A New Dawn at Carrizo Plain

Resource Management Plan for National Monument back on track, public input needed Jan. 27

One year ago, the Bureau of Land Management was determined to perform a once-over-lightly Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Carrizo Plain National Monument’s new Resource Management Plan. Carrizo Plain is home to vast archaeological and cultural resources, and some of the rarest and most valuable wildlife habitat in the United States. The Sierra Club joined with the Wildlife Society, Center for Biological Diversity, Los Padres Forest Watch, Natural Resources Defense Council and others in pointing out to the State Director of the BLM that the more thorough standard of review mandated by an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) must be met in the crafting of a management plan for Carrizo’s 250,000 acres of historic California grasslands. Last August, the BLM finally agreed.

Two months later, the BLM announced the reassignment of Bakersfield Field Office Manager Ron Huntsinger to Washington, removing the primary obstacle to a conservation-based Resource Management Plan for the Carrizo Plain National Monument. The escalating toxic working relationship between Huntsinger and Monument Manager Marlene Braun, who fought Huntsinger’s cattle-grazing preferences in favor of a plan that would favor conservation over grazing, had come to an end when Braun took her own life in March 2005. The new management plan went on hold. The Chapter went to the media and provided reporters with the background for investigative stories that ran in New Times and the L.A. Times, kept the heat on BLM and informed the public about what’s at stake at Carrizo. Now, with San Luis Obispo natural resources director Neil Havlik at the helm, a revived advisory committee will begin meeting on the Management Plan, and Havlik is eager to move in a new, positive direction — toward the management of a monument where wildlife roam, not where cattle graze.

Welcome to 2007: A Year of Action, A Year of Collaboration

By Karen Merriam, Chapter Chair

It’s hard to believe that this is the beginning of my third year as Chair of the Santa Lucia Chapter. And once again I have a wonderful group of fellow volunteers to serve with me on the Executive Committee for 2007.

Jack Morrow from Cambria will again serve as Vice Chair; Tracy Haydon of Santa Margarita is our newest (and youngest) member, and graciously volunteered to be our Secretary; Steven Marx of SLO continues as our Treasurer; John Ashbaugh of SLO is our liaison to the Political Committee and Chapter historian; Cleve Nash is also from Cambria, and Cal French of Paso Robles will continue as our delegate to the Council of Club Leaders, as well as serving as the Chair of the California Nevada Regional Conservation Committee (CNRCC) and other important appointments for the Club.

As the new year dawns, we are bidding farewell to the Ludwick Community Center and the sound of rhythmically bouncing basketballs in the gymnasium that has long accompanied our monthly meetings, and setting up camp in St. Stephens Episcopal Church at 1334 Nipomo Street, at Pismo, just south of downtown SLO (see page 2). Our meetings will still be held at 7 p.m., but now on the last Friday of the month. Mark your calendar.....
Santa Lucia Chapter General Meeting
Eucalyptus Without Tears

Are they invasive species? Are they wildlife habitats? Let them stand? Cut 'em all down?

Hear the experts:
Dr. Matt Ritter, Cal Poly Plant Conservatory Director, Biological Sciences Department
Dr. Kingston Leong, Cal Poly -- monarch butterfly specialist

Rich Matthews, Parks and Recreation Commissioner, District 5

Friday, January 26, 7:00 p.m.
St. Stephens Episcopal Church, Ramden Hall
1334 Nipomo St., at Pismo
San Luis Obispo

Enter parking lot off Pismo

Refresments provided

When Diablo Wins, You Lose

On December 14, the California Coastal Commission could and should have required PG&E to pay full freight in exchange for its permit to replace the steam generators at the Diablo Canyon Power Plant. A conservation easement over all 9,130 acres of company-owned land outside the plant’s security zone in exchange for the permit that will allow the devastating impacts of the plant’s cooling system on marine wildlife to continue for at least another ten years, and likely four times longer than that.

The easement would have ensured that the land will never be developed, conserving a significant portion of Central Coast wilderness in perpetuity. The easement was urged by the Sierra Club and Mothers for Peace when we appealed the County’s land use permit to the Coastal Commission. The rationale of the majority of Coastal Commissioners in refusing to require this as a condition of the project permits is not a mystery — fulfills the goals of the project. But PG&E simply has no other option to replace the generators are equivalent to direct preservation of the plant. It’s true that a 9,000-acre easement was urged by the Sierra Club and Mothers for Peace when we appealed the County’s land use permit to the Coastal Commission.

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The easement would have cost PG&E nothing. Instead, they offered to preclude the 9,000-acre easement as a generous gift to the community. Commissioner Larry Clark asked, “Do you think it might be seen as an even more generous gift to offer 9,000 acres?” The lawyer mumbled a terse, inaudible reply and fled the podium. The 9,000-acre easement would have cost PG&E nothing.

The upshot: A development project that will result in significant environmental impacts, detailed in the staff report, has been issued a development permit by the California Coastal Commission with no mitigation for those impacts. As far as we know, that’s unprecedented.

Coastal Commissioner Katcho Achadjian put the cherry on Alice in Wonderland’s upside-down cake when he made the motion to strip the 9,000-acre easement out of the proposed project conditions because the DREAM Initiative — a county ballot measure — and the DREAM Initiative were passed six years ago that urged long-term conservation of Diablo Canyon lands — fulfills the goals of the proposed easement.

Commission staff pointed out to Katcho that the DREAM Initiative was merely advisory and is not enforceable. The proposed conservation easement would have fulfilled the goals of the initiative, which does nothing by itself. Katcho voted against the easement any way, and prevailed. (His subsequent public attempt to explain his actions showed he has confused the concepts of “special interests” and the public interest.)

The Tribune failed to report most of this, but got the headline right: “Diablo wins conservation fight.” True enough. Everyone else, and the coast, lost.
Chapter joins in formation of strategic alliance for regional energy planning

Energy Solutions Group Takes Shape

The steering committee responsible for the Smart Energy Solutions Summit held in SLO last October has morphed into the Strategic Energy Alliance for Change (SEA). Regional Power Authority could choose the resources for generating electricity. A municipal power authority can operate less expensively than an investor-owned utility because of its tax-exempt status and eligibility for low-interest financing. PG&E supports the creation of CCAs because investor-owned utilities’ current sources of revenue contribute to overbuilding and distribution services. Thus, CCAs are collaborative rather than competitive endeavors between municipalities and investor-owned utilities.

If your organization would like to become part of SEA or participate in this process, contact Andrew Christie at the Chapter office.

Wrap-Up: Results from the Legislative Session and 2006 Elections

By Sierra Club California Staff

After a productive legislative session for the environment, Sierra Club California identified five top-priority bills for Governor Schwarzenegger to sign. The Governor responded with a mixed record, signing 2 of these top-tier bills and vetoing 3. Those he signed included AB 32 (Pavley and Nutez), which puts a cap on greenhouse gas emissions, and AB 1870 (Lieber), which adds a smoke test to Smog Check. AB 1012 (Nation), which would have increased clear alternative fuels, SB 1796 (Flora), which would have helped to improve flood protection, and SB 927 (Lowenthal), which would have enabled improved security and air quality at specified ports, all fell victim to the Governor’s veto pen.

Sierra Club California requested the Governor’s signature on an additional 34 environmental bills, making the overall requested number 39 bills. Of this total number, including the top-priority bills, he ended up signing a total of 25 and vetoing 14. The most important bill that the Governor did sign was AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act, which made California the first state to adopt a binding limit on greenhouse gas pollution. Sierra Club California will now work with the Air Resources Board and other state agencies to effectively implement this landmark law.

Additionally, enactment of AB 1870 literally allows Californians to breathe easier, as it eliminates the loophole that allowed vehicle smoking vehicle tailpipes to pass Smog Check.

Another triumph was the passage of SB 1360 (Keohoe), which creates a central registry of conservation easements on the Internet for the convenience of the public. Conservation easements are

Let’s Review continued on page 1

related legislation and submits comments on proposed regulations.

At the County Planning Commission, we argued against the County giving PG&E permits to replace Diablo Canyon’s steam generators on the basis of an environmental impact report that pretended that extending the life of the plant had nothing to do with triggering an inevitable request to renew the plant’s license, and therefore that twenty additional years of impacts need not be reviewed. The Planning Commis- sion, after a 12-hour hearing, turned to the Board of Supervisors, which rubber-stamped the permits without consider- ing the full impact of the plant’s contin- ued operation. Joined by the San Luis Obispo Mothers for Peace, we immedi- ately appealed to the Coastal Commis- sion. In May, the Commission found “substantial issue” for appeal of the project as a violation of the California Coastal Act, with two Coastal Commissi- oners filing their own appeal.

The Chapter Director attended the Eco- Farm Conference in Pacific Grove, join- ing a discussion held by Cal GE Free on various county initiatives to ban the growing of genetically engineered crops in California.

At our general meeting, Jeff Kopper of Los Padres ForestWatch introduced members to this new grassroots organi- zation that has already achieved major accomplishments in protecting our part

of the National Forest system from development inroads and bad manage- ment.

In February, we started the year asking if your mayor had signed on to the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement. On Febru- ary 28, Chapter Chair Karen Merriam and former City Councilmember Jan Marx presented a Sierra Club “Cool Cit- ies” award to San Luis Obispo’s Dave Romero, the first mayor to take us up on it and join 194 other mayors (now up over 300) across the country.

Chapter chair Karen Merriam asked Supervisor Shirley Bianchi if, in view of the threatened prospect of the San Joaquin Valley dumping selenium-tainted water into Estero Bay and Con- gress inclined to lift the ban on offshore oil drilling, perhaps now would be a good time to make a serious try at get- ting the border of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary extended down the SLO coast. We hope to get a hearing before the Board of Supervi- sors in early 2007.

At our general meeting, we hosted Corner Executives, Executive Director of the Southern California Watershed Alliance. Executives focused on the Cambria desal project, pointing out that desalination in the United States has simply never

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Taking Issue

problematic recent environmental commentary & coverage in our local press

“The foul water blamed on years of discharge,” Sonia Patel, The Tribune, November 21, 2006


Summary: In seemingly unrelated stories, the residents of Morro Bay discovered the groundwater in six local wells was contaminated with nitrates above safe drinking levels, the residents of Nipomo prepared for inevitable flooding with December rains, and Oso Flaco Lake and 18 other water bodies in the county are on state water officials’ watch list due to high levels of contamination.

All of these stories are actually about the same thing: The impacts of development on water in the form of flooding and polluted runoff. On November 16, the Sierra Club released its second annual “Guide to America’s Best New Development,” featuring ten ground-breaking projects that help keep our drinking water clean. Runoff and sewage overflows are the largest sources of water pollution and growing threats to the health of our water, so in choosing projects to be recognized with this year’s top development honors, the Sierra Club looked for simple but highly effective solutions that help keep untreated and poorly treated sewage and toxic urban runoff out of our drinking water sources.

All of the projects highlighted in the report use simple solutions that can be easily replicated across the country and that have been proven to help keep our water clean by reducing the volume and impact of stormwater runoff. The report makes the point that there is a better way to build and produce healthy and livable communities, highlighting a diverse set of projects taken on by developers, communities, local utilities and even nuns. They involve solutions both big and small, from rain gardens and natural plantings in Seattle to redefining wetlands at a Motherhouse in Monroe (Nipomo take note: Natural flood control) and a giant underground cistern at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. By incorporating creative methods for managing polluted stormwater runoff these projects help keep sewage, toxins and litter out of our water.

Developers elsewhere are helping create truly livable communities and implementing simple solutions to curb the pollution generated by their projects. We need these kinds of inventive projects and clean water practices here, unless we want to see more stories like those at right.

San Luis Obispo County’s proposed Storm Water Management Program (SLOSWMP) is currently awaiting public hearing and approval at the Regional Water Quality Control Board. As it stands, the program has a pervasive lack of specific measures that the County could adopt to reduce stormwater pollution. The Water Board needs to take heed of and incorporate the examples in the Building Better report.

Profiles of the winning projects can be viewed at: www.sierraclub.org/buildingbetter

Death comes for the RPD

By Sue Luft
President, North County Watch

At the end of 2006, a well-deserved death came to the countywide land use proposal called Rural Planned Development (RPD). At their final meeting of the year, the Board of Supervisors were forced by overwhelming public opposition to kill the proposed ordinance.

The decision by the Board of Supervisors is a sweet victory for the dedicated group of land use advocates who have followed this issue since it was first presented to the Board in June, 2005.

Outgoing Supervisor Shirley Bianchi said “step on it quick before it multiplies” and made the motion to kill the RPD and send the issue of underlying lots to the recently formed Transfer of Development Credit (TDC) Blue Ribbon Committee. As Harry Ottiv lobbied to give the RPD ordinance to the TDC Committee, Jim Patterson clearly stated that the committee should disregard the proposed RPD ordinance and act as though they have been “given a blank sheet of paper”.

Testimony and letters by the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club, ECOSLO, Land Conservancy of SLO County, Environment in the Public Interest, North County Watch, Greenspace – the Cambria Land Trust, Adelaide Area Association, Creston Citizens for Ag Land Preservation, and other concerned citizens, and a Santa Lucia website feature with supporting documents, drove the point home that the RPD must die – and so it did.

The Problem

The problem of “underlying legal lots” or “historic parcels” or “antiquated subdivisions” is serious. The discovery by landowners of underlying lots on their land has been described as being like “winning the lottery”. These “magic subdivisions” dramatically increase the perceived value of property and can allow the property owners to circumvent local restrictions on land development and avoid county policies established to preserve our working farms and ranches.

Subdivision of agricultural land is clearly the first step toward urbanization of those lands. One speaker described it as the “leapfrog development ordinance”.

RPD History

The RPD would not have solved the problem of underlying lots but would have been a Christmas gift worth millions to the development interests that backed the ordinance. However, letters and testimony by

Looking for a real wilderness vacation? Come rent Canyon Creek Lodge.

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Santa Lucian • Jan. 2007
The nine-member Carrizo Plain National Monument Advisory Committee, charged with advising the Secretary of the Interior on public land issues in the Carrizo Plain National Monument, will meet on Saturday, January 27, 2007, at the Carrizo Plain Elementary School on Highway 58. The meeting will begin at 10 a.m. and finish at 5 p.m. There will be a public comment period from 3-4 p.m.

Monument staff will present updated information on the progress on the draft Resource Management Plan, and discuss other coordination opportunities. The Committee will provide input and have opportunities for written or verbal comments. Individuals who plan to attend and need special assistance such as sign language interpretation or other reasonable accommodations should contact BLM at:

Bureau of Land Management
Attention: Johna Hurl, Acting Monument Manager
3801 Pegasus Drive
Bakersfield CA 93308
Phone (661) 391-6093
e-mail: hurlj@blm.gov

If any point has become clear through the long, painful journey toward appropriate management and conservation of Carrizo, it is that the Bureau of Land Management needs to hear from the public, loud and clear, and in large numbers, that we want the designation of “National Monument” to mean what it says it means, and we want this precious land preserved. Please circle January 27 on your calendar, and make a point of coming to Carissa Elementary School by 3 p.m. to let them know.

For more information on the issues at stake in the Carrizo Plain National Monument, please visit the Bureau of Land Management’s website, “see ‘BLM Do the Right Thing at Carrizo’,” Jan. 2006

Empower Poly!

Uniting the students of Cal Poly to advocate leadership and action for a sustainable future, the Empower Poly Coalition of sustainability clubs is a student-founded initiative formed in the spring of 2006 to serve as a link and political power base for campus organizations.

The EPC recently applied for the Ecomagination Challenge, sponsored by mtv-U and General Electric, with the idea of establishing an Eco-Innovation Grant to support student projects. The EPC and Sheep’s Pass, a student club that works on developing a solar array to power a dormitory, recently received a grant from the Cal Poly Sustainability Commission and the California State University Board of Trustees.

A GET-TOGETHER: Empower Poly is having a mixer for everyone interested in sustainability on campus.

Join us on January 18, from 4-6 p.m. in the Poly Engineering building, the largest solar power generating facility in the county.

California: Comin’ At Ya

Feds try to quietly route nuke waste through the state

by Rachelle Becker
Sierra Club Radio Committee

In early November, the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility received a statement filed by the state of Nevada addressing the U.S. Department of Energy’s October 13, 2006, notices of intent (NOI) to make changes in the plan to transport the nation’s nuclear waste to Yucca Mountain, Nevada, for storage.

One of the little changes: At least 40% of the nation’s high-level radioactive waste is now proposed to travel nearly the entire length of California, entering at Barstow and exiting over Hwy 80 out of Sacramento, but the DOE did not find it necessary to schedule any hearings on this Notice in California.

The Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility immediately contacted state agencies to determine if California had been notified and if hearings had been requested. Within hours, Commissioner James Boyd of the California Energy Commission sent a request that hearings be held and that the date for Sierra Club Radio Committee be scheduled.

A follow-up letter and comments were filed by the CEC and the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility, jointly filed with national organizations. To date, no response.

According to The Governor’s office in Sacramento, but the DOE did not provide any maps showing the new rail access routes or main line railroad tracks that are proposed for nuclear waste shipments. Key information about the actual communities affected and potential impacts are intentionally obscure by the NOI in an apparent effort to suppress public involvement and meaningful participation.

The stories of California and Utah -- two states that stand to be significantly impacted by development of a rail access route to Yucca Mountain using the proposed mined corridor were left totally in the dark by DOE.

Despite the fact that national changes in rail routing as a result of a mining spur would mean exponentially more shipments in California and would require the use of an entirely different main line railroad segment in Utah, DOE has refused to schedule public meetings in those states or even formally seek their input.

In early November, the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility received a request that provisions incorporated for mean-while storage of the nation’s high-level radioactive waste be extended. A follow-up letter and comments be extended. A follow-up letter and comments were filed by the CEC and the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility to the Department of Energy. DOE has refused to schedule public meetings in those states or even formally seek their input. There is nothing in the NOI that even hints at the widespread, all-encompassing effects of the changes DOE is proposing.

One can only conclude that DOE is intentionally seeking to mask the im- port of its actions and withhold crucial information from the public.

A fundamental principle underlying the National Environmental Policy Act is the requirement for federal agencies to transparently set forth proposed actions that have the potential to affect people and the environment and to follow procedures designed to not only allow, but encourage, meaningful public participation in the decision-making process. Like the NRC’s failure to follow NEPA when licensing a high-level radioactive waste storage facility on California’s fragile coast, the DOE Federal Register Notice of October 13, 2006, failed to adhere to this spirit of openness and inclusive participation and actually served to obscure the extent of the changes being proposed and the nature and extent of their likely impacts.

We agree with the state of Nevada that the Department of Energy’s notices are “procedurally and legally deficient” and “should be withdrawn and reissued with provisions incorporated for meaningful public participation.”

We await a response to our comments from the DOE, but we are not holding our breath. The Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility has brought this issue to the attention of California state and federal legislators and will keep our community informed of any means that may be taken to demand accountability from the Department of Energy.

Sierra Club On the Air

Saving the planet starts at home so the Sierra Club is launching Sierra Club Radio -- tips and stories we all can use as consumers, citizens, neighbors and parents to make responsible choices and connect to the growing environmental movement.

Sierra Club Radio is a weekly half-hour program broadcast every Saturday at 3:30 pm on 960 AM in the Bay Area, on the Web at www.sierraclubradio.org
I have learned a tremendous amount today, and I want to talk to you about the reason behind that.

That reason is beginning of our process here today that we're running out of oil, and the smart people tell us that as the economic disintegration are really going to be profound in the next three to five years. To me, that means that our government needs to do something about the price of energy. I've talked to many folks, and they are measuring how to make it work for the rest of the nation, and in many ways, the rest of the world. I believe we, all look at what you do. I steal it, copy it, take it back to Texas, improve on it, and then all steal it back and improve on whatever I did and make it better in California. I'm proud to acknowledge that we stole your renewable energy program from you.

If the Club gets behind this campaign, we can enlist the thousands of members to get their attention that we need new product. The current mayor sent us a letter saying “I'm asked to go to 35 to 40 forums every month to be talking about this issue; people thought. For whatever reason – maybe because I'm old and have gray hair – I think that's important that we keep track of.

You all have the power in each of our communities to make an enormous difference and to solve problems. We’ve heard at the Smart Energy Solutions summit, people have made to analyze where your energy goes, not just in your city, the businesses and buildings, but in your individual homes. That's a critical first step. Taking a look at the way you power your communities is the second step.

A comparison was made between the results of investments in wind energy and the same amount of investment in nuclear energy. The results were clearly favorable for wind energy. With the same investment, much more energy could be generated with wind. Moreover, with investments in wind energy more new jobs were generated than with investments in nuclear energy.

Dr. Smith holds forth at the Smart Energy Solutions summit, with Jan Hunt of the Community Environmental Aggregation project, right.

What He Said

Remarks of Smitty Smith, Director, Public Citizen – Texas, at the Smart Energy Solutions summit, San Luis Obispo, October 10, 2006. Smith spoke as a member of the panel on “How to Build Community Will.”

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Dr. Smith holds forth at the Smart Energy Solutions summit, with Jan Hunt of the Community Environmental Aggregation project, right.
When you have your own power system that is owned by the community, then suddenly you can make dramatically different choices.

And I’m sad to say that we’ve lost several solar manufacturers because they all got better incentives out in California. We’re learning from that. But we do have one of the new thin film solar manufacturers and there’s an agreement for them to try to bring in the next generation of solar manufacturing companies to Austin.

Another thing that we did in Austin is take a look at where the rest of our energy goes... or what else? Aha! It’s the car. What can we do about it? Well, Austin Energy, after looking at that, decided that it wanted to go out and buy a hundred plug-in hybrids. They went to Ford and said “we’ll buy a hundred of them.” Ford said “Yeah, right. Come back when we can and have an order for ten thousand.”

So Austin said “okay,” and they’ve gone city to city— I think the last I heard they’ve got about 9,800 cars and plug-in trucks on order. The power of aggregate purchasing, getting a bunch of cities together, makes a huge difference in terms of the price of the product, and it also goes to Ford or GM the belief that if they build something there will be a market. And cities are starting to get together and put it to a kind of curb, and you get real-time feedback on the generation of a product.

So the manufacturers are real excited about manufacturing a plug-in hybrid car or even creating a hybrid plug-in truck to serve the need. But we’re not stopping there. We’re looking at bucket trucks — the big things that service the light poles — and the other kinds of heavy trucks that are utilitarian for city service, figuring we’re really the best people to try out this equipment at the city level and find out what works and what doesn’t. And so Austin Energy has taken leadership on that.

Another thing that we’re looking at is where can we put our community money. Our utility has a significant amount of capital that it invests in a variety of different things. Should we be investing in next generation technologies? Should we be starting look at ways of building low-emission coal gasification plants with carbon sequestration — not because we want a coal plant, but because it will transform the market. If the city puts its money into carbon sequestration and figures it out, it may be a technology that works and then gets picked up by a lot of other people and have the cities’ money to play with.

Cities and counties, through their investments, that they’re making for their short and long-term funds, through their purchases of retirement packages, all have a lot of money they can play with, and their investment decisions make a lot of sense.

Let me wrap up by suggesting a couple of other things. The question here is how can you build the community will. Well, you can always say you wanna beat those folks down in Austin, Texas, then you’ll go to San Diego and say, we wanna beat the folks out in California; that works well. But another thing we all have to look at is what we’re doing virtually as we leave here. One opportunity you have this year is there is a movie called Kilowatt Out, and for those of you that have not seen this movie, it’s basically one man named his wife, who are twenty-somethings, that transitional generation, scratching their heads and saying why is electric utility come from? And so he goes off and looks at the coal community from that is providing his electricity. Then he moves to the south-eastern United States, Texas, or Wyoming, they have these big open pit mines, and they’re blowing these coal mine towns out, and he sees what happens to the people who live around them and the pollution that’s resulting from mining. And then he goes and takes a look at what’s happening in their state.

And he talks to the doctors. And then he talks to the people around the nuclear plants, and then he scratches his head and says “I can’t consciously continue this. I have to think of ways to reduce my emissions.”

So he and his wife, in their little 1200 square foot apartment in a crusade to reduce their energy bills by fifty percent. And they do so, at costs that are affordable for them, back within a year. And then they talk about the poltical strategies that can change the way we get our energy all across the nation.

One of the things we’ve learned is the power of neighbors saying to neighbors: “We have a problem and we know how to solve it.” Take in that movie. Going to see it tonight, then ordering it, taking it home, and having ten of your neighbors over for lunch and you tell them probably one of the most important things you can do. Watch the movie, have a conversation about what you all can do together, and what you all can do as a community.

Having a solar fair and telling those people that talks about our responsibility, not only to ourselves and to our families, but as members of the global community, to transform the way we’re generating our electricity, and not to produce.

That’s the challenge that we have walking out of this room. To pick up our knowledge today and put it to use and transform our communities and transform the technology that’s been used. Now lest you think you’ve got a lot of time to ponder this, one of the things you can do is set up your action plan in place, get your policies adopted, get your buy-down for your equipment ordered, and start installing it before the prices really go through the roof.

Those communities that take those steps now are going to be rewarded. Twenty years from now you’re going to sit there and say “I was right back then.” A different choice. How are we gonna create a solar park? What kind of incentives can we use to drive the cities to invest in solar manufacturers to come here?

Clean energy advocates and policy makers are starting to turn the corner on the realization of California’s renewable energy industry as a means of providing a job boost to the state. “Renewable energy technologies have the potential to grow California’s economy and provide thousands of high-tech, high-paying jobs,” says Berndette Del Chiaro, clean energy advocate and founder of the Ivanpah Valley Research and Policy Center, a statewide environmental group.

With the right programs, California could develop a ‘Green Energy Valley’, similar to Silicon Valley, while bringing the nation and foreign markets for renewables, a hundred megawatts of that power to the state.

200,000+ Hi-Tech Jobs Can Come From Renewable Energy Market

Full realization of the Renewable Portfolio Standard goal of 20 percent would create an estimated 119,000 person years of employment for Californians over the lifetimes of the plants built through 2017. The Energy Action Plan would bring about these jobs by 2010. Overseas renewable energy markets would create an estimated 4,300 new jobs for Californians in 2010 and 4,700 in 2017. This totals 201,000 person years of employment. At an average salary of $40,000 per year, this job growth would have payroll benefits of $8 billion.

Jobs from a steady growth in the use of solar panels would add 2,700 person years of employment. A more dramatic growth in the PV market would bring about the greatest job benefits, since solar creates more than twice the number of clean energy technologies.

Solar power not only creates pollution-free and reliable electricity, but it creates more jobs per unit of energy than all other technologies,” said Del Chiaro. “By expanding our solar market, we could export solar panels like we export vegetables, grains, and other programmers and Hollywood movies.”

Wind power is expected to more than double within five years and grow to a $60 billion industry by 2020. Geother-

mal power is projected to grow by 50% by 2020, with $60 billion industry by 2020.

California should continue to promote and use the use of ultra-clean micropower such as solar photovoltaics and fuel cells through state and local incentive programs, building codes and requirements for existing and new buildings, and technology-forcing emissions standards. It is also in the state’s best interest to remain at the forefront of this new micropower such as interconnection rules and fees and standby charges. Certainly a large increase in the use of ultra-clean micropower would result in a significant boost to the utilities, renewable energy companies, which would produce the necessary micro-power industry into global market dominance.

Other programs to promote research and development of renewable energy technologies that, and to reduce subsidies and excessive regulation on ultra-clean and nuclear energy sources, are also effective in level ing the playing field and thereby promoting the renewable energy industry. Maintaining and expanding these programs could have significant long-term economic benefits for Califor-

Join the discussion! www.kilowattours.org Go to: www.kilowattours.org
worked, at great expense, and should be any community's very last resort.

In March...

We found ourselves at the center of a First Amendment dust-up when a Cal Poly prof tried to block a project planned for San Miguel – 24 residences on a toxic waste site – had no information as to the originality of the cadmium contaminating the site, health effects, by much higher levels, exceeded safe exposure levels, the likelihood of recurrence after exposure, and potential water table contamination. We also noted that preparing a remediation plan after granting permits would be a violation of the California Environmental Quality Act.

The Commission agreed and sent staff back to the drawing board.

In a legal action made possible by the Chapter's financial assistance, the Save the Park prevailed in a settlement agreement with the County and the local Lumber Association of California and Nevada.

We pointed out to the County Planning Commission that their staff report on the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) project planned for San Miguel – 24 residences on a toxic waste site – had no information as to the originality of the cadmium contaminating the site, health effects, by much higher levels, exceeded safe exposure levels, the likelihood of recurrence after exposure, and potential water table contamination. We also noted that preparing a remediation plan after granting permits would be a violation of the California Environmental Quality Act.

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Vehicular Recreational Area and study ways to avoid vehicle crossings of Arroyo Grande Creek.

In August...

Throughout the year, we joined SLO CE Free in challenging the County Health Commission’s star- crossed efforts to assemble a task force on genetically engineered crops that was not overwhelmingly stacked in favor of the biotech lobby and folks with a great deal of self-interest in the propa- gation of genetically engineered foods. Thanks to our mutual efforts, when the Healthy Earth Homebuilding (HEH) board of its task of its report, it also agreed to for- ward to the Board of Supervisors a 9- page citizens response (http://tinyurl.com/pmgj) compiled by SLO CE Free. Two weeks later, Anita Lucia Chapter, along with a just-released report of the Santa Cruz County Public Health: Coming into our own: the report resulted in a vote by the Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors to enact an immediate moratorium on the planting and directions of genetically engineered crops in their county. The citizens report con- cluded that the Health Commission should submit a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to determine the location of all genetically engineered test fields in SLO County from the USGS. The chapter then recommended the Agricultural Commissioner institute a mandatory regi- stry program both for test fields and approved genetically engineered crops, and recommend a precau- tionary approach to the adoption of genetically engineered crops in San Luis Obispo County. The chapter also endorsed candidates, similar to the one adopted by Santa Cruz County.

The citizens report concluded that the Health Commission should submit a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to determine the location of all genetically engineered test fields in SLO County from the USGS. The chapter then recommended the Agricultural Commissioner institute a mandatory regi- stry program both for test fields and approved genetically engineered crops, and recommend a precau- tionary approach to the adoption of genetically engineered crops in San Luis Obispo County. The chapter also endorsed candidates, similar to the one adopted by Santa Cruz County.

We started the month with a bang with “Talk About the Bay,” a free public con- ference at San Luis Obispo Bay Nature Preserve that was largely planned and underwrit- ten by the Chapter, an co-sponsored by the County Water Board, SLO Chamber of Commerce, the Home Builders Association, ECOSLO, the Morro Bay National Estu- ary Program and the SLO Coast Alli- ance. Coastal Commission Executive Director Peter Douglas and State As- semblyman Pedro Nova anchored the event, whose subjects ranged from the state of the estuary and the Los Osos sewer to sea otters, power plants and the true meaning of coastal activism. The Ocean Outfall Group is now pro- moting the model state- law.

The Chapter and HopeDance hosted the Sept. 18 SLO premiere screening of Sipakapa is Not for Sale, showing how Mayan communities in Guatemala are fighting back against the devastat- ing effects of “free trade,” along with a talk by Susan Knight, National Repre- sentative for the Sierra Club’s Responsible Trade Program, on how interna- tional trade policies impact us all.

On September 20, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed the bill to enable turning over construction of the Los Osos sewer to the County. All summer, the Chapter worked with the Office of Assemblyman Sam Blakeslee and lobited in Sacramento for passage of his bill, AB 2190 — the only remain- ing way out of the sewer quagmire for the embattled, soon to be bankrupt town, which had run out of options and whose bond rating had slipped to a “C,” meaning it would never be able to acquire the loan needed to construct a wastewater treatment project at an affordable rate. With luck, we now will look to see how the performance of the Los Osos receives an acceptable level of treatment.

At our general meeting, members learned the lessons of Madagascar, as Cal and Letty French brought back photos of a slide show they put together of the grim future that awaits at the end of a road of relentless environmental de- struction.

In October...

We continued to meet with State Parks officials to monitor Parks’ progress in implementing the terms of our settle- ment agreement over the management of Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recre- ational Area, and ways to avoid vehicle crossings of Arroyo Grande Creek.

With North County Watch, The Chapter co-hosted a City Council candidate forum in Paso Robles. For the first time, the candidates were asked about their positions on Measure J and Propos- ition 90. We sponsored a Candidates Energy Forum in SLO at our general meeting, 19 days before the election. Members and view- ers of www.sloca- jon.org got the rare treat of hearing a cross-section of can- didates from multiple t t races engage in a discussion of alter- national energy solu- tions at the local, county and state levels. Participants included Assemblyman Matt Blakeslee, Mayor David Romero, Morro Bay Mayor Janet Pe- ters, County Board of Supervisors can- didate Bruce Gibson, and a slew of city council candidates.

In Memoriam: Harold Mosci

Harold was a giant among Democratic activists and environmental heroes in SLO County. It was fitting that he lived until the day, after the election, and he would have certainly cheered the news. Harold led the fight in the 1950s to preserve Cuesta Canyon against a catastrophic development in San Miguel. He fought to save it by uniting a diverse coalition of organizations and individuals for the creation of the Santa Lucia Wilderness with newly-elected Congressman Leon Panetta. Harold always volunteered stimulating conversa- tion to anyone who crossed his path near his downtown office, particularly attorneys, fellow ranchers, and anyone who shared his in- terest in politics and the environment. Though he never married, Harold Mosci leaves a legacy that goes well beyond his extended family. He fought to preserve open space and vistas, wildlife and wilderness. Those values will be etched into our memories forever.

In November...

Nine of fourteen Chapter-endorsed can- didates — Lois Capps (23rd Congress-ional District, SLO County Supervisor), Allen Settle (SLO City Council), Tony Ferrara (Mayor, Arroyo Grande City), Bev Winholtz (Morro Bay City Council), Ellen Beraud and Mike Brennler (Atascadero City Coun- cil), and Joe Costello and Chuck Fellows (Arroyo Grande City Council) — won their races.

At the November 14 meeting of the County Board of Supervisors, the Chap- ter joined the community voices urging the Board to pass the Parks and recre- ation Element as drafted in a years-long process of consensus and compromise. We asked the Board to cast the 11th-hour demands by the Farm Bureau aside to support final trail right-of-ways, assuring the resi- dents, County Board of Supervisors can- didates —  Lois Capps (23rd Congres- sional District, SLO County Supervisor), Allen Settle (SLO City Council), Tony Ferrara (Mayor, Arroyo Grande City), Bev Winholtz (Morro Bay City Council), Ellen Beraud and Mike Brennler (Atascadero City Coun- cil), and Joe Costello and Chuck Fellows (Arroyo Grande City Council) — won their races.

At our general meeting, Steve Shimek, Executive Director of the SLO Outfall Group gave a brief history of the California sea otter and alerted us to the critical final phase of the study Fish and Game Commission’s multi-year process estab- lishing a historic network of Marine Protected Areas off the Central Coast.

In December...

The Farm Bureau tried one last time to scare people and the Board of Supervisors into gutting the Parks & Rec Ele- ment, and failed to prevail against those of us who stood for science and reason for the future of our community.

The results were overwhelmingly in favor of trails and we have every reason to be pleased with the result,” said Adam Fulkerson, SLO County Chapter's Chair. Amen.
used to protect land from being developed by preserving it as farmland, open space or wildlife habitat. A comprehensive analysis of possible future locations and other relevant information will help land use planners and the public to better protect these areas.

Once again Sierra Club California was influential in stopping a number of bad bills from progressing. We also worked to get amendments to an array of legislation to make those bills acceptable. Our work in this regard generally will not show up in scorecards on the Legislature or Governor, nor make it to any media list, but it is critical if we are to protect our existing set of environmental laws.

Sierra Club California put substantial effort into the 2006 election as well. Ballot measures were our main focus, and resources were directed toward the priority legal biggest problem, defeating the takings initiative (Prop 95), while the parental notification initiative (Prop 85) that we opposed also was defeated. However, two important initiatives that we supported were not approved by the voters — clean energy (Prop 87) and clean elections (Prop 90). Voters rebelled against long and complicated initiatives that had few cohesive support. Bonds fared much better, though, as voters supported five infrastructure bonds, including 3 that we backed: water/parkland con-
servation (Prop 94), affordable housing, which has some excellent smart growth/innovative provisions (Prop 1c), and schools, which has green school buildings language (Prop 1d). We were neutral on infill provisions (Prop 1C), and schools, which has green school buildings language (Prop 1D). We were neutral on infill and public safety/land con-servation (Prop 90), and extremely vocal against the instead, that a new committee needed to be created to consider the issues under a new ordinance. It makes one wonder whether the Farm Bureau is representing potential developers rather than those who want to remain in agriculture.)
February issue ad deadline is January 16. To acquire a rate sheet or submit your ad and payment, contact: Sierra Club - Santa Lucia Chapter p.o. Box 15755 San Luis Obispo, CA 93406 sierr8@charter.net

Local Government Meetings
City of SLO--1st & 3rd Tues., 7:00 p.m.; 781-7103
Arroyo Grande--2nd and 4th Tues., 7:00 p.m.; 473-5404
Atascadero--2nd & 4th Tues.; 466-8099
Cambria CSD -- 4th Thurs.; 927-6223
Grover Beach--1st & 3rd Mon., 6:30 p.m.; 473-4567
Grover Beach Planning Commission--2nd Tues.
Morro Bay--2nd & 4th Mon.
Paso Robles--1st & 3rd Tues., 7:00 p.m.; 237-3888
Pismo Beach--1st Tues., 5:30 p.m.; 773-4657
Los Osos CSD board--1st Tues. & 2nd Mon., varies
California Coastal Commission--3rd Tues., varies
SLO County Board of Supervisors--every Tues.; 781-5450
SLO County of Governments; 781-4219
SLOCOG Citizens Advisory Committee--1st Wed. every other month, 6:00 p.m.
SLOCOG Board--1st Wed. every other month, 8:00 a.m.

HELP WANTED

VOLUNTEER AND DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR
20 hours per week - work from home, or at the Chapter Office
Reports to Chapter Director. No financial compensation available - yet. This experienced individual will be a self-starter, committed to creating a sustainable environment, willing to work as part of a dynamic team, and possessing positive people skills. Help the Chapter Director and Board to build the capacity of the Chapter in our community’s efforts to achieve a sustainable, efficient, fossil-free energy future. Grant search and writing abilities a plus. Ability to organize events, and to care for and nurture volunteer efforts, is essential.

For questions or application, please call Karen Merriam, Chapter Chair, 544-6628.

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Survival at the Edge of Experience

Karen Merriman’s Searching for Connection: An Exploration of Trauma, Culture, and Hope delves into the heart of traumatic experience, where important connections to safety, hope, and strength are severed. Even in the darkness of traumatic events, however, personal and collective resources can be discovered and brought to bear to help oneself and others endure. Through a series of personal stories and case studies, Merriman develops a paradigm of traumatic experience that reveals the common factors that allow individuals to survive and to overcome nightmare experiences. Amazingly, survivors often discover within themselves untapped resources they have never known before.

The ten chapters of Searching for Connection build with cumulative authority and power, shining a search beam ever deeper into the abyss of traumatic experience. Merriman’s exploratory approach will be especially appealing to readers who prefer to reach their own conclusions based on their unique strengths and wisdom. This is a groundbreaking study addressing a subject of profound significance, which all readers will profit from contemplating.

ORDER YOUR COPY TODAY! A GREAT GIFT FOR READERS INTERESTED IN THE HUMAN CONDITION

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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 (473-3694). For information on a specific outing, please contact the outing leader. Outings Leaders please get your outings or events in by the 1st for the next month’s outings.

Hiking Classifications:
- Distance: 1 = 0-2 mi., 2 = 2-3.5 mi., 3 > 3.5 mi.

Sat., Jan. 13, Outlaw Mine - Joshua Tree National Park:
The Outlaw Mine is located in the southeastern area of the park. A cross-country walk leads to an Indian trail (pottery cache can be found along this very old path) which crosses the Pinto Mountains at a low saddle. Because this is a way out of the beaten path, much of the supporting timber and many artifacts remain. Bring your boots for this one and lightweight clothing. Two quarts of water and a hardy backpack are required.

Jan 28, 2030, Sun., COAST Hike:
This is a 4 mile hike on coast to remote area of dunes. Call 929-3647 or bdennen@kcbx.net a few days before to confirm and for details.

Sat., Feb. 3, 4-mile hike in the North Algodones Dunes Wilderness Area:
We will have two outstanding projects in this Imperial County wilderness area. On Saturday we will join Eric Dryfuss, natural resources specialist in the El Centro BLM office, perhaps doing a census of the (famous, or infamous) Pierson’s Milkvetch, or else sifting seeds of native plants for future restoration efforts. Sunday will be a longer hike to find and inventory five small gullies for the BLM office, data they need for wilderness management and cooperation with the California Dept of Fish and Game.

Sat., Feb. 4, Otter Day at the Morro Bay Museum:
The premiere of a new film on the California Sea Otter by the Santa Lucia Chapter’s own Cleve Nelson, wildlife photographer extraordinaire, will be the highlight of a day filled with otter-related activities. The film will be shown in the Natural History Museum Auditorium at 2 p.m., where Cleve and his wife will be honored for their generous donation of time and expertise that has made this project possible. For more info, contact Norma Wrightman mwrightman@charter.net.

Whales, Pinnipeds & Wildflowers:
In Channel Islands National Park

April 13-16: 5-day island cruises visiting San Miguel, Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz & Anacapa Islands. $925

All cruises depart from Santa Barbara. Prices include assigned bunk, all meals, snacks, beverages, & services of a ranger/naturalist who will travel with us to help identify, seals & sea lions, birds & wildlife, plants & flowers, whales & other creatures of the sea. We’ll also see remnantsof the rich culture of the Chumash people who lived on these islands for thousands of years.

Each island is unique & offers its own special charm: San Miguel for its white, sandy beaches and huge congregation of elephant seals; Santa Rosa for its rare Torrey Pine forest; Santa Cruz for high mountains, deep valleys & the famous Painted Cave; Anacapa for the west coast brown pelican rookery; steep cliffs, a picturesque lighthouse and excellent snorkeling waters; Santa Barbara Island for pristine waters and a friendly colony of fancy sea lions. All islands have rugged shorelines, dotted with sea caves, & inhabited by an abundance of wildlife. Activities include hiking, kayaking, snorkeling, beachcombing, or just resting on the west coast sun-able with colorful wildflowers. In summer, the enticing, pristine waters of the Marine Sanctuary, churning with colorful fish and sea lions, will delight snorkelers and swimmers.

These cruises are fundraiser to benefit Sierra Club political programs in California. To make a reservation, send $100 check payable to Sierra Club to leader Joan Martinez, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, 91732, (626) 443-0706: holthrh@siad.com.
Website: www.truthaquatics.com/hiking.htm

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