Coastal Activist Network Launched

by Jack McCurdy

A new “Coastal Activist Network”—envisioned as a statewide watchdog of volunteers who will monitor development plans along the California coast and then work together to defeat destructive projects through appeals to the Coastal Commission—was launched at a meeting in San Luis Obispo last month.

It could become the most significant organizing effort by environmentalists in many years and for the first time will provide a formal, multi-level structure for volunteers in all coastal counties to significantly increase their effectiveness in fighting unacceptable developments before the Coastal Commission. Strategically, the Network will strengthen the public’s role in the Coastal Commission process to bolster protection of coastal resources.

A range of volunteers in each county will monitor proposed developments, file appeals, meet with Coastal Commission staff members, lobby Commissioners, and organize efforts to show public concern at Commission hearings or meetings. As part of the Network, activists in counties where Commission hearings are scheduled can also help organize and appear on projects for those in distant counties, who may not be able to travel to the hearings.

Although the Network meeting here was the first, others were subsequently held in counties to the south and more are scheduled to the north in coming months. Attending the meeting were leaders and members of most of this county’s environmental organizations, including several from the Santa Lucia chapter of the Sierra Club. A number of those in attendance quickly volunteered positions in the Network.

The Network organizational positions consist of:

—“Development monitors” for all local counties, cities, or agencies with authority over development, such as community services districts, in the coastal zone. They keep watch at the local level and may initiate appeals to the Coastal Commission in coordination with others in the Network (see below). Each county will have two and each coastal city one.

—“Coastal Commission staff liaisons,” who will meet with Commission staff on development projects that raise public concern, Local Coastal Plan amendments or on appeals to the Commission. Each county will have two such liaisons.

—“Coastal Commission lobbyists,” who will meet with Coastal Commissioners on projects and Local Coastal Plans that go to the Commission. Each county will have a minimum of three such lobbyists.

—“County organizers,” who organize letter-writing, phone calls, and turnouts at hearings on individual appeals before the Commission in coordination with county organizers, lobbyists and others in the Network.

—“Statewide organizer,” who will coordinate the Network.

Here is an example of how the Network would work: A development monitor identifies a development, or learns about it from other members of the community, that has been proposed to a city planning commission, which raises serious questions about its

continued on page 5
Chapter Seeks Coordinator

Interested in working with the leading environmental organization in the nation? The Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club is hiring a chapter coordinator, a paid position that will include addressing critical local issues such as land use management, air/water quality, habitat preservation and endangered species protection.

It also provides an opportunity to collaborate with deeply committed volunteers and be responsible for ensuring implementation of the Chapter’s conservation program objectives.

Responsibilities include:
* Working closely with the Chapter’s Executive Committee to develop and implement programs and activities in order to enhance member effectiveness and involvement.
* Providing office management and administrative functions including the recruitment, training and supervision of volunteers and interns.
* Acting as an information resource for chapter volunteers and the general public.

Qualifications include:
A BA or BS in environmental studies, political science or closely related fields, two to three years experience in the environmental field that includes research, organizing campaigns, press relations and public speaking.

Salary of the half-time position for a one-year duration is between $22,000 and $26,000 based upon experience and with growth potential. Compensation includes health insurance and other benefits.

To apply, fax cover letter, resume and relevant materials to (805) 543-8727. Deadline for applying is April 30, 2003.
Coastal Commision Seeks Help for Plovers at Oceano Dunes

The California Coastal Commission has voted to ask the state Parks and Recreation Department to expand areas at Oceano Dunes where endangered Western Snowy Plovers would be protected from off-road vehicles that are permitted on the beach there. But the action fell far short of appeals by the Sierra Club and others for much stronger measures.

Tarren Collins, chair of the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club, appealed to the Commission to urge State Parks not only to expand the protective areas for the Plovers but also to relocate camping, reduce the number of camping units allowed on the state beach, ban night driving, reduce the speed limit to 5 miles per hour, and restrict the number of vehicles on holiday weekends. She also requested the Coastal Commission to require State Parks to submit a plan to eliminate the vehicle crossing at Arroyo Grande Creek by next July.

These restrictions are urgently needed, she told the Commission, because “the Western Snowy Plover population has declined by one-third in the last five years and less than 1,000 individual birds are left.” She pointed out that the California Department of Resources and the state Parks and Recreation Department have recognized the fact that the birds are on the brink of extinction by implementing a recovery program on all other state beaches.

Collins said that State Parks has “restricted access to people, their dogs on leashes and the horses in the beach area” down the state of California during Plover nesting season. According to State Parks, these extreme measures are necessary to protect the threatened species. While the Sierra Club applauds these measures, it is ironic that you can’t walk your dog on Morro Strand State Beach just a few miles to the north without your horse there but you can put your dog in your car and your horse in your trailer and drive them along critical Snowy Plover habitat at the Oceano Dunes.

“Keeping Oceano Beach open to vehicles during nesting season negatively impacts public access on all other nesting beaches in the state.” Collins reminded the Commission that it was firm in not allowing driving on nesting Plover habitat and on Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas on beaches in Humboldt County at two recent hearings. She asked the Commission to be consistent with those actions and with its 2001 decision on Oceano Dunes, which closed one-third more of the beach during nesting season and established an independent scientific team to report directly to the Commission on the status of the Plovers.

That year, State Parks claimed a successful nesting season, but 70 of the 72 Plover chicks died, mostly from predators. Last year, State Parks and some of the scientists opposed expansion of protective fencing, claiming that if more birds hatched at the dunes, more birds would die due to predators, even though a larger area for the Plovers would provide more protection from predators. Collins pointed out that State Parks now claims to have the predators under control, leaving absolutely no excuse not to expand the fenced protected area immediately.

Collins also reminded the Commission that “parks management is in violation of the Endangered Species Act with every harassment of plover habitat and death of a Plover caused directly by a vehicle, and also when the vehicles harass the Plovers.” She urged the Commission “to use your extensive power of persuasion if that’s all you feel you can do to convince parks to comply with the Endangered Species Act.”

The Commission’s 7-1 vote (Commissioner Greg Hart of Santa Barbara was the lone no vote) came after the Commission staff recommended that it do nothing more than renew the coastal permits for operation of the Dunes, which is formally known as the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area. In addition, Atty. Gen. Lockyer’s office had warned against any action that might adversely impact the Recreation Area.

The staff did acknowledge to the Commission that predator management and expanded plover protection areas do help the Plovers survive. Yet State Parks told the Commission it would not expand the Plover protection areas.

Commissioner Sara Wan made the motion that the Commission “ask” state parks to increase the protective area by modifying its seasonal exclosure to mile marker 6, as was advised by the scientific review team. “We have waited years for this, and it really is beneficial for these birds to have more room,” Wan said. “One of the reasons you have predator problems at Oceano is because you have limited the area available for plovers to hide. We have turned the natural system on its head.”

Off-road vehicle enthusiasts, including the “Friends of Oceano Dunes” organization, urged the Commission to take no action to protect Plovers. They argued that family values are derived from driving on the beach, and that any restrictions on beach driving will inexorably lead to closed beaches and broken families.

But others disagreed. Pam Marshall Heatherington, executive director of the Environmental Center of San Luis Obispo County, pleaded with the Commission to expand protected areas for Plovers, restrict the hours for use of the dunes and beach by vehicles, require seat belts for vehicle drivers and passengers, ban driving by children and require protection of Arroyo Grande Creek. “Allowing vehicles on sensitive, dwindling natural resources night and day will never allow natural environments to survive,” she said.

Community Asks NRC for Tighter Controls at Diablo Canyon

Voicing fears for the safety of the community, their families and themselves, more than 100 county residents made strong and sometimes stirring appeals for greater protections from terrorist attacks at the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Plant and for more public hearings on proposed spent fuel storage casks before a federal panel here last month.

Nearly 200 people either spoke or attended the two-day session of the three-member Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, an arm of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), which has regulatory authority over the plant and PG&E’s proposal to build the storage facility to cover open pools of high-level radioactive nuclear waste. It was held at the Embassy Suites Hotel.

Although they were only allowed to speak as individuals, many are members of the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club, Mothers for Peace and other groups that are intervenors in the NRC review of PG&E’s highly controversial plan to build the casks on the site.

Peter Wagner, chair of the Chapter’s Conservation Committee, said his biggest worry is over establishing who is responsible for protections against terrorist attacks on the plant and what is being done to gauge the risk and take appropriate action. “San Luis Obispo County has declined to do it in its environmental impact study, citing preemption by higher authority,” he told the panel. “But the ‘higher authority’ represented by this Board and its parent (NRC) have also denied responsibility, based on an interpretation of the law that frankly borders on the absurd. If the legal order holds up, it will be a classic case of laws that blatantly contradict common sense.”

The NRC has ruled that a study of potential terrorism against the plant, especially the spent fuel storage facility, is not required by its rules and therefore unnecessary because such an attack is “speculative.”

Wagner said he has been told that the Defense Department or the new Homefront Security Department is the proper agent for such a study, but there is no evidence that they are doing it. And isn’t it self evident that the job rests squarely with the NRC?

"If even the law does permit you to do the dangerous your job, does the law actually prescribe such a study or merely permit you not to do it? I cannot believe that the NRC is barred from acting on its own initiative to create a panel of experts charged with examining acts of malice at the plant. There is ample precedent, for example in the NASAs panels that analyzed the Challenger and recent space shuttle disasters. Please do this for the benefit of the people.”

Wagner emphasized that “the spent fuel pools must immediately be hardened against overhead attack. I implore you to require this action irrespective of whether the (storage facility) is ever built. The consequences of a successful bomb, missile, or suicide airplane attack are simply too horrible to contemplate.”

He also urged the NRC “to place a moratorium on generation at the plant as soon as the existing storage capacity is used up, presumably by 2006, unless the generic problem of long-term storage has been solved by then. Shutdown need not be disruptive, nor is it as far fetched as it might seem. Conservation alone can readily obviate the demand for Diablo’s baseline generating capacity.”

Rochelle Becker of Mothers for Peace told the panel that the many alarming issues surrounding the storage facility proposal, “terrorism and/or acts of malice and insanity are without a doubt the most frightening.”

“We all watched the Twin Towers fall on September 11, 2001, we have all read that nuclear facilities have been at heightened alert at various times (including today) since that fateful day (including today). And yet this Board and the Nuclear Regulatory Commissioners ruled that terrorism and/or acts of malice and insanity do not need to be addressed. This denial is incomprehensible to those of us who live in the shadow of a proposed nuclear waste dump on our coastal bluffs.”

She asked the NRC and board to “please take your collective heads out of the sand and live up to your responsibility to protect the public from radioactive releases. Please reconsider your denial of full hearings on this issue.”

The community intervenors have provided concrete recommendations to make the Diablo Canyon nuclear facility safer and more secure. The Licensing Board and the NRC have callously chosen to ignore those recommendations, she said. “I would like to think that in your refusal to hold full public hearings on issues of terrorism and acts of malice and insanity that you to do so only at your peril. Unfortunately, it is your community, our children, our homes and our businesses that are at risk.”

Among the others who spoke was Fred Frank, former county fire chief responsible for fire rescue response and a member of the county committee on high-level nuclear waste

continued on page 5
Local Coastal Plan

continued from page 1

staff recommendations, and arrangements for coordinating travel to the Commission meeting were not available at press time. The date and time of the hearing will be posted on the Commission web site at http://www.coastal.ca.gov/index.html, and the staff report is scheduled to be available and posted about April 16. In addition, up-to-date information on coordination of travel plans to Monterey will be available on the web site of the Santa Lucia chapter at http://santalucia.sierraclub.org/index/index.html.

The LCP is one of the most important issues to face the county because, as the key planning law, it controls coastal development for the foreseeable future and embodies protection of the area’s beaches, habitat, sensitive viewsheds, cultural resources, agriculture lands and other coastal assets. At its March meeting at the Embassy Suites Hotel here, where a turnout of more than 200 called for the county to comply with the recommendations, the Commission asked the staff to provide options for dealing with the county, which, a staff report said, has made “few actual substantive changes to the LCP” since the recommendations were forwarded to the county in November, 2001.

Tarren Collins, chair of the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club, told the Commission that the county’s failure to implement the 165 recommendations “is inexcusable. The County of San Luis Obispo is the ‘poster child’ for why we need legislation to provide the Commission with the authority to force the county to come into compliance with the Coastal Act by adopting Periodic Review recommendations.”

Doug Buckmaster of the SLO Coast Alliance and Friends of the RanchLand told the Commission in March that the county has agreed to only 87 of the 165 recommendations and refuses to discuss the other 78. Of the 87, only 33 have been processed, he said, and even those have been watered down.

Probably the most significant issue among the 165 recommendations involves the identification and protection of Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA), which the Commission wanted strengthened by identifying such areas when developments are proposed, regardless of whether they are shown on planning maps. This is particularly important on the Hearst Ranch, which contains critical habitat for several endangered species. The county has ignored the Commission’s recommendation on ESHA, a staff report said.

A bill authored by Assembly member Hannah-Beth Jackson of Santa Barbara that would have given the Commission authority to enact Periodic Review recommendations when cities or counties refuse to approve needed coastal protections was not successful last year, even though the Commission supported it. The San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors unanimously opposed the bill.

As another option, if the recommendations or significant numbers of them are not approved by the county by next month, the Commission could refuse to accept any LCP amendments from the county except those that conform to the recommendations. However, the Commission may not have the legal authority to do that now.

The Commission also could decide as a practice to evaluate appeals from county decisions on projects on the basis of whether they were consistent with the LCP recommendations. Whether the Commission has the authority to take these actions also is open to question. Staff members said the county is still seeking to approve a first phase of its responses to the Commission’s recommendations but whether any significant progress will be made by the May meeting is uncertain.

Conservation Committee Report

by Pete Wagner, Chair, Conservation Committee

March was a busy month for Conservation Committee members. On March 10, I and others spoke at a Morro Bay City Council hearing on a State Parks and Recreation Department proposal to drastically reshape Morro Bay State Park Campground. It calls for paving turnoffs or “spurs,” replacing shrubs and as many as 96 tall, mature trees, including eucalyptus where Monarch butterflies roost, with native plants, and adding a new long, paved entrance road to keep vehicles waiting to register at the campground kiosk off the main road through the park area.

Together with a very large turnout of individual protesters, we opposed the proposal as it was presented by the planners and won the unanimous support of the Council. While the plan does offer advantages that include habitat restoration, public safety, and diseased-tree removal, it appeared from the presentation that the unique ambiance created by the existing tree canopy at the campground might be irreversibly destroyed.

The next step is an appeal by the parks department to the Coastal Commission. No date has been set for hearing that appeal. Meanwhile, we will continue to support a revised plan that contains the beneficial elements but preserves the essential character of the campground. We have urged the department to discuss such a compromise with city officials.

On March 21, the Regional Water Quality Control Board heard a staff recommendation to approve a Grant of Conservation Easement and a Consent Judgment that would permit PG&E’s Diablo Canyon Power Plant to continue using ocean water for cooling indefinitely, in exchange for a conservation easement on 5.7 miles of coastline north of the plant and a payment of $6 million by PG&E to be used for various projects.

PG&E presently is in violation of the water discharge (NPDES) permit, which it needs to operate the plant, because of the substantial number of fish and other marine life—called entrainment mortality—that are killed when the plant withdraws water from the ocean for cooling, as well as habitat destruction at and near where the heated water from the plant is discharged into the ocean at the site. Both damaging impacts would continue unabated under the agreement.

We opposed the staff recommendation on grounds that the mitigation—the conservation easement and $6 million payment—does not address the environmental destruction caused by the cooling system but, instead, trades the ongoing damage for Water Board mitigation objectives that are really unrelated to the impacts. After extended public comment and the opposition expressed by some board members about the mitigation measures, however, the Board approved them by a 5 to 2 vote.

Those measures are prerequisites for the NPDES permit renewal, on which the Water Board is scheduled to vote on May 16 at its next meeting at the Watsonville City Council Chambers, 250 Main, Watsonville. We urge members to attend and express their opposition to this misguided proposal. This may be our last chance to convince the Wa Board that the mitigation plan for the NPDES permit is inadequate and that other alternatives that eliminate or minimize environmental harm from the plant’s cooling system should be considered.

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 ______________________________ Phone __________________

Address _____________________________________________________________

City _____________________________ State ____ Zip ___________

Mail your contribution to: Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club
P. O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo CA 93406

Donations are tax-deductible.
Coastal Activist Network

consistency with Coastal Act provisions. If the project is approved and there is still concern among environmental groups and others, it is appealed to the Coastal Commission.

The staff liaison meets with the Coastal Commission staff prior to the staff issuing its report to explain the project’s inconsistency with the Coastal Act. Whatever the recommendation but prior to a hearing, the Commission lobbyist meets with Commissioners to review the issue. The county organizer undertakes plans for getting attendance at the Commission hearing as well as coordinating with county organizers in other counties. If needed, the county organizer will request that Commission lobbyists in other counties help lobby Commissioners, too.

This is what is needed to make the coastal protection movement more effective with respect to the Coastal Commission,” said Sara Wan, who attended the meeting representing Vote Coast, a political action committee cated to helping the election of tal-friendly candidates. Vote the it, which called the meeting, will the statewide organizer position. Activists are good at it occasionally, it is spotty,” said Wan, who also is a commissioner. One major mistake they e is not meeting and discussing is not meeting and discussing siled developments with mission staff members before they e their reports and recommendations to the Commission, she said. Project applicants always meet with the staff to convey their positions and so should the public, she added. Staff recommendations are crucial to the outcome of the Commission’s decisions, Wan emphasized.

The proponents usually lobby Commissioners well in advance of a hearing, but activists often don’t talk to Commissioners until the day of a hearing. The activists should meet with Commissioners in a more relaxed atmosphere early on, allowing more time to explain their positions and to develop a personal relationship.

Talking to Commissioners prior to a hearing is the most important,” she said. “The number of people in an audience is second.”

For some 20 years, Wan said she has watched activists be very ineffective in dealing with the Commission and “it’s because they are not trained in putting their concerns in terms of the Coastal Act. Also, the Commissioners don’t know them. You’re going to listen to someone you know.”

It was agreed that training on lobbying is needed, and plans already are under way to make it available to Network participants. Unlike developers, activists don’t have the money to pay for lobbyists and others who attend hearings on their behalf, but activists have strength in numbers, she said. And only a few in each county are needed to make the Network effective.

Mark Massara, coastal program director of the Sierra Club, who was at the meeting, and others pointed out that the Commission staff is eager to enforce the Coastal Act, but they are “overworked and underpaid.” So it is important not to be critical of them because they can be very helpful if they are shown respect once they get to know you.

Wan cautioned Network volunteers not to “be disgruntled if you are not effective at first.” It takes time to learn the ropes, and having an organized system to protect the coast is extremely important because “regardless of who is on the Commission, that’s how you achieve maximum effectiveness.”

**Marine Interest Group Announces Workshop**

A public workshop on fisheries and how they may be affected by efforts to provide greater protection of marine resources along the San Luis Obispo coastline, including possible formation of a marine sanctuary, is scheduled to be held by the Marine Interest Group Working Committee from 6 to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, April 16, at the Inn at Morro Bay.

The workshop is expected to touch upon concerns of commercial fishers that new federal controls over activities in these coastal waters, whether in the form of an expanded Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary or some other conservation program, would harm their industry.

Plans call for academic, research, fishing and regulatory interests to come together and exchange views and information on how commercial and sport fishing might be impacted, among other issues. Opposition of commercial fishers to expansion of the Monterey Bay sanctuary to cover the San Luis Obispo County coast is widely considered a primary obstacle to that option for protecting marine resources.

The Marine Interest Group (MIG) is the body that has been formed to study the various protection options, including expansion of the Monterey Bay sanctuary. It grew out of a vote of the Monterey Bay sanctuary’s Advisory Council last year to give priority status to consideration of expansion of that sanctuary to include this county’s coast.

The MIG’s 23 members include environmentalists, citizens, fishers, elected officials from this area and their representatives and others. Leslie Krinsk represents the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club.

**Coastal Oil Drilling Dead**

Exploring or drilling for oil off the Central Coast, which poses a tremendous risk to the environment, as evidenced by the disastrous Santa Barbara oil spills in 1969 that blackened 30 miles of coastline, appears virtually dead after the Bush Administration gave up a legal fight over state control of offshore exploration.

“I am absolutely thrilled that the Interior Department finally gave up this fight,” Gov. Gray Davis said, according to the San Francisco Chronicle. “The future of California’s beaches is now where it should be — in the hands of Californians.” The Sierra Club has strongly supported Davis’ lawsuit against permitting any drilling without state review.

On March 31, the Bush Administration announced it would not appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court a decision upholding California’s authority to review oil production from federal offshore leases, which goes a long way in establishing the state’s right to control oil drilling along the California coast. Leases owned by oil companies are located off the San Luis Obispo County coast west of Morro Bay as well as along the coast of Ventura and Santa Barbara counties, all of which could have become sites for oil wells that almost certainly would have been highly visible from the shore.

Two years ago, a federal judge in Oakland ruled that the Coastal Commission has the right to review the extension of oil leases along the coast, even in federal waters, and to evaluate the potential impact of any drilling plans on air and water quality, marine life and scenic views. A three-judge panel of the Ninth Circuit affirmed that ruling on appeal by the Bush Administration, saying that renewing the leases could have a major environmental impact simply by leaving open the possibility of future drilling.

The lease renewal (renewals) represent a significant decision to extend the life of oil exploration and production off of California’s coast, with all of the far-reaching effects and perils that go along with offshore oil production,” the circuit court said.

The legal dispute erupted in 1999 when the Coastal Commission asserted its right to review oil company requests for lease extensions to make sure they comply with California’s federally-approved coastal protection plans. When the Interior Department’s Minerals Management Service refused to grant that right, Davis and the state sued the federal government.

Federal officials said they now hope to buy back the leases off the California coast from oil companies, as it did in the case of Florida, which California has been advocating for some time.

Explaining the decision to drop its defense of the suit over the leases, Interior Secretary Gale Norton said the Bush Administration “strongly supports environmental protection and understands the importance of this issue to the people of California.” Last June in rejecting Davis’ suit, however, she had said that the leases should go forward because California does not oppose offshore oil drilling, in contrast to Florida, a statement which infuriated Davis, other state officials and environmentalists, who rejected it as patently false.

**NRC Hearings continued from page 3**

management, who said the plant “is vulnerable to terrorist attack.” He said “it could have devastating effect on people in San Luis Obispo County. My family is worried and feels threatened by a lack of security at the plant.”

Sheila Baker said the plant “presents an overriding risk to the health and well being and the very life” of the county. And “more waste, creates more risk,” she added.

Constance Dunbar deplored the state of planning for an emergency at the plant, which she said is only based on a very limited radiation release. “We are at risk of a much larger and more immediate release of radiation from an accident or terrorist attack on these pools. It would result in a catastrophic event.”

Jane Swanson said “we are now living in an age of terrorism which was not considered when the plant was licensed. It must be taken seriously and I want a meaningful response (from the NRC) to the concerns raised by those of us who live here.”

In a surprise development, PG&E has dropped its effort to eliminate the Diablo Canyon Independent Safety Committee (DCISC), a three-member panel of experts created by the State to oversee daily operations at the nuclear plant. The DCISC is the only one of its kind in the U.S. and is the non-federal agency with authority to monitor the plant.

A year ago the Sierra Club California/Nevada Regional Conservation Committee adopted a resolution urging an expansion of the DCISC to include a public member in an effort to strengthen its communications with the community. PG&E, however, has consistently objected to the very existence of the DCISC and campaigned to dismantle it, most recently in bankruptcy hearings now underway.

PG&E withdrew its opposition at a March 12 meeting that was the outgrowth of a petition in 2001 by the Mothers for Peace. That meeting was attended by Rochelle Becker of the Mothers, and representatives of the DCISC, the California Energy Commission, the California Public Utilities Commission, and PG&E. Congratulations to Becker and the Mothers.

—Pete Wagner, Chair, Conservation Committee
A Winter Day on Morro Bay
by Jack Beigle

One of the difficulties of scheduling outings a couple of months in advance is forecasting the weather. All week before this outing it was windy and cold. The morning of the outing it was sunny with a slight wind. Most people made other plans when they thought it might be cold and windy. We only had four people on this beautiful day.

The tide was low so we set our course north in the main channel until we passed Grassy Island. One of our paddlers had just brought a new bird book. She was actively checking off the birds as we spotted them. We beached our boats on the sand spit and found a great dune that provided a windbreak and backrest while we ate lunch in the sun. Warm and comfortably full, we were tempted to take a short nap, but it was so beautiful as we looked across the estuary and down the row of the Seven Sisters. We wanted to soak up this moment when everything was so spectacular. We spent a few seconds feeling sorry for our friends that missed this outing then we launched our boats and paddled back to the marina with the light wind at our backs. We realize that all winter days aren’t this special on Morro Bay, but it is so nice when they coincide with our canoe/kayak outings.

Check the outing schedule and join us on the water.

New Book Explores Cal Poly Land

A new book, “Cal Poly Land: A Field Guide,” has been edited by Steven Marx, former member of the Santa Lucia Chapter’s Executive Committee and longtime Sierra Club member, which he calls part photo essay, part day-hike trail map, part history and part archaeology. It provides a field guide to the public trails, wildlife, history and use of Cal Poly’s 10,000-acre land holdings. Marx is a professor of English at Cal Poly.

The book features photos by nationally renowned photographer Sky Bergman, a Cal Poly photography professor, as well as chapters by a number of other professors, Cal Poly Art and Design Professor Mary LaPorte is the book’s designer. Marx said the book “started as an idea I had. Ever since I first came here 15 years ago, I’ve been in love with the land here at Cal Poly: its beauty, its history and the variety of activities that are carried out on that land.”

The university’s contiguous campus area represents roughly one-third of its 10,000 acres, and its Swanton Pacific Ranch near Santa Cruz another third. The remaining third, referred to as the university’s “Western ranches,” lies on both sides of Highway 1 west of the Cuesta College campus and El Chorro Regional Park.

The guide also contains reflections from faculty members and students inspired by the university lands, as well as a discussion on environmental stewardship of the land and the ethics involved in dealing with land.

The book is available at Cal Poly book stores in downtown San Luis Obispo, the Foothill Plaza shopping center and on campus.

Bill Lockyer Disagrees with NRC

A new book, “Cal Poly Land: A Field Guide,” has been edited by Steven Marx, former member of the Santa Lucia Chapter’s Executive Committee and longtime Sierra Club member, which he calls part photo essay, part day-hike trail map, part history and part archaeology. It provides a field guide to the public trails, wildlife, history and use of Cal Poly’s 10,000-acre land holdings. Marx is a professor of English at Cal Poly.

The book features photos by nationally renowned photographer Sky Bergman, a Cal Poly photography professor, as well as chapters by a number of other professors, Cal Poly Art and Design Professor Mary LaPorte is the book’s designer. Marx said the book “started as an idea I had. Ever since I first came here 15 years ago, I’ve been in love with the land here at Cal Poly: its beauty, its history and the variety of activities that are carried out on that land.”

The university’s contiguous campus area represents roughly one-third of its 10,000 acres, and its Swanton Pacific Ranch near Santa Cruz another third. The remaining third, referred to as the university’s “Western ranches,” lies on both sides of Highway 1 west of the Cuesta College campus and El Chorro Regional Park.

The guide also contains reflections from faculty members and students inspired by the university lands, as well as a discussion on environmental stewardship of the land and the ethics involved in dealing with land.

The book is available at Cal Poly book stores in downtown San Luis Obispo, the Foothill Plaza shopping center and on campus.

Bill Lockyer Disagrees with NRC

A new book, “Cal Poly Land: A Field Guide,” has been edited by Steven Marx, former member of the Santa Lucia Chapter’s Executive Committee and longtime Sierra Club member, which he calls part photo essay, part day-hike trail map, part history and part archaeology. It provides a field guide to the public trails, wildlife, history and use of Cal Poly’s 10,000-acre land holdings. Marx is a professor of English at Cal Poly.

The book features photos by nationally renowned photographer Sky Bergman, a Cal Poly photography professor, as well as chapters by a number of other professors, Cal Poly Art and Design Professor Mary LaPorte is the book’s designer. Marx said the book “started as an idea I had. Ever since I first came here 15 years ago, I’ve been in love with the land here at Cal Poly: its beauty, its history and the variety of activities that are carried out on that land.”

The university’s contiguous campus area represents roughly one-third of its 10,000 acres, and its Swanton Pacific Ranch near Santa Cruz another third. The remaining third, referred to as the university’s “Western ranches,” lies on both sides of Highway 1 west of the Cuesta College campus and El Chorro Regional Park.

The guide also contains reflections from faculty members and students inspired by the university lands, as well as a discussion on environmental stewardship of the land and the ethics involved in dealing with land.

The book is available at Cal Poly book stores in downtown San Luis Obispo, the Foothill Plaza shopping center and on campus.

Bill Lockyer Disagrees with NRC

A new book, “Cal Poly Land: A Field Guide,” has been edited by Steven Marx, former member of the Santa Lucia Chapter’s Executive Committee and longtime Sierra Club member, which he calls part photo essay, part day-hike trail map, part history and part archaeology. It provides a field guide to the public trails, wildlife, history and use of Cal Poly’s 10,000-acre land holdings. Marx is a professor of English at Cal Poly.

The book features photos by nationally renowned photographer Sky Bergman, a Cal Poly photography professor, as well as chapters by a number of other professors, Cal Poly Art and Design Professor Mary LaPorte is the book’s designer. Marx said the book “started as an idea I had. Ever since I first came here 15 years ago, I’ve been in love with the land here at Cal Poly: its beauty, its history and the variety of activities that are carried out on that land.”

The university’s contiguous campus area represents roughly one-third of its 10,000 acres, and its Swanton Pacific Ranch near Santa Cruz another third. The remaining third, referred to as the university’s “Western ranches,” lies on both sides of Highway 1 west of the Cuesta College campus and El Chorro Regional Park.

The guide also contains reflections from faculty members and students inspired by the university lands, as well as a discussion on environmental stewardship of the land and the ethics involved in dealing with land.

The book is available at Cal Poly book stores in downtown San Luis Obispo, the Foothill Plaza shopping center and on campus.
Coordinator Wanted

Position Title: Chapter Coordinator
Company: Santa Lucia Chapter/Sierra Club
Date Posted: April 09, 2003
Employer: Non-Profit
Description: This new position offers an opportunity to be a part of the nation’s leading environmental organization. Opportunity includes addressing critical local issues such as land use management, air/water quality, habitat and endangered species protection. You will work among deeply committed volunteers and be responsible for ensuring implementation of the Chapter’s conservation program objectives. Half-time one-year duration. Responsibilities include: Work closely with the Executive Committee to develop and implement programs and activities in order to enhance member effectiveness and involvement; Provide office management and administrative functions including the recruitment, training, and supervision of volunteers and interns; Acts as an information resource for chapter volunteers and the general public; Maintains the Chapter records, purchases, supplies and equipment; in coordination with Treasurer, processes invoices for payment and monitors the annual budget. Qualifications: BA/BS in Environmental Studies, Political Science or closely related field, 2-3 years experience in the environmental field that includes research and organizing campaigns, press relations and public speaking. Salary: Competitive salary to be offered based upon experience between $22,000 and $26,000 with growth potential. Compensation includes health insurance and other benefits. Contact: Fax cover letter, resume, relevant materials to (805) 543-8727. Closing Date: April 30, 2003

The Santa Lucia Chapter is also seeking to fill the following positions:
- Treasurer
- Advertising Manager
- Membership Chair
- Santa Lucian Distribution Manager
If you are interested in any of the openings, please contact Ross Pepper at rossepper@charter.net

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 May 1st). Please submit your ad and payment to: Deborah Krueger c/o Santa Lucian P.O. Box 15755 San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

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

Call CYNTHIA 805-541-0912

LUNCH ON OUR PATIO
ENJOY EVENINGS WITH MUSIC
1110 GARDEN ST. SLO
541-5888

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)

P.O. Box 1445, SLO 93406-1445
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 Felneman (473-3647). To arrange for a specific outing, please contact the outings leader. Outings Leaders please get your outings or events in by the 10th for the next month’s outings.

**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., April 12, 7:45 a.m., Machesha Mountain Hike:** Take a 12-15 mile, with 3,000-ft. elevation gain, hike through the Machesha Mountain Canyon. This is a 1.5 mile climb to a 3,000 ft. elevation gain and a 7 mile loop through a 2,000 ft. climb to the summit of Bishop Peak. Details call Gary at 473-3647 or bdenneen@slonet.org.

**Sun., April 13, 8:45 a.m., ADORE TRAIL TO ROLLING GRASSLAND PLATEAU:** Moderately strenuous with steep step trail at start in a pasture, but averages high overlook down into parts of intact historical adobe ranch house below in scenic Coyama River valley. Trail steeply ascends through open oak complex to a rolling grassland plateau extending northward to Bracken Creek. USFS Trailhead (Adventure Pass required on all parked vehicles) is in enclosure on Highway 166 approximately 2 miles east of Fremont Pass. A very short of Twin Rocks area. Meet at 8:45 a.m. at the north Santa Barbara County Government Center’s easternmost (Bldg 511) parking lot (fee deposit box for all parked vehicles) near the southernmost parking lot (State Park parking is requested. Local bike shops and hiking sources on plant life. Primitive campground. Temps this time of year should still be moderate; warm days and nights, and fairly dark night skies for stargazing. Hiking the grasslands, cones and more are being planned by hike coordinator, Lucy Henderson. To reserve your spot on this outing, check your deposit for $95 and present Jack (855) 398-1930 or claycord Ave. Concord, CA 94522. For info, 925/676-3839 — or jack2@prodigy.net. FULL RINGS WITH TWO WEEK NOTICE OF CANCELLATION.

**Wed., April 16, 5:30 p.m., San Luis Mountains Loop:** Explore the area along Stenner Creek as the Deserto Vermejo Project area which is a relatively isolated area. Meet at 929-3647 or bdenneen@slonet.org.

**Wed., April 16, 5:30 p.m., Mystery Hike poetry. Confirm and details a few days before:** Details call Steve at 453-6189.

**Fri., April 18, 5:30 p.m., Lipan Valley Briggs Cold Mine/Surprise Canyon Back- pack:** What is a view worth? Join Tom Budding and me for a weekend backpack in the beautiful San Luis Obispo Valley State Natural Park. We will backpack south from Jal Canyon to Hall Canyon camping at a spring, then on to the continental Surspark. Canyon narrows. Two issues for the price of one: Briggs Mines expansion and Surprise Canyon vehicle closure. Great views will distrust us as we discuss the defense of this magnificently landscape. Moderate skills needed. Meet some on and off trail hiking required. Contact Ldr: Bob Ellis (510) 525-8742, bob@earthlink.net. CNRCC Desert Com/SF Bay Chapter.

**Sun., Apr. 20, 9:30 a.m., Bike Brigade to Ocean:** Meet at Dune Centre Parking Lot with bike and helmet near Pismo Beach 1800 ft. elevation gain. Tell a few time before at 929-3647. or bdenneen@slonet.org.

**Wed., April 23, 5:30 p.m., El Chorro Regional Park Hike:** Meet the eagle camper and all other trails in Park. Meet at the Lupine Area Parking Lot at the end of the Park. Possible dinner after. Details call Steve 543-6189.

**Fri., April 25-27, Lion Den / Crickshank Trail Work party:** The SLO Trail volunteers will be spending the weekend at Lion Den for a few days before at 929-3647. or bdenneen@slonet.org.

**Sat., April 27, 9:30 a.m., Pismo Dunes Preserve:** Meet at Melodrama in Oceano. Hike the most beautiful dunes to a Dune Lake via a seashore passage. Confirm a few days before at 929-3647 or bdenneen@slonet.org.

**Wed., April 30, 5:30 p.m., San Luis Mountains Loop:** Explore the area along Stenner Creek as the Deserto Vermejo Project area which is a relatively isolated area. Meet at 929-3647 or bdenneen@slonet.org.

**Sun., May 4, 9:30 a.m., Point Sal Hike:** Meet at end of Brown Rd. at 9:30 a.m. Bring optional Mt. Bike for fast ride back down hill. This is a 10-mile hike with 1,400 ft. elevation gain. The bike stop a lot going uphill to botanize, solve all the planet’s problems and give a GOF a rest. Bring lunch, water, flat tires don’t chase. Meet at the rail trail parking near the base of the hill. Confirm a few days before at 929-3647. or bdenneen@slonet.org.

**Sun., May 7, 9:00 a.m., Santa Lucia Trail to Jones Peak:** This is an opportunity to explore the eastern part of the Ventana Wilderness and to hike to the highest peak in the village. Meet at 6:30 a.m. at Adventure Pass required on all parked vehicles) is in easternmost (Bldg 511) parking lot approximately 22 miles east on State Park parking is requested. Local bike shops and hiking sources on plant life. Primitive campground. Temps this time of year should still be moderate; warm days and nights, and fairly dark night skies for stargazing. Hiking the grasslands, cones and more are being planned by hike coordinator, Lucy Henderson. To reserve your spot on this outing, check your deposit for $95 and present Jack (855) 398-1930 or claycord Ave. Concord, CA 94522. For info, 925/676-3839 — or jack2@prodigy.net. FULL RINGS WITH TWO WEEK NOTICE OF CANCELLATION.

**Wed., May 7, 5:30 p.m., Stenner Creek Hike:** Come explore the area along Stenner Creek as we take an evening hike to the railroad tracks and back. Bring water and dress for the weather. Meet at the Train Trestle on Stenner Creek Road. Details call Gary (473-3649).

**Sat., May 10, 7:30 a.m., Trout Creek to Coldwell Mesa:** Explore the Garcia Mountain Area which is a relatively isolated area. Bring lunch, water, flat tires don’t chase. Meet at the trailhead. Hot weather will shorten the hike. Bring plenty of water, lunch, and a few snacks for this all-day hike. Meet at the Pacific Beverage Co. in Santa Margarita. For any other info, contact Carlos at (546-0317). (SFR)

**Sun., May 11, Lopez Lake Hike:** Come join Enthusiop Sierra Peak with our team. The Lopez Lake Tentative Plans are to hike the Tuscani Two-Waters Trail. Bring lunch, water, and dress for the weather. Meet at the parking lot behind the Arroyo Grande City Hall. Details call 438-4631 or Greg at 995-1675, or check the www.ccbb.org website for details on this year’s event. Remember to register early.

**Sun., May 25, 9:30 a.m., Bike Brigade to Ocean:** Meet at Dune Centre Parking lot with bike and helmet. An easy, educational tour of Guadalupe and then to ocean. Confirm a few days before at 929-3647 or bdenneen@slonet.org.

---

This is a partial listing of Outings offered by our chapter.

Please check the web page www.santalucia.sierrabc.org for the most up-to-date listing of activities.