

IN THIS ISSUE: Adventures on land and sea,
practical scat, the problems with petrol versus
historic clean power plan and volunteers' hand.

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August - September 2015

Condor Call



Journal of Los Padres Chapter Sierra Club

Serving Ventura & Santa Barbara Counties



DIRECTORY

WHAT'S INSIDE?

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COVER PHOTO

Geralyn Souza's © "Marbled Water with Snowy Egret" was one of the top winners of the Wildling Museum's annual photo competition with the theme Nature's Patterns." An exhibition of the 25 best shots is open at the Wildling in Solvang until Sept. 28. Another of her photos -- Elegant Fight in Flight -- was a top pick in Audubon's 2015 contest. Contact Gery to see many other amazing photos: gerysouza@yahoo.com



EAVESDROPS

"We are going to ride them until we get answers . . ."

~ Rep. Lois Capps, clearly frustrated by the federal oversight agency PHMSA (Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration) regarding answers about the Refugio oil pipeline rupture. She tried to get \$27 million to bolster funding for the oversight agency, "but that failed on a party line vote," according to the **Santa Barbara Independent**.

Next issue of

Condor Call

comes out 1st of October

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Send tips, pics to

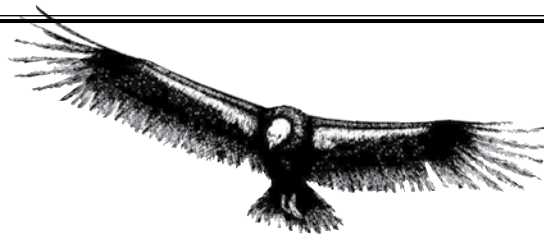
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Questions? Call 452-2885

Alisal Lake, courtesy of Wildling Museum

Condor Call

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See amazing marine life like these dolphins, which often follow tour boats like Island Packers in Ventura Harbor or the Condor Express from Santa Barbara Harbor. Meanwhile good news: the whales, dolphins and other marine life may be further protected by the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary proposal, which was resubmitted in July to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The Sierra Club strongly supports the plan, filling in between the Channel Islands and Monterey Bay sanctuaries. (Photo © Donna Hendricks, see more at www.727PhotoArt.com)

Hammered Gaviota Coast gets some love

By Phil McKenna
Gaviota Coast Conservancy

Naples is back, but it fell on its face in its first public hearing.

The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors withheld its consent to transfer an agreement governing the inland portion of the proposed Naples development on the Gaviota Coast to the new owner, Standard Portfolios which is represented by the original developer, Matt Osgood, whom

you may remember exited the project in foreclosure in 2010.

Standard Portfolios failed to provide sufficient information to the County to demonstrate that it has the financial ability and reputation to carry out its obligations. The Gaviota Coast Conservancy characterized the applicant's information as being a dog and pony show (both are adorable creatures found on pages 12-3 of the information packet) while Supervisor Salud Carbajal

described it as the very definition of an "enigma".

Osgood will most likely return with more information on Standard Portfolios, continuing this 127-year development saga.

Meanwhile, the proposal by Las Varas Ranch of an inappropriate subdivision and lot line adjustment on this large and historical Gaviota Coast working ranch was rejected by the County Planning Commission and scheduled for Sept. 1 for the Supervisors' decision.

This project would fragment the working ranch, create estate sized development envelopes, add residential density to the coastal portion of the ranch, and would set a damaging precedent.

The Tajiguas Landfill on the Gaviota Coast is the "dump" for southern Santa Barbara County. The County, in partnership with four cities, has been investigating the construction of a conversion

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Historic Power Plan supported with 'vigor'

The Sierra Club is planning nationwide events to support the Obama Administration's Clean Power Plan (CPP), which was released as of Aug. 3.

The release of the CPP marks the culmination of years of work, and a first step towards finally closing one of coal's biggest loopholes - their free pass to put 100% of their carbon pollution into our air. It also creates an opening to dramatically ramp up investments in clean, renewable energy and energy efficiency programs in the states.

Polluters will be fighting the plan with everything they've got, so the club is helping to ensure that it is strongly supported by the public.

CPP protections, if upheld, will help clean up the air, reduce pollution-related respiratory illnesses, and curb the worst effects of climate disruption. In addition, the CPP will save money, spur innovation and accelerate the clean energy economy.

#ActOnClimate

I ♥ CLEAN AIR
*Clean Power Plan
Protects Our Communities*

SIERRA CLUB

ExCom's voice resonates

Our Los Padres Chapter Executive Committee has done a lot of testifying and commenting on issues small and large to various agencies, all to help our little neck of the woods survive. Here's some of the highlights:

~ With the bad news that the Public Utilities Commission has approved a new power plant at Mandalay Bay (Oxnard shore), the chapter is backing the Environmental Defense Center's (EDC) petition to intervene. (See background story on page 4)

~ We wholeheartedly supported Sierra Club California's (SCC) work towards a complete ban on

clearcutting in California because it is a very destructive process to forest ecosystems.

~ In a July letter to Watershed Coalition of Ventura County, the Chapter supported that coalition's Integrated Regional Water Management plan. Ventura Network activist Nina Danza, who testified on our behalf, said "We want a river alive with plant and animal biodiversity, especially with riparian and endangered species that have very limited habitat anywhere else in the region."

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Power industry wears out welcome

Editor's note: This opinion piece about Oxnard being the county's "dumping ground" for power plants was prepared by Mike Stubblefield, our chapter's Air Quality Chair and Executive Committee member. Similar versions were published in the Ventura County Star on July 4 and as an official Chapter comment to the PUC.

By Mike Stubblefield

Oxnard now has three power plants. No other city in Ventura County has even one.



Oxnard has a long history as Ventura County's power plant dumping ground. SoCal Edison (SCE) built a 560 megawatt (MW) plant at Mandalay Bay in the 1950s and a 1,516 MW plant at Ormond Beach in the early 1970s. When California's energy market was deregulated in the late 1990s, Edison sold its two power plants to Reliant Energy of Texas; in 2012 NRG bought both Reliant plants.

That same year, despite Oxnard's strenuous objections, Edison announced plans to build a 45-MW "peaker" plant at the Mandalay site. Oxnard's City Council and the community felt that we had paid our dues; it was time to put power plants somewhere else. But the California Coastal Commission approved Edison's bid because, said the late Peter Douglas, our Local Coastal Plan (which hadn't been updated

since the Eighties) "didn't make a peaker plant a non-conforming project."

But at least we'd soon be rid of the two old plants: In 2010, the state Water Board announced its intentions to phase out by 2020 all "Once-Through-Cooling" (OTC) plants - which suck sea water from the ocean, circulate it through their cooling systems to absorb heat, then discharge the heated water back into the ocean, harming marine life. After that we'd be able to finish restoring the Ormond Beach wetlands and the dune habitat at Mandalay Bay.

Then we learned that the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) had approved NRG's bid to build a fourth power plant, a 262 MW peaker at Mandalay Bay. (A peaker provides extra power to the grid during high-load periods.)

But we already have that brand new Edison peaker at Mandalay. Why two peaker plants at the same site? Oxnard citizens packed City Council meetings, saying "We don't want any more power plants on or near our beaches." Our City Council agrees.

But NRG says that if it were forced to build its new plant anywhere besides Mandalay Bay, then it "just won't have the money to take down its two old plants at Ormond and Mandalay."

Really? What will NRG do? Simply shut them down, put a For Sale sign on them and walk away?

State agencies aren't much help either. The California Coastal Commission warns that energy

facilities "are at risk of impaired function due to erosion, flooding and inundation, particularly in low-lying coastal areas" of which the Oxnard Plain is the lowest. Yet the PUC allowed Edison to award a bid for a new peaker power plant, right next to Edison's new peaker, in the midst of rare coastal dune habitat next to a beautiful beach.

Oxnard has been pushed around by irresponsible energy companies who want to use our beaches as an environmental dumping ground. For generations, we have taken the burden of pollution from generating power for the whole region.

Power plants, toxic waste sites, and other industrial facilities have kept Oxnard from building the coastal tourist economy of our neighbors like Santa Barbara and Malibu, who would never allow power plants on their beaches.

Enough is enough. In order to operate a new dirty energy power plant on Oxnard's coast for decades to come, NRG is pursuing a permit from the PUC.

The PUC held a hearing in Oxnard on July 15 and 80 people showed up to protest, but were only given a minute each to speak, although written comments were accepted.

The Sierra Club and Environmental Defense Center, among many other opponents, are determined to stop this senseless project. Stay apprised of it through Condor Call, Ventura Sierra Club's Facebook page and other media.



Bobcats saved

BREAKING NEWS.... Just minutes ago the ca fish and game commission approved a ban on the trapping of bobcats in the state of California," wrote Jim Hines of the club's Wildlife Team at 1:32pm Aug. 5 in an email blast. Our chapter and Sierra Club California actively supported a full ban on commercial trapping of bobcats after a year-long effort. This critter was spotted in the Manzana Creek area of the Los Padres National Forest, proving they are indeed here even though you may not see one often, or ever. (Photo by Jack Elliott, read his outdoor blogs at www.yankeebareno.com)

Ex Com's voice...

continued from page 3

Highlights of the plan include: Reuse of water to capture, store, treat and use urban storm-water runoff, and expand environmental stewardship, long term water use reduction (for future droughts) and preparations for climate change.

~ Again in concert with SCC we supported a ban on the commercial trapping of bobcats, along with the sale and export of bobcat pelts. An original bill was gutted, inserting a ban in only a few locations. The CA Fish and Game Commission on a narrow 3-2 vote supported the full ban.

~ What's in a name? Well, the existing Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area was so named due to a compromise in the late 1970s, when it was supposed

to be the Santa Monica Mountains National Park and Seashore.

Since then, it has grown by nearly 40,000 acres, mostly in the Ventura County portion, and Rep. Brad Sherman has introduced legislation to rename it to its original intent for a more accurate description and a higher status (and protection) of National Park. Sierra Club strongly supports it.

~ Our chapter is now part of the Santa Barbara County Chaparral Coalition which is headed up by Brian Trautwein of the EDC. Our first major victory was on July 22 when the County Planning Commission designated the chaparral ecosystem in the East Goleta Valley as an "Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area."

~ By John Hankins



Frenetic pace for new oil projects

By Fran Farina

There's a song that begins, "Summer time and the living is easy." George Gershwin obviously didn't have to contend with the oil industry as we do in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. The pace has been positively frenetic with Sierra Club actively involved on several important energy fronts.

Deadly trains 80-cars in length carrying volatile crude oil remain a threat if San Luis Obispo County approves a project by Phillips 66 to expand a rail spur at the Santa Maria Refinery near Nipomo. The trains would travel over the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. So far virtually every jurisdiction in Ventura County has sent letters opposing the project. Santa Barbara County has been slower to react but the city councils in Carpinteria, Santa Barbara and Goleta have already acted urging denial of the project. We expect the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors to take the issue up in the near future.

New oil projects continue being proposed. Venoco's South Ellwood Field Project would expand drilling from Platform Holly and use the same pipeline that caused the Refugio oil spill in May. Staff from State Lands Commission held a meeting in Goleta on June 24 to a room packed mostly with people who said they didn't want to see any more oil drilling after what they just witnessed with the Refugio spill. That won't stop the process.

Drilling from Vandenberg Air Force Base farther up the coast

into the offshore Tranquillon Ridge is now a very real possibility as the military looks for new revenue sources. Legislation to stop this failed in 2014, but a new bill is alive that could provide the needed protection.

Senate Bill 788 by Sen. McGuire has passed the Senate and is currently on the calendar of an Assembly Committee. When the legislature reconvenes on Aug. 17, there will be three weeks left before the session ends on Sept. 11. Sierra Club is working very hard to ensure this bill will pass.

Refugio oil spill activity may be slowing down but cleanup continues at the bluff and beach where the oil first emerged onto the coastal area. About 200 birds and more than 100 marine mammals died in the spill area. These are images we will not forget.

During the height of the cleanup activity, Sierra Club participated in weekly meetings of the Environmental Coalition focusing solely on the spill and working closely with our elected officials to get more information to the public in a timely manner. This was often a frustrating effort as the Unified Command maintained a tight lid on all aspects of the response.

On a happier note, great progress has been made on Community Choice Energy. We now have a \$500,000 commitment to proceed with a feasibility study that may offer people in both counties local control over their energy portfolio.

Santa Barbara Supervisors also adopted a threshold for stationary industrial greenhouse gas emissions in the unincorporated area of 1,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions per year. Whether we're organizing rallies



No wonder hang gliders are popular along our mountains and the coast, the view is terrific. While not up in the air to keep tabs on the oil industry, it's not a bad idea, given the delay by Plains Pipeline in reporting the May 19 oil spill (see recap on page 13). This is another fine © photo by Susan Bell (whose Ellwood Pier photo graced our last cover issue). See more at www.Facebook.com/SusanBellPhotography

or testifying at hearings, Sierra Club members are working hard to move us to a fossil-free environment.

~ Fran Farina represents the Sierra Club's Los Padres Chapter on the Santa Barbara Environmental Coalition. The Coalition monitors all energy activity in three counties.

SUPPORT CCE

Need Sierra Club members and friends to support a feasibility study for Community Choice Energy at the upcoming Ventura County Board of Supervisors meeting, Tuesday Aug. 11 at 10am.

Issue is whether or not to pitch in \$50,000 for the study along with Santa Barbara County. Come in person or write comments to your supervisor.

CCE allows cities and counties to create a non-profit local power agency that can purchase electricity from current providers and alternative sources.

It's a gas

Natural gas is now the primary source for generating electricity across the nation, overtaking coal for the first time ever this spring, according to a recently-released study.

The primary sources for electricity in order are now natural gas (31 percent), coal (30 percent) and nuclear (20 percent). Coal is being reduced due to climate change regulations requiring less pollution while natural gas prices have fallen.

The Obama Administration intends to go even further with a Clean Power Plan that would require a 30 percent reduction in such pollution sources by 2030, which is expected to be fought by Republicans in Congress, according to the Associated Press.

Gaviota...

continued from page 3

technology facility at the Landfill since 2002.

While admirable in concept, it runs afoul of the County's pledge to close the Landfill, which is ill-sited near the ocean's edge. Additionally, the proposed facility works at cross-purpose to more traditional, proven, and cost-effected recycling strategies.

Tipping fees at the dump will jump from \$86/ton to \$146/ton, the highest in the state. The project's escalating costs have caused the developer, Mustang Renewable Power Ventures, to seek County sponsored public financing, where previously the developer proposed to finance the project with private capital. The shift is indicative of the escalating risk of this project and demands careful scrutiny by the public.

The Gaviota Coast Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) was released for public review and comment in June, and the public has until Sept. 4 to comment on it. The DEIR is available on the county's website at: <http://tinyurl.com/GaviotaPlan>

Check our website to keep up with all Gaviota Coast matters, or get on our email list: www.gaviotacoastconservancy.org



See story page 8



'Shell No' campaign goes local

In an event organized by the Sierra Club, activists on land and sea (kayaks) gathered at Goleta Beach on July 18 to say 'Shell No' to Shell Oil's plan to drill in the Arctic this summer ... and a pitch to also stop local oil projects, literally fueled by the recent Refugio Oil Spill May 19 and a penchant for alternative energy sources.

The activists joined thousands of others around the county in recent weeks to pressure the Obama Administration to stop the drilling plans that could begin in the Arctic's Chukchi Sea in a matter of weeks.

"The President's own advisers have warned that there is a 75 percent likelihood of a major oil spill if anyone drills in the Arctic, and the science warns that the continued development of dirty fuels will increase the effects of climate disruption. Shell's record of screw-ups in the Arctic would be comic if the results were not potentially so tragic," said Michael Brune, Executive Director of the Sierra Club.

Since purchasing the leases, Shell has committed one mistake after another. In 2012, its rig ran aground in what the Coast Guard classified as an "inadequate assessment of management and risks," and then recently, it put a three-foot gash in the side of a ship meant to break through ice.

"We on the Central Coast know firsthand the environmental and economic risks of offshore oil drilling. Enough is enough. We need to put an end to the relentless push for increasingly risky oil extraction

techniques and focus our efforts on developing sustainable, clean energy sources," said local Rep. Lois Capps at the Goleta rally.

Capps was also on hand at a similar demonstration in Oregon (where oil supply ships are located) when that state's Senator, Jeff Merkley, announced the Stop Arctic Ocean Drilling Act of 2015. It would prevent any new or renewed leases for the exploration, development, or production of oil, natural gas, or any other mineral in the Arctic planning area.

Residents at the Goleta rally also spoke against increased oil production in the Santa Barbara Channel. "Venoco is trying to drill six new slant wells off of Platform Holly which would feed into the pipeline which just ruptured (Refugio Oil Spill). We're here to say no!" said Becca Classen of Food Water Watch, which also helped organize the event.

"We had 50 people and six

elected leaders gather on Goleta Beach, calling on President Obama to say 'Shell No' to drilling in the Arctic. But it wasn't just Santa Barbara; there were over 20 events in 15 different states. From Alaska to Florida, from Santa Barbara to Boston, Americans want to see the Arctic continue to be preserved. Santa Barbara County and the Central Coast know where dirty fuels belong -- in the ground, not on our shores or in our water and air," said Sierra Club organizer Sam Sukaton.

The officials included Rep. Lois Capps, State Sen. Hannah Beth Jackson, Santa Barbara Supervisor Salud Carbajal, Santa Barbara Mayor Helene Schneider, Santa Barbara School trustee Monique Limon and Carpinteria City Council member Fred Shaw and IV Recreation and Parks District Trustee Jacob Lebell.

To get involved, search for 'Shell No' at:

www.sierraclub.org



That's our Rep. Lois Capps talking to activists during the "Shell No" oil protest rally July 18 at Goleta Beach, joining scores of other similar protests across the nation. Also shown (far right) are SB Supervisor Salud Carbajal and State Sen. Hannah-Beth Jackson. Fran Farina from the SB Sierra Club Group was there signing up people to protest. (Photo by Carl Hunter Perry)

A handful of 'kayaktivists' paddled out to our clean ocean off Goleta Beach to protest more oil drilling here and in the Arctic during the "Shell No" event. (Photo by Carl Hunter Perry)

Club targets oil trains

Now that there is a possibility of transporting more oil by train from the Santa Maria Refinery along Santa Barbara and Ventura's coastline (and many other areas), the Sierra Club's take on this mode of transportation is clear and is part of a nationwide activist campaign.

To keep current on the Santa Maria Refinery affecting our chapter area, go to:

www.mesarefinerywatch.com

Want to find out if you are endangered by what the club is calling oil "bomb trains"? Go here and tap in your zip code:

www.blast-zone.org

Here's what the club says about the issue:

Dangerous Oil Trains

Between 2005 and 2013, U.S. railways saw a 70-fold increase in the amount of explosive crude oil being shipped by train throughout the country, with more than 800,000 barrels per day (bpd) being shipped in 2013. These dangerous oil trains

-- sometimes called "bomb trains" -- have been involved in dozens of accidents over the last few years, many resulting in oil spills, large explosions and forced evacuations of local residents.

It's estimated that more than 25 million Americans live within the blast zone of an oil train, and most don't even realize it. In response to a record number of explosive oil train derailments over the last few years, the U.S. Department of Transportation released new industry-friendly oil train safety standards that would allow explosive oil trains to stay on the tracks for up to 10 years. Less than a week later, another bomb train derailed and exploded in North Dakota.

That's why it's important that we take action to protect our communities from dangerous oil trains. To get involved, search for crude-by-rail at:

www.SierraClub.org

More donors: we'll spend money wisely

Even more contributions to our local chapter are coming in since our annual March Appeal, and below is an addition to last issue's list of generous donors ... and it's never too late and always appreciated.

A heartfelt "thank you" to all those who contributed, whether or not through money or time.

The donations support the incredible work our volunteers are doing in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties, which includes hundreds of free outings per year and first-class activism keeping our air and water safe from threats like pollution, fracking, off-shore oil drilling and unrestrained development.

To add your name to the list, 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."

- William Allard
- G. W. Arnett
- Daniel & Cassandra Auerbach
- Marya Barr
- Susan Berg
- Ron & Virginia Bottorff
- Rhonda Cardinal
- Gerry & Beverly Ching
- Karen Clark
- John & Patricia Coppejans
- C. T. Cote
- John Edward Davis
- Peter & Diane Dowler
- John Evarts

Los Padres Group News

The public is welcome to our programs

STEERING COMMITTEE

~ Meets at 7pm on the fourth Thursday of every month, either in-person at the Carpinteria IHOP, or by conference call. Email Secretary Gerry Ching for the agenda and details: gching@cox.net

ARGUELLO GROUP

~ Board usually meets first Monday of the month at various locations and times. General meetings most months on 3rd Friday at Lompoc Presbyterian Church 1600 E. Berkeley Ave., usually with conservation program 7 – 9pm or 6 – 9pm when there are potlucks.

~Volunteers are needed as hike leaders and to monitor issues; your talents could make a difference.

~ All information on this North County Santa Barbara Group from Jerry Connor, 928-3598 or email: Connor.gd2@verizon.net

CONEJO GROUP

~ Get all information on this eastern Ventura County Group from Hugh Warren, 341-6295 mail@hkwarren.net

~ On the web: www.sierraclub.org/los-padres/conejo

~ For outings: www.sierraclub.org/los-padres/conejo/outings

SANTA BARBARA GROUP

~ Usually meets at 5:30pm on the first Monday of the month at Union Bank, 15 E. Carrillo St. View the calendar, hikes and issues and join the mailing list for the South Coast Santa Barbara area (Carpinteria to Goleta) at www.SBSierraClub.org or follow us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/sbsierraclub

VENTURA NETWORK

~ Up-to-date information about the western Ventura County group in Condor Call on the Los Padres Chapter website. Address: PO Box 7301, Ventura CA 93006. Also on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/pages/Ventura-Sierra-Club/152441931434825

~ Regular board meetings 1st Wed monthly at REI in Oxnard 7-8:30pm. Call Nina Danza to confirm at 901-1679.

- Gary R. Faulkner
- Stephen Ferry
- June Gill
- 'Condor John' Hankins
- Peter L. Hasler
- Camille & Sherman Herrick
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- Lilly Ruvalcaba
- Diana Troik & Art Shaffman
- Virginia Souza
- S. Warner-Arnett
- Michael Warren
- Robert & Katy Zappala

Hooked on Social Media

The Sierra Club loves social media because it's a great way to reach hundreds and even thousands of people very quickly as we put our messages out about our campaigns, issues and calls to action. Social media is a great activist tool.

The Los Padres Chapter has two group sites on Facebook, Ventura Sierra Club and Santa Barbara Sierra Club, which have a combined total of around 1100 followers. Our Wilderness Basics Course also has a Facebook site.

There is also the Santa Clara River Confluence Facebook, administered by member-activist Nina Danza.

The Los Padres Chapter is also on Twitter; yes we tweet, follow us at:

#hospadressierraclub

On a statewide level, our activist arm Sierra Club California has a Facebook and our Ventura Conservation Chair, Jim Hines, administers the Sierra Club California/Nevada Wilderness Team and Sierra Club California/Nevada Wildlife Team.

If you are on Facebook please "like" our pages.

"Ah yes, social media is the way to go. The Sierra Club has come a long way since the days of John Muir traveling from town to town to spread the message of the Sierra Club," said Jim Hines, our Ventura Conservation Chair whose personal Facebook site specialized in positive comments.

If this is your first time
on **FACEBOOK** leave **NOW!**
It's far too late for us,
but save yourselves.



Volunteers: our life's blood, sweat & smiles

By Jim Hines

Volunteers are the life blood of the Sierra Club. Volunteers like yourself have allowed the Sierra Club to successfully protect our environment for 123 years now.

I am so amazed at the work of our supporters and volunteers, not just in large nationwide events such as last September's



climate march in New York City, but right here at home in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties, our Los Padres Chapter region. When we called for your help in attending rallies, speaking out at public hearings and communicating with elected and appointed decision makers, you were there for the Sierra Club.

You showed up to voice your concerns and help out during the recent Refugio oil spill, and you spoke out to protect gray wolves in California at a recent state hearing held in Ventura. You continue showing up when the oil industry wants to get more petroleum and more than that, supporting the solutions of alternative energy sources, such as the Community Choice Energy campaign.

You have also attended workshops, hearings and written comments regarding protecting wildlife in the Santa Susana and Santa Monica Mountains, Simi Hills, and worked with us to get the process started to create

a wildlife overpass over the busy 101 freeway in the Liberty Canyon area of Agoura Hills.

I could not believe the massive show of support so many of you gave when I called for emails to the state Fish and Game Commission regarding support for the Sierra Club call for a ban on trapping of bobcats in our chapter region and through the state. We have over 1000 emails into the commission in support of the ban.. Each of YOU are truly making a difference.

So many of you work to save the Gaviota Coast from urban development, ensuring the health of our rivers and the years-long dream to make Ormond Beach a world-class wildlife attraction.

I wanted to take a little time this month to say a big THANK YOU to each of you, our Los Padres Chapter volunteers, supporters and activists for all of the great work you have been doing to help the Sierra Club protect our great wild places and precious wildlife.

Each one of YOU are the voices for the voiceless among us, the wildlife, land, clean water, clean air and coastal resources which the Sierra Club fights for every day.

And for those who want to get involved, check out the contacts in the Group News box. Choose your group and pick your topic!

In humble appreciation of your work and efforts ...



You'll notice below that our Ventura Network activist Nina Danza thanks our fundraisers and in other places our volunteers (so does Jim Hines in the adjacent article). The thing is, both of them are amazing volunteers themselves, setting an example and making our Chapter a dynamic and successful part of the Sierra Club. There are many others, feel free to join them; contacts are on page 2. (Photo by Jim Traina of Nina in the Santa Clara River, her special project area)

Thanks to our fundraisers

By Nina Danza

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." ~Winston Churchill

Consumers vote with their wallet, right? Well a certain retail store and ice cream restaurant vote with their wallet too.

The Refill Shoppe on Main Street in Ventura gave \$277, 1 percent of their May income, to Ventura Sierra Club as a vote for the environment. McConnell's Ice Cream (Ventura location) gave 50 percent of sales and its shop in Santa Barbara on State Street gave 10 percent of sales to the Ventura Sierra Club during scheduled dates in July.

If you've ever dabbled in small

business, you know how hard it is to make it, and to give away some of the hard earned dollars is more than generous. It's living proof of 'putting your money where your mouth is' or 'walking the walk', the antithesis of greenwashing.

The Refill Shoppe has a daily eco-ethic and is in business to reduce, reuse and recycle. At the Refill Shoppe you bring your own bottles and containers to fill with bath and home products, custom scented with essential oils in the store, all responsibly sourced.

"We do what we do because hot bubble baths, clean people, lovely smells, smiles on faces and a little less plastic in the world makes us so very happy," says the owner, Michelle

EAVESDROPS

"It just makes you feel good because you know you're helping the environment, helping animals."

~ Buena High School student volunteer Sarah Thomas, 16, commenting in the **Ventura County Star** about a prestigious national award given to the school for its long-term (17 years and counting) commitment. The school provides scores of students who go to Anacapa Island to take out weeds and replace them with native species.

Stevens.

McConnell's Ice Cream is a local legend using "grass-grazed milk and cream we pasteurize from raw at our creamery at The Old Dairy (c. 1934) and the finest local, sustainable and organic, raw ingredients, sourced from partner farms in Santa Barbara County."

How much more could you want? Go vote with your wallet at www.therefillshoppe.com and www.mconnells.com and say THANK YOU for us.

~ Editor's note: And let's not forget thanking Nina Danza who took time from her busy life to arrange these fundraisers.

**THE
REFILL
SHOPPE**
bath body home & clean

Adventure, wildlife abound on our Big 4 peaks

By Stephen Bryne
Sierra Club Hike Leader

Recently, Sierra Club volunteers had the opportunity to help maintain trails while hiking to the seldom-visited Big Four peaks in the Santa Barbara County backcountry, where wildlife and history abound.

This adventure was courtesy of

EAVESDROPS

"Coyotes have learned how to coexist with us ... but we're still trying to figure out how to coexist with them."

~Camilla Fox of the California Project Coyote, commenting in **The Week** on how coyotes have extended their reach from their original habitats in the west to the east, including cities where small packs have been seen in New York, Chicago and Washington DC, and particularly in Northeast suburbs.

the Los Padres Forest Association (LPFA) with help from U.S. Forest Service (USFS) volunteers. LPFA President Bryan Conant and Mike Smith, leader of the Sisquoc trail repair group, invited volunteers from the Sierra Club to join them on this weekend.

The Big Four peaks include Big Pine, West Big Pine, Madulce Peak, and Samon Peak. These are usually done as a 45-mile, 3-day backpack trip. While Mike would lead a group to work on the nearby Sisquoc Trail, we would do trail repair on Madulce Trail on Saturday and would hike to the remaining peaks on the other two days.

Sierra Club volunteers were led by Hundred Peak Section (HPS) hike leaders Peter and Ignacia Doggett. The Doggetts know these peaks well. Peter has completed the entire 279-peak

list a remarkable 13 times. The indefatigable Peter once did the Big Four in a single day; that is all 45 miles and 8000 feet of ascension.

For us, this was a rare chance to experience the Big Four without the 45-mile, 3-day backpack, since we were able to drive to Alamar Saddle. This spot was once forested, but the mature trees were burned during the Zaca Fire.

That fire began northeast of Buellton on July 4, 2007, and by August 31, it had burned over 240,207 acres, making it California's second largest fire in recorded history (after the Cedar Fire of 2003).

After making camp at Alamar Saddle, we hiked to West Big Pine and Big Pine Mountain. West Big Pine, at 6490 feet, offers excellent views of the surrounding wilderness. The USFS constructed a fire lookout here in 1934 but it has since been dismantled. June's rains lead to a profusion of wildflowers along the trail, including Indian paintbrush, scarlet bugler, and wallflower.

Big Pine Mountain, at 6800 feet, is the highest point in Santa Barbara County. Conifer forests including white, yellow, Ponderosa and Jeffrey pines dot the north slope of the appropriately named Big Pine Mountain.

Saturday morning our trail work involved clearing the first 1.5 miles of the 3.5-mile-long Madulce Trail, which is overgrown. After completing this work, we visited Madulce Peak. This 6536-foot peak was named in the 18th century, most likely by Mission padres for the wild



Big 4 peaks author Stephen Bryne atop one of those peaks in the San Rafael Wilderness, enjoying wonderful backcountry views. (Photo by Sonia Arancibia)

strawberries that still grow in the area. The USFS built a fire lookout here in 1934, but the tower was burned in the late 1970s. On the Madulce Trail we traversed through thickets of thimbleberries, which provided delicious, ripe berries.

Wildlife abounds in this part of the wilderness. Bears are commonly seen. Mike reported a close encounter with a mountain lion. Mule deer were spied. Smaller mammals included black-tailed jackrabbit and chipmunk. Bird sightings included mountain quail, spotted towhee, Western scrub jay, Steller's jay, raven, roadrunner, and common poorwill. Some volunteers were treated to the sight of a mountain king snake.

On Sunday, we climbed Samon Peak. This peak, at 6227 feet, is reached by a 3-mile out-and-back "use" trail. This trail climbs

steeply from near Chokecherry Spring to the top of a ridge then descends into a meadow before traversing four small peaks on the way to Samon Peak.

Peter reported that, on one of his trips to Samon, when he arrived at the peak, he found the summit register guarded by a rattlesnake. From this rocky summit, there are panoramic views of the nearby wild-and-scenic Sisquoc River.

Overall, this trip was literally a win-win. Sierra Club volunteers were able to provide badly needed trail maintenance while visiting four remote peaks in the Santa Barbara backcountry. A good time was had by all. Many thanks to LPFA, USFS volunteers, and trip leaders Peter and Ignacia Doggett. For those interested in that group, go to:

www.hundredpeaks.org



The San Rafael Wilderness, home to some of Santa Barbara County's highest peaks. (Photo by Stephen Bryne)

First person to go all the way

By Bryan Conant

The idea of the Condor Trail started just about 20 years ago with the dream of creating a hiking route that connected trails from Lake Piru to NIRA, which is outside of Los



Olivos on the edge of the San Rafael Wilderness, snaking through Ventura and Santa Barbara counties.

Since then the dream has grown and the Condor Trail now spans over 410 trail miles covering the entire length of the Los Padres from Lake

Piru (southern Ojai Ranger District) up to Bottchers Gap (northern Monterey Ranger District).

While hikers have done large chunks of the Condor Trail over the years, no one had ever hiked the entire thing, until now. Brittany Nielson became the first finisher of the Condor Trail in early July when she completed the hike from Lake Piru to Bottcher's Gap.

She solo-hiked the trail and finished in 37 days. It was interesting talking with her before and after her hike. I think she gained an appreciation for the Los Padres and a respect for how challenging our forest can get. She tackled long sections with no trail, heavy bushwhacking in deep canyons,

temps ranging from freezing to triple figures, 15 mile stretches with no water and day after day without seeing a single person (less than 20 people along the entire trail).

But, she also hiked under old growth redwoods, covered elevations from over 7,000 feet to sea level, saw incredible wildlife, ocean views, deep pools and got to experience the solitude that is a famous mark for the Los Padres.

Brittany basically took a crash course in Los Padres Backcountry, learning things in a month that many of us took years and years to learn. Speaking on behalf of everyone involved in supporting her journey, we're all so proud of Brittany for her resiliency, tough skin, happy-go-lucky attitude and ability to fight through the hard times.

This is quite an accomplishment and one that will no doubt put her somewhere in the Los Padres hall of fame.

What's next for the Condor Trail and/or Brittany? She would like to return next season and do the hike again. Perhaps when she does there will be some other through-hikers following in her footsteps.



The Chorro Fire 20 miles north of the city of Ojai that started on Aug. 2 burned 282 acres off Hwy. 33 and the Chorro Grande Trailhead. It was quickly contained thanks to over 500 personnel, along with air tankers and night-flying helicopters. The burn area is closed along with the following until Oct. 1: Reyes Peak Road (aka Pine Mountain Road); Oak Campground; Chorro Grande Trail; Potrero John Camp and Trail; Gene Marshall Trail from Bear Trap to Reyes Creek Camp; and the Boulder Creek Trail.

Chaparrel is 'sensitive'

The Santa Barbara County Planning Commission voted 4-1 in late July to recommend that the Board of Supervisors designate four types of chaparral covering thousands of acres in the Goleta Plan area as a protected "Environmentally Sensitive Habitat" (ESH).

The action was supported by the Los Padres Chapter Sierra Club, along with other environmental groups and led by the Environmental Defense Center.

The Commission also voted 4-1 to recommend adoption of the proposal to close the loophole in

the ESH Ordinance which currently allows extensive removals with no review or mitigation.

"Unfortunately, the Commission voted 3-2 to not support our recommendation to increase creek setbacks generally from 50 to 100 feet, leaving Goleta's creeks subject to pollution and degradation," noted Brian Trautwein of EDC.

The Goleta Plan goes to the Board of Supervisors in September or October and the groups are expected to rally support for chaparral and wildlife habitats.



Brittany Nielson is the first to hike the whole 410 miles of the Condor Trail starting at Lake Piru (left, photo by Bryan Conant) and finishing at Bottcher's Gap, the northern terminus (Photo by Tim Bills).

Visit Smog Nat'l Park

California's beloved Yosemite, Joshua Tree, King's Canyon and Sequoia national parks are some of the most polluted in the nation, according to a report released in July by the National Parks Conservation Association.

The report, which graded 48

of the country's 59 national parks, found that these four California parks have levels of ozone that are unhealthy for summer visitors and an average of 50 miles of visibility obscured by haze pollution.

To read the report and learn more, go to: www.npca.org

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

Clean energy is the 'jobs creator'

By Elisabeth Lamar

It was a packed crowd at California Lutheran University on July 21st when billionaire Tom Steyer took on climate deniers, asserting solar and renewable energy solutions create more jobs than the production of petroleum.

Hosted by Assembly member Jacqui Irwin, the audience was peppered with Senate District 27 candidates: Richard Mathews, David Pollock, and Henry Stern.

The audience eagerly awaited hearing about energy policy in California, and Steyer said it has long been viewed as a state that leads the way in progressive policy, setting the trend both nationally and globally.

Steyer is a former hedge fund manager turned philanthropist and a major player in the Democratic Party. In 2013, he founded the NextGen Climate Action Super PAC, campaigning against politicians who deny the science of climate change, such as Marco Rubio and Rick Scott.

Additionally, Steyer has been an aggressive advocate for clean energy on the state, federal, and international level. He spoke of his recent Washington trip to talk about the dynamic pace of renewable energy production in California, and multiple missions to China to lobby for greenhouse gas reduction.

As a business leader Steyer cited the undeniable prosperity that green growth promises. Renewable energy use in



Assembly member Jacqui Irwin hosted a talk by billionaire activist Tom Steyer debunking climate deniers. (Photo by Elisabeth Lamar)

the state is skyrocketing and projected to rise even further in the near future. Put simply, the fossil fuel industry has no place in the California economy.

According to Steyer, SB 350, authored by leader of the California Senate Kevin de Leon, would mandate that 50% of the state's energy come from clean sources by 2030, a goal easily attainable, he believes.

Passing the bill would send a powerful message to the world that fossil fuels are dead.

Steyer is a charismatic character brimming with youthful enthusiasm. He spoke optimistically about innovate technology to mitigate the effects of climate change, such as advanced farming techniques that sequester more carbon in the soil.

A question from the audience asked how we can elect firm environmentalist politicians. Steyer carefully avoided partisan

rhetoric but suggested that as voters we keep aware of where the money surrounding candidates is coming from. Steyer refrained from making any statements about the presidential election. It's worth noting, however, that only three current candidates have refused to take donations from the fossil fuel industry.

EAVESDROPS
 "For the true environmentalist, nothing beats an electric car charged by renewable energy sources. Homeowners with rooftop solar panels can literally drive on sunshine."

~ Conclusion by an LA Times report trying to sort out which green vehicle is "kindest to the planet," among hybrids, battery electrics, diesels and hydrogen fuel cells. But efficient gasoline engines are also in the mix.



The first event on Aug. 8 is You Bug Me at the Wheeler Gorge Visitors' Center.

Outdoor Ed at the 'Gorge'

The Wheeler Gorge Visitors Center has plenty of information on animals and the Los Padres National Forest every day, but it also conducts special events. Located at 17017 Maricopa Hwy, Ojai, here's its schedule through September, all starting at 11am.

You Bug Me Aug. 8

Dr. Philip Phillips of UC Riverside talks about "insects and their relationship with mankind: The good, the bad, and the ugly." While insects are very helpful to man, providing food, medical assistance and other beneficial services, they can also cause serious damage to agriculture and spread disease.

Live Birds of Prey Aug. 15

A live demonstration by Kim Stroud of the Ojai Raptor Center showing birds of prey: owls, hawks, and falcons. See them online at www.ojairaptorcenter.org

Reptiles Aug. 22

Tom Hagan and Sandy Chase, with the Southwestern

Herpetological Society, will present live and impressive lizards and snakes and give advice on which reptile to pick as a pet. Also meet Paleo-biologist Grayson Kent showing both prehistoric and present day bone structures. Online at:

www.swhs.org

Rescuing Ocean Animals Sept. 5

Wildlife rescuer Ron Barrett, with the Channel Island Marine and Wildlife Institute, will present information and insights on sea lions, seals, otters and other animals found sick or injured. What you should do and not do when you find an animal stranded on the beach? CIMWI's Rescue Hotline is (805) 567-1505; put it in your cell phone.

Amazing Bears Sept. 19

Kelley Swedlow, Wheeler Gorge docent, will present information about our brown and black bears, and the many other types of bears found around the world.

PHOTOS BY ROBERT BERNSTEIN

Does a bear scat in the woods?

Editor's note: Hike leader Robert Bernstein was diligent in getting expert tracker Michael Kresky to go along on a Sierra Club outing in the Santa Barbara foothills. Kresky is a co-author (along with Mark Elbroch and Jonah Evans) of the "Field Guide to Animal Tracks and Scat of California."

In the introduction, Elbroch writes that "readers should realize that tracking skills are but tools to be wielded for some purpose and not an end in and of themselves; hunting, education, poaching detection, wildlife monitoring, research and conservation are but some of its varied applications."

Here's Robert's account of the outing.

By Robert Bernstein

Special thanks to animal tracking expert Michael Kresky for making

the Secret Buena Vista Benches hike especially educational and enjoyable. Michael is a skilled tracker who literally wrote the book on the subject.

The highlight was when he found a perfect bear footprint after seeing bear signs on the trail.

Michael not only knows animal tracks, animal poops and signs of animal activity as he recognizes a wide range of bird calls and knows the local plants and even the invasive non-native plants.

He explained that to track animals, it is essential to use every clue available. The plants can be valuable clues about which animals may be present. He also pointed out the corridors where animals are likely to travel as vital clues.

A few poop notes: Cats are pure carnivores. If there are any seeds, it is not a cat. Lizards and birds have one opening for urine and feces. The uric

acid is a white section added to the poop. Michael said that domestic dogs (and other canids such as coyotes) introduce a fungus that grows "hair" on many poops seen on the trail.

The hike was shrouded in fog, eliminating the sweeping views usually seen on this route. But the compensation was a pleasant hike on a trail that can be brutally hot. And the ethereal feel of the fog was magical!

The hike itself was fairly short, just three miles round trip, starting on the Romero Canyon Road trail and soon branching off onto the Buena Vista Trail. The elevation gain is just 700 feet, but it is really steep; most of that elevation gain happens in about half a mile. That is a 30 percent grade, as steep as the steepest street in San Francisco. It is one of the few hikes where I strongly recommend a hiking pole or stick.



Scat tracker Michael Kresky shows other skills with plant IDs



Whiptailed lizard evidence



Bear track led to scat



Bobcat sat this scat



Bear does scat in woods



Caterpillar frass



Fox poop with fuzz



Coyote scat with seed matter



Fungus ('hair') on Dog shit

Spill is gone, bills linger on

By John Hankins,
Editor Condor Call

Just as the dark oil lapped up on shores nearly 100 miles away from the source of the May 19 Refugio Oil Spill, the political and legal tides are agitating for relief from future disasters.

Already, a litany of legislation is being proposed to tighten up regulations at the local, state and national levels, and the spill is becoming yet the latest warning of the dangers of petroleum use.

There are also multiple investigations that are ongoing at the federal, state and county levels that may include criminal as well as civil prosecutions.

Information Please

A consortium of agencies is continuing efforts to abate any impacts of the Refugio Oil Spill.

To keep apprised of these actions, sign up to get the Natural Resource Damage Assessment's newsletter. Call Steve Hampton at (916) 323-4724 or email: Steve.Hampton@wildlife.ca.gov

Check out the current newsletter is at:
www.wildlife.ca.gov/OSPR/NRDA/refugio

Below is a recap of the events. For ongoing detail by various agencies and the owner, go to:

www.refugioresponse.com

~ The extensive clean-up of the May 19 Refugio oil spill was declared finished two months afterward, affecting 96 miles of shoreline and costing owner Plains All-American Pipeline around \$100 million. An estimated (by Plains) 101,000 gallons of crude oil spilled from a corroded

pipeline and an undetermined amount of which reached the ocean, polluting the coast at least 100 miles southward to Manhattan Beach in Los Angeles.

At the height of the response, more than 1,400 workers were deployed for field operations and several hundred more were working at the command post and in support roles.

~ Wildlife officials reported nearly 200 birds and more than 100 mammals were found dead in the spill area. Approximately 60 each of birds and mammals were recovered alive and treated. Many have been released, some with tracking devices (solar powered!).

~ "For California Department of Fish and Wildlife, cleanup is only the first phase of our response," said Capt. Mark Crossland. "(Now) restoration begins, which is critical for the environment and the community. We will be here until that restoration is complete."

~ A probe into the pipeline break has reached the national level, as the House Energy and Commerce Committee took up

the issues of corrosion and the lag time in reporting. The cause is being investigated by the federal Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration.

But that agency came under fire by Congress in mid-July, with local Democratic Rep. Lois Capps calling its interim director "obtuse" and blaming the "culture" of the agency for its slowness to respond, while Republican Rep. David McKinney wondered how the agency would recover from "the loss of confidence of the public."

~ At a June hearing in Santa Barbara, Plains was taken to task for various anomalies, such as a citizen who called the County Fire Department about an odor, and that agency reported the spill to the National Response Center, while it took Plains 3.5 hours to do the same. The pipeline was then remotely shut off from Texas.

"Aren't you a little embarrassed ...?" asked Assembly member Das Williams.

Also, Plains' spokesman Patrick Hodgins said the first time he knew about the severe corrosion (82 percent of its thickness) of the pipeline was "when I read it in the newspaper," which 'shocked' him. State Sen. Hannah-Beth Jackson shot back: "why do I know more about what caused this than you do?"

~ *SB Independent's* Nick Welch reported that "One of the big surprises to emerge out of the most dramatic oil spill to hit the



The culprit, a pipeline portion that was seriously eroded and not caught by owner Plains Pipeline. Although a critical portion that connects with the offshore platforms, it was the only pipeline in Santa Barbara County that did not have an automatic shutoff feature. (Photo courtesy of SB Planning Dept.)

South Coast this century is that the pipeline ... is the only one in all of Santa Barbara County not to have an automatic shut-off valve. Not coincidentally, it happens to be the only pipeline over which the county Energy Division has no safety and inspection oversight authority."

This was due to a 1988 lawsuit won by the previous owners, Welch reported.

~ Rep. Capps asks for pipeline inspection reports back 5 years for both Lines 901 & 903 and that they remain shut down until full investigation is complete.

~ A UCSB team working with ocean flow data predicted the far-flung movement of the ocean oil, and they are suggesting a local collaboration to more efficiently analyze and clean up future spills.

~ Seven of the eight oil platforms off the Santa Barbara coast were shut in because of the

pipeline failure, and they remain so as of Aug. 1.

~ Fishing grounds were closed after the spill, affecting both commercial and recreational, and reopened in late June. The affected area covered 138 square miles between Coal Oil Point and Hollister Ranch, to about six miles seaward. Commercial fishermen have sued Plains and so have affected residents.

Affected campgrounds – El Capitan and Refugio among others – were shut down during clean-up operations; all are now open.

~ City of Santa Barbara hires special counsel to help value damage to reputation as a tourist destination caused by nationwide publicity, even though city beaches and amenities had limited impact from the spill.

~ A claims hotline has been set up for those who believe they have been impacted by the spill: (866) 753-3619.

Artists present 'Legacy & Loss'



"Summerland morning" © by Bill Dewey is one of the fascinating photos in a Wildling Museum exhibit called "Legacy and Loss: Landscapes of the Santa Barbara Region." Attend reception at 5:30pm, Aug. 21. The exhibition illustrates the tri-counties development as well as celebrate local wilderness and natural regions. Details at: www.wildlingmuseum.org

The Wildling Museum invites the community to come to an opening reception for its new exhibit, *Legacy and Loss: Landscapes of the Santa Barbara Region*, on Friday, Aug. 21 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm.

The exhibit will show the evolving landscape of the Santa Barbara region through the artwork of historic and contemporary artists. It will illustrate the development of the area as well as celebrate local wilderness and natural regions conserved as open space.

The exhibition will be in the first floor gallery from Aug. 22 to Feb. 1, 2016.

More detail on this and other exhibitions and events are at:

www.wildlingmuseum.org.



Farmers Market welcomes club

Our Sierra Club booth at the Farmers' Market in east Ventura gets plenty of attention. Here, kids learn about planting with Maravilla Clemens and they eagerly shared milkwood seeds. Kudos to Nina Danza who arranged for the booth and to Phil Clarke for helping out. (Photos by Nina Danza)



Wright choice for CEC

After 10 years at the helm, Dave Davis will officially retired from his position as CEO of the Community Environmental Council on July 31.

Sigrid Wright, who has been an instrumental leader at CEC for 20 years, is the new CEO.

Dave, a Sierra Club member and supporter, joined the CEC Board of Directors in 2004 and became CEO in 2005. He has led the organization through more than a decade of focus on regional solutions to climate change and clean energy development.

He is looking forward to new civic challenges, such as his recent appointment to the Santa Barbara Water Commission, and will continue as Chair of the

MTD Board. Send Dave your congratulations at ddavis@cecmail.org.

CEC's 45th Anniversary Green Gala – which will be held Friday, Sept. 25 at the Lark – will honor Dave..

For tickets, contact Kathi King at 963-0583 x 108 or: kking@cecmail.org

Wright is the right choice for CEC, having served there since 1995. Her credentials are impressive, such as co-authoring "A New Energy Direction: A Blueprint for Santa Barbara County," growing the Earth Day festival into a huge 2-day event and is now focused on moving the region toward sustainable methods, notable a food action plan.

EAVESDROPS

"I don't have that information in front of me ..."

~ Plains pipeline rep Patrick Hodgins, during a June 26 hearing called by State Sen. Hannah Beth Jackson and Assembly member Das Williams, who directly asked why it took the company 3½ hours to report the Refugio oil spill to the National Response Center. He gave the same answer when asked about a report showing extensive corrosion within the pipeline.

How CCE Works (See story on page 5)



Adapted from Sonoma Clean Power

Islands adventure awaits

Join the Sierra Club for a 3-day, 3-island, live-aboard tour of the enchanting Channel Islands.

Choose from these dates:

Connect with Santa Clara River event

Ventura Sierra Club Nina Danza has tipped us off to a unique event benefitting the Santa Clara River, an issue in which she is our lead activist. Nina has conducted numerous clean-ups and fundraisers for the river.

It features a keynote speaker, Charlene Spretnak, who lives in Ojai and was named as one of the "100 Eco-Heroes of All Time" by the British Government's Environmental Dept.

Called "Take Me to the River: Caring for Creation Starts at Home," the symposium runs from 8:30 am (for registration) and goes to 3:30 pm on Saturday, Aug. 15 at St. Clare of Assisi Parish, 19606 Calla Way in Canyon Country 91351.

The free event is intended to "create connections between the faith and environmental communities by exploring the rich spiritual traditions, ecology and history of the Santa Clara River watershed.

Sierra Club members are part of the board members who are presenting this event.

For details call (661) 255-6899 or email:

Lynnepl1@juno.com

August 24-26, Sept. 27-29 or Oct. 25-27.

You may hike the wild, windswept trails bordered with blazing wildflowers, kayak rugged coastlines, and marvel at pristine waters teeming with frolicking seals and sea lions.

Train your binoculars on unusual sea and land birds; and an occasional whale. Watch for the highly endangered island fox. Look for reminders of the Chumash people who lived on these islands for thousands of years ... or, just relax at sea.

All cruises depart from Santa Barbara. The \$615 cost includes an assigned bunk, all meals, snacks and beverages plus the services of a ranger-naturalist who will travel with us to help lead hikes, point out items of interest and give evening programs.

To reserve space, send a \$100 check, written to Sierra Club, to leader Joan Jones Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732.

For more information contact leader: (626) 443-0706 or email jholtzhl@aol.com

Get 'Santa Barbara Wild'

Los Padres ForestWatch is hosting its first ever *Santa Barbara Wild!* event on Sunday, Sept. 27, from 2-4 pm at the Toad&Co. courtyard on the beautiful Santa Barbara Riviera.

The theme will celebrate the role that bees and other pollinators play in protecting the Los Padres National Forest. There will be an opportunity to learn about the challenges pollinators face, the positive impact they have



The Sespe Valley and Hines Peak, a great destination for either day hikers or backpackers. Hines Peak is named after a long-ago relative of Jim Hines, the Ventura Sierra Club's Conservation Chair. On Aug. 9, we have an outing going to Piedra Blanca. (Photo by Pete Scifres)

Help support climate change bills

Ventura and Santa Barbara counties are experiencing a heat wave that feels like Florida. For the past three years we've been only getting 25 percent of our normal rain fall. We now have a "fire season" that is year-round.

and things everyone can do in their lives to help, like growing certain types of plants.

There will also be live music, food, silent auction, and much more. ForestWatch for eight years has conducted a similar event, Ojai Wild!, which will continue annually along with the new Santa Barbara county event.

For details, go to: www.sbwild.org

Ventura County Health Department held a climate forum putting Climate Change as the "greatest threat to public health in the 21st Century."

What can you do about it? A lot, beginning with signing the petition to let our Assembly members know to vote yes on clean energy and climate protection. To sign, go to:

www.VCCOOL.org

Volunteers are also needed; call 641-2665 or email:

action@vccool.org

Here's the scoop: The most powerful climate bills in our nation's history have just passed the California Senate, and are going to the Assembly floor starting Aug. 17. The top three are:

~ Senate Bill 32 (Pavley). Extends AB-32, reducing California's carbon pollution by 80 percent from 1990 levels, by 2050.

~ Senate Bill 350 (De León). Cut fossil fuel used in cars and trucks by 50 percent, ensure 50 percent of our electricity is from renewable sources, and increases energy efficiency in buildings by 50 percent, all by 2030.

~ Senate Bill 185 (De León). Directs the two largest state pension funds (public employees and state teachers) to divest their portfolios of coal companies by July 1, 2017.

There are 11 climate bills in total. An overview plus the actual text of each bill can be found at <http://focus.senate.ca.gov/climate>

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.

August 8
HENDRY'S BEACH/DOUGLAS FAMILY PRESERVE: Morning stroll along the beach then up the steps and back through the park completing the loop. Children welcome. Bring water and a snack. Slow paced 2 to 3 miles. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. DAVE 563-4850 (SB)

August 9
PIEDRA BLANCA: Strenuous 8 mrt hike across the Sespe and up Piedra Blanca Creek, then some rock and boulder scrambling to our favorite swimming hole. Much of the hike will be in the creek bed, so expect to get wet. It can be very hot in August, so bring at least 3 liters of water,

plus electrolytes. Also bring lunch, snacks, hat, swimsuit, hiking shoes, and sandals for water crossings. Please do not come on this hike if you're not comfortable hiking in the heat or in a creek. Meet at 9am. Ventura carpool lot (Seaward and Harbor between Chase Bank and Carrows). JIM 479-7063/644-6934 (SB)

August 10
MONDAY MORNING WALK: Meet at Mission Plaza at 9am to walk into Emma Wood Beach and Beyond trail. For more info, call PAT at 643-0270. (VEN)

August 14-16
PERSEID METEOR SHOWER CAMPOUT IN THE BLACK ROCK DESERT: New moon will mean great stars and meteor watching. We'll be camped mid-Playa about 102 miles north of Reno but with portable toilets. We'll probably visit hot springs, and the Emigrant Trail, among others. And watch out for Hams on the Playa, they'll be there too. Be sure to bring your radio. For more info and GPS location go to www.blackrockdesert.org. There'll

also be a map and directions in the Friends of Black Rock Desert office on Main in Gerlach. DAVID BOOK, 775-843-6443. (Great Basin Group/CNRCC Desert Committee)

August 15
EL CAPITAN CYN: Join us for a moderate 4mrt loop (600f elevation gain/loss) for an overlook hike of El Capitan Cyn. We'll use the trailhead just outside of the Ocean Meadows campground. We'll head down into the canyon and take the short Selma Rubin trail to the organic gardens, then hike to the Paradise Picnic area on the eastern ridge. From there, we'll follow the Bill Wallace trail, looping back to the canyon bottom. After lunch, we'll cross the creek and continue up the Bill

Wallace trail to the western ridge and eventually back to our starting point. Bring a water, a light lunch and sun protection. Meet 9am at the Bank of America parking lot, Hope & State St. GERRY 964-5411 (SB)

August 15
PROVISIONAL OLD CABIN SITE - POINT MUGU STATE PARK: Moderate 8 mrt hike with 800' elev. gain. Come and enjoy views of Sycamore Canyon and Boney Mountains. Bring water, food and wear lug-soled shoes. Meet at Potrero Road trailhead at intersection of Wendy Drive in Newbury Park at 7:30am. Excessive heat may shorten hike. LIZ MACGOVERN 494-6442 (CJ)

continued next page

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



Tar Creek Falls, nice and calm without visitors, who are now banned because it's in the Condor Sanctuary. Read more on page 17. (Photo by Perry Van Houten)

Outings...continued

15 August

BCTA 5TH ANNIVERSARY LIGHTHOUSE HIKE + TED IS BACK! The Port Hueneme Lighthouse is only open for tours less than ten times per year. We will make a 4 mile loop by first visiting the lighthouse, then strolling along the beach to visit the memorial to Alaska Airlines flight #261, which was bound from Mexico to San Francisco when it crashed 8 miles offshore by Anacapa Island on Jan 31, 2000, killing all 88 people on board. Our walk will also include the pier along the way. Meet at the corner of Ventura Road and Seaview Street (a block south of Hueneme Road) in Port Hueneme at 9:30am. Park along Seaview Street to avoid parking fees. Look for the BCTA lighthouse flag! Optional group lunch afterward at Pho Saigon (Pleasant Valley & Ventura Roads). No backpacks or the like permitted in the lighthouse! This year we also return to the actual site of the very last scene of the Back to the Future trilogy. Today is the second in a short series of BTTF events BCTA will do this year. TED 985-8963 (VEN)

August 16

THREE POOLS BEYOND SEVEN FALLS: Primitive trail, some rock climbing. Bring swimsuit. Difficult but short 5 mrt. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ALEJANDRO 898-1240 (SB)

August 16

CONDOR CALL OUTINGS DUE SOON: Outings leaders should be preparing their write-ups for the next Outings Schedule, covering the period of October 2015 thru January 2016 plus at least the first week into February. Submit them to your Group outings chair. Questions? Contact Gerry at gching@cox.net

August 17

MONDAY MORNING WALK: Meet at Mission Plaza at 8:30am to carpool

to Bates Beach to do a long beach walk. For more info, call PAT at 643-0270. (VEN)

August 20

RAY MILLER TRAIL - LA JOLLA CANYON: Cancelled. FONTAYNE HOLMES 300-4590 (CJ)

August 21

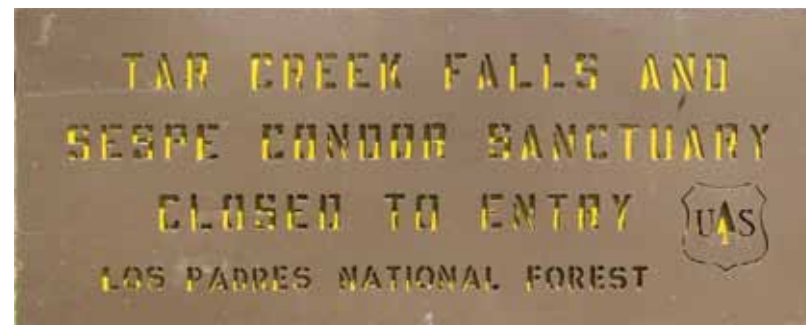
TWO HIKES in Franklin Canyon, Carpinteria: SHORTER Hike (Lora): moderate-to-strenuous 6.2 miles round trip with 1200 ft. of elevation gain starts from trailhead at Carpinteria High School, climbs to Ducas Family bench, then turns around. Allow 3.5 hours for hike. LONGER Hike (Phil): strenuous 10.4 miles round trip with 2350 ft. of elevation gain starts from trailhead at Carpinteria High School, climbs to Ducas Family bench, then continues climbing 2 more miles before turning around. Allow 5.5 hours for hike. Carpinteria Valley and ocean views highlight both hikes. For BOTH hikes meet at 8am at Ventura carpool - Seaward and Harbor (between Carrows restaurant and Chase Bank). Bring 10 essentials, hiking boots and poles, 2-3 qts of water, and snack/lunch. Sunblock, sun hat and insect repellent recommended. Rain or temperatures over 85 cancels. LORA 218-2105, PHILI 218-2103 (VEN)

August 22

RATTLESNAKE TRAIL: Hike up a wooded canyon with scenic views to beautiful meadow. Moderate 3.5 mrt. with 1000 foot elevation gain. Bring some water and a snack. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. DIANE 455-6818 (SB)

August 22-23

NORTH MAGGIE MTN BACKPACK (10,234'): Cancelled. MARC "ROADKILL" HERTZ at Marc.Hertz@Sierraclub.org. (VEN)



Fines imposed for Tar Creek trespass

By Perry Van Houten

There are thousands of miles of trails leading to great hiking destinations in the Los Padres National Forest, but there is one place you must not go: Tar Creek in the Sespe Condor Sanctuary.

The sanctuary has been closed to the public for decades, but recent attention given the area on social media has caused an explosion of illegal visitation, and forced the U.S. Forest Service to reissue the order prohibiting public access. Hikers who ignore it are being slapped with fines. Since January, officers have written roughly 100 citations. Bail for each citation is \$150 or a mandatory court appearance.

"It has historically been closed since the late '40s, and it was fine and dandy until it just got blown out of proportion with everybody showing their videos of how pristine it is," said Diane Cross, Ojai Ranger District Resource Officer. "Water is a huge attraction."

With its series of descending pools, waterfalls and stone terraces, the Tar Creek Falls area near Fillmore has long been a beloved destination for many. Since 2012, Forest Service officers have

documented over 100 people a day entering the falls area on weekends. Weekly, 100-150 pounds of trash have been left behind. People have left dozens of graffiti sites and have also started illegal bonfires.

That's the problem, because Tar Creek is within the Sespe Condor Sanctuary. Established in 1947 to protect vital habitat for endangered California condors, the sanctuary is heavily used by the birds to mate, nest, roost and forage. Public entry to Tar Creek exposes condors to human food, micro-trash and direct contact with people. Entry into the sanctuary can now result in a \$5,000 fine and/or six months in jail.

"You have both the condor and the steelhead in this area, and what are the effects of people, unfortunately," said Heidi Anderson, Ojai Ranger District Wilderness Trails Manager. "The graffiti, the climbing ropes and just the trash they're leaving impacts both of those species. If people just came up and used it and didn't leave anything behind, it would be a different matter."

Anderson believes the 2008 death of a condor strangled in rappelling lines left behind at Tar Creek was a key factor in the



Too much love by too many people at Tar Creek. You can see why. (Photo by Robert Bernstein)

decision to strictly enforce the closure. In late April, she led a group of 18 volunteers who removed graffiti from 43 separate sites in the Tar Creek area.

Enforcement is handled from the Ojai Ranger District. "It's in our backyard and we're responsible for implementing the closure," Cross explained. In addition to frequent patrols, two steel signs and an informational kiosk have recently been installed near the start of the user-created trail to emphasize that access is prohibited.

The crackdown is a step the U.S. Forest Service and its partners did not want to take, but Cross said it's essential the public understand the importance of

continued next page

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Outings...continued

August 23

URBAN HIKE TO FRANCHESCI PARK: Start near the Mission, walk through the Riviera, then up the "1000 steps" to a great view of the city and harbor. Return via Las Tunas Rd. Some steep sections. Moderate 4 mrt. Bring water and a snack. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ROBERT 685-1283 (SB)

August 23

SALT AND SAND SIGHTS: 9am-11am Bring yourself to the edge of the continent and learn about the ecological niche at Ormond Beach. We'll be on the lookout for notable bird species; the leader will explain plants and animals that live in the wetlands. Expect a packed earth trail, natural sand dunes and beach walk along the surf. Please wear closed shoes, bring water, sun protection. Binoculars may be useful! Total length 1.5 mi, elevation change zero. Light rain does not cancel. Great for all ages. Kids under 18 allowed with parent or guardian or other adult (must bring signed waiver if accompanied by non-parent or non-guardian, printable copy here:

Fines imposed...*continued from page 17*

protecting this vital habitat. "We really don't want to do this. We want to educate folks. That's our intent."

Despite the closure, recreational opportunities in the area still exist via four quarter-mile-wide Designated Travel Corridors through the Sespe Condor Sanctuary: Sespe Creek, Agua Blanca Creek, Alder Creek Trail and the Bucksnot Trail.

~ Editor's note: A version of this article was first published in the Ojai Valley News.



<http://tinyurl.com/lk3qytz>). No dogs please. Meet at the end of Arnold Rd. at docent trailer (go past Agromin 6859 Arnold Rd). Questions NINA 901-1679 (VEN)

August 24

MONDAY MORNING WALK: Meet at 9am at the corner of Park & Bard in Port Hueneme for beach and lighthouse walk. For info, call PAT at 643-0270 (VEN)

August 29

RED ROCK TO GIBRALTAR DAM: Hike up the road to Gibraltar Dam, then back past a popular swimming area. Moderate-strenuous 6.5 mrt. Bring swimsuit, wading shoes, lunch and plenty of water. Optional side trip to old mercury mine adds 4 miles. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ALEJANDRO 898-1240 (SB)

August 29

MOONRIDGE TRAIL to INDIAN CREEK TRAIL - WILDWOOD PARK: Moderate approx. 5 mrt hike with 600' elev. gain. Enjoy nature walk to and from Paradise Falls on winding trails up and down hills and along creeks. Bring water, food and wear sturdy shoes with tread. Meet at 5pm in parking lot at far end of Avenida de los Arboles. NIKI STOKOLS 907-8175 (CJ)

August 30

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)

August 30

CONDOR CALL OUTINGS DUE SOON: Group outings chairs should be preparing their write-ups for the

next Outings Schedule, covering the period of October 2015 thru January 2016 plus at least the first week into February. Questions? Contact Gerry at gching@cox.net

August 31

MONDAY MORNING WALK: Meet at 9am at Mission Plaza to walk the new trail behind City Hall & the Cross. For more info, call PAT at 643-0270. (VEN)

EAVESDROPS

"It was like a miracle."
~ Prof. Claire Komives
after finding out that a peptide molecule from the ugly opossum could be the silver bullet that acts as an anti-venom from snake bites, quoted in *National Geographic*.

August 31 – September 3

PCT BACKPACK, NORTHERN CALIFORNIA: 38 miles on the Pacific Crest Trail, Section M, starting in Sierra City at 4500', highest elev. 7400', northeast of Sacramento, in the Tahoe and Plumas National Forests. Leave Aug 29 to drive and shuttle car, return Sept 4 approx. Email leader with backpacking experience and/or training and fitness level. TERESA: teresahnorris@earthlink.net (VEN)

September 4

BULLDOG TRAIL MALIBU CREEK STATE PARK: Moderate 8 mrt hike up part of Bulldog Trail. 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 no later than 8am for carpooling. LILLIAN TREVISAN 498-1623 (CJ)

September 5

POLO CLUB - RESERVOIR TRAIL LOOP: Join us on this 4mrt easy-moderate hike to the Summerland Reservoir. Mostly flat, but some

steep sections. We'll start from the Toro Cyn Creek trailhead on Via Real near the intersection of Toro Cyn Rd. We'll pickup the Edison Trail back of Summerland and connect with the Reservoir Trail to the reservoir where we'll stop for lunch. We'll return via the Reservoir and Polo Club trails. Meet at 9am at the Bank of America parking lot, Hope & State. GERRY 964-5411 (SB)

September 5

WILDWOOD TO HILL CANYON BRIDGE: Moderate 5 mrt with 400' elev. gain. We will hike to the Hill Canyon Bridge. Bring water, food and wear lug-soled shoes. Meet in parking lot at end of Avenida de los Arboles in Thousand Oaks at 7:30am JOANNE SULKOSKE 492-3061 (CJ)

September 11

BEACH WALK POINT DUME EASY HIKE SERIES: Easy to moderate 5 mrt hike with 250' elev. gain. Lovely beach walk, up a small hill and down stairs to tide pools, and around corners to Paradise Cove and

beyond. Tide 4.7' at 9am. Tide 3.8' at 11:30am. 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 8am for carpooling. LILLIAN TREVISAN 498-1623 (CJ)

September 12

MIDDLE MATILIIJA CAMP: Moderate 8 mrt along stream, mostly shaded, to Middle Matilija Camp. There are at least 17 creek crossings, but we will have no problem rock hopping across. Bring at least 3 liters of water, sunscreen, a good pair of hiking shoes/boots, and hat. Meet at 9am. Ventura carpool lot (Seaward and Harbor between Chase Bank and Carrows). JIM 479-7063/644-6934

September 13

LIZARD'S MOUTH CLEANUP: Have fun exploring while making this popular spot a bit cleaner! Beautiful rock formations and wind

*continued next page***Outdoor trail guides: SB & Ventura**

Hiking is such a popular activity in our Los Padres Chapter region (Santa Barbara and Ventura) that many sites offer information. They include:

www.fs.usda.gov/lpnf/

Official Los Padres Forest website details all kinds of recreation.

www.hikelospadres.com

Los Padres Forest Association's Trail Guide.

<http://santabarbaratrailguide.com>

The Sierra Club's official guide for Santa Barbara trails that includes our free outings, plus news, photos and club links. Established in 1986 as a book,

now online.

<http://www.independent.com/news/outdoors/day-hikes>

Newsy site for day hikes by the Santa Barbara Independent.

www.sboutdoors.com

Trails, news, photos written and compiled by Ray Ford.

www.santabarbarahikes.com

An interactive site and blog by Diane Soini.

<http://www.vcstar.com/news/vcs-outdoors/trail-guide>

Sponsored by the VC Star newspaper.

www.VenturaCountyTrails.org

Includes news and links by Steve.

Outings...continued

caves are a pleasure to enjoy and restore! Short Easy hike with some boulder hopping. Bring a snack and water. Gloves and trash bags will be provided. Rain cancels. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ROBERT 685-1283 (SB)

September 17
CONDOR CALL OUTINGS DUE NOW: Group outings chairs should send their write-ups for the next Outings Schedule, covering the period of October 2015 thru January 2016 plus at least the first week into February. Send to Gerry at gching@cox.net

September 18
LA JOLLA VALLEY LEADER'S CHOICE POINT MUGU STATE PARK: Moderate 9 mrt hike. Bring water, food and wear lug-soled shoes. Meet at Wendy Drive and Potrero Road in Newbury Park no later than 8am for carpooling. LILLIAN TREVISAN 498-1623 (CJ)

September 19
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. CHRISTINE 963-2347 (SB)

September 20
ELLWOOD SHORE/BUTTERFLY BEACH: Walk on a beach and across an open field in the Ellwood area. Children with supervision welcome. Easy 4 mrt. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. KEITH 966-6589 (SB)

September 20
CARPIINTERIA BRUNCH HIKE: Join us for an easy hike to Carpinteria for brunch. We will meet

at the Carpinteria Bluffs parking lot at 8:30am. The park is located at 6145 Carpinteria Avenue. The hike is about 5 miles round trip. We should be done about noon. The hike is easy, the views of the ocean, islands and mountains are fantastic. Optional carpool from Von's on Seaward at 7:45am. TED 985-8963 (VEN)

September 25
NICHOLAS FLAT TRAIL: Moderate-to-strenuous 8 miles round trip with 1800 ft. of elevation gain hike in the Santa Monica Mtns Recreation Area. First 3 miles of the trail is a steady climb of 1600 feet, some of it on uneven, rocky terrain. There is not much shade on this hike but there are some great ocean views. We will rest a few minutes at Nicholas Pond (unfortunately dry due to the drought) before heading around the pond to reach the Meadows Trail for the trip back to the trailhead. Allow 4 hrs

for hike. Meet at 8am at Ventura carpool - Seaward and Harbor (between Carrows restaurant and Chase Bank). Bring 10 essentials, hiking boots and poles, 2-3 qts of water, and snack/lunch. Sunblock, sun hat and insect repellent recommended. Rain or temperatures over 85 cancels. PHIL 218-2103 (VEN)

September 25
SOLSTICE CANYON: Moderate 8 mrt hike to Tropical Terrace and beyond. Bring lots of 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 no later than 8am for carpooling. LILLIAN TREVISAN 498-1623 (CJ)

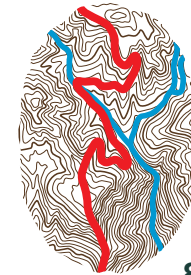
September 26
COZY DELL HIKE: Steep start, but only 700 feet total ascent in 4 miles. Great views. Bring

water, snacks. 85 degrees or rain forecast on Friday cancels. Good hiking shoes. Meet at 10am at parking area on Hwy. 33 across from trailhead just before Friends Packing House. 983-2147 for questions. KIM (VEN)

September 26-27
SERVICE AND HIKING IN THE CARRIZO PLAINS: This is an

opportunity to visit and to assist an outstanding and relatively unknown national monument. Saturday is National Public Lands Day, and we will join other volunteers on several maintenance projects. We will be car-camping, with a pot-luck and campfire on *continued next page*

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Yes, we hike the cities of Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. Here's one on the SB Riviera. (Photo by Robert Bernstein)

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Drought knocking out trees

By Perry Van Houten

Pine trees in a historic grove above Ojai are among millions in the Los Padres National Forest and throughout California suffering from the drought and a beetle invasion.

“We’re seeing trees weakened by the drought, and due to that we’re seeing increased bark beetle activity on the forest. And from this activity we’re starting to see a lot of trees fade out and die,” said Greg Thompson, Forester with the LPNF.

At The Pines, the fade-out is dramatic. Many trees have turned a reddish-brown. A few dead trees have been felled by firefighters and lay in sections on the ground. Hikers who know the site say the trees began to perish en masse about a year ago.

Scientists say it’s because of the lack of water, the main defense for trees. “What happens when a bark beetle attacks, the tree will produce sap which will then hopefully expel the beetle,” Thompson said.

“In drought conditions the tree’s ability to produce this sap is limited, thus its defense against the beetles is limited,” he said. On some of the affected trees they’re seeing no sap production.

The Forest Service said the combination of drought and beetles has killed some twelve million trees statewide. Two million have died in Southern California, most of them at lower elevations and in the Mt. Pinos Ranger District. In the Ojai backcountry, stands of pines in the Rose Valley and Piedra Blanca areas have suffered significant losses.

The grove of Coulter pines at The Pines, on the Horn Canyon

Trail, was planted as an experiment by forest rangers in the late 1940s. A few of the trees were lost in the 1985 Wheeler Fire, but most have survived for decades—until now.

“We’ve actually seen that throughout the forest and the state, across the Angeles and San Bernardino National Forests. There were some areas where trees were planted, where at the time the best science said let’s do it, let’s give it a try. And unfortunately with trees, sometimes it can take sixty years, or eighty years, for nature to tell us that trees really didn’t belong on certain sites,” explains Thompson.

Roughly three miles up Horn Canyon, at an elevation of 3,260 feet, The Pines is a spacious campsite known for its ample shade. Hiking up the trail, the trees seem to appear out of nowhere.

“The hike there is wonderful, yet especially beckoning is the grove itself, with its shade and branches rustling in the breeze,” says John Broesamle of Ojai, who’s been hiking to The Pines for forty years. “Watching the trees die one after another during the current drought has been like losing old friends.” The camp was the first place he and his wife Kathy took their children backpacking.

Prognosis for The Pines and other forest areas is not good, given the prolonged drought. “As we progress into the drought, we’re going to continue to see trees die,” said Kevin Grant, Ojai Ranger District Fire Management Officer. “Twelve of the last fifteen years have been below average precipitation. So this is really

a long term issue. It’s taken a while to get those trees stressed to the point where a pest or a problem can quickly turn their fate.”

Grant suggests campers look up into the trees and “pick a spot that doesn’t have branches dangling.”

Thompson believes all is not lost. “Forests change over time. With a certain level of bark beetle activity, they’re thinning the weaker trees. With drought, unfortunately, the normally healthy trees are also being attacked. So we might be losing a little bit more than we want right now.”

~ Editor’s note: This article first appeared in the Ojai Valley News.

Outings...continued

Saturday night. Sunday we will tour a number of the historic, prehistoric, and geologic sites in the Monument with details to be determined by consensus of the group. Leader CRAIG DEUTSCHE, craig.deutsche@gmail.com, 310-477-6670. (CNRCC Desert Committee)

September 27

SALT AND SAND SIGHTS: 9am-11am Bring yourself to the edge of the continent and learn about the ecological niche at Ormond Beach. We’ll be on the lookout for notable bird species; the leader will explain plants and animals that live in the wetlands. Expect a packed earth trail, natural sand dunes and beach walk along the surf. Please wear closed shoes, bring water, sun protection. Binoculars may be useful! Total length 1.5 mi, elevation change zero. Light rain does not cancel. Great for all ages. Kids under 18 allowed with parent or guardian or



Horn Canyon pine trees are dying in a popular campsite due to the drought. Note the reddish color. (Photo by Perry Van Houten)

other adult (must bring signed waiver if accompanied by non-parent or non-guardian, printable copy here: <http://tinyurl.com/lk3qytz>). No dogs please. Meet at the end of Arnold Rd. at docent trailer (go past Agromin 6859 Arnold Rd). Questions NINA 901-1679 (VEN)

October 31-November 1
GHOST TOWN EXTRAVAGANZA: Celebrate Halloween by visiting the ghosts of California’s colorful past in the eerie desert landscape near Death Valley. Camp near the historic ghost town of Ballarat. Saturday, a challenging hike to ghost town Lookout City with historian Hal Fowler who will regale us with tales of this wild west town. We’ll return to camp for Happy Hour and a potluck feast, followed by a midnight visit to Ballarat’s graveyard. On Sunday, we’ll make a quick visit to the infamous Riley townsite. Send \$8 per person (check payable to Lygeia Gerard), home and work phones, email address and rideshare

preferences to Leader: LYGEIA GERARD, P.O. Box 721039, Pinon Hills, CA 92372, 760-868-2179. (Mojave Group/CNRCC Desert Committee)

end of outings

EAVESDROPS

“We may well be leaving to coming generations debris, desolation and filth. The pace of consumption, waste and environmental change has so stretched the planet’s capacity that our contemporary lifestyle, unsustainable as it is, can only precipitate catastrophes.”

~ Pope Francis, who has a scientific background, in his encyclical about climate change.

He wrote that “technology based on the use of highly polluting fossil fuels — need to be progressively replaced without delay.”