

SANTA LUCIAN



Santa Lucia Chapter

Sept./Oct. 2018
Volume 55 No.5

The official newsletter of the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club ~ San Luis Obispo County, California

November 6 is Election Day

Sierra Club Endorsements

- Governor** Gavin Newsom
Attorney General Xavier Becerra
Secretary of State Alex Padilla
Controller Betty Yee
Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara
Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond

Ballot initiatives: See page 4.

At press time, we have not completed the endorsement process for local candidates in SLO County races. Check our Facebook page for updates.

Inside	
9/19: Photographing nature	2
Lawless land use	3
9/12-15: Drive Electric!	5
Youth rising for climate	10
Outings	12

Dear fellow Santa Lucia Chapter members,

I would like to invite you to the 50th anniversary of the founding of our Sierra Club Chapter on October 27. Per the above, it will be held at the San Luis County Botanical Garden from 2:30-5:30 pm. Let us come together to celebrate five decades of advocacy and action for the environment of our county.

Thanks to you, the Chapter has been in the forefront of numerous issues over the years, including the Diablo Canyon power plant, the preservation of the Morros, coastal protection, and endangered species and air quality issues at the Oceano Dunes.

Other ongoing issues include Community Choice Energy and campaigning for the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary. We are also happy to be able to continue with a vibrant outings program.

So come to the party to celebrate with food, drink, music, magic, a raffle and a silent auction. As your chair, I am grateful for your continuing support and the support of my fellow board members and other volunteers.

Sincerely,
 Chuck Tribbey, Chair
 Santa Lucia Chapter

Memo from Sue Harvey

From: Santa Lucia Chapter Conservation Chair

TO: All Past and Present Santa Lucia Chapter Volunteers

This year marks the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club. On October 27, we will be celebrating 50 years of the volunteers, advocacy, and activism that has preserved and enhanced the rich, diverse environment here in San Luis Obispo.

I invite you to join me in becoming a sponsor of our 50th Anniversary Party at the Bishop Peak level, (\$10 for every year of chapter advocacy = \$500). Or consider a sponsorship of \$10 for every year you have been supporting the work of the Chapter (\$100 minimum sponsorship level). Make your check out to Sierra Club.

Note: Because we engage in citizen-based advocacy and lobbying, sponsorships are not tax deductible. In lieu of sponsorship, if you want to help celebrate the Chapter's 50th Anniversary with a tax-deductible gift, make your check out to "Sierra Club Foundation" with "Santa Lucia Chapter" on the memo line. Mailing address for all donations is Sierra Club, P.O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406.

Sierra Club General Meeting

Santa Lucian • Sept./Oct. 2018

7 p.m. Wed., Sept. 19

Donald Quintana: *Photographing Nature*



Spend a gorgeous evening with nature and wildlife photographer Donald Quintana and learn how the pro's capture those fleeting moments that are often missed by the casual observer and how to share them with others. A multiple tier II and tier III winner in the prestigious NANPA Expressions Annual showcasing the top 250 photographs from the North American Nature Photography Association, Donald is a member of CPS Canon Professional Services, the San Luis Obispo Camera Club and The Photo Morro Bay Yahoo Group, and is a mentor for the Advanced Photography Class at Morro Bay High School. He offers photography instruction and local or distant photo tours as a way to pursue your passion for nature and wildlife photography while learning in the process.



Copeland Pavilion
3rd Floor, French Hospital
Med. Center
1823 Johnson Ave., SLO
Doors open at 6:30
Program: 7-8 p.m.

What to Do with Diablo

How About a Pecho Coast National Seashore?

Remarks of Santa Lucia Chapter Director Andrew Christie at the PG&E/Community Engagement Panel land use workshop, August 17, 2018

On the premise that any vision for the future must be informed by the past, I'm here to discuss some fairly recent history.

This is going to be a sort of case study, building on what you heard earlier from Coastal Commission staff. Everyone here is presumably conversant with most of the details from the time when Wild Cherry Canyon was almost acquired, as it was in all the papers. We think you should know about the time a few years before that, much less reported, when the preservation and protection of virtually all the Diablo Canyon lands was almost secured for the people of California.

On Dec. 14, 2006, the California Coastal Commission received a staff report for a de novo hearing on the appeal of a coastal development permit application for the removal and replacement of Diablo Canyon's steam generators.

Staff recommended approval of the permit if it was conditioned to be in conformity with the Coastal Act.

DIABLO continued on page 6

Santa Lucian

Andrew Christie
EDITOR

Lindi Doud
Sandy Simon
EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Denny Mynatt
PRINT MEDIA COORDINATOR

The Santa Lucian is published six times a year. Articles, environmental information and letters to the editor are welcome. The deadline for each issue is the 13th of the prior month.

send to: **Editor, Santa Lucian**, Sierra Club, P.O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406. sierraclub8@gmail.com

Santa Lucia Chapter

2018 Executive Committee

Chuck Tribbey (12/19) CHAIR
Christine Mulholland (12/18) SECRETARY
Sue Harvey (12/19) MEMBER
Jennifer Von Der Lohe (12/20) MEMBER
Violet Cavanaugh (12/20) MEMBER
Nancy Cole (12/20) MEMBER
Dawn Annoni (12/18) MEMBER

Chuck Tribbey COUNCIL OF CLUB LEADERS
Kevin O'Gorman, Lindi Doud CO-TREASURERS

Committees

Political
Violet Cavanaugh
Membership/Development
Dawn Annoni
Conservation
Sue Harvey

Nuclear Power Task Force
Rochelle Becker
Linda Seeley

CNRCC Delegates
Lindi Doud, Patrick McGibney
John Burdett

Calendar Sales
Open

Outings
Bill Waycott

Facebook Administrator
Kim Ramos

Bookkeeper
Sandra Cirilo



The **Executive Committee** meets the second Monday of each month at 4p.m in the chapter office, located at 974 Santa Rosa St., San Luis Obispo. All members are welcome to attend.

Webmaster

Monica Tarzier

Trail Guide

Gary Felsman

50th Anniversary Coordinator

Jennifer Von Der Lohe

Chapter Director

Andrew Christie sierraclub8@gmail.com

Santa Lucia Chapter

P.O. Box 15755

San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

805-543-8717

Office hours Monday-Friday,

1:30 p.m. - 7 p.m.

**974 Santa Rosa Street
San Luis Obispo**

Printed by University Graphic Systems Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
Mailing preparation services courtesy of the Silver Streaks

Antique Land Use Planning at Its Finest

County supervisors head back to 1905

Here's something almost -- but not quite -- everyone can agree on: 1905 was a while ago, and things have changed.

Ragtime music is no longer at the top of the charts.

Women can vote.

Segregation is no longer legal.

We have 53 more national parks.

And, per SLO County Assistant County Counsel Tim McNulty, "there were not state laws in place authorizing local jurisdictions like us to regulate the design and improvement of subdivisions to a degree that was great enough to allow those subdivision maps to create lots."

If your eyes just glazed over, you better splash some cold water on your face because the majority of the SLO County Board of Supervisors is feeling nostalgic, and they're getting ready to harken back to those golden days of yesteryear with a terrible decision that could reshape the county.

This is a story about antiquated subdivisions. How much mischief reposes in the phrase may be illustrated with a case that long time Sierra Clubbers may remember: After the Coastal Commission cancelled the Hearst Corporation's plans to turn Hearst Ranch and San Simeon Point into a golf resort in 1998, the corporation planned to rely on an 1852 map to carve 279 parcels out of its 83,000-acre ranch. The state had to pass a law to thwart, as the *California Planning & Development Report* put it, "landowners' practice of seeking certificates of compliance to legitimize antiquated subdivisions, and then using lot line adjustments to reconfigure the old lots into more usable — and more valuable — parcels."

That was the end of the lot line adjustment trick. Over the ensuing years, several court rulings eliminated the certificates of compliance trick — provided that elected officials obey the law.

Last year, the Dennis Fesler Family Trust requested unconditional certificates of compliance that would create twelve land parcels on the Fesler Ranch in rural Arroyo Grande, based on an antiquated subdivision map from 1905. In January, the County Planning Department replied that the "creation of a parcel recognizable by certificate of compliance can be based on maps recorded under the modern Subdivision Map Act or grandfathered under certain predecessor statutes."

But:

"Maps created in 1905 cannot meet the requirement of the grandfather clause because there were no laws in effect at that time that regulated design and improvement."

And: "Current case law holds that maps recorded in the unincorporated areas between 1893 and 1919 are not deemed to create parcels recognizable by certificate of compliance."



Long day Assistant County Counsel Tim McNulty warned Supervisor Lynn Compton and the board majority about the legality of approving certificates of compliance for antiquated subdivisions at their July 17 meeting, to no avail.

"That's gonna open up a door for more than just Mr. Fesler"

- Assistant County Counsel Tim McNulty on the board majority's decision to create land parcels in violation of state law.

Therefore: "We are required to deny your application for issuance of twelve unconditional certificates of compliance for these lots."

Fesler appealed the decision to the County Supervisors. On July 17, the board majority, with Supervisor Lynn Compton leading the charge, upheld Fesler's appeal and took a big step toward tossing out the rules on local land use and inviting in a wild west stampede of development.

Supervisor Compton, seeking support for legal findings the County must come up with as the foundation for the board's action, asked staff to include old legal decisions allowing for the grandfathering of parcels in antique subdivisions and exemption from the Subdivision Map Act, ignoring County Counsel when it was pointed out that those prior rulings have been superseded by subsequent court rulings that comprise the aforementioned current case law, the basis for the conclusion of the County Planning Department that the lots in question are not "separate legal parcels that are recognized under today's Subdivision Map Act."

Supervisor Bruce Gibson commented that Supervisor Compton's statement that she worked with the applicant to put together findings upholding the appeal in advance of the board's July 17 meeting shows a high level of bias and her commentary from the dais was "a not very effective attempt to disguise with a lot of amateur legal analysis the fact that she wants to approve this project." The pre-decisional nature of Supervisor Compton's vote was clear.

The board took the unusual action of directing that the findings include an agreement with the applicant to indemnify

Vote YES on Measure G

On a hot day in July 2016, as the SLO County Planning Commission was deliberating on the proposal by Phillips 66 to build an oil train terminal in Nipomo and trigger an influx of crude oil “bomb trains,” Arlene Burns, the mayor of Mosier, Oregon, stood in the gazebo of Mitchell Park in SLO, looking out on a crowd of hundreds who had come to hear what she had to say about her town’s experience with an oil train derailment and fire one month previously.

She clicked the “on” button on her megaphone and said:

“You guys are in a really unique position: In Oregon, the oil trains had already started flowing. The terminals are already in Tacoma. Here, you can stop this before it starts. And it’s a hell of a lot easier to stop it now than once it’s been approved.”

Two years later, the oil train plan has been defeated, but her words have new relevance. Measure G stops fracking here before it starts. It also halts the oil industry’s significant expansion plans for SLO County.

Fracking -- combining

horizontal oil drilling with high pressure water and chemicals to fracture oil and gas shale deposits -- has contaminated the drinking water of hundreds of thousands of Americans. Its physical impacts have devastated thousands of neighborhoods and thousands of square miles of landscapes that are important to people and wildlife. It has negative impacts on air quality and frequently necessitates unacceptable drawdowns of surface water and groundwater. Fracking and its associated waste disposal can cause seismic events. Mining for fracking sand causes air contamination and public health impacts.

These cities, counties, and local government entities have adopted resolutions and ordinances banning or declaring moratoria on fracking within their jurisdiction or calling on the state of California to ban fracking:

Arroyo Grande
Beverly Hills
Butte County
Cambria CSD
Carson
Compton
Culver City
Fairfax
Los Angeles
Los Angeles



Two Bad Ballot Measures Deserve a NO Vote on the November Ballot

Sierra Club California has taken an oppose position on two bad ballot measures on the November ballot, Proposition 3 and Proposition 6.

Proposition 3 is a poorly developed water bond that was crafted via a “pay-to-play” method. That means that the proponents negotiated with various special interests to include pet projects in the bill in exchange for supporting—including with campaign funds—the bond measure.

As a result, the proposition would create a nearly \$8.9 billion bond that would be continuously appropriated, without regard for the state of the state’s treasury. And a lot of the projects in the bond, including dams, do not deserve the taxpayer funding that would pay for them.

You can see our factsheet about the bond here: <http://bit.ly/NoProp3CA-FactSheet>. You can see a more detailed FAQ here: <http://bit.ly/NoProp3CA-FAQ>.

Proposition 6 is a cynical effort by political operatives to draw conservative voters to the polls in November. The measure would rescind a gas tax passed by the legislature in 2017 through Senate Bill 1 to fund a range of transportation projects. Transit funding, repairing local roads and bridges, and improving bicycle and pedestrian access are among the projects that would be funded over time as a result of the tax. You can learn more about that bad ballot measure’s impacts at www.noprop6.com.

So, remember, vote NO on Proposition 3 and Proposition 6 in November.

Oakland
San Francisco
San Luis Obispo
Sebastopol
Sonoma
Marin County
Mendocino County
Monterey County
San Benito County
Santa Cruz County

would confer on SLO County, is currently the site of an appeal challenging oil drilling in Santa Paula Canyon.

The courts have allowed 19 new oil wells and continued operation of 17 existing wells along the Santa Paula Canyon Trail, a popular hiking trail that serves as a gateway to waterfalls, swimming holes, backcountry campsites and endangered species habitat in the Los Padres National Forest. Several wells are located a few feet from Santa Paula Canyon Trail.

Despite objections from nearly 1,000 hikers and local residents, as well as overwhelming expert scientific testimony, the Ventura County Board of Supervisors approved the oil wells on a 3-2 vote in 2015, relying in large part on an outdated environmental impact report.

Similar lists could be compiled for Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

It’s time for us to join them.

What if Measure G fails?

Ventura County, lacking the protections against oil industry expansion Measure G

Things to Come?

“I moved from Pasadena to Kern County in 2014 to take up the fight against oil and gas development in the belly of the beast, Kern County. I left my life as a gerontologist and hit the ground running as an organizer and front-line environmental researcher in Lost Hills. Chevron frack towers are less than 50 feet from the ‘Wonderful Academy’ charter school. This is sixth largest oil field in Kern County, the eighth largest in California. The population center is less than one-quarter mile from the forest of pump jacks and processing plants. It’s a place where the noise never stops and residents are trapped in the world of a company town. Current temperatures: 100°+. Volatile Organic Compounds + heat = a bad, bad day.”

- Rosanna Esparza, Ph.D, July 24, 2018.

MEASURE G continued next page

Measure G

continued from page 4

Los Padres ForestWatch, the Center for Biological Diversity, and Citizens for Responsible Oil & Gas filed suit over the county’s failure to conduct a new study of the environmental risks of the project. The groups argue that

July, the groups filed an appeal of that decision. “Santa Paula Canyon is one of the crown jewels of Ventura County, with thousands of residents and visitors enjoying this wilderness destination each year,” said Jeff Kuyper, executive director of

“The water footprint of fracking could jump as much as 50-fold in some areas by 2030, raising concerns about its sustainability, particularly in arid or semi-arid regions in western states....”
-- Fracking is destroying U.S. water supply warns shocking new study, Thinkprogress, 8/17/18

the county failed to evaluate and reduce significant noise, visual and public safety impacts that oil drilling expansion would cause to hikers on the trail, and further neglected to fully consider the risks posed by oil spills from a pipeline directly above steel-head habitat in Santa Paula Creek.

A Ventura County Superior Court judge in April 2018 ruled in favor of the oil company and the County. In

ForestWatch, “More drilling here will ruin the outdoor recreation experience while reducing local tourism dollars and harming local businesses.”

This is the type of action that is required everywhere the expansion of fossil fuel operations threatens the local environment. Measure G would moot the necessity here for that expenditure of blood, sweat, and tears on future courtroom rolls of the dice.



TAKE ACTION

Measure G is up against all the money Big Oil can throw at it. Donate or volunteer for voter outreach, fundraising, house parties and more at protectslo.org, or (805) 994-0076.



Oil or water Waterfall in Santa Paula Canyon.

Antique

continued from page 3

the County from any legal action resulting from their decision, despite the fact that an unconditional permit does not allow for such a condition, requiring that this special provision be filed as a separate agreement. That action speaks for itself as far as the board majority’s awareness of what it was doing.

At the end of the meeting, Supervisor Gibson summed up the situation by pointing out that Supervisor Compton was seeking to do a favor for a campaign donor who wanted a simplified path to subdivision “rather than the appropriate path of modern times.... If we do it here, we’ve got a whole bunch of other antiquated maps in this county that could certainly argue [for] the same path.”

Supervisor Compton vehemently denied Gibson’s charge. (The contributions of the Fesler Ranch to Compton’s reelection campaign can be viewed via the Form 460 filings of monetary contributions received by candidates, on view at the state Campaign Finance Disclosure Public Portal.) Then she voted with Supervisors Arnold and Peschong to uphold Fesler’s appeal of the Planning Department’s denial of certificates of compliance, ordering County staff to work with the applicant to come back with legal findings to support the board’s decision.

On October 2, staff will present the results of the unenviable task assigned to them: Find a way to legalize the board majority’s vote of July 17.

TAKE ACTION

There’s bad precedent, and then there’s *really* bad precedent. The odds are that there is an antiquated subdivision near you. Take three minutes worth of comments from the above and let the Board hear from you at their October 2 hearing before their final vote.

Diablo

continued from page 2

That conformity would be achieved because “either 1) feasible mitigation measures and/or alternatives have been incorporated to substantially lessen any significant adverse effects of the development on the environment, or 2) there are no further feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would substantially lessen any significant adverse impacts of the development on the environment.”

That recommendation was followed by six pages of mitigation measures, with the seventh and final measure listed under the heading Conservation Easement As Mitigation for Marine Biology and Water Quality Impacts.

Those two pages said, in summary, that “PG&E shall record an Offer To Dedicate for a conservation easement over approximately 9,130 acres as described below as mitigation for the Steam Generator Replacement Project’s adverse effects on marine biology and water quality.”

This was to include a Stewardship Plan: A description of the allowable and prohibited uses of the easement, the primary purpose of which would be to provide conservation benefits through protection over intertidal habitat and native terrestrial habitat. The easement would allow for continuation and enhancement of other existing types of land uses on these lands, including open space, public access, and sustainable coastal agriculture, where these uses could be implemented consistent with the easement’s primary purpose. The easement would also allow for restoration of native habitat and measures that may be needed to improve water quality.

Further details and description and the required submission of a management plan,

funding mechanism, and an irrevocable Offer To Dedicate the easement to a public agency or private association approved by the Executive Director, take up the rest of those two pages from that 2006 staff report.

This was the result of an appeal of the permit by the Sierra Club and Mothers for Peace. The Commission staff report acknowledged that the environmental impacts of replacing the generators were not limited to the construction project, but included the additional years of impacts from the continued operation of the power plant, which was demonstrably the case due to the acknowledged fact that without new generators, the plant would have to shut down by 2014.

The easement would have cost PG&E nothing, but they adamantly opposed it. Instead, as a consolation prize, they offered to preserve some 600 acres near Port San Luis -- stipulating that it was a gift, not mitigation for any impacts of the project’s impacts.

The upshot: A coastal development project that would result in additional years of well-documented impacts from the plant’s cooling system on the marine environment, detailed in the staff report, was issued a permit by the California Coastal Commission with *no* mitigation for those impacts. That was unprecedented.

However, that’s a matter of historical interest at this point. For the purposes of our discussion today

and the future recommendations of this panel, here’s what matters: Commissioner Katcho Achadjian, who made the motion to strip the easement out of the project conditions, said that he did so because the Diablo Resources Advisory Measure, aka the DREAM Initiative, already fulfilled the objectives of the proposed easement.

Commission staff replied that the DREAM Initiative was advisory, is not enforceable, and will not, on its own, create a conservation easement. Commissioner Achadjian voted against the easement requirement anyway, and a majority of his colleagues sided with the commissioner from the district. The staff report’s findings and conditions were tossed out and reversed.

And that is why we’re still having this conversation. Six years after the DREAM initiative was passed, at the first opportunity to let the dream become reality, PG&E did a full-court press on coastal commissioners and sent a platoon of lawyers to that hearing to ensure that that did not happen, and that instead, on the day the plant closed they would still hold the surrounding lands,

unencumbered by anything so inconvenient as a conservation easement, for the company to dispose of as it pleased.

We have not seen a change in that position. Through the years, PG&E has made generic supportive statements of the DREAM Initiative. The history I’ve just related argues to the contrary, as did the leaked email last February containing a developer’s confident pronouncement that “I think we can get a deal with PG&E to get fee title” and commence the construction of 15,000 homes in Wild Cherry Canyon.

The existence of this panel, the utility’s expressed wish to have the public chime in, might be seen as encouraging, but for the fact that the public has already chimed in, with the most powerful and precise mechanism ever devised by which to measure public opinion: A vote, on a ballot. And it was on the order of 75% in favor.

A cynic might say that this process looks like an attempt to get around that vote, in the hope that someone at some point, in the course of chiming in at this more casual level, will suggest the stan-

DIABLO continued next page





dard compromise: the majority of the lands set aside for conservation, with some parts – the best, most desirable, most lucrative parts – slated for development.

That should not happen and this panel should not consider such a recommendation. Twelve years ago, Coastal Commission staff studied a number of possible mitigations for the environmental impacts of the plant’s cooling system and concluded that the impacts through 2025 -- or 2040 in the event of relicensing -- were such that there was nothing the company could do to

adequately mitigate them. Both the least and the best they could do, would be to secure these lands in their natural state, forever.

Decommissioning and conversion to a toxic waste storage site is a new project that involves an extraordinary risk to county residents in perpetuity. Then as now, there is no way to provide mitigation commensurate with that potential impact. Then as now, there can be no compromise. What did not happen then must happen now: PG&E must give as much as they can give, in the form of the only mitigation available: The

land, all of it, except that part necessary to buffer and protect a decommissioned nuclear power plant.

Eighteen years ago, PG&E spokesman Jeff Lewis said “the goals the DREAM initiative expresses for the land are consistent with ours.” That’s good. We urge your panel to unanimously recommend that PG&E refrain from granting fee title to any portion of the Diablo or Cherry Canyon lands, accede to the wishes of the overwhelming majority of the county’s voters, and implement the DREAM initiative by insuring the transfer of

those lands to the people of California and/or the United States, via the offices of the Coastal Conservancy or State Parks or the designation of a national seashore.

To that last point, I will quote from the 1959 Pacific Coast Recreational Survey by the National Park Service which found that “This large, unspoiled area possesses excellent seashore values and should be acquired for public recreation and conservation of its natural resources.”

The objective of the Pacific Coast survey was “to inventory and report on important remaining undeveloped areas, or areas with relatively sparse development, valuable for recreation and other public purposes, along the Pacific Coast.”

“In essence, it was the goal of this inventory of undeveloped seashore areas to select those areas that should properly be included in a well-rounded and adequate National Park System; the designation of areas that should be preserved for the welfare of the general public because of their scenic, cultural and scientific values, regardless of what agency or level of Government might administer them; and the identification of areas necessary to provide for active public recreation use and enjoyment by an expanding population.”

One nuclear power plant more or less, that was true sixty years ago and its true today.



Here are your options Telling the Community Engagement Panel “I would hope this group will acknowledge the consensus opinion of the people of San Luis Obispo County to conserve all of these lands,” former SLO County Planning Commission Chair Sarah Christie (left) laid out three potential paths to reach that goal: Acquisition via negotiation with a willing seller, a compensatory public values action by the Public Utilities Commission, or mitigation required by a regulatory agency such as the Coastal Commission.

The Fires Next Time

When you hear someone blaming California's wildfires on our failure to remove enough trees from forests, show them this

Full text of the 20-page letter with recommendations can be read at www.sierraclub.org/santa-lucia/news

May 16, 2018

Re: Fire Response

Dear Governor Brown,

We have reviewed your May 10, 2018, Executive Order on forests and fire. We are writing to urge you to develop a response to our increasingly flammable environment by **focusing on the factors that led to the loss of so many lives and homes in the 2017 wildfires, not on forests far from our communities most at risk.**

The current focus on dead trees in forests is especially misguided because **all of the wildfires** most devastating to communities in California had nothing to do with such forests. And while it is reasonable to remove hazard trees immediately adjacent to roads and homes, it makes no sense to spend millions of dollars to treat entire forests while the actual fire threat facing thousands of families occurs very far away from these forests.

We urge you to break from the conventions that have led to the current crisis and to turn California toward a more rational and effective response to the threat of wildfire. **What we have been doing, trying to control the natural environment, is not working.**

While large, wind-driven, high-intensity wildfires and post-fire debris flows are an inevitable part of California, **the devastation to our lives and communities is not inevitable.** We can choose to reject the predominant view that there is little we can do to stop the destruction to communities caused by wind-driven fires, but it will require a significant change in thinking.

Part of that change in thinking requires us to realize that the unacceptable loss of nearly 10,000 structures and 45 lives in the 2017 wildfires and the losses caused by the 2018 Montecito debris flow **have little to nothing to do with forests or the treatment of wildland habitat.** Most of these losses resulted from building flammable homes on flammable terrain, not the condition of the surrounding natural environment.

The current approach sees nature as the "fuel." Eliminate the "fuel," the thinking goes, and we can control the fires. Consequently, millions of dollars are spent clearing habitat and removing dead trees. The focus on fuel has become so powerful that some incorrectly view all of our forests, native shrublands, and even grasslands as "overgrown" tangles ready to ignite, instead of valuable natural resources. As evidenced by the 2017 wildfires, the wildland fuel approach is failing us.

We must look at the problem from the house outward, rather than from the wildland in. The state must take a larger

role in regulating development to prevent local agencies from ignoring known wildfire risks as the city of Santa Rosa ignored with the approval of the Fountaingrove community in the 1990s (Fig. 1). The state should support retrofitting homes with proven safety features that reduce flammability – external sprinklers, ember-resistant vents, fire-resistant roofing and siding – and focus vegetation management on the immediate 100 feet surrounding homes.

We must address the conditions that are actually causing so many lost lives and homes: wind-driven wildfires and the embers they produce that ignite flammable structures placed in harm's way. We have provided a list of recommendations that will help us do so.

As we incorporate this new way of thinking into our wildfire response, we must also endeavor to implement the changes we seek.

After the 2007 wildfires in southern California, former San Diego Fire Chief Jeff Bowman and others formed the San Diego Regional Fire Safety Forum. Chief Bowman introduced the Forum during a press conference on February 19, 2008, by dropping a large stack of fire task force documents from previous decades on the podium, documents filled with unrealized recommendations.

Eight years later, during the May 25, 2016, meeting of the California Fire Service Task Force on Climate Impacts, Chief Bowman distributed the After Action Report for the 1993 Southern California Wildfire Siege. As he did after the 2007 fires, he pointed out that the report's 95 recommendations for improving future responses to major fire incidents were nearly identical to those recommended by the Governor's Blue Ribbon Fire Commission after the 2003 wildfires. Again, most of those recommendations remain unrealized.

We urge you to break with the conventions that have led to the crisis and focus fire risk reduction efforts where it matters most – directly on our homes and communities, not forests far from where most of us live. This will allow us to tailor fire policy to the needs of our families most at risk.

Sincerely,

Richard W. Halsey
Director
California Chaparral Institute

Kathryn Phillips
Director
Sierra Club California

Brian Nowicki
CA Climate Policy Director
Center for Biological Diversity

Joaquin Aganza
President
Friends of Hellhole Canyon

Denise Boggs
Executive Director
Conservation Congress

Monica Bond
Principle Scientist
Wild Nature Institute

Dominick A. DellaSalla
President/Chief Scientist
Geos Institute

...plus 16 other conservation organizations and scientists

Vacation Race at Joshua Tree

Run and raise funds for Sierra Club

By Jessica Dean, Team Sierra Manager

Join us to participate in a half marathon in America's most beautiful destinations!

We have a limited number of charity bibs left to get you *free* entry into the Vacation Race of your choice. The bibs are first come, first served to those that commit to raising \$1,000.*

Coming up on November 3: The Joshua Tree Half Marathon.

The funds you raise will include:

- Complimentary entry into the Vacation Race of your choice.
- The opportunity to meet a community of other racers that want to protect our planet.
- An invitation to our exclusive Facebook group.
- Fundraising coaching to help you reach your goal.

You'll also receive Team Sierra merchandise along the way as you reach fundraising milestones:

- \$100 - Team Sierra T-shirt
- \$500 - Team Sierra Hat
- \$1000 - Klean Kanteen
- Team Sierra Water Bottle

Not all races are alike — some have a more challenging course, some have beautiful scenery. When you take on Vacation Race with Team Sierra, you're taking it on with a purpose. The funds that you



Get Your Tickets for the Wild & Scenic Film Festival

The Wild & Scenic Film Festival will be held September 27-29 in SLO, Los Osos and Grover Beach, hosted by

raise will enable the Sierra Club to do things like:

- Provide cleaner, cheaper, energy.
- Protect our land, water, and air — from our backyards to the other side of the globe.
- Save animals threatened with extinction.
- Make the outdoors accessible for all of us.

Visit vacationraces.com for more information on all races, including:

- September 8: Great Smokey Mountains Half Marathon
- September 22: Mount Rushmore Half Marathon
- October 20: Lake Powell Half Marathon*

Our team's goal is \$50,000 — please help us cross the finish line!

If you have questions, contact jessica.dean@sierraclub.org.

*Trailfests not included



Greenspace – The Cambria Land Trust seeks an **Executive Director** to help pursue its mission into its fourth decade of *protecting the North Coast Area's ecological systems, cultural resources and marine habitats through land acquisition and management, public education and advocacy*. For more background, go to www.greenspacecambria.org. Backing up the new Executive director is a dedicated 13-member Board of Directors; strong, consistent community support; and a track record of accomplished projects.

The job is full time with an initial one-year contract. Pursuing funding for conservation and related projects will be a job priority. Energy and commitment are a must.

Salary will be negotiated. Greenspace is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and an equal opportunity employer.

The application process begins with a resume and cover letter sent to Search Committee Chair, at wayneattoe@gmail.com.

the Central Coast State Parks Association. New this year will be the Wild & Scenic Family Film Day on Saturday, September 29th.

Tickets are on sale now at centralcoastparks.org/filmfest. Tickets: \$40 Full Film Festival Pass; \$15 Individual Adult; \$10 Children (17 & younger). Doors open at 6:30

pm, 7:00 pm showtime, until approximately 9:30pm.

If you would like to volunteer, please call 805-548-0392 or email events@centralcoastparks.org. Information at centralcoastparks.org/filmfest.



Welcome New Members!

Whether new to the Sierra Club or new to San Luis Obispo, welcome all to the Santa Lucia Chapter. We're very happy to have you aboard!

Susan Knecht
Melanie Gentry
Fred Wolf
Eleanor Starr
Mark Bloodgood
Francis Rowan
Barbara Kalbus
Christina Spreafico
Rafael Alonzo-Diaz
David Balter
Kenneth Doerr
Diana Hall
Eleanore Molnar
David Paulsen
Judy Murphy
Donald Mossette
Patricia D Thomsen
Wendy McIntire
John Soper
Nancy Hartley
Tina Smilkstein
Susan Aldridge
Slo Drakes
Vickie & Treg Fischbach

Anthony Salome
Shannon Montague
Erica Baumann
Anita McCort
Margaret Wright
Maria Morrow
Joshua Voerman
Tamara Glavor
Beth Newton
Ruben Ramos
Carole Duncan
Greg Bailey

Transfers

Diane Fitzgerald
Kris And Carolyn Gorsuch
Candace Havens
Juan Floriani
Jana Slezakova
Eugenia Haynie
Dana Tryde & Eric Michielssen
Gordon Jones
Pete and Cathy Herstedt

Why Wilderness First Aid?

By Nan Cole, Santa Lucia Chapter Executive Committee

I'm lying on the ground face down on a trail halfway up Mt. Whitney, with blood on my head and a bruise on my collarbone. I hear two male voices off in the distance. They notice me collapsed and tell me that they are trained in Wilderness First Aid and ask, "May we help you?" I weakly reply, "Yeah," and explain that I felt extremely dehydrated and dizzy, fell and hit a rock. I tell them I can't move.

One man gently holds my head, while the other examines my body head-to-toe for other injuries. They carefully roll me onto my back after checking to see if I had any spinal injury.

They notice my heart rate is fast and I'm breathing heavy, even after several minutes of lying down. We are far from phone communication, but they are well equipped with a satellite device that contacts authorities to aid in my evacuation off the mountain. They stay with me until more help arrives.

Or so the simulation said.

What actually happened was I participated in a Wilderness First Aid simulation as part of a 16-hour course organized by NOLS Wilderness Medicine.

As a volunteer hike leader for the Sierra Club, I've gone through a First Aid and CPR course that prepared me for medical events that take place in the urban setting. I'm now

preparing for hikes that are more isolated, without cell reception, or would require several hours for help to arrive or transport a patient.

Care for patients changes when you have an hour or more hike time for help to arrive, or you have to evaluate, treat or evacuate the patient. I practiced all sorts of treatment methods for sprains, dislocations, cuts, gashes, broken bones, shock, strokes, anaphylaxis and a whole host of other ailments.

My favorite part of the course was getting to play out emergency scenarios, being a rescuer and being a victim. It

was incredibly useful to get hands on experience evaluating injuries (both visible and not so obvious) and feeling prepared to offer basic first aid.

I've totally repacked my personal first aid kits and learned so many tips and tricks to help people in need. And I love that I can offer my services to the community! If you are interested in taking the training, check out: www.nols.edu/

Nan Cole is a yoga teacher and hike leader in SLO County. She leads monthly yoga hikes in and around the Central Coast.



Sacramento Bee video

This way to jail The author and friends leave the Governor's office.

Thank You, Sprog

by Carmen Bouquin, Sierra Student Coalition

Attending the Sierra Student Coalition Summer Program Camp last July was an honor and a life changing experience ("Off to Sprog," July). This was a climate justice camp that focused on the people most adversely affected by climate change, frontline and marginalized communities.

For a week, we huddled in a cabin and attended workshops and had discussions about oppression, poverty, race, sex and other societal factors that play a role in climate change. We discussed how these issues are all intertwined and the result of root causes such as capitalism and colonialization.

Since Sprog, I have been able to use these perspectives and connections at the Youth Climate March organized by This Is Zero Hour and the Sunrise Movement. We lobbied in the U.S. Senate offices for candidates to take a pledge to stop taking money from fossil fuel companies. In August, I was able to accompany other Sprog attendees in Sacramento as part of Brown's Last Chance (above), leading up to the People's Climate March in September. We protested, and were arrested, outside Governor Brown's office advocating for no new fossil fuel permits and a just transition from fossil fuels.

Sprog has given me the tools to approach the climate movement in a way that helps me lift up the voices of the people most affected by the changing of the earth. This summer, I have been surrounded and empowered by youth rising, holding institutions and decision-makers accountable.

Stay tuned for local San Luis Obispo County actions on the youth climate justice front.

Volumes of Pleasure Bookshoppe
A General Bookstore Specifically for Thinkers
Carroll Leslie & Barbara Strauss
BOOKSELLERS
1016 Los Osos Valley Rd. Suite 10, Carlsbad
Los Osos, California 93402 (805) 528-5565

LA COSTA GRILL
Happy Hour
4-6PM
Ta Corona
\$2.50
EACH
TACO / CORONA
168 Station Way, Arroyo Grande, CA 93420 | (805) 474-8797
(next to Arroyo Grande Post Office) www.costagrillag.com

Outings

continued from page 12

leash are welcome. Extreme heat, above 85 degrees, will postpone to a future date. We will meet at Washburn Day Use Area. 1.5 miles north of Cambria to carpool. Contact Carlos, 805-546-0317.

Sun., Sept. 23rd, 9:00 am, Johnson Ranch Open Space and Irish Hills Natural Reserve. Explore the trail connecting Johnson Ranch and the Irish Hills Reserves. Total distance is 6 miles, with a 700 ft. gain, taking about 3 hours. Meet at the Johnson Ranch Open Space trail head, at the turn out to the intersection of South Higuera Street and Ontario Road, adjacent to Hwy 101, south of SLO. From there we will shuttle to the Irish Hills Reserve trail head at the south end of Madonna Road in San Luis Obispo (ten minutes by car). Afterward, we will shuttle drivers back to their cars at Irish Hills. Bring water, snacks, dress in layers for changing weather. Hat and sturdy shoes advised. Plants, animals, and geology of the area will be discussed. Bill, 805-459-2103.

Sun., Sept. 30th, 8:30 am, Hazard Peak via Barranca Loop, Montaña de Oro State Park. Meet at Islay Creek Trailhead in MDO. Celebrate autumn on this lovely trail! Approximately 9 miles, 1,700 feet elevation gain and loss. Moderately strenuous and moderately paced. We'll walk along Islay Creek trail to the top of the Barranca Trail, then

west to Hazard Peak summit. Return along the Hazard Peak Trail. There will be a short walk along the paved road from the Hazard Peak Trailhead to our starting point at the Islay Creek trail-head. Be prepared for hot weather, but dress for whatever we get! Bring at least 2.5 liters of water per person, lunch and snacks. Lugsole boots are recommended for the gravelly trails in MDO. Sorry, dogs not allowed on any of the MDO trails. Contact Lisa, 310-864-4679.

Sat., Oct. 13th, 9:30 am, Easy family-friendly hike to Oso Flaco Lake and beach. Walk through beautiful riparian habitat, over the bridge, through the dunes to the beach, a 4-mile roundtrip. Wear layers and sun protection, and bring water. From Santa Maria, take Main Street/Hwy 166 exit west from Hwy 101, drive 8 miles to Hwy 1 in Guadalupe, turn right/north on Hwy 1, drive @ 3 miles to Oso Flaco Lake Road, turn west to the end of the road, park in lot. From Arroyo Grande, drive south on Hwy 1 to Oso Flaco Lake Road and turn west, go to the end of the road and park in lot. There may be a \$5 fee per car. No dogs allowed at Oso Flaco. Contact Andrea, 805-934-2792.

Sun., Oct. 14th, 9:00 am - 12:00 noon, Autumn in Atascadero. Join us on the new trail at Three Bridges Oak Preserve. It starts in a lovely blue oak woodland, ascends into chaparral, and ends in stands of

madrone and views to the east. 4 miles up and back, ascending 800 ft. Learn the easy to identify plant and animal species. To reach the trailhead, use a smart phone for guidance because there are several wind-y streets involved. Make sure to bring water and snacks. Sturdy shoes, sunscreen, hats, and layered clothing are recommended. No RSVP needed. Dogs on a leash. Contact Bill, 805-459 2103. Rain or threat of rain cancels.

Sat., Oct. 20th, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. Historic Walk: Old Town Paso Robles. A guided stroll through downtown Paso Robles past 1880s storefronts, hotels and saloons. Discover the city's beginnings and stories of its pioneers. Meet at the corner of Spring and 10th Streets. Contact Joe, 805-549-0355.

Sat., Oct. 20th, 8:00 am. Twitchell, Stone Ridge, and Kirk Creek (aka Vincente) Loop. It's a distance to



The Sierra Club Needs You!

Become an Outings Leader

- Lead hikes and camping trips
- Introduce others to nature
- Explore the outdoors
- Make new friends
- Protect the environment
- Get healthy exercise



John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club, in Yosemite

For further information contact:

Bill Waycott, Outings Chair
(806) 459-2103 or
bill.waycott@gmail.com

drive and hike, so we will use a lot of the daylight. This is a loop hike with a 2.5-mile car shuttle. Starting at the north end, just past Limekiln. The first 1.5 to 2 hours is a strenuous climb up a trail that is not switch backed. This hike should be regarded as strenuous for the 2,000 ft. elevation gain at the beginning. The rest of the loop is on less steep trails. About 11 miles and 3,000 feet of elevation gain. There will be poison oak. Bring lunch, water and expect to be on the trail six or seven hours. Meet at the Washburn Day Use Area 1.5 miles north of Cambria to carpool. Extreme

heat will postpone. Dogs on leash welcome. Please call Carlos if you plan to participate, 805-546-0317.

Sun., Oct. 21st, 10:00 a.m. to noon, Cerro Cabrillo Peak. A hike up the third of nine prehistoric volcanic peaks in San Luis Obispo. This 3-mile hike has an elevation gain of 900 feet, the tallest peak in Morro Bay State Park, with 360-degree views at the top. We will meet at the Quarry Trailhead's gravel parking lot. Difficulty is moderate. Bring water. Contact Nan at cole.nancy.j@gmail.com.

A Will is a Way

Make a commitment to the next generation by remembering the Sierra Club in your will. Your support will help others preserve the intricate balance of nature.

Contact:
John Calaway
Director of Gift Planning at
(415) 977-5639 or e-mail:
planned.giving@sierraclub.org

SIERRA CLUB
FOUNDED 1892

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

(photo: Dave Black)

Sierra Club

Santa Lucia Chapter
P. O. Box 15755
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 84
SAN LUIS OBISPO
CA 93401

Outings and Activities Calendar

Seller of travel registration information: CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.

All our hikes and activities are open to all Club members and the general public. Please bring drinking water to all outings and optionally a lunch. Sturdy footwear is recommended. 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 18. If you have any suggestions for hikes or outdoor activities, questions about the Chapter's outing policies, or would like to be an outings leader, call Outings Chair Bill Waycott, (805) 459-2103. For information on a specific outing, please call the listed outing leader.

Sun., Sept. 9th, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm, San Luis Obispo History Walk: Old San Luis Cemetery. Guided stroll past gravesites of pioneers like Angel, Murray, and Sinsheimer, Civil War vets, to the landmark pyramid. Learn the stories of the founders of San Luis Obispo. Meet in south parking lot adjacent to the pyramid, at 2890 South Higuera Street. Contact Joe, 805-549-0355.

Sat., Sept. 15th, 9:30 am, Guadalupe/Paradise Beach. Moderate, six-mile hike along pristine Guadalupe Beach to Mussel Rock and beyond. Duration about 5-6 hrs. Bring water, lunch, windbreaker, hat, and dress in layers for varying weather. Eats afterward for those interested. From Hwy 101 in Santa Maria, take Main St./Hwy 166 west to end at Guadalupe Beach.

Meet near interpretive signs and picnic tables. No dogs allowed at Guadalupe Beach. Rain cancels. Contact Andrea, 805-934-2792.

Sat., Sept. 22nd, 8:30 am, Cruikshank to the Old Salmon Creek Station. This hike takes you on portions of two rugged but scenic trails in the Silver Peak Wilderness. If the coast is clear there are some stunning vistas looking down from the high

points on our trek. This is a strenuous 9-mile hike, with 2,500 feet of elevation gain. This is a one-way route with a car shuttle between the trailheads. We will encounter poison oak along these trails. Dogs on



This is a partial listing of Outings offered by our chapter. Please check the web page www.santalucia.sierraclub.org for the most up-to-date listing of activities.

OUTINGS continued on page 11

Village Creek Plaza

168 La Costa Grill
(805) 474-8797

170 Cutting Edge Salon
(805) 481-3126

172 Bend Chiropractic
(805) 474-4747

174 House 2 Home Interiors
(805) 489-5233

168 - 174 Station Way, Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Along Arroyo Grande Creek next to AG Post Office

Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park. September 23-25; October 21-23. Join us for a 3-day, 3-island, live-aboard tour of the Channel Islands. Hike windswept trails bordered with blazing wildflowers. Kayak rugged coastlines, marvel at pristine waters teeming with frolicking seals and sea lions and an occasional whale. Watch for the highly endangered island fox. Look for reminders of the Chumash people who lived on these islands for thousands of years. Or just relax at sea. All cruises depart from Santa Barbara. \$675 cost includes assigned bunk and all meals. A park ranger/naturalist will help lead hikes and give evening programs. Kayaking overseen by our concessionaire; all hikes on trails, class 1 terrain. This is a fund-raiser to support the Sierra Club political program in California. To reserve space send a \$100 deposit to "California Sierra Club PAC" to Joan Jones Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732. For information: Joan Jones Holtz: jholtzhl@aol.com; 626-443-0706. Wayne Vollaire: avollaire1@gmail.com; 909-327-6825.