

Vol. 18, No. 1 of 6

February - March 2018

# Condor Call



Panorama photo of Thomas Fire above Ventura by Dashiell Dunkell [www.venturalandtrust.org](http://www.venturalandtrust.org)



© Aerial photo by Rich Reid

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Preserved ... Oil Collusion ... Leaders ... Fire & Mud ... Bigfoot  
Pg 1 Pg 2 Pg 3 Pgs 1,4,7 Pg 5



## WBC Outdoor Class Begins

Let's go hiking and camping with Wilderness Basics Course folks and it'll give you a smile just like it keeps doing for veteran hike leader Stephen Bryne. WBC offers smart and savvy instruction on how to travel outdoors safely. As one student said, "After a night in the mountains, I come home feeling more healthy, peaceful and centered."

Local teachers and outdoor experts will explain the essential topics, so you don't get "strayed" like Cheryl did in her novice experience written in "Brave Enough".

Our popular WBC course for 2018 starts Feb. 7 - March 28, and it may be sold out by the time you get this issue, but you should check it out (524-7170) immediately or go here:

[www.lospadreswbc.org](http://www.lospadreswbc.org) [lospadresWBC@gmail.com](mailto:lospadresWBC@gmail.com) [www.facebook.com/lospadresWBC](http://www.facebook.com/lospadresWBC)  
(Photo by Arturo Hernandez)

# National acclaim for our chapter's Add-Up

The Sierra Club's "Add-Up" portion of its website is a dynamic, user-friendly tool for effective actions and issues.

National just came out with the top three "Most Active Chapters of 2017" using this tool most effectively. We're in the top three, just after the Rocky Mountain and Michigan chapters, giving Santa Barbara Group's Katie Davis great praise.

Locally, we know her well, now all chapters nationally know what we know. Here's what went out to all chapters throughout America:



Katie Davis, a stand-out at any event, rally, or behind the publicity scene. (Photo by Condor John Hankins)

"Whenever the one-woman digital super-volunteer Katie Davis fired up her computer on behalf of the Los Padres Chapter last year, SolarCity would triple their order for solar panels, and offshore oil rigs would get stuck trying to leave the harbor.

"Whenever Katie pulled the Add-Up campaign management homepage from her bookmarks, Santa Barbara County officials would scramble to write "NO!" on applications for new oil drills, and city councilmembers would scramble out of their kids' basketball games in order to finish their plans for transitioning to 100% clean energy.

"Whenever Katie hit 'Publish' on her latest Add-Up campaign in 2017, Ryan Zinke would grimace, knowing the unwelcome reception he'd get in Santa Barbara when he flew down to visit the in-laws, reminisce at the history of oil spills in the Santa Barbara Channel, and miss most of his putts at the annual American Petroleum Institute Lobbyist-Lawmaker Scramble. Thanks for all your great work, Katie!"

For anyone reading this, you too can get involved, go to: [www.SierraClub.org](http://www.SierraClub.org)



## SIGHTINGS

# Fire, mud, yet we persist

By John Hankins

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 the Thomas Fire and mud disaster to conservation efforts.

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).

Feb 8: **Offshore oil lease** proposals by Trump Administration will be monitored in Sacramento during a hearing by the Environmental Defense Center, notably attorney Linda Krop and Kristen Hislop EDC's Marine

Conservation director. Our chapter chipped in funds for the trip. To comment, go to:

[www.boem.gov/National-OCS-Program](http://www.boem.gov/National-OCS-Program)

Feb 3: **Thomas Fire** Benefit brought Ventura together at Plaza Park, including many of our members for a concert headed by Kevin Costner and his New West band, along with locals Big Bad Voodoo Daddy and Olivia Newton-John, Colbie Caillat, Super Duper KYLE etc. Sierra Club members were certainly in view as 100% of funds will be used to assist victims of the fire. Costner was evacuated from his house in Summerland and his daughter from Ojai, making this

a very personal affair.

Feb 3: **#ProtectOurCoast** noon rally at Ventura City Hall and walk to the beach for Hands Across the Sand was sponsored by CFROG and attended by Sierra Club members. It's a national annual event now.

Jan 28: **New Bikes** for fire victims event at the Ventura Bike HUB coordinated by Ventura Sierra Club in which volunteers helped put together bikes donated by Giant. Their reward? Lunch and a "happy soul."

Jan 26: **Income from**  
*continued on page 2*

# Our agenda for 2018

By Jim Hines

LP Chapter Chair

Happy New Year to all you members and friends, hope you can get out in the outdoors more often this year.

We are starting off 2018 with some major challenges to our environment in our regions, Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. Here's what we're in for; hope you can help.

✓ Major new offshore oil leasing is being geared up for by the Dept. of the Interior.

✓ The proposed Mission Rock Energy Project along the Santa Clara River south of Santa Paula begins the process with local hearings by the CA Energy Commission and we have not yet put the Mandalay Peaker Plant (Puente) completely to rest.

✓ There are proposals to slash funding in a major way for the Los Padres National Forest which will cut staff and reduce the number of visitor-serving offices as well as trail maintenance. This comes at a time of great need to recover our lands from the Thomas Fire.

✓ We will continue to work with Caltrans and the Angeles Chapter on the Liberty Canyon Wildlife Overpass over the 101 freeway.

✓ Northern Santa Barbara county energy projects will reappear on the docket.

✓ Gaviota Coast protection will once again be a top priority for our chapter but note major success via Gaviota Coast Conservancy (see story page 1) that gives us inspiration and hope.

✓ Our work to protect the Simi Hills, Santa Susana and Santa Monica Mountains will continue in conjunction with the Angeles chapter.

✓ I will lobby Congress for passage of two of our legislative priorities 1) expanding Los Padres wilderness via the Central Coast Heritage Protection Act and 2) Rim of the Valley Corridor Protection Act.

✓ Threats to open space in the Santa Ynez Valley will require our attention.

✓ Our work on the Santa Clara and Ventura rivers will move forward in a positive way.

These and other challenges which will pop up will keep our chapter leadership and our many great activists very busy in 2018.

And don't forget 2018 is a very important election year.

## COVER PHOTO

Wow, here it is, saved from development. The Point Conception area includes much of the TPL purchase – from Government Point at bottom to Cojo Point lower right, and all the way up to Jalama and into the distance. See story below.  
(© Aerial photo by Rich Reid)

## EAVESDROPS

"Preservation of Cojo-Jalama (Bixby) Ranch is an enormous achievement, one of the crown jewels of the Gaviota Coast. While numerous development schemes have been put forward over the last few decades, none have succeeded."

~ Gaviota Coast Conservancy President Michael S. Brown on the amazing success of The Nature Conservancy buying up over 24,000 acres in January, thanks to a donation of \$165 million by Jack and Laura Dangermond.

# Crown jewel of Gaviota Coast purchased to preserve

*Editor's note: As the Gaviota Coast Conservancy said, this is "a stunning development". While all of us (Los Padres Chapter Sierra Club) who are part of the GCC are ecstatic, the amount of public access is not yet known. This comes on the heels of our report in our last issue of 36 coastal acres possibly being added to Jalama County Park, and this land is adjacent.*

The Nature Conservancy has announced that it has acquired the 24,364-acre Cojo-Jalama Ranch, (AKA Bixby Ranch) that surrounds Point Conception extending from Jalama County Park to near the western boundary of Hollister Ranch.

Ownership by the Conservancy eliminates threats of the conversion of this historic property for

residential development, oil extraction or mineral development.

"It's the Crown Jewel of the Gaviota Coast!" exclaimed Gaviota Coast Conservancy President Michael S. Brown. "Preservation of the Cojo-Jalama Ranch has long been one of the GCC's leading goals. It is the largest privately-owned ranch on the Gaviota Coast, and has faced significant development threats in the past."

The purchase was made possible by a single donation of \$165,000,000 by Jack and Laura Dangermond, whose company played a major role in developing GIS methodologies.

"The generosity of people like the Dangermonds have played a critical role in the preservation of the Gaviota Coast and other

threatened coastal lands. We applaud their vision and generosity and invite others to support GCC's ongoing work to preserve our precious coastline," said Phil McKenna, GCC board member and past president.

The Gaviota Coast spans 76 miles of coastline from Coal Oil Point in Goleta to Point Sal west of Santa Maria. The area was studied to be a National Seashore in the early 2000s, but the National Park Service found that while the visual, biological and recreational resources made it suitable as a National Seashore, opposition from the George W. Bush Administration and landowners made it infeasible. The 2004 Report suggested local efforts should be undertaken to protect and preserve the Gaviota

Coast, and so that has happened!

Cojo-Jalama was the site of a proposed LNG plant in the 1970s, which led to a pitched battle lasting for years.

GCC and its members expect

this will eventually result in public access to Point Conception, allowing the public to enjoy the 1985-era County recreational use easements on parcels near Point Conception.



We like to think Mike S. Brown's curving moves are celebrating the purchase of Gaviota coastland, where surfing is big around the Jalama Park area ... Mike is Gaviota Coast Conservancy's president. (Photo by Josh Brown)

# Sightings...

continued from page 1

members goes where it's needed and where our hearts are. Know about the president opening offshore oil drilling leases? Our ExCom unanimously voted to help fund a local attorney (Linda Krop, Environmental Defense Center) travelling to Sacramento on Feb. 8 to the only scheduled government meeting about Trump's ill-advised opening for offshore oil.



Jan 23: **WBC Feature** posted with 10 pictures on the *Ventura County Star* website. It was in the print edition on Jan 4, cover in Time Out. Read Alicia Doyle's story here: <https://tinyurl.com/WBCinVCStar>

Jan 23: **Sustainable VC** hearing at Board of Supervisors re General Plan to ensure climate change and environmental justice are addressed. Sierra Club members involved, for background go to: [www.VC2040.org/documents](http://www.VC2040.org/documents)

Jan 20: **Women's March** anniversary was HUGE yet again at major cities, and bigly in Santa Barbara's De la Guerra Plaza (est 3,500) and Ventura's Plaza Park (est 1,500). Sierra Club members of all sexes were evident at both events, as were environmental signs such as "Let the Forest Be with You." Justice for All organized the Ventura march, a key component of the club's ethic, and a Women's March committee handled the Santa Barbara event to create "transformative social change."

Jan 9: **"Islands Apart: A Year on the Edge of Civilization"** was the Ventura Sierra Club's first program of the year, known as "Venture(a) Out". See story back page.

Jan 9: **Katie Davis** was quoted in the L.A. Times article entitled "Mess with the coast? Not without a fight!"

Jan 7: **Trail Building** and native plant affair where volunteers were invited to build a new native plant trail mini-park near the entry to the Fillmore Fish Hatchery area. The trail will become a public community resource with interpretive markers and a kiosk, thanks to the Ventura Sierra Club. "Sweet success! Big turnout... them caring and doing makes me happy," said organizer Nina Danza. See story page 3.

Dec 28: **Oil Alert:** Chapter

Chair Jim Hines sent out a warning on social media that Interior Dept. will soon release its offshore oil leasing plan that could include the California coast. Sierra Club will fight the plan with "massive rallies," Hines predicted after speaking to Interior staffers.

Dec 15: **"Dark Vision for YOUR National Public Lands"** was the headline for an article by our Los Padres Chapter Chair Jim Hines, in the (San Fernando) Valley Sierran newsletter, referring to the Trump Administration's assault on parks, monuments etc. A similar version was printed in the Dec/Jan *Condor Call*. The Sierran also printed his articles on opposing national park entrance fees and another topic of commenting on the state's Elk Management Plan, on behalf of the Cal/Neva Wildlife team.

Dec 8: **Photos & Potluck** gathering by the Conejo Group in Thousand Oaks where participants shared culinary talents and photo adventures.

Dec 7: **Fire help** from National Sierra Club offered after LP Chapter Chair Jim Hines informed them about the Thomas Fire's devastating effects on our region re fundraising and recovery efforts.

Dec 5: **Goleta Renews**, voting to adopt a 100 percent renewable energy goal by 2030 (Santa Barbara has already signed on). Alex Pujo of the SB Group was interviewed by Univision.

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.

### Ocean Oil Op

Directly oppose the Trump-Zinke offshore oil proposal and comment on an environmental statement by March 9 at: [www.boem.gov/National-OCS-Program](http://www.boem.gov/National-OCS-Program)

You should also tell Interior Sec. Ryan Zinke (whose family lives in Santa Barbara!) at (202) 298-3100 or: [www.FeedBack@IOS.doi.gov](mailto:www.FeedBack@IOS.doi.gov)



At the Ventura Women's March on Jan. 20, Cara Lopez Lee and Jan Dietrick had a steady stream of visitors with 41 new signups. One visitor said, "Lobby -- that means DOING something!" So, (coincidentally?) the Ventura County Board of Supervisors did just that on Jan. 23, voting to address climate change in its Vision Statement. Sierra Club encourages support of a new Clean Energy 805 campaign, locally on SoCal Edison proposals. Learn more at: [www.citizensclimatelobby.org](http://www.citizensclimatelobby.org)

# President Oil colludes

By Katie Davis

## Protecting Mar-a-Lago

On Jan. 9th the Trump administration abruptly changed tune on their draft offshore oil lease plan, the most aggressive plan ever, saying that they don't plan to drill off Florida after all because it's "unique" and has an important tourism and fishing industry.

This came after Interior Secretary Zinke met with Republican Gov. Rick Scott, whose plans to run for Senate would be hindered by a wildly unpopular offshore oil plan. Florida also happens to be Trump's coastal home at Mar-a-Lago.

An outcry followed from every other coastal state, including California, all of which are also obviously "unique" and have tourism and fishing industries. Indeed, California's economy is the sixth largest in the world and most of our population is in coastal counties, making offshore oil spills here particularly damaging.

At the same time the Trump administration is proposing eliminating safeguards put in place after the 2010 Deepwater Horizon disaster. Learn more and find comment links at: [www.protectthepacific.com](http://www.protectthepacific.com)

See more on this subject this page and page 3.

## Beach leak

It's been a terrible and tragic month for southern Santa Barbara County, which is still reeling from the recent mudslides. In one more impact for Summerland,

the State Lands Commission has reported that due to high surf, unfavorable swell direction, and poor water quality, the Becker Well abandonment project to cap the leaking oil well on Summerland beach has been delayed. It should start by the end of February.

## Solar Eclipsed

The Trump administration just dealt a blow to renewable energy by slapping a 30% tariff on solar panels in January, a perverse move will reduce U.S. jobs, cost consumers more, and risks triggering a trade war with China. That's because low cost solar panels have been driving a solar boom, effectively nudging coal and natural gas out of the electricity marketplace and creating a booming solar industry.

California alone has over 100,000 solar jobs (compare that to 11,000 coal miners in the entire country). Trump's move will raise solar costs, hurting those jobs and growth. What it won't do is change the tide of history; the future is renewable energy not matter what Trump does.

## Energy Shopping

SoCal Edison is shopping for new power supplies in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties, seeking bids for energy storage and clean energy in our area. Worryingly, they are also accepting bids for gas-fired power plant up to 55 MW for the Goleta area, but will show a "strong preference" for alternative energy resources.

Local municipalities, who know that a new polluting power plant in or near Goleta would be wildly unpopular, are working to ensure a robust response with lots of clean energy options. The County and cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta have all directed staff to work on this.

The City of Oxnard is also hoping for a robust response to help ensure that no new gas power plant is needed there either. NRG's proposed Puente gas plant at Mandalay Beach is on hold while deciding if renewable resources could be used instead. Meanwhile, the Ventura Sierra Club is monitoring the Puente issue endlessly as well as the proposed Mission Rock Energy Center on the banks of the Santa Clara River near Santa Paula. Both are undesirable for a few great reasons: environmental justice and habitat impacts and adding to greenhouse gases.



Free Women's March signs for participants in Ventura and Santa Barbara Jan. 20, which attracted about 4,000 in those cities. Across the nation? Millions, many bigger than the GOP inauguration! (Photo by John Hankins)

## Condor Call

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

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**Photos, news, tips always welcome!**

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**Typography and production by Dan Fuller**

# Join oil threat events

In early January, the Administration announced a new process to greatly expand offshore oil leasing in federal waters across the nation ... except off the Florida coast because of it coral, kelp, fish, tourists, manatees and Mar-a-Lago habitats.

But the list includes the Santa Barbara Channel and the whole western coast, marking the first time the federal government has opened the California coast to new lease sales since 1984, when Ronald Reagan was president.

Come to a public meeting protesting this situation (and/or write/phone, see box above).

It's at 6pm Tuesday, Feb.13th at the SB main library, 40 E Anapamu St.

The short list and more to come

includes county, state, and federal elected officials along with Katie Davis (Chair, SB Group, Sierra Club), Linda Krop (Environmental Defense Center) and Mike Lyons, (Get Oil Out!).

Join us and learn how you can make a difference in helping protect our coast and climate from this irresponsible scheme. Please RSVP to the EDC (963.1622) or go to: [www.environmentaldefensecenter.org](http://www.environmentaldefensecenter.org)

On Feb 8 there's a bus to Sacramento for the one public meeting on offshore oil in California by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM). There will also be a big rally. The bus leaves from Ventura, but if there's demand, it will stop in Santa Barbara as well. Go here to Get On the Bus! [www.CFROG.org](http://www.CFROG.org)

# Take me to your leaders

*Editor's note: Below are your local leaders for 2018 for the Los Padres Chapter, which includes Santa Barbara and Ventura counties with two groups apiece. They are ALL VOLUNTEERS, who put in lots of time fostering the club's motto: "Explore, enjoy and protect the planet." Please join us as members or friends (contacts on page 2).*

## CHAPTER EXCOM

A nominating committee in January chose David Gold, Alex Pujo and Mike Stubblefield for re-election to the Executive Committee for two-year terms (other officers have staggered terms and will be up for election next year). In turn, they voted in Jim Hines for his third year as Chair, which will be his last due to term limits. Katie Davis was also returned as Vice-Chair.

Once they were chosen, the ExCom reappointed perennial treasurer Richard Hunt (40+ years!) and long-time secretary Gerry Ching

## SANTA BARBARA GROUP

Luz Reyes-Martin is the newest member of the executive committee

## Ventura is hands-on

What has Ventura Sierra Club been up to? Maybe you get an email every month or so and know the answer.

If not and you want them, sign up for Los Padres Chapter's emails (see below).

On the ground, hands-on work is a club legacy, so some of our proudest hours have been making the environment *come back to life* in selected places. One is the Hedrick Ranch Nature Area (HRNA), a preserve along the Santa Clara River near Santa Paula.

Open to guided groups only for now, HRNA is undergoing ecological restoration from grazing and agriculture to full-fledged native species habitat. Sierra Club shows up monthly in partnership with Audubon, Friends of the Santa Clara River (FSCR) and UCSB to volunteer. It's working! Endangered birds are arriving in increasing numbers and mountain lion tracks as well as other land species have been observed.

Not far upstream we are working on the Sespe Cienega Habitat Restoration area, a brand new native plant trail and mini-park being built at the entry to Fillmore fish hatchery. It will be completely open to the public once completed. Efforts will continue through the next couple years, so come plant something and then come back to watch 'your' tree grow!

for the Santa Barbara Group (South Coast).

Already very active in civic affairs, Reyes-Martin sits on the Goleta School Board and plans to run for re-election in November. By day, she works as the Executive Director of Public Affairs and Communications at Santa Barbara City College. Background includes Master's degrees in land-use planning and public administration.

The election in December was the first in several cycles that was contested, with five people running for four open seats. The top winner was incumbents Katie Davis with 80% of the vote, Alex Pujo 73%, Robert Bernstein and Reyes-Martin both with 67%.

During the first meeting of the new board Jan. 4, leaders were appointed to key positions. Davis continues as Chair, while Bernstein takes over as Vice-Chair. Tony Biegen continues as Outings Chair, Alex Pujo as Political Chair, and Ginny Turner as Treasurer. Reyes-Martin is the new Secretary.

Pujo and Bernstein are Trans-

Being outside doing things is way more fun than talking about doing things, right? But advocating is a serious need. The Ventura club has had to research, write, speak and meet endlessly on two electric power plant projects proposed in our area: Puente Power Plant (PPP) at Mandalay Beach (Oxnard) and Mission Rock Energy Center (MREC) on the banks of the Santa Clara River near Santa Paula.

The PPP project is suspended at this time, but the case is not completely closed and needs vigilant attention. MREC is a more recent proposal and has a lot of activity in progress requiring us to be involved. Help wanted, you up for that challenge?

Fun is in our genes too! Throughout this year you're invited to any of inspiring speaker evenings, or to help at an Earth Day booth, a Santa Clara River Clean Up Day, or a summer picnic. We have a great website that needs bloggers and our social media needs to be more social! All of these are guaranteed to make you feel part of the tribe and recharge your eco-soul. Help make 2018 a year of accomplishments.

Please contact us here:  
[SierraClubVentura@gmail.com](mailto:SierraClubVentura@gmail.com)  
[www.Meetup.com/SierraClubVentura](http://www.Meetup.com/SierraClubVentura)  
[www.SierraClubVentura.org/los-padres/ventura](http://www.SierraClubVentura.org/los-padres/ventura)

portation Committee Co-Chairs, and Martha Sadler and Katherine Mullin are the Program Co-Chairs.

## ARGUELLO GROUP

There was no opposition to four candidates for this Santa Barbara North County Group. Chair Rebecca August was reelected along with Janet Blevins, Doris Connor and Dean Thompson.

## VENTURA SIERRA CLUB

Of the Chapter's four groups, the Ventura Sierra Club (western Ventura County) is special, appointed by the Chapter's Executive Committee. See story about what it's been up to this page.

Ventura's board starts with Chair Nina Danza and includes Irene Rauschenberger as treasurer, Monica Stanley as secretary, Jim Hines for conservation and jacks-of-all-issues Larry Older, Carol Marsh and Mike Stubblefield.

VSC has regular programs organized by Rachel Enevoldsen and volunteer leader Danielle Robottom. A Santa Clara River committee is headed by Danza, website lead is Jose Flores, and social media by Samantha Marin.

## CONEJO GROUP

In December, the Conejo Group (eastern Ventura County) membership elected Melanie Ashen, John Holroyd, Stephanie Scher and Joanne Sulkoske to serve on the group Executive Committee for 2018 and 2019.

They join Hugh Warren, Ellen Sanders and Elizabeth MacGovern, who are serving out their 2017-2018 terms.

The group officers for 2018 are: Hugh Warren, Chair; John Holroyd, Vice-Chair; Melanie Ashen, Secretary and Stephanie Scher, Treasurer.

## EAVESDROPS

**"As President Trump voices his determination to expand oil drilling and 20<sup>th</sup> century energy policies, California is pioneering the sustainable alternative ... gaining a strong foothold in the future energy and global economy."**

~ Lt. Gov. Gavin Newsome, on the welcome news that Venoco has decided to give up its interests in Platform Holly and Goleta Pier leases, effectively ending production there.

## Pipe spill suit filed

The jury trial of People v. Plains All American Pipeline began on Feb. 5 in Santa Barbara Superior Court, announced District Attorney Joyce E. Dudley.

The case stems from events that occurred around May 19, 2015, when a 24-inch subterranean oil pipeline (Line 901), ruptured. It allegedly caused the release of raw crude oil, which then surged down a culvert under Highway 101 and into the Pacific Ocean near Refugio State Beach.

The People earlier dismissed the charge against Plains' employee, James Colby Buchanan, for failing to follow a material provision of Plains' Spill Response Plan. That charge remains one of the crimes alleged against Plains, and Buchanan must appear as a witness.



Our Los Padres Chapter leader, now in his third year, is Jim Hines, shown about to lobby at the Capitol. Below are the leaders of each of the chapter's four groups, representing (clockwise) Santa Barbara, Ventura, Conejo and Arguello. (Photos contributed)



**Katie Davis**



**Nina Danza**



**Rebecca August**



**Hugh Warren**

## 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](mailto: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](http://www.SBSierraClub.org)  
[www.facebook.com/sbsierraclub](http://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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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](mailto: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](http://www.meetup.com/SierraClubVentura)

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

[sierraclubventura@gmail.com](mailto:sierraclubventura@gmail.com)

### CONEJO GROUP

~ Get all information on this eastern Ventura County Group from Hugh Warren, 341-6295 [mail@hkwarren.net](mailto:mail@hkwarren.net)

[www.sierraclub.org/los-padres/conejo](http://www.sierraclub.org/los-padres/conejo)

[www.sierraclub.org/los-padres/conejo/outings](http://www.sierraclub.org/los-padres/conejo/outings)



It's growing (and not just the plants) during our Fillmore Trail Build events (near fish hatchery entrance). Plenty of people are hearing about this fun place and you're next. Come help install a native plant trail mini-park and do something lasting for the environment. (Photo by Sergio Flores) For future news and events, go to: [www.meetup.com/SierraClubVentura](http://www.meetup.com/SierraClubVentura)



Carpinteria is rising above the flood and mud to protect and advance democracy as hundreds walk during the Women's March on Jan 20, poignantly passing above the debris from dredging the Carpinteria Salt Marsh slough after the Thomas Fire. © 2018 Photo by Ted Rhodes, [www.TedPages.com](http://www.TedPages.com)

# Thomas Fire facts

The Thomas Fire was truly a two-headed monster, breaking out in two places about four miles from each other near Santa Paula and the other in upper Ojai. Here's a <wince> glance:

Now considered the largest fire ever in recorded history in California, the aftermath is bringing threats of (more) flooding, unhealthy air quality (from debris removal), wild animals evacuating to urban areas and unhealthy water and beach quality. See recovery info below for updated details and help.

The Thomas Fire originated as two separate fires, with the first fire igniting on Dec. 4 at 6:26 p.m. PST, in Santa Paula Canyon, near Thomas Aquinas College (hence the name), while the second fire started about 30 minutes later, nearly four miles north in Upper Ojai, at the top of Koenigstein Road.

Santa Ana winds bringing gusts of up to 70mph made it a monster fire that initially and intermittently prevented fighting the fire via aircraft. Thousands of firefighters from all over the west came to fight it.

Full containment wasn't until Jan. 12, 2018, over 281,893 acres, mostly in the Los Padres National Forest, destroying habitat, trails and wild animals.

Lives lost, 2 (one firefighter, one person evacuating); structures destroyed, 1063; damaged 280. Subsequent mudslides on Jan. 9-10 in the Montecito area killed at least 20 people and destroyed

at least 115 homes. About seven people remain in Cottage Hospital.

Hwy 101 was closed for nearly two weeks from Jan. 9 to Jan 21, along with Hwy 192, which has not opened as of press time. Hwy 101 carries about 100,000 vehicles per day, notably from Ventura and Santa Barbara commuters who got around the shutdown via boat ferries and some via private planes. Others took a long route around to Hwy 5 in Los Angeles.

Cause of the fire is yet unknown and under investigation. However, there are already lawsuits, a class-action on behalf of homes lost and another against SoCal Edison, alleging a power line started the Ojai fire. Others are sure to come, one possibly aimed at oil operations in Ventura County where oil spilled burned for days.

Recovery Information at: [www.VenturaCountyRecovers.org](http://www.VenturaCountyRecovers.org) [www.countyofsb.org/fire-recovery.sbc](http://www.countyofsb.org/fire-recovery.sbc) <http://AwareAndPrepare.org>

## EAVESDROPS

**"You can't absorb their pain; you can't absorb their loss. But we're the only species on the planet that will line up with each other when things go wrong. And our level of empathy is what separates us from everything else."**

~Actor and musician Kevin Costner of Summerland who is headlining a major, sold-out event to help Thomas Fire victims in Ventura on Feb. 3.

# Our brave, new post fire world

By John Hankins

You're standing in awe among the bare, fire-ravaged grounds and denuded trees, and you spy a spider spinning its web. How the heck did that survive?

It wasn't there, it was carried there afterward by the



Dr. Sean Anderson, a broadly trained ecologist at CSUCI, mesmerized a packed audience of nearly 300. (Photo by John Hankins)

wind, said Dr. Sean Anderson, an ecology expert at the Cal-State Channel Islands University.

He conveyed even more thought-provoking knowledge to a packed house at the Poinsettia Pavilion on Jan. 18 entitled: "No Doubting Thomas: Impacts, Management and Our Brave, New Post-Fire World." It was sponsored by the Ventura Land Trust, whose own lands were stripped.

The Thomas Fire "was truly monumental in scale," he said, showing a satellite slide with the fire blob as big as L.A. and Santa Rosa Island blanketed in smoke. In January, heavy rains slammed onto the denuded hills and thrust tons of mud down canyons like a killer volcano.

"You cannot win against these forces," he emphasized.

The 'why' is that weather has changed (jet stream deflecting our rains), we were (are) in a prolonged drought that dried out plants and the winds were heavy (60mph +), but civilization has a role.

In the "old days," an 1874

photo showed you could ride a horse through Yosemite areas, now it's choked with brush because man started fire suppression techniques in the 1900s. Ironically, a part answer today is prescribed burns, chancy because of liability issues, pollution and risk of escaping control.

But we can also do more with capturing water to increase moisture overall, like terracing, using desal, bioswales, native plants, and fire-safe landscapes around homes. Too, avoid power poles and oil drilling in fire-prone areas.

That's us, the animals are on their own. Size matters; the big ones can run (though two bears we know of suffered burnt paws), smaller animals did poorly, burrowing animals may survive the fire but maybe not the smoke. On that score, see the Fire Kill mapper project graphic below.

"This is a work in progress," he concluded.

A video of his extensive talk will be posted soon, check [www.venturlandtrust.org](http://www.venturlandtrust.org)

CSU CHANNEL ISLANDS' FIRE KILL MAPPER

The Thomas Fire has had huge impacts across our region. Please help CSU Channel Islands understand what this wildfire has done to our local wildlife.

scan me

survey link: [bit.ly/firekill](http://bit.ly/firekill)

## help us document post-fire wildlife

Use this link to report any living, hurt, or dead animals you see over the coming weeks. You can simply report what & where you saw it or give us more info (like uploading a picture of the critter). Thanks for your help & sightings!

more info:  
[piratelab.org/fire/fire-kill/](http://piratelab.org/fire/fire-kill/)



A man (Oscar Gonzales, 19) was driving a friend home on Highway 1 near La Conchita Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> when he stopped to rescue rabbits running from the fire. When posted, the comments ranged from high praise to unkind comments and a ranger writing "Just let the animals be." The video (by RMG News) went viral, being viewed by over 5 million (last time we looked). Here it is: <https://tinyurl.com/RabbitSavedT-fire>

## Let's Bring Back Big Rock

The Thomas Fire burned 1,000 trees and many trails at the Big Rock Preserve.

Donate and learn more:  
[venturlandtrust.org](http://venturlandtrust.org)

VENTURA LAND TRUST Your Trees | Your Trails | Your Land Trust



The first phase of the hard-won Franklin Train opened in Oct. 2013, the first access (modern times) to the National Forest in the Carpinteria Area. The popular trail with stunning views was stunned itself during the Thomas Fire in December. Prior to that, it needed regular pruning, now it's stark raving bald. (© 2018 Photo by Ted Rhodes, [www.TedPages.com](http://www.TedPages.com))

## GREETINGS FRIENDS

# Bigfoot rumors in forest

*Editor's note: search for "Bigfoot sightings in Los Padres National Forest" and see!*

By Jim Hines

Recently I saw one of the most elusive creatures which may inhabit the Los Padres National Forest: Bigfoot.

The sighting was on the evening of Dec. 28 last year while watching a herd of deer grazing in the oak woodland immediately north of Lake Casitas (not burned by the recent Thomas Fire). The herd of eight deer abruptly stopped their grazing and looked up in alarm, the sun had just set and as darkness came in a large, upright walking furry figure appeared and was moving along the edge of the woodland toward the herd.

The deer moved to the other end of the woodland. The creature, which has been seen in the Casitas Watershed area many times over the years, did not appear to be in a hurry, but did disappear back into the shrub cove. The creature was about 8-9' tall with light brown fur and walked upright.

Some people tell me that these creatures are bears or bear relatives. I can tell you from the sightings I have seen over the years that they are NOT bears. Much larger than our native bears, different body frame and build, walk differently than a bear and have longer hair/fur on their bodies.

There have been sightings of Bigfoot in the wooded areas of Frasier Park/Lockwood Valley and early pioneers talked about seeing huge upright walking hairy creatures in the Upper Sespe Creek area of the Los Padres.

My ancestors, who settled in the western Ojai Valley area in the late 1800s, observed from time to time several groups of Bigfoots which would roam around the area, according to stories passed down by my family and others. I have had the chance to make about a dozen different sightings of what I would call Bigfoot-like beings. These fascinating creatures seem to stay away from civilization and prefer isolated areas such as vast wooded areas close to creeks (water source) in the Los Padres.

There have been many organized Bigfoot search parties which have explored the legend within the Los Padres with mixed results. Some groups claim to have seen Bigfoot, some have heard sounds of Bigfoot

or found footprints while others have come up with nothing.

Back in the 1970s there was even a highway sign on Highway 150 north of Lake Casitas which said, "Bigfoot Crossing".

There are so many undiscovered wild creatures on our planet and our own forest that Bigfoot may just be one of those creatures. So, keep a lookout the next time you are out hiking in the Los Padres National Forest.

See you on trail ... looking for Bigfoot.

## WBC gives

The Wilderness Basics Course board has split \$5,000 accrued over time to each group in the Los Padres Chapter for use in the outings program, wildlife protection, trail access, clean energy and our legal fund.

It also gave money to four Search & Rescue teams located in both Santa Barbara and Ventura counties, and another portion to the Los Padres Forest Association for trails.

"I'm grateful we're in a position to help," said WBC Chair Teresa Norris, thanks to the popularity and regard for the WBC education.



Here's the Wilderness Basics Course crew for the 2018 season, the behind-the-scenes planners, experts, trail critics and volunteers, all who put in hundreds of hours to bring you the best dang outdoor course in the region. (Front Row from left) Annette Preciado, Jim Duliakas, Marc Roadkill Hertz, Teresa Norris, Tim Grant, Anna Chung, (Second row from l) Cara Peden, Heather Nicksay, Suzanne Tanaka, Murray Ruben, Alison Dernbach (Third row from l) Jane Montague, Arturo Hernandez, Laurie Crane, Pete Chavez, Alisse Fisher, Jim Hines, Natalie Segovia, Jim Danza.

Not shown are: Stephen Bryne, Chrissy Magee, Condor John Hankins, Gina Cole, Heather D'Anna, Irene Rauschenberger, John Johnson, Kathrine Heinzman, Kim Hocking, Kristi KirkPatrick, Lora Clarke, Michael Kuredjian, Michaela Boschert, Pete Scifres, Philip Clarke, Richell Bequilla Zastrow, Sean Cole, and Tom Somers. (Photo by Condor John) [www.lospadresWBC.org](http://www.lospadresWBC.org)

## EVENTS

Feb 8: **Sustainable Future** for our oceans by Holly Lohuis, marine biologist and Jean-Michel Cousteau's long-time dive partner. Her multimedia presentation will feature the beauty and crises facing our water planet. At 7pm Thursday, Feb. 8, SB Maritime Museum, 113 Harbor Way. Details and sign-up at [www.sbmm.org](http://www.sbmm.org)

Feb 8: **San Nicolas Island** free program about its flora, fauna and history by the Navy's natural resources manager, William Hoyer; 7pm Solvang Library sponsored by SYV Natural History Society. Details at: [www.SYVnature.org](http://www.SYVnature.org)

Feb 13: **Offshore oil threat** on how to protect our coast from Trump Administration to greatly expand leasing in federal waters. Co-sponsored by SB Sierra Club, EDC and GOO! 6pm Tuesday, Feb 13 at the SB Public Library 40 E. Anapamu St. (See story pg 2)

Feb 13: **Audubon Activism**, from "Victorian Hats to Modern Beaches" 7:30pm at Poinsettia Pavilion, 4352 Foothill Rd. Ventura Audubon's Cynthia Hartley gives an overview of Audubon's origins and learn about the group's local conservation work.

Feb 28: **Trails and Tales** of the Santa Barbara Backcountry, sponsored by SB Audubon 7pm at SB Museum of Natural History, 2559 Puesta del Sol. It features James Wapotich, outdoor writer and author of the *News-Press* Trail Quest column.

Feb 28: **Banff Mountain Film Festival** at the Arlington Theater in Santa Barbara at 7:30pm. Tix available at [www.ArtsAndLectures.ucsb.edu](http://www.ArtsAndLectures.ucsb.edu)

March 8: **Deep-Sea Exploration** program that includes SB Channel and hydrothermal vent fields by Edward

Cassano, 7pm Thursday, March 8 SB Maritime Museum, 113 Harbor Way. Details and sign-up at [www.sbmm.org](http://www.sbmm.org)

March 17: **PLAN event** includes an 8am hike, 10:30am speakers on local wildlife corridors and our own Los Padres Chair Jim Hines at 12:30pm reporting on his trips to Washington DC advocating for public lands. Events take place in Canoga Park, please RSVP to Carla (818) 307-6418 or [www.PlanOpenSpace@gmail.com](mailto:www.PlanOpenSpace@gmail.com)

March 17: **Ventura River Estuary** restoration at 9am by Ventura Land Trust to remove debris from winter rains after Thomas Fire, along with pulling out non-native plants. Meet in parking lot next to Main St. bridge & Peking Streets along the bike path. More info under Events tab: [www.VenturaLandTrust.org](http://www.VenturaLandTrust.org)

March 23-25: **Nature Track Film Festival**, a first for the Santa Ynez Valley about a 3-day event with some outdoor screenings intended to "ignite passion for nature through film." For details go to: [www.NatureTrackFilmFestival.org](http://www.NatureTrackFilmFestival.org)

## Spot critters

Outdoor writer Perry Van Houten has a good article in the Ojai Valley Visitors' Guide called

"Deerly Beloved, a look at some of the amazing critters that call the Ojai Valley home."

Those same critters are, of course, all over the land in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties.

What's the trick to spotting wild animals in nature? he asks naturalist Bruce Vincent.

"Luck. No animal wants to be seen."

But he also mentions "observational skills, being in tune with what's around you."

It's a good read with some great photos. Here's the link (go to page 18):

<https://tinyurl.com/SpotWildAnimals>

## Check out solar deal

In many cases, homeowners with low electricity bills have an uphill battle in making solar affordable as it is less cost effective for small systems.

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.

Attend a "Going Solar" workshop on Saturday, Feb. 24 at 12:45pm at the City/County Library, 995 Palm St., San Luis Obispo. More details and registration are at: [www.SunWork.org/events](http://www.SunWork.org/events)

To learn more about SunWork, or if interested in learning how to install rooftop solar as a volunteer, go to: [www.SunWork.org](http://www.SunWork.org)

Check out the SunWork ad next to this story.

**Want SOLAR in North SB Co? But Electric Bills Too Low?**



**Call NONPROFIT SunWork!**

If bills < \$100/mo, we offer solar for ~1/3 less.

Expert staff designs & installs with trained volunteers.

[sunwork.org](http://sunwork.org)

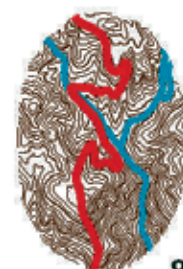
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## Trail Prints

... No two trails are the same

**Attractive, Accurate and Easy to Read Hiking Trail Maps of the Front Country and the National Forest**

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# 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 online 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)

**February 5**  
**CHUMASH TRAIL, SIMI VALLEY** is a 5.3 mile out and back trail rated as moderate. Great vistas of the city below and sandstone formations. No shade ever. Be forewarned that the trail is a sustained uphill trek with an elevation gain of 1,102 feet. There are several spectacular vistas where you can look out over the city of Simi Valley and on a clear day you can even see the Channel Islands. Dogs, horses and mountain bikers are also able to use this trail. We will meet at 8:30am at Ventura carpool or at the trailhead at around 9:15am. Trail head from Highway 118/Simi Valley Freeway in Simi Valley, exit on Yosemite Avenue. Drive 0.4 miles north to Flanagan Drive and turn right. Continue 0.8 miles

to the trailhead at the end of the road. LORA & PHILIP CLARKE 218-2103 or 218-2105. (VEN)

**February 7**  
**WILDERNESS BASICS COURSE:** Wednesday nights, Feb. 7 through Mar. 28, 7-9:30 p.m. plus weekend outings. See more info on the website: <http://lospadreswbc.org> or contact us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/lospadreswbc](http://www.facebook.com/lospadreswbc) or email: [lospadreswbc@gmail.com](mailto:lospadreswbc@gmail.com). TERESA 524-7170 (VEN)

**February 7**  
**HAWK CANYON** to Western Plateau Loop: Moderate 5 mrt hike with 600' elev. gain. Bring water, food and wear lug-soled shoes. Meet at trailhead at 8:30am. From Hwy 101 exit north on Rancho Conejo Blvd. and continue approximately 2 miles to City Recycling Center on Conejo Center Drive. Parking and trailhead are on the right. MELANIE ASHEN 497-6773. (CJ)

**February 8**  
**CENTURY LAKE and MASH SITE - MALIBU CREEK STATE PARK:** Easy 5.3 mrt hike with 500' elev. gain. Bring water, food and wear lug-soled shoes. Take 101 Freeway to Kanan, south on Kanan to a left turn at Cornell. Meet 8am at the Ronald Reagan Ranch Parking Lot at trailhead 300' past intersection with Cornell Road and Mulholland Highway on left. FONTAYNE HOLMES 300-4590. (CJ)

**February 9**  
**OLD CABIN SITE - POINT MUGU STATE PARK:** Moderate 7 mrt hike with 1,000' elev. gain. Visit waterfall. Bring water, food and wear study hiking boots. 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)

**February 10**  
**ZUMA CANYON:** Easy-moderate 4 mrt hike with 200' elev. gain. Loop hike in beautiful Zuma Canyon. Optional return via Canyon and Ocean View trails adds 2.5 miles and 600' elev. gain. Bring water, food and wear water repellent lug-soled shoes for possible wet stream bed crossings. Carpools leave parking lot near Freddy's just before the Shell Station on Hampshire Road in Thousand Oaks at 8:00am Alternatively meet at 8:30am at trailhead parking at the end of Bonsall Drive. Directions: Kanan

### EAVESDROPS

"Thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wildness is a necessity; and that mountain parks and reservations are useful not only as fountains of timber and irrigating rivers, but as fountains of life."

~John Muir 1901

Road to PCH; right on PCH; right on Bonsall to parking lot (last 100 yards is unpaved). SUSAN VIVELL 495-1436. (CJ)

**February 11**  
**JESUSITA TRAIL TO INSPIRATION POINT:** Walk through woods and meadows to a scenic view point. Moderate-strenuous 7 mrt. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. TONY 455-4212 (SB)

**February 12**  
**OJAI BIKE TRAIL** from the Oak View community center to Villanova road. This walk lets us explore yet another section of the Ventura River bike trail that will give us some unique views of the Ventura River Valley and beyond. We will walk up the trail for about 2.5 to 3 miles before turning around. On the way back, some of us may stop at Full of Beans for a coffee before walking back down to our cars. We will be meeting at the Ventura carpool at 8:30am or meet us at the Oak View Community Center (18 Valley Rd, Oak View, CA 93022) at 9am. LORA & PHILIP CLARKE 218-2103 or 218-2105. (VEN)

**February 15**  
**HIDDEN MEADOWS TRAIL:** Moderate 4.4 mrt with 400' elev. gain. Wonderful views on a clear day of Santa Monica Mts., 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 cul-de-sac off Falling Star Avenue. Turn onto Falling Star from Kanan in Oak Park. FONTAYNE HOLMES 300-4590. (CJ)

**February 16**  
**BACKBONE TRAIL HIKE #1:** Join us as we begin hiking sections of the newly completed 67-mile Backbone Trail, which winds through the

Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. The first section (moderate) starts at the Ray Miller trailhead, where we ascend to the fire road with wonderful ocean, island and canyon views. After more climbing, a winding trail descends to Sycamore Canyon, where we walk among oak, sycamore and walnut trees. 9.6 miles with an elevation gain/loss of 1,100 ft. Bring layers, water, lunch, sun protection, and the other 10 essentials. Meet at 8am at Starbucks at 1921 N. Rose Avenue, Oxnard or at the Sycamore Canyon Campground day use parking area at 8:30am to leave cars for short shuttle back to La Jolla Canyon. Rain cancels. For more info, contact TERESA at 746-6030 or SUZANNE at [suzanne@hiplaces.org](mailto:suzanne@hiplaces.org). (VEN)

**February 16**  
**SOLSTICE CANYON:** Moderate 8 mrt hike to beautiful Tropical Terrace and beyond, with 1900' elev. gain and ocean view. Bring lots of water, food and wear lug-soled shoes. Meet at 8:30am at trailhead. Kanan Road, left on PCH, turn left at 76 Station. LILLIAN TREVISAN 498-1623. (CJ)

**February 18**  
**SUNBIRD MINE:** 12 mrt with 1000 ft elevation gain/loss, a very long and strenuous hike that begins at the top of the Cold Spring Trail on East Camino Cielo Road. From the trailhead we will descend about 1000' in 2 miles and follow Gibraltar Trail toward the reservoir and the Santa Ynez River for about 4 miles, ending at the Sunbird Mine, an abandoned quicksilver mine (active 1860 - 1992). Bring 3 liters of water, lunch and sun protection. Because there is a significant increase in elevation gain at the end of the hike you must be in excellent physical condition to join this hike. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. Rain cancels. KRISTI email: [sbhikergirl@cox.net](mailto:sbhikergirl@cox.net)

**February 19**  
**MISHE MOKWA TRAIL** to Sandstone Peak - this moderate 5.8-mile loop trail with 1,300 feet of gain is located near Malibu featuring sandstone peaks and native wild flowers. Dogs are also able to use this trail but must be kept on leash at all times. We will meet at the Ventura carpool parking lot at 8:30am or meet us at 9am at the trailhead (12896 Yerba Buena Rd, Malibu, CA 90265). LORA & PHILIP CLARKE 218-2103 or 218-2105. (VEN)

**February 22**  
**RAY MILLER TRAIL - Point Mugu State Park:** Moderate 5.6 mrt hike with 700' elev. gain. Fabulous ocean views, good switchbacks, up the first half of the hike, with a downhill return. Bring water, food and wear lug-soled shoes. Meet at 7:30am in parking lot near Freddy's just before the Shell Station on Hampshire Road in Thousand Oaks to carpool, or 8am at the La Jolla Canyon parking lot off PCH (CA State Park lot with parking fee) next to the trailhead. FONTAYNE HOLMES 300-4590. (CJ)

**February 24**  
**GOLETA BEACH/MORE MESA II:** Hike along the beach at low tide and then up onto More Mesa, looping around along the bike path. Moderate 6 miles round trip. Bring water and a snack. Meet behind B of A on upper State Street at Hope Ave. at 9am. DIANE 455-6818 (SB)

**February 26**  
**CAMARILLO CALLEGUAS CREEK PATH** - This is a 4 to 5 mile walk on paved bike trail along the Calleguas Creek. The path winds along the east side of Camarillo and serves as a connector between the city's north and south sides, providing safe passage under the 101 Freeway. Along the way, the trail passes the Village at the Park Sports Complex, Adolfo Camarillo High School, and Pitts Ranch Park. We will meet at the Ventura carpool parking lot at 8:30am or meet us at 9am at the start of the walk at Pleasant Valley Fields (150 Westpark Ct, Camarillo, CA 93010) LORA & PHILIP CLARKE 218-2103 or 218-2105. (VEN)

**February 28**  
**BOWFIELD AND SADDLE PASS TRAILS:** Moderate 5½ mrt hike with 900' elev. gain. Bowfield Trail to Saddle Pass Trail to southern end and back, with several steep climbs



This Wandering Tattler is the perfect model for the Great Backyard Bird Count from Feb.16-19. Simply tally numbers and kinds of birds you see on one or more days of the count. Do it from anywhere in the world. Detail and help is at: <http://ebird.org> © Photo [www.DeniseDewirephotography.com](http://www.DeniseDewirephotography.com)

and 360° views along the way. Bring water, food and wear lug-soled shoes. Meet at 8:30am. From Lindero Canyon Road, drive west on Bowfield Street almost ½ mile to the trailhead on your right. Park on street. MELANIE ASHEN 497-6773. (CJ)

**March 2**  
**BACKBONE TRAIL HIKE #2:** Join us as we continue hiking sections of the newly completed 67 mile Backbone Trail, which winds through the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. The second section (strenuous) starts at the Sycamore Canyon Campground day use parking area, where we walk up Sycamore Canyon, among oak, sycamore and walnut trees to Danielson Ranch, and then ascend Sandstone Peak via the Blue Canyon and Chamberlain trails, before ending at the Mishe Mokwa trailhead. Sandstone Peak is the highest point in the national park, and has incredible views in every direction. 12.8 miles with an elevation gain of 3,111 ft. Bring layers, water, lunch, sun protection, and the other 10 essentials. Meet at 7:30am at Starbucks at 1921 N. Rose Avenue, Oxnard, CA 93036 or at the Mishe Mokwa trailhead parking area at 8:15am to leave cars for shuttle back to Sycamore Canyon. Rain cancels. For more info, contact TERESA at 746-6030 or SUZANNE at [suzanne@hiplaces.org](mailto:suzanne@hiplaces.org). (VEN)

*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://LosPadresSierraClub.org>  
[www.SBSierraClub.org](http://www.SBSierraClub.org)  
[www.SantaBarbaraTrailGuide.com](http://www.SantaBarbaraTrailGuide.com)  
[www.SantaBarbaraHikes.com](http://www.SantaBarbaraHikes.com)  
[www.LPForest.org](http://www.LPForest.org)  
[www.VenturaCountyTrails.org](http://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](http://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](http://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

March 3  
**OLD CABIN SITE - POINT MUGU STATE PARK:** Moderate 6 mrt hike with 700' elev. gain. Bring water, food and wear lug-soled shoes. Meet at Potrero Road Trailhead at intersection of Wendy Drive in Newbury Park at 8:30am. JOANNE SULKOSKE 492-3061. (CJ)

March 4  
**FILLMORE NATIVE PLANT TRAIL BUILD.** 8:30am-12pm. Come help install a native plant trail mini-park near the entry to the fish hatchery area. The mini-park will become a public community resource with interpretive markers and a kiosk. Tasks on this date will be given under the direction of a UCSB project manager, such as planting, weeding, installing trail area. Pls wear long pants and closed shoes that can get dirty! Bring water and snack and shovel (if possible) with your name tagged. 8:30 - Optional hatchery walk and wildlife peek in the Santa Clara River. 9am- 12pm trail build. All ages welcome, 14 and under accompanied by adult. Directions: Route 126 East or West to Fish Hatchery Road. RSVP Please! Contact Nina: [sierraclubventura@gmail.com](mailto:sierraclubventura@gmail.com) (VEN)

March 5  
**SISAR CANYON, Upper Ojai -** This is a beautiful canyon in Upper Ojai that can get you into the Los Padres backcountry, but today we are going to do a short hike up the fire road to one of the many overlooks of Ojai Valley. We will park on the 150 Highway near the Summit School, then walk up the paved road (first mile) to the turnoff for Sisar Canyon. Then we will continue about two more miles to where the fire road almost twists back on itself. Here is the view! We will meet at the Ventura carpool at 8:30am or you can meet us on HWY 150/Sisar Cyn Rd intersection near Summit School 9-9:15am. At the end of the hike we will drive HWY 150 into Santa Paula for Coffee and treats at Rabalais' Bistro. LORA & PHILIP CLARKE 218-2103 or 218-2105. (VEN)

March 10  
**HELL'S HALF ACRE:** Hike from Cachuma Saddle up a dirt road to interesting rock formations. About ten miles round trip. 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 455-6818 (SB)

March 12  
**CITY WALK OF FILLMORE -** Today is your chance to explore some of the city of Fillmore and its environs. We will be walking much of the perimeter on sidewalks and bike paths. Please wear comfortable shoes and bring some water. This will be somewhere close to a 5.5-6 mile walk. We will be carpooling from the Ventura carpool at 8:30am or meet us in the parking lot near the only Starbucks in Fillmore, near the corner of A street and Hwy 126/Ventura Blvd, where we will start and end the walk. (650 W Ventura St Fillmore 93015) LORA & PHILIP CLARKE 218-2103 or 218-2105. (VEN)

March 16  
**NICHOLAS FLAT FROM LEO CARRILLO** This is an 8.5 mile out and back hike with an elevation gain of 2,169 feet. We will be hiking from Leo Carrillo State Park up the Nicholas Flat Trail into the Nicholas Flat Nature Preserve. This is a bit of a challenge getting up to the Preserve, but a hike with plenty to see. We actually do a loop around the preserve once we are up on the "flats" area, where we may also find a small pond if rain has been recent. On the way back down to Leo Carrillo you get great views of the

ocean and on a really clear day you may see some of the Channel Islands. We will leave from the Ventura carpool at 8:30am or you can meet us at 9:00 am at Leo Carrillo State Park (fee required) on PCH. Bring plenty of water, sunscreen, good hiking boots/shoes, and some snack or lunch. RAIN or HEAT ABOVE 85 CANCELS. PHILIP 218-2103 (VEN)

March 17  
**ROCKY PINE RIDGE - SHORT ROUTE:** From Camino Cielo, hike into this wonderful pine tree/rock region and skirt along the ridge line. Moderate hike with some rock hopping, 4-5 mrt. Bring water and lunch. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. ROBERT 685-1283 (SB)

March 18  
**ARROYO HONDO:** We'll take the scenic West Ridge trail to get good views of the canyon and the coastline. A moderate 3 mrt, 600' gain. After a lunch break outside the historic Adobe, a leisurely stroll around the canyon floor trails will complete our day. Meet behind the Bank of America on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. If you are coming from north of Santa Barbara, you can meet us at the trailhead. Call or email for instructions. Rain cancels. GERRY 964-5411, [gching@cox.net](mailto:gching@cox.net) (SB)

**SATWIWA NATURAL AREA, SANTA MONICA MTS. NATIONAL RECREATION AREA & POINT MUGU STATE PARK:** 6.1-mile hike. Fossil Trail: Start in the Parking Lot, climb toward Boney Mtn. then to Fossil Trail and down to road. Strenuous hike and terrain, easy pace. Bring 10 essentials plus food and water and hiking shoes. Meet in the parking lot by the bathroom off Lynn Road at Via Goleta, Newbury Park at 10am. KIM HOCKING 983-2147. (VEN)

March 19  
**LOS PADRES OPEN SPACE-LOS ROBLES TRAIL LOOP.** The Los Padres - Los Robles Loop Trail is a 3.5 mile loop trail located near Westlake Village. When in season, many native wild flowers adorn the sides of the trail. Dogs are also able to use this trail but must be kept on leash at all times. We will be meeting at the Ventura carpool at 8:30am or at the trailhead at 9am (326 S Moorpark Rd, Thousand Oaks, CA 91361) LORA & PHILIP CLARKE 218-2103 or 218-2105. (VEN)

March 24  
**FREMONT TRAIL:** Park on East Camino Cielo and walk North along ridge used by Fremont to cross the ridge into Santa Barbara. Superb views of valley. Bring lunch and water. Easy-Moderate, 4 mrt. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. TONY 682-8290 (SB)

March 26  
**SANTA BARBARA BOTANICAL GARDENS -** We catch the 7:55am VISTA bus from the Government Center in Ventura to ride to Santa Barbara where we get off at City Hall at 9:08am. Then we walk 3 miles (about an hour) through town to the Santa Barbara Botanical Gardens (1212 Mission Canyon Rd, Santa Barbara 93105). We plan to wander through the main gardens before crossing the street to the extension, where we will eat our lunches that we bring with us. This is an all-day event so we will be getting back to Ventura in the afternoon around 3:38pm. Depending on where you live will depend on which Vista bus stop you choose to take, but we will all meet at the Santa Barbara city hall as close to 9am as possible. Wear comfortable walking shoes, bring a drink and or water and a sack lunch. Over the period of the day we will be walking up to 8 miles, but the walking will be broken up over the day, not all at one time. Please bring layers in case it gets cold/

## FIRE & RAIN

# Dispatches from the field

By John Hankins

*Editor's note: How's the hiking and beach quality in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties after the Thomas Fire and mudslides in Montecito et al? Crippled in so many places, judging from these reports from the field. Front country and forest trails and some roads are closed for repairs. Below are comments from Sierra Club hike leaders and others.*

*Outings listed on pages 6&7 are open; hikes will be added when fire area trails are re-opened. Always check with pertinent ranger stations (see list on page 6) and for Sierra Club changes check the Chapter's website:*

<https://lospadres2.sierraclub.org>

**Los Padres National Forest:** Officials have revised the areas closed to the public due to the Thomas Fire, opening access to the Mt. Pinos Ranger District and prohibiting access to only those areas within the Thomas Fire perimeter on the Ojai and Santa Barbara Ranger Districts .... See map this page. (NOTE: Ironically, on Jan. 19, the forest's stringent fire restrictions (campfires etc.) were reduced from the highest to lowest level ... not much left to burn!)

**Stephen Bryne:** "Much of the Los Padres National Forest will remain closed for the foreseeable future. I spoke with Heidi Anderson who is on the Burn Area Emergency Response (BAER) team. Within the burn area, the BAER team is planning to recommend that the trails be closed for the winter for safety reasons." (Chapter Outings Chair)

**Anthony Biegen:** "Due to the fire we are going to have a much-reduced hike schedule. We will be adding more hikes to the web sites as time goes on." (SB hike leader)

**EAVESDROPS**  
 "We make information about the United States Congress accessible, understandable, and actionable for public use (free)."

~ Joshua Tauberer, founder in a website in 2004 that started out as a hobby and has now grown to be a significant way to keep track of issues. Check it out at: [www.GovTrack.us](http://www.GovTrack.us)

hot. The bus ride is \$1.50 each way for seniors/\$3 for others, bring exact change. Admission to the Gardens is \$8 for seniors with RSVP by previous Monday, or \$12 for others. LORA & PHILIP CLARKE 218-2103 or 218-2105. (VEN)

March 31  
**SB RIVIERA URBAN HIKE:** Easy to moderately strenuous hike about 5 miles through a beautiful residential neighborhood in Santa Barbara. We will start at the Mission and head up toward APS and Franceschi Park, then across Mission Ridge and back to the Mission. Wear comfortable hiking/running shoes, bring 2 liters of water and a snack. Meet at the Rose Garden by the SB Mission on Plaza Rubio at 9am. Rain cancels. KRISTI email: [sbhikergirl@cox.net](mailto:sbhikergirl@cox.net) (SB)



Hwy 33 is closed above Wheeler Gorge due to road damage from the January floods (Photo by CalTrans)

**Gerry Ching:** "Santa Barbara Group hikes in the present outings schedule are limited because many SB front country trails have been closed ... most of East (and West) Camino Cielo, the ridge road above Santa Barbara, is currently closed. There is also no road access to the back country ... most trails and ORV roads in the Lower Santa Ynez recreation area are closed. It is unlikely that they will be re-opened before Spring."

"Many of the forest lands overlooking the Gaviota Coast suffered similar damage due to the Whittier Fire and many of these lands remain closed." (hike leader)

**Hugh Warren:** "I had a hike scheduled Dec. 16 for Potrero John. By Thursday it was clear that the Thomas fire was only getting worse up there. I canceled the hike and did a substitute. A few of us from the Conejo Group had a pleasant hike to The Grotto by Sandstone Peak. Surprisingly, there was flowing water down there." (East Ventura hike leader)

**Alejandro Andreatta:** "I will be requesting hikes outside the burn area for the next period. I'll try to go after the evacuation orders are lifted to see the damage." (hike leader)

**Robert Bernstein:** "My Jan. 7 hike to Gibraltar Rock was spared." (hike leader)

**Ray Ford:** "Pretty much every major canyon in the burn area has been carved out — they are not riparian corridors; they are truly canyons at this point." During a Jan. 18 talk at Faulkner Gallery, Ford described "now-barren watersheds and their dangerous drop-offs," and deepened creek beds. Conditions likely to change even more during this rainy season. (outdoor writer)

**Murray Ruben:** "All front range trails from Cold Springs Canyon east to the county line have been totally obliterated by the fire and then the mud flows. Above the canyon creeks, those same trails remain unusable due to ash and silting from the fire, dumping up to 2 feet onto the Cold Spring Ridge Trail and other similar trails." (hike leader)

**Big Rock Preserve:** (Ventura Land Trust) "Big Rock Preserve is currently closed to the public while we make much-needed repairs and implement our fire restoration plan." Donations happily accepted at: [www.VenturaLandTrust.org](http://www.VenturaLandTrust.org)

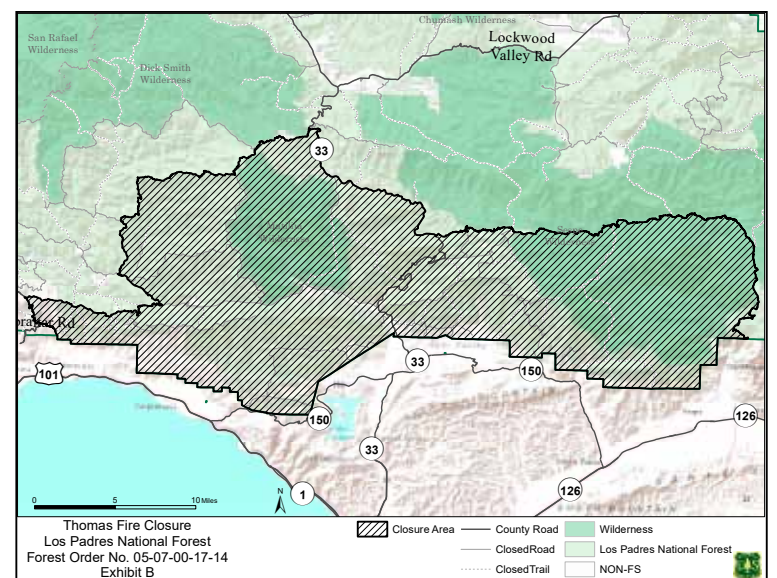
**Ventura Botanic Garden:** "Gardens and trails closed for repair. No trespassing allowed." Donate at: [www.venturabotanicalgardens.com](http://www.venturabotanicalgardens.com)

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**Surf, swim report:** Beach and water impacts from Montecito mudslide and Thomas fire are impacting both counties. Contact county websites for warnings and closures. Check weekly updates at: [www.sbck.org](http://www.sbck.org)

**In Santa Barbara:** Closed as of late January due to poor water quality are Arroyo Burro, Carpinteria, El Capitan State Beach, Goleta Beach, Summerland Beach, and Hammond Beach. County flood control workers have been dumping truckloads of mud collected from Montecito at Goleta Beach and Ash Avenue in Carpinteria.

**In Ventura:** Due to high bacterial counts, beach warnings are posted at the Rincon, Faria County Park, Oil Piers, Solimar





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## You are not alone on Channel Islands

Would you go solo into nature for weeks at a time?

One local author did just that, a week trip each to the various Channel Islands, and he told us about it at first Ventura Sierra Club evening programs Jan. 9.

No doubt it's a path to slowing down and mindful living and the author, Ken McAlpine, also made us laugh, think and want to be better humans but without abandoning modern life.

Ken looked at the audience full of expert hikers with a bashful start, admitting he is a mediocre 5 out of 10 as a camper. He was not truly alone because the National Park Ranger typically checked in with him at least once a day. But there was a load of empty hours which loomed as he was planning the trips.

He had dreamed up a routine he expected to use but in only a couple days that routine was broken, and in went the following epiphany:

"I just suffered a depressing dinner and the oncoming night did not look much better. The

wind had kept pushing the tuna off my fork and was continuing to gather steam. Already my tent was performing pushups. But an hour before sunset I made my way to Inspiration Point through a small field of coreopsis.

"I was feeling sorry for myself and at first glance, the half dead coreopsis didn't do much to lift my spirits. But I found if I hunched low the small plants afforded some wind break, so I stopped and stood motionless like some paralyzed monk.

"A strange thing happened. There was nothing else to do but observe the coreopsis carefully."

In that minute Ken realized the life of the plants were perfectly suited with its environment and that coreopsis has trunk and foliage texture that is dependent on sea air to collect water to live. Trying to escape the wind, with low quality equipment, this less competent outdoorsman understood the journey -- and perhaps not the destination -- held more meaning in life.

The standing room only



Unique San Nicolas Island foxes are part of a program by Navy Resources Manager William Hoyer about island's history, plants, animal, and biosecurity programs, 7pm Feb. 8 at Solvang Library (Note: Island is not open to public). © Photo by Chuck Graham, and details at:

[www.SYVnature.org](http://www.SYVnature.org)

crowd that evening came away willing to try to be mindful of some moments along their way and let themselves be alone but not lonely. You can get a taste of his talk at:

<https://tinyurl.com/IslandsApart>

His book, *Islands Apart*, is available on the web or through his own site:

[www.kenmc Alpine.com](http://www.kenmc Alpine.com)

Ventura Sierra Club programs will happen in March, May, July, September and November. Watch our Meetup for dates and details.

### Island volunteers

Channel Islands Restoration wants volunteers for overnight service trips to San Nicolas Island.

You will assist with plant installation and restoration site maintenance around the island. Tasks may include installing new plants, weeding, installing irrigation, or erosion control at any of the restoration sites.

There are eight trips available from March 22 through May 21, all leaving on Thursday mornings and returning Monday afternoons. Interested? Learn more at

<https://cirweb.org>

### Passion for nature films

The Nature Track Film Festival is having its inaugural event in Los Olivos March 23-25, featuring films from around the world designed to "ignite passion for nature through film."

Its opening reception will be at the historic and newly reopened Mattei's Tavern on Friday, and Saturday a free outdoor screening of family friendly films will be at the Corner House Café. Docent led hikes in the Santa Ynez Valley will also be a part of this special event.

Nature Track, founded in 2011, is a non-profit that provides cost-free outdoor field trips for Santa Barbara County school-aged children, utilizing local trails and beaches, along with school coordinated programs and instruction.

Its goal is to "instill students with leadership skills, attitudes and habits for lifelong learning, inspiring them to be respectful stewards of the natural world."

For details and tickets to this first-ever event, go to:

[www.NatureTrackFilmFestival.org](http://www.NatureTrackFilmFestival.org)



These are the giant coreopsis Ken writes about during his 'lonely' San Miguel Island vigil, and at his jam-packed program by the Ventura Sierra Club. Walking through the head-high plants is like being in a different world. (Photo by Condor John Hankins) Get on our meetup to find future fascinating programs: [www.meetup.com/sierraclubventura](http://www.meetup.com/sierraclubventura)