



**SIERRA
CLUB**

SAN GORGONIO

Palm and Pine

A publication of the San Gorgonio Chapter of the Sierra Club
Serving Riverside and San Bernardino Counties

Protect America's Environment For our Families . . . For our Future

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Pathways to 30x30 in California

We've been talking about 30x30 in nearly every issue of the Palm and Pine, and we have some exciting news about our ongoing efforts. Following is an update from our collaborative work on the 30x30 campaign here in California. Our national staff, Sierra Club California, our 30x30 Task Force of volunteer leaders from chapters all over the state, and activists here in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties are working hard to ensure that the first 30x30 plan in the nation is a true model for addressing the biodiversity and climate crises, and advancing restorative justice and equity in conservation models. (In case you've forgotten, 30x30 is the goal of conserving 30 percent of our lands and coastal waters by 2030.)

The California 30x30 Campaign showed up in full force for the critical comment period on the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) "draft 30x30 Pathways document", which will help finalize the shape of California's plan to achieve our 30x30 goals. The dedicated work of our Sierra Club California 30x30 Task Force made the following impact:

- We drove in over 1,500 comments from our California members and supporters to the CNRA – this includes over 100 comments generated directly from a social media push led by many of our chapters!
- We developed a detailed comment letter (see here for regional appendix) with input sourced widely via a collaborative process with our chapters and volunteer leaders around the state.
- We turned out several dozen people to CNRA's February 1st public meeting who delivered excellent, highly localized, substantive comments on the draft Pathways report.
- Our 30x30 Task Force leaders and their networks worked to engage local community groups and elected officials in their regions to provide comment letters to CNRA.
- Lastly, we helped shape and support a statewide coalition letter while our 30x30 Task Force leaders participated in many regional coalitions to develop and support more localized comment letters alongside local partners and community members.

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Outing Highlight: Timber Mountain Hike, Cucamonga Wilderness

Date: Weds., April 27th

Rating: Strenuous.

Distance: 9 Miles

Hike Leader: John St. Clair, Los Serranos Group

Contact: john@stclairs.us or 909-983-8501

Hike Registration: [Register online](#)



About the Hike

Get ready for a challenging hike into the Cucamonga Wilderness to the top of Timber Mountain (elevation 8,303 ft.), nine miles round trip with 3300 ft. elevation gain. The trail begins in Ice House Canyon and follows a creek for the first 1.5 miles under a canopy of oak, spruce, fir, and pine. From Ice House Saddle (elevation 7580 ft.), expect an exhilarating climb to the peak, where you'll enjoy scenic views of the surrounding wilderness. Due to the strenuous nature and high elevation, the hike leader requires high altitude conditioning prior to the hike. This hike qualifies for the Cucamonga Wilderness Patch program.

The Cucamonga Wilderness Patch is awarded to those who summit all seven of the Cucamonga Wilderness peaks. The program was started in 2019 to encourage hiking with Los Serranos Group outings leaders. To earn a patch, any hiker (no need to be a Sierra Club member) must hike to the top of the seven peaks in the Cucamonga Wilderness on a Sierra Club hike led by a Los Serranos outings leader. All seven of the hikes are considered strenuous and require high altitude conditioning prior to the hike. Contact John St. Clair (john@stclairs.us) by email for ideas on how to condition for these hikes.

There's no time limit to complete the hikes and it is possible to earn a second patch by completing the hikes a second time. If you were well on your way to earning a patch when COVID-19 restrictions put the hiking program on pause, you can finish this year and earn your patch by reaching your remaining summits.

The seven peaks are, from lowest to highest: Timber Mountain (8,303 ft.), Big Horn Peak (8,441 ft.), Thunder Mountain (8,587 ft.), Etiwanda Peak (8,662 ft.), Ontario Peak (8,696 ft.), Cucamonga Peak (8,862 ft.), and Telegraph Peak (8,989 ft.).

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About the Leader

John started camping and hiking with his children in the late 1980s and continued as his children grew into adults. After retiring from his teaching position in 2010, he began hiking with the Sierra Club and has served as a certified Sierra Club hike leader since 2011. He says his time on the trail has led to new friendships: “My favorite part of being a hiking leader is that I have met many wonderful people who love hiking in the mountains like I do and some of those people have become wonderful friends.”

Contact John St. Clair prior to the Timber Mountain Hike for carpooling and meeting place details. Bring sturdy boots, 2+ liters of water, snacks, sunscreen, and layer clothing appropriate for the weather. An Adventure Pass required for trailhead parking.
Rain cancels.

Looking for more adventures? Sierra Club’s hikes range from easy to strenuous, and are held throughout the Inland Empire and beyond. Find more upcoming Sierra Club hikes on the Outings and Events page of San Gorgonio Chapter website.

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What’s next: CNRA has told us that they will be working to finalize the Pathways document this spring, and has acknowledged that a lot of specifics are necessary to guide implementation before it is finalized. While we wait to learn more details of how we can next engage in this process, our 30x30 Task Force is planning our goals and priorities for the year ahead, which in addition to further shaping the statewide process, will focus on supporting existing and/or building local campaigns within each chapter that they have identified as key priorities for 30x30 in their regions.

We need your ideas! Volunteers in our chapter are considering what areas should be added to protected lands in our counties. Is there a place special to you that deserves protection? Are there parks with open space that could be added, or undeveloped agricultural land that you want saved? Let us know here on this interest form

Finally, we want to thank all who have stepped up to lead during this major push, and to our amazing activists here in San Gorgonio Chapter who are building this tremendous effort to create a truly grassroots, distributed 30x30 campaign in California that will see us through this process (and much more!) for years to come. We are just getting started so STAY TUNED!

From the CA 30x30 Leadership Team,

Jenny Binstock, Brandon Dawson, and California 30x30 Task Force

Co-Leads Vicky Hoover and Anne Henny, and San Gorgonio Task Force rep Mary Ann Ruiz

March Trail Talk

Trail Talk: Photographer Q.T.

Luong On His New Book

Our National Monuments

March 16, 2022 | 7:00 PM



Photographer QT Luong will discuss his stunning new book of photographs, *Our National Monuments: America's Hidden Gems* (2021) during our March "Trail Talk." Mr. Luong -- who is also the author of the best-selling photography book about the national parks, *Treasured Lands* -- will join us via Zoom on Wednesday, March 16th at 7:00 PM to talk about the national monuments and his photographic method.

Mr. Luong has written five photographic books and was featured in Ken Burns' film, *The National Parks: America's Best Idea*. He has received the National Parks Conservation Association's Robin W. Winks Award for Enhancing Public Understanding of National Parks. Luong lives in San Jose with his wife and two children. RSVP for the zoom link [here!](#)

April Trail Talk

Trail Talk: Troubleshooting Your Hikes

April 20, 2022 | 7:00 PM

Ever wonder how you would handle unexpected situations on your hikes? Our April Trail Talk will help you to prepare. Please join us for a Zoom panel discussion on troubleshooting your hikes, with issues ranging from health emergencies to weather changes, wildfire, equipment failure, wildlife threats, human behavioral challenges, getting lost, and finding lost hikers, to name a few. Our panel will include hike leaders Joseph Amador, Juliann Anderson, Judy Atkinson, Karla Kellems, David Melton, Mary Ann Ruiz, and John St. Clair.

As always, the Trail Talk presentations will be held virtually via Zoom on the third Wednesday of the month: You must register on the San Geronio Outings listing for this event to receive your Zoom link [here.](#)

An Environmental Issue: Riverside County's Housing Element

HCD Finds the County's Housing Element Out of Compliance

By Bill Havert and Gary Gray, Co-Chairs, Tahquitz Group Environmental Justice Committee

The term “environment” is often used to mean the natural world, especially as affected by human activity. It brings to mind protecting different types of environments or ecosystems: desert, wetlands, forest, etc. “Environment” also means the surroundings or conditions in which a person, animal, or plant lives. That meaning brings the concept of environment close to home; in fact, it is home. One of the goals of the Sierra Club is to protect and maintain a healthy environment where a person, a plant, or animal can thrive. That includes the natural world and the immediate environment we call home.

In parts of the eastern Coachella Valley, home may not always be such a healthy environment. Home may not include ready access to safe drinking water, a functioning sewerage system, a house with adequate insulation and functioning air conditioning to provide relief from extreme temperatures too much of the year, or air to breathe that is not often polluted with dust, some of it toxic. (A Pro Publica article and YouTube video provides a sense of what conditions are like in some of the eastern Coachella Valley communities: [Postcard From Thermal: Surviving the Climate Gap in Eastern Coachella Valley — ProPublica.](#))

It's a complex problem that includes lack of infrastructure, lack of affordable housing stock, income inequality, and local pollutant sources in the air, land, and water. In unincorporated communities such as Mecca, Oasis, Thermal, and North Shore, the County of Riverside plays an important role in trying to address those issues. Some of the issues should be addressed in the Housing Element of the General Plan. The County's Vision Statement says, “We acknowledge shelter as one of the most basic community needs...” One of the goals of the Housing Element is “Encourage construction, maintenance, improvement, and preservation of safe, decent, and sound affordable housing in unincorporated Riverside County.”

In 2021, the County, as required by state law, updated and adopted a new Housing Element. Many of the community groups and residents active in the eastern Coachella Valley, as well as the Sierra Club, found that the Housing Element did not live up to the promise of the Vision Statement and did not meet the stated goal to provide safe, decent, affordable housing. These community groups, including the Sierra Club, tried hard to work with the County and provide policy and program recommendations – including strategies to address unsafe housing in dilapidated trailer parks, promote community representation in community councils and advisory committees, and expand tenant protections – but these were generally ignored. The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) is charged with reviewing and approving Housing Elements from every jurisdiction in the state to ensure that the Element complies with state law. After the County approved its new Housing Element, it was submitted to HCD in October for the required review.

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HCD found the County's Housing Element out of compliance with state law. In its letter to the County, HCD included this important finding: "HCD received several comments that the public was not provided sufficient time or outreach wasn't sufficient to gather comments. HCD also observes that past comments included meaningful policy and program suggestions that could be incorporated into the housing and safety elements. Yet, the adopted element does not reflect this input. Moving forward, the County should consider additional methods to gather input from all segments of the community and must proactively make future revisions available to the public, including any commenters, with sufficient time to comment and prior to submitting any revisions to HCD and diligently consider and address comments, including revising the document where appropriate. The County's consideration of public comments must not be limited by HCD's findings in this review letter."

A Coalition of the Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability, Pueblo Unido CDC, California Institute for Rural Studies, California Rural Legal Assistance, Consejo de Federaciones Mexicanas, Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice, and Sierra Club, saw HCD's message to the County as an opportunity to again approach the County to engage in a dialogue with community groups and residents to develop meaningful policies and programs to address the serious deficiencies in safe, decent affordable housing in the unincorporated areas of the eastern Coachella Valley.

The Coalition sent a letter to the County Supervisor for that area, Supervisor Manny Perez, hoping he could help ensure that County staff would engage with the Coalition and local residents to incorporate policies and programs proposed by the Coalition. Last fall, Supervisor Perez had been the only member of the Board of Supervisors to vote against the adoption of the Housing Element because of its deficiencies.

While there has been no direct response from the Supervisor's office to the Coalition, the revised Housing Element just released for public review and comment does seem to include some of the policy and program recommendations submitted by the Coalition. The document is the better for it, but the Coalition's review is in its early stages, so it's too soon to say if the revisions adequately address the issues raised by the Coalition.

The Coalition would prefer to work directly with the County to develop a Housing Element the groups can support, and we have renewed our request to the County to dialogue with the Coalition to discuss the recent revisions and consider additional ones before approving the revised Housing Element and submitting it to HCD. For now, the Coalition will continue reviewing the revised document and make additional recommendations. If necessary, the Coalition is prepared to again urge HCD to reject the next iteration of the Housing Element and take other steps as necessary to support safe, adequate housing for all.

National Sierra Club Elections are Underway - VOTE!



A Democratic Sierra Club Demands Grassroots Participation

The annual election for Sierra Club's Board of Directors is now underway.

Those eligible to vote in the national Sierra Club election will receive in the mail (or by email if you chose the electronic delivery option) your national Sierra Club ballot in early March 2021. This will include information on candidates and where you can find additional information on Sierra Club's website.

Your participation is critical for a strong Sierra Club.

How can I learn about the candidates? Members frequently state that they don't know the candidates and find it difficult to vote without learning more.

Each candidate provides a statement about themselves and their views on the official election ballot. You can learn more by asking questions of your group and chapter leadership and other experienced members. Also, [click here](#) to visit the Sierra Club's election website for additional information about candidates.

Voting Online is quick and easy! Even if you receive your election materials in the mail, we encourage you to use the user-friendly Internet voting site to save time and postage. **If sending via ground mail, please note: your ballots must be received by no later than noon Eastern time on Election Day, April 28, 2021.**

Las elecciones nacionales de Sierra Club están en marcha - ¡VOTA!

Un Sierra Club democrático requiere participación de sus socios.

La elección anual para la Junta de Directores del Sierra Club ya está en marcha.

Las personas elegibles para votar en la elección nacional de Sierra Club recibirán por correo (o por Internet si elige la opción de entrega electrónica) su boleta del Sierra Club nacional a principios de marzo. Esto incluirá información sobre los candidatos y dónde puede encontrar información adicional en el sitio web del Sierra Club.

Su participación es crítica para hacer el Sierra Club fuerte.

El Sierra Club es una organización estructurada democráticamente en todos los niveles. Sierra Club requiere un flujo regular de opiniones sobre políticas y prioridades de su membresía de base para funcionar bien. La participación anual en las elecciones en todos los niveles del Sierra Club es una obligación importante de la membresía.

En un año típico, menos del 10% de los miembros elegibles votan en las elecciones de la Junta. Se requiere un mínimo del 5% para que las elecciones sean válidas. Nuestra estructura de base se fortalece cuando nuestra participación es alta. Eso significa que su participación es necesaria en el proceso de votación.

¿Cómo puedo aprender sobre los candidatos? Los miembros frecuentemente afirman que no conocen a los candidatos y les resulta difícil votar sin conocerlos bien. Cada candidato proporciona una declaración sobre sí y sus puntos de vista sobre los asuntos en la boleta electoral oficial (en inglés). Puede obtener más información haciendo preguntas a su grupo y al líder del capítulo y a otros miembros con experiencia que conozca. También puede visitar el sitio web de elecciones del Sierra Club para obtener información adicional sobre los candidatos:

<https://www.sierraclub.org/board-directors-election-2022>

¡Entonces haz tu elección y emite tu voto! ¡Votar en línea es rápido y fácil!

Incluso si recibe sus materiales electorales por correo, lo alentamos a utilizar el sitio de votación por Internet fácil de usar para ahorrar tiempo y gastos de envío. Si envía por correo terrestre, tenga en cuenta que sus boletas deben recibirse a más tardar el día de la elección, el 28 de abril de 2021.

Letter From Sacramento: How Sierra Club California Works to Defend The Environment

by Brandon Dawson, Director



Over the last month, I've heard from a number of individuals inquiring about how Sierra Club California operates, who works here, and how Sierra Club volunteers around the state can aid our efforts. Many of these members are new and want a primer on our chapter. Others are long-time members curious as to which staff member they should contact about a given issue.

Fear no more: the answers you seek are here! (If you already have an idea of the workings of Sierra Club California, here's a nice reminder).

[Sierra Club California](#) is the legislative and regulatory advocacy arm of Sierra Club in California. We're unlike any other Club chapter anywhere in the country. We focus only on state-level issues and campaigns.

We're based in Sacramento, just a few blocks from the Capitol building. In pre-pandemic years, a normal day would consist of our staff shuffling about the Capitol and state agencies, meeting with legislators and decision makers and their staff in person. Nowadays, that advocacy has shifted to virtual meetings and phone calls.

Our chapter is governed by a volunteer board of directors or, in Club parlance, an [executive committee](#). The positions we take on legislation, who we endorse in elections, and where we stand on regulatory issues are determined by groups of volunteers who are active in a variety of committees.

If you want to be involved in state-level issues as a volunteer, there's a place for you and it could be on one of Sierra Club California's committees. If you're more interested in local issues, there's a place for you in a local chapter. There are 13 local chapters around the state.

The staff of Sierra Club California includes three policy advocates (we're currently hiring another!), two organizers, an administrator, and a communications person. Our operations staff keeps our office running, our communications person keeps our newsletters and social media flowing, while our organizers work hard to ensure that you - our members and volunteers - are engaged and educated on specific campaigns.

Our policy advocates represent Sierra Club California at the state legislature and regulatory agencies by advancing pro-environmental policies and bills, and stopping harmful policies and bills.

Our legislative advocacy is a critical component of the work we do to ensure that future generations have the opportunity to enjoy and preserve California's beautiful and unique lands, coasts, waters, and communities. Every year, we track more than 500 bills that have some implication for the environment.

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This year, the deadline for getting bills introduced is February 18. So far, about 55 bills have been introduced that have some environmental content. By February 18, that number will likely increase substantially (pre-pandemic, it was common for bills with environmental keywords to exceed 600).

As bills are filed, policy advocates research and analyze them - consulting a wide array of resources for information, including the expert knowledge of many of our volunteers. Staff use this information to develop suggested positions, and then take those suggested positions to our volunteer legislative committee, who establish the final position on the bill. By mid-March, we will post a list of 2022 priority bills on our website.

Individual Sierra Club members and local Sierra Club chapters should not independently take positions on bills. If a bill arises that a member or local chapter believes should have a Club position, please email our legislative committee chair Patricia Jones at pvjones10@gmail.com. She can make sure the committee considers it.

Also, if you want to track particular bills or learn more about a bill's status, the state has an excellent bill information system online at <http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov>.

Sierra Club California is California's largest grassroots environmental advocacy organization. That wouldn't be possible without members like you. At least once a week, we reach out to different members around the state to take an action that will benefit the environment, asking you to either call your legislator, send an email to a regulator, or get involved in a local campaign.

Our members taking action is critical for decision makers to witness the power of the Sierra Club. So if you've just joined the Sierra Club—or been a member for years—you're playing a key role in protecting the environment and our communities across the state.

Big Bear Group Update

by Ellen Kesler

With Spring just around the corner, the Big Bear Group ExCom is diligently working to get our General Meeting programs lined up for the third Thursday of each month, starting in April. Member emails and a notice in our local newspaper, "The Grizzly" are planned to go out when everything gets solidified. The Discovery Center still has not opened so our meeting will begin at 6:30pm in the Bridges Presbyterian Church, 579 Knickerbocker Rd., Big Bear Lake. Free refreshments are always offered. Masks are required with social distancing in the seating area.

In the meantime, our Outings Program has begun - check the Chapter website on the Hike Calendar - <https://sangorgonio2@sierraclub.org>.

I encourage you to visit the Big Bear Eagle Cam ([Big Bear Eagle Cam](#) live Friends of Big Bear Valley) and watch our local bald Eagle pair, "Shadow" and "Jacki" care for their two eggs.

Santa Margarita Group Update

by Pam Nelson

The Santa Margarita Group (SMG) has lots of irons in the fire, as always. We're busy tabling at events as they come up. Our tabling team has two enthusiastic members, Caren Hanson and Shea Millan (new Group Vice Chair). Margaret Meyncke, Pam Nelson, David Marrettt and Shaul Rosen-Rager fill in at times. We tabled Louie's Nursery's Spring Fling in February, and we'll participate in Menifee's , Soboba's, and the Murrieta Library Earth Day celebrations coming up soon. Anyone is welcome to join us!

If you visit the Temecula Library, look for our Earth Day display. Pam Nelson and her granddaughter set it up on Feb. 27th. Itl features wildlife crossings and the Sierra Club theme of Explore, Enjoy and Protect the Earth.

Pam Nelson and Teri Biancardi have been chosen to join the Regional Conservation Authority (RCA) advisory committee along with thirteen others that represent non-profits, landowners, business/realtors. We will be looking at the RCA's opportunities and needs. We're hoping that we can help add conservation acquisitions to their growing list. We will be keeping the 30x30 effort in mind, as well. We are also hoping our participation will support our work with the Santa Ana to Palomar Wildlife Linkage Alliance (S2P). S2P is making progress with both the Temecula Creek underpass and a future overpass south of Temecula on the I-15, but land for corridors is still lacking.

Yay! Bob Audibert, our Hiking/Outings Leader, is beginning a hiking season. It's been a long time and a lot of extra work to get this rolling, but several people went to Tenaja Falls last week and had a great time (see photo). The March hike will be to Maidenhair Falls. Look for details in the SG or SMG website.

Caren Hanson is continuing to lead the Group's Native Plant Garden Team. Her efforts are paying off. She's received funding for an educational sign for the new Winchester Creek Park garden in Temecula, and the Menifee City Spirit Park's garden is thriving.

On March 6th we'll have an outdoor in-person Executive Committee meeting. Everyone is welcome. It'll be a fun time. We'll be meeting at the Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve at 2 pm. First, we'll take a short hike, and then do a bit of business. Please RSVP to me at pamela05n@yahoo.com





Outings are Back!

We are excited that Outings are back! [Check our calendar](#) for the latest updates in hikes and events through the end of April. Hikes listed are from easy to moderate to strenuous, in our local deserts and mountains. Check out the list and don't forget to look regularly to see additions to our schedule. In addition to outings, you'll find all our Trail Talks and Chapter Events. (just an example of our schedule at print time. [Click on this link](#) for current schedule. (The calendar image below is just an example of our schedule at print time)

Photo credit: Sally Santoyo // Hikers headed towards Wollow Hole during Joshua Tree Car Camp Trip

List View		Map View	Calendar View							
Date	Activity (click title for full description)	Sponsor	Category	Type	Difficulty	Miles Away	Links			
Wed 3/16/22 8:30 AM	GARRETT'S ARCH, JOSHUA TREE NP – HIKE	Tahquitz Group	Outing	Hike	Moderate	Map or Directions				
Wed 3/16/22 7:00 PM	Trail Talk: Our National Monuments: America's Hidden Gems	San Gorgonio Chapter	Activist Event	Community forum	--					
Sat 3/19/22 9:00 AM	Madianhair Falls Hike	Santa Margarita Group	Outing	Hike	Moderate					
Sun 3/20/22 8:00 AM	MOUNTAIN HOME TRAIL HIKE	Big Bear Group	Outing	Hike	Moderate	Map or Directions				
Wed 3/23/22 7:30 AM	Frankish Peak Hike	Los Serranos Group	Outing	Hike	Strenuous	Map or Directions				
Wed 3/23/22 9:00 AM	CANCELLED: Sturtevant Falls Hike	Los Serranos Group	Outing	Hike	Moderate	Map or Directions				
Sat 4/9/22 8:30 AM	SANTA ANA RIVER TRAIL HIKE	Big Bear Group	Outing	Hike	--	Map or Directions				
Thu 4/14/22 7:00 AM	Mt. Baldy Conditioning Hike	Los Serranos Group	Outing	Hike	Moderate	Map or Directions				
Wed 4/20/22 7:00 PM	TRAIL TALK: Troubleshooting Your Hikes	San Gorgonio Chapter	Activist Event	Community forum	--					
Thu 4/21/22 7:00 AM	Mt. Baldy Conditioning Hike	Los Serranos Group	Outing	Hike	Moderate	Map or Directions				
Sun 4/24/22 8:00 AM	WILDHORSE CREEK TRAIL HIKE	Big Bear Group	Outing	Hike	--	Map or Directions				
Wed 4/27/22 7:30 AM	Timber Mountain Hike	Los Serranos Group	Outing	Hike	Strenuous	Map or Directions				