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Feb - Mar. 2015

Condor Call



IN THIS ISSUE: Winter wonderland walks, wilderness wonks, tattered trails and oil rails, saunter the beach, celebrate the women and fight for the wildlife

© Photo by Doug Klug, www.flickr.com/diverdoug

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

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WHAT'S INSIDE?

Condor Call

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EAVESDROPS

"Living on Earth is expensive, but it does include free trips around the sun."



Ahhh...wilderness!
(from the internet)

COVER PHOTO

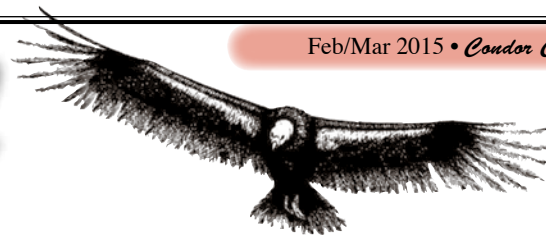
We see the ocean and islands all the time, but never what's underneath them, unless you're like "Diver Doug" Klug, who took this amazing shot of a seal in the kelp forests off Anacapa Island. He'll show and tell a lot more Feb. 19 at the SB Maritime Mvsevm (see story on page 4) and check out more of Doug's photos at www.flickr.com/diverdoug And check out the efforts for a new marine sanctuary on page 10.



Topa Topa snow photo by Perry Van Houten

Condor Call

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



We fight and have fun, too

By John Hankins
Editor, Condor Call

We have better ideas than business as usual ... and we are doing them.

That's the theme of the Los Padres Chapter's pitch to members, known as the March Appeal, the one time that the chapter asks for donations so we don't bug you all year.

But it's a much deeper document than simply a letter asking you to contribute. Primarily written by Chapter Chair David Gold, it recognizes the hundreds of you who have taken the time for action at anti-fracking protests, rallying to protect wildlife, fight for climate change and voting for candidates who make a difference.

"We live in an extraordinary place, and want to protect it for generations to come," Gold writes. "Business as usual means more threats to our air and water, more climate change and rising sea levels, more development encroaching on vital natural resources, and more destruction of wildlife corridors and animal habitat."

A political cartoonist recently drew a twist on activism entitled "Voters Have Spoken" that showed smiling politicians with a crowd in front of them shouting slogans such as: "Give our forests to the timber companies now," "Pave our farm

lands," "Don't tell us what's in our food," "Yes to costly Health Care" and "No laws for industry," etc.

The battles are as fierce here in the Santa Barbara and Ventura regions as they are in the halls of Congress and continue ad infinitum.

The appeal letter lays out the threats in detail: an oil company wanting to drill from the Ellwood and Carpinteria bluffs, an energy company proposing another electricity plant on the Ventura coast, increased fracking in the condor sanctuary, leap-frog development into the Gaviota Coast, opposition to restoring the Ormond beach wetlands, industry pressing for less pollution controls, and transporting oil by train through the cities along our coast, among many others.

And yet, the Sierra Club can point to many successful campaigns that have stopped, delayed or modified projects that if not challenged would be built to our overall detriment.

We also have a lot of fun, too. "The chapter continues to be the local leader in bringing people to the outdoors," Gold writes, noting the hundreds of hikes into the backcountry and teaching people to be safe through our "thriving Wilderness Basics Course."

"Your donation to the Los Padres Chapter is highly leveraged,

magnified by untold hours of efforts by many volunteers. It helps us mobilize and educate the public, conduct research, write testimony, advocate, lobby, and litigate when necessary," Gold concludes.

Even though we only ask for funds once per year via the March

EAVESDROPS

"... Inaction before a crisis carries an immense price tag afterward for recovery and rebuilding."

~ Conclusion of California's Little Hoover Commission after a year-long study on meeting the challenges of climate change. Quote is from an op-ed by Commission Chair Pedro Nava and vice-chair Loren Kaye, calling for new state function to help local jurisdictions prepare, especially on the coast.

letter, you may contribute anytime. Simply send your contribution to: Los Padres Sierra Club, PO Box 31241, Santa Barbara, CA 93130-1241.

There are two ways to contribute: To support our effective action programs (not tax-deductible), make a check out to "Los Padres Sierra Club," and for a tax deductible donation, make it out to "Sierra Club Foundation."



Dune buddies: Naturalist Joel Robinson, Ormond Beach steward Walter Fuller and Oxnard City Corps leader Eddie Dominguez point out the amazing wildlife that is often unseen to the untrained eye. Read the Ormond Beach story on page 12. (Photo by Condor John Hankins)

Wildlife wins a way

By Jim Hines

We are on our way to creating a safe passage for wildlife crossing the busy 8-lane 101 freeway at Liberty Canyon in Agoura Hills.

Meeting in Ventura Jan. 29, the State Coastal Conservancy approved a \$1 million grant to CalTrans to begin the work. I was able to get a great turnout of supporters from throughout SoCal to attend the meeting and we also had lots of letters in support.

I spoke on behalf of the Sierra Club and our Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, commenting that this very important wildlife crossing is one of the top priorities of our "Deadly Journeys: Threats to Wildlife Corridors Campaign."

Two other local issues were addressed:

~ A positive presentation by U.S. Navy officials on the efforts

to protect the open space lands around Naval Base Ventura County and the Ormond Beach area. Mike Stubblefield spoke to the board about the great and very successful work of the Sierra Club to protect Ormond Beach.

~ Before the start of the meeting, board members and conservancy staff meet with a group of us to walk along the Ventura Beach Promenade and talk about beach erosion problems. As if on cue, three dolphins suddenly appeared to our great delight.

We also walked along the lower Ventura River and discussed the restoration work being done by the Friends of the Ventura River Coalition (of which the Sierra Club is a member). Then we had a presentation on the removal of Matilija Dam in the Upper Ventura River area.

WILDERNESS COURSE**Knowledge that will keep you safe****By Stephen Bryne**

Hike and Backpack Leader

Over the holidays I watched the biopic “Wild” with another Sierra Club member. We were both struck by how woefully unprepared Cheryl Strayed was for her trip on the Pacific Crest Trail.

From ill-fitting boots to taking way too much stuff, she showed that she had not really done her homework prior to setting out. If only Cheryl had taken the Sierra Club’s Wilderness Basics Class!

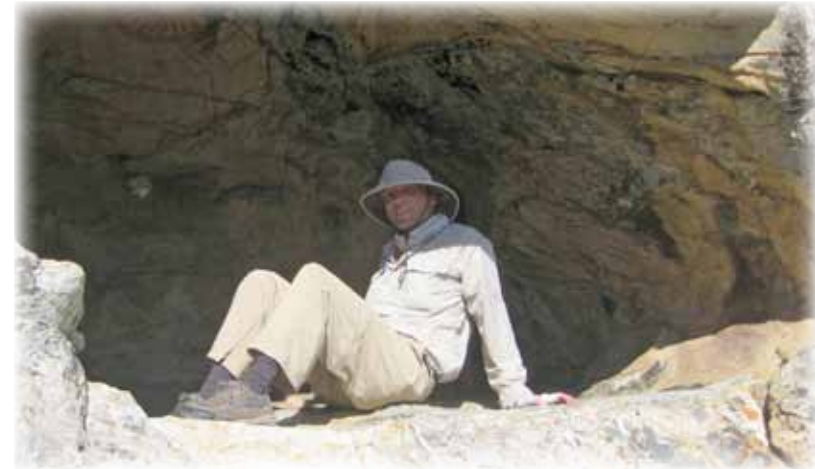
I did, here’s my story.

I started backpacking as a youth in the 1970s on the Appalachian Trail. Since that time, college, raising a child, and work were the focus of most of my time. When I moved to Ventura more than five years ago, I looked to the Sierra Club and the outings they offered to help me learn places to go for both hiking and backpacking.

Later I became a Sierra Club hike and backpack leader. I am very grateful to the Sierra Club and its leadership for introducing me to the local environment. A big part of this introduction was my participation in WBC. When I asked Sierra Club Hike Leader Jim Duliakis if I should attend, he indicated that it might not be worth my time and money—since I knew most of the stuff. Matter of fact, I did sit out the first class that was available. But, with all respect to Jim, I did find that attending WBC was well worth the investment.

There are a couple of points that seem relevant here:

~ First, times change and



Hike leader Stephen Bryne kicks back in a Painted Rock hole, comfortable that whatever weather or adversity may strike while out in the backcountry, he has learned the knowledge to ride out the storm in comfort. (Photo contributed)

technology and attitudes toward the environment also change through time. There has been a revolution in outdoor equipment since the 1970s. Lighter and better equipment is more readily available. Likewise, outdoor

knowledge I am talking about is information about the environment including terrain, hydrology, flora and fauna, weather as well as knowledge about how to prepare for your planned outing.

SIGN UP FOR WBC

If the course is not full, you can still sign up until Feb. 11. Call 524-7170 or email: LosPadresWBC@gmail.com

education has changed people’s attitudes toward the environment. The Leave No Trace ethos has become widely accepted as a way to lessen human impact on our wild lands.

While you may think that you know it all, there is always more to be learned.

~ Second point, I firmly believe that knowledge (and not gear or equipment) will keep you safe and sound in the great outdoors. The

From basics like the Ten Essentials through more advanced subjects like physical conditioning, map and compass orienteering, hiking safety, and weather analysis, WBC will give you the knowledge you need to feel confident in the outdoors.

What’s more, the WBC subjects are taught by experts in their respective fields. For instance, our weather class instructor was Joe Sirard of the NOAA’s Oxnard office and the segment on clothing was led by Bruce Livingstone from local outdoor clothing and gear company Patagonia. Who better to learn from, I ask?



It’s always amazing how a touch of water and sun brings our backcountry to life. Winter is prime time for hiking in the Los Padres National Forest and foothills. Here is a shot right after the rain in the Thorn Point area. (Photo by Cara Peden)

Underwater adventure awaits with Diver Doug

Diver Doug Klug has surfaced from the wild and wonderful waters of Anacapa Island to show the public what’s underneath the waves.

This free picture portrait happens at 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 19 at the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum, 113 Harbor Way in Santa Barbara. Come early for the reception at 5:30.

“We will visit the shale ledges, the sand flats, and the majestic kelp forests.” Klug said. “We will see snapshots of the life on these reefs and explore some of the beautiful, colorful, and playful animals that divers and snorkelers might encounter.”

Klug’s lecture will be a photographic journey that encompasses more than 20 years of diving the underwater reefs and kelp forests. Most locals know the island for its iconic lighthouse and rock arch, and underneath are famous shipwrecks.

Klug’s first dives on Anacapa Island were as a teenager and in 1986 he caught his first lobster. Since then, he has made diving Anacapa Island part of his everyday life earning him the nickname “Diver” Doug.

For information or to register for the lecture, call (805) 962-8404 x115 or go online: www.sbmm.org

Lend your voice at frack meet

Sierra Club members are among the many other groups and citizens who are setting up an anti-fracking rally an hour prior to a state meeting on the draft environmental impacts of fracking.

"Please join us at the rally as we express our outrage against fracking and its negative impacts to our wildlife, soil, air, water and public health. Then join us to speak out at the hearing," said Jim Hines, the Los Padres Chapter's Ventura County Conservation Chair.

Thanks to local Sen. Fran Pavley's SB4 bill, the Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) published the Draft Environmental Impact Report titled "Analysis of Oil and Gas Well Stimulation Treatments in California."

The Ventura meeting is the first of six throughout the state and invites public comment starting at 5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 10 at the Ventura College Performing Arts Center, 4700 Loma Vista Road in Ventura.

The rally starts at 4 p.m., designed to show the state that there is sentiment to ban fracking and/or to ensure regulations are as strong as possible.

Ventura is a great place to start because the Sespe Oil Field north of Fillmore is one of the largest producing fields that uses fracking, and it sits right next to the protected sanctuary for the endangered California condor. That fact has created a rallying cry of "Condors



Hang glider ok after fall

A hang glider fell from the sky within camera shot of Sierra Club hike leader Robert Bernstein on New Year's Day, as he was hiking along Mission Ridge. He gave this account to Condor Call: "As I was heading down the Rattlesnake Connector Trail at 12:35 p.m. I heard a loud sound behind me and I turned back to see a hang glider plummeting to the ground. I was horrified ... then delighted to see a small parachute deploy. It continued to fall, but at a speed that apparently allowed the pilot to survive."

Sure enough, "Flyer Tuck" landed safely if not scratchy. He called 911 to inform them he was ok and hiked out. Another pilot, "Vicarious Icarus," was flying that day and asked to use Robert's photos. Here it is on YouTube, a fascinating look from the thermals above the local mountain range: <http://tinyurl.com/Hang-glider-SB>

and Fracking Don't Mix."

The Sierra Club continues to fight for a total ban on fracking, but Pavley's SB4 was the bill that was politically ripe for passage. The bill requires the impact report and other measures to regulate the potential dangers of fracking, along with disclosing what chemicals are used in stimulating wells.

The draft is available at:

www.conservation.ca.gov/dog

The public comment period will end on March 16 and your input must be received in writing either at the hearing or via email to: SB4EIR@conservation.ca.gov

EAVESDROPS

"We've been here before ... progress didn't stop ... in fact, we came out stronger."

~ Reaction over the Republican majority in Congress by Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune, who noted we've seen worse times, such as "The most successful activist campaign in Sierra Club history -- Move Beyond Coal -- began and flourished under Bush/Cheney."



Are the monarchs endangered?

By John Hankins

You've heard of the Flight of the Pheonix, now be alarmed by the Fall of the Monarchs.

Hard to imagine life without those fun and friendly butterflies, but the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is looking at listing them on the endangered species list, which the Los Padres Chapter has endorsed. The insects have been in a "dramatic decline" from a peak estimated at one billion just 20 years ago to 33 million today.

A lot of them are here now, migrating up to 3,000 miles from Canada and the U.S. on their way to winter vacations in South America. They stop over our region in large, colorful clusters, in well-known places such as the Ellwood Preserve in Goleta and the Eucalyptus trees at Ocean Avenue in Ventura, among others.

There is some good news in that an annual count in California concludes the insect's population is slightly up this year. And more ...

"It was a beautiful winter morning (Jan. 5) at Ventura's Ocean Avenue Park as about sixty gathered to learn about the importance of Monarch butterflies and watch my friend, Juliana Danaus, of Monarch

ARC Waystation in Ojai, release several dozen Monarchs she has raised," said Jim Hines, Ventura Sierra Club conservation chair.

A Waystation is where the monarchs are "officially" raised, and when ready to fly are marked and released. Monarch Arc is part of the "monarch and milkweed movement" to literally spread the word ... and eggs and milkweed. Monarchs undergo metamorphosis in four distinct stages: egg, larva (caterpillar), pupa, and adult in about a month's time.

Hines wants to organize a Sierra Club Butterfly Fest when Monarch Arc is ready to release more in the spring, calling it "The Magic of Monarchs."

"My fondest memories with my grandmother are playing with the Monarchs in her milkweed garden on

Faria beach in Ventura," Danaus said, which partly inspired her new work which includes spreading around knowledge and eggs so that more waystations can increase the supply.

She's even talking with the Ojai police to turn its office into a Waystation, along with community gardens, senior homes and schools. But you don't have to be an official Waystation to raise them, just plant some milkweed and let the Monarch's munch.

There are lots of resources on the web. One of them gives out free milkweed at:

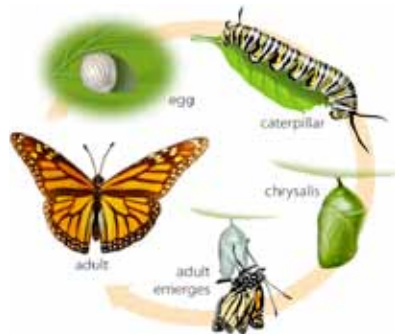
www.saveourmonarchs.org

In Ventura, Monarch Arc is on Facebook and it's filled with photos and comments.

Stunning photos and info are also at: www.goletabutterflygrove.com



A monarch Waystation in Ojai managed by Juliana Danaus for breeding and then releasing Monarch butterflies. Juliana created Monarch Arc (on Facebook) to help them survive, and you can too very easily. (Photo by Juliana Danaus)



Julia Ann Hankins' cute nose was an attractive perch for a Monarch butterfly at the county fair. (Photo by John Hankins)

Smell the butterflies
Ask a friend to join
www.Sierraclub.org

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Graphic by Paul Mirocha

Insights after eating

By Robert Bernstein

The Santa Barbara Group's annual Holiday Potluck Dinner Party attracted a full house of over 40 people at Jefferson Hall at the Unitarian Society to eat and greet and hear two speakers on food and energy.

First was UCSB Professor David Cleveland, who shared his fascinating research on our local food system, our diet, and climate. "Buy local" may have some social and environmental advantages when it comes to food, but Cleveland showed that WHAT we eat is more important than WHERE it comes from.

Transporting food is small in terms of resource use compared with the resources that go into certain foods, most notably red meat. Cleveland suggested a win-win solution: Eating less red meat improves health and quality of life while significantly reducing our greenhouse gas emissions.

We don't have to go to extremes to reap significant benefits, he said. Instead of an 8-ounce steak, make it four ounces. Most of the pleasure comes in the first few bites and you will do your heart and the planet a favor!

Then Michael Chiacos of the Community Environmental Council showed a road map of how Santa Barbara County can transition to 100 percent renewable energy. It is a matter of changing land use so that we don't need as much transportation. And when we do use transportation, we can bike, walk or use transit much of the time.

When we must use private motor vehicles, Chiacos showed how electric and plug-in hybrid cars are allowing people to reduce energy use. Electric cars make more efficient use of fossil fuels and can allow people to switch entirely to solar and/or wind power.



The Santa Barbara Group's annual holiday potluck included two experts speaking on food and transportation; read the adjacent story for their insights. Newly elected Santa Barbara Chair Katie Davis stands by the projector. (Photo by Robert Bernstein)

SB upgrades communication

Santa Barbara, considered by many to be the birthplace of the modern environmental movement, is at a crossroads. We are rich in natural beauty, biodiversity and potential clean energy, but oil interests are attempting to influence our elections and set us backwards.

Never has our work been more urgent and more important.

To better communicate with our members and supporters, the Santa Barbara Group has launched a new and updated website and Facebook page.

www.sbsierraclub.org
www.facebook.com/sbsierraclub

Log on and learn about our top issues and opportunities, including fighting fracking and other extreme oil expansion, protecting critical habitat and open space, working towards making our Santa Barbara communities walkable, bikeable, healthy and powered by 100 percent

clean energy.

On Facebook, please "like" it now and invite your networks to do so as well.

EAVESDROPS

"Burying my head in the sand over climate change is much easier now that half the world's turned to desert."

~ GrinningPlanet.com

VENTURA SIERRA CLUB



Mark your calendar for April 25 to take out a ton of trash at the Santa Clara River Gateway Puente Earth Day Clean Up event. More than a ton of appliances, paper, plastic, glass, clothing and this big tire were removed last year. Contact Nina for details: 901-1679. (Photo by Nina Danza)

Los Padres Group News

The public is welcome to our programs

STEERING COMMITTEE

~ Usually meets the fourth Thursday of every month in Carpinteria. Email Chair Gerry Ching for the agenda and details: gching@cox.net

ARGUELLO GROUP

~ Board meets first Monday of most months often with a program. All information on this North County Santa Barbara Group from Jerry Connor, 928-3598 or email: Connor.gd2@verizon.net. Volunteers are needed as hike leaders and to monitor issues; your talents could make a difference.

CONEJO GROUP

~ Get all information on this southern Ventura County Group from John Holroyd, 495-6391 or backpacker2@earthlink.net. On the web: <http://lospadres.sierraclub.org/conejo/index.html>

SANTA BARBARA GROUP

~ Get the latest updates on events and issues of this South Coast Santa Barbara area at www.SBSierraClub.org; also join our email list by contacting Stephen@lospadres.sierraclub.org

VENTURA SIERRA CLUB

~ Up-to-date information about the northern Ventura County group at www.VenturaSierraClub.org **ALSO ON FACEBOOK**

Let's celebrate women working for environment

By Elisabeth Lamar

As we embrace the advent of spring and March as Women's History Month, it is the perfect time of year to celebrate the diverse accomplishments of women in the environmental movement.

Women play a vital role in our society and are crucial in shaping its future of our society. Take a moment to pay your respects and acknowledge the achievements of the female environmentalists in your life.

Join us on as the Ventura Sierra Club presents Oxnard Mayor Pro-Tem Carmen Ramirez with an award for outstanding environmental leadership. The event is 1 – 3 p.m. Saturday, March 7th at the Heritage Cultural Center, 141 West 5th Street #202, Oxnard.

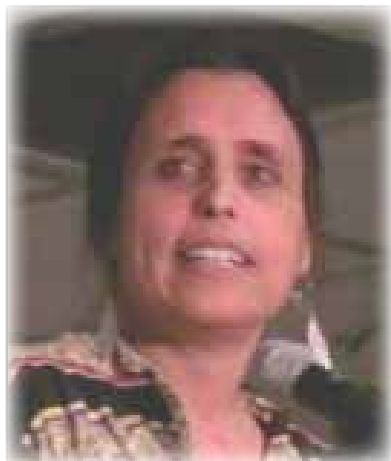
Ramirez has worked for the full restoration of the Ormond Beach wetlands and pushed for action on the cleanup of the HALACO toxic dump. Recently she led the effort to ban a fourth power plant on



Carmen Ramirez



Allison Chin



Winona LaDuke



Rue Mapp

our coast and remains a steadfast advocate for a cleaner city.

Other women of note include:

~ Allison Chin, who became the first Sierra Club board president of color in 2008 and served two terms.

She has continued to lend herself to the club as an active member of the diversity council.

"The demographics in our country are shifting; we don't reflect the communities that we work in and live in. If we want to reach everyone, then we've got to reflect them in our leadership," Chin said.

"It's essential to building the movement that we really engage people, and one of the best ways to attract people is to make sure that you reflect them and their values."

~ Winona LaDuke is a Native American activist and environmentalist who is known for her commitment to sustainable development.

An author of six books, she once ran as the vice-presidential candidate with Ralph Nader on the Green Party ticket. Currently

she serves as the executive director of "Honor the Earth," a group that provides organizing and financial support to Native environmental initiatives.

"The essence of the problem is about consumption, recognizing that a society that consumes one-third of the world's resources is unsustainable. This level of consumption requires constant intervention into other people's lands. That's what's going on," LaDuke said.

~ Rue Mapp is the founder and CEO of Outdoor Afro, an organization designed to reconnect black people with nature.

Since beginning the group, Mapp has been invited to the White House on numerous occasions, including to the America's Great Outdoors initiative and to the launch of first lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move! campaign.

"Through Outdoor Afro, I intend to help African Americans remember their historical connection to nature, and be inspired to try new things to be healthier and happier.

Why did the lion cross the road?



Because it could! Or at least that's the dream as these ladies celebrate after the Liberty Canyon wildlife corridor project received \$1 million from the State Coastal Conservancy; see page 3 for full story. Shown are: Ventura County Supervisor Linda Parks, Beth Pratt of the National Wildlife Federation and Kara Seward, District Director for Senator Fran Pavley. (Photo by Marie Lakin)

EAVESDROPS

"The government needs to put a more daring carbon emissions reduction plan in place as soon as possible, and at this point, the most direct and most efficient way to encourage that is through the federal courts."

~ Zoe Johnson of Kids vs Global Warming, who sued the federal government along with other kids from across the country. Lead plaintiff is Alex Looz of Ventura, founder of www.imatteryouth.org

Tribute to Jim McComb

When scores of people came to the Celebration of the Life of Jim McComb on Dec. 20, we were handed an Irish blessing:

“May the wind be always at your back ... the sun shine warm upon your face ... rain fall softly upon your fields ... and until we meet again ...”

How appropriate for Ventura Sierra Club member Jim McComb (Oct. 26, 1955 – Dec. 15, 2014) who spent a lot of time experiencing that wind, sun and rain during his life. We could always count upon him to run the website, help out with club events, and dispense good cheer and unabashed puns.

His wife Coleen and daughter Shannon “thank all of the hundreds of friends and family for their showing of support and caring during this difficult time.”

The Celebration hand-out said: “He will be remembered as the official Bear Hugger, awesome cook, avid surfer, environmentalist, pun-teller, entrepreneur, computer doctor, great realtor, jack-of-all-trades and



lover of life.” Jim always had a smile on his face, and was known for going out of his way to help others. Jim was known for being able to start a conversation with anyone and, usually, becoming their friend. He deeply loved his wife and daughter, and his community of family and friends. From the approximately 600 people who attended his service, it is clear he was well-loved in return, until we meet again...

Sign the online guestbook: <http://tinyurl.com/Jim-McComb>



The popular Middle Lion Campground and road to Lion Canyon trail-head in the Ojai District is now open. It's been closed until fallen trees and other potential hazards were cleared, and “the public can once again enjoy their favorite campground,” said Charlie Robinson of the U.S. Forest Service, thanks to the Engine 55 crew. (Photo by Andy Juarez)



The first-ever Gear Grab event was clearly so popular it is likely to become a yearly event. Shown in the foreground are the key people who made it happen (from left: Teresa Norris, Liz Lamar, Stephen Bryne, lead organizer Nina Danza, and, ready to take notes for a story and photos that appeared on Feb. 1, Ventura County Star reporter Hannah Guzik. Also thanks to Larry Older, money manager. (Photo by John Hankins)

Gear Grab seized the day and pay

A lot of people grabbed the gear at what was the first-ever Gear Grab event on Jan. 31 at the WAV near downtown Ventura.

“It was a great day, many fantastic things to choose from, and extremely generous sellers to work with; sweet, happy buyers coming around. This will be a highlight in my volunteer work with Sierra Club for a long time,” said Nina Danza who organized the event for the Ventura Sierra Club.

It got great coverage in the *Ventura County Star's* Sunday edition, entitled: “Outdoor gear gets second life in Sierra Club fundraiser.” The publicity also highlighted the Wilderness Basics Course which is sure to get some

more sign-ups out of it.

The Gear Grab – in which you could sell or buy – took in over \$1500, with 70 percent going to the sellers and 30 percent to the Ventura Sierra Club as a fundraiser.

Nearing the end of the 4-hour event, there was enthusiastic talk about making it an annual event,

possibly tying it in with the WBC. Some of the gear that did not sell will go to the WBC as sort of a gear library for students to check out. The rest was either picked up by the sellers or given to charity.

The Star's article and photos are available at:

<http://tinyurl.com/GearGrabVCStar>

Hear wilderness stories from panel

The Los Padres Forest Association is presenting a panel discussion about the history, impact, splendor and future of the Santa Barbara County Wilderness areas at the Wildling Museum at 5:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 7.

There will be great stories about

the backcountry from the panel: outdoor writers James Wapotich and Bob Burtness and former Forest Ranger Kerry Kellogg.

Tickets are \$10; call 686-8315 to reserve a space. The Wildling is located at 1511 Mission Dr. in Solvang.

Industry pushing for lax air regs

By Katie Davis
SB Group Chair

Santa Barbara County is quietly deciding one of the most important environmental regulations it's ever had to develop in the face of intense pressure by the most powerful polluters in the county.

The question is simple: What amount of greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) from new stationary, industrial sources — like new oil drilling projects — is significant?

On one hand, it's clear that any increase is significant. We need to reduce emissions, not increase them.

On the other hand, oil companies don't want any limit at all. They favor shaving a percentage off expected emissions and calling the rest insignificant. The practical effect of such a policy would be huge increases in county emissions while regulators turn a blind eye.

Why does this matter? Oil companies are planning to expand high-pressure steam injection operations in Santa Barbara County. This requires massive engines to heat the earth hundreds of degrees, making it the most emissions-intensive form of oil production in the world. The resulting increase in GHG emissions from these operations threatens all other progress in Santa Barbara County in reducing greenhouse

gas emissions, which calls for a 15 percent reduction in GHG emission levels by 2020.

That reduction — 186,900 tons per year — would be achieved through heroic efforts from commuter rail to establishing a community choice energy utility to finance, build, and sell renewable power.

But applications already submitted by Pacific Coast Energy for 96 steam-injection wells and by ERG, currently being sold to a Chinese company, for 233 wells — just those two projects — could wipe out all the emissions savings in the County Climate Action Plan entirely. And these two projects are just the beginning, as other oil companies have stated plans for thousands of additional steam-injection wells.

In short, all the energy savings from those of us who have changed our light bulbs, put solar panels on our houses, drive electric cars or bikes to work — all that savings could be wiped out many times over by increased unconventional oil production in our county.

The goal of “zero net increase” in emissions makes a lot of sense. If we must reduce emissions, any project that increases them is a concern. The Air Pollution Control District's (APCD) mission is to protect the people and environment of Santa Barbara County, not oil industry

profits.

The APCD closed the public comment period on January 16, but the issue will come back after analysis of comments. “We intend to develop a staff report that includes final threshold options,” the district wrote. “We would then present the report to our Community Advisory Council as soon as

EAVESDROPS

“All the climatologists whose career depends on the climate changing to keep themselves publishing articles, yes I could read it (sic), but I don't believe it.”

~ A member of the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology, Rep. Larry Bucshon (R-Indiana), when told by a scientist at a hearing that he should read scientific reports to understand climate change.

practicable (which) would be jointly scheduled with a public workshop.”

To keep apprised of the process and future dates, sign up at: www.ourair.org/greenhouse-gases-and-ceqa

The district's contact person is Molly Pearson at 961-8838 and email:

CEQA@sbcapcd.org

~ Editor's note: Portions of this article were printed in the Santa Barbara Independent on Jan. 13 2015.



One of the most magnificent Elephant seal haul-outs is just a few miles from Hearst Castle on the shores of the proposed Chumash marine sanctuary. Studies have clearly shown marine sanctuaries are extremely beneficial to the ocean's flora and fauna. (Photo by John Hankins)

Good tides turn for new marine sanctuary

It's official, the Chumash have formally requested the nomination of a new “Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary” in an application to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

“If this area were located on land, it would rival some of our greatest National Parks for biodiversity,” said Michael Thornton, aof Sierra Club California. “Ensuring its continued health will help the environment and

the economy. We are delighted to support this local community effort.”

The sanctuary “is dedicated to the nurturing of relationships to nature and the ocean in the deepest ways possible,” according to its official website.

The Santa Lucia and our own Los Padres chapter were early supporters of the proposal and now Sierra Club California has signed on, among

continued on page 11

Flood of water well apps halted

Editor's note: On the critical issue of protecting Ventura's valuable ground water sources, our Los Padres Chapter Chair, David Gold, published this article in the Ventura County Star refuting CoLAB Executive Director Lynn Gray Jensen's Dec. 3 guest column entitled: "County's water-well moratorium is damaging."

By David Gold

The column grossly distorts the facts concerning Ventura County's water-well moratorium, and the misleading portrayal of Supervisor Steve Bennett's comments on the subject amounts to a gratuitous personal attack.

The Sierra Club testified in support of the Board of Supervisors' decision to impose the temporary moratorium. Some of the county's groundwater basins are so severely depleted that they are at risk of drawn-in toxic contamination, threatening the quality and safety of our drinking water.

While the new groundwater agencies are developing plans to ensure a safe, sustainable and reliable groundwater extraction rate, common sense dictates a temporary halt to the introduction of still more wells. In basins where

pumping exceeds a sustainable level, it will be hard enough to require existing users to cut back, without new wells making the problem worse.

The attacks in the Dec. 3 column may reflect the frustration of some high-volume pumpers that they were not tipped off in advance, which would have enabled them to get wells approved ahead of the moratorium.

The Board of Supervisors had an ethical responsibility not to leak the fact that supervisors were considering a moratorium until it was properly noticed on the board's agenda. A leak would have advantaged some pumpers over others and led to a rush of new wells.

In fact, 37 new well applications were submitted in just the two days between the public announcement of a potential moratorium and the board's emergency hearing on the subject. Appropriately, none of those wells were permitted, due to the board's prompt action. Had the board followed CoLAB's demand for delay, far more new wells would have been allowed.

At this point, can anyone really believe the right policy is

that anybody should be allowed to drill any well he wants and pump water without regulation? The new state law will end this practice, and a temporary moratorium until the new regulations are in place makes common sense.

The county's moratorium is similar to the same good-government policy adopted by

EAVESDROPS

"The public should take a moment to appreciate that."

~ Our Chapter Chair, David Gold, writing that: "Our elected representatives took a stand for sustainable groundwater use in the face of tremendous political pressure from powerful interests."

the Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency — an agency dominated by agricultural interests. Both policies wisely call for a temporary halt to new wells until proper pumping limits are established.

Fox Canyon's regulatory tools allowed it to discourage new well permits before a moratorium. The county lacks those tools but, by moving promptly, was able to enact the same sound public policy without a rush of new approvals.

CoLAB suggests in utterly misleading fashion that the temporary moratorium will keep any wells from being drilled for six to eight years. First, replacement, repair and backup wells are all exempted. Second, waivers are available for hardship cases such

as a single home with no other water option.

Finally, as soon as an agency submits a groundwater sustainability plan to the state, the moratorium ends. Those agencies will have enormous incentive to submit those plans quickly.

Additionally, and nonsensically, CoLAB suggests that new wells will not in any way increase groundwater use. Not surprisingly, given the obvious weakness of its case, instead of discussing the merits of a temporary moratorium, the Dec. 3 column launched a personal attack on Supervisor Bennett.

The approach suggests the frustration of entrenched interests who no longer have veto power over groundwater policy. The status quo changed when the supervisors set a groundwater policy despite their opposition.

The distortions and personal attacks are an attempt to perpetuate overuse of a public resource. This pattern of political intimidation is a common tactic of those who do not like their status quo power being challenged.

It is important that the public be aware of these tactics so that CoLAB and others will have less ability to intimidate elected officials into avoiding policies that serve the public interest.

Our elected representatives took a stand for sustainable groundwater use in the face of tremendous political pressure from powerful interests.

The public should take a moment to appreciate that.



"Good Tides..."

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many other groups. It would run between the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary and out to the western slope of the Santa Lucia Bank.

Local Rep. Lois Capps is in a key position to help make the proposal happen as she is a co-chair of the Congressional National Marine Sanctuary Caucus. She called it "an exciting opportunity."

The Chumash understanding and culture-based respect for nature comes from their long and profound relationships with coastal marine ecosystems, according to the website, which has much more detail about the effort at:

www.chumashsanctuary.com

The area embodies significant oceanographic features, habitat and sacred Chumash onshore and submerged sites.

There are a significant percentage of the California sea otter population, thriving kelp forests, rocky intertidal regions with world-class fish diversity and densities, large numbers of pinnipeds, three estuaries, high coastal dunes, magnificent views and vistas; and the splendid waters of Morro, Estero and San Luis Bays.



Robinson said, citing a number of endangered birds that are rarely seen.

Our trip included Eddie Dominguez of the Oxnard City Corps along with students Horalia Reta and Miguel Meza. The Corps often brings students to Ormond to do service projects and learn, and they clearly were fascinated by the tour.

Fuller's official moniker is as the Ormond Beach steward, and his volunteer work over so many years was noticed in a *Los Angeles Times* feature last December, with the headline: "A Humble Guardian Watches Over Ormond Beach." Fuller was raised in Ojai and was fascinated with birds, then in 1995 he discovered Ormond Beach during a lunch break.

"That was what started my bird-watching days ... I was hooked," he told the *Times*. And he's always there, living in a small trailer provided by the city and welcoming individuals and groups with his knowledge.

Robinson's story is similar as far as growing up with animals and the outdoors, thanks to his parents. He worked in Disneyland but after college decided he needed a job outdoors, something in real life, so he volunteered a lot and in 2006 started Naturalist for You, a non-profit that provides experts and was "created to connect you, the public, to the diverse natural areas in your backyard."

For the Ormond tour, he was representing The Nature Conservancy. Go to the website for a wide plethora of tours and information:

www.naturalist-for-you.org

His next tours of Ormond Beach are:

~ Valentine's Day Singles Hike, Saturday, Feb. 28 2 p.m.

~ An Ethno-botanical Plant



Audubon sponsored this children's art project. (Photo by John Hankins)



The white faced ibis is a marsh dweller at Ormond. (Photo by John Hankins)

Walk, Saturday, March 28 10 a.m.

Meanwhile, the Coastal Conservancy is hard at work to make the Ormond Dream come true via political action. On Jan. 30 Sierra Club activists and politicians testified before the Conservancy asking it to support the Navy's intention to purchase the wetland area next to the base.

"We're excited that the Navy is willing to buy some of the wetlands because we know it will be 100 percent protected," said Mike Stubblefield of the Ventura Sierra Club.

American avocets march along the shore near Ormond Beach. (© Denise Dewire Photography - Facebook & Flickr)

Hike Ormond with ears and eyes

By John Hankins
Editor, Condor Call

I joined the "Birdman of Ormond" and "Shoeless Joel Robinson" for a visual and aural tour of an Ormond Beach area that many dream will become a tourist-worthy preserve.

To the untrained eye and ear it may be just a walk on the beach for the 12,000 or so visitors per year,

but once Robinson opens your ears and the Birdman (Walter Fuller) opens your eyes, a whole new multi-dimensional world opens up.

Birders know this, so do many backpackers and it's a skill that can be learned.

Ormond is a great place for it, too, as over 250 bird species visit the wetlands and there are two main trails that loop around portions of

the area.

"Listen," Robinson would say after a few steps and point to a sound in the bushes, dunes or wetland, then identify the bird and tell his group about it. "It's birding by ear," he says, adding that one species likes to mimic other birds or animals, which frankly sounds like the bird has a sense of humor.

"We really scored today,"



Ormond Beach East may look barren, but it's not and is one of the few areas in southern California with an intact dune transition zone and marsh system. It's a major flyby for migrating birds who hang out with the locals. Go there and meet Walter Fuller, who lives at the entrance from Arnold Road. (Photo by John Hankins)

Take a Hike!

LOS PADRES CHAPTER

Updates at <http://lospadres.sierraclub.org>

Panoramic photo 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. Study footwear is recommended. If you have any questions about a hike, please contact the leader listed. All phone numbers are area code 805, unless otherwise noted. Pets are generally not allowed. 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 the chapter's website:

<http://lospadres.sierraclub.org>

Ongoing Outings

Ventura Every Monday Morning

EASY WALKS: Join Pat Jump at 8:30 a.m. every Monday morning for easy to moderate walks in the Ventura and Ojai areas. A long-time tradition, the walks will last about two hours and the group sometimes goes for coffee afterward. Call Pat at 643-0270.

Ventura Every Wednesday

URBAN EVENING HIKE: Weekly hike in Ventura meets across the street from the Mission at 6:45 p.m. for a 4 1/2-mile walk up to Father Serra's Cross for spectacular scenic views of Ventura, the Channel Islands and the sunset. It continues across the hillside, down to the ocean, to the end of the pier, then along the promenade looping back to the Mission. Wear comfortable walking shoes. Contact KURT PRESSLER 643-5902. (VEN)

Santa Barbara Fridays, Wednesdays and Weekends

SOCIAL HIKE every Friday evening for an easy-to-moderate 2-4 mile roundtrip evening hike in the Santa Barbara front country, beach or back roads. Meet at 6 p.m. at the Santa Barbara Mission; we leave at 6:15 sharp. Bring a flashlight; optional potluck or pizza afterward. AL SLADEK, 685-2145. (SB)

STRENUOUS 5-10 mile roundtrip evening hike on Wednesdays. Meet at 6:30 p.m. at the Santa Barbara Mission; bring water and a flashlight, preferably head lamp. Hike is designed for conditioning. For details, contact BERNARD MINES, 722-9000.

MODERATE AND STRENUOUS hikes at 9 a.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Meet at Bank of America at State St. and Hope Ave.

Monthly Programs

ARGUELLO GROUP offers slide shows, speakers and movies, the third Friday of each month. Call for details: 928-3598.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: Help keep Highway 1 beautiful. Adopt-a-Highway trash pickup from the Lompoc 'Wye' to the Base boundary. Meet at Vandenberg Village Shopping Center parking lot at 9 a.m. on the fourth Saturday of odd-numbered months. Rain cancels. Contact CONNIE: 735-2292.

February 6

OLD CABIN SITE - POINT MUGU STATE PARK: Moderate 6-7 mrt hike with 700' elev. gain. Bring water, food and wear lug-soled shoes. Meet at Wendy Drive trailhead at intersection of Potrero Road in Newbury Park no later than 8:30am. LILLIAN TREVISAN 498-1623 (CJ)

February 7

BUENA VISTA - OLD PUEBLO TRAIL: Hike begins in Romero Canyon. Proceeds along catway and Buena Vista trail to San Ysidro trail and returns on the Old Pueblo trail. Steep at times. Great views of coast line. Moderate-strenuous 7 mrt. Bring lunch and water. Meet

behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. KEITH 965-9963 (SB)

SEAWARD BEACH CLEANUP: 10am-noon - Living on the coast means loving the sea! Sierra Club has 'adopted' the beach at the end of Seaward in Ventura and promises to help clean it up every few months. Great way to get high school community service hours, and we invite all locals to come and show the love! No dogs please. High school teens ages 15 to 18 can come without parent/guardian but must bring the signed waiver on the Ventura Sierra Club FB page 'notes' here <http://tinyurl.com/podupd4> NINA 901-1679 (VEN)

FOSSIL TRAIL: Moderate 7 mrt hike with 1200' elev. gain. Bring water, food and wear lug-soled shoes. Meet at 8:30am at Rancho Sierra Vista (Satwiwa parking lot in Newbury Park). From the 101 Fwy. take Lynn Road south towards ocean; turn left on Via Goleta before Dos Vientos and drive to the end parking lot. JOANNE SULKOSKE 492-3061 (CJ)

Outing Notes

Key to outing locations (noted in parenthesis at the end of each listing)

AR - Arguello Group
(Northern SB County)

SB - Santa Barbara Group
(Southern SB County)

VEN - Ventura Network
(Northern Ventura County)

CJ - Conejo Group
(Southern Ventura County)

LA - Los Angeles Chapter joint hikes

February 8

RATTLESNAKE TRAIL - TUNNEL TRAIL: Hike up Rattlesnake Trail to Tunnel connector. Hike up steep connector to Tunnel Trail. Hike along Tunnel Trail to rock formation for lunch. Beautiful views of Santa Barbara and Goleta. Moderate-strenuous 9 mrt. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. TONY 455-4212 (SB)

February 9

MONDAY MORNING WALK: Meet at Mission Plaza at 8:30am or 9am at Sulphur Mountain to walk to the top. For more info, call PAT at 643-0270. (VEN)

February 13

BEACH WALK - POINT DUME - EASY HIKE SERIES: Easy to moderate 6 mrt hike with 250' elev. gain. Hike along the beach, up to the bluff & down to tide pools and to Paradise Cove, if tide permits. Tide 1.5' at 9:30am, Tide 0.6' at 11:53am. Peace will flow into you with the waves. Bring water and food. Meet in parking lot near Freddy's on Hampshire Road just the before Shell Station in Thousand Oaks no later than 8:30am for carpooling. LILLIAN TREVISAN 498-1623 (CJ)

February 14

BASE OF CATHEDRAL PEAK SPINE: Start at Tunnel Trailhead toward Seven Falls. Make steep climb to the base of the Cathedral Peak Spine. Moderate but difficult 4 mrt. We'll go further than I led in the past! 1200 foot gain with some boulder hopping. Bring water and

EAVESDROPS

"Real adventure is defined best as a journey from which you may not come back alive, and certainly not as the same person."

~ Yvon Chouinard of Ventura, founder of Black Diamond (clean climbing equipment, notably Hexentrics) and Patagonia clothing.

lunch. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ROBERT 685-1283 (SB)

KANAN TO MALIBU VIA BACKBONE AND ZUMA RIDGE TRAILS: Moderate 8.4 miles one way with 1200' elev. gain and 2200' loss. The car shuttle will have cars where the Backbone Trail crosses Kanan Road for a snack and the view near Buzzard's Roost. Bring water, food and lug-soled shoes. Meet at 8:30am in the parking lot near Freddy's just before the Shell station on Hampshire Road in Thousand Oaks for carpooling. HUGH WARREN 341-6295 (CJ)

February 15

ROMERO CANYON/ ISLAND VIEW LOOP: Strenuous hike up to a ridge line with the most gorgeous views in SB, Old Island View trail to an OHV road and Juncal, looping back to Romero, 12 mrt, 3000' gain. About 6-8 hours at a moderate pace with several steep spots and some minor height exposure. Experienced and

continued next page

Outings...continued

Intermediate hikers only. 18- must be accompanied by a parent. Wear hiking shoes/boots, bring 3 liters of water, lunch, snacks, weather protection, and personal first aid. Meet behind B of A on State St. at Hope Ave. EARLY START TIME at 8am. KRISTI, myomy. design@cox.net (SB)

February 16

MONDAY MORNING WALK: Meet at Mission Plaza at 8:30am or 9am at Shelf Road to hike over and back. For more info, call PAT at 643-0270. (VEN)

February 20

UPPER NEWTON CANYON - CASTRO PEAK: Moderate 8 mrt hike. Bring water, food and wear lug-soled shoes. Meet in parking lot near Freddy's just before the Shell Station on Hampshire Road in Thousand Oaks not later than 8:30am for carpooling. LILLIAN TREVISAN 498-1623 (CJ)

Wild jaguar event March 3

Some claim downtown Ventura has a lot of wild life, but on March 3 the real animals take over as the Ventura Sierra Club is hosting a fascinating program, "Protecting the Wildlife of Central America."

The club has invited Dr. Sarah Otterstrom from the conservation organization Paso Pacifico. She will talk about her work with critically endangered jaguars, sea turtles and other Central America wildlife, featuring never before seen film footage of jaguars, said Jim Hines, who organized the event.

This free, family friendly event is open to all at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 3 at Ventura City Hall's Community Meeting Room, 501 Poli St.

February 21

CANINE HIKE JESUSITA TRAIL TO INSPIRATION POINT: Hike through woods and meadows to a scenic view point. Moderately strenuous 7 mrt. Well behaved dogs welcomed and encouraged; must be leashed. Bring lunch and water for you and your canine companion. Hikers without dogs welcome too. Meet at B of A parking lot at 9am. Hike limited to four dogs - please call to reserve your dog's place. Rain/fire cancels. Call leader if in doubt. SALLY 689-7820 (SB)

UPPER SADDLE PEAK TRAIL - PIUMA: Moderately paced 9.5 mrt hike with 1600' elev. gain. Bring water, food and lug-soled shoes. Meet at 8:30am in parking lot near Freddy's just before the Shell Station on Hampshire Road in Thousand Oaks. CYNDEE ZAHORIK 492-1453 (CJ)

February 22

SWEETWATER TRAIL: A hike from the Bradbury Dam lookout to the Lake Cachuma County Park. We'll explore a portion of the park before retracing our steps. Easy 5mrt. Bring a light lunch and water. Meet behind the Bank of America on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. If you are coming from north of Santa Barbara, you can meet us at the trailhead. Email me for instructions (gching@cox.net). GERRY 964-5411 (SB)

February 23

MONDAY MORNING WALK: Meet at Mission Plaza at 8:30am to hike in Casitas Springs. We'll cross the bridge to the stage and return over Sky Hi trail. For info, call PAT at 643-0270 (VEN)

February 27

SADDLE PEAK from STUNT HIGH ROAD: Moderate 8+ mrt hike. Bring water, food and wear hiking boots. Meet in parking lot near Freddy's on Hampshire Road before the Shell Station in Thousand Oaks no later

than 8:30am for carpooling. LILLIAN TREVISAN 498-1623 (CJ)

CASITAS SPRINGS-SULPHUR MOUNTAIN RD RECREATION TRAIL: 10 mile one-way hike follows a 2600 ft ridge along Sulphur Mtn. Car Shuttle required. Brisk pace (2.5mph). Group size limited to 14, including leaders. MUST CALL Phil or Lora by 6pm on Thursday, Feb 12 to secure a place. Weather permitting the hike across the ridge offers gorgeous views of the Pacific Ocean, Channel Islands, Oxnard plains, Topatopa Mtns, and Ojai Valley. 1500 ft of gain/loss on the west side near Casitas Springs. Meet at 8am in Ventura at Seaward and Harbor Blvd. Required: 10 essentials, hiking/trail boots, 3 qts of water, and snack/lunch. Hiking poles, sunscreen, sun hat and insect repellent recommended. Rain or extreme heat (above 85F) cancels. PHILIP 218-2103 & LORA 218-2105 (VEN)

February 28

HOWARD CREEK TRAIL TO NORDHOFF PEAK: Strenuous 10 mrt hike with 2400' elev. gain/loss. The hike starts from the Rose Valley Road right off of Highway 33 and takes the Howard Creek Trail up to Nordhoff Ridge Road, then continues on to Nordhoff Peak for some great views of Lake Casitas, the Ojai Valley, and the Los Padres backcountry. Wear hiking shoes/boot, bring lots of water, snack, lunch, and proper clothing for the weather conditions. Meet at 9am at the Ventura carpool lot (Seaward and Harbor between Chase Bank and Carrows). JIM 479-7063/644-6934 (SB)

March 1

ROMERO CANYON TO CAMINO CIELO: Walk all the way up this mostly tree shaded trail to the top. Great views of back country.

continued next page

Volunteers fix damaged trails

By Mike Stubblefield
Outings Chair

After the devastating fire that ravaged the western end of the Santa Monica Mountains over a year ago, there was little vegetation to hold the soil when recent heavy rains seriously damaged popular local trails.

By the time you read this, Pt. Mugu State Park should be ready to re-open. But many of the trails we love will remain closed for some time because they were heavily damaged.

This situation is true throughout Santa Barbara and Ventura counties and virtually all trail repair and maintenance is done by volunteers due to lack of funds from public agencies.

And it's not just rain or fire

damage. If you hiked up La Jolla Canyon Trail last year, you were likely as angry as me if you spotted the graffiti splattered all over the cave walls in the canyon above the falls, which would cost about \$10,000 to remove.

But hey, if you want to see real graffiti, check out the work of the vandals who defaced the rocky walls of the Punch Bowl at the lower end of Santa Paula Canyon, or Lizard's Mouth above Santa Barbara. Search for pictures on the internet and you can see photos posted by clueless kids frolicking on the graffiti-strewn rocks.

We are noticing less respect for the adage "Take only photos, leave only footprints." Those days are gone as more graffiti, trash and trail damage is noted, most often close to

continued next page



A First Saturday of the Month Project on Gridley Trail (Ojai District), where a volunteer crew moved monster rocks off the trail. (Photo by Heidi Anderson)

Outings...continued

Moderate-strenuous 9 mrt. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. CHRISTINE 963-2347 (SB)

RIPARIAN PLANTING AND RESTORATION DAY. 9 am – noon. Salute to the health of the Earth! Do something in a day that makes a difference - come volunteer at Hedrick Ranch Nature Area (HRNA). These couple of hundred acres have been donated to the public but are in need of being returned to a sustainable ecological state. You may be collecting willow and cottonwood cuttings and planting them, or collecting native seeds and broadcasting, or removing invasive plants all under the direction of the restoration manager. Hundreds more adjacent acres will be added to the program over the next years, watch for future restoration planting days! Long pants and closed shoes required. Bring water, gloves, sun protection. All ages welcome. High school teens MUST bring waiver signed by parent or guardian if unaccompanied to get community service hours. (Waiver on the Ventura Sierra Club FB page 'notes' here <http://tinyurl.com/podupd4>)

DIRECTIONS: Hwy 126 E to Santa Paula, exit 10th St. and turn left (go under freeway), turn right on Harvard, turn right on 12th St. (cross Sta Clara River bridge), go 3.7 mi to 20395 S. Mountain Rd, turn left onto dirt road to the end (about 1/2 mi). Heavy rain cancels. Contact: NINA 901-1679 (VEN)

March 2
MONDAY MORNING WALK: Meet at Mission Plaza at 8:30am to drive to Rite Aid in Oak View for 9am trolley (\$1) to Ojai and return

on trail. For more info, call PAT at 643-0270. (VEN)

March 6-9
DEATH VALLEY EXPLORATION: Four days of hiking and touring. Hikes include Golden Canyon, Amargosa Canyon, Mosaic Canyon, Natural Bridge and the Mesquite Sand Dunes, all 4 miles or under. Visits to China Ranch, Salt Creek, Zabriskie Point, the Artist Palette and Badwater. Two nights of primitive camping, one night at a developed campground. Potluck on Saturday night. Contact leader CAROL WILEY at desertlily1@verizon.net or (760) 245-8734. (Mojave Group/CNRCC Desert Committee)

March 7
PARMA PARK LOOP: A pleasant four mile morning hike through Santa Barbara's largest and least used park. Dirt roads and primitive trails, sometimes steep. Bring water and a snack. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. KEITH 965-9953 (SB)

continued next page



New resident Paige Palombo pitched right in during a Lizard's Mouth clean-up sponsored by the Santa Barbara Group. (Photo by Hike Leader Robert Bernstein)

How you can help our tattered trails

Los Padres Forest Association: Bryan Conant 405-8628 or info@LPForest.org

Ojai District Los Padres Forest: Heidi Anderson, 646-4348 or handerson@fs.fed.us

Los Padres ForestWatch: Tanner Yould, 617-4610 or info@lpfw.org

Santa Barbara Trails Council: <http://sbvolunteers.org/>

Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area:

Craig Sap: (818) 880-0396; craig.sap@parks.ca.gov

Mary Ann Webster: Task Force (310) 733-7042; mawebster1984@sbcglobal.net

Jerry Mitcham, Trails Council (818) 406-1269; jerrymitcham@verizon.net or www.smmtc.org

Volunteers...

continued from page 15

urban areas. I've also encountered trash in remote areas.

Last year some hiking buddies and I hiked up the Rancho Nuevo Trail to bag Lizard Head Peak in the rugged Santa Barbara backcountry. The Upper Rancho Nuevo campground was littered with so much garbage that we

vowed to remove what we could. Despite Stephen Bryne's selfless act of carrying a huge bag of trash six miles back down to the trailhead, we were unable to pack it all out.

We vowed to return and remove the remainder this spring, and clear the trail of fallen trees -- if you're interested in helping out, call me 216-2630) or email:

motodata@roadrunner.com

I'm also seeing more illegal shortcuts lately. On one trail we put a makeshift barrier and the next week it was tossed aside. Eventually, a park ranger sunk a steel fence post into the mouth of the illegal trail with an official sign that said CLOSED. The next week the sign was yanked out!

You and I are offended by this kind of all-about-me behavior because one reason we go to our parks is to get away from the stressful and sometimes trivial urban world we live in.

But even in remote areas untouched by graffiti, trash or illegal shortcuts, Mother Nature never stops reshaping our wild backcountry with fire and rain and

snow, so there is always work to be done come Spring.

Our public agencies are chronically underfunded, so that's where you and I can help.

If each of you reading this column were to decide to volunteer once or twice a year, you could "put something back" and help our beleaguered park professionals.

Most work events are day trips; others span an entire weekend, with Saturday night potlucks, campfires and camaraderie. Here's an important one: Concerned Off-Road Bicyclists Association (CORBA) is having a work day on Saturday, Feb. 21, on the Wood Canyon Vista Trail that was damaged by the Springs Fire of 2013. Details are at: www.meetup.com/CORBAmtb/events

So, please, join me and scores of others by contacting any agency or group on the adjacent list. Not only will you meet wonderful people and make new friends; you will thoroughly enjoy the work and feel good about yourself for pitching in and helping out.

Trail Prints are for day hikes

Outings...continued

Feb/Mar 2015 • Condon Call 16

Let's give a leg up to Sierra Club life member Jim Balsitis who has created Trail Prints, a map publishing company specializing in the development and creation of maps for day hikes or short overnight backpack trips.

"Each map focuses on one trail or hike that is easily reached by car on good roads. I wanted to show the trail at a larger scale and more detail as opposed to a map that shows dozens of trails on a large sheet," Balsitis said.

So far he has published about a dozen maps and expects to publish 25 more titles this year. They are categorized as a series entitled: Santa Barbara Front Country, Santa Ynez Mountains and Wilderness Threshold. The Wilderness series focuses on trails that are easily accessible by car and lead the hiker into an actual wilderness area.

"More than 99 percent of hikers are just day hikers, so I wanted to give them an a la carte choice of maps at a reasonable price (each costs \$2.95)," Balsitis said.

"We develop our trail maps literally from the ground up. We put on our hiking boots and hike each trail at least twice to gather the data and photography needed to create the map."

When Balsitis first came to Santa Barbara in 2003, he immediately began hiking the Santa Barbara front country and "fell in love with the desert and chaparral environments."

Originally from Illinois, he worked as a cartographer mainly for archaeological field work. He became a Sierra Club member there and while on his first Sierra Club service trip in 1998 he was



recruited to be a leader for National Outings.

He chaired the California/Nevada Outing Subcommittee from 2006 to 2014 and was a member of the International Outing Subcommittee leading trips to Peru, Costa Rica and Panama.

Trail Prints donates 1 percent of gross earnings to approved organizations such as the Sierra Club Foundation. While there are some stores starting to sell the maps, his website is probably the most efficient at this time:

www.trail-prints.com



Jim Balsitis during an international hike to Machu Picchu.

March 8
GAVIOTA CAVES EXPLORATORY: Hike from Gaviota beach to the caves and wind tunnels in the ridges above. Includes off-trail cross-country exploration on a challenging route! Some rock scrambling, bushwhacking and agility required. About 5mrt. Wear long pants and bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ROBERT 685-1283 (SB)

March 9
MONDAY MORNING WALK: Meet at Mission Plaza at 8:30am to walk into Emma Wood for low tide beach walk. For more info, call PAT at 643-0270. (VEN)

March 14
CATHEDRAL PEAK: Start up Tunnel trail and branch off onto Jesusita connector trail. Continue up primitive trail, steep and rocky in places, to Cathedral Peak. Lots of boulder hopping. Strenuous 6 mrt. Some agility required. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 8am. ALEJANDRO 898-1240 (SB)

LA JOLLA CANYON LOOP: Beautiful slow to moderate 7.5 mile loop walk, beginning at La Jolla Canyon, with a few steep parts, stopping for a snack at the campsite, continuing on up to the Ray Miller trail and back down to the starting point. Sweeping views of the ocean, islands, and Santa Monica Mountains. Total gain about 1100'. Bring water, snack, sunscreen, and other 10 essentials. Parking fee in lot or park on Pacific Coast Hwy. Meet 9:15am La Jolla Canyon parking lot, Point Mugu State Park. Rain cancels. For info, call TERESA 524-7170 (VEN)

March 14-15
GHOST TOWN EXTRAVAGANZA: Explore the ruins of California's

colorful past in this spectacular desert landscape near Death Valley. Camp near the historic ghost town of Ballarat (flush toilets). Sat. a challenging hike to ghost town Lookout City with expert Hal Fowler who will regale us with tales of this Wild West town. Return to camp for Happy Hour and a special St. Patty's Day potluck and campfire. Sun. a.m. a quick visit to the infamous Riley townsite. Group size strictly limited. Send \$8/person (Lygeia Gerard), 2 sase, H&W phones, email address, rideshare info to Ldr: LYGEIA GERARD, P.O. Box 721039, Pinon Hills, CA 92372, 760-868-2179. (CNRCC Desert Committee)

SERVE AND DISCOVER THE CARRIZO PLAINS: We pray for winter rains, and if they arrive we can look forward to spring wildflowers in the Carrizo Plain National Monument. Our service on Saturday will either remove or modify sections of fence to facilitate the mobility of pronghorn antelope. These residents prefer to crawl under rather than jump fences to escape predators. Sunday will be, at the choice of the group, either a hike in the Caliente Range or else a tour of popular viewing areas in the plains. Leader: CRAIG DEUTSCHE, craig.deutsche@gmail.com, 310-477-6670. (CNRCC Desert Committee)

March 15
CHORRO GRANDE: Strenuous 12 mrt hike with 3200' elev. gain/loss - experienced hikers only. The hike starts at 4000' and climbs steadily for 6 miles to 7200', ending up on the Pine Mountain Ridge near Reyes Campground. Wear hiking shoes/boots, bring lots of water, snack, lunch. There's a good chance that there will be in snow at the top, so bring a warm jacket,

continued next page

Outings...continued

a hat, and gloves. Meet at 8:30am at the Ventura carpool lot (Seaward and Harbor between Chase Bank and Carrows). JIM 479-7063/644-6934 (SB)

ARROYO VERDE PARK HIKE: Some steep climbs, 700' total ascent in 3.5 miles in this important Ventura hills hiking environment. Bring water; it can be hot back in the canyon, good hiking/running shoes. Fee for parking or park on Poli St. Meet at 9am at Foothill and Day Roads, Ventura. Call KIM 983-2147 for questions. (VEN)

March 16
MONDAY MORNING WALK: Meet at 9am behind Ventura city hall (upper parking lot) to hike on new trail. For more info, call PAT at 643-0270. (VEN)

March 18-22
DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK - SPRING WEEKEND: Our car-camping trip is planned when temperatures are mild and wild flowers may be blooming. We'll hike to waterfalls including oasis-like Darwin Falls, through stunning desert canyons including Titus Canyon, visit ghost towns and mining areas, and explore some lesser known but truly

fantastic areas outside of the Park. We will also tour Scotty's Castle. The hikes are rated moderate to strenuous with several hikes off maintained trails. Strenuous hikes to the most interesting locations require short sections of rock scrambling and minor exposure to heights. The hikes range from five to ten miles, with elevation gains up to 500 feet. Cost is \$60 per person and includes 4 nights of camping and tour of Scotty's Castle. Group size limited to 15 people. Email or call leader for reservation information. Leader: RICH JUROCICH, rich.sierraclub@pacbell.net, 916-492-2181. (Sacramento Group/CNRCC Desert Committee)

March 21
HISTORIC HWY 150 & STAGECOACH ROUTE: We'll walk a portion of the original Hwy 150 road near Lake Cachuma and explore Arrowhead Island. Then we'll carpool to a location where we can walk on a section of the historic Stagecoach Road that linked Santa Barbara before the railroad. Lunch will be at a turn-out on this road. Easy-moderate 4 mrt. Bring water and a light lunch. Meet at 9am at the Bank of America parking lot, Hope Ave & State St. GERRY 964-5411 (SB)

March 22
BLUE PEAK: (3662', 10 mile round trip, 2700' elevation gain) We ascend Romero Canyon trail to the saddle, loop behind and over Blue Peak back to the saddle, and then descend also by the canyon trail. Bring plenty of water, lunch, and sun protection. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. PAUL 886-1121 (SB)

March 23
MONDAY MORNING WALK: Meet at 8:30am at Mission Plaza for extra low tide Loon Point beach walk. For more info, call PAT at 643-0270. (VEN)

March 27
OJAI'S NORDHOFF PEAK (4485') VIA HOWARD CREEK (3480') TRAIL: 12 mile one-way hike begins at Howard Creek Trailhead, climbs 1200' ft to the Peak and ends on Hwy 33 at Cozy Dell Trailhead. Brisk pace (2.5mph). Car Shuttle required. This is just one of many ways to get to Nordhoff Peak, where you will get plenty of views of the surrounding area. Meet at the Ventura car pool at Seaward and Harbor at 8am to shuttle up to Howard Creek TH to begin hiking at 9am. Required: 10 essentials, hiking/trail boots, 3 qts of water, and snack/lunch. Hiking poles, sunscreen, sun hat and insect repellent recommended. Rain or extreme heat (above 85F) cancels. PHILIP & LORA 218-2103 (VEN)

March 28
MORE MESA: Morning loop walk around this extensive coastal bluff. Children welcome. Slow paced 2-3 miles or so. Bring water and a snack. Meet behind B of A on upper State Street at Hope Ave. at 9am. VICKI 563-4850 (SB)

March 29
RATTLESNAKE TRAIL: Hike up a wooded canyon with scenic views to Gibraltar Rock. Moderate 5.5 mrt. Bring a snack and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. DAVE 563-4850 (SB)

EAVESDROPS

"I have to say, far and away, these are some of the most interesting people on the planet. I always say that it's a river of life that washes up to my shore."

~ Jeff Saufley and his wife Donna, two of the "Trail Angels" who help more than a thousand hikers per season along the often grueling 2,650-mile Pacific Crest Trail. The angels can be a drop-off point and provide food and shelter. Read the feature at:

<http://tinyurl.com/Trail-Angels>

JOURNEY THROUGH A SECRET 'SPRING' GARDEN: 9am - noon. Did you know there is a parkway being quietly planned on the Santa Clara River from the mountains to the sea in Ventura County? Come see what is helping and hindering this vision. Be part of the grassroots support for a river alive with native plants and animals, available to the public for recreation and open space, and protected from damage by humans. The Santa Clara River is the largest natural river ecosystem left in the Southern or Central California.

continued next page



The island fox is making a tremendous comeback, hear all about it at the Fox Fest Feb. 5, or go online if you miss it. Here's one foraging on Santa Rosa Island. (Photo by Kurt Preissler)

Fox fest is free and fun

Join the Ventura Sierra Club and Friends of the Island Fox for a fun and educational program about the endangered island foxes of Channel Islands National Park on Feb. 5.

If you miss it, go to the Friends' website:

<http://www1.islandfox.org>

This free, family friendly event is open to all. The Sierra Club's

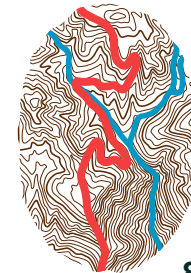
Jim Hines will host Pat Myers, founder of Friends of the Island Fox and its educational director Keri Dearborn as they give a power point presentation about the organization's work to save the island foxes.

The talk starts at 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 5 at Ventura city hall's community meeting room, 501 Poli St.

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GREETINGS FRIENDS

Don't overlook Simi, Santa Susana hikes

By Jim Hines

Wow, what a view, our own 'top of the world' with wildlife tracks everywhere, early blooming white Ceanothus and songbirds in full chorus. A truly amazing place, all at the center of a major Southern California wildlife corridor.

It's the beautiful Simi Hills - Santa Susana Mountains of eastern Ventura County, parts bordered by Los Angeles County.

Many times overlooked, it is one of the best locations in our chapter region to see wildlife, enjoy great vistas, oak woodlands, perennial streams, bird watching, native wildflowers in the grassy

meadows and several mountain peaks over 2600 feet. On a clear day you can see all the way across the Santa Monica Mountains to the Pacific Ocean.

Public access and parklands abound in this area, often used by neighboring San Fernando Valley residents.

One of my favorites is the state-owned Rocky Peak Park, with over 5000 acres of craggy rock formations. Miles of public hiking trails abound in this park with a major trailhead at the Rocky Peak off-ramp of the 118 freeway at the eastern end of Simi Valley.

Sage Ranch Park, also owned by the state, not only has hiking trails among the meadows and along the creeks, but also a rustic tent campground. From Ventura County, this parkland is accessed by Woolsey Canyon Road in the northern San Fernando Valley.

A small natural area known as Rocky Pointe Natural Park is located at the eastern edge of Simi Valley at the base of the Simi Hills and is a fun area to explore on short hikes as well as a great location for picnics.

The largest public parkland on the border of Ventura County but actually in Los Angeles County



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Las Lajas Canyon Trail is showing its beauty after some winter showers in the Simi Hills area. The canyon connects to a road on the ridge that goes to Rocky Peak, one of the areas noted in the adjacent column. (Photo by Joanne Sulkoske)

Outings...continued

Sierra Club has permission this date to explore part of the still privately held land, which is part of the future Santa Clara River Parkway. We will be hiking a 1,000+ acre parcel owned by The Nature Conservancy. Approximate distance 3 mi with 1000' gain, expect two river crossings and lots of natural observations. Bring water, snacks, sun protection, and wear supportive shoes. Ages 10+ recommended. No dogs please. Meet at south end of Mission Rock Road at the gate posted with The Nature Conservancy sign near Pick the Part, 936 Mission Rock Road, Santa Paula 93060 Directions: Hwy 126 E to Briggs Rd exit, right on Pinkerton, left on Mission Rock Road and go straight to gate. BE SURE TO GO STRAIGHT TO THE GATE WITH

NO MORE TURNS. Contact: NINA 901-1679 (VEN)

March 30
MONDAY MORNING WALK: Meet at 9am at 45 Alto Dr. in Oak View to walk up valley meadow scenic square. For more info, call PAT at 643-0270. (VEN)

April 4
DEVEREUX POINT: Stroll slowly exploring around this creek area to the shoreline. Slow paced 3 miles or so round trip. Children welcome, bring water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. KEITH 965-9963 (SB)

April 5
JESUSITA TRAIL TO INSPIRATION POINT: Walk through woods and meadows to a scenic view point.

Moderate-strenuous 7 mrt. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. CHRISTINE 963-2347 (SB)

April 10
OJAI LAND CONSERVANCY-VENTURA RIVER PRESERVE: 8 mile loop, moderately-paced (2.0mph) hike of about 4 hrs. Approx 1000 ft elevation gain/loss. Start at Riverview trailhead, hiking to Oso Ridge trail to the Preserve's Highpoint (1,320 ft) then follow Wills and Rice Cyn trails and back to Riverview trailhead. Some boulder hopping and stream crossings possible. Meet at 8 am in Ventura at Seaward and Harbor Blvd. to carpool, or 9am in dirt parking lot near Riverview trailhead (across from horse stables on So. Rice Rd. just north of W. Lomita Ave)

in Meiners Oaks. Required: 10 essentials, hiking/trail boots, 3 qts of water, and snack/lunch. Hiking poles, sunscreen, sun hat and insect repellent recommended. Rain or extreme heat (above 85F) cancels. PHILIP 218-2103 (VEN)

April 10-13
MOJAVE NATIONAL PRESERVE OUTING: Meet on Friday April 10 at Amboy Crater at noon and hike up the crater for lunch. Primitive camping Friday night near Granite Pass. Saturday head to Kelso Dunes for a hike up the dunes. Sunday visit the Kelso Depot and then the lava tube with camping at Midhills Campground. Monday we can hike to Cima Dome on the way out. All hikes are moderate (easy to some). Saturday night we



The Upper Sycamore Trail in Pt. Mugu State Park was damaged by the rains but you can still muddle through. (Photo by Joanne Sulkoske)

Don't overlook Simi hikes...

continued from page 18

is Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park with over 6000 acres of hills, meadows, an educational center, seasonal streams, and miles of hiking trails as well as interpretive exhibits highlighting the early history of the area.

The natural areas and parks in the Simi Hills - Santa Susana Mountains region offer so much for the outdoor enthusiast. You can actually hike from the Santa Monica Mountains starting at the Upper Las Virgenes Canyon Open Space Preserve, crossing into Sage Ranch Park and over to Rocky Peak Park.

And what a day-long hike that

is: beautiful vistas, fresh air, running creeks, wild flower meadows and wildlife everywhere. When visiting this area several weeks ago I could not believe the number of mountain lion tracks I saw; they were everywhere, also saw several deer herds, numerous small mammals and hawks soaring overhead.

So make your next outdoor expedition over to this region and you will not be disappointed. The Sierra Club's Conejo Group can introduce you to its marvels. Just follow the link to our Conejo Group newsletter web site:

<http://lospadres.sierraclub.org/conejo/index.html>.

For the wild ...

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a special discount of up to \$1,000 and at the same time, it sends funds back to Sierra Club California. It's a win-win-win!

To get more details or a free quote go to: sierraclub.org/solarhomes

Outings...continued

will have a potluck (optional). There are no services in the preserve. Contact leader: CAROL WILEY at desertlily1@verizon.net or (760) 245-8734. (Mojave Group/CNRCC Desert Committee)

April 11

INSECT HIKE IN ALISO CANYON: Learn about the most abundant form of life on the planet - insects - on this interpretive hike. A leisurely loop from Sage Hill campground on a marked trail alongside a stream. Easy/Moderate 3.5 mrt. Please note that location may change based upon weather conditions. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. KENNY 692-2227 (SB)

April 12

PINE MOUNTAIN LODGE: Strenuous 13 mrt hike with 3000' elev. gain/loss - experienced hikers only. Wear hiking shoes/boots, bring lots of water, snack, lunch. There's a good chance that there will be in snow at the top, so bring a warm jacket, a hat, and gloves. Meet at Ventura carpool lot at 8:30am (Seaward and Harbor between Chase Bank and Carrows). JIM 479-7063/644-6934 (SB)

April 18

ROCKY PINE RIDGE - SHORT ROUTE: From Camino Cielo, hike into this wonderful pine tree/rock region and skirt along the ridge line. Moderate hike with some rock hopping, 4-5 mrt. Bring water and lunch. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9Aam. ROBERT 685-1283 (SB)

April 19

NINETEEN OAKS RIDGE ROUTE: Hike along a stream with impressive exposed cliffs to 19 Oaks camp for lunch. Return via a low ridge and dirt OHV service road with great views. Moderate pace 6 mrt. Long commute to Upper Oso trail head, plan on late

afternoon return. Bring water, lunch, sunscreen, and sturdy shoes. Rain cancels. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. MURRAY 967-8770 (SB)

START PLANING YOUR OUTINGS

NOW: Start planning your outings for the next Condor Call outings schedule covering the period of June - September plus the 1st week of October.

April 25

VALLEY VIEW PRESERVE LOOP: Join us on a hike in the new Valley View Preserve back of Ojai. This is a 4mrt easy-moderate loop encompassing portions of the Pratt, Foothill and Fox Canyon (or maybe Luci's) trails. Great views of Ojai and it's nearby mountains. Note that this involves a 1 hour drive to the Pratt trailhead. Meet behind the Bank of America on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 8am. NOTE EARLY MEETING TIME! Bring a light lunch and water (it can get very warm). If you are coming from south of Santa Barbara, you can meet us at the trailhead. Email me for instructions. GERRY 964-5411, gching@cox.net (SB)

EARTH DAY CLEAN UP DAY AT SANTA CLARA RIVER GATEWAY PUENTE: 9am-12noon. Earth Day means acting locally! We think the biggest difference you can make

EAVESDROPS

"I think the environment should be put in the category of our national security. Defense of our resources is just as important as defense abroad. Otherwise, what is there to defend?"

~ Robert Redford

locally is at the SANTA CLARA RIVER GATEWAY PUENTE Clean Up. Help tackle wasted tires or tin cans, textiles or broken toys. It's all trash and will end up on the beach. Sierra Club and The Nature Conservancy are partnering at this site, earmarked as part of the future Santa Clara River Parkway. Come lend a hand, huge personal satisfaction awaits you! All supplies provided, wear sturdy closed toed shoes. Families welcome. High school teens MUST bring waiver signed by parent or guardian if unaccompanied to get community service hours. (Waiver on the Ventura Sierra Club FB page 'notes' here <http://tinyurl.com/podupd4>)

Parking Location: Gateway Shopping Center Johnson Dr and Northbank Dr, Ventura, 93003 Contact: NINA 901-1679 (VEN)

continued next page

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Featured in the LA Times and Sierra Club "Condor Call."

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Hike new website

It's a work in progress right now, but a major effort is ongoing for a new website that already has a lot of great features, so check it out at: www.HikeLosPadres.com

The Los Padres Forest Association is working with web designer John Ziegler to create this resource for Los Padres Forest users. "It's been a huge undertaking and there remain bugs throughout the site that are on our to-do list, but we are hacking away and making it faster, better and more user-friendly each day," said Bryan Conant of LPFA.

Outings...continued

April 25-26
SERVICE IN THE CARRIZO PLAINS NATIONAL MONUMENT: This trip is scheduled late in the wildflower season, but we pray that rains have produced a wonderful and long-lasting display. Our service on Saturday will remove or modify sections of fence to facilitate the mobility of pronghorn antelope. Sunday will be, at the choice of the group, either a hike in the Caliente Range or a tour of popular viewing areas in the plains. This is an opportunity to combine car camping, day-hiking, exploring, and service in a relatively unknown wilderness. Contact leader for details: CRAIG DEUTSCHE, craig.deutsche@gmail.com, 310-477-6670. (CNRCC Desert

Committee)

April 26
REFUGIO BEACH TO EL CAPITAN: Car pool to Refugio Beach and walk to El Capitan or beyond. Easy 6 to 8 mrt. Bring old shoes, lunch, and water. Share parking fee. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. DAVE 563-4850 (SB)

May 2
SUNBIRD MINE: Hike on Forest Service road and trail past Gibraltar Dam to abandoned quicksilver mine, active from 1860 until abandonment in 1992. Moderately strenuous 11 mile RT. Terrific views of the back country. It can be quite hot in this area, so NOTE EARLY START TIME. Meet at B of A parking lot at 8am for carpool to trail head located in Red Rock area at end of Paradise Road. Rain/fire cancels. Call leader if in doubt. SALLY 689-7820 (SB)

May 3
WEST FORK COLD SPRINGS TO TANGERINE FALLS: Hike along the trail then do some rock-hopping up the creek to the falls. Difficult 3 mrt. Some climbing and agility required. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind Bank of America on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ROBERT 685-1283 (SB)

OUTING WRITE-UPS DUE SOON: Outings write-ups for the next Condor Call outings schedule are due soon. Get your write-ups covering the period of June – September to your Group Outings Chairs soon.

May 9
SAN ANTONIO CREEK: Beginning at Tuckers Grove County Park, we will walk on a creek side trail that meets up with Hwy 154. A short walk on this busy highway will link us to a return via San Antonio Creek Road. Easy, 2 mrt. Meet at the Bank of America parking lot, Hope Ave. & State St. at 9am. VICKI 563-4850 (SB)

DANGER: Oil-by-train

The Sierra Club and climate activists and many others are trying to pull the brakes on an "oil by train" proposal that would go through Santa Barbara and Ventura counties and beyond.

"The transporting of crude by rail is becoming a big issue here and across our nation. The city of Moorpark and the Ventura County Board of Supervisors have taken positions opposing the use of VC rails to transport crude," said Jim Hines, the Ventura Sierra Club's conservation chair.

The Los Padres Chapter's Arguello Group and the Santa Lucia Chapter will have a lot of arguments to present to the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors' hearing on Feb. 10. The oil would come to and from the Santa Maria Refinery, which is asking for a permit to use the rails.

The Ventura Climate Hub is

Secret trade afoot

The United States is quietly negotiating an expansive free trade agreement, the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), with Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam.

The Sierra Club is deeply concerned about the lack of transparency in the TPP negotiations and the environmental implications agreement which could increase fracking, give corporations "unfettered rights," and increase stress on natural resources.

To find out more, go to: www.sierraclub.org/Trade/trans-pacific-partnership

arranging a bus to take people from the Ventura area to the hearing.

You can find out about the risks involved for your own area. The state Office of Emergency Services has an interactive "rail risk" map where you just click on your area and find rail routes that carry hazardous liquids, where earthquake faults lie and environmental risks.

That and a factual report on such risks called "Oil by Rail Safety in California" can be found by typing in Oil-by-Rail at the website: www.caloes.ca.gov

Eschew the choo choo

The Sierra Club's Santa Lucia Chapter is running detailed articles on the proposed oil-by-train proposal mostly because the Santa Maria Refinery is in San Luis Obispo County. Go to its website:

www.SantaLuciaSierraClub.org

Also, a group called the Mesa Refinery Watch Group has sprung up to monitor all the details. Go to: www.mesarefinerywatch.com

No to Ellwood oil

In another oil issue, the Santa Barbara Group "expressed strong support for phasing out the Ellwood Onshore Facility. It also urged the Goleta City Council to tell the State Land Commission not to certify the impact report.

"This type of heavy industrial facility is unacceptable in a sensitive coastal zone near dense residential and business areas and puts people and the environment at risk," wrote Robert Bernstein on behalf of the group, citing over 2,000 members.



Portrero John got a new sign and a volunteer crew led by Ranger Heidi Andersen were quick to get it up. Helpers were Bill Brenden, Peter Wilder and Mary Looby, who took the photo.