

Vol.'17, No. 6 of 6

Dec 2017 - Jan 2018

Condor Call



© Photo by Cara Peden

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Beachin' ... Oil slip ... Eco-trouble ... Sprawl ... WBC
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National disgrace: targeting public land

By Jim Hines

There is a massive change in how the people who make decisions and manage YOUR national public lands view the most precious items America has, her national public lands, which hold our heritage allowing millions to enjoy, recreate, learn and be amazed at nature's grand creations.

This is a national disgrace. Your national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, monuments, historic parks, conservation areas and offshore marine sanctuaries are all in jeopardy in a sharp turn of events coming from Washington DC.

With Our Wild America campaign, the Sierra Club is doubling down in the fight to preserve this heritage. Get involved at: <http://tinyurl.com/FightForPublicLands>

Condor cave videos live

The Condor Cave Facebook page is a fascinating look at an endangered bird that has been brought back from the brink of extinction.

The page includes videos of chicks and adults in our own Los Padres backcountry and in the Big Sur area. It is co-sponsored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Santa Barbara Zoo. A recent video is defined as: "awesome parenting by male #328 and #216 as they defend their chick #895 from a golden eagle flying around their nest site." There's also a short film entitled "The California Condors of Big Sur," featuring spectacular footage of the condors soaring over the waves below rocky cliffs just off the Pacific Coast Highway.

Check it out at: www.facebook.com/TheCondorCave
Meanwhile, the Friends of Condor Wild and Free help the agencies, notably by enhancing public awareness of the endangered condors and conducting tours. Go to: www.FriendsofCondors.org

I was raised with a vision that our lands would be protected, be a sacred sanctuary and most important, be a place where we can all go and enjoy, appreciate and learn.

But after three trips (a total of 15 days) to Washington DC this year and having meetings with the players who are now in power in DC, I have come away with sense that all that we know and care about when it comes to our public lands has turned upside down.

The players both in Congress and in the Trump Administration are powerful players who see your national public lands as nothing more than a place to mine, drill, extract and use in any way without any regard to the sacredness or importance of our natural and historic heritage.

Meetings with the Secretary of the Interior, his deputy and their senior staffs, and some members of Congress have allowed me to see a dark vision for special places like Cape Cod National Seashore (offshore oil drilling proposed), Bears Ears National Monument (coal mining), Wrangell-Elias National Park (copper mining), Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (offshore oil drilling), Flathead National Forest (oil/ gas drilling) and the list just goes on and on and on.

Plans are now in the works to remove protections and other insults, such as raising park fees to over \$80 per visit, making it harder for working Americans to afford a wonderful visit. There are plans to remove areas from national park status and to remake the entire system, with the goal of supporting more fossil fuel development at any cost, and no environmental review needed, said the staff at Interior.

An example is a House bill (HR 3990), which would amend the Antiquities Act of 1906 to reduce or modify current national monuments.

Rise up, stand up. speak up. We all need to make our voice heard loud and clear in full support of YOUR national public lands.



"Gates of the Valley", Yosemite National Park. Could it be next? Maybe the valley is protected but not necessarily the outer portions. On Dec. 4, Pres. Trump went to Utah officially signing documents that would reduce the size by 90% of Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments. He was met by thousands of protestors; join Sierra Club's campaign to fight other such insults. (© Photo by Cheyne Walls)



Condor Call

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

Dec 2017 - Jan 2018

WILDERNESS COURSE

Pursue happiness outdoors

By John Hankins

Our tenth annual Wilderness Basics Course promises adventure, friendships, confidence, beauty, weather, inspiration, knowledge, tasty food and hardy health. What a bargain!

It's all about the Sierra Club's ethic of showing people the forests, open spaces, mountains and rivers in a safe and comfortable manner, and you don't have to be a member. Now in its 9th year, the sell-out program runs from Feb. 7 to March 28 with conditioning hikes, car camp and backpacks.

The course is geared to a wide variety of experiences, ranging from novice to knowledgeable, out-of-shape to out-of-sight. It's for everybody, from teens to seniors, singles, couples and family members. Last class we had a Camarillo woman sign up with her daughter, a hiker who "wants to take it to another level," an empty-nest couple, retired guy, SB student, man who wanted to follow

his backpacking kid, another who "wants to get to know the area," and many who cited simply getting outside in the fresh air.

Classes are Wednesday nights at the Poinsettia Pavilion,



3451 Foothill Rd, Ventura, which overlooks Ventura and the Pacific Ocean. Day hikes and backpacks are in prime locations in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. Early bird prices are available until Jan. 24; Christmas present to yourself or loved one?

Listen to what students and leaders have to say.

Let's start with Teresa Norris, who took the club's WBC in San Diego, and became so enthusiastic she went on to become a leader, and when she moved to Ventura County in 2004, she was so hooked she volunteered to help create a WBC here.

"Taking WBC helped me update my gear and lighten my load. When I did that, my trips became more enjoyable and I could hike faster too," she said, and perhaps most important, "I made some of the best friends of my life."

But before she took a WBC course, "I carried an extra pair of blue jeans and 6 liters of water on

continued on page 2

COVER PHOTO

Lending a hand is exactly what our Wilderness Basics Course is all about to be safe and comfortable on a day trail or backpacks. (Photo near Danielson Monument by Cara Peden)

Public gets surf beach due to citizen's action

A citizen noticing potential habitat violations on Bixby Ranch land in 2011 has finally led to an agreement that adds 36 acres to Jalama County Park, encompassing a popular surf break known as the Tarantulas.

Mike Lunsford of the Gaviota Coast Conservancy followed up by inviting a Coastal Commission enforcement officer to take aerial photos with the

LightHawk nonprofit, which connects volunteer pilots with environmental and science groups.

The county of Santa Barbara declined to act, but the Conservancy and Commission persisted, uncovering several other land use violations, including 37 unpermitted water wells, grading and development in riparian areas, destruction of other habitat and numerous new roadways and road

maintenance in highly sensitive areas.

The disturbed areas associated with water wells, roads, stock-pond, and bluff grading will be restored; 200 acres of oak tree habitat will be planted, 300 acres of invasive, non-native ice plant on the coastal prairie will be removed and a \$500,000 payment will be made to the Coastal Commission's Violation Remediation Account.

The action happened at the Commission's Nov. 9 meeting after negotiations with the Cojo and Jalama ranches, aka Bixby Ranch, of some 25,000 acres surrounding Point Conception.

What's more is that the expansion of Jalama Park "advances a long-standing goal of completing the Coastal Trail," said Ed Easton, who chairs the Conservancy's land use committee and is a Sierra Club member.

Easton noted that surfers have long used the Tarantulas area via the "Crack" trail, but often found their cars "towed or ticketed" when Bixby called the Sheriff's

office. That should stop, now that Jalama's boundaries are extended to include that area.

The law office of Marc Chytilo helped the Conservancy over the years, and Lunsford was hard on the county "refusing to

enforce its own" land use plans and coastal zoning ordinances. He added, "enforcement of the Coastal Act is central to protection of the Gaviota Coast," which the Sierra Club is involved via the Conservancy.



The gifted land begins to the right of the "horseshoe" bend in Jalama Road and extends Jalama County Park. It is known to surfers as the Tarantulas, access via the 'Crack' trail. The continuous roadbed parallel to the bluffs is the railroad. (© 2002-2017 Kenneth & Gabrielle Adelman, California Coastal Records Project, www.Californiacoastline.org)



Scene of the Crimes: Cojo-Jalama (Bixby) ranch land previously restored by Union 76. (Aerial photo by Mike Lunsford via LightHawk)

Is Puente a turning point?

Could the imminent rejection of the proposed Puente Power Plant on Oxnard's Mandalay beach really be "a turning point in California's clean energy revolution," as predicted by local environmental groups after three years opposing it?

The latest green signal was from a key committee of the California Energy Commission (CEC), "issuing an unprecedented statement announcing it will deny NRG's proposed plant ... which would have been the fourth power plant burdening the community of Oxnard," stated Alicia Roessler, attorney for the Environmental Defense Center. EDC represents Sierra Club's Los Padres Chapter and Environmental Coalition of Ventura County.

Another was an editorial in the *VC Star* Oct. 10 that, if the rejection pans out, "then we will all (Californians) owe Oxnard a

debt of gratitude for quickening our inevitable journey toward an alternative-energy future." It cited that the state already can sometimes reach more than 60% from renewable sources.

"There are alternatives to building this power plant," said the Club, "SoCal Edison and NRG (applicants) are both building energy storage and clean energy solutions in other parts of the region. It's past time that low-income communities get clean energy instead of another polluting power plant," especially within the coastal zone where sea-rise from climate change is a threat.

The committee's statement is not the last word, of course, but the evidence and preference to deny the power plant has increased substantially over three years, especially because of news like an *LA Times* study concluding, "that the state has overbuilt the electricity

system, primarily with natural gas plants, and has so much clean energy that it has to shut down some plants while paying other states to take the power California can't use. The overbuilding has added billions of dollars to ratepayers' bills in recent years."

Another blow was the 46-page report issued in August by the California Independent System Operator, which centered on solar power and battery storage, albeit at a higher cost, but within a realistic range.

"It's great news for our local environment and social justice," EDC said in a release and the Club agreed, noting California is leading the way to a clean energy future. This power plant doesn't fit with our climate and clean energy goals."

There were other factors, notably impacts on coastal wetlands, wildlife habitat and air pollution, along with the hope that the beach and coastal area could eventually be restored to public use.

NRG's proposal is for a peak 271-megawatt natural gas-fired power generation facility that would replace two older units, located in the city of Oxnard at 393 North Harbor Blvd., next to the existing Mandalay Generating Station. The state's links where anyone can learn and/or comment on the proposal is at:

<http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/puente>

~ By John Hankins



Existing power plant next to Ormond Beach. NRG wants to put another power ('peaker') plant in coastal vicinity, but the project appears to be doomed in favor of renewable sources elsewhere. (Photo by Condor John)

ENERGY UPDATE

Greed, green & luck!

By Katie Davis

Goleta Goes Green - Since Santa Barbara became the 30th city in the nation to set a 100% renewable energy goal last June, seventeen additional cities around the nation have done so, including surprising additions like St Louis, home of Peabody and Arch Coal. Locally, the Goleta Green Committee voted recently to bring a 100% renewable energy resolution to the full City Council as early as December 5. Might Goleta become the 50th city to set this goal?



(See page 2 about the Puente Power Plant defeat for more good news on renewable energy.)

Carpinteria Gets Lucky - After Carpinteria's 71%-of-the-vote rejection of Venoco's towering blufftop Paredon oil project, Venoco turned its immediate attention to aggressive expansion efforts in Goleta. In the end, both places were spared by Venoco's bankruptcy, but what about its assets?

Would a yet more dastardly oil profiteer swoop in -- as Venoco threatened us if the Sierra Club didn't embrace their expansion plans? Luckily, no takers for Venoco's Carpinteria assets emerged. Chevron, as the prior owner, maintains liability, and has agreed to take over Venoco's Carpinteria properties, including offshore platforms Gail and Grace and the oil processing plant, and shut them down for good.

This is great news for Carpinteria beach fans. Now the only question is what Carpinteria's General Plan update will have to say about future uses of the 55-acre property. More fabulous open space and bluff side recreation perhaps?

Exxon Gets Greedy - Exxon's three offshore platforms have been effectively shut down ever since the badly corroded Plains Pipeline burst in May 2015 spilling 143,000 gallons of crude oil onto Refugio beach and into the ocean. For that, Plains was indicted on dozens of criminal charges and faces fines of up to \$3 million.

Now Plains is back with an application to build a whole new pipeline to get that Exxon oil flowing again. The proposed pipeline would tear a swath through three counties, the Carrizo Plains National Monument, Los Padres National Forest, a wildlife refuge, sensitive rivers and creeks, and much private property, which they may need to wrest by force of law from understandably resistant landowners.

In the meantime Exxon, impatient for the pipeline, has proposed trucking its oil up the Gaviota Coast to the Santa Maria Refinery or Kern. This would mean 70 oil truckloads a day, exceeding air pollution limits and creating spill and accident risk up and down the 101. Comment to: energy@countyofsb.org

Feds Go Batty - The Trump administration is purging the EPA and other departments of scientists and replacing them with industry hacks, reversing regulations right and left, and refusing to protect us from everything from pesticides to toxic chemicals to nuclear waste.

Congress is gearing up to vote on a grab bag of bad ideas in HR 4239, the so-called SECURE American Energy Act, that eliminates safety standards for Arctic drilling, makes it easier to kill marine mammals and birds, opens more public lands to extraction, and prohibits enforcement of any federal regulation on fracking.

The Trump administration is working to expand offshore oil and limit oversight. In response, Santa Barbara, Goleta and at least fifteen other cities in California have recently passed resolutions opposing offshore oil in the Pacific. There hasn't been a new oil lease in federal waters in the Pacific in over thirty-five years, under both Democratic and Republican administrations, and now is not the time to start.

WBC...

continued from page 1

one trip where I wasn't sure about finding water. I could hardly lift my pack, just like Cheryl Strayed in 'Wild'."

WBC graduate and Finance Chair, Kristi KirkPatrick, said, "I was delighted to find so many enthusiastic people sharing all this great information about going out into the wilderness. It was inspirational, challenging, and so much fun to hang out with this wonderful group of people."

Course content Chair Alisse Fisher emphasized that all WBC hike leaders are trained in first aid and have knowledge of the flora and fauna; the speakers are experts in gear, safety, food, fitness and the new outdoor book has the latest information. Also, course handouts are online for those who may have missed a class or want to refresh.

Last word is from club leader Nina Danza, who posted of "a great work-out today on the trail. Just what I needed. Need to repeat much more frequently. Can I retire yet?"

See our ad on pg 5. All the detail you need or to sign up is at: <http://www.lospadreswbc.org> lospadresWBC@gmail.com www.Facebook.com/lospadresWBC 805 524-7170

EAVESDROPS

"I am amazed at the publicity for the loss of a few birds."

~ Union Oil president Fred Hartley's infamous comment after the Platform A oil blowout on Jan. 29, 1969, then the largest blowout in U.S. history. It spilled three million gallons of oil into 800 square miles of ocean, killing more than 3,600 seabirds and countless marine mammals and fish. Read the history at: <http://tinyurl.com/SB1969oilblowout>

'Broke' is about SB spill

There is a significant oil spill somewhere in the US every 2½ days and a Santa Barbara woman is working on a film about the May 2015 "Refugio spill" caused by a break in Plain's All-American Pipeline.

Entitled "Broke", the documentary is by Gail Osherenko, a long-time activist and film-maker who has lectured at UC-Santa Barbara and Dartmouth.

"That spill sent 140,000 gallons of crude oil onto the Gaviota Coast and into the ocean (reaching as far as the Ventura coast). We started filming at Refugio State Beach that afternoon. Crude oil tumbled in the surf, sent toxic fumes in the air, and killed sea life as the Coast Guard mobilized to respond," she said.

The documentary features first responders, oil engineers, wildlife experts, politicians and the public, who demanded

more stringent spill prevention and response. Meanwhile, the platforms that transported oil onshore are shut down with one declaring bankruptcy and another wanting permission to take oil by trucks.

Plains still faces both criminal and civil lawsuits.

It's a one-hour environmental story with a peek back at the 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill that helped launch the environmental movement, EPA, and clean air and water laws ... and a look forward to a fossil free future.

Osherenko needs to raise at least \$12,000 to complete the film for final editing, music production, purchasing rights and licenses, submitting to film festivals and costs of ensuring that the film reaches a wide audience. The Kickstarter campaign is at: <http://kck.st/2yDpooX>

See the trailer and all the local folks who appear in the film at: www.BrokeTheOilSpillFilm.com

Condor Call

<http://lospadres2.sierraclub.org> ~ All phone numbers 805 area code

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Photos, news, tips always welcome!

Sierra Club

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Smile, our chapter's a model

**Jim Hines, Chair
Los Padres Chapter**

Wow, what a year this has been, and I am so proud of the Los Padres Chapter for all of the great work each of you have done in protecting our great outdoors, wildlife, marine environment, coastline, keeping dirty energy in the ground and educating the media, elected officials and public.

The four groups which make up the Chapter – Arguello, Santa Barbara, Ventura and Conejo -- have done amazing work in their respective regions. In fact, in September a national staff member, Greg Casini, used our Los Padres Chapter as an example of how chapters can work to make a difference.

In 2017 you rallied in record numbers to our calls to attend rallies, events, meetings with elected officials and speaking out at hearings. I am honored to be your leader and have proudly represented the Chapter, speaking at close to 170 organizations, rallies and events locally, elsewhere in California and beyond to Washington DC to lobby Congress and the Trump Administration about Sierra Club issues.

Your support for the Club and our work has been overwhelming and all of us in Chapter leadership are grateful to each of you. We would not have made great strides without you to protect such spectacular areas as the Gaviota Coast, Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary, Los Padres National Forest and Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

With your help and with

EAVESDROPS

"Clean energy is the preferred choice for communities across California and the people in Oxnard have set a trend for how the state looks at building our energy future."

~ Evan Gillespie, Deputy Western Director with the Sierra Club, commenting on the rejection of the Puente Gas Plant proposal near Mandalay Bay in Oxnard, capping a 3-year battle.

coalitions, we stopped an unwanted and unneeded power plant at Mandalay Beach in Oxnard, we increased awareness of Community Choice Energy, and we stopped many bad bills from becoming law which would have affected our region.

We also led over 300 outings across our chapter region, from short beach walks, day long hikes, week long backpack and camping trips. Part of our mission is to get people into the great outdoors to enjoy, respect, appreciate and learn from our environment and have fun doing it.

Our very popular Wilderness Basic Course had the largest class ever in 2017 and expects to sell out again with classes beginning Feb. 7 (see story pg 1).

and every one of you for your amazing efforts on behalf of the environment. What more can you do? Ask friends to join and see pg 5 for tips on current actions needed.

A big Thank You to each

VENTURA SIERRA CLUB Island insights ahoy

The Sierra Club Ventura educational series Venture(a) Out is a time to rethink our place in the environment and why we need nature. The next one on Jan. 9 fits the bill and is close to home: author Ken McAlpine who spent weeks alone on our Channel Islands.

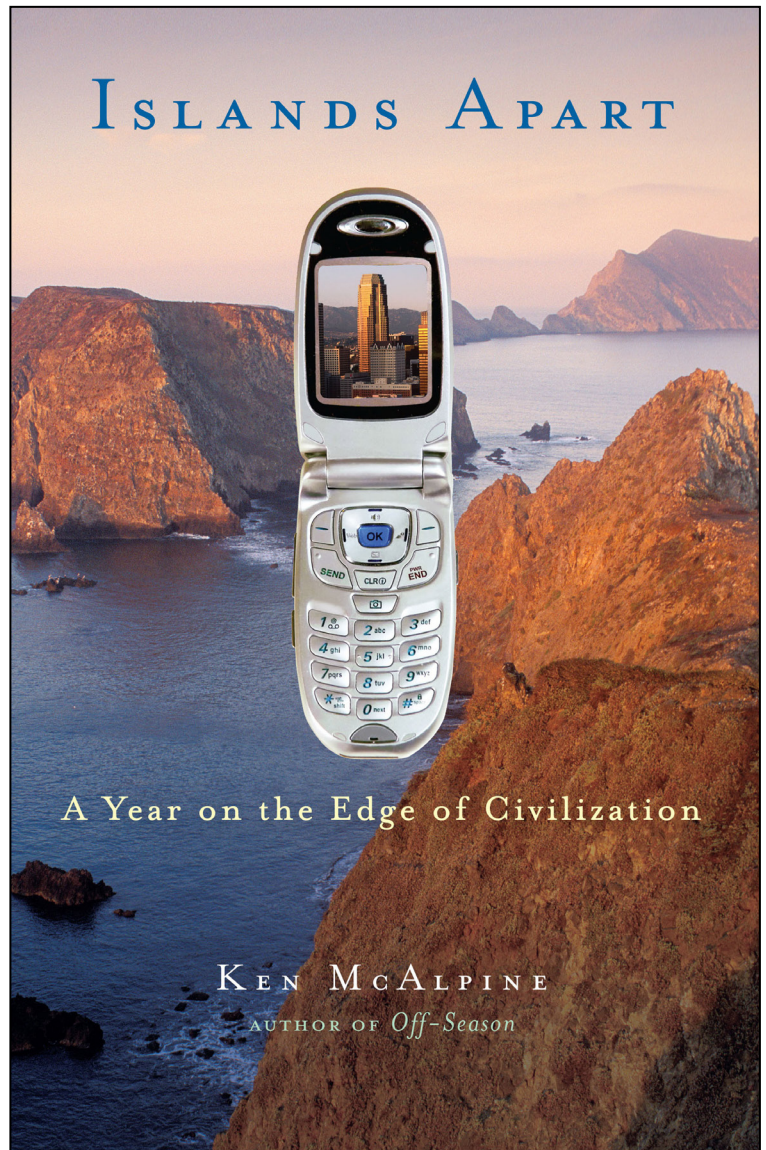
"Islands Apart: A Year on the Edge of Civilization" is billed as "a rumination on what it means to be human", and McAlpine was lauded as "a humorous and humble guide who takes his contemplation of our busy world into unexpected places."

Author of ten books, Literary Travel says *"Islands ..."* is "a humorous and wise look at contemporary American life—and

how time spent alone in nature can give us a fresh perspective and greater clarity about what matters most. In this touching and surprising book, McAlpine does what many of us long to do - slow down and take a closer look at this one life we have."

This is also a great time to learn and chat with others in the club, open to supporters and members. Watch for Venture(a) Out topics every other month through 2018.

The event starts at 5:30pm Tuesday, Jan. 9 in the Topping Room at EP Foster Library, 651 E. Main St. · Ventura. Coffee and tea provided; and donations are appreciated.



ARGUELLO GROUP MEMBERS ONLY VOTE

Arguello Group ExCom Ballot
(No candidate statements available)

NOTE: Only members of the ARGUELLO GROUP can vote for the candidates below. A second column is provided for households with dual memberships who get only one Condor Call.

Print out this ballot and mail by Dec. 31 to:

Sierra Club Arguello Group
c/o PO Box 31241, Santa Barbara CA 93130
Vote for NO MORE THAN 4 (FOUR),
(Including write-in option)

Alpha order	1 st member	2 nd member
Rebecca August	_____	_____
Janet Blevins	_____	_____
Doris Connor	_____	_____
Dean Thompson	_____	_____

Write-in candidate(s) _____
Enter your Sierra Club member ID _____

(Number is only to ensure a valid confidential vote; it will NOT be tied to your name)

Group News

The public is welcome to our programs

CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

~ ExCom meets 7pm on 4th Thursday of every month, either at the Carpinteria IHOP or by conference call. Email Secretary Gerry Ching for the agenda: gching@cox.net

SANTA BARBARA GROUP

~ Usually meets at 11:30am on 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 SB area (Carpinteria to Goleta) at:

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

ARGUELLO GROUP

NOW ON FACEBOOK; keep in touch with our SB North County Group at: <http://tinyurl.com/ArguelloGroup>

~ General meetings with potluck and programs during most months on 3rd Friday at Lompoc Presbyterian Church 1600 E. Berkeley Ave. at 7pm; 6pm if a potluck.

~Volunteers needed for hikes and/or issues; your talents could make a difference. Call 350-0629 or: RebeccaAugust@mac.com

VENTURA NETWORK

~ Up-to-date information about the western Ventura County group:

<http://tinyurl.com/VenturaSierraClubFB>

~New MEETUP site for hikes, outings etc:

www.meetup.com/SierraClubVentura

~ Regular meetings 1st Tuesday monthly at REI in Oxnard 7-8:30pm. Check before attending at:

sierraclubventura@gmail.com

CONEJO GROUP

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

www.sierraclub.org/los-padres/conejo

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

Reflect on Goleta win

Hi Sierra Club,

The Board of Supervisors approved the Eastern Goleta Valley Community Plan on a 3-2 vote Nov. 7 after a long discussion about the Coastal Commission's requirement that new private bluff stair cases be banned.

Realtors and Hope Ranch homeowners were concerned this could lead to removal of existing bluff stairs, but that is not the case ...

Thank you to Kate Mullin (Sierra Club Group) for showing up and providing some great testimony! We had 12 speakers

including Sierra Club, Audubon, Environmental Defense Center (EDC), SB Urban Creeks Council and More Mesa Preservation Coalition. The opposition had half that many.

The plan improves habitat protection, closes the loophole in the Environmentally Sensitive Habitat (ESH) Ordinance we identified, and considers chaparral an ESH at least where it supports rare species and or vegetation alliances. All in all, very good job, and a good ending to a 10-year campaign!

~ Brian Trautwein
EDC Environmental Analyst

5 vie for 4 SB group seats

Last issue's (Oct/Nov) ballot for the SB Group ExCom was published without a PO Box number due to a production error. We are reprinting the ballot with the correct address inside the ballot below. We apologize for this inconvenience. Also,

the headline over the candidate statements was wrong. It should have read "5 Vie for 4 SB Group seats". Before voting, you can read those statements at this link (on page 3):

<http://tinyurl.com/CondorCallOctNov2017>

SANTA BARBARA GROUP MEMBERS ONLY VOTE

Santa Barbara Group Executive Committee Ballot

(Candidate statements@ <http://tinyurl.com/CondorCallOctNov2017>)

NOTE: Only members of the SANTA BARBARA GROUP can vote for the candidates below. A second column is provided for households with dual memberships who get only one Condor Call. You may photocopy or cut this ballot from the Condor Call.

Mail ballot before Dec. 31 to:

Santa Barbara Group, Sierra Club,
P.O. Box 31241, Santa Barbara, CA 93130

**Vote for NO MORE THAN 4 (FOUR) people,
including the write-in option if you wish.**

In alphabetical order: 1st member 2nd member

Robert Bernstein	_____	_____
Katie Davis	_____	_____
Alex Pujo	_____	_____
Luz Reyes-Martin	_____	_____
Merlie Samonte	_____	_____

Write in candidate if desired: _____

Please provide your Sierra Club member ID # (from your Condor Call mailing label or your membership card)

(Number is only to ensure a valid confidential vote. It will not be tied to your name)

SIGHTINGS

Eco-trouble, yet we persist

The Sierra Club persists, nationally and locally, as shown by these actions taken by our Los Padres Chapter volunteers over the last few months, ranging from backpack training to an important summit meeting in San Luis Obispo.

But while we're busy working for the environment, it's important that we also play there. Take a nature break, by yourself, with friends or join our free outings (pgs 6 & 7).

Dec 2: **Environmental mini-park** and opportunity for the first volunteers to build a new native plant trail near the entry to the Fillmore Fish Hatchery area, co-sponsored by Ventura Sierra Club and UC-Santa Barbara.

Dec 2: **Holiday potluck** sponsored by Santa Barbara Group did have some food for thought: "The Path Forward," the Sierra Club's mission during the Trump Administration.

Nov 19: **Daisy Troop** of Santa Paula (kindergarten Girl Scouts) asked for a Santa Clara River night with the Sierra Club. Environmental art educator Holy Wright, a river

volunteer, found out the kids didn't even know there was a river close to them. She proceeded to teach them about the flora and fauna and so much more. Read Sam Marin's blog post at: <http://tinyurl.com/RiverTeacher>

Nov 9: **Espresso Yourself** at Caraba Coffee featured singing, goodies and art, with half the proceeds of the art sales going to the Ventura Sierra Club. Read more about it at Sam Marin's blog post at: <http://tinyurl.com/Coffee-Fun-Art>

Nov 7: **Job well done** to our Santa Barbara Group. All the candidates for SB Mayor and SB city council endorsed by the Sierra Club won. They are: Cathy Murillo for mayor and Kristen Sneddon, Eric Friedman and Gregg Hart for districts 4, 5 and 6.

Oct 31: **Sierra Club Trail** mentioned by outdoor writer James Wapotich on his Trail Quest blog about Elings Park in Santa Barbara. The trail is 1.5 miles long and the (Jim) Vanyo overlook with great views of the coast and nearby a popular place to launch hang gliders.

Oct 29: **Artful Beans Benefit** at Caraba Coffee had art exhibit and music with half of art proceeds benefitting the Ventura Sierra Club. A companion "Bike & Beans bike ride" from the Bike Hub noted, "Sierra Club has been a great supporter of our work, and supporting their benefit is a great way we can give back."

Oct 27: **Big Summit** meeting by Sierra Club California in SLO County; our Los Padres was represented by Chapter Chair Jim Hines, SB Group Chair Katie Davis and member Leslie Purcell. Great day of networking and action for public lands in the face of a hostile Trump Administration.

Oct 24: **Seneca injection** of water into aquifers for oil drilling plan is opposed by Sierra Club at hearing. Fillmore resident and club member Teresa Norris testified against it.

Oct 21: **40-Year anniversary** of Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency was celebrated by the Conejo Group by building new trails and a dog and burger thank you lunch and door prizes. Work was at the Sapwi Trails Park.

Oct 20: **Tsk Tsk Tamarisk**, a real villain of the plant world, according to Nicole Norelli of UCSB's Marine Science Institute during the Ventura Sierra Club's new environmental speaker series. Read more on Sam Marin's blog: <http://tinyurl.com/VillainTamariskPlant>

Oct 16: **Widen Wilderness!** Rep. Salud Carbajal reintroduced the Central Coast Heritage Act into Congress (HR 4072). Sierra Club worked on this legislation as part of a partner coalition that would add new and expand existing wilderness areas within the Los Padres National Forest of Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties, plus add 140 miles of scenic river mileage. Please support here: <http://centralcoastwild.com>

Oct 11: **Beach field trip** for eight 6th grade science classes from Rio Vista introduced the kids to Ormond Beach where Sierra Club member Iren Rauschenberger gave her time and expertise for free. Eleven other trips are planned to various outdoor locations.

Oct 9: **Putrid Power Plot** announced by EPA administrator Scott Pruitt, abandoning President Obama's signature Clean Power Plan that would restrict greenhouse gas emissions from coal-fired power plants. Sierra Club accelerates its actions for renewable energy. Add your voice at: <http://tinyurl.com/FightDirtyPowerPlan>

Oct 7: **Pest Plant Biocontrol** is possible and happening. Part of Ventura Sierra Club's educational series and featured Nicole Norelli of the California Alliance for Tamarisk Biocontrol at the Foster Library in Ventura. For details of the local Santa Clara River project, go to: <http://tinyurl.com/SCLaraRiverBiocontrol>

Oct 6: **Oil trains dead** on arrival, as Phillips 66 dropped its lawsuit challenging denial of transporting crude oil by rail from Santa Maria refinery, thanks to 25,000 comments, opposition from more than 45 cities and actions by Environmental Defense Center, Sierra Club and others.

Oct 5: **Salmon Run** event by Patagonia is in its 7th year along the Ventura River. "It was a great morning greeting many of our members who take part in this event and making contact with new people. Gave out lots of *Condor Calls*. I talked to so many people that I was exhausted when I left," said our Chapter Chair Jim Hines. Big shout-out to Patagonia which supports many Sierra Club in ways great (Wild Utah) and small (wildlife events). "It was also good to receive so much support from those attending, thanking the Sierra Club for our efforts in these challenging political times for our environment."

~ Compiled by
Condor John Hankins



Rigs rife with life

Ever wonder what's under the rigs out in our Channel? It's a "Marine Megatropolis," according to diver Bob Evans who spent from 1974-1981 shooting photos for marine research and farming, which are now on display through April at the SB Maritime Museum (SB Harbor). The exhibit is billed as having "unique historical, educational, scientific, political and artistic value."

It's a timely exhibit since some rigs may be dismantled and destroy the habitat underneath. A "rigs to reef" scenario is controversial here, but has been done in the Gulf. UCSB has "a huge database" studying all aspects. (Top photo are divers under Platform Hilda)

Below, Bob (left) is met at the museum reception by George Steinbach, Exec Director of the California Artificial Reef Enhancement program. (Photo by Condor John Hankins)



Ojai oil review ordered

By John Brooks

Ventura Superior Court Judge Glen Reiser not only criticized the majority vote of the Ventura County Board of Supervisors for sidestepping analysis and mitigation in the name of expediency in an Upper Ojai Valley oil and gas project, he also held county planning staff responsible for misrepresenting facts and stated staff showed a deep-seated feeling of dislike to the concerns of local residents.

This decision will have powerful ripple effects for all oil and gas permit modifications and renewals in Ventura County and it calls into question the legality of several aspects of how the county planning department processes oil and gas permits.

Citizens for Responsible Oil & Gas (CFROG) filed legal action in 2016 against the County because the planning department, and ultimately the Supervisors (in a 3-2 vote) approved a project adding three new wells and allowing oil tanker trucks to use a narrow rural road and bridge in the Upper Ojai Valley without conducting proper review as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

CFROG also knew the county violated policies of the Ojai Valley Area Plan, that mandates any project that will emit over 5 lbs. per day of particulate air toxins be found to have a "significant" impact, thus triggering a more in-depth environmental review. And the county had failed to explain why -- with increased and faster traffic, and more trucks servicing more wells -- resulted in a safer intersection today. In the 70s the county prohibited oil tanker trucks from using Koenigstein Road because they deemed it unsafe.

The Nov. 14 ruling orders the county to "set aside" the project approval and prepare a revised environmental study consistent with CEQA. This means the county must include an analysis of the significant air quality and traffic impacts and alternatives and methods to reduce the impacts for the expansion of the Agnew Lease. All project expansion must now stop, and the operator is prohibited from using oil tanker trucks on Koenigstein Road.

~John Brooks is a CFROG co-founder and Board member. This is an edited version of his Op-Ed; to read the full story and the court order visit: www.cfrog.org/cfrog_wins

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Still fighting Newhall sprawl

By Lynne Plambeck & Carla Bollinger

Green lights have flashed once again for the mega-metropolis Newhall Ranch Project and the now more than 26,000 units (Mission Village and Landmark Village), alongside the Santa Clara River in Los Angeles County that will affect Ventura County. But the fight isn't over.

For decades, the Sierra Club and many others have had an opposition position on this auto-oriented urban sprawl project because it will pave over 1,500 acres of prime farmland, fill the flood plain with 7 million cubic yards of dirt, and levy and concrete 80% of the tributaries.

It will add to the unbearable traffic choke points affecting commuters along Freeway 5 and to the air pollution in an area that already does not meet Federal air quality standards. None of this has changed. And now with the recent approval of the massive Chiquita Canyon landfill expansion located immediately across Hwy 126 from the

1500-unit first phase, including a school, the project remains a prime example of poor planning.

Four out of five Los Angeles County Supervisors voted "Yes" at the July project hearing. Supervisor Sheila Kuehl abstained from voting. The developer, Five Point Holdings, was able to rush this vote through the County without even a Regional Planning Commission Hearing.

Now several groups have settled with the developer, promised not to oppose the project and never comment again on any future permits.

SCOPE, Sierra Club and Friends of the Santa Clara River did not sign the settlement agreement, so they and others will continue to fight this destructive project. The groups believe that while the recent approvals included some greenhouse gas reduction improvements and some additional flood plain protection, the bottom line is that this is still urban sprawl that will severely impact a very sensitive area of the Santa Clara River, Los Angeles

County's last free-flowing river.

Unanswered questions: Will alteration of the Santa Clara River impact the river's flow from Los Angeles County through Ventura County to the ocean? Can a major storm-flood, as in 1971, cause a catastrophic disaster for future residents? Will efforts to revive the Santa Clara River Steelhead trout be impacted?

What is the negative impact on habitat and watershed that will affect wildlife movement in the proposed "Rim of the Valley Wildlife Corridor" through the Santa Susana Mountains-Los Padres Forest-Angeles Forest-San Gabriel Mountains?

This development in a chaparral eco-system with spiked summer-heat, droughts, Santa Ana winds, and historical wildfires, is wrong on all fronts.

~ Editor's note: Lynne just won an award signed by State Sen. Henry Stern for "your tireless efforts advocating for environmental issues in the Santa Clarita Valley ..."



Winter is our Gray whale watching season typically from late December to mid-April, when these 50-foot leviathans are making their annual migration from the Bering Sea to Mexico and back again. Of the 78 species of whales, dolphins, and porpoises in the world, 29 ply the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary. (© Photo by www.DeniseDewirephotography.com)

A Winter's Tale

By Jim Hines
Greetings, Friends

It is the winter season here in the Los Padres Chapter region and what a beautiful season it is.



With her bareness, silence, gentleness and sweet beauty, the winter season beckons us to be alive with our

natural world. Winter in our region is a time of peaceful beauty.

Creeks and rivers are still flowing from last Spring's rains, the water is cold and clear, tiny paw prints from the arrival of foxes and raccoons dot the moist soil at the water's edge. Bird life bounds as many unusual and rare bird species from the colder north arrive to stay the winter here, Orioles, wood storks, Canadian geese and more.

Monarch butterflies on their winter migration from central part of our state to warm Mexico will delight our eyes as they rest by hanging in massive clusters in their favorite trees

the great Eucalyptus groves of Santa Barbara and Ventura.

Several species of late flowing Autumn wild flowers are still blooming such as native fuchsias and several early species of sage are showing color. And don't forget the red berries of the native toyon shrubs which abound in our region, beautiful hardy evergreen shrub with bright red berries at this time of year dazzle our eyes.

Acorns are falling from the great oaks, deer and wild boar are feeding on the acorns, birds and small rodents are gathering the acorns ... hopefully some acorns will be left to sprout and start new groves.

The great predators are on the move: black bears, bobcats, mountain lions and coyotes. Watch for them, respect them and allow them the space they need to roam.

The winter season allows each of us to use a different perspective to explore, observe, respect and be at one with our natural world.

For the wild ...

We offer easy action tips

Editor's note: The Sierra Club has a 125-year history battling for the environment, with lawyers and lobbyists in Washington, but mostly the cadre of three million members who work local, state and national issues in their spare time. The club makes it simple to be active, and easy to donate your time or money to the cause.

Here's how to help, locally and nationally, through targeted actions and/or donations that bolster our volunteer work.

~ Coordinate your passion or hobby with Team Sierra Club to raise essential funds for the fight. Details at: www.TeamSierra.org

~ Did you love the vibes from the women's and climate marches after the inauguration but are wondering where to go from there? The Sierra Club's free streamlined activist network is not only a great

way to stay active NOW, it keeps track of your activism and makes it simple to communicate with legislators at:

www.addup.org

~ Sierra Rise is an online community working to create a world with justice, sustainability, and genuine democracy for everyone. Read or tell your stories at:

<http://content.sierraclub.org/sierrarise>

As for donations, the most direct way is to contribute to our local chapter (SB and Ventura counties) online at:

www.SierraClub.org/donate/1000

~ Amazon shoppers can designate the Sierra Club to get a small portion of your purchases (at no extra charge). Sign up at:

www.smile.Amazon.com

~ Buy Sierra Club paraphernalia, be it a shirt, outdoor

and shopping bags, calendars and cards. You can also adopt an animal in which your donations go directly to the activity you choose (great for kids). Click on 'store' at:

www.SierraClub.org

~ Other ways to donate include signing up for a Sierra Club credit card, leaving a legacy in your name to the Sierra Club in your will, donate a car and many other methods; go to:

www.SierraClub.org

~ If you're not a member, join. If you are a member, ask friends to join or gift a membership.

SB north solar deal

In many cases, homeowners with low electricity bills have an uphill battle in making solar affordable. Solar is more cost effective for large solar installations, so those with low bills often face higher costs per kW for a small system.

There is an affordable option, however, for those whose bills average under \$100 month.

It's offered by SunWork Renewable Energy Projects, a mission-driven nonprofit that installs less-expensive rooftop solar systems for homeowners in this situation. SunWork also installs solar systems for other nonprofits, such as churches, homeless shelters, museums, etc. Its mission is to make solar energy more available and affordable in these markets where the economics are generally unfavorable.

SunWork uses professionals who design the systems and install with the help of trained volunteers, reducing the cost by about one-third. At the same time, SunWork provides training and volunteer experience to people looking for green careers and for those who want to help address climate change.

Over the last eight years, SunWork has trained more than 1,400 volunteers, installed more than 500 systems, and received excellent reviews from Yelp, and Solar Reviews in the Bay Area. It's now expanding to include the San Luis Obispo and northern Santa Barbara County areas.

For exploring solar for your home or volunteering, go to

www.sunwork.org

Check out the SunWork ad on page 4

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Course Fees — Register before January 24 to receive an early bird discount!

	Early Bird	Regular
Single Sierra Club member	☐ \$160	☐ \$175
Couple Sierra Club members	☐ \$285	☐ \$312
Single non-member	☐ \$175	☐ \$191
Couples non-members	☐ \$315	☐ \$345
Student with photo ID	☐ \$135	☐ \$148



Take a Hike!

LOS PADRES CHAPTER

UPDATES: <http://lospadres.sierraclub.org>

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 listed are within 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: <http://lospadres2.sierraclub.org>

This website also contains links to Group web pages and other resources. Some regional Groups also list their outings on Meetup sites (See Meetups box below).

Key to outing locations:

- 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)

December 7
CENTURY LAKE and MASH SITE - MALIBU CREEK STATE PARK: Easy to moderate 5.3 mrt hike with 500' elev. gain. Bring water, food and wear lug-soled shoes. Take 101 Fwy to Kanan, south on Kanan to a left turn at Cornell. Meet 8am at the Ronald Reagan Ranch Parking Lot. Make a left turn into parking lot just passed Mulholland Hwy. FONTAYNE HOLMES 300-4590. (CJ)

December 8
SULPHUR MOUNTAIN ROAD HIKE: 6-7 miles, 1000' elevation gain. Moderate hike on a gated hiking, biking, and equestrian fire road. The road follows the ridge of Sulphur Mountain and has beautiful views of Ojai Valley, the Topa Topa mountains and Lake



Hi Hat woman at the Playgrounds, a great rock-hopping site overlooking Goleta. (Photo by Robert Bernstein)

Casitas. Bring plenty of water, snacks, and sun protection. Meet at the Casitas Springs trailhead of Sulphur Mountain road at 9am. Directions: Take 101 to 33N towards Ojai to Sulphur Mountain Road. Turn right and continue 0.4 miles to a locked gate. Park along the side of the road. For questions, contact GINA at venturacoles@gmail.com. (VEN)

MALIBU CREEK STATE PARK: Moderate 7-8 mrt hike. Bring water, food and wear sturdy hiking boots. Meet at 8:30am at trailhead. Take Kanan Road, turn left at Cornell Road, cross Mulholland Hwy., quick left into parking lot. LILLIAN TREVISAN 498-1623. (CJ)

HOLIDAY POTLUCK and digital photo show: The Cameron Center will be the site of our potluck and photo show. Bring your favorite digital photos or prints to share. Bring your most tempting dish and favorite drink for a Holiday Celebration. Come early (6:30pm) to help setup; party starts 7pm. HUGH WARREN 341-6295, JOANNE SULKOSKE 492-3061. (CJ)

December 9
TOPA TOPA BLUFF ANNUAL CHRISTMAS POTLUCK: Strenuous 16 mrt hike with 4,487 ft of elevation gain to Topa Topa Bluffs (elev. 6,300 ft). Fun revelry and scenic views of the Oxnard Plain and Channel Islands. Light snow is possible. Please bring 10 essentials and food or drink to share with the group. Meet

at Sisar Canyon Road gate at 7:30am. Dog friends welcome. Rain cancels. Leader: STEPHEN BRYNE 794-1150. (VEN)

AUTUMN RIDGE TRAIL - LANG RANCH: Moderate 5 mrt hike with 800' cumulative elev. gain. This is a double lollipop loop trail through Woodridge and Lang Ranch Open Space. Bring water, food and wear lug-soled shoes. Meet at 8:30am. Take Westlake Blvd. north to end at Autumn Ridge Drive. Trailhead and parking at intersection. JOANNE SULKOSKE 492-3061. (CJ)

December 10
LOON POINT BEACH WALK: We'll start just south of Summerland and walk the beach to Santa Claus Lane Beach. Return via Padero Lane. Great views of the SB Channel and elegant beach estates. Easy 4 mrt. Meet 9am at the Bank of America parking lot, Hope & State St. GERRY 964-5411 (SB)

December 11
CITY WALK OF SANTA PAULA - Meet at Ventura in the parking lot facing Harbor Blvd between Chase bank and Carrows' restaurant (2401 E Harbor Blvd) at 8:30am to carpool or meet us in Santa Paula in the parking lot next to the Ventura County Agricultural Museum (926 Railroad Ave, Santa Paula, CA 93060.) We will be doing a walk around this amazing local city with beautiful old homes and lots of wall murals depicting the rich history of the city. This is a 5-6 mile loop through the town, all

on pavement, so wear comfortable shoes. We will retire to Rabalais' Bistro after the walk for some java and sharing a basket of Beignets. LORA & PHILIP CLARKE (218-2103 or 218-2105). (VEN)

December 14
HIDDEN MEADOWS TRAIL: Moderate 4.4 mrt with 400' elev. gain. Wonderful views on a clear day of Santa Monica Mountains, Simi Valley, the Oxnard Plain and Channel Islands. Bring water, food, and wear lug-soled shoes. Meet at 8am at the trailhead at the end of Falling Star. Turn onto Falling Star from Kanan Road in Oak Park. FONTAYNE HOLMES 300-4590. (CJ)

December 15
POINT DUME to PARADISE COVE beach walk - Zuma beach: Join us for a peaceful walk along the waters' edge and to Paradise Cove (tide permitting). Some rock scrambling. Bring water, food and wear appropriate footwear. Meet at beach at 8:30am. Tide at 9am 4.9 feet decreasing; at 11:30am 1.8 feet decreasing. Take Kanan to PCH, turn right to Westward Beach Road, drive down to end and meet across from Sunset restaurant. LILLIAN TREVISAN 498-1623. (CJ)

EAVESDROPS

"The exaltation one can get in the presence of mountains can be a memorable lesson in humility and an aid to self-realization."

~ Legendary mountaineer Fred Beckey, an outdoor writer who notched more first ascents than any other American. He died in October of natural causes at age 94.

December 16
ROMERO CANYON/ ISLAND VIEW LOOP: Strenuous 12 miles rt hike, 3000' gain up to a ridge line with the most gorgeous views in SB, Old Island View trail to an OHV road and on to Juncal, looping back to Romero. About 5-7 hours at a moderate pace with several steep spots and some minor height exposure. Advanced and Intermediate hikers only. 18-must be accompanied by a parent. Wear hiking shoes/boots, bring 3 liters of water, lunch, snacks, and personal first aid. Rain cancels. Meet behind B of A on State St. at Hope Ave. 9am. KRISTI email: sbhikergirl@cox.net (SB)

POTRERO JOHN: Moderate 5 mrt with 700' elev. gain. Potrero John from Highway 33 north of Ojai. Some unmaintained trail at the end. Bring water, food and sturdy footwear. Meet at 8am at the east end of the Oaks Shopping Center parking lot in Thousand Oaks for carpooling to the trailhead. HUGH WARREN 341-6295, hiker@hkwarren.net. (CJ)

December 17
CANINE HIKE RATTLESNAKE TRAIL: Hike up a beautiful wooded canyon with scenic views to meadow. Mostly shaded trail. Moderate 4 mrt, 1000 ft. elevation gain, optional 1 1/2 mile extension up and back to Gibraltar Road. Well behaved dogs welcomed and encouraged; must be leashed. Bring snack and water for you and your canine companion. Hikers without dogs welcome too.

Meet at B of A parking lot at 9:00 a.m. Hike limited to four dogs - please call to reserve your dog's place. Recent heavy rain/fire cancels. Call if you have questions. SALLY 689-7820 (SB)

PLAN YOUR OUTINGS: Take a break from your holiday shopping to plan your outings for the next Condor Call outings schedule. It will cover Feb-May plus 2 weeks into June. Then get your writeups to your Group Outings Chair. Questions? Email Gerry Ching (gching@cox.net).

December 18
SULPHUR MOUNTAIN RD from the east end in upper Ojai - Meet at Ventura in the parking lot facing Harbor Blvd between Chase bank and Carrows restaurant (2401 E Harbor Blvd) at 8:30am to carpool (about 45 minutes) or meet us at the Rotary Community Park Parking lot on the East side of Hwy150, just after the signal where the Hwy 33 goes North. This walk is all about the views you get on a clear day! You will be able to see Ventura, the Oxnard plain, the Santa Monica mountains, and if it is clear, the Channel Islands. Parking is LIMITED at the top of the road, so please carpool. A walk of 5-6 miles total, all on dirt road. Come prepared with sturdy hiking shoes and poles. Water and maybe a snack is a good idea. Coffee afterwards in downtown Ojai. LORA & PHILIP CLARKE (218-2103 or 218-2105). (VEN)

December 21
PIUMA TRAIL: Moderate 5 mrt hike with 600' elev. gain. Bring water, food and wear lug-soled shoes. Since there is limited space at the meeting place please carpool from the parking lot near Freddy's on Hampshire Road in Thousand Oaks just before the Shell Station before 7:40am. Meet Fontayne at Piuma at 8am. Exit 101 Fwy. at Lost Hills Road, right turn to Las Virgenes Canyon, left turn into the small parking area on the corner of Piuma Road and Las Virgenes. FONTAYNE HOLMES 300-4590. (CJ)

December 22
LOOP IN OJAI VALLEY via Fuelbreak trail (aka Gridley Fire Rd): This is a 6.5 mile loop, moderately-paced hike. Start from Pratt/Foothill Parking area hiking north, then east on Fuelbreak trail to paved Gridley Road. Walk on paved road south to Shelf Fire Road. Then head west on Shelf Fire road back to Pratt/Foothill trail and then south to Parking area. Total of about 900 ft elevation gain. Meet at the Ventura carpool at 8am or 8:30am at Pratt/Foothill Trailhead Parking area in Ojai. Ten essentials, hiking boots and poles, sun hat, 3 qts of water, and snack required. Temperatures above 85f or rain cancels. PHILIP 218-2103 (VEN).

PALO COMADO to ALBERTSON'S MOTORWAY: Moderate 8 mrt hike, with 950' elev. gain. Bring lots of water, food and wear lug-soled shoes. Meet no later than 8:30am at trailhead, on Sunnycrest off North Kanan Road. LILLIAN TREVISAN 498-1623. (CJ)

December 25
THILLE PARK IN VENTURA WALK - Meet at Thille park at the corner of Thille and Saratoga in Ventura, 93003 (just down the street from the Government Center) at 9am for a fun flat 4-mile walk on paved trails around this charming area of Ventura. Coffee locally after the

continued next page

Conditions

A number of campgrounds and roads in Los Padres National Forest are closed or have restricted (no autos) access due to protection of habitats and species or are under repair. Before you go into the local backcountry, it's a good idea to check conditions with rangers. Numbers to call (unless noted all are area code 805):

Los Padres National Forest Districts	
Headquarters	968-6640
Ojai District	646-4348
Mt. Pinos	(661) 245-3731
Santa Barbara	967-3481
Santa Lucia	925-9538
Other Areas	
Santa Monica Mtns. Area	370-2301
Conejo Parks	381-2737
Simi Valley	584-4400
Montecito	969-3514
Forest Notes	
For updated information, news releases, maps, and many other goodies, go to Los Padres National Forest's website: http://fs.usda.gov/LPNF	
Regional Hike Info	
There are a number of websites that give you information as varied as outings, trail profiles, wildflower alerts, trail work opportunities, and much more. Here's a few:	
http://LosPadres.SierraClub.org	
www.SBSierraClub.org	
www.SantaBarbaraTrailGuide.com	
www.SantaBarbaraHikes.com	
www.LPForest.org	
www.VenturaCountyTrails.org	
http://Hikes.VenturaCountyStar.com	

Meetups & Ongoing Outings

Santa Barbara

Meetup site by the Santa Barbara Group is a place for people to find all sorts of local activities, including hikes, and you can post or see photos too. Go to: www.meetup.com/SierraClub-SantaBarbara

Regular outings are every Wednesday and Friday nights and every Saturday and Sunday during the day.

Wednesday night: Strenuous conditioning hike. Meet at 6:30 at the Santa Barbara Mission, Laguna and Los Olivos St.

Friday evening social hike for an easy-to-moderate 2-4 mrt 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)

Saturday and Sunday hikes: Usually meets at the Bank of America on Hope and State Street. Starting times vary. For detailed schedules and who to call, go to: <http://tinyurl.com/SB-Hikes>

Ventura

Meetup group is open to anyone to join and is a super handy calendar of the local official Sierra Club outings. Ease into fitness at beginner walks, get going on intermediate half or whole day hikes, or make new friendships on overnight backpacks. Just go to: www.meetup.com/SierraClubVentura

Every Monday morning, Easy Walks: Join the Ventura Sierra Club at 9am every Monday morning for easy to moderate walks-hikes in the Ventura county area. A long-time tradition, the walks will last about two to three hours and the group sometimes goes for coffee afterward. Call Philip 218-2103 or Lora 218-2105.

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Outings...from page 6

walk. LORA & PHILIP CLARKE (218-2103 or 218-2105). (VEN)

December 29

OLD CABIN SITE - POINT MUGU STATE PARK: Moderate 7 mrt hike with 1,000' elev. gain. Bring water, food and wear lug-soled shoes. Meet at the end of Wendy Road in Newbury Park at Potrero trailhead in Newbury Park not later than 8:30am. LILLIAN TREVISAN 498-1623. (CJ)

January 1

VENTURA RIVER TRAIL from Oak View Community Center - Meet 8:30am at the Ventura parking lot facing Harbor Blvd between Chase bank and Carrow's restaurant (2401 E Harbor Blvd) to drive to the Oak View Community Center (18 Valley Rd, Oak View, CA 93022). From there we will start off the new year with an easy walk up another section of the Ventura River Trail going North towards Ojai then return the way we came. This will be 5-6 miles total, all on paved trail. Then at the end to have a drink at a local spot. LORA & PHILIP CLARKE (218-2103 or 218-2105). (VEN)

ANNUAL NEW YEARS DAY HIKE - MISHE MOKWA TRAIL to SANDSTONE PEAK: Moderate 7 mrt hike with 1500' elev. gain. Hike via Split Rock, with views of Balanced Rock. Snack on Mt. Allen, highest point in the Santa Monica's. Loop back via Backbone Trail to the parking area. Bring water, food and wear sturdy hiking shoes. Meet in parking lot near Freddy's just before the Shell Station on Hampshire Road in Thousand Oaks at 9am for carpooling. HUGH WARREN 341-6295, JOANNE SULKOSKE 492-3061. (CJ)

January 6

HELL'S HALF ACRE: Hike from Cachuma Saddle up a dirt road to interesting rock formations. About 10 mrt. Moderately strenuous. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 8am. NOTE EARLY START TIME! DIANE dianesoini@gmail.com (SB)

BACKBONE TRAIL: Kanan Rd. to Zuma Ridge - 5-mrt with 354' ascent. To carpool meet at the Ventura Von's at Harbor & Seaward parking lot near Harbor entrance at 9 a.m. Otherwise meet at 10am in parking lot on Kanan Rd. across from W. Newton Canyon Rd. No reservation needed and no limit. KIM, 983-2147 (VEN)

January 7

GIBRALTAR ROCK VIA RATTLESNAKE TRAIL: Hike up a wooded canyon with scenic views to Gibraltar Rock. Moderately Strenuous 5.5 mrt. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ROBERT 685-1283/event@swt.org (SB)

SANTA CLARA RIVER & Fillmore native plant trail building: 8:30am-Fish Hatchery Visit. 9am-noon. Exciting to announce invitation to the first volunteers for building a new native plant trail near the entry to the fish hatchery area. The trail will become a public park with interpretive markers and a kiosk. Pls wear long pants and closed shoes that can get dirty! Bring water and snack. Come at 8:30 for half hour before trail building to see the hatchery raised trout and sneak a peek at the wildlife outside the fence in the river. Tasks may include additional work to install fence, parking surface (mulch) and kiosk. All ages welcome, 14 and under accompanied by adult. Teen ages 15-17 without adult must bring two waivers (print from links below). RSVP requested, light rain does not

cancel. Sierra Club waiver: <http://tinyurl.com/lk3qytz>
UCSB waiver: <http://www.ehs.ucsb.edu/files/docs/rm/WaiverElecActivities.pdf>

Directions: Route 126 East (through Fillmore), in 1 mile turn right on Fish Hatchery Road (before Cornejos Stand). RSVP requested to: NINA at sierraclubventura@gmail.com. (VEN)

OUTINGS WRITEUPS DUE SOON: Outings for the next Condor Call are due soon. They should within the period of Feb-May, plus 2 weeks into June. If you haven't gotten your writeups to your Group Outings chairperson, do so NOW!

EAVESDROPS

"The more prepared you are, the less you have to be worried about."

~ Matt May, EMT and outdoor first aid instructor from 4PointsWildMed.com who conducted a basic course for about 20 Wilderness Basics Course personnel on Sept. 30. The 8-week WBC starts Feb. 7 (see story on pg 1, advertisement on pg 5).

January 8

CITY LOOP WALK of historic Oxnard - Meet at the parking lot next to Plaza Park (500 S B St, Oxnard, CA 93030) at 9am. We will do an interesting 4-mile walk around and through historic district of downtown Oxnard. This walk is all on sidewalks so sturdy shoes are a good idea. After the walk we enjoy coffee at one of the local shops. LORA & PHILIP CLARKE (218-2103 or 218-2105). (VEN)

January 9

VENTURE(A) OUT Educational Speaker Series: 5:30-7pm at the EP Foster Library Topping Room 651 E Main, Ventura. Ventura Sierra Club educational series is a time to rethink our place in the environment and why we need nature. Ken McAlpine has written 10 books but will speak about one: "Islands Apart: A Year on the Edge of Civilization." See story on page 3 For more info, contact NINA at sierraclubventura@gmail.com. (VEN)

January 12

CHIEF PEAK from Rose Valley: Hike up to Chief peak (5,565) from Rose Valley by starting at the Rose Valley campground (3,420). This hike is 8.6mrt, 2,145 feet gain. Most of this hike is on dirt fire roads until we leave to do the last bit (1/4th mile) of rock scrambling to the top. There will be impressive views all around. We will return the way we came. Meet 7:30am at Ventura carpool. Ten essentials, hiking boots and poles, sun hat, 3 qts of water, and snack required. Temperatures above 85° or rain cancels. PHILIP 218-2103 (VEN).

January 13

DIVIDE PEAK: Very strenuous 13 mrt hike with 3200 feet elevation gain/loss from Matilija trailhead to Divide Peak. Experienced hikers only. Great views of Ojai and Lake Casitas. On a clear day, all 8 Channel Islands are visible. Wear lug-soled shoes, bring at least 3 liters of water, lunch, and snacks. The weather can vary greatly during the course of the hike, so bring layers accordingly. For those coming from Santa Barbara meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 7:30am (note early start time) to arrange carpool to trailhead. For those in Ventura meet 8am at Ventura carpool lot (Seaward and Harbor between Chase Bank and Carrows). JIM 479-7063/644-6934 (SB)

January 14

CATHEDRAL PEAK LOOP II: Head up Mission Canyon trail and then branch off onto a steep and rocky primitive trail to Cathedral Peak for lunch. Spectacular views, including "Three Pools," and echoes from the Canyon. Return down west side to Jesusita trail. Strenuous 6 mrt with hundreds of knee high steps.. Some agility needed. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ALEJANDRO 451-1239 (SB)

OUTINGS WRITEUPS DUE NOW: Send Feb-May outings writeups for the next Condor Call outings schedule to Gerry Ching (gching@cox.net).

January 15

VENTURA RIVER PRESERVE from the River View trail head - Meet at the parking lot facing Harbor Blvd between Chase bank and Carrow's restaurant (2401 E Harbor Blvd) at 8:30am to carpool to the River View trail head. You can meet us at the trail head (just North of the intersection of S Rice Rd and W Lomita Ave - across from the stables). We will walk up Wills Canyon trail, down the Chaparral Crest trail, across the Fern Grotto trail before returning to the TH via Wills Canyon. This is one of our longest and more ambitious hikes, 6 1/2 miles. All dirt trail with some river crossings so come prepared with sturdy hiking shoes and poles. Water and maybe a snack is a good idea too. Some of us will do coffee in Meiners Oaks after the hike. LORA & PHILIP CLARKE (218-2103 or 218-2105). (VEN)

January 20

ISLAND VIEW LOOP: Outstanding view of the islands and the coastline are featured in this moderate 5 mrt hike. We'll start at Romero Saddle, hike down the Juncal Road a bit, then follow the motorcycle/ATV road to the start of the Island View trail (also known as the Romero Ridge trail). Bring water, a light lunch and sun protection. There is little shade

and can be very warm, but bring a light jacket, just in case. This hike involves a long (45 minute) drive to the trailhead on mountain (paved) roads. Rain cancels. Meet at 9am at the Bank of America parking lot, Hope Ave & State St. GERRY 964-5411 (SB)

any rain recently. A real chance to get out of the city for a break. Come prepared with sturdy hiking shoes and poles. Water and maybe a snack is a good idea. Some of us will stop for coffee after the hike at CSUCI. LORA & PHILIP CLARKE (218-2103 or 218-2105). (VEN)

EDITOR'S PICK

January 21

FRANKLIN TRAIL: Strenuous 10.4 mrt hike with an elevation gain of 1700'. Let's check out the newly re-opened historic trail in Carpinteria that offers great views of the Channel Islands and the coastline. We will hike at a moderate pace or about 2 miles an hour and stop halfway for lunch and snacks, returning to the trailhead between 2-3pm. If the group is up to it we may follow the trail to the top for another 3 miles (16 mrt). This is a long hike and good physical conditioning is recommended. Under 18 must be accompanied by a parent. Wear hiking shoes/boots, bring at least 2 liters of water, snacks, and personal first aid. Rain cancels. Meet behind B of A on State St. at Hope Ave. Note early start time 8:30am. Those coming from the south can meet us in the Carp High School parking lot at 9am. KRISTI email: sbhikergirl@cox.net (SB)

January 22

WALK SYCAMORE CANYON in Point Mugu SP - Meet at Ventura carpool in the parking lot facing Harbor Blvd between Chase bank and Carrows restaurant (2401 E Harbor Blvd, Ventura, CA) at 8:30am to carpool to Sycamore Canyon (Mugu St Park) or meet at 9:00 at Sycamore Canyon TH. We will do a total of six miles walking on Sycamore Canyon Trail. While this a fairly flat walk up a dirt fire road, it is a beautiful walk with lots of majestic Oaks and Sycamore trees. We might even encounter stream crossings if there has been

January 29

DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES from Oxnard - Meet at the Oxnard train station (201 E 4th street, Oxnard, 93030) at 7:10am to get tickets for the 7:43am Metrolink to Union Station in Los Angeles for a day of fun walking around town to see the sights. We will visit various historical locations, including but not limited to the Main Library, the Biltmore Hotel, Chinatown, Grand Central market, Angels Flight, and the Last Book Store in LA. We will purchase lunch at the Grand Central market. After lunch and a few sights on our way back to Union Station, we will catch the first Metrolink (4:28 pm) back to Oxnard station. Bring a daypack to carry a water bottle, snacks, possibly a jacket/sweater and wear comfortable shoes. We usually walk 6-8 miles before catching the Metrolink. LORA & PHILIP CLARKE (218-2103 or 218-2105). (VEN)

February 3

SANTA CLARA RIVER/FILLMORE NATIVE PLANT TRAIL BUILDING: 8:30am-Fish Hatchery Visit. 9am-noon Native Plant Trail Building Day. See Jan. 7 outing for details. RSVP requested to: NINA at sierraclubventura@gmail.com. (VEN)

February 7

LOS PADRES Wilderness Basics Course: Wednesday nights, Feb. 7 through Mar. 28, 7-9:30 p.m. plus weekend outings. Get more info via email, website or Facebook: lospadreswbc@gmail.com <http://lospadreswbc.org> www.Facebook.com/lospadreswbc TERESA 524-7170 (VEN)

We're always training leaders

In a big step for our chapter, seven new students hiked up the Middle Matilija trail in October to hone their skills to lead overnight backpack trips.

There was also a separate basic first aid training for about 20 others by Matt May in September, making it clear that Sierra Club outings leaders have the expertise to ensure safety and knowledge to hikers under their watch.

The seven students will double the number of backpack leaders in our chapter, and they hailed from three Los Padres Groups: Annette Preciado, Arturo Hernandez, and Sean Cole (Ventura Sierra Club), Jim Duliakas, Kristi KirkPatrick and Murray Ruben (Santa Barbara Group), and Gene Babcock (Conejo Group).

Four instructors participated: Pete Scifres (Conejo), Alisse Fisher and Teresa Norris (Ventura) and Marc Hertz (Angeles Chapter).

Topics included trip planning, personal leadership skills, and hike, camp and group management. After setting up tents, they discussed many aspects of leading overnight trips into more remote locations than day hikes. Students took turns leading the group, earning certificates for OLT 201.

The students are now provisional backpack leaders. and to complete the course each needs to lead an overnight backpack trip, evaluated by an experienced leader.

~ By Teresa Norris



Outings leaders were given a refresher First Aid training (top photo by Condor John Hankins) by Matt May of www.4pointsWildMed.com. He's showing that the first step is to assess the situation. At a higher level (photo below by Kristi KirkPatrick) are our seven new backpack leaders along with instructors who have to learn much more to be responsible for taking groups into the wilds overnight.

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Back page Condor Call Dec 2017 - Jan 2018

Behind the maggot door

By John Hankins

Approaching the maggot room, you can feel the heat and energy coming from within, and a live, undefined but earthy aroma blows to your nose as the dusty door opens ... the feeling of caution grips you, sensing millions of small, live movements. Creeeeeeeepy.

Not to worry, it's just a farm, an extraordinary Bug Farm in Ventura out to combat bad bugs with good bugs and replace toxic pesticides for a healthier



Ron Whitehurst, Pest Control Advisor, inviting Bugfarm tour participants to hold wiggly housefly maggots

earth. Like superheroes.

Don't like houseflies? Neither do livestock breeders, zoos, farmers, nurseries and no one on a picnic. All would love the Spalangia wasp, a very tiny immigrant from Australia that is a natural house fly predator.

"There's no resistance to predators. That's why beneficial bugs work," said Jan Dietrick in a KCET video. She and her partner Ron Whitehurst, both Sierra Club members, run the Rincon-Vitova Insectary, spawned from two insectaries started in 1959 and '60, about the time Rachel Carson warned the world about pesticide resistance.

Ron and Jan are no strangers to this esoteric world (she thinks "fly maggots are fun") as she helped her farmer

Beneficial Bugs

Housefly pupae ready to be put in the sting cages, which hold wasps that lay their eggs in fly pupae.

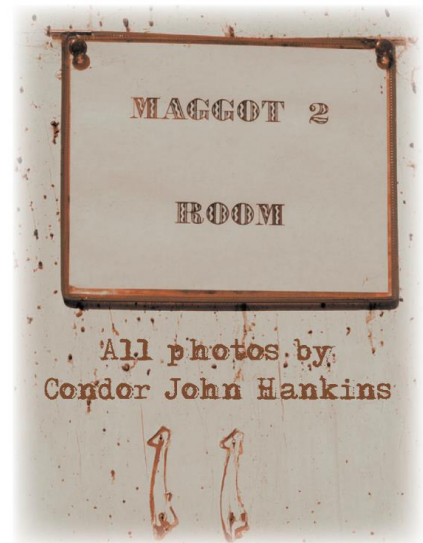
and inventor father work on biological controls. For over 30 years Ron was involved with organic methods and wrote a book "*Reading Weeds as Soil Indicators*".

Both are co-editors of the BioControl Beat and Fly Control Buzz; inquire within: bugnet@RinconVitova.com

And they are visionaries, now branching out from beneficial insects and parasites to bacterial and fungus methods.

Too, their techniques have a whole new turf because federal law prohibits pesticides for those growing medical marijuana.

Recently, the Ventura Sierra Club invited Nicole Norelli from UCSB to talk about ridding our rivers of the thick, non-native tamarisk plant. "The most efficient biocontrol method are the tamarisk beetles," she said. The beetles find the tamarisks tasty and eat the darn things.



The Bug Farm is a business that is embraced by farms, nurseries, resorts, research institutions and private residences. Their emphasis is habitat diversity and conserving natural enemies "that are affordable and work."

The Bug Farm occasionally has tours, but you can get a virtual one via the KCET short documentary at:

<http://tinyurl.com/BeneficialBugFarm>



Ron shows visitors ladybird beetles attacking armored scale insects on Butternut squash, a perfect growing medium.