Coastal Commission Wants Local Coastal Plan Updated Now

by Jack McCurdy

For more than a year and a half, the California Coastal Commission has waited for San Luis Obispo County to implement 165 recommendations for updating its Local Coastal Plan, the key planning law that protects the area’s beaches, habitat, sensitive viewsheds, cultural resources, agricultural lands and other coastal assets. But now the Commission may have had enough delays.

After listening to a united contingency of environmental groups urging strong action before a supportive crowd of more than 200, the Commission asked its staff to recommend ways for dealing with the county, including a possible report to the California Legislature, a request for “legislative action necessary to assure effective implementation” of the Local Coastal Plan (LCP), or sanctions. These could involve possibly holding up the processing of future LCP amendments that the county seeks until the Commission’s recommendations are addressed. The staff’s recommendations and options for responding to the county’s handling of the LCP update are expected to be presented to the Commission at its May 6-9 meeting in Monterey.

Meantime, the Commission by consensus offered the county a further opportunity to explain why, as a staff report put it, “few actual substantive changes to the LCP have been accomplished to date.” Although county officials appeared and spoke at the March 5 meeting at the Embassy Suites Hotel, their explanations did not seem to satisfy the Commission.

Maria Elena Durazo, an alternate commissioner, remarked that she had heard the accusations of its foot-dragging, but “I didn’t hear any responses from the county” as to “why the county has not responded to a number of issues and recommendations” from the Commission. All I can conclude is that we need some very strong measures to push the county, and sooner than later.”

County Planning Director Victor Holanda said updating the LCP is “extremely time-consuming because of the involvement of the public.” He blamed the county’s delay on a lack of staffing due to a dearth of affordable housing, even though the county routinely approves new developments without requiring affordable housing as part of them.

Later, when asked by Commission Chair Mike Reilly why the county is “silent on so many recommendations,” Holanda said the county’s “financial and staff resources are limited,” even though state money has been provided for the update, and “if we should have been more diligent, it is our fault.”

Supervisor Shirley Bianchi said the county’s effort was being portrayed in “black and white—it ignores the gray in the middle. It’s not that bad.” Her remarks were focused not on the LCP but on extolling the conservation framework proposed by the Hearst Corporation for the Hearst Ranch, and Bianchi also unjustly chastized those critical of the Hearst Framework as “black and white—it ignores the gray in the middle. It’s not that bad.”

Holanda said updating the LCP is “extremely time-consuming because of the involvement of the public.” He blamed the county’s delay on a lack of staffing due to a dearth of affordable housing, even though the county routinely approves new developments without requiring affordable housing as part of them.

Later, when asked by Commission Chair Mike Reilly why the county is “silent on so many recommendations,” Holanda said the county’s “financial and staff resources are limited,” even though state money has been provided for the update, and “if we should have been more diligent, it is our fault.”

Supervisor Shirley Bianchi said the county’s effort was being portrayed in “black and white—it ignores the gray in the middle. It’s not that bad.” Her remarks were focused not on the LCP but on extolling the conservation framework proposed by the Hearst Corporation for the Hearst Ranch, and Bianchi also unjustly chastized those critical of the Hearst Framework as “black and white—it ignores the gray in the middle. It’s not that bad.”

Holanda said the county’s delay on a lack of staffing due to a dearth of affordable housing, even though the county routinely approves new developments without requiring affordable housing as part of them.

Later, when asked by Commission Chair Mike Reilly why the county is “silent on so many recommendations,” Holanda said the county’s “financial and staff resources are limited,” even though state money has been provided for the update, and “if we should have been more diligent, it is our fault.”
Housing Committee Update

by Jan Marx
Chair, Chapter Housing Committee

The Chapter’s Housing Committee has been monitoring the City of San Luis Obispo’s Housing Element Update Task Force, which is going through the present (1994) Housing Element program by program, policy by policy, and goal by goal to decide whether to keep, change or eliminate present language. The Committee also is working with and supporting Richard Schmidt, who was appointed by the Executive Committee as the Chapter’s representative to the Task Force.

The 1994 Housing Element was a “constraints based” document, which took the availability of natural resources and the environment into account. This makes it quite different from the new Housing Element, which will likely ignore such constraints in obedience to the state housing quota.

The Task Force members represent various stakeholder groups and advises the city Planning Commission. It was not initially set up by City Council to decide by majority vote but rather to make clearly identified comments and recommendations, which could conflict with each other, in order to clearly express stakeholder positions. However, city staff is pressuring the Task Force to take votes and not even record who voted for or against a given proposal.

Since environmental and neighborhood representatives are vastly outnumbered by business and pro-development advocates, they will likely find themselves on the losing end of votes on issues regarding the health of the environment and quality of life in the neighborhoods.

The Housing Update Task Force meetings are open to the public and are held the second and fourth Thursday afternoons, starting usually around 3 p.m. in City Hall. The presence of the environmental community at these meetings is very important, so please come by, observe and become better informed. For more information or to share ideas on policies, contact me at <janmarx@fix.net>.

Change of Address?

Mail changes to:
Sierra Club National Headquarters
85 Second Street, 2nd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105-3441
or e-mail:
address.changes@sierraclub.org

Visit us on the Web!

www.santalucia.sierraclub.org
Outings, events, and more!
Coastal Commissioners to Serve Fixed Terms

Gov. Gray Davis has signed a bill strongly supported by the Sierra Club that is designed to resolve a major constitutional question about the composition of the California Coastal Commission, and the issue is now before the state Supreme Court.

Attorney General Bill Lockyer asked the Supreme Court to review a state Court of Appeals decision that the nature of the appointments process of the Coastal Commission violates the California Constitution. It objected to the fact that eight appointments from the Legislature four from the Assembly and four from the Senate serve “at the pleasure” of the appointing authority rather than according to fixed terms. The current setup, according to the court, unfairly undermines the governor’s authority and his four Commission appointments over the Commission. Under the new legislation, the four Senate and four Assembly appointees will served fixed terms of four years.

The court was less clear about its concern that the Legislature rather than the governor appoints the majority of the Commissioners. Lockyer is concerned that there are, at various state courts, at least 20 other lawsuits raising legal challenges to the Commission’s constitutionality. Therefore, he believes it would be very helpful to the administration of justice and coherent coastal land use planning if the Supreme Court would either reverse the Court of Appeals or rule that the bill approved by the Legislature and signed by Davis on Feb. 28 is sufficient.

What is clear is that if the Supreme Court doesn’t comment, certain developers (at Bola Chica, Malibu, media (Santa Barbara News-Press) and lawyers and law firms (Ronald Zumborn of the Pacific Legal Foundation) will continue to claim that the Commission is unconstitutional in every lawsuit they manufacture, Sierra Club officials said.

These officials pointed out that since the Coastal Initiative, Prop. 20, was passed in 1972, which established the Coastal Commission, there has always been a small, local minority group of aggressively anti-coastal individuals who continue to this day to work to undermine and dismantle the coastal protection program in California. It would be very helpful for the Supreme Court to advise these disharmonious litigants in advance that their future efforts to undermine the program will not be successful, they said.

The Commission and its composition was made permanent by the Legislature in 1976 with passage of the Coastal Act.

The bill signed by Davis, AB 13X, moved quickly through the Assembly and Senate, with Sierra Club’s Legislative Director Bill Allauyad involved in crafting the language through meetings with legislative staff and committee consultants. He also testified at hearings and communicated with the Davis administration officials to emphasize how important the legislation was to Club members.

From the grassroots side, Mark Massara, the Sierra Club’s Coastal Program Manager, organized letter and phone call campaigns so that the governor and legislative leaders would understand the importance of resolving this legal issue to voters and lovers of California’s coast.

In signing the bill, Davis praised the Legislature for delivering a bill to sign in short order. He also praised the Sierra Club and other environmental groups for stewarding the bill to his desk. He stressed what he must have a strong coastal program and said “the Coastal Commission is the Guardian Angel of our coast” and “this legislation will let the Coastal Commission continue to be America’s environmental leader.”

Reporters at the signing asked only one question of the governor, and it was about the Pacific Legal Foundation’s (PLF) claim that this “fix” will not be enough, and that the real problem is the majority of the Commissioners being appointed by the Legislature. Davis replied that he and supporters of the bill think the court opinion is clear and that the bill will be enough.

This legislative response grew out of a Dec. 30, 2002, Court of Appeals ruling in the Marine Forests vs. Coastal Commission case. It involves a man in the Los Angeles area who has illegally dumped old tires and oil in the near-shore waters. His claims that he is doing an experiment to show that habitat can be created from these materials. However, he failed to comply with various state laws, including the Coastal Act, which requires he obtain a permit from the Coastal Commission for such a project. Over the years, the California Department of Fish and Game has established marine habitats through their artificial reef program and has had mixed success.

The PLF took up the violator’s case. This conservative non-profit litigation organization based in Sacramento has challenged, harassed, and even attempted to dismantle the Coastal Commission in every way it can, Sierra Club officials said. The PLF had won at the Superior Court level, and the Coastal Commission appealed to the Appeals Court and was represented by Lockyer.

So for now, the Legislature and governor have addressed the issue raised by the courts. But be assured, Allauyad said, that the PLF will pursue this matter endlessly because they would like nothing better than having no Coastal Commission around. But, he noted, “If the Coastal Commission was declared unconstitutional, coastal activists from Oregon to Mexico would immediately rally behind the Legislature and governor to remedy the problem, and if it comes down to doing a new coastal initiative as the only means to do so, the work would begin. People love the California coast and know that some local governments cannot withstand the pressure that developers put on them. We need the Coastal Commission to guard our coastal land, estuaries, and offshore areas.”

The bill was authored by Assemblymember Hannah Beth Jackson of Santa Barbara. Sen. Sheila Kuehl of Los Angeles introduced the same bill on the Senate side, which was eventually dropped in favor of the Assembly bill. All this work was done as part of a special session called by the governor in order to speed action on a Commission bill. Legislation passed and signed in a special session takes effect in 90 days rather than the first of next year.

Hiking the Cruickshank in the Silver Peak Wilderness

by Gary Felsman

It was a beautiful day as four of us (Tom Berrier, Chuck, Holly and Myself) headed up the Cruickshank Trail on Sunday, January 19, 2003. We started our ascent of the well graded switchbacks and noticed some work had been done on this part of the trail. Upon reaching the first crest we were treated to a field full of Star Lilies, Lupine, and vetch along the trail.

We reached the top of the switchbacks and were treated to views along the coast and the canyon along Villa Creek. Again we noticed that Jim was probably working here as there were signs of more trail work as well. The poison Oak brush that lay across the trail has since been removed. Following the trail we wound in and out of some beautiful redwoods then came to first of many small streams filled with water from the winter rains. We continued on to Upper Cruickshank Camp for a snack.

From here we headed up to Silver Camp along the well graded switchbacks. Along the way we came across a tree that had recently fallen across the trail, and we stopped to remove the tree. We then headed on up to Silver Camp, stopping over a few trees and dodging some poison oak along the way.

At Silver Camp we again paused before heading on up the trail. It is here where one needs to pay attention as the trail can be easily missed heading towards Silver Creek. The trail has been recently flagged to make the traverse easier. Reaching the canyon wall, the trail descends under one tree, then must climb over another. Upon reaching Silver Creek, a portion of the trail has been washed away for three feet. One must climb about three feet then traverse the slope to continue along the trail.

From Silver Creek to the Rocky Outcropping the trail is in great shape. The SLO Trail volunteers have rebuilt this section of trail. At the Rocky Outcropping, we stopped for a leisurely lunch. We were treated to great views and several shooting stars in the open field.

After lunch, Chuck and I headed up the Cruickshank Trail to survey the downed tree section. It takes about 25-30 minutes to reach the downed tree section from the Rocky Outcropping. At this point we started to count the number of trees across the trail. We found that our previous estimates were wrong, and there are about 35 trees left to be removed. Five or six are definite removal candidates and are from one to three feet in diameter. Most of the others can be stepped over. There is one major downed tree section that needs to climb up 20 to 30 feet to get around the deadfall. It took us about 15 minutes to cover this traverse, the ¼ mile stretch of trail reaching our stopping point from our last work party in October from Lion Den. Chuck and I then turned around, heading back to the Rocky Outcropping to meet Darlene and Holly.

All in all we had a great trip and it is well worth the effort to see this beautiful canyon. There were many flowers, including Milk Maids, Shooting Stars, Star Lilies, Hounds Tongue, Currant, and Gooseberry Pachys, with many other flowers soon to be blooming. As with all trails there were a few ticks and some poison oak. The trail is in good shape and very pleasant to travel as compared to other Big Sur Trails.

Trail conditions are classified as follows:

Trailhead to Cruickshank Camp, Clear.
Cruickshank to Silver Camp, Clear, some poison oak
Silver Camp to Rocky Outcropping, Clear, one tree to climb over, and small washout at Silver Creek.
Rocky Outcropping up 25 minutes, (1 mile or so), Clear some encroaching brush and Poison Oak.
Tree Section, ¼ mile long, 35 or so trees to traverse, and some Poison Oak. Takes about 15 minutes
From there to Lion Den, Clear, some encroaching brush and poison oak.

Sierra Club California Convention Coming in June

The 2003 Sierra Club California Convention will be held on Saturday and Sunday, June 7 and 8, at Camp Arroyo near Livermore, Julia Bott, Chair of Sierra Club California, announced.

Workshops will begin on Saturday morning, and there will be outings and conservation trips on Sunday. Further details on the program will be forthcoming. Chapters and Regional Conservation Committees appoint delegates to the Convention, and if you are interested in serving as a delegate, contact the Chapter office. But the Convention also is open to non-delegate members of the Club.

The cost of admission is $35 per person, which includes sleeping accommodations and three meals—lunch and dinner on Saturday and breakfast on Sunday. The Club is paying for a portion of the set price charged by Camp Arroyo, reducing the cost to $35 for each participant.

Registration forms and other details are expected to be available shortly. Advance reservations are required. Lori Ives, the event’s registrar, can be contacted at <livesico@earthlink.net>.

The camp is located about 45 minutes from Highway 5. Oakland has the closest airport, also approximately 45 minutes away from the camp.
Coastal Commission Meeting
continued from page 1

framework, which allows development of the property, while major environmental groups have reserved judgment until the details of the very general framework are revealed.

Tarren Collins, Chair of the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club, told the Commission that the “county is the poster child for why we need the Legislature to require enactment of the LCP recommendations, which are necessary to bring it into compliance with the Coastal Act.” The lack of a LCP that reflects today’s land uses and needs simply “endangers resources, and once destroyed, they can never be replaced.”

Her strong words were echoed by Mark Massara, coastal program manager of the Sierra Club; Doug Buckmaster of the SLO Coast Alliance, a consortium of 32 environmental organizations with over 22,000 supporters, and Friends of the RanchLand; Kat McConnell of the California Coastal Protection Network; Eric Greening of Life on Planet Earth, the Environmental Defense Center and others.

In addition, Rhonda Vigil of the San Luis Obispo County Chumash Council told the Commission that the enactment of the recommendations are essential to provide a much-needed greater level of protection for Native American resources in many parts of the county. “The county is not protecting Native American resources,” she said.

Buckmaster said of the Commission’s 165 recommendations, the county agreed to consider just 87 for approval but refuses to discuss the other 78. Of the 87, only 33 have been processed, but even those have been watered down by, for example, substituting “should” instead of “shall” and omitting all deadlines for implementation. The staff report said the county’s responses “fall short of addressing the primary intent of the Commission’s recommendations.”

In preparation for the periodical review of the LCP, the Commission agreed to provide the county with about $220,000 to pay for staff work to process the recommendations in a phased-in approach. Under the Coastal Act, the county was given one year to review of the LCP, the Commission’s 165 recommendations, while major environmental groups have reserved judgment until the details of the very general framework are revealed.

The Commission had asked that the county “incorporate new standards and review procedures to implement ESA and viewed protection consistent with Coastal Act Section 30010.” These changes are very important because under the current LCP, the county only recognizes ESAs that are shown on maps in the plan, as opposed to what is found to exist at the time development is proposed. It means that endangered species habitat or wetlands that were not included in the maps, now 20 years old, are not currently protected. The staff report said the county had “no response” to this recommendation.

Buckmaster said the SLO Coast Alliance, of which the Chapter is a member and Collins is Co-Chair with Pam Marshall Heatherington of the Environmental Center of San Luis Obispo County, urged the Commission “to make a full report to the Legislature” reflecting the county’s “deliberate non-compliance with the Coastal Act,” notify the Legislature “of the need to require this county to stop issuing all permits in the Coastal Zone” until the LCP is updated and ask conservancies that have contributed to the purchase of open space in the county “to step in and help save properties from poor planning and worse political decisions.”

Creating an Old Fashioned Neighborhood in Harmony with Nature

Imagine living in a neighborhood you help create that reflects your values. Imagine living among neighbors who care about you, and with whom you can hike and cook meals together. That’s what living in cohousing is all about! We invite you to learn about our community and come visit us.

Specifics:
- 14 wooded acres with flowing stream, hiking trail, hilltop and valley views
- 10 acres preserved as open space
- Edible landscaping + environmental design and materials

Call: 800-489-8715
Email: info@OakCreekCommons.org
Website: www.OakCreekCommons.org

Marine Sanctuary Update

A citizens committee studying marine sanctuary status for the San Luis Obispo County coastline has voted to include a Santa Lucia Chapter representative in its membership, among five persons added to the group. Leslie Krinsk, who serves on the Chapter’s Conservation Committee and was nominated by the Executive Committee, was selected as a member at large to serve on what is now called the Marine Interests Group Working Committee after Chair Tarren Collins wrote a letter supporting her appointment on behalf of the 2,000-member Chapter.

Krinsk, a local resident, “would add a dimension which is not now represented and which would prove invaluable to (Working) Committee operations,” Collins wrote. “Based on her background as a senior attorney for the California Air Resources Board, she can contribute her inside knowledge of the workings of governmental agencies at all levels and familiarity with their regulations as well as her governmental contacts, her experience, and her analytical ability.”

Collins also noted that “her link to the Sierra Club can bring to the full weight of its support for the Committee’s recommendations.” In her letter, Collins said the Chapter “supports the Working Committee and shares its goals of protection and enhancement of marine resources in our county. We are favorably impressed with the breadth of marine interests represented on the Committee.”

Ross Pepper, the Chapter’s Program Chair who also was nominated by the Executive Committee, will attend meetings when Krinsk is unable to. Shosh Crotzer, a Sierra Club member who helped spearhead efforts to study the sanctuary issue, is expected to serve in a support capacity to the Working Committee.

Also voted as new members of the Working Committee on Feb. 20 were David L. Sears, retired California state parks ranger, who served his last 15 years in this county; Dave Rymal, parks ranger, who served his last 15 years in this county; Dave Rymal, parks ranger, who served his last 15 years in this county; and once destroyed, they can never be replaced.

Also voted as new members of the Working Committee on Feb. 20 were David L. Sears, retired California state parks ranger, who served his last 15 years in this county; Dave Rymal, parks ranger, who served his last 15 years in this county; and once destroyed, they can never be replaced.

Also voted as new members of the Working Committee on Feb. 20 were David L. Sears, retired California state parks ranger, who served his last 15 years in this county; Dave Rymal, parks ranger, who served his last 15 years in this county; and once destroyed, they can never be replaced.
meeting or shorten the meeting time. You must e-mail all three of the addressees below or fax or write both addressees by March 14 in order to be allowed to speak. You also are requested to specify the date and time (afternoon or evening) you would like to speak.

E-mails should be sent to hearingdocket@nrc.gov, pa@nrc.gov, and gpbl@nrc.gov. Faxes should be sent to two numbers: (301) 415-1101 and (301) 415-5599. Written requests should go to: Office of the Secretary Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff U.S. NRC Washington, DC 20555-0001.

The Chapter is co-intervener with Mothers for Peace in the regulatory review of PG&E’s plans for the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Plant, and costs of intervention are very high. Both the Chapter and Mothers for Peace badly need any amount of financial support you can give for this effort. Checks should be written to Mothers for Peace or to the Santa Lucia Chapter, Sierra Club.

The Executive Committee’s recommendations, which raise important questions that in many cases require answers from the NRC and other regulatory agencies, follow additional background and supporting material for the recommendations are available at the Chapter’s web site, http://santalucia.sierrclu.org/index/index.html:

1. What are the provisions for safeguarding the liquid storage pools from overhead attack? Any shortcomings must be rectified immediately.

2. After bankruptcy, will PG&E finance the mitigation measures already adopted to compensate for the adverse effects of the cooling water discharge on marine life, as well as new mitigation and safety measures that might be required for the proposed project? No decisions on PG&E’s applications to the NRC and to SLO County can reasonably be made until the financial terms of PG&E’s bankruptcy application have been settled.

3. What are the regulatory and jurisdictional implications of the bankruptcy settlement? These should be specified clearly before any action is taken on the two PG&E applications.

4. How can the mandate and composition of the Diablo Canyon Independent Safety Committee be restructured to include greater public involvement and more effective dissemination of information to the public? Improvements are needed.

5. Has a risk analysis been performed that treats terrorist attacks, earthquakes, accidents, and other incidents that could breach plant security and have catastrophic consequences? If so, the results should be made available to the public. If not, such an analysis should be undertaken by a highly qualified panel whose members have no connection with the nuclear industry or the governmental regulatory apparatus.

6. Has the applicant made a comparative evaluation of the disadvantages and advantages of other means for handling the high level waste? Such an analysis is essential.

7. Will all feasible alternative methods for electricity production and demand reduction be fully evaluated and compared point by point to the applicant’s proposal?

8. If no method of high level waste handling is determined to involve socially acceptable risks, should a moratorium not be called on electricity production at Diablo until a satisfactory solution is found? Operations at Diablo should not continue after the existing liquid storage space is used up in 2006 unless a safe storage option is found by that time.

### THAI YOGA MASSAGE

An energizing & therapeutic form of bodywork integrating Hatha yoga, Acupressure, and Reflexology.

**INTRODUCTORY OFFER:**
$45 for 75 minutes

Swedish & Deep Tissue Massage also available. Call CYNTHIA 805-541-0012

### Chapter Wants More Details before Supporting Hearst Ranch Agreement

The Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club and the SLO Coast Alliance by unanimous votes of their respective boards said they will wait and review details of the entire conservation package for the Hearst Ranch before passing judgment on a conservation option agreement signed on Feb. 19 by the American Land Conservancy and the Hearst Corporation.

The signing provided no new details on the updated “conservation framework” that was offered last December by the Hearst Corporation, which was very broad and itself provided very few specifics on how the Ranch would be developed. Most of those details will probably not be forthcoming until the Conservancy and Hearst have discussions with funding agencies.

The Chapter and the SLO Coast Alliance, composed of 32 organizations representing over 12,000 members, made these points clear in a joint statement, which said:

“The Hearst Ranch and its 83,000 acres of ocean frontage, mountains, forests, streams, lagoons, rare plants and threatened animal species is singular as one of our country’s rare jewels. Our goal at the SLO Coast Alliance is to protect and preserve this majestic land for all generations in perpetuity.

“We take extremely seriously our role as guardians of the land and will work with our 32 environmental-member group base to ensure that the best possible conservation package (easement and/or fee title acquisition) is achieved for the Ranch. To that end our team of experts will carefully review all terms in the easement and entire conservation package. It would be premature to pass judgment on the signing of the option agreement by ALC (American Land Conservancy) without first analyzing all of the details of the conservation package. Along with environmental and cultural resources on the Ranch, we will be looking at availability of water, impacts to surrounding communities and because public money will be used toward the purchase price, we will look at the value of the property and the benefits the public receives.

“It would be premature to pass judgment on the signing of the option agreement by ALC without first analyzing all of the details of the conservation package.”

The statement was signed by Tarren Collins, Chair of the Santa Lucia Chapter, and Pam Marshall, Executive Director of the Environmental Center of San Luis Obispo County (ECOSLO), who are Co-Chairs of the SLO Coast Alliance.

“Steven Hearst is quoted in the Tribune saying what we have been saying all along—that many details have yet to be revealed to the public,” Collins said. “It would be premature to pass judgment on the signing of the option agreement by ALC without first analyzing all of the details of the conservation package. They haven’t revealed the very details we need to know to determine if it will be TRUE conservation.”

The Los Angeles Times reported that the option gives the ALC a year to come up with $100 million or more it will cost to permanently restrict development on the 128-square-mile ranch and ensure access of 18 miles of beach to the public. However, there has been no official estimate of the amount that an acceptable conservation package will ultimately cost.

Susan Jordan, director of the California Coastal Protection Network, was quoted in the Times as saying that although signing something “is a step in the right direction,” the agreement is still too vague for her comfort. She said that signing the deal without an appraisal is like “buying a house and not knowing what you are paying.”

That is why the Santa Lucia Chapter and the SLO Coast Alliance believe it is essential that the details of any agreement be clarified and understood before environmental groups support it.

Kara Blakelke, project manager of the conservancy, said negotiations are continuing on a variety of issues, including Hearst family desires to build as many as 27 homes on the ranch. She said it is not certain where they would be located. The Hearst Corporation also wants to erect a resort hotel in Old San Simeon.

Under the conservation option agreement, the Hearst Corporation would retain ownership of some or all of the ranch but would give up the rights to develop it for either residential or commercial use. The Hearsts would have to keep the land in agriculture, but the type of agriculture would be controlled by the final agreement. “The devil is in details like those,” Collins emphasized.
San Antonio Lake Eagle Outing

by Jack Beigle

I enjoy all of our canoe/kayak outings, but our trip to San Antonio Lake to see the eagles was truly outstanding. The day was cool with a light wind. We launched 17 boats and paddled along the north arm checking for birds. We spotted a few hawks but no eagles. Then, right in front of our group two Western Grebes gave us a demonstration of their courting display called ruffling. The two birds were about four feet apart in the water and facing the same direction. They opened their wings about halfway, pointed their heads and long necks straight up, and then ran, full speed, parallel to each other on the surface of the water for about 25 feet. It was exciting to watch.

As we were shore looking for a Golden Eagle at the feathers out of a large, semicircular flock, we saw a Bald Eagle fly in and bumped the Golden off of his perch. The Bald Eagle did not land on the water but circled to the right and landed right on top of another Bald Eagle that was sitting in that tree. The lady in the boat next to me said, “Did you see what I saw?” I said, “Yes, it’s not very often that you can see two Bald Eagles mating.”

After lunch we saw another Golden sitting on a broken tree trunk. As we were watching, a Bald Eagle flew in and bumped the Golden off of his perch. The Bald Eagle did not land on the water but circled to the right and landed right on top of another Bald Eagle that was sitting in that tree. A public meeting on the proposed plan had been scheduled by the Morro Bay City Council at the Morro Bay Vets Hall on March 10. The proposal will also have to go before the California Coastal Commission, which will give a second opportunity for public comment.

Cal French has been following developments at Carrizo Plains. An advisory committee formed last December was due to meet on March 6. Committee members are Michael Ryan, Creston; Dale Kuhnle, Santa Margarita; Neil Havlik, San Luis Obispo; Robert Binnewies, Arroyo Grande; Kirk Brettschneider, Taft; Raymond Watson, Ellen Cypher and Bill VanHverweg, Bakersfield, and Michael Rhus-Zara, Fresno. Cal reports that the management plan must include four features:

1. Any grazing on the Carrizo Plain National Monument must be done at the discretion of U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and then only as part of a research project that is reviewed by an independent scientific panel comprised in part by botanists and zoologists.

The Committee has been asked to examine a California Department of Parks and Recreation proposal for tree removal at Morro Bay State Park as part of a scheme to restore the campground to its original state. We have not yet had time to reach any conclusions on this question. A public meeting on the proposed plan had been scheduled by the Morro Bay City Council at the Morro Bay Vets Hall on March 10. The proposal will also have to go before the California Coastal Commission, which will give a second opportunity for public comment.

The Committee was one of several chapters that objected vigorously to a national Sierra Club position statement issued last year on grounds that it was too weak and its language might be construed as tacit acceptance of a unilateral invasion, irrespective of any UN action. The national Sierra Club stated: “The Sierra Club is concerned about the global dangers presented by possible Iraqi aggression and about the dire environmental consequences of war. The Sierra Club supports disarming Iraq of weapons of mass destruction. The Sierra Club commends the US and the other United Nations Security Council members for their unanimous resolution calling for the restoration of the disarmament inspections process as a means of achieving a peaceful resolution of the Iraqi issue, and it urges all nations to work through the UN to achieve this objective. The process of inspection should go forward immediately with, and pursuant to, international consensus as expressed in the UN Security Council resolution.

“Even if the UN succeeds, however, this process will be incomplete if the US and other nations fail to recognize that their continued dependence on oil and other fossil fuels is, itself, a significant de-stabilizing influence in international affairs. The Sierra Club therefore, re-affirms its urgent call for the US to move to a clean energy economy, greater efficiency, and use of renewable sources of energy.” Afterward, the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter passed a resolution stating, “It is incumbent upon environmental organizations to work to prevent the massive environmental destruction intrinsic to war. The San Francisco Bay Chapter urges the Sierra Club Board of Directors to oppose unequivocally war on Iraq.”

Conservation Committee Column

by Pete Wagner

The Executive Committee of the Santa Lucia Chapter has adopted a resolution opposing “unilateral armed intervention by the United States” in Iraq and instead supports reliance on “a greatly intensified inspection” program to assure Iraqi disarmament. Although it “recognizes the potential to protect against the threat of offensive military action by the present Iraqi government,” the resolution said “we believe the United States should not intervene militarily unless it has been unequivocally proved that Iraq has continued a weapons buildup in violation of disarmament actions required by the UN (United Nations), and then only with UN support.”

The Bush administration’s declared intent to invade Iraq with or without UN sanction has provoked widespread debate within the Sierra Club. The Santa Lucia Chapter was one of several chapters that objected vigorously to a national Sierra Club position statement issued last year on grounds that it was too weak and its language might be construed as tacit acceptance of a unilateral invasion, irrespective of any UN action.

The national Sierra Club stated: “The Sierra Club is concerned about the global dangers presented by possible Iraqi aggression and about the dire environmental consequences of war. The Sierra Club supports disarming Iraq of weapons of mass destruction. The Sierra Club commends the US and the other United Nations Security Council members for their unanimous resolution calling for the restoration of the disarmament inspections process as a means of achieving a peaceful resolution of the Iraqi issue, and it urges all nations to work through the UN to achieve this objective. The process of inspection should go forward immediately with, and pursuant to, international consensus as expressed in the UN Security Council resolution.

“The Chapter also urges the Board to 1) change its November resolutions consistent with the foregoing, 2) formally endorse the January 18th mobilization to be held in San Francisco and elsewhere against war on Iraq, and 3) encourage Club members to participate in the mobilization and similar activities. Vigorous objections also were raised by Utah’s Glen Canyon subchapter, the Loma Prieta chapter and several others. In December, the national office seemed to clarify its position by joining a new coalition called Win Without War, which “represents millions of Americans and seeks to prevent bloodshed and loss of life on all sides by slowing the Bush Administration’s apparent rush to war so that U.N. Arms Inspectors have time to do their job.” Afterward, the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter passed a resolution stating, “It is incumbent upon environmental organizations to work to prevent the massive environmental destruction intrinsic to war. The San Francisco Bay Chapter urges the Sierra Club Board of Directors to oppose unequivocally war on Iraq.”

Other members of the coalition include the National Council of Churches (NCC), the NAACP, National Organization for Women (NOW), Working Assets and MoveOn.org. Win Without War was founded on the conviction that security can be achieved through aggressive inspections, sustained monitoring and dismantling of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. Its members pledge to broaden opposition to Bush Administration calls for a unilateral invasion of Iraq. After reviewing the controversy, the Santa Lucia Executive Committee adopted the following resolution at its February meeting: “The Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club shares the concern about the global dangers and potentially devastating environmental consequences of war with Iraq, and we believe it is essential to protect against the threat of offensive military action by the present Iraqi government. We believe that the situation can be kept under control short of unilateral armed intervention by the United States by means of a greatly intensified inspection program which includes a large increase in the number of inspectors, an indefinite period for inspections, uninterrupted overflights, and whatever methods short of armed invasion are necessary to assure Iraqi compliance with specified disarmament measures. We believe the United States should not intervene militarily unless it has been unequivocally proved that Iraq has continued a weapons buildup in violation of disarmament actions required by the UN, and then only with UN support.”
Classifieds

 Classified ads are $10 and are limited to 20 words. They are due by the 1st of the month of publication (next deadline is April 1st). Please submit your ad and payment to:
Deborah Krueger
c/o Santa Lucian
P.O. Box 15755
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Santa Lucia Chapter is seeking to fill the following positions:
- Advertising Manager
- Treasurer
- Membership Chair
- Santa Lucian Distribution Manager
- Office Manager
- Office Staff

If you are interested in any of the openings, please contact Jack at jmccurdy@slonet.org. If you are interested in the office manager or office staff positions, please contact Ross Pepper at rosspepper@charter.net

The Land Conservancy
of San Luis Obispo County

- Permanent Land Conservation
- Restoration and Enhancement
- Community Education

The Battery Exchange

Get your Trail Guide today!
Only $14.95. We pay tax & shipping!

Law Offices of Jan Howell Marx
A Client-Centered Practice

- Business
- Elder Law
- Environmental Law
- Labor/Employment
- Real Estate
- Wills & Trusts

(10% discount with Sierra Club Bequests)

541-2716

E-Mail: janmarx@fix.net

A Will . . .

. . . is a way to protect the environment as well as yourself. If you do not have a will, the state decides how your property and other affairs are handled. Decisions made now can later provide financial security for family, friends, and the Sierra Club. You may even direct your bequest to a specific Club program or your home Chapter.

For more information and confidential assistance, contact
John Calaway
Sierra Club Planned Giving Program
85 Second Street, 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105-3441
(415) 977-5538.
Outings and Activities Calendar

All of our hikes and activities are open to all club members and the general public. 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 Leader Gary Felsman (473-3684). For information on a specific outing, please contact the outings leader.

Hiking Classifications:
Distance: 1 = 0-2 mi., 2 = 3-5 mi., 3 = 6-9 mi., 4 = 10-12 mi., 5 = 12 mi. or more.
Elevation Gain: A = 500', B = 1000', C = 1500', D = 2000', E = 2500', F = 3000' or more.

Sat.-Sun., Apr. 12-20, May 3-17, and June 7-20, Panamint Valley/Briggs Gold Mine Carcamp. What is a view worth? Join Tom Budlong and me for a weekend carcamp in the beautiful threatened Panamint Valley west of Death Valley National Park. One of the world's grandest landscapes is endangered by the Briggs Mine's expansion proposal which would forever scar a huge area of the Panamint escarpment. See the sights, walk the ground, and talk the issues with activists committed to the defense of this magnificent landscape. Moderate skills needed, some on and off trail hiking required. Contact Ldr: Bob Ellis (510) 525-9742. <bobellis6@earthlink.net> CNRCC Desert Com/ SF Bay Chap

Fri.-Sun., Apr. 25-27, Culp Valley, Anza Borrego State Park Carcamp. Culp Valley, in the Upper Sonoran plant zone, is our base for a hike down the old California Riding and Hiking Trail to Boar's Camp at Culp Valley, 3,000 feet below. We'll see a variety of chaparral community plants on the way. On shorter hikes we'll visit local springs and see effects of water sources on plant life. Primitive campground. OK for passenger cars. Send phone number and address with SASE, or send v-mail to Ldr: Bill Engs, Box 3248, Crestline, CA 92325. <engs@juno.com> Phone: (909) 338-1910. CNRCC Desert Com/ San Gorgonio Chap

Sat.-Sun., Apr. 19-20, Panamint Valley/Briggs Gold Mine/Surprise Canyon Backpack. What is a view worth? Join Tom Budlong and I for a weekend backpack in the beautiful threatened Panamint Valley west of Death Valley National Park. We will backpack south from Jail Canyon to Hall Canyon camping at a spring, then on to the controversial Surprise Canyon narrows. Two issues for the price of one: Briggs Mine expansion and Surprise Canyon vehicle closure. Great views will distract us as we discuss the defense of this magnificent landscape. Moderate skills needed, some on and off trail hiking required. Contact Ldr: Bob Ellis (510) 525-9742. <bobellis6@earthlink.net> CNRCC Desert Com/ SF Bay Chap

Sun., May 4, 7:00 a.m., Santa Lucia Trail to Junipero Serra Peak. This is an opportunity to explore the eastern part of the Ventana Wilderness and to hike to the highest point in the northern Los Padres National Forest at 5,862 ft. The hike is a strenuous 12 miles with 3,800 ft. of elevation gain. The landscape is beautiful, beginning in a meadow with distinctive outcroppings, traveling through oak woodlands, and culminating in a pine forest before reaching the summit. We will be near the proposed new wilderness area of Bear Canyon. There is a possibility of ticks and poison oak. The weather can be unpredictable and vary from extremely warm to cool. Last year in April we were walking through snow on the last pitch to the summit. Bring plenty of water, a lunch, good hiking shoes, and dress in layers. Meet at the north end of the Walmart parking lot in Paso Robles near the McDonald's. It is a 1-1/2 hour drive to the trailhead so a carpool is recommended. We will be going through Fort Hunter Liggett so drivers need a license, proof of insurance, and registration. The hike will be in an Adventure Pass area which means there may be a fee. If you are interested you may camp at Indians Campground the night before or after the hike. If you are coming from north of Paso Robles, please call to arrange a meeting place. Please confirm with the leader if you are going and please, no beginners. For details and confirmation, call Chuck (927-3769) (SP)

Yes, I would like to help the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club preserve precious lands on the Central Coast by making a donation to the Sierra Club Morros Preservation Fund, and/or SLO Land Preservation Fund.

I have enclosed: $500 $250 $100 $50 Other: ____

Please make your check payable to: Sierra Club Foundation Morros Preservation Fund, or Sierra Club Foundation SLO Land Preservation Fund
Name ____________________________
Address ____________________________ Phone ____________________________
City ____________________________ State ______ Zip ____________
Mail your contribution to: Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club P. O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo CA 93406

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