

Vol. 22, No. 3 of 6

June - July 2022

Condor Call

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



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New Name ... Old oil games ... Lobbying ... Saving ... Outings

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Condor Call

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We've changed our name to the Santa Barbara-Ventura Chapter

By Jon Ullman

Chapter ED

Santa Barbara-Ventura Chapter is the new name of our Los Padres Chapter.

After several months the Chapter Executive Committee in April voted to change the name, established in 1952 and named after the Los Padres National Forest.

"The change fulfills the commitment of the Sierra Club to remove names which refer to colonial occupation of the indigenous peoples which live in our region," said James Hines, Sierra Club Santa Barbara-Ventura Vice-Chair.

The Chapter took this step out of respect for Native Americans, specifically the Chumash, who like other California tribes were subjected to harsh labor, a new agrarian diet, diseases like measles and smallpox, forced religious and cultural conversion within a Mission system they were forbidden to leave once entered.

The Padres who ran the mission system between 1769 and 1833, regardless of intent, coerced and stripped the Native American population of their autonomy. They used their labor to build the Missions and surrounding grounds that would eventually entrap them. Below are links to do your own research, but regardless of the Padres' motives, the historical facts are clear.

We realize many of our cities and counties, including our new Chapter name, are derived from individual missions, but we felt Los Padres was different as it

represented the whole system. One litmus test for us was if you were Native American, and even if you're not, "how would you feel?"

The "Los Padres Forest" was signed into law by Franklin Roosevelt on Dec. 3, 1936, after Forest officials came up with a new name for the Santa Barbara National Forest, a name that outgrew its eight consolidated forests spanning six counties. The Forest's proximity to nine Spanish Missions in Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura was apparently the rationale for the name.

Later the name "Chumash Wilderness" was given to 38,150 protected acres of the Forest in 1992, but Los Padres remained. Los Padres was our chapter's name for 70 years; the National Forest's name for 86 years.

One of our close allies and Los Padres National Forest protectors has the name. We realize it's harder to change the name of the Forest when national votes are involved, and a name is long-standing and familiar.

We just asked ourselves: Considering what we know, what's the right thing to do?

The answer for us was to change it.

Maybe the Forest Service and Congress will take our cue.

It wouldn't be the first time. Denali National Park was called McKinley National Park from 1917 to 2015, named after its highest peak.

"I hope that in the bill you will call it 'Mt Denali National Park' so that the true old Indian [sic] name of Mt Denali (meaning 'the Great

One') will thus be preserved."

That quote was from a 1916 letter from one of the Park's main advocates to another on the legislation drafting team. Another Park advocate agreed it should be named Denali. But the recipient replied: "I don't like the name of Denali. It is not descriptive. Everybody in the United States knows of Mt. McKinley and the various efforts made to climb it. In consequence, both Mr. Yard and I think that the name McKinley should stick."

They needed the Park legislation to pass, so they went McKinley until it was changed in 2015. The moral: It's never too late to change.

Our new name Santa Barbara-Ventura may not refer to a majestic mountain range nor noteworthy flora or fauna nor well-known river or park unit, but it's simple to understand. It serves Santa Barbara and Ventura counties.

We hope our name's simplicity is the key to opening new doors.

Further Reading:

<https://www.sfgate.com/opinion/openforum/article/The-dark-terrible-secret-of-California-s-missions-2685666.php>

https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/5views/5views1b.htm
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Los_Padres_National_Forest

COVER PHOTO

California's Condor Trail was featured in the March issue of *National Geographic*, a major boost for this dream route. It winds 400 miles through seven wilderness areas, from Lake Piru in Ventura County, through SB County and bending to the coast at San Luis Obispo County, ending at Botchers Gap in Monterey County. *Condor Trail Guide* is available via REI. Shown is the trail going through the Ventana Wilderness called *Last Light*. © Photo by Ed Callaert, see more of his excellent photos at:

www.edcallaert.com

You can read the article here:

<https://tinyurl.com/>

[CondorTrailNatGeo](https://tinyurl.com/CondorTrailNatGeo)

Oil's belligerence strikes our region

By Katie Davis

If there was any doubt about Big Oil's aggressiveness and belligerence, you would only need to look at what is going on in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties as ExxonMobil and its subsidiary, Aera Energy, are currently suing both counties.

In so doing, they threaten not only the environment, but the right of government to do its job and protect its residents from harm. Oil companies create a costly burden for taxpayers. Unlike other law-abiding businesses, oil companies routinely contest their property taxes and sue when they don't get their way.

In Santa Barbara, ExxonMobil is suing the County for denying its oil trucking project. That proposal was denied by SB County Board of Supervisors in March based on the project's significant and unavoidable harms to biological, water and cultural resources in the event of a spill. The plan would have added up to 24,800 oil-filled truck trips a year on coastal Highway 101 and hazardous Route 166 and restarted three offshore platforms off the Gaviota coast that have been shut down since a pipeline ruptured and spilled thousands of gallons of oil into the ocean and coastline in 2015.

Its bullying legal case against the County is full of exaggeration, hyperbole and novel legal claims.

A real-time accident happened March 2020 outside of Santa Maria when an oil tanker

detached from a truck and rolled into the Cuyama River, spilling more than 4,500 gallons of oil. In January, SB County prosecutors settled criminal and civil cases against the trucker and the trucking company.

In a related matter, Plains All American recently agreed to a \$230M settlement over the 2015 pipeline spill that shut down Exxon's platforms and sparked the oil company's plan to truck the oil to refineries. The money will go to the fishing industry and property owners, among others. Exxon has itself sued Plains.

In Ventura, Aera Energy (owned jointly by ExxonMobil and Shell oil) and other oil companies have filed lawsuits against Ventura County seeking to invalidate the health and safety regulations in the General Plan—including the setbacks between residences, schools, and new oil drilling and a ban on flaring or venting gas.

The stakes are high as these lawsuits challenge the basic right of local jurisdictions to protect their citizens. Ventura County was forced to allocate \$2 million to defend itself. And on March 24, a judge granted a petition to intervene in Aera Energy's lawsuit. The petition was created by the Sierra Club, CFROG and Voices in Solidarity Against Oil in Neighborhoods (VISION).

The goal is not only to help defend Ventura County, but to defend people's basic right to protect their health and safety through local governance.

Solar is 6,000 years old

Did you know Solar Energy is at least 6,000 years old?

Neither did we until we came upon from an article in the *Santa Barbara Independent*.

"John Perlin lives, breathes, and dreams in science, and his particular passions are often related to alarming developments around the world, whether the climate crisis or the destruction of trees and forests," wrote Jean Yamaura leading into a Q&A with the author by Nick Welch.

Yamaura explained "He wrote *Let It Shine: The 6,000-Year Story of Solar Energy* in 2013, and the newly released paperback edition contains a plan for a 100 percent

renewable future, and he said, 'It's both an answer to the quest to end the heating up of our planet and our reliance on petroleum autocrats like Putin'.

"In the past decade, photovoltaics moved from expensive to now the least costly source of electricity, and solar arrays capacity increased from a billion watts to a trillion watts today. A visiting scholar in UC Santa Barbara's Physics Department, Perlin replied to questions about his book and solar energy in general in Santa Barbara," she added.

Read the whole story and those answers here:

<https://tinyurl.com/Solar6000>



Images changing too: Ventura County's new County Seal (left) is by Carol Gravelle who "wanted to underscore how beautiful our area is." In contrast, the former seal (right) shows oil, nuclear and religious icons in a crowded mish-mash of images.

LP Forest name changes

It's not just our chapter that is changing its name.

Outdoor writer Jack Elliott has suggested we find

EAVESDROPS

"Racist terms have no place in our vernacular or on our federal lands. Our nation's lands and waters should be places to celebrate the outdoors and our shared cultural heritage—not to perpetuate the legacies of oppression."

~ Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, who created a Derogatory Geographic Names Task Force. Local effects here: <https://tinyurl.com/NamesLocally>

a new name for the whole Los Padres Forest, "not a matter of applying contemporary mores to old choices . . . My focus is elsewhere, and much deeper." Find out why:

<https://yankeebarenano.com/>

Also, the US Forest service is on the trail to replace derogatory names nationwide. In Los Padres National Forest there are three locations that use the offensive name 'squaw'. They are Squaw Flat, Squaw Creek and Squaw Spring. Stay tuned for alternate names.



The Sierra Club has partnered with SunPower to bring you a great deal on solar panels, the future of energy. Editor Condor John did it five years ago and recommends it highly, especially in 2022 with a 26% tax rebate that will drop to 22% in January. Check out this fantastic deal with a simple online appointment here: <https://tinyurl.com/RunSonRun>

CFROG REPORT

Idle oversight on idle oil-gas wells

Over 40 percent of abandoned oil and gas wells in Ventura County cannot be confirmed as properly abandoned, according to CFROG (Climate First: Replacing Oil & Gas).

Poorly abandoned wells pose serious risks to groundwater, air quality, agriculture, wildlife spaces, and environmental justice communities, made worse by other climate disasters common in Ventura County.

These wells can leak methane, an ultra-potent greenhouse gas that, when concentrated, can become a source of deadly explosions. Additionally, the research finds 34% of poorly abandoned wells are located within groundwater basin boundaries and nearly 20% located within 2,500 feet of 'environmental justice' communities.

The persistent extraction of oil and gas in Ventura County has left over 4,000 plugged and abandoned wells and over 2,000 idle wells. "Plugged and abandoned" is used to describe wells that have been safely and successfully closed, no longer posing any danger to the land, air, and water. Unfortunately, this study found this is not the case.

The conclusions came after a

year of historical well record analysis and research, using state agency data from California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM).

The non-profit group CFROG found most poorly plugged wells, 66 % (1,629 wells) were abandoned before 1953 when modern plugging standards were established. An additional 372 wells were categorized as poorly abandoned due to insufficient plug materials, final abandonment transferred to the landowner, or simply inadequate. Lastly, 211 wells had entirely missing records and 180 had incomplete documentation, despite being labeled as "plugged."

The organization worked with students from the USC Sol Price School of Public Policy to assess this problem in Los Angeles County with a smaller study of wells, finding a significant number of wells with substandard abandonment. Their study found that CalGEM had no publicly available well record data for nearly half of their samples. The group attempted to contact CalGEM with questions multiple times with no success.

In recent months, orphan and idle oil and gas wells have received justified media, funding, and regulatory attention. CFROG's report encourages local and state agencies and decision-makers to recognize the full problem of legacy oil and gas infrastructure by monitoring, assessing, and considering the re-abandonment of poorly abandoned wells.

The report estimates cleanup costs ranging from \$7.4 million to \$37.2 million and creating over 400 well-paid jobs and significant greenhouse gas emission reductions.

To view a full interactive map, go to: <https://bit.ly/VCPlugged>



Grasshopper oil rigs may still leak when idled.. (Courtesy of SAFE.org)

EMISSIONS DOWN

Are our climate plans ok?

By Katie Davis
Chapter Chair

What's in a Climate Plan?

Santa Barbara County recently received a report on its Climate Action Plan as it set goals in line with what



the United Nations says is necessary: 50% reduction in emissions by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2045 or sooner.

And the county adopted immediate actions for this year and didn't wait for the plan to be updated. Those are:

~ Require new buildings to be electric: "Develop an ordinance to restrict natural gas infrastructure, increase energy efficiency performance and electric vehicle charging infrastructure for new construction and major renovations."

~ Electrify all county buildings: "Assess the feasibility of updating the Zero Net Energy Resolution to Zero Carbon for County municipal buildings for new buildings to be all electric and replace or retrofit space and water heating devices and equipment in existing buildings."

~ Plan to facilitate EV adoption: "Develop a Zero Emission Vehicle Plan to strategically identify gaps, resources, projects and programs to advance the use of zero emission vehicles in County operations and the community."

~ County to buy EVs only: "Directed staff to return to the Board with a revised policy regarding Electric Vehicle Purchases to include light duty vehicles and develop a plan to expand that to all County departments . . . by Jan. 2023."

What's Out? Emissions

One problem with the Climate Plan is that fails to count "stationary source" emissions, i.e., emissions from oil and gas production and processing, in its greenhouse gas inventory. (In contrast, Ventura County inventory DOES count stationary source emissions -- as they should.)

The result was that news outlets missed the good news that emissions from oil are down in Santa Barbara County because we beat a bunch of oil projects! Emissions have been cut in half from 492K to 189K metric tons (carbon dioxide equivalent) over the past decade due to the shutdown of Exxon and withdrawal of major, new onshore projects. These emissions were once the largest source in the county after transportation.

The bad news is that because SB County omitted these emissions from their tally, they could decide in the future to permit an expansion of some of the most carbon-intensive forms of oil production in the world, driving emissions up, and still claim that they are meeting their emissions reductions

goals. That would be what we call, "questionable accounting," or rather, "cheating."

However, right now the County is doing many of the right things. Recent reductions from methane capture at the Tajiguas landfill and 100% renewable energy goals achievable through Community Choice Energy have not yet shown up in the data either but will be significant.

The one-two punch of 100% renewable energy combined with electrifying buildings and transportation is how the County can achieve its newly set goal of carbon neutrality by 2045, while improving people's health and saving us money.

It Takes Everyone

It takes all of us to decarbonize, which is why it's good to see new solar arrays at local schools, with more coming.

For instance, I heard that Dos Pueblos High School plans to install parking lot solar this summer. In addition, in the past month the Sierra Club has sent letters of support for grant applications so the Santa Barbara MTD can get more electric buses and

so Goleta Water District can fund solar panels on their facilities that will supply 80% of the 2,000,000 kWh/year of electricity they require.

These kinds of projects benefit all of us -- less pollution, lower operational costs, greater reliability.

Including Agriculture

Electrification is also a way farmers can get around the problem of rising fuel prices that could affect food prices. Ag electrification is one of the most successful programs offered by Central Coast Community Energy, which now serves Santa Barbara County.

For the past three years, they have offered rebates for fuel-switching farm equipment, and the monies that were budgeted for were used down to the last penny each of the past three years.

"What a gift to run a quieter 2020 harvest with maintenance free electric equipment," enthused one business owner. "The benefits of 3CE's Ag electrification program are priceless to small farmers!"

State budget mixed

Gov. Governor Gavin Newsom released the 2022-2023 May Revision to his state budget proposal, which will bring California's multi-year climate investment to \$47.1 billion.

While historic, the May Revision unfortunately also includes funding that could set the state back in its efforts to retire outdated energy resources and increase water resilience.

Among the good aspects of the May Revision are:

~ Continued strong investments in the state's transition to Zero Emission Vehicles by accelerating \$1.75 billion in funding for ZEVs and the infrastructure necessary to power this transition.

~ \$970 million for residential solar and storage system incentives, including for low-income households. These investments will not only help to slow the climate crisis and improve air quality, they will also help create more resilient communities.

~ \$750 million in grants to provide Californians with free transit for three months and \$500 million for the Active Transportation Program.

~ \$1.2 billion to address residential electric utility and \$200 million to address residential water and wastewater shortfalls.

Among the disappointments of the May Revision are:

~ \$5.2 billion that could, in part, fund existing generation capacity that is scheduled to retire diesel- and methane-powered back-up generation.

~ \$500 million that could, in part, fund new environmentally harmful dams and above-ground water storage.

~ Funds for projects that support implementation of Voluntary

Agreements, instead of supporting the State Water Board's process to update water quality standards for the Bay-Delta ecosystem. The voluntary agreements were negotiated without public engagement or transparency and fail to provide adequate flow protections for the Bay-Delta ecosystem.

Brandon Dawson, Director of Sierra Club California said that "the May Revision contains great investments aimed at addressing the effects of the climate crisis, but its implementation could ultimately end up a mixed bag."

"There are things to applaud, including money for the state's transition to zero-emission transportation, which will improve air quality and slow the climate crisis. There's also important funding to equitably deploy rooftop solar and storage, which was threatened by the Public Utilities Commission earlier this year."

"However, there's no guarantee that the energy reliability money the Governor is proposing doesn't prop up aging fossil fuel infrastructure. The California Air Resources Board disappointingly called for these types of investments in their draft Scoping Plan, so we want to ensure that the Governor's budget isn't in furtherance of that. We'll need to ensure that those funds don't support polluting industries that continue to disproportionately harm low-income communities and communities of color."

Editor's note: Sierra Club California is the legislative and regulatory arm of Sierra Club's 13 local chapters in California, representing half a million members and supporters.

EAVESDROP

"That's also going to help save hundreds of billions of gallons of gasoline over time, saving an average driver . . . up to \$1,000 every year on fuel; making our country more economically competitive, lowering air pollution, and keeping families healthier as we tackle the climate crisis."

~ President Joe Biden, noting that the billions of dollars set aside for electric chargers in the Infrastructure Act is essential to help more people buy electric vehicles.

Condor Call

www.SierraClub.org/Santa-Barbara-Ventura ~ All phone numbers 1-805 area code

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Photos, news, tips always welcome!

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HINES CHRONICLES

Simple acts come back

Editor's note: We continue with the Jim Hines Chronicles, which reflects the emails by our premier lobbyist on the ins and outs of environmental activism and is chock-full of information. This covers the last two months, starting the first week of April through May. Jim is our chapter vice-chair and conservation director who belongs to many wildlife groups.

April 1: **At last night's** Los Padres Chapter ExCom meeting (March 31), the ExCom voted to approve my motion to change the name of the Sierra Club Los Padres Chapter to Sierra Club Santa Barbara-Ventura Chapter.

I have now submitted our request for the name change approval to the national staff and national Sierra Club Board of Directors for approval. (*Editor's note: the vote was 4-1-0-3*).

April 5: **I can't believe** that some members of the U.S. House and Senate are still backing Russian President Putin. Many of these same members are opposing legislation which would protect America's national public lands.

Do I hear the echo of the Trump years when it was an open door policy for all kinds of foreign players who wanted to log, mine uranium, oil and gas drill on federally protected lands? Here we go again.

April 6: **California has awarded** a \$326,000 grant to the

Ventura County Transportation Commission to study the impacts from the 101 freeway in Ventura County on wildlife movement and find ways to migrate the 101's impact on wildlife. It will also allow the County to start planning for a second wildlife overpass, this one would be on the Conejo Grade portion of the 101.

A big thank you to Supervisor Linda Parks for gaining the grant.

April 11: **National Sierra Club** Board of Directors held a special session just to hear our request to change its name from Los Padres Chapter to Santa Barbara-Ventura Chapter. I appeared before the board to answer any questions they might have had. It was approved and our chapter has entered a new era.

April 16: **I spoke at the request** of VC Supervisor Carmen Ramirez at a fundraising event she held on behalf of VC 2nd District supervisor candidate Claudia Bill de la Pena who is currently a member of the Thousand Oaks City Council. I spoke as a lifelong environmental leader since the Sierra Club had not made an official endorsement yet. (*Editor's note: she is now endorsed*).

April 18: **It all starts** with a simple act. I am getting lots of positive comments and accolades from throughout the Sierra Club praising our chapter for changing our name and causing many others across our nation to look at names within their chapter regions which



The Ventura Sierra Club is at it again and again, asking volunteers to bring gallons of water to ensure newly native plants have a chance of success. Most work done at Community Park (AKA Kimball). Photo by Nina Danza who welcomes you to help:

www.Meetup.com/SierraClubVentura

may be offensive.

April 28: **Fish and Game** Commission published a notice of intent today to list the Southern California steelhead Trout population as endangered. This region includes Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. This starts a one-year process to determine if full endangered species protections are warranted so the population can recover, mostly due to habitat loss.

The Sierra Club California Wildlife Team supported this designation.

May 10: **I am working** with

our Sierra Club national public lands office to counter the lies the Stop 30 x 30 Campaign is putting out. It is so important on any campaign to know what our adversaries are doing. So, I joined the American Stewards of Liberty's zoom meeting. Check it out here:

<https://tinyurl.com/Stop30X30crowd>

May 16: **Gosh, I think** I am beginning to join more anti-environment organizations than I am pro-environment organizations. But in any good battle it is so important to know what our adversaries are up to. It is all about gathering intelligence. (*Secretary Gerry Ching chimed in: "We are going to watch you closely to see that you don't slip over to the Dark Side :)"*)

May 20: **I have been sharing** language to prohibit the use of rodenticides, herbicides and

pesticides which kill wildlife. Sierra Club supported it in the Santa Monica Mountains' Coastal Land Use Plan with our Sierra Club National Wildlife Policy Team (I am one of 8 members). Now the Club's Colorado Chapter is trying to get similar language included in various land use plans.

Our great work moves around.



May 25: **Good Morning Ventura.** No more oil wells, nuclear fusion or Father Serra on the new Ventura County seal. Here is the new official County of Ventura seal unveiled yesterday. This seal was supported by the Sierra Club.

EDC's Owen Bailey resigns

Editor's note: The SB-Ventura Sierra Club wishes the best for Owen Bailey and his family. Due to health issues, he is resigning as executive director of the SB Environmental Defense Center. Bailey joined the EDC on Jan. 1, 2013, after nearly a decade at the Sierra Club, first specializing in outreach and organizing for the Club's Coastal Program, notably working with our chapter to stop a floating LNG facility off the coast of Oxnard. Despite the club losing his expertise, our Chapter Chair at the time, Mike Stubblefield, commented: "This is great news". Portions of his letter appear below.

By Owen Bailey

After nine amazing years, I am writing to inform you that I will not be returning to my role as Executive Director of the Environmental Defense Center (EDC). Last fall I took what I had hoped would be a short leave of absence to regain strength to resume my role. Unfortunately, that's not how things worked out.

But I find comfort knowing that I am stepping away from EDC when the organization is at a point of great strength, with top-notch staff and a dedicated board, and poised for many more decades of victories for our climate and coast.

While I continue to be hopeful that my latest treatment will be effective and get my cancer under control, this has turned out to be a harder struggle than I had hoped. Since my leave began, my friends and colleagues, and especially Linda Krop, as Chief Counsel, and Betsy Weber, our Assistant Director, have covered the bulk of my duties in addition to their own work.

Everyone has filled in for me brilliantly. They have been

extraordinarily successful, winning victories and carrying forward the work of this essential organization.

This year, EDC is celebrating its 45th anniversary, and our work is more important today than ever before. As the climate changes, and oil companies fight to squeeze the last drops of carbon emitting fossil fuel from beneath our feet and waves, EDC and its new leadership will be ready to fight back.

We will push back for the clean, renewable sources of energy we need now and for the future. As developers look to pave over our local agricultural lands and open space that wildlife and residents depend upon every day, EDC

will be there to stand in the way and still fight for the affordable housing we need.

Together we can fight the spread of sprawl which adds more traffic to our roads and pollution to our air and water. And, as we move forward, we will stand with our diverse partners and clients to make sure the Santa Barbara Channel remains a clean and welcoming home for marine life, responsible fishing, and recreational users for generations to come.

I have so enjoyed my time as part of the EDC family, and I look forward to seeing you again on June 5th when *Green & Blue* returns as a live event for the first time since 2019.



We first met Owen Bailey working for the Sierra Club's coastal areas and he was so successful, the SB Environmental Defense Center hired him. Unfortunately, he is now resigning due to health issues; we hope he can fight for his health like he has fought for the environment. (Photo Courtesy EDC)

Most meetings continue online for now

Group News

The public is welcome to our programs

CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

~ Meets 4th Thursday 7pm of every month, via internet for now. Email Secretary Gerry Ching for the agenda: gching@cox.net
~ Chapter website and blog at:

www.SierraClub.org/Santa-Barbara-Ventura

SANTA BARBARA GROUP

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

<http://www.sbsierraclub.org>
<https://www.FACEBOOK.com/SBSierraClub>
<https://TWITTER.com/SBSierraClub>
<https://www.INSTAGRAM.com/SierraClubSantaBarbara>
<https://www.MEETUP.com/SierraClub-SantaBarbara>
<https://tinyurl.com/SBGGroupBlog>

ARGUELLO GROUP

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

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

VENTURA NETWORK

~ For board meeting dates, times and location email: sierraclubventura@gmail.com
~ Get latest info about the western Ventura County group via Facebook and a blog:

<http://tinyurl.com/VenturaSierraClubFB>
<https://tinyurl.com/VenturaSierraClubBlog>
~New MEETUP site for hikes, outings etc:

www.meetup.com/SierraClubVentura

CONEJO GROUP

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

ConejoGroupHiking@gmail.com.

Or view the Conejo Group website:

www.sierraclub.org/Santa-Barbara-Ventura
www.sierraclub.org/Santa-Barbara-Ventura/outings

Climate Watch

How to save water, energy and \$\$

Editor's note: While it's increasingly clear that the need for climate action is urgent, it can be hard for an individual to know where to start. This year we are featuring specific actions you can take authored by UCSB lecturer in Environmental Studies, Deborah Williams.

"As Earth's atmosphere continues to warm due to climate change, droughts are becoming more frequent, severe, and pervasive. The past 20 years have been some of the driest conditions in the American west on record," according to NASA



We are in the red, signifying extreme fire danger.

Conserving water has never been more important. As we enter the driest months, Santa Barbara and Ventura counties are classified as being in either "Extreme Drought" or "Severe Drought."

It gets worse: Before the current drought, California urban areas had cut their average water use from 180 to 146 gallons/day. Since then, it has increased in most parts of the state including our area.

Fortunately, there are strategies we can adopt, reducing our water consumption and energy use. Simple techniques also save you real money! Four of the best approaches are:

~ **Saving Water in the Shower.** Especially using low-flow showerheads. An average U.S. household can save around 2,700 gallons of water annually and 330 kilowatt hours of electricity (enough to power a house for 11 days) by installing just one low-flow showerhead. Details are at: www.epa.gov/watersense/showerheads

Low-flow showerheads are low-cost and can reduce water use

EVENTS

June 5: **Green & Blue**, Environmental Defense Center's signature fundraiser and best way to connect with environmental activists. If you're reading this after the date, go to website anyway, lots to see and do: www.EnvironmentalDefenseCenter.org

June 9: **Hiking** on the Channel Islands 5:30-6:30 zoom, details on page 7.

June 11: **Paddle Out** fundraiser for SB Maritime Museum 1-4pm at Leadbetter Beach. Includes food and surf music, beach games and crafts. Surf legend Shaun Tomson will lead paddlers into the water and on June 16 he will be hosting an in-person lecture along with Noah benShea. Details at www.SBMM.org

June 16: **Build Trails Plan** for SB County with uber hiker/writer Ray Ford via zoom: 5:30-6:30 via Zoom, details on page 7.

by up to 60%. Check out the best here:

[7 Best Low Flow Shower Heads \(2022 Reviews\) - Sensible Digs](#)

Also, use a bucket while waiting for it to get hot, capturing about 10% of a shower's water goes down the drain. Then use the bucket to water plants, or use it to flush the toilet, slowly pouring slowly into the bowl (tank water will be retained).

How often should we shower, anyway? Research (Harvard et al) concludes showering a few times per week is plenty for most people, is better for your health, and saves lots of water and energy.

Also, a showerhead leak of one drop per second wastes [over 1,660 gallons of water a year](#). So, fix leaks quickly, saves you money, too. There are lots of good [guides](#) and YouTube videos to help you do this.

~ **Using Greywater Systems.** Consists of domestic wastewater from households, free from fecal contamination. Sources include washing machines, showers, sinks and baths.

Notably, every load of clothes generates [15 to 40 gallons of greywater](#). Estimates note that up to [40 gallons of graywater/person/day](#) is available in SoCal. A home could reduce irrigation by [5% to 30%](#).

The simplest greywater "systems" involve collection buckets to catch water that only contains soaps and mild detergents.

More complex systems use plumbing to transport the greywater from our clothes washers, bathtubs, showers and sinks for irrigation. (If your home uses a water softener be aware the salts might harm plants.) [Here](#) is a schematic example of a greywater system.

There is specific [California](#)



Joshua Trees burnt from the Cima Dome fire of August 2020, covering 70 square miles of one of the densest JTree forests in the world. Efforts have been under way ever since to reclaim this unique ecosystem. (Photo by local club member Suzanne Tanaka).

JTrees need help

The Sierra Club has sent out a message asking members and friends to help save California's beloved Joshua Trees by telling the CA Fish and Game Commission to list them as endangered.

The item is on the commission's June 15-16 agenda via zoom and a message should be sent before then at: <https://tinyurl.com/JTreeAlert>

Scientists say that the western Joshua Tree could lose 90% or more of its habitat in the Mojave Desert by the end of the century.

[state requirements for a Greywater systems](#). Fortunately, "Laundry to Landscape" systems and most "Showers to Flowers" systems do not require a permit statewide.

Santa Barbara County has a "[Greywater Handbook](#)" with more detail, including a section on doing it yourself. Ventura County also has guidance here:

<https://vcrma.org/water-use-and-efficiency-information>

~ **Transitioning to Drought Tolerant Landscaping.** Irrigation accounts for about [50%](#) of annual residential water consumption in California, so replacing a lawn with such landscaping can achieve a [30 - 60%](#) water savings.

There are the 2 basic stages to [creating a drought tolerant yard](#): Make a [plan](#) (here are [8 steps](#), including use of non-plant material such as rocks) and [construction](#) (purchasing plants etc. and, if necessary. Permits. Do it [yourself](#) or hire professionals. Even incremental changes make a positive difference.

The City of Ventura's brochure "[Ventura Water Wise Landscaping](#)" has guides and contact numbers; and here is a great "Water Wise Gardening in Ventura County" [website](#), which includes "Find the Right Plant" and another on "Lawn Substitutes."

Santa Barbara County also has a similar [website](#), and "[Water Wise Native Plants for Santa Barbara County](#)."

~ **Detecting and Fixing Leaks.** Finally, you can get a home leak detection system featuring alerts such as <https://flumewater.com/> -- saving you water and money. There are many [step-by-step guides](#) on the internet.

For the sake of our environment and future generations, we can do better.



The boardwalk to Rincon Island, a familiar sight along the 101 freeway in Ventura. SB Group's Jim Taylor took a tour and photos with the State Lands Commission which wants the public's suggestions. Jim thinks it might best serve as a bird refuge. For more info, see item on April 27 below.

SIGHTINGS

Action = Progress

By John Hankins

Here's what we've been up to the last two months on their way to spring. And it's really been busy but with some good stuff happening. Check out the links.

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

If you'd like to donate (it helps a lot and the money stays here at home), do not pass go, but go directly to: www.sierraclub.org/donate/1000

June 1: **Ventura Rail Trail** virtual community forum was pitched by our Sierra Club (thanks to Nina Danza) to put in a new multi-use trail along the railway from Montalvo to Satcoy - Route 118. "This is a long sought-after Class 1 (no motor vehicles) path for bikes, pedestrians and all wheels. This is a major step toward extending a path to the beach!" Nina said on Facebook.

May 29: **Bike Clean & Fix-it** day sponsored by the Ventura Sierra Club for giving away to local kids in need, took place at Ventura Bike Hub which provided all tools.

May 24: **Dirty Oil & Gas** wells can leak methane from over 1,300 idle wells in SB County according to the county Grand Jury. Also, on this day in Ventura County, a judge ruled the Sierra Club and others can intervene in Aera Energy's lawsuit that seeks to invalidate health and safety regulations in the General Plan.

May 21: **Get Out Vote** rally at Kellogg Park in Ventura and get people to canvass for a YES on Measure A&B which our Chapter supports, sponsored by Food & Water Watch.

May 21: **Water-Weed** the newly planted Native Area the Ventura Sierra Club planted last fall at Kimball Park. Advertised on Meetup, similar work was done on May 22, 28 and 29 thanks to Nina Danza, organizer.

May 19: **Need for documents** via the Freedom of Information Act was backed by our Chapter as support for the SB Environmental Defense Center to file an FOI request getting Fish and Wildlife Service to release documents to the EDC. It is part of EDC's larger legal effort to prevent FWS from issuing a plan that could allow oil companies to harm endangered species and get future oil projects approved more easily in Santa Barbara County.

May 17: **Battery Brouhaha** leading up to this date allowing battery storage on a 2-acre vacant parcel by first revising the General Plan designation via the Goleta City Council. Our Chapter fully supported the application and wrote a May 13 letter to the city asserting "it's a good fit," noted Chair Katie Davis. It passed 3-2 vote, thanks to Kasdin, Richards and Kryiaco.

Note: Background, on Sept 20, 2021, Tim Murphy of ERM-West

(Agent) submitted a request for the initiation of a GPA on behalf of GenOn Holdings, LLC (property owner).

May 14: **YES on A&B** Opinion Editorial by our Chapter Chair Katie Davis appeared in the *Ventura County Star*, and likely other local newspapers. Read it here: <https://tinyurl.com/OpEdYesAB>

May 9: **New treasurer** for our chapter is Jim Taylor, at least on an interim basis. If there's anyone out there who would like to fill the spot permanently, contact our Chair Katie Davis at: kdavis2468@gmail.com

May 4: **Rincon Island** follow-up (see April 27 below) by the State Lands Commission staff on its Phase 2 of a 'decommissioning'. For updated information, go to a video of the meeting here:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=qPqajpwF9j4

May 1 & 6: **Trails are us, right?** Asks Alex Pujo of the SB Group on the highly controversial Montecito Trailhead parking plan. Parking congestion is off the charts while East Mountain Drive property owners have blocked side-of-the road parking with landscaping, rocks and no parking signs. Owners insist on an environmental impact report. Alex wants the club to get involved in a solution.

On May 6 a judge ruled the county's parking plan to add parking spaces cannot move forward until it is determined whether an environmental review is needed. Alex commented, "things are not looking good."

April 27: **Rincon Island** conundrum, what to do with it? State Lands Commission had its meeting there with the public invited. Our Carpinteria contact, Jim Taylor, went and said the commission wanted public input. He also took photos and made them into a short video here:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=eqJoCeXUR0c

For any update on the process about the island, and to sign up for email updates, go to: www.sl.ca.gov/oil-and-gas/rincon/



April 26: **"Very sad"** notice to our Executive Committee that Jules Zimmer passed away at 92 years on April 9. He was a member of our political committee and married to Carolyn Cogan, also a member. Chapter Chair Katie Davis said, "I really adored Jules who was always so helpful in our work and a smiling, delightful presence."

April 22: **Long awaited** groundbreaking for the Wallis

continued on page 5

Deluge of lawsuits on Pine Mt.

Three lawsuits were filed against the Forest Service for failing to protect environment and cultural resources on Pine Mountain and Reyes Peak, backed by a coalition of environmental, business, and recreational groups.

Ventura County and the City of Ojai were also part of the suits filed in federal court in May to challenge the commercial logging and vegetation removal project in the Los Padres National Forest.

“Pine Mountain must be protected, not offered up to logging companies using loopholes that make a mockery of our bedrock environmental laws,” said Los Padres ForestWatch executive director Jeff Kuyper.

Keep Sespe Wild Director Alasdair Coyne noted that, “These ‘sky islands’ of giant trees only survive at the rare high elevation peaks of SoCal’s national forests. Threatened by climate change, they need protection, not logging.”

Plus, the project area is located on ancestral lands of the Chumash and is historically and culturally important to them. It is also critical habitat for the California condor, and home to other sensitive wildlife, rare plants, old-growth conifer forests, and unique ecosystems. Recreation is also an important aspect.

Too, the area is proposed for wilderness protection under the bipartisan Central Coast Heritage Protection Act (H.R. 2199), now awaiting final approval in the Senate.

The Environmental Defense Center’s Senior Attorney, Maggie Hall, asserted the project violated “several important environmental laws.”

The project would allow unlimited cutting and removal of live and dead trees of any age up to two feet in diameter and an undisclosed number of trees up to five feet in diameter as well as the destruction of chaparral across 755 acres.

The lawsuits – which are likely to be combined -- take aim at the Forest Service’s failure to collaborate with stakeholders which is required on a ‘categorical exclusion’, which is designed for small maintenance projects.

The project was approved last September over the objection of local elected officials, Indigenous leaders, scientists, more than 30 area businesses, 70 environmental organizations including the Sierra Club, and 15,000 members of the public.

The project is part of a spate of proposals issued during the Trump Administration when timber targets were increased, costs were lowered, and the use of categorical exclusions was encouraged. Three similar projects are proposed in the immediate region.

For more information go to: www.protectpinemountain.org

Earth Day fuels EV owners

By John Hankins

This year’s Earth Day may have been quieter than pre-Covid celebrations, but the passion to demonstrate support for environmental protection was palpable here and world-wide, celebrated by about a billion people in nearly 200 countries.

Here, the environmental heroes were EVs, the electric vehicles that are gaining popularity at a rapid rate, and you should hear the stories the owners tell how that future is now.

For instance, Scott Toshi showed his 2015 BMS i3 that was the most earth-friendly car possible. “The whole car was made to be recyclable,” he explained at the Pacific View Mall.

That was where a bank of new Electrify America chargers was placed, drawing EVs from all over for the free charges offered that day. The car was made with carbon fiber instead of steel, with an aluminum frame and the fabric inside was from recycled bottles. For emergencies it has a tank holding 2 gallons of gas to run a generator. A nice start and an inspiration, but it’s not made anymore!

Also at the Mall was a sight drawing everybody’s attention – two EVs connected, one giving a charge to the other which could come in handy on a petered-out EV in the middle of nowhere.

The charge was by a brand-new Hyundai Ionic 5 owned by Brian Pletcher of Thousand Oaks who plunked down \$100 in March 2021 to get in line for it. He got it on Valentine’s Day “and I love it, it’s fun to drive, goes fast and quiet and the build quality is great.” Pletcher can not only ‘siphon’ electricity to others with it, “I could plug in my refrigerator with this.”

The Ionic 5 has since outshone Tesla as the Car of the Year with one critic calling it “a brilliant car.”



One EV car’s charger couldn’t fit into the brand-new chargers installed at Pacific View Mall, but Brian Pletcher with his brand-new Hyundai Ionic 5 had just the adapter that could. There was no charge. (Photo by John Hankins)

But don’t count Tesla out, ever. The brand-new Tesla Model S Plaid with around a 400-mile range was proudly displayed by James Reach while one of the oldest Teslas (2014) was in the same Boku Café parking lot in Ojai during a show backed by the EV Advocates of Ventura County and the Sierra Club organized by our Transportation Chair, Kent Bullard, who doubled down with an advocates’ meeting, inviting the public.

Reach said the Plaid-logo Tesla was in the movie “Spaceballs” and is high performance with “no clutter” around the steering wheel, just buttons.

The ‘old’ Tesla from 2014 is a story by itself via the owner, Brennan Balson, who was visiting family in the area. He was an early owner at an early age of the first EVs, the ones with lead batteries that did not have a long range. “The technology was not ready for long range, but it felt like the next generation’s car.”

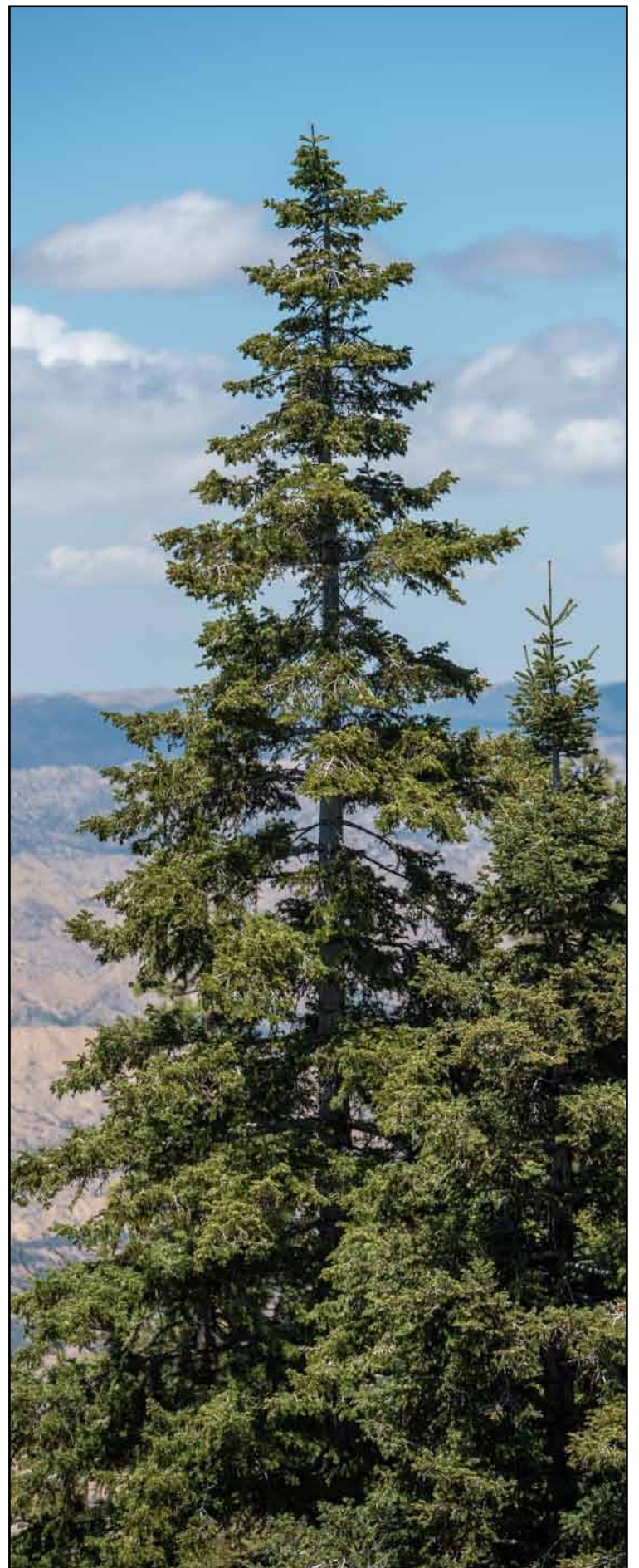
Another EV owner, Russell

Sydney, remarked over 11 years the maintenance on his EV consisted of new tires and a new battery, “not the battery that runs the car, but the 12-volt one (for accessories, in all gas cars).”

Finally, a story of adaptation by Jeff and Nanette from Hollywood who stopped by the event in Ojai, carrying their young child. They were travelling past the Temecula area to see the hot-air balloons, but the event was cancelled. So, they cooled their heels at a Hyundai dealer on President’s Day and out of the blue bought the latest Hyundai Ionic 5 because “it’s ahead of everybody else.”

They found a new use for it, as their travelling RV, plenty of room to sleep all three of them and no hotel bills. No high gas prices either!

Want to learn more about EVs? Here’s some links: www.cecsb.org/ev-101 www.GreenCarReports.com www.PluginAmerica.org



This strand of White Fir on Pine Mountain is part of its ecosystem, but they could be cut down or harmed unless the Forest Service plan is stopped. (Photo courtesy ForestWatch)

Sightings..

continued from page 4

April 5: **Call to Action** by Jim Taylor of Carpinteria informing our chapter of a developer who wants to build a resort on the bluffs above the Harbor Seal Sanctuary. It was a presentation to officials and the public, and no action was taken. It’s up to the developer to come back with a plan.

April 20: **Kiss the Ground**, a leading-edge film narrated by Woody Harrelson with a guest panel and moderator, Professor Jim Danza, a Sierra Club member. Held at Oxnard College.

April 13: **Announcement** in the *New York Times* that California intends to phase out new gas-powered cars by 2035 was shared by our Executive Director, Jon Ullman. The plan would require 35% of new passenger vehicles sold in CA would be powered by batteries or hydrogen; Jon bets most will be electric.

April 6: **A win** to another level for carbon neutrality happened at the SB County supervisors meeting when staff was directed “to develop an ordinance to restrict natural gas infrastructure and increase energy

efficiency performance and electric vehicle charging infrastructure for new construction and major renovations.” A reach code must also be developed (allowing jurisdiction to go above state regulations).

April 5: **Call to Action** by Jim Taylor of Carpinteria informing our chapter of a developer who wants to build a resort on the bluffs above the Harbor Seal Sanctuary. It was a presentation to officials and the public, and no action was taken. It’s up to the developer to come back with a plan.

March 31: **Stand up to SoCalGas** rally outside the Crowne Plaza Hotel where it sponsored an event announcing its study on alternative sites for the Ventura Compressor Station.

March 28: **Los Carneros Creek** hearing by the Goleta Planning Commission in which the Environmental Defense Center, Sierra Club and others testified to protect the creek and habitat from Heritage Ridge development. The proposed rentals would have 104 or 332 units available as a below-market price, which is supported. But we asked for a redesign to require a minimum 100-foot buffer from the creek.



An older (2014) and a newer (2022) Tesla were at the EV show in Ojai during Earth Day, proving the iconic car has held its attraction over the years. (Photo by John Hankins)



Take a Hike!

SANTA BARBARA-VENTURA CHAPTER

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

Panorama above Goleta by Robert Bernstein

SB OUTINGS



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.

A frequently updated on-line listing of all outings can be viewed at:

<http://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.

Fire Danger

Due to drought and heat, fire danger is extremely high so do not build any fires or smoke except in official campsites that have fire rings. For latest information on this and other aspects of the forest, go to:

www.fs.usda.gov/lpnf



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/santa-barbara-ventura
- www.LPFforest.org
- <https://LPFW.org>
- www.HikeLosPadres.com
- www.SBSierraClub.org
- www.SantaBarbaraTrailGuide.com
- www.SantaBarbaraHikes.com
- <https://SBTrails.org>
- www.VenturaCountyTrails.org
- <http://Hikes.VenturaCountyStar.com>



From our Mountains to the Sea where to go?

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

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

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

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

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

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

Click to access all hikes

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

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

The chapter's website:

<http://lospadres2.SierraClub.org>

A very special personal website

run by Diane Soini which includes our chapter hikes, blogs, connections and a dragonfly on the screen:

www.SantaBarbaraHikes.com

Visit Ventura has a lot of information about hikes in the county and the Channel Islands. Go here:

<https://visitventuraca.com/biking-hiking/>

Los Padres National Forest is the turf for Los Padres Forest Association and it's the 'bible' for the forest as it shares amazing information gleaned from hikers and others outdoor sites. Here's its hiking site (see QR code too)

www.HikeLosPadres.com

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

www.ovlc.org/trailfinder

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

<https://tinyurl.com/NearUsGuide>

Even more! UCSB's Deborah Williams created a new and expanded website as part of her "Public Lands and Waters" class. Here's the link: <https://50greatpubliclanddestinations.org/>

50 great places from here

Just in time for Summer, the website: "50 Great Public Land Destinations -- Santa Barbara and Beyond" has been updated and expanded by Deborah Williams. Check it out:

<https://50greatpubliclanddestinations.org/>

Williams, a Sierra Club supporter and volunteer, created the website for her "Public Lands

and Waters" class at UCSB to help her students and the public "discover amazing public land areas -- of all kinds -- within 300 miles of Santa Barbara."

The new updates enhance the amount of areas to explore, because each of the featured 50 Destinations now has additional links to nearby hikes, campgrounds, and/or other special public land areas.

As one person commented:

"This website offers a treasure trove of adventure and so many hidden gems," and natural, historic, community, recreational and cultural locations are included.

The ad-free site is easy to navigate, such as choosing a map location you might want to explore or search where a particular activity is special, such as mountain biking or simple, short walks. All destinations will give you the distance from UCSB

Covid Precautions

We will be observing any state/county rules effective at the time of the outing. Each participant should observe these rules and take any additional precautions that they deem necessary to protect their health. In addition, the following rules will be observed on Sierra Club outings.

- * If you feel sick, please do not attend the outing
- * Each participant will fill-out a sign-in sheet with clear contact information.
- * Masks will be required for any indoor activity such as carpooling.
- * Masks are optional outdoors.
- * Group size will be limited, depending on the type of outing.

Please note that in going on a Sierra Club outing you are potentially on a trip with individuals vaccinated and unvaccinated. It is your choice to attend the outing knowing this information.



UCSB's new website identifying "50 great places" within 300 miles of the campus, included this site high in Goleta's Painted Cave hills which has an excellent representation of Indigenous cave images. (Photo by Rance Wall)

June 12
ROCKY PINE RIDGE - SHORT ROUTE: From Camino Cielo, hike into this wonderful pine tree/rock region and skirt along the ridge line. Moderate with some boulder hopping and agility required, 4 miles round trip. Bring water and lunch. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ROBERT 805-685-1283 event@swt.org (SB)

June 18
FIR CANYON: Long (90 minutes) carpool to Davy Brown camp behind Figueroa Mt. Steep hike up the most beautiful canyon in the area to near the top of Figueroa Mt. Strenuous 6.5 miles round trip. End time is just an approximation. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B off A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ALEJANDRO 805-451-1239 (SB)

June 26
HOPE RANCH HIKE: Join us on a 2 miles round trip hike on the quiet roads of Hope Ranch. This hike will follow a hilly route beginning at Vieja Valley School. Bring water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. GERRY 805-964-5411 (SB)

July 10
PLAYGROUND: Explore the labyrinth of boulders forming a natural playground of West Camino Cielo. Some rock scrambling and agility required. Always a new route! Bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ROBERT 805-685-1283 event@swt.org (SB)

July 16
ARROYO BURRO TRAIL TO EAST CAMINO CIELO: Very Strenuous hike, 12 MRT 4000 ft elevation gain. May be hot, dress accordingly. Bring lunch and 3 liters water. Meet 8am at Jesusita Trailhead on San Roque Rd, Santa Barbara. Group limit 10. DALE 805-886-1674 (SB)

July 24
SAN MARCOS FOOTHILL PRESERVE HIKE: Join us on a 2 miles round trip hike in the expanded Foothill Preserve on established and unofficial trails. Bring water and sun protection. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. GERRY 805-964-5411 (SB)

July 30
RED ROCK TO GIBRALTAR DAM: LONG (45 min) carpool to Red Rock trailhead. Hike up the road to Gibraltar Dam, then back past a popular swimming area. Moderate 6.5 miles round trip. Optional side trip to old mercury mine adds 4 miles. Bring swimsuit, wading shoes, lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ALEJANDRO 805-451-1239 (SB)

EAVESDROPS

"I don't have the patience to fish, but I can sit for 90 minutes waiting for the light to be right."

~ Local photographer Mike Eliason, quoted in *Newsmakers TV* about his newly published photo book, "Santa Barbara and Beyond" via Shoreline Publishing Group. He has spent decades capturing iconic images of local disasters, weather, people and more. Over the years, his photos have graced the *Condor Call* cover photo and inside pages over the years.

<https://youtu.be/CqKENDaIZpY>

TRAIL TALKS

Hiking the Channel Islands Creating trail plan for SB

Get to know more about our local Channel Islands and learn how new trails are created in Santa Barbara County through two Zoom presentations featuring local trail experts, courtesy of the Santa Barbara Public Library.

Thursday, June 9, 5:30-6:30pm features *Hiking & Backpacking on the Channel Islands*.

During the last ice age, the four islands off our coast -- Anacapa, Santa Cruz, Santa Rosa, and San Miguel -- were all part of a single, larger island called Santarosae. This talk will highlight the hiking and backpacking opportunities on these four islands today, as well as describe an imagined traverse of the now submerged super

island of Santarosae.

Join local author James Wapotich as he shares images and stories from hiking, backpacking, and camping on the four islands. He has hiked many of the trails and has visited all five islands within Channel Islands National Park. An experienced backpacker and trail guide he also writes the Santa Barbara News-Press hiking column, *Trail Quest*.

Thursday, June 16, 5:30-6:30pm, *Building a Comprehensive Trails Plan for Santa Barbara County: Where? What? How and Who?* with Ray Ford.

In the next few years Santa Barbara County will be completing a trails master plan that could call

for new trail access. An inventory is underway about current trail access and analyzing new potential routes. This talk will provide an in-depth look at what we have, where new trails might be added and how this might occur.

Ray Ford has more than a decade of experience designing, rehabilitating, and repairing trails in the Santa Barbara area, and has coordinated and led trail projects for the Santa Barbara Trails Council and Los Padres Forest Association.

He is the author of numerous books and maps on hiking, backpacking, and mountain biking in the Santa Barbara area including *Santa Barbara Day Hikes* (1975-present), *Trails of the San Rafael Wilderness* (1974), *Santa Barbara Mountain Biking* (1992), *Santa Barbara Road Rides* (1992), *Santa Barbara Wildfires* (1991) and the recently revised *Santa Barbara Front Country Trails* map. He is the outdoors writer for Noozhawk, and his website is www.sboutdoors.com

To register for the talks, go to the Santa Barbara Public Library's home page <https://tinyurl.com/LibrarySBC> select the Calendar, and then click on the specific event; or contact James to be included on email list announcing the talks: jwapotich@yahoo.com

CA clubs asks

Please support Sierra Club California, your voice for the environment in the state capitol.

We advocate for environmental politicians and grade them, educate frontline activists, reduce plastics and toxic substances and protect and enjoy CA lands and waters.

Also important for the Santa Barbara-Ventura Chapter is that the Sierra Club California PAC is the only source of funds we can use to contribute on behalf of our members to our local endorsed candidates.

We are volunteer run; please donate here: <https://tinyurl.com/CAsierraclub>



Our region is designated as in "Extreme Drought" condition (See story pg. 4). Fire danger is high, noted by tough rules in the National Forest. Harmon Canyon (story below) is intended as a natural fire break. (Photo courtesy of SB County Fire)

Warm up to Harmon

The arrival of hotter temperatures this time of year triggers visible change across the hillsides, with green giving way to tan and yellow.

Harmon Canyon Preserve in Ventura County is no exception. The above-average rainfall of the 2021-22 winter season promoted extra growth; unfortunately, much of it is composed of invasive species: wild mustard, tamarisk, and milk thistle.

Visitors to Harmon over the past few months may have noticed work crews "brushing" (removing overgrowth) alongside trails, to make them passable again. Visitors on Sunday or Monday mornings might even notice volunteers with the Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program (WHIP) removing these invasive plants by hand.

As vegetation dries out, and seeds get dispersed, the stage is set for further spread of these species. If you are interested in helping with this important work, sign here: www.venturalandtrust.org/events

Preserve visitors will also notice a new feature at Harmon, its first one-way, downhill only trail. Here's a video from a mountain biker's helmet camera -- a wild and wonderful ride! See it here: <https://youtu.be/RHgodPGZPRA>

Descending from the top of the Goldenberg Overlook to the dog turn-around sign, the Ropersmith Family Trail is open to all users. It will help to reduce user conflict on Long Canyon Road and provide a nice loop experience for those

able to hike or cycle all the way to the Overlook.

Frequent visitors to Harmon will also notice several new programs and events onsite. From guided hikes in English and Spanish to programs exploring art in nature to opportunities to learn about native plants and pollinators, and more, Ventura Land Trust is offering a variety of new events and programs for people of all ages.

To see upcoming events, visit the link above.:

Visitation to the canyon is high, and ever-growing. In fact, recent estimates suggest that as many as 175,000 will visit there in 2022!

But keep in mind that although the parking lot may be full, once you get out on the trails, the canyon is so large that it can still feel like you have the place to yourself.

Ventura Land Trust is now calling upon those of you who have fallen in love with Harmon Canyon to support the capital campaign. and thanks to the generosity of a VLT donor, a \$50,000 matching grant is currently available, so your gift is doubled. Go to: www.VenturaLandTrust.org/harmoncanyoncampaign

Gifts of all sizes are welcome, and many naming opportunities are available/ Volunteers are always welcome as is the opportunity to be a docent. So much more on the website: www.VenturaLandTrust.org



A local section of the California Coastal Trail along the Gaviota Coast is part of a county trails plan you can hear during a zoom event. (Photo by Ray Ford)



These folks are clearly having fun on a Sierra Club trip for Yosemite day hikes. Choose yours either in or outside the U.S. (Photo by Pat Stevens)

Club trips amaze

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Welcome to simple things

By Jim Hines

It is our sacred duty as human beings to protect our earth. Walk gently on the earth, recycle, care for the land, enrich the soil organically, grow healthy organic fruits and vegetables to nourish our bodies, adopt a homeless pet, protect our wildlife and do no harm to animals.

A tall order of simple ways which humankind needs to take immediate action on to save our planet.

We all have inherited the special place of Mother Earth, we cannot forsake her, we must stand up for her, the earth has done us no harm so why are we harming her?

Each single action we as individuals take to save our earth does matter and does make a difference and when we join forces with likeminded individuals and organizations to save our planet, we even make a bigger difference.

My daily challenges in my Sierra Club campaigns to Protect Wildlife and Wild Places across our nation is to prevent the killing of our endangered wildlife and stop the destruction of our great natural areas and wild ecosystems.

But each of us needs to be strong emotionally and physically first, so eat healthy, take care of our bodies, spend quiet time in nature, keep a healthy positive mind so that you can move forward in a gentle positive way to protect Mother Earth.

In addition to my work in campaigns, my daily routine includes recycling, gardening and walking in nature all of which help me to better myself and the world around me.

Live simply...buy less... recycle...reuse...and stand up for Mother Earth.
For the wild, Jim



The official opening of Ventura Land Trust's Harmon Canyon was held on Earth Day which was blessed by the Chumash, VIPs and supporters. Executive Director Melissa Baffa welcomed the crowd and the public to Ventura's newest and biggest land conservancy, open for free from dawn to dusk. ((Photo by John Hankins)

Become a Member

As a Ventura Land Trust member, you'll join a community of people who love nature and support VLT's efforts to conserve open space, restore habitat, and offer environmental education programs that inspire the next generation of land stewards. **Goodness is growing - join today!**

- **EXPLORE** Experience protected lands on members-only guided outings.
- **LEARN** Members receive the *Outlook* newsletter twice a year.
- **PROTECT** VLT preserves are protected forever and open daily at no charge because of support from members like you.

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Condors released in Northern California

“Prey-Go-Neesh Keech Ke-Me’-Yehl – Condors Have Come Home!”

For the first time in more than a century, the endangered California condor soared the skies over the state’s redwood forests along the far northern coast and more releases are expected in the future.

Two captive-bred male condors (*Prey-go-neesh* in Yurok) play a principal role in the Yurok tribe’s creation story and is prominently featured in its White Deerskin and Jump Dances. The

birds were released from a pen in Redwood National Park on May 3, under a project aimed at restoring the giant vultures to their historic habitat in the Pacific Northwest.

“They just jumped up and took flight off into the distance,” said Tiana Williams-Claussen, of the region’s Yurok tribe.

The release was a collaboration between the tribe, National Parks Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), taking place in the northern California redwood forest, containing some of the

planet’s tallest trees.

Now, the forest also contains some of the planet’s largest — and most endangered — birds which disappeared from the area around 1892.

Once, the California condor ruled the skies across western North America; their nine-foot wingspans casting shadows on habitats as diverse as the arid scrubland of southern California to the forests of the Pacific Northwest.

But by 1980s, the global condor population had dropped to 27 birds, decimated in part by hunting and lead poisoning. Now, the population in California, Arizona and Utah stands at just over 300 birds.

It was here in SoCal when the recovery started in 1983. The USFWS teamed up with the L.A. Zoo and San Diego Wild Animal Park to start the first-ever captive breeding facilities, now numbering four.

In 1987 the condor went extinct in the wild, last captured in Southern California for the zoo breeding project to bring

them back from the brink of extinction with only 22 of them sighted that year. By 1991 there were enough adolescent condors that it was possible to release them into the wild, but that didn’t happen until 2003 and by 2008 there were more condors released into the wild than in captivity. Breeding facilities in addition to the first two came online via Santa Barbara and Oregon zoos, Chapultepec Zoo in Mexico City and in Boise, Idaho.

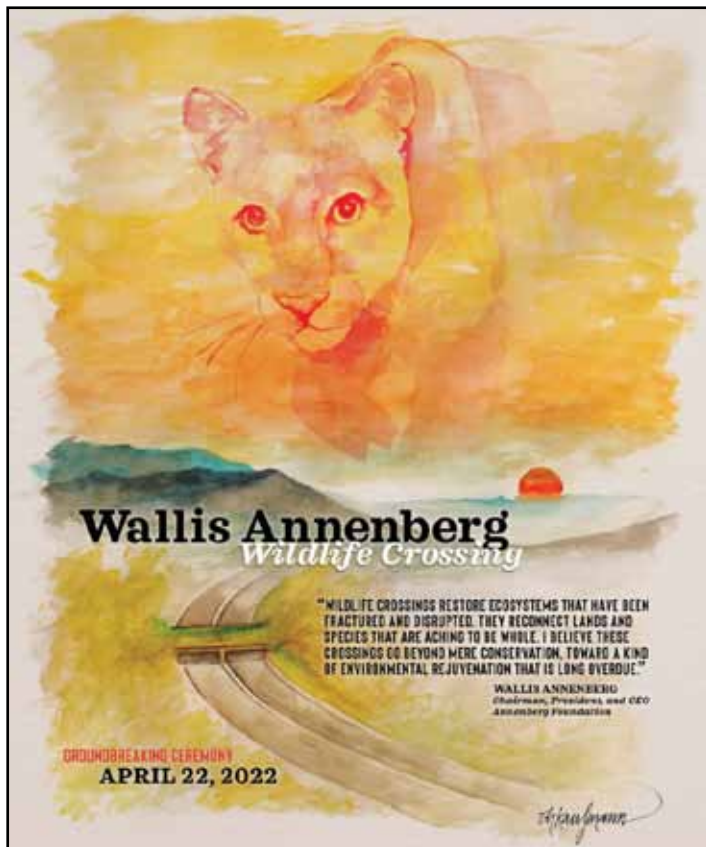
Despite success, the condor is still listed a critically endangered because of human activity, notably lead poisoning. USFWS reports in the last 20 years there were 120 documented deaths from lead poisoning, half of all 234 condor deaths. California started banning lead ammunition in 2019. To keep track, go to:

<https://tinyurl.com/CondorsStory>

The Yurok Tribe started working on condor reintroduction in 2008.

More details at: www.YurokTribe.org

~ By ‘Condor’ John Hankins



The ground was broken on Earth Day for one of our nation’s largest wildlife crossings. Design calls for vegetation, spanning 10 traffic/exit lanes over Hwy 101 at Liberty Canyon, Agoura Hills. It will connect the Simi Hills and Santa Monica Mountains. (Poster image contributed)



Condors awaiting release in Northern California. (Photo Courtesy USFWS)