What’s Next for Santa Margarita?

This is Old California’s last stand

The Santa Margarita Ranch Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) hit the ground with a thud on January 11 — 400 pounds of hefty evidence that converting the state’s largest privately held valley oak savannah into a series of residential subdivisions punctuated by nine wineries, multiple churches, a golf course, dude ranch, convention center and numerous other side shows, is still as bad an idea as it ever was.

Anyone who has ever driven through the rolling, oak-studded hills on the way to Pismo, or admired the sunrise on granite outcroppings south of Santa Margarita Lake, or stopped to drink in the color of the wildflowers along the lower reaches of Highway 58 already knows what the EIR tells us in so many words—that the Santa Margarita is one of those unique, sacrosanct landscapes that should be preserved, in perpetuity, for future generations to experience the true flavor of “Old California” in a way that will soon be all but impossible.

Even the Tribune, in reporting the January 11 meeting where the environmental study was unveiled, wrote that the plan consisted of “growth so dramatic that the current Santa Margarita, and the quiet lives [residents] live there, would be little more than a memory.”

This city-sprawl is the product of a recently formed Limited Liability Corporation (LLC) made up of local developers Rob Rossi, Doug Filippini and Karl Wittstrom. The EIR assessment of impacts from just the proposed “ag cluster development” identified 11 “Class One” impacts—those are environmental impacts that can neither be avoided nor adequately mitigated. In other words, the public should learn to live with impacts such as the loss of up to 400 mature oak trees, acres of prime agricultural soils, extensive cultural resources—both Chumash and Spanish Mission era—ground water aquifer depletion, traffic, degraded air quality and more. County planner James Caruso said at the January 11 meeting that he could not recall an EIR that identified as many Class One impacts, and has stated that it is one of the most complex EIRs the county has ever considered, right up there with reports that dealt with offshore oil drilling.

And the EIR only analyzes a tiny portion of the total development—a 112-lot “cluster” subdivision on 1 to 3-acre lots. The other 400+ homes, hotels, wineries, golf course, etc. will be analyzed later. One can, literally, only guess what the total tally of impacts and their effects will be.

The reader here may be moved to inquire “What about the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)? That law requires EIRs to consider the whole project, and prevents looking at segmented development in a piecemeal fashion. How can they get away with this?”

In a twist of land use planning, the portion of the General Plan that was unveiled, the portion of the General Plan for which the Santa Margarita is home, was unveiled on January 11 meeting that he could not recall an EIR that identified as many Class One impacts, and has stated that is one of the most complex EIRs the county has even considered, right up there with reports that dealt with offshore oil drilling.

And the EIR only analyzes a tiny portion of the total development—a 112-lot “cluster” subdivision on 1 to 3-acre lots. The other 400+ homes, hotels, wineries, golf course, etc. will be analyzed later. One can, literally, only guess what the total tally of impacts and their effects will be.

The reader here may be moved to inquire “What about the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)? That law requires EIRs to consider the whole project, and prevents looking at segmented development in a piecemeal fashion. How can they get away with this?”

In a twist of land use planning, the portion of the General Plan that was unveiled, the portion of the General Plan for which the Santa Margarita is home, was unveiled on January 11 meeting that he could not recall an EIR that identified as many Class One impacts, and has stated that is one of the most complex EIRs the county has even considered, right up there with reports that dealt with offshore oil drilling.

And the EIR only analyzes a tiny portion of the total development—a 112-lot “cluster” subdivision on 1 to 3-acre lots. The other 400+ homes, hotels, wineries, golf course, etc. will be analyzed later. One can, literally, only guess what the total tally of impacts and their effects will be.

The reader here may be moved to inquire “What about the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)? That law requires EIRs to consider the whole project, and prevents looking at segmented development in a piecemeal fashion. How can they get away with this?”

In a twist of land use planning, the portion of the General Plan that was unveiled, the portion of the General Plan for which the Santa Margarita is home, was unveiled on January 11 meeting that he could not recall an EIR that identified as many Class One impacts, and has stated that is one of the most complex EIRs the county has even considered, right up there with reports that dealt with offshore oil drilling.

And the EIR only analyzes a tiny portion of the total development—a 112-lot “cluster” subdivision on 1 to 3-acre lots. The other 400+ homes, hotels, wineries, golf course, etc. will be analyzed later. One can, literally, only guess what the total tally of impacts and their effects will be.

The reader here may be moved to inquire “What about the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)? That law requires EIRs to consider the whole project, and prevents looking at segmented development in a piecemeal fashion. How can they get away with this?”

In a twist of land use planning, the portion of the General Plan that was unveiled, the portion of the General Plan for which the Santa Margarita is home, was unveiled on January 11 meeting that he could not recall an EIR that identified as many Class One impacts, and has stated that is one of the most complex EIRs the county has even considered, right up there with reports that dealt with offshore oil drilling.

And the EIR only analyzes a tiny portion of the total development—a 112-lot “cluster” subdivision on 1 to 3-acre lots. The other 400+ homes, hotels, wineries, golf course, etc. will be analyzed later. One can, literally, only guess what the total tally of impacts and their effects will be.
Santa Lucia Chapter General Meeting

Glen Canyon & Grizzlies

On Friday, February 23, Walter Robie will treat us once again to an incomparable display of beauty captured with his camera on his trips to the canyons of Lake Powell and the tundra of Alaska.

The first part of the program is titled "Lake Powell’s Magic Light." Walter spent a week photographing the morning and evening light reflecting off the burnt-orange Glen Canyon walls into the roping waters of the Colorado, creating fantastic oscillating patterns. And there are scenes of arches and buttes rising out of the blue waters draped in ribs of ochre-colored sandstone. The second part of the program is titled "Grazing Bears and More." On one of many trips to Alaska, Walter had the opportunity to photograph these monarchs of the north up close, and large herds of caribou on the arctic tundra. This part of the program ends with a dazzling display of the aurora borealis moving across the northern sky at a furious, sensuous pace.

Friday, February 23, 7:00 p.m.
St. Stephens Episcopal Church
1334 Nipomo St., at Pismo
San Luis Obispo
Enter parking lot off Pismo

Okay, They Helped a Little...

By Pam Heatherington

On January 27, a ceremony took place on the East West Ranch (aka Fiscalini Ranch Preserve) to honor the donor community groups and public agencies responsible for the preservation of that beloved coastal property.

Gaily absent from the list of invitees was the California Coastal Commission. I find this omission odd and unfortunate, because if it hadn’t been for the Coastal Commission’s denial of the county-approved subdivision of the ranch, public acquisition would never have been possible. In fact, if it hadn’t been for the Coastal Commission’s bold action in 1998, we would now have a private dealant on East West Ranch, serving dozens of ocean view mansions, and a golf course, dude ranch and luxury hotel on the Heart Ranch just up the coast.

Similarly, no mention of the Coastal Commission is made in the otherwise informative interpretive signs on the ranch, north and south entrances to East West Ranch. Unsuspecting visitors are led to believe that the fate of the ranch was determined from the proposed development to local fundraising efforts to buy the property, with no regulatory action.

It’s time the Cambria Community Services District, American Land Conservation and Friends of the Ranchland correct this revisionist history and give the Coastal Commission the credit and recognition it deserves. The public needs to be reminded that the Commission doesn’t just make developers, and the CCSD angry, it makes thing happen for the betterment of the coast.

On January 27, Pam Heatherington, our Conservation Committee Chair, was selected by the Atascadero City Council to fill the at-large seat on the City Planning Commission.

“It’s a two-year commitment,” says Pam. “I’ll need to stay on from the conservation committee due to time constraints, but there are many issues I intend to stay involved in. Be assured, one of the main reasons I felt qualified to apply to the Planning Commission is because of my involvement in the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club.”

And we’ll miss you, Pam, but our loss is Atascadero’s gain.

Old Problem, New Permit

By Jack McCurdy
Conservation Committee

A hearing has been scheduled on a proposal to renew the federal permit that allows the existing Morro Bay Power Plant to continue to take millions of gallons of water from the Morro Bay National Estuary for cooling purposes, killing billions of crab and fish larvae in a nursery for marine life and a designated Environmental Sensitive Habitat Area.

The National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit, which regulates diversion of water from the Estuary and discharge of water into Estero Bay at the north face of Morro Rock, was last renewed in 1995. Expired for nearly seven years, it has been on “administrative extension” since 2000 on the rationale that a new plant was to be built, but no such project is in the works.

The Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board will conduct a hearing on the existing permit on Friday, March 23, starting at 9:30 a.m. at the Board’s offices, 885 Aerovista Place, Suite 101 in San Luis Obispo. The period for accepting written public comments will extend through Tuesday, February 13.

Information about the issues surrounding the proposed permit renewal will be posted prior to the comment period deadline on the web site of the Coastal Alliance on Plant Expansion (CAPE), a nonprofit citizen group that has monitored the original proposed replacement of the Morro Bay Power Plant since 1999 and a designated party in the board review of the permit renewal, at www.morrobaypowerplant.org and at the Chapter web site, http://santaluca.sierraclub.org. Notice of the hearing, the proposed renewed permit and a fact sheet are at www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/

In 1999, Duke Energy sought to replace the plant with a new, larger facility but dropped its application. When the US Power, the current owner, has been reported as wishing to build a replacement plant but has provided no plans or timeline. A scientific study required by the U.S. Clean Water Act for replacement plant found that between 17% and 33% of crab and fish larvae would be killed every year in water diverted into a new

continued on page 3
National Club Election Coming This Spring

The annual election for the Club’s Board of Directors is now underway. In March, those of you who are eligible to vote in the national Sierra Club election will be able to vote in the mail (or by Internet if you chose the electronic delivery option) your national Sierra Club ballot. This will include information on the candidates and where you

A Public Purchase

By Adam Hill

San Luis Obispo Developer Rob Rossi has purchased an option on Possil Point, the old Eucalan “tank farm” site, 90 ocean-bluff acres just south of the town of Arila Beach. Mr. Rossi’s preliminary plans, presented at the January 8 Advisory Council meeting, are likely to include a subdivision of ocean view mansions and a massive luxury hotel.

Mr. Rossi is receiving early and enthusiastic support from Third District Supervisor Jerry Lenthall, who has generously offered to convene and Chair another “Blue Ribbon Task Force” to determine “public preferences,” i.e., a la the Dihido Ranch development. Lenthall has selected the same Berkeley firm to facilitate the meetings.

The growing trend of using hand-picked focus groups to assist developers in the early stages of controversial projects is alarming for a number of reasons. First, they confer the aura of “consensus” and “buy in” from the public without ever actually engaging the public. If any critics or opponents to the project are ever selected to participate, they are always outnumbered by the project’s sponsors.

Second, these groups provide excellent political cover for the decision-makers who ultimately must approve or deny the project. It is so much easier for an elected official to suspend independent analysis or critical thinking skills when faced with the beguiling justification that “The task force discussed this project for six months, and after careful consideration, this is their recommendation.” How can a County Supervisor or city councilman compete with six months of focused meetings?

Lastly, one should never forget that these facilitated focus groups are paid for by the developer, to achieve a particular outcome—support for their project. One can scarcely imagine Mr. Rossi or any other developer paying upwards of $30,000 for a process that concluded with a recommendation that the project should not go forward. It is unseemly in the extreme for Supervisor Lenthall to be assisting in such an effort. The Third District Needs a Supervisor who will be an ardent and independent protector of the coast, not a sly opportunist.

In 1989, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service designated the Oceano Dunes complex as the most fragile habitat in the United States,” said Christie. “The County’s Open Space policy is absolutely clear that off-highway vehicles are not welcome on County-owned lands. These two facts go together, and we

Under subsequent questioning, Planning staff admitted that the designation of county land parcels in the ODSVRA as “buffer” – the designation used in the county map submitted with the county’s Local Coastal Plan and certified by the Coastal Commission — did not agree with the fact that the land is being used as an off-highway vehicle riding area. In their staff report, Planning staff also failed to analyze the consistency of the proposed sale with the County’s Open Space policy on off-highway vehicles.

Saying “We should clean up our own act before we get rid of [the land],” Planning Commissioner Penny Rappa commented that the inconsistencies pointed out by Naficy and the Sierra Club mean “we’re speaking out of both sides of our mouth.”
that deals with Santa Margarita Ranch requires the corporation to provide a Specific Plan that spells out all of the development plans for the ranch. In its first formal subdivision proposal — unless that subdivision happens to be an “Ag cluster subdivision” — from this requirement. There is no consensus on whether this General Plan loophole is sufficient to circumvent CEQA.

For a copy of the Draft EIR (CD or Executive Summary), contact Lynn Dotter, Environmental Division, at dotter@cbo.slo.ca.us, or call (805) 781-5700, ext. 284. You may also view the web site: www.sloplanning.org. Anyone interested in commenting on the DEIR should write a comment directly to the County, San Luis Obispo, CA 93405. Comments must be submitted by 5:00 p.m., April 12, 2007. (The original deadline of March 9 was extended to allow for public comment.) If you need more information about this project, call Caruso at (805) 781-5702, or jcaruso@co.slo.ca.us.

To get involved in responding to the DEIR and the effort to protect this land, contact:

David Halberg, dhalberg@gmail.com 438-5006
SMART, John Beccia, jbeccia@slodave.com 805-505-3620
William Miller, wmmiller@mpandc.com 438-5332

NOTE: The owners of the Santa Margarita Ranch make their facilities available for the use of BCC facilities for the Santa Lucia Chapter fundraiser in April do not compensate for the plans or the activities of the owners.

Continued from page 1

Slouching continues on page 3

including The Nature Conservancy and the California Rangeland Trust. The result of the 7 years of disagreement over the future of this site is a tangled web of issues with convoluted legal implications, including the 1966 mediated agreement between the owners — a Texas family with business interests, development, and land development — and the Santa Margarita Area Advisory Council, which was eventually taken over by the county General Plan and settlement agreements associated with the Taos Road. Setting aside the subject of high intensity, comprehensive nature of the saga could fill a book of similar length to the Draft EIR. The 30,000-acre Santa Margarita Ranch was purchased for 16,000-acre Santa Margarita Ranch and 2,100-acre Chimeiras Ranch back in the mid-1980s. The county sold the ranch, 2,100-acre portion of SM Ranch west of Highway 101 (now known as “Spanish Oaks”), leaving them with approximately 13,900 acres. While the ranch was purchased, the owners — a Texas family with business interests, development, and land development — and the Santa Margarita Area Advisory Council to ensure they achieved their ultimate goal of seeing a mega-development scenario approved on the property. It is important to remind ourselves that the Texans purchased a cattle ranch. Nothing more, nothing less. The fact that their intention was to transform it into a new town does not obligate the county or the community or anyone else to support and facilitate that intention. They convinced the Board of Supervisors to provide them unprecedented access to the process as the Salinas River Area Plan (SRAP) was updated — essentially giving them the opportunity to include their wish list for development of the property in the county General Plan. But when they pushed for including specific language that would make it easier for them to apply to develop 500 or more homes and a golf course resort and other commercial after the purchase, the proverbial stuff hit the proverbial fan. And so it began. For more than a decade, the Texans strategized, maneuvered and manipulated the county planning department, the community, and the Santa Margarita Area Advisory Council to ensure they achieved their ultimate goal of seeing a mega-development scenario approved on the property. It is important to remind ourselves that the Texans purchased a cattle ranch. Nothing more, nothing less. The fact that their intention was to transform it into a new town does not obligate the county or the community or anyone else to support and facilitate that intention. They convinced the Board of Supervisors to provide them unprecedented access to the process as the Salinas River Area Plan (SRAP) was updated — essentially giving them the opportunity to include their wish list for development of the property in the county General Plan. But when they pushed for including specific language that would make it easier for them to apply to develop 500 or more homes and a golf course resort and other commercial...
than the institutions that created them—and what people can do to right the scales.

Two beliefs have taken hold in rural Pennsylvania, where Grossman now works for the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund. In the late 1990s, large corporate hog farms were generating a mountain of manure that threatened to seep into the area’s groundwater and wells. Instead of protesting these specific conditions, citizens in some of the area’s townships—many conservative, lifelong Republicans—head of the defense fund, to pass local laws that banned corporate farms altogether. In two cases, they declared that corporations don’t have the same rights as people. Agribusiness firms have fought back by pushing for a plan—unveiled last year by Governor Edward Rendell (D)—to set up a board of political appointees with the power to overturn local ordinances. “The establishment of this board is nothing less than the state being used by agribusiness and sludge corporations to eliminate those ‘pecky’ Townships and rural communities who continue to believe in local, democratic control over issues affecting their lives,” a group of township supervisors wrote. A bill based on Rendell’s initiative was signed into law in July.

A similar battle is being waged on the other side of the country, where residents of the Northern California city of Arcata were struggling with the economic impact of fast-food franchises. In 1999, the city passed an ordinance that prohibited any more of these businesses from opening. “Local businesspeople were very much in favor of it,” says David Cobb, a Humboldt County activist and the Green Party’s 2004 presidential candidate. “So much so that they said, Why only do restaurants?” The city is considering a prohibition on all chain retailers, while the county weighs a ban on non-local corporate involvement in elections. Last year Arcata voted (on a nonbinding resolution) to oppose corporate personhood altogether, declaring that “only persons who are human beings should be able to participate in the democratic process.” The conviction shared by these disparate communities—that democracy is impossible unless corporations are subordinate to citizens—is nonpartisan and proliferating. And its biggest advertisement is the corporations themselves: Every time big business comes into a community and effectively declares that its citizens don’t have the right to govern themselves, Grossman says, more people will understand what it is at stake.

—excerpt from “Meet the Corporation,” by Chris Warren, Sierra magazine, Sept./Oct. 1995

Asking community members with no professional training in land use law to sit down in a room to negotiate with savvy developers and their consultants and attorneys gave the developers an unfair advantage over the process.

How?

activities—with no language that guaranteed any protection of any portion of the ranch in trade, the community pushed back.

On the eve of the morning in which that section of the SRAP would be before the Board of Supervisors, the Ranch owners’ attorney notified county attorneys that they believed Supervisor David Blakely had a personal conflict of interest on any issues involving the Ranch because he resides in Santa Margarita and adjacent to the Ranch. No mention had ever been made of this concern during the previous several years that Blakely was on the Board. Having no time to seek an opinion from the Fair Political Practices Commission, Blakely had no choice but to recuse himself from the discussion-leaving the Board deadlocked 2-2 on the proposed language.

That impasse led to a series of mediated discussions which resulted in an infamously ‘mediated agreement’ immortalized in the General Plan. What is apparent now but wasn’t then is that asking community members with no professional training in land use law to sit down in a room to negotiate with savvy developers and their consultants and attorneys gave the developers an unfair advantage over the process.

Even though the Texans eventually sold both ranches several years ago, the foundation they carefully laid for future development of the Santa Margarita Ranch remains in place.

The Chimineas Ranch was purchased in part by the Nature Conservancy in 2001 and in 2004 by the California Department of Fish and Game—which now owns the entire 30,000-acre ranch. Such was not the fate of the Santa Margarita Ranch, which was purchased by local developer Rob Rossi and other investors in 1999. Although Rossi spent many months negotiat-

ing with The Nature Conservancy, no agreement could be reached. He later worked with the California Rangeland Trust on a proposed conservation easement deal, which ultimately fell apart when CRT was unable to raise the funding to purchase the easement.

Since that time, some of his partners have come and gone and the ranch has been subdivided, with different partners owning different portions.

Just outside Yosemite National Park on 50 Acres of beautiful forested hillsides

Private cabins with bath or shared bath, dorms and tent cabins. Full service Ayurvedic spa with sauna, hot tub, cold plunge, massage, scented soaking room & yoga classes. Meeting rooms to accommodate conferences & retreats of all sizes. Outdoor amphitheater with fire pit. Cafe at the Bug serves fresh Californian cuisine with Vegans & Vegetarians options. Visit us once, and you’ll come back for a lifetime.

Yosemite Bug Rustic Mountain Resort 6979A Highway 140, Midpines, CA 95345 toll free 866 826 7108 or 209 966 6666
Website: www.yosemiterustic.com Email: bug@yosemiterustic.com

HopeDance

Screenings at SLO Public Library, Osos & Palm.
Fri., Feb. 2, 7pm: “Death of a President” $7
Sat., Feb. 3, 7pm: “Converging Ecological Crisis: Are We Up to the Challenge?” with Professor Gordon Hartmann. $5
Sun., Feb. 4, 3pm: “2012: The Odyssey.” $10
Fri., Feb. 9, 7pm: “Who Killed the Electric Car?” $5
Fri., Feb. 16, 7pm: “Why We Fight.” $5
Sun., Feb. 18, 3pm: “One: the Movie” (Glaad). Free
Sat., Feb. 24, 6:30pm: “An Inconvenient Truth” followed by panel discussion with SLO Mayor Dave Romero, Sierra Club’s Karen Merriam. Air Pollution Control District’s Larry Allen, Ridershare’s Lisa Quinn. Free.
Sun., Feb. 25, 3pm: Paul Hawken’s 2006 Bioneer Plenary speech, continuing the discussion from the film. Free.
Call Bob Banner at 544-9663 for details. Changing the World, One Documentary at a Time, 3 or 4 times a month!

Poly Empowered

A splendiferous time was had by all at the January 13 mixer for the Empower Poly Coalition of student sustainability clubs, held at the Arno Grande home of Chapter Chair Karen Merriam. Sierra Club is working with Cal Poly student and faculty groups on energy element & Community Choice energy aggregation planning for senior projects this year. (See: www.local.org).

Empower Poly’s Michael Marcus (left), recipient of the American Planning Association’s National Planning Leadership Award, confers with Bill Samuels, Cal Poly City & Regional Planning Department head, and SLO Green Bank’s Nick Alifer.
We can't have clean water soon enough.

California sea otters are struggling to survive.

Pollution from land is causing disease and death in the ocean.

Meanwhile, the Morro Bay-Cayucos Sewage Treatment Plant is seeking a rare waiver from our nation's sewage treatment standards.

We need to upgrade the Sewage Plant as fast as possible.

Otters should not have to wait eight years for cleaner water.

People shouldn't have to either.

To ? Morro Bay and Cayucos to complete the upgrade as fast as possible. Call Morro Bay at (805) 772-4656 or Cayucos Sanitary District at (805) 995-3290 to voice your opinion.

For more information, please visit www.nrdc.org

Regional Conservation Committee Meets in First Webcast

Following a trial run three days prior to work the bugs out, the Sierra Club's California-Nevada Regional Conservation Committee held its first meeting via the World Wide Web on January 20.

Members went to Sierra Club offices equipped with the necessary hardware and software in San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego and San Luis Obispo. (Traditionally, committee members from one part of the region have had to drive to a meeting location in southern or northern California, with a second meeting held the following day in the other part of the state for members nearer that location.)

A highlight of the day-long meeting was the energy presentation, covering Cool Cities, Community Choice energy aggregation, Fresno's nuclear rush and moves to relicense Diablo Canyon and San Onofre nuclear power plants, and Liquidified Natural Gas facility plans in Southern California.

"Obviously we saved a lot of energy just by staying where we are," said webinar organizer Ken Smokoska. "We proved this can be done for the Club's far-flung committees, so we hope it will catch on."

We Get There Eventually

By Joe Dickerson

With two big football games to compete with, we weren't very hopeful that our January paddle was going to be very well attended. Were we ever surprised. It proved to be one of our biggest outings in a while and we didn't even make it easy for anyone to find us. Let me explain.

We schedule our trips long before the outing date so that everyone has ample time to plan for them. The date, launch site, and time are all dutifully mailed to everyone on our mailing list. Great plan, and one that usually works.

But this time, our fearless leader, that would be me, blew it. I forgot to look at the scheduled trip and had a senior moment. We were supposed to launch at the State Park Marina in Morro Bay but I had in my mind Coleman beach by the power plant.Oops.

After Ann and I downloaded our power plant. Oops. Eventually we got there, but it was too late for everyone to sort out what was happening. Gulls and shore birds really drive me nuts. After several minutes of not seeing any shore birds whose bills we couldn't see because they were tucked under their wings, we finally took a poll and decided they were marbled godwits.

We paddled almost to Midden Point and hauled out for lunch, a walk to the ocean side of the sand spit and the requisite swapping of paddling stories. Almost at the very moment of our launch to return to the cars, the slight breeze freshened, turned nearly 180 degrees and blew us back to Coleman Beach. In spite of the silly beginning, the day turned out to be another great paddle for the SLO Paddlers. But then, aren't they all?
Classifieds

March issue ad deadline is February 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 sierra8@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 Council of Governments: 781-4219
SLOCOG Citizens Advisory Committee--1st Wed. every other month, 6:00 p.m.
SLOCOG Board--1st Wed. every other month, 8:30 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 as 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 are 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.

Law Offices of Jan Howell Marx
A Client Centered Practice

Business Mediation
Environmental Law
Elder Law
Real Estate
Wills and Trusts

541-2716 janmarx@fxx.net

Everything U need to backpack except your sleeping bag. More than 20 items, incl. 2 tents, stove, 2 packs, coolware, lantern, mattress, food containers, etc., $110. Call 772-1735 for details.

Survival at the Edge of Experience
Karen Merriam’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 enough 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, Merriam 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 hold with cumulative authority and power, shining a search beam ever deeper into the abyss of traumatic experience. Merriam’s exploratory approach will be especially appealing to readers who prefer to reach their own conclusions based on their unique strengths and windows. 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
YES! I want to order this thought-provoking book. Send me _____ copies of Searching for Connection: An Exploration of Trauma, Culture, and Hope at $22.95

Name ____________________________________________
Organization ____________________________________________
Address ____________________________________________
City/State/Zip ____________________________________________

My check or money order for $_______ is enclosed • Charge my CVISA D MasterCard
Card number ______________________ Expiration Date ____________
Signature ____________________________________________

Mail to: Truthsayer Press
PO Box 1245
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

To order, call (805) 541-1360
or order online at www.searchingforconnection.com

To order, call (805) 541-1360
or order online at www.searchingforconnection.com
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.

February 8-11 Cross country skiing and snowshoeing: For beginner to expert, both skis and snowshoes will be used, no experience necessary. Have fun in the snow at beautiful Mammot Lakes and enjoy company of our fellow Sierra Clubbers. For more details contact leader. Limited number of accommodations available at Tamarack Lodge so make plans now! JOHN HOLROYD 495-6391 (CH)

Sat., Feb. 10, 8:30am, Hike to Big Falls via the Rinconada Trail and High Mountain Road: This is a good time of year to check out Big Falls. There should be water (no promises). The hike is approximately 9 miles in length with about 1800 ft. of elevation gain. There are great views of Poon Valley and Lopez Canyon from the top of the saddle on the Rinconada Trail. There is a possibility of poison oak. Bring water, lunch, and dress for the weather. Meet at the Santa Margarita Beverage Company at the east end of Santa Margarita. There is an optional stop at the Pozo Saloon after the hike if they are open. Rain cancels. For info, call Chuck at 441-7397 (CH)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10 Biking at Oso Flaco: Oso Flaco is a small freshwater lake nestled in the Guadalupe Dunes. We expect to find many birds at this stopover on the birding flyway. Bring your boat and equipment, PFDs, picnic lunch and binoculars. LAUNCH AT OSO FLACO CAUSEWAY PUT IN 10:00 AM Joe Dickerson 693-9534


SUN., FEB. 11, 10AM, BLISS MOUNTAIN ROAD: HIKING: Sponsored by BLM. This hike is subject to change, all day hike, probably a 1000 foot gain. NO RESERVATIONS. ANacle at the BLISS MOUNTAIN ROAD. Meet 10:00 AM. Call 929-3647 or <bdenneen@kcbx.net> for more info. Mike 441-7597 (CH)

Mar. 3, 4:30p.m. Sunset moonrise hike and potluck at Harris grade: Walk along the ridge at Harris grade with a short steep climb at the end (4 mrt, 900 ft. elev. gain). Watch as the sun goes down and the full moon comes up a few minutes later. Bring a daypack with flashlight, food to share, a plate, utensils, and water for yourself. Meet at Lompoc Pizza Hut parking lot or Orcutt Long’s Drugs parking lot at 4:30pm. Hikes subject to change, always contact leader. Jim 937-6766 (AR)

Mar. 3, Sun.0930, TOUR de WOODLANDS: Meet at junction of Willow and Albert Way with bicycle & helmet, see the explosion of an “instant city”. Very easy ride with many stops. Call 929-3647 or <bdenneen@kcbx.net> a few days before to confirm and for details.

Sat., Mar. 10, Conocoupah north and Morro Bay: We will launch from the north end of Morro Bay and float south on a rising tide. Bring your boat and equipment, PFDs, picnic lunch and binoculars. LOW TIDE 10:19 AM LAUNCH AT COLEMAN BEACH HIGH TIDE: 2:39 PM. PUT IN 10:00 AM Joe Dickerson 693-9534.

Sat-Sun., Mar 10-11, Service in the Santa Rosa Wilderness Area: We will assist BLM in removing tamarisk from a canyon in the Santa Rosa Wilderness Area in the recently created San Jacinto National Monument, near Palm Springs. Arrive Saturday morning or campout Friday night. Work with Saturday with Justin Suastrad, Wilderness Coordinator for BLM, Potluck and happy hour Saturday evening, then hike Sunday Leader: Kate Allen 691-4405, kaiserella@pacbell.net

Santa Lucian • Feb. 2007

Hiking Classifications:

Distance: 1 = 0-2 mi., 2 = 3-5 mi., 3 = 6-9 mi., 4 = 10-12 mi., 5 = 13+ mi.


Sat.-Sun., Feb 3-4, Service and Hiking in the North Algodones Dunes Wilderness Area: We will have two outstanding projects in the Imperial County wilderness area. On Saturday we will assist Ern Dreyfuss, 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 game glaciers for the BLM office, they need for wilderness management and cooperation with the California Dept of Fish and Game. Saturday evening will be a potluck, a campfire, and stories about our desert. Contact leader: Craig Deutche, deutche@earthlink.net, 714-774-6417 (CH)

Feb. 4th, Sun.,0930, tour de woolseys: Meet at junction of Willow and Albert Way with bicycle & helmet, see the explosion of an “instant city”. Very easy ride with many stops. Call 929-3647 or <bdenneen@kcbx.net> a few days before to confirm and for details.

Feb. 4th, 3 p.m. Superbowl alternate hike and potluck: 3 hours, dolphins, and eagles sound like animals, not team, join us as we hike Point Sal Road to our potluck dinner destination (5 mrt, 1300 ft. elev. gain). Bring a daypack with food, sunscreen, and a plate, utensil, and water for yourself. Meet at the Orcutt Long’s Drugs parking lot at 3pm. Always contact the leader. Jim 937-6766 (AR)

Feb. 11, 0930, Sun., Nikomio creekside Service and behind Adobe Plaza in Old Town Nikomio. See new trail, riparian habitat, native plantings. My easiest hike. Dogs OK. Call 929-3647 or <bdenneen@kcbx.net> a few days before to confirm and for details.

Feb. 18, 0930, Sun. POINT SAL: Meet at the west end of Brown Rd (1.5 miles south of Guad). Hike to ridge, a couple of good pictograph sites, then we’ll begin picking our way along the eastern edge. At a high point, we’ll start heading west towards Willow Hole, probably have lunch amid the tall rock formations there and do a leisurely stroll out. All very pretty. Bring two boxes of liquid stimulants, food. E-mail Ann and Al Allen at wni@agmundo.org or call directly (no messages please) at 760-366-2932. San Gorgonio Chapter/CNRC Desert Com.