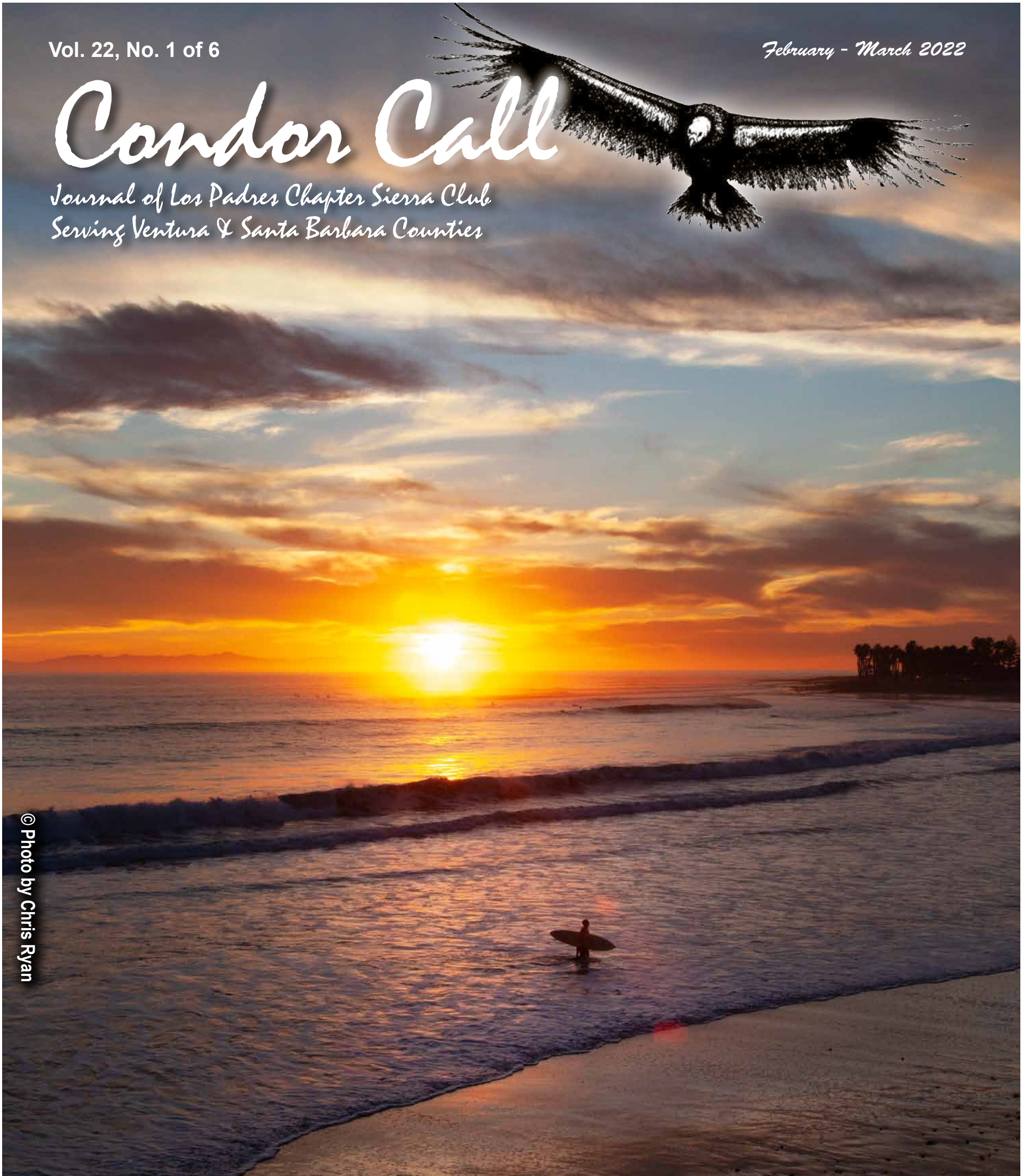


Vol. 22, No. 1 of 6

February - March 2022

Condor Call

Journal of Los Padres Chapter Sierra Club
Serving Ventura & Santa Barbara Counties



© Photo by Chris Ryan

Showdowns ... Bye 2021 ... Junk mail ... Harmon(y) ... Donors!

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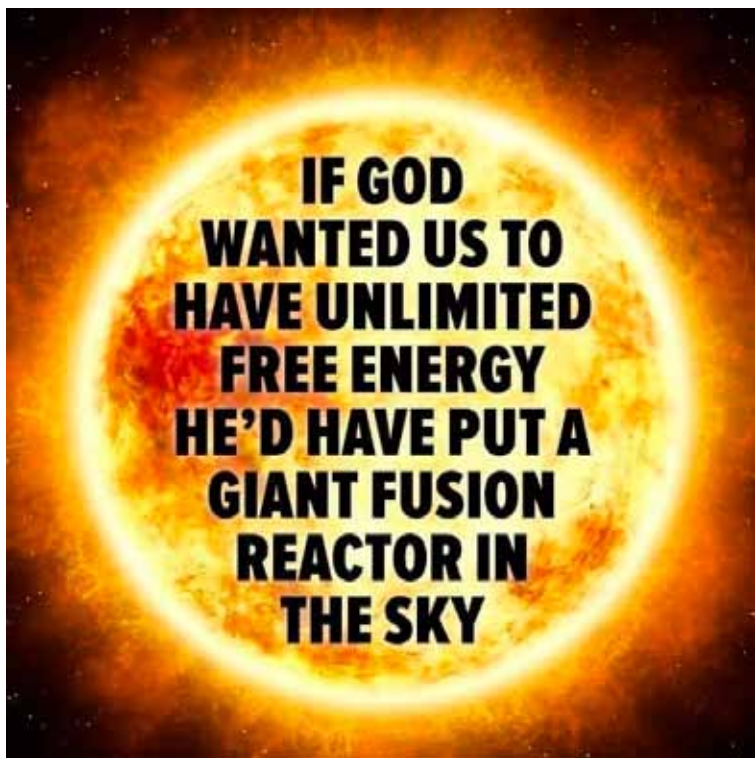
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Pg 7

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Beware of those who would block the sun

By Jon Ullman
Chapter ED

As we speak, monopolies are unleashing an unprecedented attack on Californians' access to the sun.

The changes proposed in California would "decimate the cost effectiveness of rooftop solar," according to the Sierra Club.

Having worked on clean energy and climate issues in Florida and California, I've seen what happens when a monopoly seeks full control. *Don't let California go down that path.*

One quick way is to tell Governor Newsom to Save California Solar here:

<https://tinyurl.com/CAsaveSolar>

Both California and Florida investor-owned energy corporations are seeking to stall the rooftop solar market with help from a national web of utility industry lobbyists and think tanks. Florida-based, anti-rooftop NextEra is known as a large clean-energy contractor to SoCal Edison among others nationwide.

Its monopoly, Florida Power and Light (FPL), not only is extinguishing the solar rooftop market, but only providing 3% of utility solar. Meanwhile, FPL generates close to 75% of its electricity from fossil fuels.

NextEra has become so

brazen; it may be a threat to democracy itself. Two years ago, Florida State Senator José Javier Rodríguez (D) lost reelection by 34 votes to Ileana Garcia, Republican founder of Latinas for Trump ... but a "ghost candidate" who shared the same last name as José Javier Rodríguez, received 6,000 votes. The real Rodríguez is an FPL watchdog and rooftop solar advocate endorsed by Sierra Club Florida.

The Miami Herald and Orlando Sentinel revealed that Alexis Rodriguez was paid to siphon votes, through a web of dark money consultants working closely with Florida Power and Light, a NextEra Energy company. Alexis Rodriguez took a plea deal and is now helping prosecutors. NextEra's connection to the loss of Jose Javier Rodriguez continues to make headlines in Florida as more people who carried out the scheme are charged.

I don't think California is Florida yet, but it must repel the utility power grab.

We need a lot more utility-scale and rooftop solar in California, but no monopoly should ever be allowed to own the sun.

Again, tell Gov. Newsom to Save California Solar:

<https://tinyurl.com/CAsaveSolar>

You can also call his office at



Nina Danza of the Ventura Sierra Club is helping the California Institute of Environmental Studies reactivate a nursery for restoration plants on Santa Cruz Island in January – but she wasn't alone as eight volunteers signed up and did other clean-up activities. On land, Nina is hosting a volunteer event every Sat & Sun through February to water and weed the newly planted native bee-butterfly-pollinator species. Details on www.meetup.com/sierraclubventura



ENERGY RAP

Showdowns at the not OK corral

By Katie Davis
Chapter Chair

Santa Barbara Showdown

Marking the January anniversary of the 1969 oil spill, the *Santa Barbara Independent* posed the provocative question, "Is Big Oil Dead in Santa Barbara?" It called recent developments, "so wildly unlikely they would not have been imaginable even a few years ago."

"Oil platforms — immovable anchors on our horizon — are

County of Santa Barbara



**DEADLINE
NOW FEB 15**

Your input on SB County's 2030 Climate Action Plan draft is extended to Feb 15!

To learn details and/or comment:

<https://tinyurl.com/1ClimateSB>

916-445-2841, M - F from 9-5. Be patient if lines are busy and keep calling. Here's a sample script.

"My name is ___ and I live in ___. I expect Governor Newsom to take a stand against the Solar Tax and in favor of making rooftop solar more affordable for middle- and working-class people, not less. I see this issue as a test for Governor Newsom's commitment to addressing rate hikes, blackouts and air pollution. I expect him to side with the people, not the utilities. Thank you."

COVER PHOTO

Surfing in Ventura under one of our lovely sunsets we've had lately (as well as good surf for boards and kites). Photographer Chris Ryan is an Adventure/Conservation photographer and Sierra Club member. Like what you see? He has many other fine photos at: www.ChrisRyanPIX.com

now being decommissioned. Three proposed onshore projects that would have generated roughly 700,000 metric tons of greenhouse gases a year are all but dead. And a company as seemingly omnipotent as ExxonMobil appears on the brink of being shut down for the indefinite future."

This is good news indeed, though stopping ExxonMobil is not yet a done deal. While the SB Planning Commission has recommended denial of ExxonMobil's proposal to restart offshore wells along the Gaviota coast, the Board of Supervisors still needs to vote on this. With no pipeline, it aims to truck the oil on the 101 via 24,800 roundtrip tanker trucks each year. That hearing has been delayed once again and is currently scheduled for March 8.

Ventura Showdown

An oil showdown is coming to Ventura County soon too. In 2020 the Ventura County Board of Supervisors adopted ordinances which require discretionary review of certain new and expanded oil and gas exploration and production and compliance with modern health and safety standards governing those operations.

The oil industry prefers to avoid scrutiny of the environmental and health impacts of their projects and having to comply with new requirements, such as oil well setbacks away from homes and schools.

So, they funded a referendum and gathered enough signatures to get the question on the June 2022 ballot.

continued on page 2

Meet our leaders

First of the year brings appointments and elections of our hard-working volunteers in the Los Padres Chapter of the Sierra Club. That means these citizens are putting in huge hours *without pay* to serve their community for the greater good of the environment.

But first a shout-out to our retiring treasurer Richard Hunt who's served us without complaints and some humor over 45 years! Think about that. In December we gave him the first-ever Marathon Volunteer Award.

Since we mention all these people are volunteers, we still need donations to run the club. Donate here:

www.SierraClub.org/donate/1000

Chapter posts

The Executive Committee is the 'point of the spear' for environmental action. Chair Katie Davis and Vice-Chair Jim Hines will serve another term, indicating trust and pride for their leadership.

Newly appointed Bernard Mines will take the place of retiring Treasurer Richard Hunt and long-term Secretary Gerry Ching will again serve the ExCom, writing its history via the minutes.

Santa Barbara Group

The four incumbents won the

SB Group elections: Katie Davis, Alex Pujo, Robert Bernstein, and Luz Reyes-Martin. Luz will become the Chair, giving Katie a break. All won in a landslide with no competition, meaning they are respected and doing a great job. Plus, there was a larger than usual turnout, possibly because of social media posts.

Conejo Group

Lots of changes here, notably Niki Stokols taking over from long-term Chair Hugh Warren, thanks Hugh!

Niki is a 2015 alumni of our Wilderness Basics Course, but had much experience prior to that, such as leading hikes with children from the Children's Nature Institute, and an Environmental Educator for the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains in 2015. She's been a hike leader for Trails Education Days in the Conejo Valley since the early 1990's to the present and occasionally leads hikes for the Conejo Group.

Also, the group's secretary is Marcey Pascual, and the Outings Chair is Gerry Lynham.

For general information regarding the group, or its outings email:

conejogrouphiking@gmail.com



Volunteers hosted by the Ventura Sierra Club didn't just do restoration work on Santa Cruz Island, they also enjoyed sightseeing along Potato Harbor.

Showdowns...

continued from page 1

Federal Showdown

Unfortunately, the Build Back Better Act with all its great and desperately needed climate provisions failed to pass last year after a dramatic rejection by Senator Joe Manchin. Let's hope it gets resurrected.

In addition, the Public Lands Acts including the Central Coast Heritage Protection Act were stripped out at the last minute of a must-pass Senate bill in December. However, some good things related to chemical cleanup of PFAs, toxics, and climate change resilience and preparedness did make it into that end-of-year defense bill.

In addition, the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary proposed in federal waters off the coast of Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties is making progress towards designation with a carve out for offshore wind. That Morro Bay Wind Energy area is waiting for environmental review for leasing.

The Biden administration is also expected to issue a draft of a 5-year offshore oil leasing plan in the coming months, which is NOT expected to include the Pacific Ocean.

Oil Settlement

The SB County District Attorney announced a settlement related to the March 2020 oil truck accident and spill that released 4,533 gallons of oil into the Cuyama River, threatening the Twitchell reservoir, a drinking water source for Santa Maria valley.

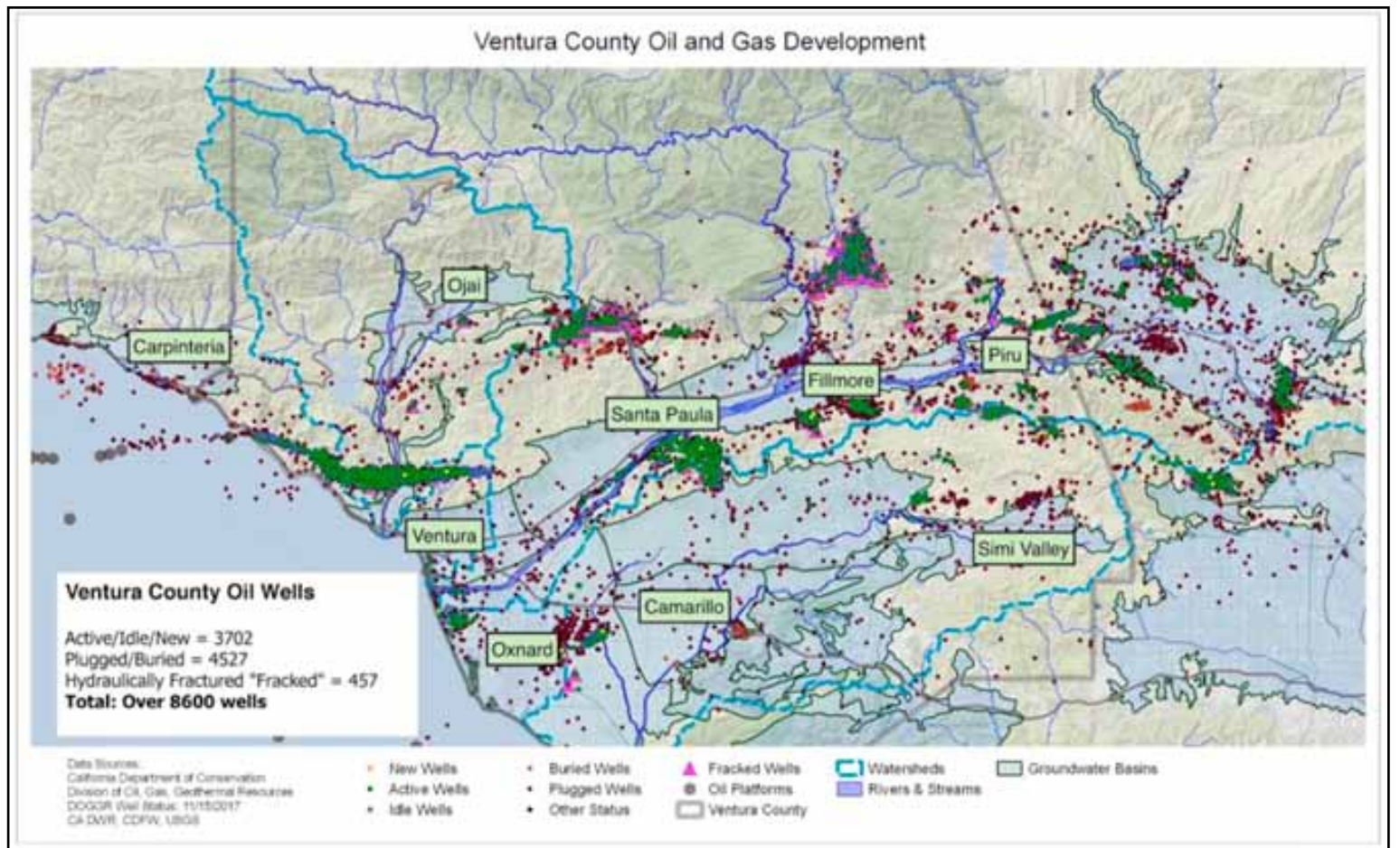
The DA found on Jan. 24 that the truck was driven at an unsafe speed, causing the oil tank to detach from the truck, and roll down an embankment into the river. The driver of the truck,

Jesse Villasana, pled guilty to a misdemeanor and his employer, Golden Valley Transfer, Inc., has agreed to pay \$514,320 in reimbursement for clean-up of the spill, remediation, and penalties.

EAVESDROPS

"Nuclear energy has been creeping up in public estimation, despite its long record of unfulfilled promise and cataclysmic missteps."

~ Michael Hiltzik, LA Times columnist, warning on Jan. 9 about moves to reconsider Diablo Canyon's expected shutdown in 2024, quoting then (1960's) Sierra Club Director David Brower jokingly describing nuclear reactors as "complex technological devices for locating earthquake faults."



VENTURA COUNTY

Oil review faces June referendum

Residents in Ventura County are gearing up for a battle that will come to a head this spring. Multiple initiatives will be on the ballot in June regarding the level of environmental review required for oil drilling under what have been called "antiquated" oil industry permits.

Currently Ventura County has two oil industry permitting processes. It is the only county in California with these so-called "antiquated" permits issued in the 1930's, 40's, and 50's. These old permits have no expiration date, no limit to the number of wells drilled

and are exempt from health and safety reviews that now apply to newer permits.

As a result, there are about 3,800 active oil wells in the county that can be drilled deeper, use more complex and expensive drilling methods and be expanded without environmental reviews. Over 127,000 acres of our farmland, open spaces and watersheds could be affected by these types of permits.

Last year, a majority of the Ventura County Board of Supervisors (Steve Bennett, John Zaragoza, and Linda Parks) voted to

bring an end to this dual permitting regime and use a single, consistent process for new oil drilling.

According to public records, the oil industry spent \$1M to bring the issue to voters to decide an outcome on the June ballot. June primary voters will determine whether the 2-tiered permit structure remains in place, or whether instead all new wells will be subjected to modern environmental review.

To learn more about Ventura County's oil and gas program, go to:

<https://vcrma.org/oil-and-gas-program>

Help solve offroad conflicts

Do one, two, three, or even more of the issues below bother you? Interest you? Upset you? Make you feel some action is needed toward better management?

~ Off-road vehicles (motorcycles, electric bicycles, ATVs, snowmobiles, jet-skis, etc., whether creating noise, conflict with hikers, or impacts to ecosystems.

~ Overflight noise impacts at parks.

~ Bicycle trail conflicts and unsuitable uses.

~ Accessible recreation.

~ Recreation fees charged on public lands.

~ Commercialization and privatization of recreation on public lands.

If so, let the Sierra Club's Recreation Issues SubTeam hear from you!

The Sub Team was recently created from the club's national Wildlands and Wilderness Team, and it seeks members.

Recreation Issues was a standalone team from 1999, but now it works within the Wildlands Team.

Its mission is to assist volunteers, build networks and help coordinate the Club's conservation efforts on recreation issues, primarily on public lands.

A major concern is the way that land managers, under the relentless advocacy of mechanized recreation, are steadily converting

non-motorized trails into

mechanized-motorized trails.

This mechanized use conflicts

with potential future wilderness

designations, among other

problems.

To help or learn more

contact Sub Team Chair Karl

Forsgaard.

karlforsgaard@comcast.net



Conflicts between users sharing the trails is becoming more critical, such as this scary photo of a hiker and motorcycle. Want to do something about it, Read the article. (Photo contributed)

Condor Call

SierraClub.org/Los-Padres ~ All phone numbers 1-805 area code

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Photos, news, tips always welcome!

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Typography and production by Dan Fuller

Party and progress 2021

The Sierra Club volunteers in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties work hard for the environment, social justice, free public hikes and more.

They can also party and have fun.

That happened at the annual December holiday event that gave a capsule view of the Los Padres Chapter's wins and challenges.

"We have 'wins' this year, it was a difficult year and sometimes you can get down," said Katie Davis, our Chapter Chair.

As always, the club is about its members and volunteers. A special shout-out went to Richard Hunt, our treasurer for 45 years who's retiring this year, not only doing the books under the club's complicated rules but helping with fundraising. He never wanted credit for it, but as member David Gold said, "Richard, we're making a fuss."

"I've been happy to do it, as opposed to picking up trash and stuffing envelopes, with my background I could do it!" he said.

Another key member who is also retiring is Teresa Norris (see story back page) who was instrumental in creating the wildly popular Wilderness Basics Course in 2010.

Fun stuff included Holiday

Food Tips from Gerri French, a kayak trip raffle, a David & Goliath Award, more Spanish language prospects and the "award winning *Condor Call* and editor" which has a print and online version, and its features are part of a blog *Condor Call Currents*. All of which helps reach more citizens with issues.

Some of the 'wins' include lobbying for 100% Community Choice energy, now a reality in both counties, success in convincing SoCal Edison to use a huge battery storage system instead of a petroleum powered Peaker Plant, a revival of Outings, stopping Cat Canyon oil fields, a likely success against Exxon using trucks to transport oil, backing wind energy now under construction and lobbying for alternative energy, to name a few.

Andrew Christie of our sister/brother chapter in San Luis Obispo was effusive in our chapter's support of the proposed Chumash Heritage Marine Sanctuary that was first proposed 40 years ago by Chumash leader Fred Collins and now under study by the feds.

"The Los Padres Chapter really worked the levers with politicians to build that support. We believe we're on the road to a win.



Richard Hunt, out of the office for some fresh air.



30x30 or else dirty

What IS 30 X 30? And why?

It's a global movement that seeks to conserve 30 percent of lands and coastal waters by the year 2030, or 30 X 30.

Biologists tell us we're in a global crisis for biodiversity, as countless species of animals and plants could be extinct in 50 to 100 years—unless we drastically change our sprawling land use and protect at least "Half Earth" which is needed as places where nature can dominate.

Aiming for 30 percent over the next decade is seen as an achievable "steppingstone" toward an eventual 50 percent—called "Nature Needs Half". The Sierra Club has joined the global Nature Needs Half initiative.

We need to preserve Nature so that Nature can preserve us—as, truly, it is our support system.

California became the first state to adopt 30 X 30 as official state policy, in an October 2020 Executive Order by Governor Gavin Newsom. And in January 2021, a week after his inauguration, President Biden gave a national 30 X 30 executive order—his program is dubbed "America the Beautiful."

In addition to fighting species extinction, 30 X 30 directly addresses climate change: protecting natural lands enhances the carbon sequestration ability of lands and waters—whether unlogged

forests, undisturbed desert soils, grasslands, or marine habitats.

Thus, it connects the fight for biodiversity and the fight to mitigate the climate crisis. Sierra Club volunteers and staff have long pushed both these goals, and now 30 X 30 embraces both and ties them together.

At present some 12 percent of the nation and about 22 percent of California is considered "conserved".

Sierra Club in California set up the California 30 X 30 task force—with representatives from most of our Chapters which have identified local places important to them for conservation.

Local conservation priorities in our Chapter are saving the Gaviota Coast from development and in Ventura, making the Ventura and Santa Clara rivers as natural as possible. Both counties also work on renewable energy.

What about you? Get involved by contacting your Chapter's rep on the statewide 30 by 30 task force; they are Jim Hines for Ventura and Katie Mullin for Santa Barbara:

jhcasitas@gmail.com and mullin@shelter-vet.com

You can also contact Anne Henny or Vicky Hoover, co-chairs of the statewide task force at:

Vicky.hoover@sierraclub.org or anneth6@sbcglobal.net



The Ventura Sierra Club's jaunt to Santa Cruz Island to do environmental tasks was not all work as the dolphins and other marine life are part of the experience. (Photo by Nina Danza)



See catch currents at:
www.sierraclub.org/lospadres

Most meetings continue online for now

Group News

www.SBSierraClub.org

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/LosPadres

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/los-padres/conejo

www.sierraclub.org/los-padres/conejo/outings

GREETINGS FRIENDS

An ode to the land

By Jim Hines

An Ode to the land:

On how I walk on thee, soiled shoes treading one in front of the other, land you lay bare, a bare beauty like that of a sweet-skinned lass, I love you land, I feel your grip upon my soul, land which looks useless but is rich in all which provides for mankind. I walk the land, I horse ride on the land, I make love on the land, I sleep on the land . . . land you never end . . . land you never cease to amaze me.

Land, which is green from sweet rains, land which browns in the warmth of the sun, a land renewal we humans call for, a land revival . . . yes oh yes, we need to respect, love and care for you in a better way.

Land you provide for us, land you supply us with all that we need . . . land which is brown, black, red, gold, land which knows no other way than to give. The wind sweeps across the land, blowing my hair, ruffling my shirt and sending seeds across the land to start life anew.

Land who never ends, land which drinks up the water rushing

across her, land which carries a heavy burden of man's aggressions, land which wildlife walks on, lives on and dies on.

Land where I grew up, still open space and preserved, land where my father is buried under the great pine tree with roots deep into the land . . .

a land that I am rooted to as well . . . thank you to my father's love for the land.

The land needs renewal, land which needs carrying for from a loving and tender hand.

Land I seek ye oh land, yes I seek, where will the land take me?

Help us reach our 30x30 goal: 900 Wilderness Guardians by June 30

DONATE TODAY >>
<https://wildernessguardian.sierraclub.org/>

Climate Watch

How to dunk the junk mail

Editor's Note: Every week seems to bring news of the worsening climate crisis and the urgency of needed action, but it can be hard for an individual to know where to start. This year we will feature specific actions you can take authored by UCSB lecturer in environmental studies, Deborah Williams.

Take individual action, starting with cancelling unwanted catalogues and other junk mail.

Every year about 100 million trees are cut down for junk mail and 28 billion gallons of water are consumed in support of its production. The average American adult receives an astounding amount of junk mail annually — about 41 pounds of it. How much do you receive?

Every tree that is cut down for junk mail is a tree that could have been left standing to absorb carbon dioxide, provide habitat, and support other important ecosystem services. Junk mail is also annoying,

so it's a win/win/win. And it's easy.

Here are some quick ways to stop getting junk mail and unwanted paper waste.

~ **Catalogues:** Register with Catalog Choice, a nonprofit organization dedicated to saving trees and water — while reducing greenhouse gas and solid waste — through eliminating unwanted catalogues. Once you are signed-up (no charge), every time you receive an unwanted catalogue, it's easy to go on the site and cancel it. www.catalogchoice.org

~ **Member catalogues/magazines:** For some member organizations — like Costco — you will need to go into your member account and change your preferences so that you do not receive their magazine or other information by mail. For Costco, click My Account, then select Preferences.

~ **Credit and insurance card solicitations:** As recommended by the U.S. Federal Trade Commission, you can opt out of prescreened

offers of credit and insurance for five years by calling 1-8880-5-OPT-OUT (1-888-567-8688) or visiting www.optoutprescreen.com/?rf=t.

You do not need to provide your Social Security number and can complete this entirely online. It takes about a minute to do. To permanently opt out, you will also need to mail in a form found at www.optoutprescreen.com/form

~ **Other (magazines, mail offers, new catalogues):** Sign up with DMAChoice (the largest U.S. data and marketing association) and for a \$2 fee you can opt out of unwanted magazine offers, other mail offers and new catalogues for a period of ten years. Click here to remove your address from receiving Valpak blue envelopes: www.valpak.com/coupons/show/maillinglistsuppression

~ **Go paperless:** For utility bills, bank statements, and other official mail, whenever possible, choose to go paperless. If there isn't a paperless option, ask for one.

~ **Share this information** with others.

~ **Additional thoughts:** When you stop junk mail, you will save approximately 20 trees and 7,000 gallons of water.

According to a study funded by NASA, the creation of pulpwood generates the highest carbon release of all wood products. In its 2018 annual report, the USPS reported distributing over 77 billion pieces of junk mail (AKA standard presorted). Let's put a dent in that.

EAVESDROPS

"The cultural transformation and fight for justice inside the Sierra Club mirrors our work externally. We cannot realize our mission or goals externally if we are not living our values and empowering all of our people internally."

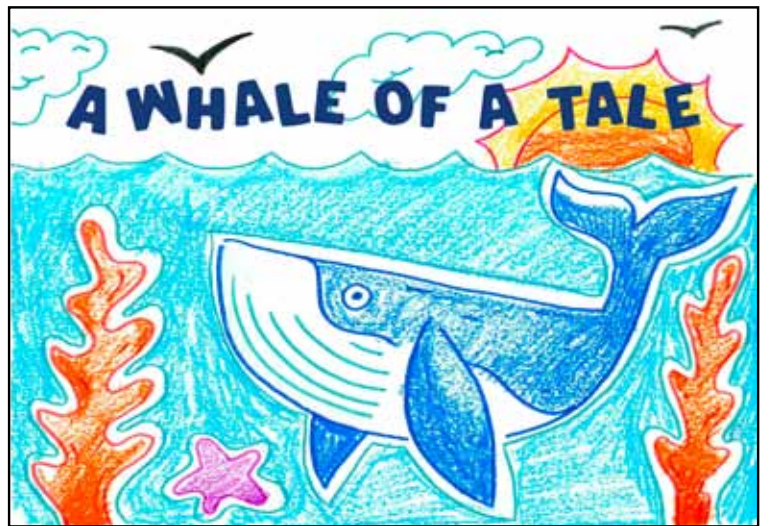
~ Michael Brune, Executive Director of the Sierra Club who stepped down at the end of 2021. He predicted, "The next generation of leadership will bring great things to the Club."



Condor John's 'collection' of magazines, flyers and whatnot. He promises to read more online and cancel junk mail, just like the story says. New Year's resolution? Watch this space. (Photo by John Hankins)



Despite the beautiful view and quote, this photo appears wistful as it was featured on our Wilderness Basics Course website, because it has been cancelled for the third year in a row, no thanks to Covid. Read the story next page.



Draw a super whale

To kick off its next major exhibit, *Whales Are Superheroes!* the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum is holding an immersive ocean adventure featuring artwork submitted by children in grades K-6.

The young artists' submission — by Feb. 28 — will include a free family pass to the museum. The art show is not limited to Santa Barbara County.

An interactive and immersive event, *A Whale of a Tale*, will feature audio and video components that bring the children's artwork to life and will be on display from April 15-May 15.

During that month, visitors will see a new permanent exhibit on whales and climate change. There's more: *The Wonder of Whales: Two Artists' Perspectives*, an exhibit by Kelly Clause and John Baran, and a special featuring

Holly Lohuis speaking about how whales affect the climate, along with Santa Barbara's application to be designated an international Whale Heritage Site, supported by the local Sierra Club.

Children are invited to submit their interpretation of a whale, its activities, and/or anything ocean-related, such as kelp, starfish, dolphins, and other sea creatures. Artwork must be done on 8½" x 11" white paper, using only crayons, colored pencils, and/or markers, and must be submitted by Feb. 28 to be included in the show.

For inspiration, the children are invited to watch the *Whale of a Tale* video: <https://vimeo.com/661045048>

For more details about submitting the art, call (805) 962-8404 or go to: www.SBMM.org

All the above are part of the multi-faceted exhibit, *Whales Are Superheroes!* which will explore the effect whales have on the ocean, climate and climate change, and air quality.

EVENTS

Feb 12: **Wildlife Tracking** at Ventura Land Trust's Harmon Canyon Preserve with Mike Watling. Easy 3-hour event starting at 8am. Identify wildlife via paw prints and scat. RSVP here: www.venturalandtrust.org/wildlifetracking

Feb 17: **Backcountry Update** by the Los Padres Forest Association at the main library in Santa Barbara. For details go to: www.LPforest.org

Feb 20: **Ansel Adams: The Man Behind the Camera**, a special Zoom with Adams' former assistant, Alan Ross, 2-3pm. An in-person exhibit runs through March 2. To sign up or learn more go here: <https://WildlingMuseum.org>

Feb 26: **Caminata Guiada En Español** En Big Rock Preserve (Spanish Guided Hike At Big Rock Preserve), 9 - 11am located on the Ventura River near Foster Park. RSVP via: leslie@VenturalandTrust.org

Figueroa Mountain Wildflower Guide

Beautiful wildflowers can be found on Figueroa Mountain at various times during wildflower season as well as throughout the Los Padres National Forest. Normally, the wildflowers start blooming in late February to early March and continue to April or May. Weather plays a big role in when flowers bloom and how long they stay. Let's see how many of these lovely blooms we can find. Ready...let's go!

CONTACT US
Santa Lucia Ranger District
Los Padres National Forest
1616 Carlotti Drive
Santa Maria, CA 93454
(805) 925-9536
hankw@fs.fed.us

How to identify wildflowers

What is the primary color of the flower?

WHITE & GREEN	YELLOW & ORANGE	PINK, RED & BROWN	BLUE & VIOLET

What is the shape of the flower?

ASYMMETRICAL OR IRREGULAR	2-3 PETALS	4-6 PETALS

7 OR MORE PETALS	NUMEROUS VERY THIN PETALS	FUSED, BELL OR TRUMPET SHAPED PETALS

How are the flowers arranged?

INDIVIDUAL FLOWERS (NO CLUSTERS)	ELONGATE CLUSTERS	ROUNDED OR FLAT CLUSTERS



WBC cancels

By Alisse Fisher
& Teresa Norris

Sad news for our Wilderness Basics Course community, it's not going to happen this year, again for the third year due to the pandemic.

The WBC board members voted unanimously to cancel the popular class for 2022 due to the risks posed by the Omicron variant.

Discussion brought up the following key points:

~ Gathering indoors with such a contagious strain increases the likelihood that any WBC class could be a spreader event.

~ Some of our key committee members did not plan to participate in-person this year and the first few classes would have difficulty functioning without them.

~ We have no backup backpack leaders. If just one leader were not available, we would have students who would be out of a backpack, or it would require rescheduling.

~ Given the challenges, there was a risk that students would not receive the usual highly organized training and the WBC brand could suffer.

Thanks to each and every one of the 35 volunteers for all you've contributed to WBC. We hope that next year will be a better year for all of us. We look forward to starting the planning process again later this year.



Credit: Michael Darter

Trust balancing conservation and recreation

By Dan Hulst

Humans share responsibility for the impact of our species on our planet. From flying abroad for vacation to watering the lawn during the hot days of summer, no deed goes without its associated footprint.

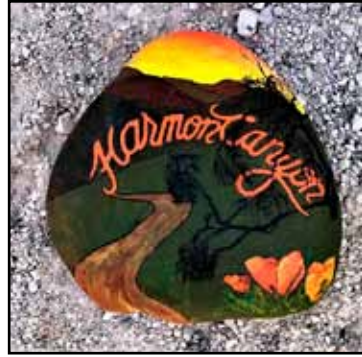
As Preserve Director for Ventura Land Trust, I am keenly aware of the impacts of humans on the landscapes I work in.

In 2020, Ventura Land Trust finalized the acquisition of Harmon Canyon. The property opened to the public for the first time and community members flocked to its trails. Seasoned hikers and first-time trail users alike could now explore the preserve and revel in its natural beauty. The opportunity to connect with nature was suddenly abundant and close to home.

The Sierra Club agrees and has started free public Outings at the Canyon.

However, this incredible opportunity for our community undoubtedly impacts our native plant and animal populations.

~ In 2020 a preserve visitor



documented killing a rattlesnake and shared the experience via social media.

~ Consistently, bags of dog poop are discarded alongside the

trails, rather than carried out for proper disposal.

~ Social trails pop up in designated restoration areas that have been marked as off-limits.

How do we justify these continuing impacts? If we really are a conservation organization, shouldn't we just keep Harmon Canyon off-limits to the public?

I wrestle with this question continually. I know that Ventura Land Trust is providing an opportunity for our community to connect with nature, and that the power of these connections cannot be understated. Some of the greatest conservationists credit their life's work to an early experience in nature that moved them to fight to protect the very places that inspired them.

When people have a connection to nature, they are more inclined to enjoy it, to advocate for it, to work toward its health

and vitality. Lovers of nature and users of our preserves support our mission via membership, donations, volunteerism, and advocacy.

And, as it turns out, responsible management of a landscape can go a long way in mitigating the impacts of visiting humans. On our preserves (where they are allowed), dogs must be kept on a leash. No off-trail travel is permitted. Preserves are closed when significant weather events create hazards for human visitation.

With proper planning and execution, Ventura Land Trust's conservation goals can be met while accommodating public access. The best part? You can help us make this a reality by contacting us to help balance conservation and recreation at Harmon Canyon:

docent@venturlandtrust.org

Our website is:

www.VenturaLandTrust.org

HINES CHRONICLES

Jim dares to predict 2022

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 December. Jim is our chapter vice-chair and conservation director who belongs to many wildlife groups.

Dec 4: **Heads up**, took part in a Zoom meeting of the Western States Petroleum Association (WSPA) yesterday. They talked about upcoming elections in 2022 and the number one area it's concerned about is Ventura County where two fossil fuels industry backed initiatives will be on the June 2002 ballot. (See story pg 2)

Dec 6: **Wildlife Team Update:** Top priority is to relist wolves as endangered, also policy to protect endangered Sage Grouse, wild horses and ban wildlife killing contests.

Dec 8: **Land Setback** because the U.S. Senate will NOT allow any national public lands bills, including the Central Coast Heritage Protection Act and Rim of the Valley Corridor Protection Act in the National Defense Authorization Act which will go to President Biden this week.

Dec 9: A **3-minute film** about the proposed Chumash Heritage Marine Sanctuary was released: <https://tinyurl.com/ChumashMarine>

Dec 15: **New Yorker Magazine** wrote an obituary for Gray Wolf OR-93 which walked from Northern CA to Ventura, calling us a "beachy exurban county."

Dec 17: **NOAA is inviting** public comment through Feb 24 on a draft plan and environmental assessment for Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary. To comment online Use Docket NOAA-NOS-2019-011 when you log into:

www.Regulations.gov

You may also mail to UCSB

Ocean Science Education Bldg. 514, SB CA 93106.

Dec 20: **Official request** to Interior to remove the name "Squaw" Creek in the Los Padres National Forest behind Fillmore has now been placed on the Secretary's list of offensive geographic names, which would include nationwide renaming on federal public lands.

Dec 20: **Build Back Better** legislation appears dead, so it's time we all put pressure on the federal government, perhaps to use Executive and Secretarial orders. I talk with VP Harris' climate advisor about this.

Dec 26: **My predictions** for us in 2022: Chumash Sanctuary proposal will be made official (passage may take two years), Los Padres Chapter will change our name in line with club policy to remove offensive name, also the LP National Forest ("Padres" referring to Mission-era priests), two land acts (see Dec 8 item) will not be passed, new redistricting in CA will favor SClub endorsees and Liberty Canyon Wildlife Overpass with start construction.

Jan 5, 2022: **Wildlife Team** has officially requested Sierra Club California to support a petition to designate the southern portion of steelhead trout as endangered, which includes rivers in Ventura and SB counties. (Jim is Chair of the Team). More info here: <https://lpfw.org/our-region/wildlife/steelhead/>

Jan 11: **Another \$10 million** is allocated via Gov. Newsom's budget towards the construction of the Liberty Canyon Wildlife Overpass in the Agoura Hills area.

Jan 18: **I just finished** speaking on behalf of the Sierra Club to the Organic Gardening Club of Ventura County, which invited me back. Over the next couple of months, I have engagements to speak to garden clubs (it used to be Rotary Clubs!).

Jan 20: **Surfrider Foundation** has asked me and our chapter to sign onto a letter declaring "an ongoing ecological disaster at Ormond Beach in Ventura." Here's a link to a YouTube video, it's disturbing: <https://youtu.be/gZGeLGMHSuw>

Jan 28: **I am supporting** ("on behalf of the Sierra Club") a \$5 million grant request from the City of Ventura for projects along the Ventura River Parkway Trail within the City. Repaving new access, new fencing, down lighting, greening along the trail, signage and public art on flood walls would all be part of it.

~ Edited by John Hankins



The line of staff and volunteers building trails at Harmon Canyon is Ventura Land Trust's recreation component while Preserve Director Dan Hulst is erecting a wildlife camera as part of its conservation component, which includes guzzlers, planting oaks and native plants and taking out invasive weeds. (Photo above is by Michael Darter, trail camera by Melissa Baffa who also donated it)

Hitch your legacy locally

What do you want your legacy to be?

A planned gift to the Los Padres Chapter will create a legacy that provides for a sustainable and healthy future for Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. Naming the chapter as a beneficiary in your will, living trust, or other estate plans creates a significant, meaningful, and enduring impact for the Chapter.

You can also choose to list the chapter in your life insurance policy, IRA, or other retirement plan. Whatever strategy you choose, planned gifts give you the benefits of remaining in

full control of your assets during your lifetime and the ability to modify your gift to address changing circumstances. As a bonus, under current tax law, there is no upper limit on the estate tax deduction for your charitable bequests.

Most donors define their gifts as a general use gift. This type of gift is most helpful to the Chapter because it allows us to direct funds to our most crucial conservation priorities. However, if you have a specific environmental or program interest, or if you wish to establish an endowment, we would be happy to assist you in planning a fit that meets your interests and the long-term

goals of the Chapter.

If you do decide to include the Los Padres Chapter in your plans, we hope you'll let us know. This information helps guide our long-term planning and allows us to express our thanks to you and to our community.

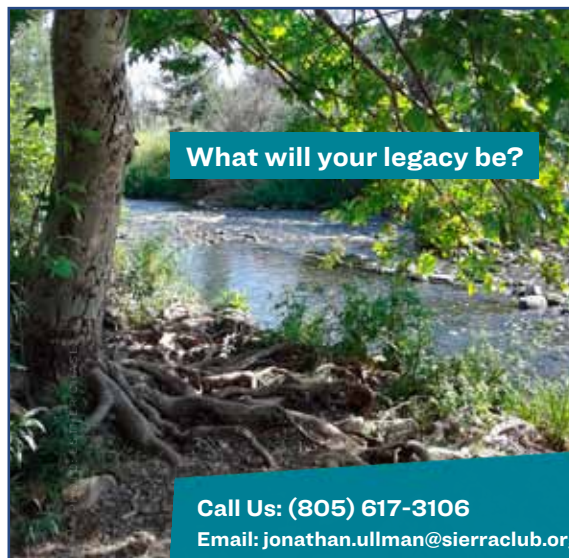
To request more information or to notify us about your plan, please contact Fundraising Chair, Emily Engel:

emilyaengel@gmail.com

Or Chapter Director Jonathan Ullman:

jonathan.ullman@sierraclub.org

Thank you for your support!



What will your legacy be?

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

Call Us: (805) 617-3106

Email: jonathan.ullman@sierraclub.org



SIERRA CLUB
LOS PADRES CHAPTER



Panorama above Goleta by Robert Bernstein

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://lospadres2.sierraclub.org>

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.

- <https://www.sierraclub.org/lospadres>
- 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>



When our club collaborated with SCAPE artists in October, awards were given out, but we wanted to single out Kevin Gleason's work entitled *Creek Flow Tunnel Trail*. We gave him a Sierra Club calendar and a certificate of appreciation. By the way, Kevin's work has appeared on the cover of *Condor Call* more than once. (Photo contributed)

SIGHTINGS

We've got links revisiting 2021

By John Hankins

Here's what we've been up to the last two months, pandemic be damned! Lots of good info, links. And fun at our

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.

Holiday Party.

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

Jan 25: **WASCO what?** The group recently formed to address all things relating to our watersheds. It is Watershed Alliance of South Coast Organizations, a conglomeration of both non-profits, companies and educational institutions. Catherine Mullin (SB Group) asked us to sign onto its efforts, but it doesn't seem to have a website yet.

Jan 25: **Climate Action** at Ventura Board of Supervisors discussed furthering 100% renewable electric energy as a mitigation and a retrofit program, supporting solar rooftops and more. Our Ventura Sierra Club sent out an action blast the day before urging our members and friends to support the items.

Jan 19: **No to Trucking Oil** email blast went to our members and friends via our

OUTINGS

Editor's note:

For Ventura County outings.

Go to:

www.MeetUp.com

SierraClubVentura.com

For Conejo Group outings (east Ventura), ask to get on its email list or visit its website:

ConejoGroupHiking@gmail.com

www.sierraclub.org/los-padres/conejo

February 12

GIBRALTAR ROCK VIA RATTLESNAKE TRAIL: Hike up a wooded canyon with scenic views to Gibraltar Rock. Moderately Strenuous 5.5 mrt. 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)

February 19

HIKE EAST COLD SPRINGS TRAIL TO EAST CAMINO CIELO: Very strenuous 9 mi out and back 2675' elevation gain. Optional summit Montecito Peak. Bring lunch and min 2.5 liters water. Group size limit 7. Meet at Cold Springs Trailhead on E Mountain Dr. Montecito 8am. Limited parking, carpooling is encouraged. DALE 805-886-1674 (SB)

February 27

TEQUEPIS: Hike up to West Camino Cielo from Santa Ynez Valley. View of

Cachuma Lake and the Pacific Ocean. Moderate-strenuous 8 mrt. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ALEJANDRO 805-451-1239 (SB)

March 12

FLORES PEAK FROM GIBRALTAR ROCK: We will drive to Gibraltar Rock, above the Rattlesnake Trail. We will then hike a steep, little-known trail to Flores Peak. Some rock scrambling and agility required. The Wednesday hikers sometimes call this "The Medicine Circle". Elevation gain is about 700 feet in only a half mile! Please bring a snack or lunch and a liter of water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ROBERT 805-685-1283 / event@swt.org (SB)

March 19

HIKE FRANKLIN TRAIL TO OHV ROUTE: Very Strenuous 16mi out and back, 4610' elevation gain. Depending on group this can be a timed hike not completing entire distance so as to return at 4:30 PM. Bring lunch and min 3.5 liters water. Group size limit 7. Meet at Capinteria High School parking lot (4810 Foothill Rd.) at 7:30am. DALE 805-886-1674 (SB)

March 27

SNYDER TRAIL: Hike up from Paradise Road to the remains of Knapp's Castle. Enjoy breathtaking views of mountains while eating lunch. Moderate 7 mrt. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ALEJANDRO 805-451-1239 (SB)



SB North County Arguello Group. It was to remind us to tell SB Supervisors to reject Exxon's plan during a Feb. 8 hearing. SB planners recommended the board reject the plan and this would be a follow-up.

Jan 18: **Organic Gardening Club** of Ventura County invited our chapter vice-chair Jim Hines to speak, following a prior November talk. Jim spoke about our work here in Ventura County and gave them plenty of gardening tips as well (he's written a gardening book, and worked for a nursery).

Jan 17: **Celebrate the life** of Martin Luther King is embraced by the National Sierra Club and many of its chapters. Our club President, Ramon Cruz, marched in DC with MLK's family. A virtual phone bank was set up to guide members to lobby their senators. The club's statement: "We will challenge voter suppression in every forum, for as long as it takes, until we can create a democracy that truly works for everyone."

Jan 9: **California Compliance Officer** Ruth Muzzin has gotten approval to serve as our Chapter Compliance officer.

Jan 8: **Public Access** to the coastal area of Hollister Ranch is still in the courts, but an appellate court voided a secret settlement crafted by state agencies in a Superior Court lawsuit, mostly siding with the Gaviota Coast Trail Alliance. Our Sierra Club sides with the Alliance.

Jan 6: **Candlelight Vigil** urged by the Sierra Club "to defend the freedom to vote," arising from "violent extremists attacking the U.S Capitol to stop the peaceful transition of power." Locally, our SB Group officer, hike leader and photographer, Robert Bernstein wrote an excellent piece in EdHat about the SB vigil at the Courthouse. Read and see photos/videos here: <https://tinyurl.com/JanSixVigil>

Jan 4: **Just say no** to Port Hueneme luxury car import expansion lot on 34 acres of coastal wetlands. Don't be fooled by this Port's sophisticated greenwashing. That is the message from our Executive Director Jon Ullman.

Jan 2 **Thank You** Santa Barbara County, "What a difference a county makes" wrote our sister Santa Lucia Chapter (San Luis Obispo) about the SB supervisors unanimously backing the proposed Chumash Heritage Marine Sanctuary on Dec 14, 2021. Check out the resolution here: <https://tinyurl.com/SBCwhereas>

Dec 31: **Robert's Highlights** is to be enjoyed, eye candy! Our talented hike leader, photographer and writer sent out a link to highlights of 2021, which include "Love at UFO Landing Pad, Octopus, Elephant Seals, Nit Wit Ridge, Gaviota Wind Cave, Merlie Becomes a Citizen, Ojai Sunset and so much more. Go here: <https://swt.org/events/highlights2021/>

Dec 26: **Major Win** stopping Cat Canyon oil projects in the Santa Maria area was revived by the Environmental Defense Center. Three oil projects were stymied by the EDC and its clients, our own Los Padres Chapter and SBCAN. The last of the three projects was withdrawn in November, avoiding 1.5 million metric tons of CO2 emissions from 700 new oil wells. See the video by attorney Tara Messing thanking our chapter: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j3dquVLx55Q>

Dec 4: **Holiday Party** (virtual online) for our whole chapter in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. Guest speakers, awards and celebrating our 'wins' in 2021. Special recognition for Treasurer Richard Hunt and WBC leader Teresa Norris.

See story pg. 3



The talks are back!

The popular monthly series of talks about hiking, backpacking, and our local natural history has returned after a hiatus due to the pandemic. Although in person talks have yet to resume, the presentations are being live streamed via Zoom.

The talks for February and March should be of particular interest to hikers of the Southern Los Padres.

~ Feb. 17, 5:30pm – No NIRA Now What? with Bryan Conant from the Los Padres Forest Association {LPFA}

Oh no! NIRA is closed and I can't hike my favorite Manzanita Trails . . . What can I do? Join LPFA's Executive Director Bryan Conant as he discusses the Sunset Valley Road closure, trail updates, and some alternate backpacking trips that will help you get over the NIRA closure blues.

Founded in 1979, LPFA helps organize and manage volunteer trail work projects within Los Padres

National Forest. Bryan is an avid backpacker, the author of two backcountry trail maps covering the San Rafael and Dick Smith Wilderness areas, and has been actively involved in the development of the Condor Trail, a 420-mile through hike route that traverses Los Padres National Forest.

~ March 17, 5:30pm – Waterfalls of the Santa Barbara and Ojai Mountains with James Wapotich.

Our local mountains are surprisingly rich in the number of waterfalls and cascades they hold. When enlivened by the rain, these scenic destinations become more compelling.

This talk will highlight close to two dozen different waterfalls and cascades in the mountains behind Santa Barbara and Ojai; and will feature a mix of relatively easy to reach places, as well as more remote locations in the San Rafael and Dick Smith Wilderness areas.

Wapotich shares images and stories from his hikes to these picturesque places. He has hiked many of the trails in our local backcountry as a backpacker, trail guide, and author of the *Santa Barbara News-Press* hiking column, "Trail Quest".

To register for the talks, go to the Santa Barbara Public Calendar:

<https://tinyurl.com/EventsSBLibrary>

You may also contact Wapotich to gen on his email list announcing future talks:

jwapotich@yahoo.com

EAVESDROPS

"Dick Smith is one of only three people after whom a California wilderness has been named. The other are John Muir and Ansel Adams."

~ Craig Carey is his book "Hiking and Backpacking Santa Barbara and Ventura." Smith was a reporter (with SB News-Press) and an artist who died in 1977. He first helped found the San Rafael Wilderness.



Indian Creek is an example of a waterfall upstream from Indian Creek Camp (Dick Smith Wilderness) that Bryan Conant calls "a perfect 10". Below, Manzanita Creek is seen from above as it heads toward the San Rafael Wilderness. Photos by James Wapotich who you can reach at:

www.songsfromthewilderness.com



Hop Hopkins is the Director of Organizational Transformation for the Sierra Club aiming at more diversity.

EAVESDROPS

"We need to stop thinking of trees as objects that belong to us."

~ Reaction to a property owner cutting down a 250-year-old black walnut tree in a Cleveland suburb, claiming it was on their property (it wasn't) and selling the lumber for \$2,000.

We are so grateful to donors

A heartfelt *THANK YOU* to our many generous donors and volunteers.

We Appreciate You, the 120 donors from Santa Maria, Oxnard, Camarillo, and Ventura to Westlake Village, Thousand Oaks, Goleta, Moorpark, Santa Barbara, Solvang, Buellton, Lompoc, Newbury Park, Port Hueneme, Oakview, Summerland, Ojai, and Carpinteria, all of whom supported the Los Padres Chapter's Annual Appeal in December 2021.

Your support has leveraged grants for environmental protection and community engagement across Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. Your generosity makes it possible for the Los Padres Chapter to address climate disruption, fight for clean renewable energy, and protect our local wildlife and wild lands.

We are sincere when we say we cannot do our work without you. You are:

\$50 and under

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Dick Mazess

Honoring Ansel Adams

A special virtual Zoom program in honor of Ansel Adams on what would have been the iconic photographer's 120th birthday is happening at the Wildling Museum of Art and Nature on Sunday, Feb. 20 from 2-3pm

Entitled *Ansel Adams: The Man Behind the Camera* it features insights by photographer Alan Ross, Adams' friend and former assistant for nearly six years. The two photographers are currently featured in the Wildling Museum's exhibition *Sharing the Light: Ansel Adams & Alan Ross*, on view through March 20.



While Adams' striking images and exacting technique have been well documented over the years, what is less shared is a view of the man behind the camera. This presentation will reveal more about who Adams was as a person, how he worked, what motivated him to expose film to light, and his magical and sometimes irreverent sense of humor.

Suggested donation: \$5; register here:


<https://tinyurl.com/AAdamsZoom>

Wildling Museum's number is (805) 686-8315 and website: www.WildlingMuseum.org

ANSEL ADAMS:
The Man Behind the Camera
A Presentation by Photographer Alan Ross, Adams' Former Assistant

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2 - 3 P.M.
Zoom Program • \$5.00 suggested donation

Wildling Programs Sponsored by Montecito Bank & Trust 

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LOS PADRES CHAPTER
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WBC leader changed lives

By John Hankins

It all started with a public notice in the 2009 issue of *Condor Call*:

“For the first time ever, the Los Padres Chapter is sponsoring a Wilderness Basics Course beginning January 20 (2010), thanks to the efforts of organizer Teresa Norris and a cadre of volunteers who will share their expertise.”

Teresa initially got permission from the chapter’s Executive Committee, then put a couple of articles in the *Condor Call*. Suzanne Tanaka and Alisse Fisher were first on board, then Kim Homan, Marc ‘Roadkill’ Hertz, John Hankins, Irene Rauschenberger, and Kurt Pressler came on board to bolster the team.

It sure worked, starting with about 25 students and a continuous rise to 60 or so. Many who took the course became trained leaders and then circled back as WBC staffers.

Unfortunately, the Covid pandemic shut the class down for the last three years, and Teresa is retiring as the ongoing Chair of WBC. Fortunately, the current WBC board is determined to revive it in 2023 (see separate story).

At the chapter’s December holiday party, Teresa was given the Wilderness Hero Award and the club is searching to place an overlook bench in her honor, hopefully on her favorite trail in the Fillmore area where she lives. Los Padres ForestWatch is also on



Teresa Norris didn’t start out as a backpacking expert, as you can see by the heavy large backpack in 2004 (photo right, by sister Nanci Wise). But she learned via training and experience and by 2009 helped create our Wilderness Basics Course, sharing her knowledge (note the slim daypack years later on Sulphur Mountain (left). Through it all she and her husband Tom got it down perfectly (bottom) happily backpacking a 2018 trip along the Pacific Crest Trail.

the search.

“Whatever we do, it won’t be enough,” said David Gold, an at-large member.

“Thanks, it’s been a joy of mine over the 14 years, I didn’t consider it work. It’s been a wonderful community. In the beginning there wasn’t a community, then they got to know each other and now it’s a community . . . always my hope from the beginning,” she said.

From the start, WBC’s topics included backpacking clothing and equipment, first aid and safety, water filtration, map and compass, fitness and much more, notably tips from experienced hikers that you won’t find in books.

It grew in reputation and other outdoor experts from wilderness groups and

authors became speakers: Los Padres Forest Watch, the Forest Service, Los Padres Forest Assn., backcountry writer Craig Carey. Search and Rescue members became a favorite.

“The one night a week evening lectures will set the stage and prepare you for the real-life adventure that awaits you and your group on the trail. Each of the outings will be different and exciting because nature is unpredictable, but you will be ready to succeed,” wrote Lawana Godwin, a graduate from the first class who become staff. “The camaraderie alone will keep you actively learning every minute of the adventure.”

WBC often had a ‘warning’ that it could change your life. And it did, with all ages,

families and couples taking it together and even experienced hikers learning something new. Some were timid at first, others anxious to learn more to feel safe and comfortable in extreme wilderness.

This is Teresa Norris’ legacy.

