

Sierra Club YODELER

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY CHAPTER ♦ SUMMER 2022



- ♦ GREEN-BLUE NEW DEAL RATIFIED IN RICHMOND ♦
- ♦ INSPIRING REASONS TO RUN FOR CHAPTER LEADERSHIP ♦
- ♦ NATURE'S DELECTABLE KEY TO MITIGATING SEA LEVEL RISE ♦
- ♦ HEARTFELT POEM: AN ODE TO SAVING WATER ♦

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Sierra Club family,



What is the proper way to greet one another in such precarious times?

This past April, the 195 member governments of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change approved the final installment of their 6th Assessment – an exhaustive 3,675-page report with one simple conclusion: It's now or never if we want to get a handle on climate change. This means we need to reimagine everything: how we live, how we get around, how we power it all, what we eat, how we treat our natural environment, and how we treat each other.

The good news is that we already have the tools and the know-how to reduce emissions, bolster biodiversity, and avert the most dire impacts of climate change. Communities across our chapter are stepping up to kick our addiction to fossil fuels:

- We are procuring (and producing) 100 percent renewable energy to power our buildings;
- We are switching out gas appliances for electric ones;
- We are electrifying our transit systems – and getting people out of vehicles altogether;
- We are rethinking where and how we build – who benefits and who is burdened;
- We are banning single-use plastic foodware to curb the development of new fossil fuel-based industries;
- We are restoring our natural ecosystems; and
- We are centering the most impacted frontline communities in these decisions.

Leaders across our chapter are proving these actions are achievable if we prioritize them. This gives me hope. This gives me focus.

I wanted to express my gratitude to you for your continued support of our chapter, whether you've joined us for a trip outdoors, participated in one of our many advocacy campaigns, or made a meaningful financial contribution. I'm honored to work alongside you to create a livable planet for all.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you are looking for new ways to volunteer with our chapter or are seeking ways to take bold, necessary climate justice actions in your community. We are all in this together, and we have no time to waste.

Onward,

Chance Cutrano
CHAPTER CHAIR

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Chapter News & Events ♦ 3 - 6, 12

Outings Calendar ♦ 8 - 9

Campaign Updates ♦ 4, 6 - 7, 9 - 11, 13 - 15

Sierra Club YODELER

Volume 84 • Number 2
Summer 2022

Sierra Club Yodeler (ISSN 8750-5681) is published quarterly by
SIERRA CLUB SF BAY CHAPTER

P.O. Box 2663, Berkeley, CA 94702

Email: info@sfbaysc.org
Phone: (510) 848-0800
Website: sierraclub.org/sfbay

Editor
Elizabeth Hall
yodedit@sfbaysc.org

Design
Courtney Andujar
andujar-twins.com

Postmaster
Send change of address to Sierra Club Yodeler, P.O. Box 2663, Berkeley, CA 94702. Periodicals postage paid at Oakland, CA, and additional mailing offices. Printed at Fricke-Parks Press, Inc., 33250 Transit Ave., Union City, CA 94587. Copyright San Francisco Bay Chapter Sierra Club, Sierra Club Yodeler.

Subscriptions
Annual Sierra Club dues are \$39 and include a subscription to the Yodeler for Bay Chapter members. Annual subscriptions for non-members and for members of other chapters are \$8. Send check payable to "Sierra Club" to: Sierra Club Yodeler Subscriptions, P.O. Box 2663, Berkeley, CA 94702. Specify preferred starting issue.

Address Changes
Sierra Club Membership Services
P.O. Box 421042
Palm Coast, FL 32142-1042
address.changes@sierraclub.org
(415) 977-5653

Cover Photo
Ground squirrel in Coyote Hills Regional Park. Photo by Jerry Ting.



SUMMER 2022 CHAPTER NEWS

Announcing Our New Office Space: National Headquarters

Bay Chapter staff have been working remotely since we gave up our Berkeley office early in the pandemic. Starting in June, we will be working out of the national Sierra Club headquarters, located at 2101 Webster St in Oakland. Our Chapter staff will be working on the 13th floor, and we will have access to conference rooms where we can host Chapter meetings and events. After June, you can reach out to zephir.omeara@sierraclub.org for information about reserving meeting space.

If you need to get in touch with us for now, please continue to use the Chapter's office phone number, (510) 848-0800, and our P.O. Box address: P.O. Box 2663, Berkeley, CA 94702.

Welcoming Dani Zacky, Our New Chapter Organizer!

We'd like to extend a warm welcome to our new Chapter Organizer, Dani Zacky! She will be working on issues surrounding the Bay, shorelines, wetlands, and sea level rise, and partnering with the Redwood and Loma Prieta chapters on the Bay Alive campaign. You can learn more about these issues through her *Yodeler* contributions on pages 9 and 13.

Dani studied Geography in Long Beach, CA where many of the shoreline and wetland issues are similar to those in the Bay. She also has a background in environmental justice that will help inform her work with local community groups. When she's not working, she enjoys cooking, reading, hiking in the Oakland hills, and spending time with family.

We're Hiring: Communications Assistant

In May, our Communications Assistant and *Yodeler* Editor, Elizabeth Hall, will be leaving our chapter. We are looking for a passionate and detailed-oriented individual to take over the role: the Communications Assistant leverages the Chapter's full range of communications platforms to inform, inspire, and engage stakeholders — including local Club members, decision-makers, community partners, the media, and the general public — in order to advance Chapter campaign objectives and grow our broad-based, grassroots community.

The position is responsible for managing Chapter communications platforms including emails, our website, the *Yodeler*, our blog, texting campaigns, and social media, and works regularly with staff, volunteers, and partners to assist with coordinating actions, events, and campaign updates across our chapter area. Learn more about the position and apply at sierraclub.org/sfbay/jobs.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Thank you for the stunning photographs on both the back and front of the last *Yodeler* issue featuring critters in action! Everyone wants to help monarchs and many of us have touching memories rearing caterpillars through to metamorphosis. But since a picture says a thousand words, I felt the need to share with readers that the milkweed shown is one of the reasons monarch populations are plummeting: it is non-native and as a perennial plant (meaning it does not go dormant like our natives), it encourages monarchs to continue breeding rather than moving to protective overwintering sites, in addition to potentially harboring high loads of disease.

To learn more, check out xerces.org/blog/tropical-milkweed-a-no-grow. And while you're at that website, check out the Top 5 Actions to Help Save Western Monarchs, which include planting native milkweed in the right areas (important: NOT near the coast or proximate to an overwintering site). We all can offer nectar plants and a healthy, pesticide-free home habitat, too! Thank you photographer Judy Smith for this opportunity to use your beautiful picture as a "teachable moment" too!

Mia Monroe, Xerces volunteer and Western Monarch Butterfly Count monitor

Richmond City Council Approves Green-Blue New Deal

MARK VAN LANDUYT

In the same week the Supreme Court struck down the Clean Water Act and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's report told us "Delay Is Death," the City of Richmond approved a Green-Blue New Deal for implementation.

A major victory for environmental policy in the Bay Area, the plan was forwarded by City Council member Gayle McLaughlin and had its final ratification the evening of April 5th.

The Green-Blue New Deal will be exploring community-led programs around green workforce development, sustainable affordable housing developments, local circular economy reuse projects, water-energy conservation, the greening of government buildings, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, public health, and more.

Origins for Richmond's proposal started with the Bay Area Green New Deal in 2020 — a policy document written in collaboration with scientists, labor, activists, Indigenous communities, and elected officials.

"The Bay Area Green New Deal is about jobs — good paying jobs that will usher in the economy of the future, that leaves no community behind," says Justine Burt, author of *The Great Pivot*.

Advocacy of the plan started with Bay Area Green New Deal town halls, educational forums, and workshops for elected officials and city staffers.

These workshops were produced by the Sierra Club in coalition with Generation Green, the Bay Area Green New Deal Alliance, Contra Costa County Climate Leaders, Our Revolution East Bay, and others.

The Bay Area Green New Deal was developed by Sierra Club activist and environmental scientist Dr. Wietske Medema and sustainability policymaker Justine Burt, with involvement from frontline communities and stakeholders. The name is a reference to the economic and public works projects undertaken by U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the labor movement during the Great Depression, giving a sense of the size of mobilization needed to tackle climate change.

"To tackle the climate crisis, cities need to redesign countless systems and enable new kinds of climate adaptation, mitigation, and resilience. The City of Richmond has shown its commitment to meet this moment," says Dr. Wietske Medema.

Invaluable support for the policy was provided by Sierra Club stalwarts Igor Tregub, Olga Bolotina, and Paul Seger, Environmental Protection Agency scientist Lynda Deschambault, labor activist Steve Ongerth, former Fremont City Councilmember Vinnie Bacon, former Vice Mayor of Dublin Arun Goel, Food & Water Watch director Mark Schlosberg, California State University, Chico economics professor Mark Stemen, green advocates Jeff and Lisa Songster, Sunrise Movement activists Massimo Lambert-Mullen and Maria Luisa Esteves, environmental journalist Ted Franklin, and economist Fadhel Kaboub.

Activists hope the victory and success of Richmond's Green-Blue New Deal will animate other Bay Area cities to embrace comprehensive economic action that will benefit workers and residents.

Nature writer Rachel Carson once said, "hope is also a natural resource." With the IPCC report saying it's "Now Or Never" about addressing the climate crisis — this is no time to give up. Richmond is showing the way forward. Now is the time for all municipalities to act.

Mark Van Landuyt is the chair of the Sierra Club SF Bay Chapter Contra Costa Green New Deal Committee.

Looking Ahead as Your New Green Friday Coordinator

VICTORIA TISHMAN KAMERZELL



I look forward to serving as the new volunteer coordinator for the Sierra Club SF Bay Chapter's popular Green Friday speaker series and am excited to help arrange speakers for this monthly Zoom event.

I have worked in the nonprofit space for several years and live in Livermore with my family. I appreciate the abundance of natural beauty in our area and would like to help in preserving it for future generations. The Bay Area is rich with micro-habitats, plant diversity, and abundant aquatic and terrestrial landscapes. I feel privileged to experience these natural wonders and want to hold conversations with more folks striving to protect our environment. I studied English at Mount Holyoke College, was a college intern on the U.S. Senate Energy Committee, and have a Master's Degree in Writing.

We already have two speakers confirmed for this summer:

On June 10th, John McManus, President of the Golden State Salmon Association, will give a talk. He recently wrote a powerful piece for CalMatters about successful attempts in Washington and Oregon to help salmon cope with climate change-induced higher temperatures by reintroducing the salmon into areas with colder water, and how this model can be implemented in California.

On July 8th, Angel Garcia, Organizing Director with Californians for Pesticide Reform, will be speaking on the need to reduce pesticide use as a critical environmental health and environmental justice issue.

I would love to connect with you and other Sierra Club members to help cultivate speakers for our series. Please reach out with any future topic ideas at victoria.kamerzell@gmail.com.

Also, we have a new Green Friday poll, so please share your feedback on what you want to see with the Green Friday program moving forward at bit.ly/GreenFridaySurvey.

You can catch up on past Green Friday programs on our YouTube channel at bit.ly/SFBayYouTube, and learn more and register for our upcoming presentations via the calendar listings on our Activities and Events calendar at sierraclub.org/sfbay/events.

I hope to connect with you at our next Green Friday event!

Victoria Tishman Kamerzell is a member of the Sierra Club Tri-Valley Group and the coordinator for the SF Bay Chapter Green Friday program.

WHAT WILL YOUR LEGACY BE?

Ensure your environmental legacy by naming the Sierra Club's San Francisco Bay Chapter in your will or trust.

If you have named your local Sierra Club chapter as a beneficiary or would like to discuss doing so, please contact us today.

MATT BIELBY
matt.bielby@sierraclub.org
 (510) 848-0800 x 321

Get ready for 2022 Chapter Elections

- Passionate about the environment and local issues?
- Be a team leader in a more tangible way!
- It's time to make your voice heard.

SIERRA CLUB
SAN FRANCISCO BAY

NOW ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS FOR CHAPTER POSITIONS!
Nominations due July 30th

Visit sierraclub.org/sfbay/chapter-elections or email elections@sfbaysc.org for more info. First time applicants are highly encouraged. The Nominations Committee is here to help you through the election process.

Honoring the Legacy of Bay Chapter Leader David McCoard

VIRGINIA REINHART

Stalwart Sierra Club volunteer David McCoard passed away in April. He was a tireless advocate for the environment and social justice. Dave was a Sierra Club member for 58 years, and an active Club leader for most of those years. He got started with the Club in the 1970s as an Executive Committee member and Outings Chair of the Kern-Kaweah Chapter. Even after he moved to the Bay Area in the 1980s, Dave continued to make regular pilgrimages to backpack the Sierra. His experiences in the mountains shaped his lifelong environmental ethos.



on the Executive Committee of the West Contra Costa County Group. He was passionate and informed about a wide range of issues including housing, transportation, air quality, and toxics.

To his many friends and colleagues, Dave was a kind, patient, curious, and welcoming presence. His 2018 candidate statement for the local Group election summed up his inclusive attitude: *“Basic to action on environmental issues is the task of increasing the number of people actively involved in the Group. We can do this by actively inviting and creating opportunities for participation, and making members know that their activity and feelings count.”*

Dave will be deeply missed. If you have memories of Dave to include in an upcoming memorial piece, please email yodedit@sfbaysc.org.

Virginia Reinhart is the director of the Sierra Club SF Bay Chapter.

A Win for Point Molate: Developer's Bond Plan Rejected

POINT MOLATE ALLIANCE & NORMAN LA FORCE

On Friday, March 18th, the Richmond City Council rejected establishing a Community Facilities District (CFD) that would allow for a \$292 million bond to finance the infrastructure needed for SunCal, an Irvine developer, to build up to 2,000 luxury units at Point Molate — the city-owned 411-acre headland that has long been a source of controversy.

The unanimous vote, 4 - 0, with Councilmembers McLaughlin, Jimenez, Martinez, and Willis voting “No” and Bates, Johnson, and Mayor Butt absent, was “a courageous step by the council’s progressive majority to undo the dangerous fiscal conduct of the former council,” says Point Molate Alliance (PMA) Steering Committee member Andrés Soto.

Three independent economic analyses had exposed the fiscal irresponsibility of the course Mayor Butt has been

advocating successfully up until now. The council majority was convinced that the risks to the City's finances were too great and exercised their legal right under the Development Agreement to protect the City from negative General Fund impacts.

In his review of the proposed CFD, former Richmond Planning Commissioner Jeff Kilbreth estimated that in the Best Case scenario where all housing units were sold in 15 years, there could be almost \$400 million in operating losses over 50 years. Even if SunCal picked up the first \$70 million in losses, there would still be a shortfall of over \$300 million to the General Fund over 50 years.

“The project never breaks-even for the City’s General Fund,” Kilbreth noted, “pointing to the high cost of city-funded fire and police substations required by SunCal’s insurance underwriter. A 24 X 7 fire and police station costs over \$6 million per year. The property taxes on fourteen hundred and fifty two homes aren't enough to cover either the cost of this dedicated fire and police station or repaying \$292 million in bonds over 35 years, which is like saddling every homeowner with an extra two hundred thousand dollar mortgage. We can't ask Richmond taxpayers to subsidize the operating costs



of a new village called “Tiburon East.”

A fire and police station are required due to the limited access to Point Molate and its proximity to the Chevron refinery. Without fire and police substations, homeowners could not get property insurance and mortgages.

To address General Fund impacts, SunCal proposed a “Special Fiscal Impact tax” on undeveloped land, but the tax would not cover all of the General Fund shortfalls as it extends only to the end of the construction period. The City’s bond consultant, Mark Northcross of NHA Advisors said, “The Special Fiscal Impact tax is no guarantee at all. If we levy the tax, and they don’t pay it, our only recourse is to foreclose on the property.”

If SunCal chooses not to move forward, the City has options. The option the Mayor is promoting and the one he negotiated in a settlement agreement between the City and Upstream, the earlier failed casino developers at Point Molate, is to sell the property to them for \$300 if the City does not sell to a developer such as SunCal by May 21st, 2022. If the City does that, Upstream has four years to sell the property to a developer with a city-approved project and split the sale price with the City.

The Sierra Club views the defeat of the CFD as an opening for all parties in the lawsuits that the Sierra Club, Citizens for East Shore Parks, the Point Molate Alliance, and SPRAWLDEF have brought to save Point Molate. SunCal should consider how it can resolve these lawsuits in favor of making Point Molate a regional park instead of an enclave of luxury housing requiring annual incomes of over \$250,000 to buy a unit.

The City should work with the East Bay Regional Park District and others to resolve the lawsuits, and in exchange for a fair settlement among the parties, develop Point Molate as a world-class regional park in the Park District. In fact, just recently the Trust for Public Land sent a letter to the City

expressing its interest in Point Molate. The Sierra Club urges the parties in the various lawsuits to view this as an opportunity to resolve the legal issues over Point Molate instead of engaging in further litigation.

Creating such a park has been a goal of the Sierra Club for close to 30 years, and one of our priority conservation areas in our 30x30 campaign. Not only would our local community get a great new park, but the park designation would also protect Point Molate’s critical eelgrass beds that sequester more carbon per acre than trees, and protect Ohlone sacred sites as well as cultural sites important to the Chinese-American community.

Coming to an agreement with all parties would benefit the City of Richmond while giving Richmond’s small Planning Department the time and resources to pursue not only market, but affordable and moderately priced infill housing projects. The Sierra Club and the Point Molate Alliance call on the City to pursue a new settlement with the developers, end years of litigation, and avoid the fiscal and safety risks of a high-end housing development on this unique headland and natural treasure.

This article includes contributions from the Point Molate Alliance and Sierra Club SF Bay Chapter East Bay Public Lands Committee chair Norman La Force.

KEEP COOL THIS SUMMER: DONATE YOUR UNWANTED VEHICLE

Keep cool like a popsicle and let those costs of your unwanted car just melt away by donating it to the Sierra Club Foundation's SF Bay Chapter! It's easy, the pick-up is free, and cars, boats, motorcycles, RVs, and more are all tax-deductible. To learn more, visit our website at scfch.careasy.org or call (844) 674-3772.

PHOTO CREDIT: David McCoard at the 2017 Chapter awards dinner. Photo by Jane Richey Photography, janerichey.com.

PHOTO CREDIT: Photo by Jack Scheinman, provided by the Point Molate Alliance.

ABOUT THIS CALENDAR

Activities listed here are abbreviated. For full listings, registration, and waivers visit: sierraclub.org/sfbay/activities. The online calendar will also include changes, cancellations, and outings submitted after the print deadline.

Hike and backpack ratings

Hike ratings are based on distance and elevation gain (the sum of all gains in elevation per day):

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. up to 6 miles | A. under 1,000 feet |
| 2. 6 - 10 miles | B. 1,000 - 2,000 feet |
| 3. 10 - 15 miles | C. 2,000 - 3,000 feet |
| 4. 15 - 20 miles | D. over 3,000 feet |
| 5. over 20 miles | E. over 3,500 feet |

Backpack ratings include a third digit for travel:

- T. trail
1. limited/easy crosscountry
 2. moderate crosscountry
 3. strenuous/difficult crosscountry

What to bring

For day hikes always bring lunch and enough water. Consider layered clothing, sunscreen, good hiking boots with treads, and hiking poles. Non-service dogs are allowed only if specified in the listing; canine hikers should bring leashes, litter bags, and water for their dogs.

Liabilities

To participate in a Sierra Club outing, you will need to sign a liability waiver. To read a copy of the waiver form, call (415) 977-5630, or visit tinyurl.com/outingswaiver.

COVID-19 Protocol

Masks are optional for adults in outdoor areas, but required in indoor close quarters such as vehicles, public transport, restaurants, or visitor centers. Vaccinations are not required, so please be aware you may be on trips with unvaccinated individuals. Masks are required at all times for unvaccinated minors. If you are experiencing any possible COVID-19 symptoms, do not attend the outing and contact the outing's leader. Report any positive COVID-19 tests after an outing to the outing's leader.

Carpooling

Carpooling helps the environment and allows people without cars to participate. You can arrange carpools on our Meetup group: meetup.com/sanfranciscobay. Outings will be listed there two to three weeks prior to the event. Masks are required in carpools.

SUMMER 2022 OUTINGS CALENDAR

TUESDAYS

Lake Chabot Reservoir 1A Hike. Scenic weekly three-mile hike. MEET: 4pm at boathouse/cafe. Park free on street, \$5 in lot, or annual pass from East Bay Regional Park District. LEADER: Dolores Gruenewald, (510) 351-6247 or doloresgru@aol.com. (Solo Sierrans)

WEDNESDAYS

Lafayette Reservoir 1A Hike. Enjoy the lovely weather while walking around the beautiful reservoir. We have both faster and slower walkers, or you can walk at your own pace. COST: 5 quarters for 1hr, 15 minutes of parking. MEET: 4pm at the west end of the parking area near the picnic tables and permanent bathrooms. LEADER: William Gilbert, wmgibr@gmail.com. (Solo Sierrans)

SECOND SUNDAYS & FOURTH SATURDAYS

MAY 8 • SUN | JUN 12 • SUN | JUL 10 • SUN

MAY 21 • SAT | JUN 25 • SAT | JUL 23 • SAT

Luxurious Walking in Delight Zen Mindfulness 1A Walk. Slow, luxurious walking designed to relax and balance yourself resulting in deepening connection to your inner nature. It is often accompanied with an experience of delight. Attendees report a change in awareness and some report their heart opening. Attend either in-person in Berkeley or virtually in your backyard on Zoom! We will check in, walk in luxurious awareness, and share. Heavy wind or rain cancels. REGISTER: If attending in-person, registration on the online listing is required with a limit of ten people. To attend virtually, register using the Zoom registration link on the online listing. BRING: Clothes for the weather. MEET: 11am at 1853 Solano Ave, Berkeley or on Zoom. ENDS: 12:30pm. LEADER: Halley Forest, sierragreenforest@gmail.com. (Hiking)

MAY 8 • SUN

Mother's Day Wildflower 1A Walk. Mother Earth's natural beauty is on display this day, so bring mom along on this nature hike! Our wildflower saunter will follow in the footsteps and paw prints of 19th-century explorer David Douglas and his faithful dog, Billy. As we walk up Mitchell Canyon, we'll search for many of the flowers first collected by the dynamic duo, including the Mount Diablo Globe Lily, Mariposa Lily, Baby Blue Eyes, and Chinese Houses. Any rain cancels. COST: \$6 per vehicle park entrance fee (exact cash required). Pay at the entrance gate "iron ranger." BRING: Water, snacks, and hiking poles if you normally use them (dogs aren't allowed on park trails nowadays, so don't bring any canine friends). Dress in layers and wear good hiking shoes. MEET: 9am at 100 Mitchell Canyon Rd, Clayton. ENDS: 12pm. LEADERS: Ken Lavin, (925) 852-8778

or ken_lavin@hotmail.com; Elizabeth Watson, sweettrails00@gmail.com. (Mount Diablo Group)

MAY 21 • SAT

Alamere Falls 3B Hike. Located in the southern section of Point Reyes National Seashore, Alamere Falls is a rare "tidefall," a waterfall that flows directly into the ocean. We will hike out to the falls from the Palomarin trailhead on Coast Trail through a variety of terrains, including woods and beach, with a stop at Bass Lake. This 12 mile hike involves some steep climbs and is recommended for strong and experienced hikers only. Heavy rain cancels. BRING: Lunch, snacks, and a good supply of water. Wear hiking boots and layered clothing.

MEET: 9:30am at Palomarin trailhead. LEADER: Jeffrey Sanchez, (510) 599-5238 or amagi@pacbell.net. (Sierra Singles)

MAY 27 • FRI

Redwood Park Evening 1A Hike. Take an early evening stroll through Oakland's Reinhardt Redwood Regional Park. This 4 mile hike features lush woods and expansive vistas. The terrain is hilly so be prepared for at least a light cardio workout. Friendly dogs welcome. BRING: Water and layered clothing. Wear hiking boots or running shoes. MEET: 6:30pm at the Redwood Bowl Staging Area parking lot. LEADER: Jeffrey Sanchez, (510) 599-5238 or amagi@pacbell.net (no texts please, email only!). (Sierra Singles)

Oysters: A Delicious Appetizer, and Nature's Key to Mitigating Sea Level Rise

DANI ZACKY

With summer around the corner, what could be better than a plate full of fresh oysters on crushed ice and all the fixings? But oysters are not just a tasty delicacy — they are also one of nature's superheroes in helping to clean water and protect shorelines.

It is no secret that the Earth is already feeling the impacts of climate change, and the San Francisco Bay is believed to be one of the most impacted regions in California. Additionally, the San Francisco Bay is one of the most urbanized estuaries in the world. The industries that line the Bay's shoreline include multiple oil and gas refineries, pesticide manufacturing plants, and the remnants of wartime nuclear material facilities. The Ocean Protection Council and California Coastal Commission project that by 2100 California will see a minimum of 3.5 feet of sea level rise — and up to 7.6 feet, depending on the speed of climate change. Sea level rise will not only push chemical pollutants further into our waterways, but in many cases, directly into shoreline communities.

So what does this have to do with oysters? These incredible bivalves make for a delicious meal, but are one of nature's most powerful aquatic filtration systems. A single oyster filters, on average, over 50 gallons a day, capturing toxins and foreign particulate matter as water passes through its gills. Incredibly enough, their filtration is not the only ecosystem benefit that oysters provide. Seawalls are a tactic implemented by many cities in order to protect shorelines from increased wave activity



brought on by sea level rise, but oysters naturally build massive colonies that are similar in structure to these seawalls. Additionally, these oyster colonies support other species and thus promote increased biodiversity.

Other urbanized estuaries and waterways have had major success in implementing and encouraging oyster reefs back into the water. Thankfully, the Wild Oyster Project is doing similar work right here in the San Francisco Bay. They have been implementing a strategy called oyster shell recycling, which involves partnering with local restaurants and using their spent shells to create structures for living oysters to attach to. These structures, which encourage oyster reefs to grow, are strategically placed around the Bay to help mitigate the effects of sea level rise. To learn more about their work, head to their website at wildoysters.org.

Nature knows how to protect, clean, and support itself. It is important that, as environmentalists, we educate ourselves on and advocate for these nature-based solutions over man-made options. If you are interested in learning more about Bay issues and nature-based solutions, join the SF Bay Issues Group by emailing Dani Zacky at dani.zacky@sierraclub.org.

Dani Zacky is an organizer for the Sierra Club SF Bay Chapter.

PHOTO CREDIT: Oyster shell on the Hayward Regional Shoreline. Photo by Hillary Van Austen, East Bay Regional Park District (CC BY-NC 2.0).



Why a Trails Master Plan Is Needed for Our East Bay Parks

NORMAN LA FORCE

The East Bay Regional Park District, like parks across the country, has seen an enormous increase in park users over the past years, and especially during the pandemic. As a result, some of the trails have gotten quite crowded, and there have been reports of conflicts between different park user groups, particularly between hikers and mountain bikers on narrow trails.

Thankfully, the Park District has been working hard to expand its parks and trails system, and currently has 30,000 acres of land bank properties (properties acquired by the Park District, but not yet open to the public), and a number of new parks and trails that they are working to open in the coming years.

An important outstanding question as the Park District expands its trails system has been how the Park District can appropriately expand mountain bike access to meet the needs and desires of the mountain bike community, while avoiding conflict with other user groups to the greatest extent possible, and protecting our parks important natural resources. To gather input on these questions, the Park District formed a Trail User Working Group (TUWG) in 2020, made up of various stakeholders including the Sierra

Club and other conservation groups, as well as mountain bike advocates, equestrians, hiking clubs, outdoor equity organizations, and more. Regular meetings were held over a year and a half period, and perspectives were shared — unfortunately, the group was not asked to formulate any specific policy recommendations and the process concluded in early 2022 without much accomplished.

After the end of the Trail User Working Group, knowing that these issues remained unresolved, the Sierra Club worked with our partners to develop and propose a clear process for how East Bay Parks’ trails system can thoughtfully expand at the pace and scale necessary to meet the growing demand of the public while protecting the environment. What we came up with was a proposal for a Trails Master Plan.

An East Bay Parks Trails Master Plan would identify the overall goals, priorities, and strategies for the Park District’s trails work for the next ten years. Critical components of this plan would include:

- Assessing the status of trail access for Park District communities, including the completion of a trail equity audit and developing strategies and specific action steps for East Bay Parks to advance equitable outdoor access for all;
- Developing holistic visions and strategies to meet the unique recreational needs of each user group, including walkers, hikers, mountain bike users, equestrians, and dog walkers;
- A detailed vision and action plan for development

of new trails throughout the district, including a detailed timeline and priorities for opening land bank properties to the public; and

- Robust exploration and deployment of “best practices” for ensuring safe and enjoyable outdoor experiences for all by minimizing conflict between recreation user groups.

The Trails Master Plan would need to include robust environmental review, including detailed biological surveys of Park District lands and close consultation with the Stewardship department to avoid and/or mitigate ecological impacts as a result of new trail construction. The plan must also include robust public engagement, ensuring that park users throughout the region have a voice in shaping the future trails of our Park District.

As the largest urban park district in the country, the Sierra Club firmly believes that the East Bay Regional Park District can set an example in doing the inclusive regional planning that our diverse communities deserve. With past park planning efforts in the Park District, there has been significant conflict between different user groups over trail design, balancing access for different user groups, and how to balance access with protecting the natural environment. We firmly believe that much of this conflict can be avoided if East Bay Parks 1) does holistic planning that analyzes and plans future trail development at the regional level, allowing compromises to be achieved that may not otherwise have been possible, and 2) minimizes the use of “mixed-use narrow trails” that force bikers, hikers, and equestrians on the same narrow trails, inevitably causing conflicts. In a survey of TUWG stakeholders, 63

percent opposed multi-use narrow trails, demonstrating the unpopularity of this trail design with park users. We believe wider trails that accommodate all user groups are more appropriate, or separating non-compatible uses, such as dedicated hiker/equestrian trails and mountain bike trails.

With the conclusion of the TUWG, the Park District has transferred the bike access issue to its Park Advisory Committee (PAC), and staff are exploring a number of potential “pilot projects” that would increase mountain bike access and amenities in local parks. The Sierra Club looks forward to working with the PAC on this issue, however we also believe it is critical that East Bay Parks include local communities and the public at large in any proposals for new trails, and comply with their own Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA) process to ensure a proper public process and environmental review for significant changes that may impact our parks.

We continue to believe that it is in the best interests of the East Bay Regional Park District — and the 3 million East Bay residents it serves — to design the expansion of the trails system at the district-wide level, in the form of a Trails Master Plan, rather than engage in piecemeal planning of new mountain bike trails within existing parks. We will continue to advocate for the Trails Master Plan concept and the resolution of this issue in a fair manner that accommodates all users and ensures that environmental concerns such as protection of habitat and species are carried out in an open, public, and transparent planning process.

Norman La Force is the chair of the Sierra Club SF Bay Chapter East Bay Public Lands Committee.

— — — — — cut here — — — — —

Make a donation to support your local chapter's work here in the SF Bay Area!

\$25 \$50 \$100 \$200 Surprise us! \$_____ Make my gift monthly!

Make your check payable to **Sierra Club SF Bay Chapter**, or use your credit card.

Please select a payment method: MasterCard Visa Discover AmEx

Credit Card Number: _____ Exp. (mm/yy): _____

Name on Card: _____ Signature: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Contributions to the Sierra Club are not tax-deductible; they support our effective citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts.

Return instructions:
Cut out this card and return it (in an envelope) to:



P.O. Box 2663
Berkeley, CA 94702

Donate online:
sierraclub.org/sfbay/donate

People, Power, and Politics in Local Sierra Club Executive Committees

PEGGY DA SILVA

As members, we know that the Sierra Club is a well-recognized and respected name — some even call it a “brand.” So when the Sierra Club takes a position on an issue, it garners attention. Whether stopping coal exports, protecting communities impacted by toxic substances, or making the case for free-flowing streams, we influence decisions that affect all of us (and our grandchildren). Our direct actions and outings help people to “Explore, Enjoy, and Protect” our environment; our political endorsements help to elect officials who fight for our work and our local communities.

But what is often forgotten is that we — each one of us — are the Sierra Club. From the local Group Executive Committees (Ex Coms) to the national Board of Directors, we elect the people who speak for us as a Club. These leaders work very hard and dedicate countless hours to our cause — why do they do it? And should you consider joining them at the table (or Zoom room)?

I spoke with three current leaders in the SF Bay Chapter, who shared their motivations, success stories, and hopes for even better leadership and effectiveness as we move through 2022 and beyond. These leaders are:



Melinda Howard-Herrarte

Member of the Chapter Ex Com (past) and the Northern Alameda County Group Ex Com (current)



Beth Bittle

Member of the Mount Diablo Group Ex Com



Lisa Park

Member of the West Contra Costa County Group Ex Com

Motivation: Both Beth and Lisa were long-time Sierra Club members — Beth has been an outings leader for many years, while Lisa volunteered in the Chapter office. Both said

that they were encouraged to take another step — to become part of the decision-making group for their area. Both are very interested in the political endorsement process and have been energized by the interactions with candidates and the chance to make endorsements. Melinda took the step from “member” to “leader” because she wanted to make sure that the voices of the people in her community were heard by the decision-makers.

Experience: All three note the amazing opportunities for learning that they have enjoyed — especially learning about the complexities of the Sierra Club and how it functions in the community. They have been able to contribute via direct environmental actions, setting up strategic planning processes for their Groups, and bringing their own personal skills to each committee. They emphasize that they truly enjoy working with the other Ex Com members; one comment was “I’d be friends with them anyway if I weren’t in these meetings.” They mourn the past two years with the restrictions on meetings, tabling, and hiking in-person — and are glad that more in-person gatherings are being planned.

Suggestions for Potential New Ex Com Members: First and foremost, take advantage of the opportunities to learn! The Sierra Club has numerous training opportunities, fellow leaders hold a wealth of information, and your Sierra Club position gains you entrée into meetings with all sorts of community movers-and-shakers. Recognize that your voice matters — our Club needs to be inclusive and diversify our approaches to solving the problems we face.

Interested? Reach out to Beth, Lisa, or Melinda to hear more about what it’s like being a Sierra Club leader — contact information is listed at sierraclub.org/sfbay/leadership-roster. I also encourage you to contact the Chair of our Chapter Ex Com, Chance Cutrano, or any other Ex Com Chairs or Vice Chairs, who are also listed on the roster.

If you’d like to run for Ex Com in 2022, you can! Make sure your membership is up-to-date, watch for details on our Chapter Elections page at sierraclub.org/sfbay/chapter-elections, and/or contact elections@sfbaysc.org. You can also attend our **2022 Chapter Elections Virtual Open House** on May 16th from 6:30 - 7:30pm to learn more about the elections process: register using the listing on our Activities and Events calendar at sierraclub.org/sfbay/events.

You too can be the power and voice of the Sierra Club — the oldest, most respected, and most grassroots environmental organization in our country.

Peggy da Silva is the chair of the Sierra Club SF Bay Chapter Nominations and Elections Committee.



50th Anniversary of the Clean Water Act Reminds Us Where We Started

DANI ZACKY

This year marks the 50th anniversary of our country’s Clean Water Act (CWA). In October 1972, Congress passed the Clean Water Act in order to help protect and repair America’s waterways. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which was created two years prior in 1970, adopted and took responsibility for enforcing the CWA.

Before the Clean Water Act, only one third of America’s waterways were considered to be clean enough to be fishable or swimmable. You may have heard of the infamous Cuyahoga River in Ohio; a river so over-burdened by chemical dumping that it caught fire, not once, but multiple times. The Cuyahoga River became a symbol of America’s desperate need to step in and protect our waterways.

The goals of the CWA are to address these water quality issues by regulating the amount of pollutants discharged into our natural water systems, as well as by creating national standards for water quality. These water quality improvements have created positive impacts on the health of ecosystems, species, and communities.

The San Francisco Bay, being one of the world’s most urbanized estuaries, desperately needed the protections of the

Clean Water Act. Prior to the 1970s, the Bay was being inundated with untreated sewage, chemical waste dumping, and industrial particulate matter. Many wetlands on the edges of urban communities were used as dump facilities. The Bay has been home to all kinds of polluting industries, including those using radioactive materials and highly toxic chemicals that were being freely dumped into the water. Since the adoption of the Clean Water Act, the Bay’s water quality has improved tremendously. While regulatory agencies are not perfect in enforcement, the CWA also includes a citizen suit provision. These provisions empower communities to protect the waterways they love and rely on by allowing private citizens to take legal action and hold polluters accountable.

While it can be easy to be pessimistic about the state of our planet, the passing of the Clean Water Act and all the positive outcomes that have followed in its wake are a refreshing reminder of how regulatory action can make a difference. As challenges like sea level rise become a more prominent focus in how we protect our Bay ecosystems, biodiversity, and shoreline communities, remembering the success of the Clean Water Act can help motivate us to fight for regulations to address these issues.

The San Francisco Bay Chapter is working to activate members and volunteers interested in water, wetland, shoreline, and Bay issues. If you or a family member/friend would like to learn more about Bay issues, please contact SF Bay Chapter Organizer Dani Zacky at dani.zacky@sierraclub.org.

Dani Zacky is an organizer for the Sierra Club SF Bay Chapter.

PHOTO CREDIT: U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Dominique Pineiro.

Jemez Principles for Democratic Organizing: A Column

JACOB KLEIN

#3 Let People Speak for Themselves

We must be sure that relevant voices of people directly affected are heard. Ways must be provided for spokespersons to represent and be responsible to the affected constituencies. It is important for organizations to clarify their roles, and who they represent, and to assure accountability within our structures.

In this column on the Jemez Principles, we'll be diving into letting people speak for themselves. On its surface, this can seem fairly straightforward. Many of us may think that we already accomplish this. Unfortunately, many of us may not notice the ways in which we stand in the way of people speaking for themselves.

Let's break this into two pieces. One, active listening. Two, accessibility.

Active listening is a core tenet of organizing, even though it often gets left behind. In an organizing fellowship I did years ago, we spent a half-day working on this skill. Active listening requires more than sitting down and talking to somebody. It's how we conduct ourselves in a conversation, the very stance that we bring.

Active listening requires us to focus on hearing what somebody is saying to us, letting it impact us, and not thinking about what to say next. This last part can be very tricky. I remember being in school and always thinking about the next point I wanted to make in a discussion. Sometimes this meant that I'd completely miss what was being said around me and miss the direction of the conversation.

Over the years, I have learned to take in what's being shared with me, and often, I'll learn more than I could have ever imagined. I'll hear people's stories about why they care about an issue, I'll learn exactly how someone is being impacted, and sometimes people will generate a creative solution that never would have crossed my mind.

During that fellowship, one of the trainers told a story about a time she was organizing at a school for ed-

ucational equity. Her campaign assumed probable goals, but when they sat down with parents, they heard about an unexpected obstacle that was preventing education for underserved children. Sidewalks. The sidewalks in this community were either in disrepair or not to be found. This meant that people who would otherwise be able to walk to school lost that ease of access. A creative solution to a problem, one that wouldn't have been noted without listening.

When I go to meetings with partners of organizations led by people of color, I do my best to not assume goals. Even if I have an agenda that's in alignment with Sierra Club positions, I know that not every person is going to be represented by the Sierra Club. For me, meetings with partners are about listening and learning what the primary issues are, what the goals that need to be achieved are, and what are the best ways to get there.

All of this enables me to build a stronger campaign within the Sierra Club and with our partners. I can figure out how to best support our partners and where the Sierra Club's strengths can best be applied.

To the second point: access. What may seem perfectly accessible or comfortable may prevent significant barriers to others. This shows up in the when, the where, and the how of bringing people together.

People who have multiple jobs or not nine-to-fives won't be able to meet at times that white-collar workers find convenient. If a job isn't near public transportation centers, that provides a barrier. If meetings are held at locations where people may get racially profiled, that will prevent people from attending. If a space requires the use of stairs to get in or doesn't have wheelchair-accessible restrooms. If the restrooms are gendered. If someone doesn't have Wi-Fi at home, or the most modern technology. If there isn't ASL or Spanish or other language interpretation. These are just some barriers that can impinge on a person's ability to participate. Through all these barriers, we lose more and more people who are already underserved by our society and systems, and we lose the stories and the people necessary to affect change.

I raise this up because it's not just about the decision-making processes, or speaking over people, it's about how we build our movement space. Once we can get into the same room together, then we can listen.

Jacob Klein is an organizer for the Sierra Club SF Bay Chapter.

AN ODE TO SAVING WATER



The water we use,
The water we waste,
The water we lose,
When we use it in haste.

It's a scar on our earth,
A debt to the future,
A tax on our worth,
And a pox on all nature.

Less water for showers,
Or cleaning our faces
Is more water for flowers
Or drought-stricken places.

We can be more reserved
When we shampoo our hair.
More can be preserved
If we act with more care.

We can use less today,
So there's more for tomorrow.
That brings us more joy
And a little less sorrow.

As we learned from our elders
All those eons ago,
We are bound to this earth
From our head to our toe.

The earth is our partner,
So preserve it we must.
Tread softly my friends,
To earn its full trust.

Worth more than our dollars,
Worth more than our gold,
Rocks, trees, and water
Are gifts to behold.

They're gifts to the future,
To our children and theirs.
Tread softly my friends,
Be kind to our heirs.

© David Pearson (poem) and
Nancy Erb (art)
Piedmont Gardens, 2022



#SierraSnapshots | A juvenile Cooper's hawk in Alameda. Photo by Rick Lewis. For a chance to get your snapshots featured in the next issue of the Yodeler, email photos to yodedit@sfbaysc.org or share them on Twitter or Instagram with the hashtag #SierraSnapshots. Include your name, the names of any people in the photo, and where and when the photo was taken.

A Note: Our Spring 2022 featured #SierraSnapshot inadvertently highlighted an invasive species of milkweed that can be harmful to monarch butterflies. Learn more about this issue and how to help monarch populations on page 3.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

Facebook.com/SierraClubSFBayChapter
Twitter @SFBaySierraClub
Instagram @SierraClub_SFBay

SIERRACLUB.ORG/SFBAY

Our website is home to helpful information and resources including:

- Our blog, updated regularly
- The full activities and events calendar
- Group information and leadership roster

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Apply now for our communications assistant staff position (p. 3)
- Nominations open for 2022 Chapter Elections (p. 4)
- Introducing our new Green Friday program coordinator (p. 5)

EMAIL

Visit sierraclub.org/sfbay/email to sign up for Bay Chapter emails, including monthly bulletins and action alerts.