Editor’s note: On July 22, Sierra Club Director Michael Brune posted an article titled “Pulling Down Our Monuments,” that asserted “it’s time to take down some of our own monuments, starting with some truth-telling about the Sierra Club’s early history.” That includes the club’s icon John Muir who “was not immune to the racism peddled by many in the early conservation movement.” Of course, it generated some criticism, but also praise. Below are excerpts, read the whole Op-ed here: https://tinyurl.com/ClubLooksshadow

By Michael Brune
The Sierra Club is a 128-year-old organization with a complex history, some of which has caused significant and immeasurable harm. As defenders of Black life pull down Confederate monuments across the country, we must also take this moment to reexamine our past and our substantial role in perpetuating white supremacy.

As the most iconic figure in the Sierra Club’s early history, John Muir eventually came to learn more about Native Americans, to openly admit to his own white privilege and to recognize his mistakes, and he left a rich legacy, an incredible trove of natural beauty. Now it’s time to make sure it was made for all of us.

The Times editorial on July 24, which also said “good for the Sierra Club for admitting to its white privilege beginnings and starting to repair it via ‘racially and ethnically diverse leadership,”

The Forest Service’s display at last year’s Ventura County Fair. The Protecting America’s Wilderness Act contains six previously separate bills that together recognize more than 1.3 million acres as Wilderness across the West, including a new 400-mile Condor National Trail. (Photo by Condor John) To understand the scope of this important act, go to: https://tinyurl.com/WildfireActionSheet

Wild bills can’t be killed

A coalition of major environmental groups opposes ExxonMobil using trucks to transport offshore oil to refineries, and Santa Barbara County’s final environmental impact report released in July gives them no comfort that is anywhere near safe.

No doubt the county will hear from students to businesses to city councils that our lands in the decades or centuries before they became national parks. Its authors make it clear, too, the fact that only people insulated from systemic racism and brutality can afford to focus solely on preserving wilderness.

As writer Julian Brave NoiseCat says, “The environment is no longer a white sanctuary. The messy business of society, power, and race is everywhere and intertwined.”

The Sierra Club that I want to belong to not only acknowledges that reality, it also works to counter racism and exclusion wherever it occurs.

To begin with, we are redesigning our leadership continued on page 3

A beautiful scene at Matilija Falls in the spring, worth the 9.6 mile “tough hike” up Matilija Canyon where you’ll find pools, waterfalls, and more. Perhaps the Lady of the Lake? (© Photo by Pete Solfires)
Setbacks...literally

By Katie Davis

Given the undue influence of oil lobbyists in Sacramento and their insistence on allowing drilling right next to people’s houses, it is gratifying to see AB345, a bill calling for setbacks from homes, schools, and hospitals. It’s making progress through passage in the Assembly and a hearing in the Senate Natural Resources Committee. Research proves oil spills are still costly, in terms of both health and economic impact. A study by the National Academy of Sciences shows that oil off the coast of California results in 5,000 illnesses and 90 deaths per year. It’s making progress through passage in the Assembly and a hearing in the Senate Natural Resources Committee.

No relief from carbon

By Sean Cummings

For months, climate experts have urged governments to center renewable energy and infrastructure in their stimulus packages to avoid the drop in global emissions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic as a chance to transition to a greener future. However, as we take steps to restart the economy, we must ensure that we do not repeat the mistakes of the past.

In 2016, a Crimson oil pipeline, operating at least 44,000 gallons of oil down Ventura’s Hall Canyon, flowing near a high school. An early morning resident taking a walk alerted officials, and it was stopped before it could reach the gorge, estimated to be 6,000-17,000 gallons per day. The public should know that an oil spill happens in California, we hold those responsible accountable and require a thorough and rapid cleanup and restoration.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife is responsible for the oil spill in Hall Canyon. The public should know that an oil spill happens in California, we hold those responsible accountable and require a thorough and rapid cleanup and restoration. Thomas Call of the state Fish & Wildlife office.

The oil spill is the result of an operational error, and the responsible party has taken steps to prevent future incidents. The spill was caused by an operational error, which resulted in the release of oil into an underground storage tank. The responsible party has taken steps to prevent future incidents. The spill was caused by an operational error, which resulted in the release of oil into an underground storage tank.

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Club presidents show diversity at the top

Sierra Club has elected a new national Board of Directors for the upcoming board term, 2020-2021 and tapped Ramón Cruz of Puerto Rico to become the first Latino President in the organization’s 128-year history.

Club’s movement toward equity continues from page 1

The challenges we face are daunting. We are constantly grappling with the-looking at the intersection of sustainability, environmental and energy policy, urban planning, and climate change. He has worked in the public sector as the Deputy Director of the state environmental regulatory agency in Puerto Rico and held senior positions at the Environmental Defense Fund, Pacific Institute for New York City and Institute for Transportation and Development Policy.

Confronting...

I recognize that my term comes during the enormously difficult moment of the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as during the dark threat to the environment of the Trump administration.

Tax relief offered

Those who itemize deductions can’t double-up on this new feature, but if you are among the 95% of folks who take the standard deduction, you can add up to $300 – and you can still claim the standard deduction. More detail, go to: https://tinyurl.com/CARESAct

Santa Barbara, Ventura gardens open

There’s no itemized deduction, but a reduction in your Adjusted Gross Income (AGI).

Serra statue put in storage

The statue of Father Serra in front of Ventura City Hall has been removed, and is currently being stored at a home new at the Ventura Mission.

 pads

The public is welcome to our programs and events. For more details go to:

https://tinyurl.com/HiddenNature

https://tinyurl.com/SBGroupBlog

https://www.Meetup.com/SierraClubVentura

https://TWITTER.com/SBSierraClub

https://www.venturalandtrust.org/events

CONJOE GROUP

• Events, outings and meetings - sign up if you wish to sign up at ConjoGroup@gmail.com

ARGUELLO GROUP

Our North County Group will keep you informed on our Facebook page www.facebook.com/SierraClubArguelloGroup.

Other events and information on this eastern Ventura County Group from Hugh Warren, 341-6295 mail@hkwarren.net

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

www.lospadres.com

www.serraventura@Gmail.com

www.serraventura@Gmail.com
I'll never buy a gas car again

By Katie Davis

In honor of National Drive Electric week, this is my declaration I will never buy a gas car again. It's an easy call.

Having driven electric cars for a decade, I would not give up the quiet, flame-free driving experience, the convenience of charging at home, the freedom from gas stations and oil changes, and the peace of mind that comes from kicking the addiction to oil.

My family has gone through several different kinds of electric cars, and my whole extended family now drives only electric. My college-age son has never even driven a gas car.

It's getting easier and more affordable to go electric. Used electric cars are a new option, and new ones have more range, with public chargers throughout the country, which opens up long-distance travel. California offers grants and generous rebates for lower income utilities. Utilities like SCE and PG&E offer additional rebates. The cost for electricity is much cheaper than gasoline.

The annual week is Sept 26-Oct 4, and the Sierra Club is a co-sponsor.

Rebates: The federal tax credit is applied when you buy or lease an EV. You must apply for state and utility rebates which range from $750-$10,000 depending on eligibility. Be sure to research rebates whether you are buying new, used or leasing. You can practically get a free car. Electric Drive 805 has all the links:
https://tinyurl.com/Rebates4EV

Home Charging: If you can park near an outlet, just plug in and charge an EV. Best to do it overnight as costs are less and it's with a typical 110 outlet. It's faster if you can install a home charging station (240 outlet); you cost $300-$800 plus an electrician's time. Look into rebates for this too.
https://tinyurl.com/EVhomecharger

Public Charging: Download the ChargePoint app on your phone to find places to charge when you're on the road. Common chargers locally are via ChargePoint or EVgo.com. Sign up for a free account and get a card for convenience. Cost is 14/20-23 the cost of a gallon of gas for the same amount.

Note that Tesla has its own network, which other brands can't tap however, there are adaptors for some non-Tesla models but not the Supercharger megad. Other links:
https://tinyurl.com/EVCharger

Electricity is a subsidiary of Volkswagen, established in 2016 by the automaker to offset emissions in the wake of the Volkswagen emissions scandal.
https://www.Electricity.com

Get Solar

The Community Environmental Council (CEC) is launching another Solarize Santa Barbara deal that is thanks to the ownership of Miramar Solar.

It's a community-led group purchasing program for solar and battery that must be crushed at all costs.
https://tinyurl.com/LeasedV8

Used Cars: As an example, a used Nissan Leaf can be found for $4000 - $5000. Use the “advanced search” feature on Auto Trader, and select, fuel type “electric”:
https://www.autotrader.com

Make Drive Electric Electric Week last 12 months

The wildly enthusiastic and well-attended events showing off electric vehicles during September’s National Drive Electric Week Sept 26 to Oct 4 will be modified this year to either static displays or webinars, no thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Typically, you’ll see the Sierra Club and Santa Barbara Community Environmental Council conducting these events at various locations such as SB, Goleta, Solvang, Carpinteria, Ventura and Oxnard.

During this year’s week, CEC’s Mike Chiaoco said the SB static shows and a webinar are not yet finalized, but you can find details closer to Sept. 26 in newspapers, social media, and the link below.

It’s a similar situation in Ventura County, noted our chapter’s Transportation Director Kent Bullard.

“We are working on providing several alternative EV educational opportunities for 2020,” said Bullard, “One that’s already been nailed down is on Friday, Oct. 2, from noon - 4pm at the Santa Clarita County Government Center for a non-contact, social distancing EV parking and learning opportunity.” Details are here: https://tinyurl.com/593wv3v

Besides the Sierra Club and CEC, organizations that are working together include the Ventura County Regional Energy Alliance and Air Pollution Control District along with the solar Asia organization for all details and educational materials here:
www.ElectricDrive805.org

By Jon Ullman

Recently, I saw a social media post from a friend lamenting that people weren’t focusing on climate change because of Coronavirus.

There’s no question climate change has been put on the back burner. Hauana’s Mauna Loa observatory is currently reading 414 ppm of CO2 (350 ppm is considered ‘safe’). The CO2 curve hasn’t flattened, it’s trending back up (see story pg). Both climate change and viruses are environmental factors that affect our lives as markets and jobs. Math and science allow us to graph the curves we need to flatten them.

The problem is that Republicans aren’t paying attention to the long-term relationships between the two. They are choosing to ignore the Coronavirus and climate change graphs because the curves don’t impact our financial markets. But as we’ve seen in the past two months, they do so at my (our) peril.

It was clear in May that the Coronavirus curve had not flattened but had increased. Nevertheless, Trump and the GOP began a coordinated denial machine so at their own (and our) peril.

To learn more tap into this local webinar:
www.electricdrive805.org/webinars

GOP ignoring graphs

The Republican denial of Coronavirus perfectly mirrors their denial of climate change. But we’ve wanted decades with their denial and inaction.

We get it. They are afraid that the people will lose jobs, and maybe it will require us to buy less, be more efficient and travel less. But the climate isn’t going to care about the weather, solar and wind and batteries and anything that helps to reduce carbon. But even if we flatten the climate curve, we’ll see widespread misery and death and ultimately a collapse of financial markets.

Many have fretted that Coronavirus has caused us to lose our focus on the climate. But if it happens, it has taught us a valuable lesson that must be crushed at all costs. It’s a similar situation in<br>
Biking is on a roll everywhere
During the quarantine, bike riding is flourishing, especially with greater numbers of people because indoor activities are limited by these days. Within the city of Ventura, it’s up 70% in 2020 which is, from January to June, 241,000 bike trips of regular users. That’s confirmed by bike shops where there’s often a waiting line for repairs. Notably, new sales of electric bikes “have taken off,” said Robin Towers, owner of Drogo (DrogoElectric.com) in Ventura, who said 50% of new bikes sold are electric. The reasons are great in Santa Barbara and besides its electric bike specialty, also deals in electric golf carts.

New roads being paved, reducing emissions, bikes are fun and healthy, just ask Santa Barbara City Council member Christy Weir, who’s been posting her rides on Facebook with her husband Tim, exploring the region and enjoying the quiet. Here’s some of her favorites:
1. QuiVista Bike Trail, one of my favorites that parallels the Ventura River. It is a well-paved, scenic bike path that follows the former railroad right-of-way. Views of the river and valleys and hills are awesome any time of year.
2. Emma Wood bike path is newly repaved and so close to the Pacific Ocean that you can hear the waves and smell the ocean air. I enjoy watching the surfers and gulls, and see deer grazing on the uncrowded shore.
3. Canada Larga Road off Hwy 101 and Route 166. “We recognize it is a very special Sustaining member in the Circle:
By John Hankins
Well worth getting used to Zoom meetings and webinar events during the quarantine, including our learning curve isn’t flat … in contrast to the rise of Covid and decline of national leadership.
Please join us; see Group News on page 3 for contacts and links where you can get involved. While we are not now conducting our free outings (possibly resuming in September), we encourage all to get outdoors despite the pandemic. If you’d like to donate (it helps a lot and the money stays here at home), do not turn the page and go directly to: https://tinyurl.com/VCbikePlan
July 16: Goleta School Board votes unanimously to reject ExxonMobil’s plan to truck offshore oil on Highway 101. “We recognize the inherent risk,” commented Trustee Luz Reyes-Martinez who is also on the city’s Santa Barbara Group executive committee.
July 11: Black Lives Matter hearing via livestream during SB County Board of Supervisors meeting, item D-4, Hearing on Racial Equality, and the Criminal Justice System. Numerous Sierra Club members participated. Most participants favor creation of civil review board, transparency by Sheriff, reducing jail population and guards, and diverting misdemeanor offenses. Hearing is recorded on Channel 20 or via YouTube (CSBTV20).
June 3: SOLAR COOKING with Pat Browne sponsored by Ventura Sierra Club and 350.org Ventura County chapter. Focused on practical info like types, cost, solar etc. Chair Katie Browne sponsored by Ventura Sierra Club. Comments may also be sent to SB County Assn. of Governments, Attn: Jared Carvalho by phone (805) 961-8900 or email: jcarvalho@sbcag.org
June 2: Virtual Town Hall with state’s CaveClimb department in which Sierra Club participated to stop oil projects and insisting no cyclic steering, no drilling through drinking water aquifers and monitoring of numerous effects.
New rooftops cabins under construction at the Yak Hotel, along the Manuslu Trail, Nepal; an “expanding pantheon of gurus.” Many team club’s national and international “Outings with a Cause” are on hold, but check the website: www.SierraClub.org/page/317. Photos by Steve J. Hachury, intrepid hike leader. Check out his website at: www.StevenVest.com
The ocean is a common destination along the Ventura bike path. Bikes ridden by Council member Christy Weir (and family and friends) is taking a break near Surfer’s Point. She has been posting her Ventura local bike rides on Facebook for weeks. (Photo by Christy Weir)
The Santa Barbara has its own bike plan too: https://tinyurl.com/SBbikePlan
Before you go into the forest, check the alerts and closures (you may also subscribe to them) here: https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/los-padres-notice

STRESSED OUT?

By Carla Bollinger
The world is suffering great stress, loss of life and economic resources caused by the Coronavirus. We are living through climate change disasters, political discord, human rights’ loss of resources to support growing over-population, and shrinking open space that is threatening survival of wildlife, biodiversity, and quality of life for humans. We all need some soul quenching “Wells.” Here’s a list that affects our local areas:

- Rim of the Valley Preservation Act would add 19,100 acres annexed to the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area as a wildland open space corridor through the Simi Hills and into Los Angeles area. It is now up for passage as part of the Protecting America’s Wilderness Act (see story pg 1).

- Birth of three coyote kittens in the Santa Monica Mountains, discovered by Nat’l Park Service Ranger/Biologist Jeff Sikich, who believes they arelx homes) became Hidden Creek Parkland, 257-acres, in the Santa Susana Mountains. The battle since 2007 was a major win for many, as it helped save over 400 coast live oak, black walnut trees, a rare black cottonwood woodland, and considerately more native plant-plains and wildlife habitat at the confluence of Mission and Bowens Creeks, tributary to the LA River.

- The Angeles and San Fernando Valley Sierra Club chapters were major players in the fight that culminated in the Mountains Recreational Conservation Association acquiring this land with connection to the Antonovich Regional Park at Joghul Ranch, 2,560-acres.

CELEBRATE ‘SOUL QUENCHING WINS’

by Carla Bollinger

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some camps reopen

Many of the camps located near the Los Padres National Forest have been difficult to get to since high water levels. It is now open, and another. And be careful with fire.

Backcountry trails don’t just happen. They are built with loving care and

Some camps reopen

All camps in the Los Padres National Forest are open except for group campsites, which are subject to a user fee, a fee cannot be collected. A new sign posted at the first kiosk makes this clear, but you must use an existing road turn-out and be completely off the pavement.

Please Be Safe

Please observe social distancing. And if an area is too crowded, pick another. And be careful with fire.

Day Use Fees

Day use fees are not required for roadside parking outside of developed camps or day use areas.

Travel Ventura River

on a drone adventure

The Ventura River Near Shell Road, see it as the crow flies! (Photo courtesy of Friends of the Ventura River)

Have any Ventura residents gone up or down the Ventura River between the ocean and upper Ojai watershed?

The upcoming drone trip will take you there, seeing the river from a flight path “as the crow flies.”

“Ways of Water” is an hour long video filmed and edited by CFROG advisor Jimmy Young of Ventura as a gift to water protectors and now available to local groups which have mission statements that include the protection and management of our local waters and native species of flora and fauna. That boundary includes Sierra Club, Ventura Land Trust, Patagonia, Surfrider and ChannelKeeper, among many others.

In draft form, the video provides an incredible birds eye view of the Ventura River system from Matilija Creek to the Pacific Ocean. You will see from above the Matilija Dam, Ojai Quarry, the Robles Dam and diversion canal, the former USA Petrochem oil refinery property, the river mouth, canyon and more.

CFROG (Climate First Replacing Oil and Gas) and the producer hope the video piece will aid in the promotion of the Matilija Dam removal, creation of the Ventura River Parkway, green use of the PetroChem property and restoration of the entire riparian system. If groups identify footage they want to use to promote their vision, they must contact the producer at: CFROG@CFROG.com

All footage was obtained with an FAA registered drone. Young practices environmentally responsible methods and follows the North American Nature Photography Association’s “Principles of Ethical Field Practices.” Young is the owner of McConnell’s Fine Ice Creams of Ventura and is on CFROG’s advisory board.

Here is the link “Ways of Water” https://tinyurl.com/WaysOfWater

Local lands website

There have never been a more important and positive time to get involved and explore our regional and national lands. Federal, state, county, and city public lands.

Anew website: “50 Great Public Lands Destinations – Santa Barbara and Beyond” launched in late July to help everyone discover new and wonderful places and adventures, all within 300 miles of the Sierra Club’s Los Padre Chapter area.

While teaching the Public Lands class at UCSB, I learned that a lot of my students from throughout the state and nation did not know about the tremendous public land opportunities all around us,” notes Deborah Williams, the author of the book and CSU professor. “Many thanks to all who sent emails and our partners at Climate Hub and Los Padres Forest Watch,” Brooks said. “The Sierra Club” supports this tool but was not actively involved except for members who Supervisors last year, providing habitat connections and wildlife movement corridors from the Santa Monica Mountains to the Los Padres National Forest, and east to the Simi Hills.

Editor’s note: Carla is a Sierra Club Member and Public Land Alliance Network/PLAN Director. To learn more, email: plan@sierraclub.org

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Presence of history

Greetings Friends:

Growing up on the historic Spanish land grant which made up Rancho Santa Ana was an unbelievable experience for me. Riding horses over the land, helping to work the land, reaching my maturity on this land, forever I hold the land close to me.

Native American villages were erected on the land, Joaquin Murrieta (Mexican bandit) camped there, Depression era farmers plowed the ground, the landscape carried travelers through it, a large lake (Lake Casmir) flooded a portion, and Johnny Cash sang on the land ... just a few examples of its rich, rich history.

And decades later I walked through this land, humbled by the history. My childhood home, my family’s ranks, my ancestor’s roots are deep.

I was so delighted but maybe stupid, for the big cat could have easily jumped down on us, but she sensed the gentleness of our walk.

I swam in the creek that bordered our ranch, Santa Ana Creek to the east and Coyote Creek to the west. I walked over the nearby ridges, Laguna Ridge to the south and Superior Ridge to the north. And towering over it all was the 5000-foot Whiteledge Peak, which I viewed out my bedroom window each morning I woke up, my sacred mountain.

I still visit the site of my childhood home on a hill known as The Pine Grove, which my dad planted, flashbacks to a younger me. I feel close to my father who is buried there, and I feel, I see, I hear, I touch all which is important to me on this land.

When I walk across the land, can the past see me, can the past hear me, can the past feel me? I feel the presence of all that miles of the prominent ridge known as Pine Mountain stretching from Highway 33 to Reyes Peak.

Hearing of the project, Sierra Club member Carla Bollinger and her husband decided to visit Pine Mountain before preparing public comment letter. It was an adventure to escape ‘living’ in my home office-work space,” Carla is also the Director of PLAN, the Public Land Alliance Network.

“We drove State Route 33 north (Ojai Hwy), continued north (Mariposa Hwy) to our gateway and high-oxygen, wonderland visit. The Matilija poppies were in bloom, translucent dancers decorating the passageway. On the way back we stopped at the Wheeler Gorge Visitor Center with a meticulously informative wildlife/birds/nature display. Take the drive, stop on the terraces, island and take photos,” she advised.

To read the project proposal and submit a comment, visit the project webpage and these other links: https://tinyurl.com/ESAattack

Deaton ForestWatch: www.LPFW.org/pine

From ForestWatch’s webinar on this project: https://tinyurl.com/PineMTWebinar

Wheeler Gorge reopens

Los Padres Forest Watch, the Sierra Club and many others oppose the proposed project to try and stop the biodiversity hotpot ... It would allow the logging of centuries-old trees, up to 10 feet in diameter, and the clearance of rare old-growth chaparral along six miles of the prominent ridge known as Pine Mountain stretching from Highway 33 to Reyes Peak.

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More than a hiking club

By Kathryn Phillips, Director
Sierra Club California

A friend who worked for a local chapter of the Sierra Club about 35 years ago tells a story that illustrates one of the challenges of change. As the story goes, my friend heard a volunteer say loudly into the phone: “Conservation? We don’t do conservation ... We are a hiking club!”

This is so Sierra Club in that there are so many different interpretations of what we are, even among our members. Since the Club’s founding in 1892, members have joined for the hikes and backpacking trips, and members who join to make a difference for the environment, and some want to do both.

What has changed over time is that making a difference for the environment has expanded as the world has changed. In its earliest days, the Club’s founders were all about getting people into the Sierra Nevada to build a constituency for protecting that magnificent Range of Light. Later, members moved into actively lobbying to protect important natural areas.

In the last three decades, Sierra Club volunteers and staff have broadly expanded the sorts of environmental issues that we’ve focused on, especially in California. Here we still work to preserve forests, deserts, and coastal areas, but we’re increasingly adding in work about toxics, air pollution, water pollution and climate change.

In the last five years — and especially since the inauguration of the most divisive president in U.S. history — the Club has incorporated into our agenda support for policies that recognize the systemic inequities that prevent people from fully participating in civic engagement. We have supported policies that protect Dreamers, provide sanctuary for undocumented immigrants, ensure health access, and protect workers from toxic exposure and other unhealthy and unjust work conditions. We have supported raising the minimum wage and lowering the number of big corporations that escape paying their fair share in taxes.

In 2020, we supported eight bills identified by the California Legislative Black Caucus as needed to help end systemic racism in California. One of those bills, Assembly Constitutional Amendment 5, flew through the legislature and will allow voters in November to roll back restrictions on affirmative action put in place in 1996.

But I do occasionally get emails from members who feel we’ve strayed too far from our original purpose: protecting the outdoors.

So why have we expanded the types of policies that demand our environmental organization’s support? We don’t just explore, enjoy and protect the outdoors. We live in the world. Lately, we have been reawakened to the level of cruelty and bigotry targeted at Black Americans. It’s forced us to look inside ourselves and to change what we do to address the moment.

We haven’t given up on protecting the outdoors. But if the world is set up so that Black people are prevented from birdwatching, or murdered by a policeman over a $20 bill, there’s something deeply wrong with that world. Black Lives Matter.

As a large grassroots organization with the power to alert and influence, we have a responsibility to expand our policy portfolio, to change again, to evolve. We are more than just a hiking club.