Coastal Roundtable Takes Shape

We have the first network of Marine Protected Areas in the U.S. Now what?

When it comes to public policy, land and ocean planning need a hookup. When California’s 1999 Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) finally went into effect for the Central Coast on September 21, implementing a first-in-the-nation network of marine conservation areas and reserves -- 29 sites comprising 204 square miles of coastal waters -- the need for the integration of policies that have impact on both land use and the health of the ocean only became more urgent. That’s why the Planning and Conservation League has begun discussion of a Coast and Ocean Regional Roundtable (CORRT) for San Luis Obispo County, slated for March 2008.

The first meeting of the CORRT planning group convened in SLO on October 4, assembling a group of land-based organizations and ocean stakeholders with a common interest in coastal and marine environments with the goal of developing a preliminary CORRT Plan for San Luis Obispo, identifying potential participants among local groups and other stakeholders in the community. “At this time, I anticipate at least one future meeting in January 2008, in which we will create the final CORRT agenda and program design,” said Dr. Monica Hunter, project coordinator for the Planning and Conservation League. CORRT will initiate a process to focus on local land use and coastal water quality issues as they relate to the goals of the MLPA Initiative and new marine policy established by the California Ocean Protection Act (COPA). This effort will provide the initial platform on which to establish a nexus between land-based resource programs and conservation organizations, marine conservation programs and stakeholder organizations. These relationships currently do not exist and are not likely to develop without a distinct mechanism to create an innovative dialogue on the interrelationships of land-use and water quality policy decisions and the newly defined goals of COPA and the MLPA.

The Coast and Ocean Regional Roundtables can help to meet that need, initiating a strong land use and marine policy base for coordinated action at the regional level. The project will be working with the Monterey Bay National Marine Preserve.
**General Meeting**

**Songs from the Sea: An Evening with Walter Robbie**

The debut of a new audio/visual dual-projector extravaganza from leg- endary nature photographer Walter Robbie is always an event. Robie made two trips from the central coast to northern Oregon, photographing the Haystack Rocks, crashing waves, tide pools and abstract patterns of seagrass at low tide, plus coastal foothills as the light changed in the early morning and evening. Music for this program features a violinist of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

**In Memoriam**

thanks to Patricia Wyse for her donation in memory of Bea Morrow

**Supes Gone Wild!**

Long ago having earned themselves collective nicknames like “The Three Amigos,” “The Gang of Three” and “The Three Horsemen of the SLOpocalypse,” development-friendly County Supervisors Ovitt, Achadjian and Lenthall lately seem determined to ramp up the level of favors done for developers and land speculators and the level of public disregard they routinely display for their ostensible constituents. This is the moment of the planning profession. And if the lengthy moratorium after the Board majority’s rise in 2003 was the rebuke, then this is the retribution.

The Morro Shores decision at the Supervisors’ meeting on Tuesday evening was spectacular, but increasingly common—example of the Board majority’s rising contempt for the entire planning process. Even the Tribune, normally as development-friendly a local paper as any project proponent could wish for, could not conceal—or even more significantly, did not edit out—the reporter’s palpable incredulity in covering the decision, in which the Gang of Three ignored the Planning Director and the unambiguous advice of County Counsel in order to help a developer get a project built in Los Osos. This has not been an unusual practice, but an example of a pattern that was recognized by the California Supreme Court in 2007.

A developer hoping for a permit to build in Los Osos under eleven-year-old terms of an expired approval, then expired, been extended for five years, expired again, and now have nothing to do with the reality of land use as much as a Level III wa- ter severity designation, Ovitt, Achadjian and Lenthall opted to give the developer another shot under the conditions of his ancient permit because addressing the actual impacts of his project in the real world would involve additional cost and inconvenience for him.

The law is clear: What the Gang of Three is trying to do is not allowed. And it’s no longer just about protecting, or failing to protect, the quality of life here, or our rural lands, natural areas and wildlife. This is the worst possible time for the Gang to be stepping up their shenanigans because this is the historical moment when we need all hands on deck, with innovative poli- cies and strong ordinances all pointing in the same direction in order for all of us to do our part in dealing with the world’s biggest problem.

What we have instead are three good old boys hooked up to the real estate/development lobby lobbing for the developer.

The L.A. Times nailed the problem in “To Go Green, Live Closer to Work,” in its September 21 edition: “Forty per- cent of the planet-heating gases that Californians emit come from transportation, and...the state’s greenhouse emissions will continue to soar unless it dramatically changes the way it builds cities and suburbs...Compact development — mixing housing and businesses in denser patterns, with walkable neighborhoods — could do as much to lower emissions as many of the climate policies now promoted by state and national politicians...A growing consensus of experts is homing in on the everyday decisions of local officials and county planners.”

The Times was referring to the just-released major report “Growing Cooler: The Evidence on Urban De- velopment and Climate Change,” by the Urban Land Institute. The report makes the finding that, as the second meeting was a major example of the Board’s ignoring the Planning Director and the unambiguous advice of County Counsel in order to help a developer get a project built in Los Osos. This has not been an unusual practice, but an example of a pattern that was recognized by the California Supreme Court in 2007.

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Genetically engineered corn at Avila Beach site marks first known instance of labeling

In what may be a national first for the voluntary labeling of a genetically modified organism (GMO), a local grower has labeled genetically engineered corn being sold to the public.

The sign “Our own G.E. corn” appeared over a bin at the Avila Valley Barn in September, with a sign reading “traditional corn” identifying the contents of an adjacent bin. On request, helpful employees aided shoppers in distinguishing between the two. (The GE product is skinnier.)

Known as Bt corn, the variety has been genetically engineered to produce a toxin that kills the corn borer worm. The Bt toxin is present in every cell of the plant, requiring Bt corn to be registered as an insecticide with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. About 30 percent of the corn planted in the United States since 1996 is estimated to be genetically engineered.

Avila Valley Barn’s decision to label GE corn is apparently unique. “I have not heard of this happening anywhere else in the U.S.,” said Renata Brollering of Californians for GE-Free Agriculture.

“There are some voluntary labels for GE-free foods — we have distributed several hundred posters for farmers to use at their market stalls. But I haven’t seen any like this.”

The FDA does not require toxicity or allergenicity testing before allowing GE foods on the market, despite the recommendations and warnings of many of its own scientists. The first GE food, the Flavr Savr tomato, genetically engineered for longer shelf life, was allowed on the market despite the fact that it was known to cause stomach lesions in lab rats.

“Not surprisingly, FDA’s ‘no testing, no labeling’ policy is opposed by the vast majority of Americans,” writes Joseph Mendelson, legal director for the National Center for Technology Assessment and the Center for Food Safety. “Opinion polls consistently show that more than half of Americans strongly support the labeling of GE foods. More than a half million people wrote to the FDA to support a legal petition filed by the Center for Food Safety which demanded mandatory labeling and testing of biotech foods.”

The Avila Valley Barn is owned by John DiVincenzo. The Santa Lucia Chapter has spoken with Dr. DiVincenzo on numerous occasions over the last year and a half about labeling the GE corn he has been growing for sale at Avila Valley Barn. He has agreed with us that more information is better than less, and the public has a right to know. We hope he will go on to produce informative materials available on the premises describing all the types of produce he sells — genetically engineered, traditional, no-spray and organic.

Jesse Arnold of SLO GE-Free reports that, in a September 27 discussion with Robert Hayashi at the SLO Farmers’ Market, Hayashi said that Y. Hayashi & Sons is also selling Bt corn, but did not say whether they intend to label it. At press time, Hayashi and Dr. DiVincenzo had not returned calls from the Sierra Club.

To join the national campaign to label genetically engineered foods, go to www.thecampaign.org

A Chicken in Every Pot? A Car in Every Backyard?
Sierra Club’s True Cost of Food Campaign

The genetic diversity of our planet and the genetic resources which are the fruit of 100 centuries of human agriculture are a shared common treasure of mankind. Transgenic agriculture -- using modern genetic engineering techniques to splice genes from one species into another -- involves many risks which are yet to be fully evaluated, but one danger in clear sight is the use of patent protections to shift equity from the global genetic commons into private hands. This is theft in broad daylight.

The principle argument in favor of life patents is that they spur innovation. Yet genetic engineering in plants has so far consisted only of the splicing of genes from one species into another with no significant increases in yields or benefits to consumers. This reusing of the genetic code has sufficed to win patents. This is not technological progress but the vener of technology being used for theft. The patents allow seed companies to impose new conditions in contracts with farmers. The actual “innovation” is a loss of farmers’ rights. In the United States and Canada, farmers are being sued for planting their own saved seed (saving seeds) without paying a fee.

It’s the U.S. which has pushed life patents and genetic patents on the world. Just as the nations of the world have agreed that there should be no slavery and that a contract which calls for slavery would be unenforceable, there should be no patents on the genetic machinery of life, and that all contracts based on such an idea should be null and void. That would be to the advantage of every man, woman and child on this planet — we are the heirs to this planet’s genetic diversity and shouldn’t let that heritage be claimed by corporate greed.

One way to put the brakes on GMO agriculture that will soon be available is the Biosafety Protocol of the Convention on Biological Diversity (Cartagena Protocol). Although the U.S. hasn’t ratified either the Convention or its Protocol, the Biosafety Protocol has obtained ratifications from over 50 countries and has entered into force. As part of international treaty law, it allows nations to invoke the Precautionary Principle to stop imports of GMOs. We urge farmers in the U.S., and likewise the farmers and nations of the world, to defend their rights to save seeds. We urge them to work for the abolition of patents on the molecular machinery of life. While changes in U.S. patent laws may be slow in coming, if farmers use their own seed or sell seed crops intended as food, they shouldn’t have to pay licensing fees twice.

A Chicken in Every Pot? A Car in Every Backyard?
Sierra Club’s True Cost of Food Campaign

In the 1928 presidential campaign of Herbert Hoover, a Republican-paid newspaper advertisement promised prosperity in the form of “a chicken in every pot and a car in every backyard, to boot.”

Hoover’s prosperity has arrived in spades with food and cars. Yet, less than 100 years later, worries about global warming and suburban sprawl are making most Sierrans doubt the wisdom of the cars, even suggesting we should often forego the private automobile in favor of public transport.

Study: Genetically Engineered Corn Polluting Streams

In October, the journal Proceedings of the National Academies of Sciences published an Indiana University study that found that Bt corn pollen and other plant parts containing toxins from the genetically engineered corn is entering streams near cornfields where it may be killing aquatic insects known as caddisflies.

Researcher Todd Royer told the Environmental News Service that caddisflies “are a food resource for higher organisms like fish and amphibians; if our goal is to have healthy, functioning ecosystems, we need to protect all the parts.”

The National Science Foundation-funded study, titled “Toxins in transgenic crop byproducts may affect headwater stream ecosystems,” found one type of caddisfly fed leaves from Bt corn grew at half the rate of those fed non-Bt corn litter. Others had significantly increased mortality rates when exposed to high concentrations of Bt corn pollen.

Before licensing Bt corn in 1996, the federal government failed to test its toxicity on insects closely related to the corn borer — such as caddisflies — that is targeted by the Bt toxin.

“I think probably the risks associated with widespread planting of Bt corn were not fully assessed,” Royer said.
Letters
send to: sierra8@charter.net, or P.O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406. Letters may be edited for space.

Having lived in South County, we have seen development go rampant. Not only am I constantly inconvenienced by traffic congestion (bad planning?) and loss of scenic views (more bad planning?), I am now being threatened with annexation of the aquifer under my property for Pismo Beach’s latest development, Los Robles Del Mar (300 homes). Because of this development, Oak Park Community Group was formed. Some property owners in the unincorporated area are already experiencing low levels in their wells. It is because of the drought of more wells already pumping! Whatever the reason, neither of these issues have been addressed by the Environmental Impact Report. LAPCO will decide soon, hopefully the members will realize our plight, protect our rights, and not leave us high and dry!

Elizabeth Martz
Arroyo Grande, unincorporated

Well said, Ms. Martz. In comments submitted to the Local Agency Formation Commission on September 12, the Sierra Club noted the serious multiple deficiencies with the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (DSEIR) for Los Robles Del Mar. It is clear that Pismo Beach intends to use the transfer of water rights for much of the city’s future growth. It’s also clear from the EIR that Neadow Creek and the riparian wetlands on Oak Park Boulevard east of the LRDM project would be directly and unacceptably impacted. We concur with the finding of the Oak Park Community Group’s hydrological study that previous reports on the Oak Park aquifer likely “overestimated the amount of water in the deep aquifer, potentially underestimated the amount of pumping from the deep aquifer and ignored the impacts on streams, springs, and wetlands.” The proposed annexation is likely to result in water being pumped from the aquifer that is necessary to maintain this aridic habitat and the species it supports, and would put Arroyo Grande’s water supply at risk of saltwater intrusion. We agree with the City of Arroyo Grande in its concern over the lack of pump tests of several LRDM and Arroyo Grande wells, the inaccuracy of the DSEIR’s presentation of such test data as was gathered, and the obvious false assumptions on which rests the total estimated safe yield of 270 acre feet per year (AFY) for the aquifer.

For these reasons, the proposed development is unsustainable. SLO LAFCO should not certify the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report due to the serious errors throughout the document and insufficient mitigation measures proposed, and disallow annexation of the LRDM land to the City of Pismo Beach.

Jack Morrow

Vote for your 2008 Chapter Executive Committee

Here is your ballot for the Santa Lucia Chapter’s Executive Committee election. Vote for the candidates whom you think are most capable of governing the Santa Lucia Chapter.

The winners of this election will start their terms when the outgoing ExCom adjourns their December meeting. The newly-elected ExCom will then convene a brief meeting to elect Officers and set the date for their January meeting.

IMPORTANT VOTING INFORMATION
- Cumulative voting is not allowed. (More than one vote for one individual)
- Vote only one ballot per member. A second ballot is included for two-member households.
- Ballot must be received by 5:00 p.m., December 5, 2007 at the Chapter office.
- Enclose your ballot in an envelope and clearly write your name and Sierra Club membership number on the envelope.
- Then sign it. Mail to the address on the ballot, or you may drop it by the office at 547-B Marsh St. in SLO between 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Karen Merrium

I joined the Santa Lucia Chapter in the early 1990s to meet kindred spirits who treasure our environment. As I learned the trails into our beautiful wild places, I became a hike leader, and then, in 1995, became a member of the ExCom. I served for two terms (four years) on the ExCom, much of the time as Secretary, and helped to establish a local office and staff for the Chapter. During that time I also worked as a volunteer with the Sheriff’s K-9 Search & Rescue team, with my dog Babe, which took me into the out-of-doors in a whole different way.

In 2006 I published my second book, Searching For Connection: An Exploration of Tranquility, Culture, and Hope, which summarized my 30 years of work and thoughts in the field of trauma and stress. The book concludes with the start of a new search for solutions to the environmental losses and trauma we face in our community, our country and worldwide; a search that engages me now, in my work for the Sierra Club and in most other aspects of my life.

As Chair of the Chapter’s ExCom for the past three years, I have committed myself and the Chapter to forging new bonds with other community leaders and groups who share our interests and dedication to protect, preserve, and enjoy our natural environment. Thank you for voting and for supporting your Chapter.

Judith Bernstein
When I arrived in California in 1970, I had never heard of John Muir, David Brower or the Sierra Club. Fortunately, my house was one block from the East Bay Chapter office and one day I wandered in. It was love at first knowledge; I joined the Club, explored northern California with the chapter’s outings, wrote articles for The Yediker and worked on a fund raising committee. I had the thrill of winning the national Grand Prize for nature photography in 1988.

Each time I move, the local chapter is among my first calls. In Ashland, Oregon, I served on the fund-raising committee and led the Chapter’s first “meditation” hikes. In Portland, I was a member of the Population Committee that went into local high schools to present a workshop. I also participated in outreach efforts educate the public about the Club.

Recently, I got my political feet wet lobbying the Paso Robles Mayor and to sign the U.S. Mayors’ Climate Protection Agreement. I have also been part of a local group that is presenting the Pachamama Alliance’s “heakening the Dreamer” symposium in SLO and Santa Barbara. I am a believer in bridging North and South divides, and would like to do so as a North County representative on the Executive Committee.

Karen Merrium

The Yodeler

Santa Lucia Chapter Election November 2007

Households with two members may return their ballots in the same envelope.

You must write your Sierra Club membership number(s) on the envelope. Do not write a membership number the ballot.

Households with more than two members may make duplicate ballots.

Mark an “X” in the box next to the candidate’s name. Order drawn by lot:

Jack Morrow ☐
Judith Bernstein ☐
Karen Merrium ☐

Do not write your name on this ballot. Put ballot in envelope, print your name and Sierra Club membership number on the envelope. Return to:

Elections Committee
Santa Lucia Chapter
P.O. Box 15755
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

This ballot may be reproduced

This ballot is for the second member of a two-member household

Households with two members may return their ballots in the same envelope.

BALLOT
Santa Lucia Chapter Election November 2007

Jack Morrow ☐
Judith Bernstein ☐
Karen Merrium ☐

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Judith Bernstein ☐
Karen Merrium ☐
Sierra Club’s Diversity Council Expands Efforts to Include All People in Protecting the Planet

Diversity statement, surveys begin the comprehensive process

by Andy Basler, Sierra Club Diversity Council

The Sierra Club’s Diversity Council has announced several steps in an effort to internally diversify the Sierra Club around the country. While the Sierra Club remains the nation’s largest and most effective grassroots environmental advocacy organization, work remains to make sure the Sierra Club reflects all the diverse communities found across America. The Sierra Club Board of Directors established the Diversity Council in 2006 to help craft a strategy for diversifying the Sierra Club and demonstrating a commitment to diversity from the national to the local level.

Diversity Council has been working hard over the past year because we do not diversify, we won’t meet our conservation goals as an organization,” said Diversity Council Co-Chair and Sierra Club Board member Sanjay Ranch.

Within the past year, the Sierra Club Board of Directors has approved an official Diversity Statement that reflects Sierra Club’s commitment to diversity at the staff, volunteer and membership levels. The statement was circulated to Sierra Club leaders across the country for their feedback and consensus via an online bulletin board.

The Diversity Council also conducted an online survey of Sierra Club volunteer and staff leaders to find out how they feel about efforts to diversify the Sierra Club. Survey results indicated that 70% of respondents agree that Sierra Club needs to diversify to achieve our conservation goals.

“Sierra Club leaders know in their hearts that change is needed,” said Mark Walters, Diversity Council Co-Chair and a volunteer leader of the Sierra Club’s Inner City Outings Program. “But to change, folks need to know how to lead. To that is where we can help.”

With a clear mandate from Sierra Club leaders around the country to act, the Diversity Council met in Memphis, Tennessee in August to begin drafting a plan to diversify the Sierra Club nationally and locally. The draft plan was presented to the Board of Directors at their October board meeting. Comments are now sought from all members.

The Diversity Council urges all Sierra Club leaders to do their part to make the Sierra Club reflect the face of America and educate themselves about efforts to diversify the Sierra Club.

For more information on the work of the Diversity Council, visit www.sierraclub.org/diversity.

Every Litter Bit Helps

By Teddy Llovet

We conserve our landfills when we recycle properly. Folks want to do the right thing if shown how...and if it’s easy.

Last August, Amanda Bailey, Marketing Manager at New Frontiers in SLO, gave shoppers a visual tool for recyclables. Responding to customer requests about how to do a better job with recycling in the cafe, Amanda met with Peter Cron at Integrated Waste Management Authority (IWMA) to review materials used in the cafe at New Frontiers. Amanda also made a visit to the re-cycling center at Cold Canyon.

Then she and her staff went to work to create the recyclables board at right. Folks are clearer about what to do and they’re doing it.

Customers are happy and so is the environment.

America Recycles Day is November 15

Did you know that your old cell phone and ink cartridge in your computer printer can be recycled? Well, they can, but unfortunately most are not. In fact, over 400 million old cell phones and empty ink cartridges find their way into our nation’s landfills every year.

How can you help?

Just contact The Recycling Guy on line at www.therecyclingguy.com or call 866-380-9077. The Recycling Guy will send you boxes for recycling ink set cartridges and cell phones. Simply put the used inkjet cartridges and cell phones in the box and drop it off at a UPS Store. The Recycling Guy pays the shipping cost and you will receive a check for the remanufacturable ink cartridges and cell phones. By participating in this program you will help reduce the amount of solid waste going into our landfills. Over 80% of used inkjet cartridges and cell phones are going in to our landfills. Over 400 million cartridges and cell phones annually.

How do you get started?

Contact The Recycling Guy on line at www.therecyclingguy.com or call 866-380-9077 for this free and easy Environmental Service Project. They will take that old cell phone out of the drawer. And when it is time to replace that ink cartridge, don’t throw it away, Recycle!

2008 Sierra Club Calendars

They’re here, they’re gorgeous, you have to have one for your desk, one for your wall, and a great many more for friends and family! When you buy direct from the Chapter, you support our conservation work in San Luis Obispo County!

wall calendar: $12.50
desk calendar: $13.50

To order, call 543-7051
Looking for a Good Match

What do advocating for meaningful viewed ordi-
nances and land use policies, the goals of the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, and a marine sanctuary off our coast have in common? They’re just three of the initiatives the Santa Lucia Chapter is involved in, and they all cost money.

In the next six months, we must:
• Hire a part-time admin. assistant
• Hire a part-time volunteer coordi-
nator and intern supervisor to mobilize contributions of volunteers

Thanks to generous donations re-
cieved this year, we were able to upgrade our office facilities and infrastructure. This was due to the success of our “Sustainability Circles,” small groups dedicated to providing the financial support necessary to sustain the Chapter’s expanding conservation programs.

The success of the Sustainability Circle fundraising campaign will allow us to do more, including the addition of new interns and 20 volunteers, expansion of our outings program to include youth and families, leading European Energy Tours, and offering advocacy and lobbying training for energy efficiency and sensible land use.

If you are interested in joining the Sustainability Circle by making a financial contribution and/or by collaborating with a member of our Fundraising Committee to bring together people you know for one of our informational meet-
ings, please contact our office at 543-8717 or send an e-mail to susraclub@gmail.com

We discussed the Seven (or nine or ten whatever) Sisters, their geologi-
ical and biological uniqueness, and marvelous hiking possibilities. Local politics – “have you heard about the sewer system yet?” Good little borders.

Spirit and Nature
continued from page 1

Sustainable: We are striving to remember the differ-
ences between and every other thing. Of course, nobody thought to bring their Skipper’s like. Eventually the conversation(s) turned to great white and other sharks. It is called Shark Inlet, right?

Once decided that we wouldn’t be spotting laws or any of his/her cousins, we snuggled into a new and three more of the usual suspects met at Morro Bay State Park marina, shaken boats and beer to the water, double checked lunches, water, sun screen etc., and after the obligatory skipper’s meet-
ing, shoved off for Shark Inlet and the sand spit.

The weather just got better and bet-\tter, with a hint of a breeze that sug-
gested we might be blowing around a
bit on the way home. The presence of the two newbies brought out the tour-
guide in the rest of us and I suspect that we probably sounded like realists with a hot prospect on the hook.

We discussed the Seven (or nine or ten whatever) Sisters, their geologi-
cal and biological uniqueness, and marvelous hiking possibilities. Local politics – “have you heard about the sewer system yet?” Good little borders.

Sustainability Circle

M SSIO N Statement: We believe in the power of the individual to affect change. We seek to be the vehicle by which the wisdom of the past becomes the momentum of the present. We are dedicated to providing the financial support necessary for the Santa Lucia Chapter to continue its mission.

This is a defining moment in human
life. Our current life-styles are a ver-able cancer on the host, our planet...

Humanity may be on the edge of its
own suicide...the question is: can spirit help rescue us from the apocalypse? — Kabir Helminski, a Shitshik of the Mevlevi Sufi Order

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The core message of religion gets
hedged in more and more...when you know it, you are worshipping the hedge. Religions need to change...to retell their stories in compelling ways, purposeful ways. We need a creation story that says that way that the universe becomes con-
sious.” — Rabbi Rami Shapiro, Ph.D.

Taking his advice, I thought about how I speak with people at a social gathering. I might say: “I saw a TV pro-
gram about the melting of polar ice and the possibility that polar bears may not be able to survive. That makes me feel really sad to think they may only be in zoos fifty years from now. What do you think we can do about it?”

On the last night, we gathered in the large, glass windowed chapel to the sound of flutes and drums. After learn-
ing a simple dance, we started circling as songs of three faith traditions were played. It went round and round and soon the steps and sounds blended by, mind, heart and spirit. As the chanting grew louder. I felt the interconnectivity of all the things we had talked about. After three days of dialog, my blue funk had lifted. I felt that an alliance between people of faith and environmentalists might stop the tragic march towards the extinction of the many life forms with whom we share the planet. And I left knowing we need energy and com-
mitment to be a renewable resource that will sustain us in our work for decades to come.

“...the root cause of our problem is ignorance of the interconnectivity of all things.” — Ed Bastian, Buddhist and conference organizer

$25,000

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own suicide...the question is: can spirit help rescue us from the apocalypse? — Kabir Helminski, a Shitshik of the Mevlevi Sufi Order

For 2007 Deduction, Send the Check Now

Making a year-end donation? Thank you! But due to the Christmas of trans-
port fees, the reason you send your check this week, or just before that week, won’t see it or deposit it until 2008, and you won’t be written off for your taxes.

Please make sure to mail in year-end Sierra Club Foundation donations sooner rather than later to get the most out of your donation.

Tip number two: Make sure you make your check out to “Sierra Club - SLO Conservation Fund.” Checks simply made out to “Sierra Club” are not tax-
deductible.

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Rebuked

Planning Commission tosses Supervisors' special-interest ordinance. Cayucos viewshed is now a line in the sand.

How much cavalier disregard can you demonstrate for the planning process before it comes back to bite you?

How many slaps in the face can you deliver to people who take that process seriously and consider upholding it to be their duty before you are faced with revolt?

Will the County Board of Supervisors fish or cut bait?

All these delicate questions will be hanging in the air during the last act of the struggle over the Cayucos Viewshed ordinance on November 27, when the development-über-alle Board majority of Jerry Lenthall, Harry Ovitt and Katcho Achadjian will be confronted with the blowback from their efforts to carry water for land speculators and developers-in-waiting. A stinging rebuke from their own Planning Commissioners, who took the sweetheart ordinance sent to them by the Board on a 3-1 vote last August (Patterson dissenting, Gibson recused), turned it into a real ordinance, and sent it back to the Board.

That wasn’t what was supposed to happen. The toothless non-ordinance blessed by Lenthall-Ovitt-Achadjian was designed to deliver a major payday to landowners who are looking toward the time when they can sell out for astronomical sums and start the race to build ridgeline castles with 360-degree views throughout the 53 square miles of pristine rural land between Cayucos and Paso Robles — a spree facilitated by the draft ordinance written by their private attorney and blessed by the board majority. To deliver that gift, Lenthall, Ovitt and Achadjian avoided the planning process as much as they could, allowing a privately written ordinance by Protect Our Property Rights (POPR) to supplant public drafts from both the Cayucos Citizens Advisory Council and County planning staff. They bent over backwards for POPR’s attorney, allowing him to make adjustments and remove blatant illegalities from his text during the public hearing. They ignored planning staff, the advice of County counsel and all logical analysis and voted to approve an ordinance that bore scant resemblance to anything that had been reviewed previously by the public or the Planning Commission.

But they couldn’t avoid the public process entirely. After Lenthall-Ovitt-Achadjian did the bidding of their backers, they still had to send the results to the Planning Commission for review. Nevertheless, the three Supervisors did what they could to maintain their grip: When the Commission requested an extension on the time they were given in order to review the ordinance properly, Chairman Lenthall refused to even place the request on the Board’s agenda for consideration. The message was clear, and raw: You will give this a quick once over, apply the rubber stamp, and send it off.

The Planning Commissioners refused to go down that path. They cleared the Commission’s schedule of every other item for the meeting in question, spent the entire day taking public testimony, and then went to work fixing just about everything wrong with the ordinance. They expanded the protected area, nixed the flawed definitions, and reinstated the concept of siting new development off ridgelines wherever possible.

It was a textbook example of sterling land use planning: Evenhanded, by the book, and in conformity with the General Plan and other viewshed protection standards in place throughout the county.

What happens now is anyone’s guess. If Lenthall-Ovitt-Achadjian attempt to pull the teeth of the revised ordinance -- basically, removing the corrections and re-inserting the flaws and giveaways -- they will be able to fool no one as to what they’re doing and why. If they don’t make that attempt, they will have to answer afterward to their backers: The development and real estate lobby, which has invested heavily in their preferred outcome.

The County could probably sell tickets to the November 27 meeting of the Board of Supervisors.

TAKE ACTION

Be at the Board of Supervisors meeting to support the Planning Commission’s Cayucos Viewshed Ordinance and stand up for responsible land use planning:

Tuesday, November 27
County Government Center
1055 Monterey Street, San Luis Obispo

Check schedule for time: www.slocounty.ca.gov/bos/calendar.htm

Building an awakened community. For schedule, trailers, info, and reviews of films at SLO Library, go to www.hopedance.org
Coastal Commission (Slightly) Opens Pecho Coast Trail

When the California Coastal Commission approved the permit for PG&E's nuclear power plant and the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant two years ago, the commission added a condition called "expansion public access" at the south end of the Diablo Canyon property—along the Pecho Coast Trail and the Port San Luis Lighthouse. It also required PG&E to open up access at the north end at Montana de Oro, which finally happened on July 13.

As a condition of another Diablo Canyon development permit, PG&E has been operating a docent-led program along the Pecho Coast Trail, leading hikes to the lighthouse once or twice a month. The hikes were limited to 20 people, you had to sign up in advance, and PG&E sent all your personal info to the Department of Homeland Security. As virtually nobody knows how to sign up for them, the hikes frequently were not full, were cancelled at the drop of a hat, and almost never went the full length of the trail — about 5 miles to Rattlesnake Canyon.

For the past 2 years, Coastal Commission staff has been arm-wrestling with PG&E to get what it wants: a full, open, 7 days-a-week public access along the Pecho Coast Trail. The commission and the San Luis Lighthouse Keepers' Pecho Coast Trail Committee want the trail open to the public, seven days a week, without the docent-led requirement. They're getting there.

While it is quite possible to have lived in this county for years, be very involved in coastal issues and have never heard about how to sign up for a hike on the Pecho Coast Trail, that is no longer the case. As of November 3, the hikes have doubled in frequency and no reservation is required. They are still docent-led, but it's first come, first served every Saturday morning at 9 a.m. Meet at the Fisherman's Memorial in Arroyo (the site of the dolphin fountain).

Open (non-docent), seven-days-a-week access is still under discussion.

That discussion intensified last July, when the Coastal Commission met in San Luis Obispo and the Sierra Club testified along with some two dozen local residents, who walked up to the microphone at the SLO Embassy Suites to tell the Coastal Commission — and the perpetually reluctant San Luis Harbor District — what they want.

The trail and the lighthouse are coastal resources of statewide, national and international significance, and it is unacceptable for PG&E and the Harbor District to keep the public from fully enjoying them. Concerns about security are misplaced. Even at the far end of the trail (Rattlesnake Canyon), people are still less than 2 miles away.

The Harbor District has an obligation to permit and support full use of this property. PG&E has an obligation to make sure the District has the financial capability to do it. The lighthouse Keepers have proven their commitment to the facility and should be fully supported in their role as managers of the facility in the future.

True Cost (continued from page 1)

Sanctuary's current project to assess ocean water quality, the Synthesis, Analysis and Management (SAM) Project. For the next six months, the CORRT Project and the SAM Project will integrate stakeholder results and input to SAM's water quality assessment.

CORRT will target participation from among staff or representatives of local and regional resource agencies, local non-governmental conservation organizations, community-based groups, business and professional groups, agricultural communities, coastal fishing communities, academic institutions, and local government.

CORRT will support development of a new regional perspective that will build an understanding of the broader context in which land-based planning and management policy directly links with coastal and ocean resource management goals.

CORRT participants will contribute to a preliminary inventory of programs and resources for marine protection at the county level, identity priority regional problems for future action, and lay the groundwork for future collaboration and public-private partnerships. Recommendations for local implementation will include identifying priority programs, funding needs and local-level policy direction. CORRT participants will be linked in with future action co-ordinated by the PCHC and the PCTF to continue action for successful implementation of the Marine Life Protection Act Future.

The CORRT will also assist in realizing several of the main objectives of the Ocean Protection Council's Five-Year Strategic Plan related to governance, ocean and coastal water quality, physical processes, habitat structure, education and outreach.

Coastal Conservation Council's Five-Year Strategic Plan.

Conservation Council's Five-Year Strategic Plan.

Conservation Council's Five-Year Strategic Plan.

Conservation Council's Five-Year Strategic Plan.

Conservation Council's Five-Year Strategic Plan.
At the September 27 meeting of the Cambria Community Services District, board member Ilan Funke-Bilu, trying to explain the actions and expenditures of the board to angry residents, called the California Coastal Commission “a bunch of schmucks.”

Funke-Bilu’s statement – which he repeated – was made at a moment when the Cambria CSD has a request before the Coastal Commission for reconsideration of the Commission’s denial of the CSD’s permit to drill desalination test wells in San Simeon State Beach. The Coastal Commission allows reconsideration requests to be made by applicants when an application for a Coastal Development Permit has been denied but the applicant believes the Commission made its decision in error, due to a major error of fact or law or in the absence of information that was not available at the time of the hearing.

As the Commission’s rulings on permit applications are final, the standards for reconsideration are strict and the Commission rarely grants such requests. Funke-Bilu’s public characterization of the Commission therefore might be thought an odd thing to call the way the CCSD has been spending its money. The matter of what the CCSD spent on its fight with the Coastal Commission and local coastal advocates might be thought an odd thing to call the CCSD’s financial woes. But it was the CCSD that decided to sue the Commission over the tanks, not the other way around. The CCSD not only lost the suit, they lost every single legal motion. They ended up building the tanks to the design specs worked out by the Commission. Every dollar they spent on that effort was ratepayers’ money wasted on a pointless, losing lawsuit that never should have been filed (See “Cambria’s Lesson,” October Santa Lucian). Had they succeeded, the CCSD would have set a statewide precedent for the destruction of environmentally sensitive habitat, opening it up to development throughout the coastal zone.

Cambrians might well ask: How could this happen with two attorneys on the CCSD Board, one of them specializing in land use and the environmental regulatory process? They might ask, but they would likely get an answer like this one, in another deathless Funke-Bilu exchange from the September 27 meeting:

Resident’s question: “Are we paying $25,000 a month for a lobbyist?”

Funke-Bilu: “No. That figure is not correct.”

Like a good lawyer – but a bad CSD board director – he did not go on to explain that the CCSD is in fact paying three lobbyists. Dave Neth receives $10,000 a month for lobbying the Coastal Commission. The CSD’s Sacramento and D.C. lobbyists are not likely to be receiving substantially less. Mr. Funke-Bilu was content to duck the question.

Environmental Council Joins MBNMS Expansion Effort

Cal Poly’s Environmental Council has joined with Sierra Club, the SLO Coast Alliance and the SLO Chamber of Commerce in the effort to expand the southern boundary of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary to include the waters of San Luis Obispo County. Environmental Council, one of twelve Student Community Service groups that serve the community and Cal Poly, promotes awareness about the natural environment and the issues surrounding it.

Fair Trade Packs Steynberg Gallery

More than fifty people came to the Steynberg Gallery in SLO on September 22 for the free local premiere of Maquilapolis: City of Factories, co-hosted by the Sierra Club, SLO Fair Trade Coalition and HopeDance.

It was one of a series of screenings sponsored nationwide by the Sierra Club and in August and September, the story of a group of women workers in Tijuana’s maquiladoras who took their fate in their hands and changed their lives for the better, despite the spirit-crushing reality of “free trade.”

“NAFTA and the WTO were designed to benefit the fortunate and to afflict the desperate,” says Sierra Club Executive Director Carl Pope, “and that is still the course that U.S. trade policy is following.”

Let’s change that. To get involved, go to www.sierrclub.org/trade and contact slofairtradecoalition@gmail.com

SRO. More than fifty people turned out for the local premiere of Maquilapolis at SLO’s Steynberg Gallery.

**Summary:** PG&E invites you to participate in their “Climate Smart” program, paying to plant trees in order to offset greenhouse gas emissions. (All rebuttals are from “ClimateSmart or ClimateCopOut,” at www.letsgreenwashthiscity.org)

**Upshot:** “ClimateSmart” doesn’t commit PG&E to provide any green energy. PG&E says it “may enter into GHG emission reduction contracts where the reductions occur over time into the future.” Counting future reductions today is like telling the bank to count all the mortgage payments you plan to make for the next 10 years and asking them to consider your debt paid off now.
Classifieds

Next issue deadline is December 9. To acquire a rate sheet or submit your ad and payment, contact: Sierra Club - Santa Lucia Chapter PO, Box 15755 San Luis Obispo, CA 93406 sierraclub8@gmail.com

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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.; 466-8999
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.; 781-5410
SLO Council of Governments; 781-4219
SLOCOG Citizens Advisory Committee--1st Wed. every other month, 8:00 p.m.
SLOCOG Board--1st Wed. every other month, 8:30 a.m.

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“Searching for Connection offers hope, inspiration, and meaning to those who have been traumatized, to family and friends of those touched by trauma, and to those who have dedicated their lives to helping the victimized and traumatized. Most importantly, it illustrates that one can endure with dignity and survive with meaning, even in the face of terrible experiences.”

—Beverly Trigg, MFT, psychotraumatologist and author of Dealing with the Cycle of Abuse

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Karen Merritt’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 revered. 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 stories of personal stories and case studies, Merritt develops a paradigm of traumatic experience that reveals the common factors that allow individuals to survive and to overcome. It is a groundbreaking study addressing a subject of profound significance, which all readers will profit from contemplating.

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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 outings 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 = 3-5 mi., 3 = 6-9 mi., 4 = 10-12 mi., 5 = 12 mi. or more.


Saturday, November 3rd, 8:00 a.m., Trail Works – Montana de Oro, Come help California State Parks and the CCMB maintain trails in Montana de Oro State Park. 100 hikers, equine trails and mountain bikers expected; count on the usual great food and gift certificate raffle. Work on the Ridge Trail Retreat. 8:00 – 8:30 – Sign-in, breakfast stuff, trail snacks. 8:30 – 9:45 – Safety talk, general announcements. 9:45 – 9:00 – Organize into crews and get tools. 9:00 – 1:00 – Head up the trail to our work locations and work till 1:00. 1:30 – 2:30 – Eat at 1:30, raffle.

Long sleeve shirt, long pants, sturdy shoes, gloves, hat and a water bottle highly recommended. Meet at Camp Keep across from Hazard Canyon Parking lot, MDO SP.

Saturday, November 10th, 8 a.m., Tentative - Big Sur Coastal Trail. Take a 9-mile hike from the Cruikshank Trailhead to via Bucheye Camp the return via the Soda Springs Trail. There is a possibility of poison oak and ticks. Bring plenty of water, lunch, snacks, and dress for the weather. Meet at the Washburn day use area just north of Cambria on Highway 1. There is an optional rebuilding stop at Main Street Grill in Cambria after the hike. For info, call Gary @ 473-3694. Rain or threat of rain cancels.

Sunday, November 18, birding on Oso Flaco. A stopover on the birding flyway.

We expect to find American bitterns, ruddy ducks, ring-necked ducks, white pelicans, Virginia rails, sora rails, and raccoons. NOTE: There is a parking fee of $5.00 per car and a portage from the parking area to the lake. We will help you portage your boats. Please allow an extra half hour for the portage. Bring your boat and equipment, PDVs, binoculars and your picnic lunch that you can eat in your boat. Launch Oso Flaco causeway. Put in at 10:00 a.m. For details, call Joe Dickerson 693-9534.

Thanksgiving Day Hike, Thursday, November 22, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., Black Lake Canyon, Nipomo/Arroyo Grande. Bring family and friends to start this special day with a mild strenuous trail hike through dunes, scrub and sand. You’ll be treated to a behind-the-scenes tour of a special Land Conservancy restoration site and to a relaxed hike around Black Lake. Bring water, wear comfortable shoes, layered clothing and the usual great food and gift certificate raffle. For information on a meeting place, contact Melinda Robles, deutsche@earthlink.net, (310-477-7338). Prefer e-mail info@canyoncreekbritishcolumbia.com or call 250-847-4349 (Roger McColm). Mention this ad and 5% of your rental goes to the Santa Lucia Chapter.

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

In the mountains near Smithers, British Columbia. Designed for groups and families. Easily accessible by air, road or rail, yet located in a true wilderness setting. Canoe, kayak, raft, bike, fish, ski, or view the abundant wildlife. The Lodge accommodates up to 10 with 5 bedrooms and 2.5 baths. It’s like your own private wilderness area, but with all of the comforts of home. Also great for retreats, seminars, courses or club outings. We can connect you to local outfitters, guides or instructors. Visit www.canyoncreekbritishcolumbia.com, email info@canyoncreekbritishcolumbia.com or call 250-847-4349 (Roger McColm). Mention this ad and 5% of your rental goes to the Santa Lucia Chapter.

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

Santa Lucian • Nov./Dec. 2007

Santa Lucian • Nov./Dec. 2007

Photo by Joaquin Palting

Sat.-Thurs., Dec. 29, 2007 - Jan. 3, 2008, Holiday Service in Carizzo Plain National Monument. Celebrate the end of one year and the beginning of the next in one of our new national monuments. The Carizzo Plain, west of Bakersfield, is vast grassland, home to pronghorn antelope, tule elk, kit fox, and a wide variety of birds. A welcome hike Dec. 29, three and a half days of service modifying barbed wire fencing, and a full day for hiking and exploring are planned. Use of accommodation at Goodwin Ranch included. Limited to 12 participants, $25 covers five dinners. For more information, contact leader: Craig Deutsche, deutsche@earthlink.net, (310-477-6670), or co-leader leader Melinda Goodwater, MGdiamond51@aol.com, (408-774-1257), CNRCC Desert Committee.

Sunday, January 6th, 9:00 a.m. Morning Glory Trail – Los Padres National Forest Work Party. Come help the CCMB maintain one of the newest trails on West Cuesta Ridge. Meet at the SLO Vets Hall or at the Top of the Grade.