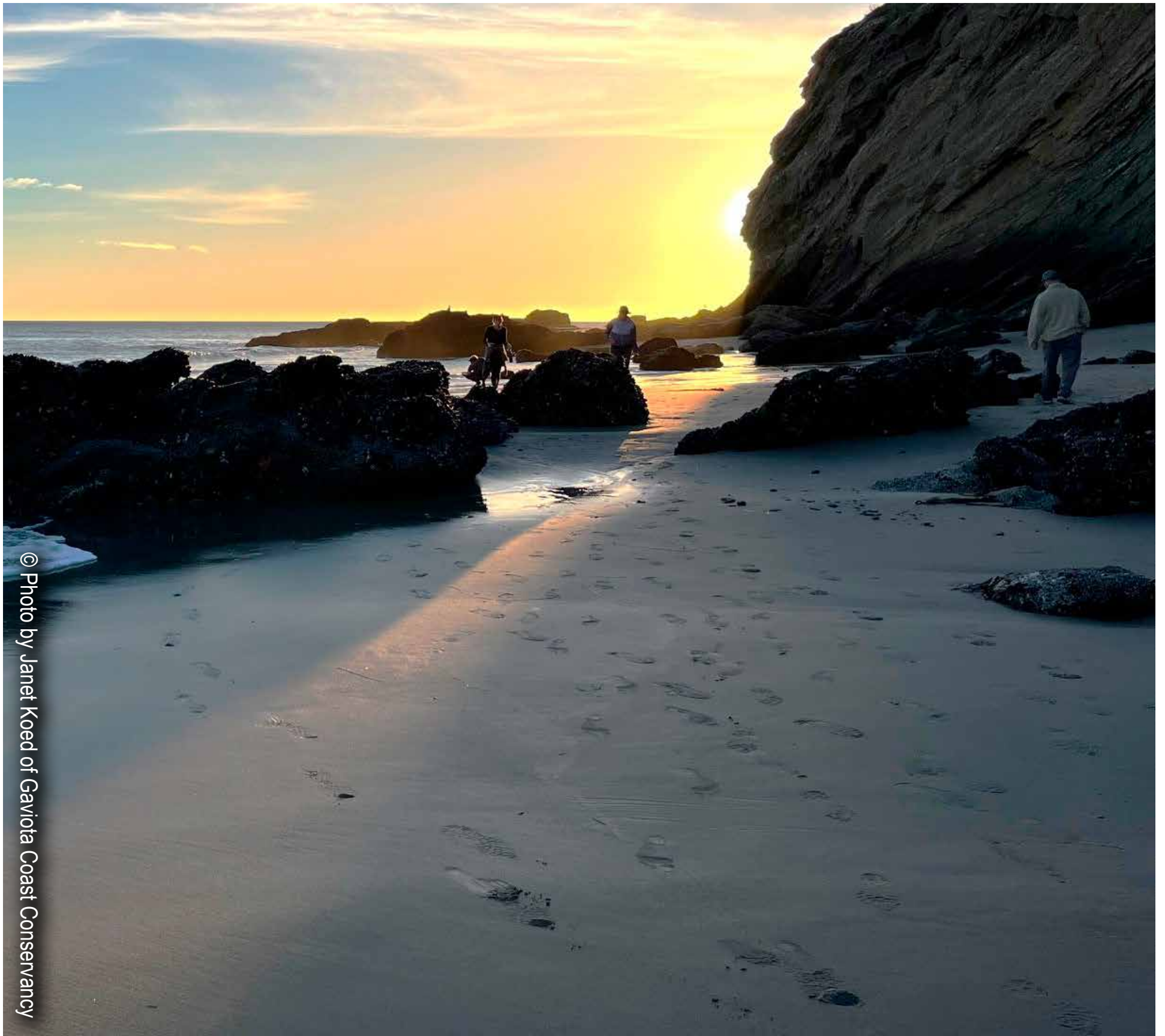
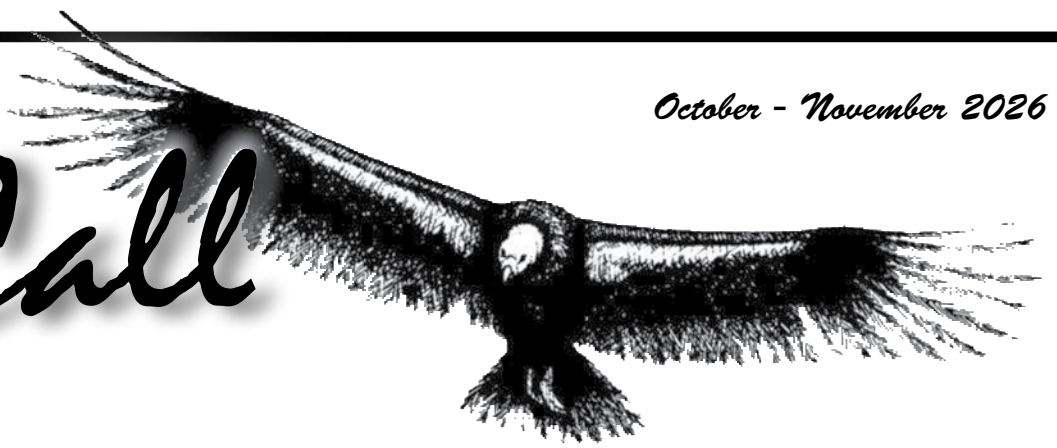


Vol. 26, No. 5 of 6

October - November 2026

Condor Call

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



© Photo by Janet Koed of Gaviota Coast Conservancy

Coastlines ... Forest fix ... Dispatch ... Surprises ... Renewal

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Speakers at the Santa Barbara Hands across the Sands event. (Photo by Irene Cooke)

Coastal Act in jeopardy

By Janet Bridgers

Editor's note: The author is Co-Founder and President of Earth Alert, where you can find her movie about Ormond Beach and much more. Her theme here is "California Celebrates Fifty Years of Coastal Protection As Trump Tries to Unravel It."
www.earthalert.org

As I celebrated my 70th birthday, I realized that 50 years is not a long time. And yet, it's certainly long enough to see the effects of legislation.

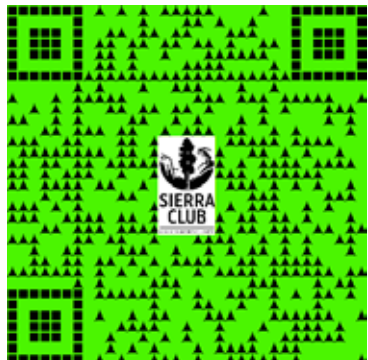
FRONT COVER

Our local portion of the 1200-mile California Coastal Trail on the Gaviota coast in Santa Barbara County. But getting through the private Hollister Ranch means getting your feet wet! The trail connects beaches, coastal communities, state parks, wilderness areas, and major cities across California and is not yet finished. (Photo by Janet Koed of Gaviota Coast Conservancy)

This September, California marked the 50th anniversary of the Coastal Act, the country's strongest land-use legislation. While the act has not totally prohibited development in the narrow Coastal Zone, it has none-the-less protected the 1100-mile California coast from over-development, ensuring access, views, near-shore water quality and habitats.

Through enforcement by the California Coastal Commission, the popular act has effectively deterred would-be developers of private coastal enclaves, high-rise hotels, and utilities proposing major industrial use along the coast.

Consequently, despite its popularity, the commission has had to fight numerous attempts to cut it off



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.

at the knees.

Now Trump has asked NOAA to review California's adherence to the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA), the federal legislation passed by bipartisan support and signed by President Nixon in 1972.

The feds are probing whether California has complied with the CZMA through the Coastal Commission's enforcement activities, alleging it has interfered with economic development. The CZMA requires review once every 10 years and California's adherence was reviewed recently, in 2024 under the Biden Administration. It passed.

The state therefore challenges NOAA's right to pursue this again so soon and will take the matter to court. There, it will play out as a precedent-setting case for all 34 states affected by the CZMA.

Still, one must wonder at the timing of what is happening now. If the Administration's reason is to increase offshore oil production, it is a largely symbolic move because the California coast does not produce "sweet light crude." It produces asphalt-grade oil which, while useful for paving roads, requires so much refining that it could hardly be expected to reduce the cost of gasoline.

In testing the strength of the CZMA, does Washington figure that no one remembers the 1969 Santa Barbara oil blowout? To this day, major media still spread images of oil-soaked birds and blackened beaches whenever there's an oil spill off the California coast. Those images were seared into the brains of California's still-numerous baby boomers.

Also, the Refugio oil spill occurred on May 19, 2015 due to a corroded pipeline spilling over 142,800 gallons on beaches, contaminating one of the most biologically diverse areas of the West Coast.

Though Trump cannot exact revenge on the leadership that navigated the 1972 passage of Proposition 20—the ballot initiative that was reauthorized four years later as the Coastal Act—he would perversely extract it from their grandchildren.

This is the generation that has inherited the right to access the beach and who will now have to do battle to preserve it. Trump's actions via NOAA challenge the

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Condor Call

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Our hands take a stand

Hands Across the Sand: A Resounding "No" to Offshore Oil

By Anahita Banerjee

Decrying federal attempts to open the state's coastline to dirty, irresponsible drilling, over 300 people joined *Hands Across the Sand* at Santa Barbara's West Beach Sept. 26.

But they also celebrated the 50th anniversary of the California Coastal Act.

Similar *Hands Across the Sand* events took place in nine other communities along the coast — from Mendocino to San Diego.

The day brought together several local organizations, including Sierra Club, Environmental Defense Center, Fearless Grandmothers, Indivisible Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper, 805 Action, Community Environmental Council, Surfrider Foundation, 350 Santa Barbara, CLUE Santa Barbara, Women's March, Get Oil Out!, Unidos 805, League of Women Voters, Last Chance Alliance, and Sea League.

Against the sparkling backdrop of the Pacific Ocean, speakers took the stage in Santa Barbara to mark the occasion. Gesturing to the colorful row of booths, Sierra Club's Emily Engel urged the crowd to engage with participating organizations and extend their impact beyond *Hands Across the Sand*.

Toni Cordero of the Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation reflected on a collective duty to protect all that is at risk from continued drilling operations, including livelihoods, recreation, marine life, and the ocean's integrity. She highlighted state and federal environmental progress in response to the devastating 1969 Santa Barbara

oil spill as evidence of local movements' power.

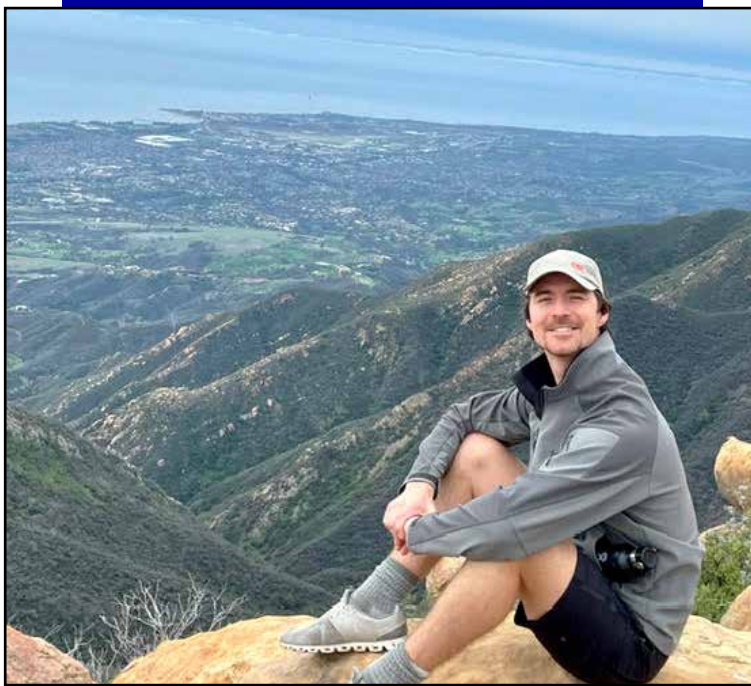
In addition to the tangible harms of offshore oil, Environmental Defense Center's Linda Krop encouraged attendees to "stand up for the rule of law", denouncing the Trump administration's flagrant disrespect for local and state regulation in its backing of Sable Offshore.

Since May 2025, the company has operated the pipeline that caused the 2015 Refugio oil spill; Krop and other supporting organizations have fought Sable in court ever since.

Coastal Commissioner Meagan Harmon highlighted another federal battle over the authority of California's Coastal Commission, which has upheld the Coastal Act's

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MEET OUR NEW DIRECTOR



In his own words

Editor's note: Let's all welcome Bruce Haase, the new executive director of our Santa Barbara-Ventura chapter of the Sierra Club, the most enduring and influential grassroots environmental organization in the United States.

Hello Sierra Club Santa Barbara - Ventura members, supporters, and volunteers!

My name is Bruce Haase, and I am humbled, honored, and excited to be named as your new Chapter Director.

My love for the outdoors began by exploring the creek beds along Rock Creek Park in the suburbs of Washington D.C., and through weekend hiking trips to the Appalachian Mountains. Following university, I joined the Peace Corps and served in southwest Uganda, where I worked to develop and deploy carbon-efficient cookstoves to schools and refugee camps in the region. My years in Uganda distilled within me the importance and power of grassroots community environmental activism.

After my Peace Corps service, I returned to the Washington D.C. area where I worked for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for nearly ten years. My work focused on financial and strategic planning, where I had a front-row seat to implement major environmental legislation, including the Inflation Reduction Act and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

During that time, I completed an MA in International

Affairs with a focus on global energy and environmental policy from George Washington University. Together, these experiences gave me a holistic understanding of sustainability, environmental policy, and environmental justice from local to international levels.

After my EPA office closed in 2025, my wife Lauren and I moved to the Santa Barbara-Ventura chapter area four years ago because we wanted to immerse ourselves in a community that embraces and inspires environmental activism and progress, and I truly believe there is no better place in the country to be a vanguard for this movement.

I worked for a year with the County of Santa Barbara Executive Office before I had the opportunity to return to the environmental field with the Sierra Club.

Outside of work, you can find me exploring the craggy mountains and coastline of our amazing Chapter, traveling, trying to perfect my pizza-baking skills, and spending time with family and dear friends.

I am thrilled to be working with such an amazing array of local advocates to defend and protect the nature we all hold dear, to advance policies and positions locally, statewide, and nationally that build a more resilient and sustainable future, and to connect together outdoors to remind us all of the stewardship title we maintain.

Data center’s ‘a 4-letter’ word!

The Ventura County Fairgrounds Board ended talks with Global Stack USA on Sept. 15 over a proposal that community members feared could lead to a large-scale data center, citing environmental and long-term impact concerns.

Or as one of the executives characterized it: “A *data center* has become a four-letter word,” and insisted it was not. Rather, it would include a parking garage, vertiport, and a self-contained data-processing unit with a low profile (a compact data-processing unit the size of a shipping container).

It proposes building “emergency resilience systems” that would include compact data-processing units with parking and helipad features—at up to 70 California fairgrounds.

A video showed a vertiport as a future concept for a take-off and landing site for electrically powered aircraft that take off and land vertically.

Whatever you call it, and however a team of two from Global Stack insisted it’s not a data center, the public attending the fairgrounds virtually unanimously said “not here” with a wave of cheers when the board voted 5-3 not to continue talks.

Global Stack USA is proposing to build “emergency-resilience systems” at up to 70 California fairgrounds, but not in Ventura!

“We’re not looking to build a data center,” insisted Global Stack president Nick Kovacevich, adding, “Mission No. 1 is keeping these (fairgrounds) as community assets for generations to come.”

“Thank you for coming, but we don’t want or need the environmental nightmare you are selling,” said Adriene Coulter to Global Stack leaders.

Dan Kang, CEO of Global Stack, simply said: “It’s no skin off my nose if you reject it.”

And airport director Dan Long quipped: “The last thing we need is a helicopter pad at the corner next to the 101, the beach and downtown.” So there!

~ By John Hankins

SB Hands..

continued from page 1

promise to protect the coastline from privatization and development since its conception half a century ago.

As the Trump administration attacks the agency for obstructing its oil-drenched reimagining of California’s waters, Harmon stressed that the commitment to preserving the coast is being tested now more than ever.

Student activist Ethan Maday of 805 Action confronted these challenges with heart, criticizing the federal administration’s prioritization of “private profit over public benefit”. He envisioned an oil-free future for him and his fellow students, calling disinvestment in the fossil fuels of the past “just common sense”.

Before directing attendees to join hands in a massive line along the shore, Maday called for Gov. Gavin Newsom to sign Gregg Hart’s Assembly Bill 1448, which would close loopholes in existing offshore regulation exploited by companies like Sable.

“The feds have poked the bear of California,” Maday asserted; to the approving roar of the crowd confirmed.



A full gathering of 200 residents filled the Ventura Fairgrounds room to hear Global Stack executives claim it’s not a “data center” but a “community asset,” drawing laughter. The fair board decided not to continue discussions. Details above. (Photo by John Hankins)

Gut Roadless Rule? Not so fast!

Editor’s note: The National Sierra Club has announced it will challenge the federal government’s move to remove the Roadless Rule and said it will “fight this reckless proposal every step of the way,” including through legal action. Here’s why:

The public lands we love most (wild, untouched, and free) often exist because of something called the Roadless Rule.

Created in 2001 after overwhelming public support, this policy has protected millions of acres of our national forests from road building and logging. And today, its purpose is more important than ever.

The government has been flooded with thousands of comments asking them to leave the rule alone, but comments will be cut off on Oct. 6. In any case, if the deadline has passed,

you could still make your voice heard.

The fight doesn’t stop on Oct 6; go to Sierra Club’s link and find out more details:

<https://act.sierraclub.org/actions>

The government’s preferred method is to submit electronically to the Federal rulemaking Portal: Regulations.gov. Use docket FS-2025-0001 or RIN 0596-AD66.

By mail: Director, Ecosystem Management Coordination, 201 14th Street SW, Mailstop 1108, Washington, DC 20250-1124.

<https://www.regulations.gov/>

The reality: more roads mean more human activity ... and more human-caused fires. Repealing the Roadless Rule won’t solve the crisis; it could make it worse.

These remote, rugged landscapes weren’t logged before for a reason.

And losing their protection could mean sacrificing clean drinking water, wildlife habitat, and outdoor recreation, while costing taxpayers.

Locally (see link below), it could remove long-standing protections for 635,000 acres in Los Padres National Forest — the largest amount of roadless land in any California national forest.

USDA’s decision also has nothing to do with public access. More than 371,000 miles of roads already crisscross national forests, and many existing roads are closed because of a nearly \$8.6 billion road and bridge maintenance backlog.

Visit the link below to explore an interactive map of roadless areas in Los Padres National Forest, find information about upcoming town halls, and submit a public comment:

<https://forestwatch.org/roadless>

No more oil..

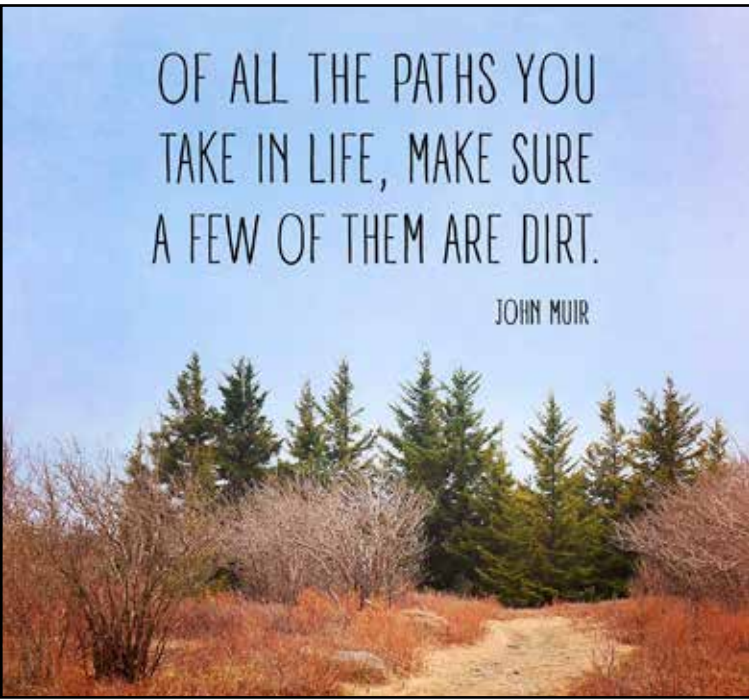
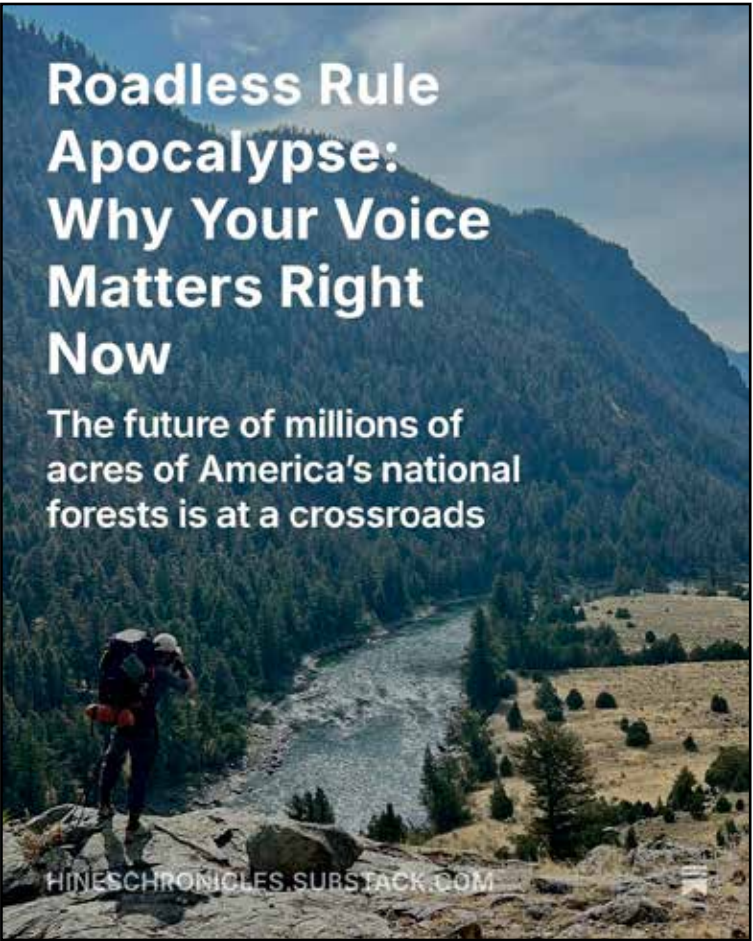
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climate-focused organizations, advocating for local climate action plans, engaging in the public process, supporting clean energy and electrification, and voting for climate leadership.

Local elections often receive less attention than national contests, yet they may have a greater impact on climate policy in your community. Research candidates’ positions on climate, energy, land use, and environmental protection, and support leaders willing to take decisive action (see Sierra Club endorsements at:

Also, climate action becomes more achievable when it is discussed as a community issue rather than a partisan one. Talk with neighbors, colleagues, faith groups, business leaders, and civic organizations about local climate challenges and opportunities.

The County’s vote is about more than drilling permits or land-use regulations. It is about recognizing that communities have both responsibility and the ability to shape their future.



Fix our forests

Editor’s note: The writer of this LA Times letter is the Sierra Club’s deputy legislative director of forests and public lands. The Act passed the House last October (2025), but has yet to be taken up by the Senate. <https://tinyurl.com/SClubRoadless-Link>

The debate over the Fix Our Forests Act is not a choice between managing our forests and leaving them alone.

The Sierra Club supports active, science-based forest management, including prescribed fire, ecological restoration, and carefully designed thinning where appropriate.

We also recognize that climate change is making wildfires more destructive and that we urgently need to do more to protect communities and ecosystems.

Our concern with the Fix Our Forests Act is not that it promotes active management; it is that the legislation would weaken environmental review and public oversight for projects that can cover thousands of acres. Those safeguards help ensure forest management is based on sound science and ecological needs rather

than simply accelerating commercial logging, particularly under an administration that has clearly decided to prioritize timber harvest over all other values for our national forests.

We can move faster to restore forests, use prescribed fire, and reduce wildfire risks without treating environmental protections as an obstacle.

The question isn’t whether we manage our forests. It’s how we manage them — and whether we do it responsibly.

~Anna Medema, Washington, D.C.

Read our blog



If you are a member or on our email list, you will be getting our stories and pictures via Condor Call Currents.



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Hikes and Gatherings on Meetup





Condor Call Newsletter Chapter Website



For emails and phone numbers for specific areas and Sierra Club officials and issues, see the page 2 Directory.



An impressive discovery

Editors' note: The Climate Dispatch is an official Sierra Club California podcast, produced by the Sierra Club Angeles Chapter in partnership with Stranded Astronaut Productions. The podcast covers climate issues across California.

It is an impressive discovery, as each episode focuses on a particular concern impacting the state, counties, and cities, such as plastic waste, housing, climate migration, and more.

The dispatch takes a deep dive into these topics with insights and testimony from experts, and highlights local experiences, stories, wins, and struggles. It also features music from different artists to close out each episode.

Check it out; you'll be glad you did and become smarter about the issues too. Learn more at <https://tinyurl.com/Eco-Podcasts>

Here are some of the podcasts ready for viewing during this year, 2026:

~ **Save the Bees**, focusing on "Biodiversity of a healthy planet" along with California's 30X30 initiative, which the Sierra Club supports.

~ **Little Metropolis on the Prairie**, about development across acres of farmland and areas that include rare ecosystems. It asks the question, "Who gets to build the future, and who pays the price when it's 'built in the dark?'"

~ **California's Water Gamble**: Info about the Delta Tunnel

project, where it stands today, and what could be lost if it moves forward. It also highlights ongoing restoration efforts and explores why investing in local water solutions is essential to building a more resilient water future.

~ **One Too Many Lights**: This episode features a middle school teacher who leads community stargazing gatherings to discuss the importance of connecting to the night sky. As light pollution from human development increases, we learn what we could lose: with every light that shines at night, the starry sky above becomes more eclipsed.

~ **Can Cities be Ecosystems?** Featuring the California Center for Sustainable Communities at UCLA, which is digging into the hidden logic behind how cities are built and why so many of them feel fundamentally disconnected from the land they occupy. It explores how the rise of fossil fuel-powered development has shaped urban environments that prioritize speed, scale, and profit over resilience and community.

It also asks what it means to design cities that sustain us and what systems need to change to make housing truly affordable. Urban metabolism is a powerful framework that reimagines cities as ecosystems with flows of energy, water, materials, and life.

~ **California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)**, one of the

state's most influential environmental laws, is now being badgered by the Trump Administration in a state vs federal battle.

While CEQA has delivered real environmental wins, critics say a small number of bad actors have also weaponized the law to stall or block essential projects, from housing to transit to even a daycare.

So how exactly does CEQA work, who does it serve to protect, and who can be harmed in the process?

"See qua and ye shall find!"

~ **Confronting John Muir's Great Outdoors**. While US National Parks are often a symbol of people's connection to nature, many would be surprised to learn how the Parks' history and that of the wider conservation movement have often had their origins in racism, discrimination, and land grabbing from Indigenous groups.

Today, the barriers to accessing public green spaces echo a history of exclusion for BIPOC communities, which is an acronym for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

Featuring Sierra Club President Allison Chin, this program examines what it means to enjoy the outdoors, surveys the historical legacy of our National Parks, and explores how the Sierra Club is helping steer a path toward equity.

~ Compiled by John Hankins

SIGHTINGS

ENDORSEMENTS NOV 3
<https://tinyurl.com/AllEndorsements>

Feds vs States

By John Hankins

Check out the stories and links below on what happened in the last two months.

Join us by getting involved and having fun too.

We offer activities, activism and free hikes via our MeetUp. See Group News box on page 3 for contacts and links or enjoy our free hikes on page 5.

If you'd like to be an official hike leader, contact our hike teacher Gerry Ching at: gching@cox.net

Donations help a lot, and the money stays here at home doing good stuff. Donate here: www.sierraclub.org/donate/1000

Oct 4: **Sierra Club, in step** with the EV Advocates group, hosted its annual EV showcase on the main lawn at Ventura Harbor Village. The popular event features about 60 local EV owners presenting their autos, trucks, and boat electric vehicles and answering direct questions from the visitors. It was particularly enlightening amid higher gas and diesel prices.

Sept 26: "**Arroyo Hondo Preserve, Saved to Inspire Future Generations**" was the headline in *Noozhawk*. The preserve turned 25 this month, thanks to the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County, which purchased the 782-acre area but has since expanded it to 910 acres between Refugio State Beach and Gaviota State Park. Check out details: <https://www.sblandtrust.org/>

Sept 26: **National Public Lands Day**: This year's theme, *Caring for Our Shared America*, is an inspiring call to action for a milestone year. Check it out and learn more here: <https://www.neefusa.org/>

Sept 14: **California Sues** over Trump Administration's attempt to weaken the Endangered Species Act. Environmentalists warn it could affect species in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties, such as southern steelhead trout, California condors, Southern rubber boa, least tern, and red-legged frogs. Ventura County has 58 listed species, and Santa Barbara County has 53. It's a nationwide issue, and CA Attorney General Rob Bonta announced he is co-leading a coalition of 21 attorneys general in filing two lawsuits against the Trump administration for this and

other revisions to the ESA.

Aug. 25: **CA Environmental Voters** (<https://envirovoters.org/>) exists to build the political power to solve the climate crisis, advance justice, and create a roadmap for global action. To protect our air, land, water, and future, we organize voters, elect and train candidates, and hold lawmakers accountable for bold policy change. Our vision is to solve the climate crisis, build resilient, connected, healthy communities, and create a democracy and economy that is just and sustainable for all.

This case cannot be heard soon enough. So far this year, the states of Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming have opened gray wolf killing seasons, and by the three states' own counts, over 2000 wolves have been shot and killed this wolf hunting season. *Note: formerly known as California League of Conservation Voters*

Aug 20: Ormond Beach documentary by Earth First is linked from the homepage of www.EarthAlert.org

Aug 10: **State vs. Feds** occurred in Santa Monica to evaluate how well California is implementing its federally approved coastal management program under the Coastal Zone Management Act. Sierra Club was there to protest the Trump Administration for trying to cripple or delete the Act. Catch the transcript here: <https://tinyurl.com/NOAAcoastHearing>

Ellen's comment: key topics including spaceport infrastructure, offshore oil production, pipeline maintenance, desalination projects and undersea cables. <https://coast.noaa.gov/data/czm/media/california-cmp-transcript-8-10.pdf>

A copy of the most recent performance report may be obtained upon request by contacting NOAA at cзма.california-evaluation@noaa.gov.

Aug 5: **Feds vs State**: California Natural Resources Secretary Wade Crowfoot on Zoom for "Defending California's Coast from Federal Threats," a one-hour webinar providing context on the federal review and other challenges facing California's coastal protections. Key topics included spaceport infrastructure, offshore oil production, pipeline maintenance, desalination projects and undersea cables.

Photos of Hands across the sands



The photo at left is Santa Barbara's version of the Hands Across the Sands protest on Saturday, Sept.26, while below it is Ventura's version, which brought a flock of birds murmuring above the people, perhaps a sign that wildlife also doesn't want any ocean oil facilities. Sierra Club, Community Environmental Council, CFROG, Chumash, and other local partners responded with a coordinated statewide event at a time when the federal government is waging unprecedented threats against our California coast. (Photos contributed)

EAVESDROPS

Thanks y'all! It's a wonderful recognition of operating The Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens for 100 years in the Santa Barbara region, promoting native plants for the health and well-being of people and the planet."

~ Keith Nevison, Director of Horticulture and Operations for the Garden and a local Sierra Club officer, commenting about Senate President Monique Limón celebrating it as her Non-Profit of the Year.



No Kings
Oct. 17

For more than a year, millions of people have come together to reject the idea that power belongs to kings, billionaires, or politicians who believe they are above the people and the law.

No Kings rallies are happening all over our Santa Barbara-Ventura region on Saturday, Oct. 17, at 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

What's different is taking the next step, turning people power into voter power through Indivisible and similar groups. Vote Early is not purely a protest. Instead, on Saturday, Oct. 17th, it's a day of nonpartisan voter participation: we are bringing our community together to plan to vote early and ensure every eligible voter understands their options and can make their voice heard.

A core principle behind all No Kings events is a commitment to nonviolent action. We expect all participants to seek to de-escalate any potential confrontation with those who disagree with our values and to act lawfully at these events.

Santa Barbara: Rally at Alameda Park, 1400 Santa Barbara St. from noon to 2 pm. on Oct. 17. Followed by a March down Anacapa Street to De La Guerra Plaza and a Party to the Polls at the ballot drop box at Santa Barbara City Hall. Celebrate our Right To Vote!

Ventura County: Rally along Victoria Avenue in front of the Government Center, 800 S Victoria Ave. 10 am to 1 pm.

Many similar rallies are happening in smaller cities from Santa Barbara's North County to Ventura's South County. To tap into details, visit:

<https://www.mobilize.us/>
<https://indivisible.org/>

A tale of two Botanic Gardens



Santa Barbara garden on the lowlands

In 2026, the Garden marks 100 years as the first botanic garden in the United States dedicated exclusively to native plants.

Since its founding in 1926, the Garden has remained rooted in one guiding principle: that native plants are essential for the health and well-being of both people and the planet.

From its visionary beginnings and collaborations with world-renowned scientists and designers to its rebirth following the 1964 Coyote Fire and the 2009 Jesusita Fire, the Garden's century-long story reflects resilience, innovation, and a deep connection to community. To access the Garden's Centennial Celebration's hub visit:

<https://sbbotanicgarden.org/100years/>

"As we begin our second century, the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden stands not only as one of our community's treasured assets, but as a statewide leader demonstrating how native plants are essential to sustaining life on this planet," said Steve Windhager, Ph.D., executive director of Santa Barbara Botanic Garden.

It will mark the debut of the Centennial Route, a new curated route that will guide visitors through Santa Barbara Botanic Garden's most historic sites — including the Blaksley Boulder, a remnant of the Pleistocene debris flows, named in honor of founding supporter Anna Dorinda Blaksley Bliss, the redwood grove planted in 1930, and the LEED-certified Pritzlaff Conservation Center, built in 2016 after the Jesusita Fire burned 80% of the grounds — offering a deeper understanding of the people and stories that shaped the Garden over the past 100 years.

In honor of the incredible work that has shaped Santa Barbara Botanic Garden over the past 100 years, the community is invited to go behind the scenes through a new video series. These short films offer rare access to the critical scientific work that happens at the Garden out of public view — from species conservation in the Seed Bank, to the documentation of California's flora in the Herbarium, to cutting-edge research in the Genetics Lab.

By bringing this work forward, the Garden hopes to show how our research is developing solutions to the challenges humans and other species face.



Ventura garden high on a hill

In celebration of National Hispanic Heritage Month, the Ventura Botanic Gardens presents *Nature's Spirits – Flight of our Ancestors*, now through Nov. 1.

Inspired by rich cultural traditions, including ancient Mayan mythology, where hummingbirds are sacred messengers for ancestors, this mini exhibit transforms the Gardens with a Day of the Dead-inspired backdrop of bold colors, striking silhouettes, autumn blooms, and colorful calaveras gigantes, or large decorative skulls.

Experience the Gardens after dark for a special, family-friendly evening celebrating the mystical connection between nature and history on Saturday, Oct. 24 from 5-8pm.

Coinciding with National Hispanic Heritage Month, this event draws inspiration from rich cultural traditions—including Mayan mythology, where hummingbirds are revered as sacred messengers carry-

ing notes from ancestors and loved ones.

Against a vibrant, Day of the Dead-inspired backdrop of bold colors, striking silhouettes, and autumn blooms, guests can explore the moonlit grounds and connect with the season's magic.

The mission of all botanic gardens is rooted in conserving rare and endangered plants. This core objective is embedded in the very meaning of "botanic garden". Its mission is to create and maintain public gardens for the preservation, education, cultural contribution, and enhancement of the entire community.

Today's gardens are the realiza-

tion of a vision sparked by a small group of Ventura residents, first dreamed of in late 2005. They came together to formulate plans for a world-class botanical garden showcasing native flora and providing educational, recreational, and cultural enhancement for the Ventura coastal community.

Its Master Plan vision includes gardens representing the earth's five Mediterranean climate zones, with public gathering areas and facilities for educational programs, botanical laboratories, and conservation programs. Find details here:

<http://www.venturabotanicalgardens.com>



For details about MPAs and how to comment, go to:
<https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MPAs>



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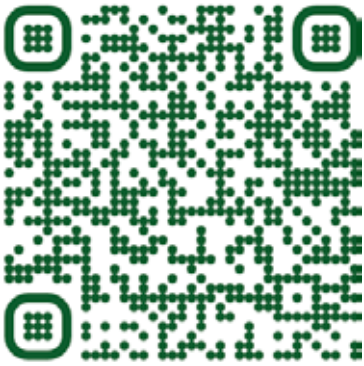
Your membership supports
our local grassroots movement
to protect vulnerable communities
and defend our Central Coast
wildlands.

Join today!



Scan to
Join online

(805) 617-3106
jonathan.ullman@sierraclub.org
PO Box 31241, Santa Barbara, CA 93130-1241



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.LPForest.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>



Our Sierra Club chapter's Basic Backpacking class was back for 2026 and likely for 2027 under the steady and knowledgeable hands of Scott Nelson, and as you can see the fellow backpackers were all smiling. You can put yourself on a list for next year and get notices here:

<https://tinyurl.com/BasicBackpacking>

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

All links are now live!

We used to print our Sierra Club Outings here covering a two-month period. But we find that planning that far ahead may change due to weather, 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:

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)

<https://www.hikelospadres.com>

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

<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/NearUsLA>

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/>

EVENTS

All trails lead inward

CALNAM Exhibits

Terra Firma or "solid earth" is a term that grounds us in the natural landscape – both stabilizing and affirming our connection to the land.

To speak to that concept, the California Nature Art Museum's permanent collection ranges from engaging oil paintings to sublime photography.

Works by artists such as Ray Strong, Meredith Abbott, John Marshall Gamble, and Chris Chapman record some of the natural spaces found in the Santa Ynez Valley and beyond. This exhibition highlights the iconic landscape works found in the museum's permanent collection.

Now showing is *Untamed Desert*: Captured by Paulette Donnellon, on view now through January 18th, 2027.

Vast, rugged, and full of life, *Untamed Desert* is a photographic tribute that reveals the hidden stories of the animals, celebrates the park's wild spirit, and reminds us that even in the harshest environments, beauty endures.

Also, on view is *"All Trails Lead Inward"* by artist Sangeetha Gopalakrishnan, specializing in California visions. What began as time outdoors to recover from a crippling back injury became a lifelong passion. The natural landscape helped her heal, reshaped her perspective, and eventually led her to become an avid hiker and backpacker.

The Sierra Club shares that vision.



SIERRA CLUB
SANTA BARBARA-VENTURA CHAPTER

Presents:



Luzonica Birds of the World, a non-profit educational program of Ojai, is dedicated to promoting Understanding, Appreciation and Conservation of all birds. Their organization is focused on bringing birds from around the world into classrooms & educational events, and this time they are coming to us! Join us and learn about the many challenges wildlife is facing today living so close to humans & ways in which you can help them in your everyday life.

Erin Koski, a wildlife educator for over thirty-five years, will introduce a few live educational ambassadors, including a local species of owl, a not-so-local hawk, and a very large songbird! So come support the cause & take part in this informative hands-on presentation! Just Wing It!



Historic Dudley House (Downstairs Meeting Room)

Wednesday October 21st 6-8pm

197 N Ashwood Ave, Ventura, CA 93003

Food Provided***Always Free***Bring A Friend!



Solace by Sangeetha Gopalakrishnan is part of an exhibit at CALNAM, named "All Trails Lead Inward," specializing in California visions. (Courtesy photo)

Comment on the future of Crooked Palm

Comment on the future of Crooked Palm
What should a future Crooked Palm Preserve provide for the community? What do you value about this place, and what would you like to see here someday? Your ideas will help inform you about the next chapter of this extraordinary property.
Help shape the future of Crooked Palm Preserve by attending the Community Listening Day on Saturday, October 10, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., to learn more, to RSVP for the Community Listening Day, or to complete the Crooked Palm Community Listening Form here:
<https://venturalandtrust.org/crookedpalm>

New chapter for Ventura River

By Melissa Baffa
Executive Director
Ventura Land Trust
A remarkable new chapter begins along the Ventura River.
The Ventura Land Trust acquired Crooked Palm Preserve, a 101.5-acre property that represents both an extraordinary conservation opportunity and a significant restoration challenge.
For more than a century, this land was privately owned and used for farming and industry, including an agricultural fertilizer plant, an oil refinery, and an above-ground storage tank farm.
Following several waves of remediation beginning in the late 1980s, the property is now under the care of Ventura Land Trust, which is working toward a long-term vision to transform this heavily impacted landscape into an ecologically rich nature preserve.
Despite its industrial past, Crooked Palm is already home to important natural resources.
The preserve protects nearly a mile of the Ventura River, including its confluence with Cañada Larga Creek, one of the largest tributaries in the Ventura River watershed.
Mature riparian woodland, perennial surface water, riparian scrub, coastal sage scrub, and riverine habi-

tats provide habitat for a diversity of wildlife, including the southwestern pond turtle, two-striped garter snake, and federally endangered least Bell's vireo.
At the same time, restoring Crooked Palm will take time. The property contains deteriorating industrial buildings and infrastructure, extensive stands of invasive plants such as arundo and castor bean, and other challenges associated with its history.
Ventura Land Trust estimates that transforming the property into a thriving natural area could take approximately a decade.
The first steps are already underway. VLT is seeking funding for ecological surveys that will establish a biological baseline and help us better understand and protect the preserve's natural resources. A comprehensive strategic plan will then guide restoration and long-term stewardship.
Perhaps most importantly, Crooked Palm offers an opportunity to imagine what this land can become together. After generations of limited public access to this stretch of the Ventura River, Ventura Land Trust is beginning a community listening and visioning process to help shape the preserve's future.



This portion of the Ventura River is hidden by trees between the bike path and the adjacent 101-acre Crooked Palm Preserve. Plans may include access.
(Photo by Ventura Land Trust)

'Restoration' is their name

Editor's note: The public is turning out to our monthly events that fascinate, educate, and excite thanks to smart and savvy speakers. Next up on Oct. 21 is a show-and-tell about Birds of the World, presented by Luzonica, an Ojai non-profit that shares with schools and public events. See details on the ad on page 4. Bring friends, birds will be there!

By John Hankins
Ventura's Sierra Club Network did it again, inviting key people to talk with the public about the local environment, its caretakers, and how to get involved.

Channel Islands Restoration (CIR) was invited on Aug. 19 to Ventura's Dudley House. You may not have heard of them, but you've likely benefited from their projects, a fascinating potpourri of habitat renewal.
As its name suggests, the Channel Islands are where it has spent 25 years restoring habitats across all eight islands and is still going strong, said speaker John Ziegler, along with Doug Morgan.

The central message was that removing invasive plants and re-establishing native vegetation creates the foundation for recovering entire ecosystems: insects and birds return first, followed by larger wildlife and improved ecological function. Both the Santa Barbara and Ventura Botanic Gardens are involved in this work.
It also invites people into that work through lectures, service trips, and volunteer restoration projects that build lasting environmental education on the Central Coast.
For example, phase one of an ethnobotanical garden is nearing completion; it will educate the public about the native plants of the San Marcos Foothills and include information on how the local Chumash used the plants for food, fiber, and medicine.
Trips to the islands for high school students and others guar-



Channel Islands Restoration does a lot of wonderful work on and offshore, such as chipping Arundo Donax along the Santa Clara River and tending to the unique Island fox. (Photos by CIR and National Park Service)

antee a fascinating event. On Anacapa, a native plant nursery was built for service-learning trips; on San Miguel, removing bull thistle and protecting the seal rookery; on San Nicolas, in partnership with the Navy, teams installed over 30,000 native plants and removed invasive species; on Santa Rosa, erosion control and invasive plant removal, and so on.
On land, its teams removed over 1,000 acres of Arundo cane along the Santa Clara River and into Santa Paula, Fillmore, and upstream areas. Tamarisk removal has occurred at the Santa Clara, Piru, Sisquoc, Santa Ynez, and Los Pa-

dres watersheds. Also, it's involved in the transformation of Elings Park.
It all started years ago with Ken Owen, the co-founder and executive Director. He has 24 years of experience managing large-scale ecological restoration projects and conducting botanical surveys in sensitive natural areas on the Channel Islands and on the adjacent mainland of Santa Barbara, Ventura, and Los Angeles counties.
Sign up for the organization's newsletter and email list to receive volunteer opportunities, trip announcements, and registration information here:
<https://cirweb.org/>
<https://cirweb.org/volunteer>
CIR is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to restoring native habitat on the Channel Islands and the adjacent mainland. It removes invasive plants, grows native plants from local seed, and plants them back into the landscape.
It also brings people into that work through lectures, service trips, and volunteer restoration projects that build lasting environmental education on the Central Coast. Its research and monitoring show what's working and what's not.



THE CARBON WAVE

A Story of Democracy, Parenthood, and the Race to Protect Our Planet

Leah C. Stokes

Leah Stokes has just published a new book entitled "The Carbon Wave" (MIT Press, 2026). It's a memoir of the period when she worked closely with members of the Biden administration to enact the Inflation Reduction Act, which at the time was viewed as the most consequential piece of environmental legislation in decades. Surprisingly, the book is also a real page-turner. There is plenty of "West Wing"-style drama recounting the difficult effort to draft a bill that could pass both houses of Congress

EAVESDROPS
"The love of wilderness is more than a hunger for what is always beyond reach; it is also an expression of loyalty to the earth, the earth which bore us and sustains us, the only paradise we shall ever know, the only paradise we ever need, if only we had the eyes to see."
~ Edward Abbey, environmental activist who passed in 1989.

30x30
ORGANIZING TO CONSERVE
30% OF OUR LANDS BY 2030.

SUPPORTING STATE, FEDERAL AND LOCAL CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

- H.R. 973 (Carbajal)
- Chumash Marine Sanctuary
- Carpinteria Bluffs

STOPPING HARMFUL POLICIES AND PRACTICES

- Oil Extraction and Trucking
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Methane Heating & Cooking Fuel

Sierra Club supports federal legislation- H.R. 973 (Carbajal) would:

- Designate 288,672 acres of wilderness in Carrizo Plain National Monument and Los Padres National Forest
- Create two scenic areas (34,882 acres)
- Establish the 400-mile Condor Trail
- Safeguard 159 miles of wild and scenic rivers

Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary

- 140 square miles
- Cambria to Channel Islands
- Connects existing marine sanctuaries

JOIN US!

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SANTA BARBARA-VENTURA CHAPTER

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Permit No. 9

Establish & protect new area

On October 15, California's Fish and Game Commission will decide whether to create a new marine protected area, the Mishopshno State Marine Conservation Area, off Carpinteria's coast.

You can go in person Oct 14-15; as there is a call for volunteers who would like a free trip to Sacramento in support of the Petition Hearing. Hotel and transport provided. Contact Sierra Club's Executive Director Bruce Hasse at:

Bruce.haase@sierraclub.org

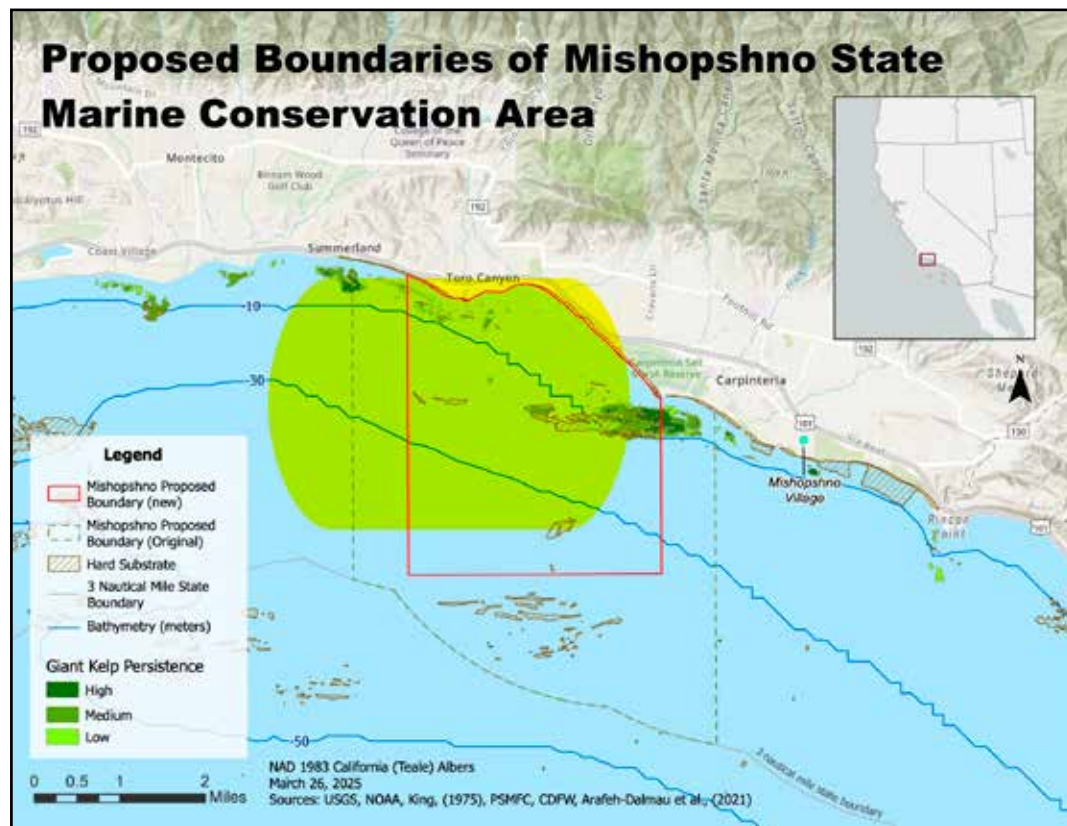
Numerous residents signed a petition to the state commission showing support, but the Sept. 30 deadline has passed. Nevertheless, you can still send comments via email or attend the meeting in person:

fgc@fgc.ca.gov

It would be designated as a marine protected area, which is "like national parks under the sea," said Dr. Douglas McCauley, director of the Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory, during an interview with the *SB Independent* last year.

"Not only do fish have the chance to grow larger, but they also generate more eggs," he noted, likening it to similar on-land protected parcels like "underwater wolves and bison," such as the giant sea bass.

The Tribal led proposal is named for a thriving Chumash village renowned for building tomols, the traditional plank canoes that connected mainland and Channel Island communities.



The protected area would safeguard kelp forests, the 1.6-mile-long Carpinteria Reef, fish, spiny lobsters, white sharks, and rays, covering about 26.2 square miles and extending roughly six miles from the shoreline.

It would also help clean up the mess that the oil industry made when oil was discovered in 1962. Some underwater wells are still leaking after abandonment.

Supporters say everyone can experience the wonder and beauty of our coast, while honoring the rich history of the Chumash people and safeguarding kelp forests, rocky reefs, and a juvenile white shark nursery.

Learn more details and how you can support it here:

<https://www.mishopshnompa.org/>



California has approved Ocean Rainforest Inc.'s plan for a 2,000-acre (3-square-mile) giant kelp farm in federal waters about six miles off Ventura Harbor, marking the largest offshore kelp farm in the U.S. (Courtesy photo)