Why We Sue II

Sierra Club legal action to remove cars from County land would place 584 acres off limits to vehicles.

On February 21, a month after filing suit to protect the Cayucos Viewshed, (“Why We Sue,” February Santa Lucian), the Santa Lucia Chapter filed a notice of intent to sue the California Department of Parks and Recreation for allowing vehicles on land in the Oceano Dunes where vehicles should not be. State Parks’ General Development Plan for the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area (ODSVRA) is inconsistent with San Luis Obispo County’s Local Coastal Program. The LCP designates the County-owned “La Grande” tract as the Oceano Dunes as a “natural buffer area.” But the ODSVRA General Plan opened the La Grande tract to off-road vehicle recreation. The Local Coastal Program is the basic planning tool used to carry out the partnership between the State and local government as stewards of California’s spectacular 1,100 mile coastline. LCPs are the ground rules for land use in the coastal zone portions of the 73 cities and counties along the coast. “In filing suit, we are acting on behalf of our coastal dunes, one of the rarest and most fragile ecosystems in the world, of greater ecological value than Yosemite Valley,” said Karen Merriam, Chair of the Sierra Club’s Santa Lucia Chapter in San Luis Obispo. “For 25 years, the County’s Local Coastal Plan has said that cars are not allowed on the land the County leases to State Parks. For 25 years, State Parks has ignored its responsibility to operate the Park in a manner consistent with the LCP. We are asking the court to compel the County and the State to abide by the Local Coastal Plan.” In January 2007, the Sierra Club supported a Planning Commission appeal of the proposed sale of the La Grande Tract to State Parks. The Chapter pointed out, and the County agreed, that the sale would not be in conformance with the county’s General Plan due to conflict with the Local Coastal Plan. We simply pointed to the provisions of the County’s Coastal Plan Policies, the county land in the ODSVRA was repeatedly designated as buffer between the dunes preserve and the riding area. But twenty-five years later, the ORVs are still riding in the buffer area. The County upheld the appeal on the basis of the Sierra Club’s argument, but was sued for doing so by the off-road vehicle lobby and has since been in closed-door negotiations with State Parks over the proposed sale of the property. The county property constitutes about one-third of the total area of the ODSVRA. State Parks wants to buy the land to secure insofar as possible a claimed right to run vehicles across that property forever. We want a judge to enforce the terms that were laid down 25 years ago.

continued on page 4
It’s time for America to get smart about energy and be less dependent on dwindling oil reserves. We need to increase our use of clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar power.

Add your voice to protect the planet. Join the Sierra Club today.

Join today and receive a FREE Sierran Club Weekender Bag!

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85 Second Street, 2nd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105-3441

e-mail: address.changes@sierrclub.org

General Meeting
Meet the Ventana Wilderness Alliance

The Ventana Wilderness Alliance was founded ten years ago by people who share an intense respect for the unique and sacred place that is the north- ern Santa Lucia mountain range, and who want to see to it that what little wilderness is left in our area remains as such in perpetuity.

This evening, the Alliance presents “Return to Wilderness,” documenting the VWA’s Willow Creek Restoration Project.

7 p.m., Friday, March 28
St. Stephens Episcopal Church
1334 Nipomo St., San Luis Obispo
- Pismo Street entrance
parking lot off Pismo

Heard the One About the Neanderthal Environmentalist?

If you haven't heard it yet, you will eventually. It turned up in New Times the other day, in a letter to the editor from frequent contributor Norm Mehl, and was quickly reprinted in a blog dedicated to arguments over evolution. It’s just a matter of time before it starts coursing through the main arteries of the world, as it carries a message irresistible to a certain constituency.

The story goes like this: A University of Wisconsin researcher has determined that Neanderthals died out because they had a gene for overly cautious behavior — they conserved their resources and had minimal impact on their environment, and had a prehistoric precautionary principle. As a result, they went extinct, unlike go-getting, innovative Cro-Magnons, who carried a gene that impelled them to go questing aggressively outward in the name of progress — due to their fear of climate change as a scheme to derail the engine of progress on which our economic miracle is based. Cal Thomas will reveal the plot to force us all to live in small houses and drive tiny cars. All will likely go on doing as long as they are physically able. They will do so — ironically, considering Crichton’s imagi- nation, studying the “environmental gene” to be the source of fear of change and progress — due to their fear of change and progress, a fear rooted in the perception of the environmental ethic as the implacable foe of economic well being. That fear has been carefully fostered by the curators of the corporate ethic, who have long defined economic well being as anything that makes them money regardless of the disasters visited thereby upon local economies, demo- cratic self-determination and the environment.

In citing this startling scientific discovery, Norman Mehl failed to hammer home the none-too-subtle message it contained. Environmentalism is the result of striving to cre- ate the noble Cro-Magnon lin- eage. Fearing progress and change — due to their fear of climate change as a scheme to derail the engine of progress on which our eco- nomic miracle is based. Cal Thomas will reveal the plot to force us all to live in small houses and drive tiny cars. All will likely go on doing as long as they are physically able. They will do so — ironically, considering Crichton’s imagi- nation, studying the “environmental gene” to be the source of fear of change and progress — due to their fear of change and progress, a fear rooted in the perception of the environmental ethic as the implacable foe of economic well being. That fear has been carefully fostered by the curators of the corporate ethic, who have long defined economic well being as anything that makes them money regardless of the disasters visited thereby upon local economies, demo- cratic self-determination and the environ- ment.

In their fear, the Crichton contingent accuses environmentalists of wanting to kill off economic growth. But in reality, the model of what economic health should be — currently the post-1945 corporate model — is what’s killing us. That model created industrial farming, is shunting down small farmers, destroying healthy soils and killing off rivers continued on page 4

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Outings, events, and more!
A Nation Focused

“Focus the Nation,” a national climate change educational symposium taking place simultaneously at more than 1,400 colleges and universities across the United States on January 31, was hosted locally by the Empower Poly Coalition of sustainability clubs and organizations. Thousands of educators and millions of students participated in the largest teach-in in American history.

Meet the New Team

The Chapter is delighted to greet two new additions to our office team. Development Coordinator Ken Smokoska and Volunteer Coordinator Shaba Mohseni. Working under Chapter Director Andrew Christie, Ken and Shaba will greatly strengthen our outreach and assist us in achieving strategic goals in fulfilling the Sierra Club’s mission. Both come to us through the AmeriCorps program and are well known to many in our community.

As former interim chair of our Conservation Committee and chair of Sierra Club’s California’s Energy/Energy Solutions campaign in SLO County, Ken will be instrumental in bringing together representative organizations of the Chamber of Commerce, Home Builders Association, Cal Poly University, local banks, and seven other organizations in the coalition known as the Strategic Energy Alliance for Change (SEA Change). Ken has served as liaison to many Sierra Club chapters, linking them together in their efforts to develop energy programs and providing much-needed subject-matter expertise. Last year, Ken received the Agent of Change Award from the Empower Poly Coalition. This year, he assisted in the creation of a Sierra Student Coalition chapter at Cal Poly. He will develop infrastructure and resources for the Chapter through fundraising activities and events.

Shaba is helping to increase the capacity of the Santa Lucia Chapter to integrate our members into projects, events and campaigns, providing opportunities through membership mixers, informal gatherings and outings. Shaba’s skills at event promotion, production and management consulting have been deployed previously as project consultant to such organizations as SLO Regional Rideshare, the SLO County Bicycle Coalition, ASEEC and United Cerebral Palsy. As co-founder of Nimble Bicycle Coalition, AISEC and United Cerebral Palsy, she produces and promotes musical, athletic and seasonal events such as the annual San Luis Obispo Downtown Criterium Classic Cycling Festival.

“We are thrilled to have Ken and Shaba on board,” said Chapter Chair Karen Merriam. “We are very lucky to have individuals of their caliber in our community and available to serve our members.”

Shaba’s skills at event promotion, production and management consulting have been deployed previously as project coordinator for the 2008 SLO County Coastal Cleanup Day and several XCOs: SLO New Year’s Eve galas, and as a consultant to such organizations as SLO Regional Rideshare, the SLO County Bicycle Coalition, ASEEC and United Cerebral Palsy. As co-founder of Nimble Bicycle Coalition, AISEC and United Cerebral Palsy. Shaba has been involved in the creation of a Sierra Student Coalition chapter at Cal Poly. He will develop infrastructure and resources for the Chapter through fundraising activities and events.

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You know, of course, that it’s a good thing to buy local. You know the reasons why: You get fresher food. Dollars and jobs stay here. You’re supporting a sustainable food supply, preserving unique and heirloom crop varieties that have been discarded by corporate industrial agriculture, and helping fend off the loss of open space and agriculture to development.

There’s one more good reason: It’s really, really easy. The Central Coast Grown project has put up a new website based on a free database built for farmers and ranchers to aid in the marketing their goods. The.CCG website provides a searchable resource for consumers looking for local options for foods that they currently purchase from out-of-town providers.

If, say, you want apples, type it in, and you’ll get a list of not only every farmer in the county who grows apples, but when they’re in season, where to go to purchase from out-of-town providers.

Buying Local Made Easy

Continued on page 6

photos:  Steven Marx

DIANE WILSON visits SLO!
Renowned Environmentalist, co-founder Code Pink
TUES. APRIL 1
7:00-8:30PM
SLO PUBLIC LIBRARY
109 Palm St.
$20 Donation / $5 Students
Reservations suggested
WED. APRIL 2
6:30-9:00PM
RECEPTION 7PM & HORS D’OEUVRES
Private Home, SLO
$40 Reservations required

CONVERSATION & INSPIRATION... The Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility invites you to meet Diane Wilson, the renowned artist, environmentalist and co-founder of Code Pink. A renowned speaker of Bananas; and veteran of the Blue Planet Award. In Berlin in 2006, Ms. Wilson has been on the forefront of fossil-fueled climate activism in her home state of California and for supporting the movement to stop the war in Iraq. Diane is a founding member of the International Peace Bureau, the International Committee for the Disarmament, Women Peacemakers, Physicians, and the Right to LaudM Natural Resource Defense Council.

Ms. Wilson will discuss her newest book, Holy Bullshit, due out this fall, which details her upbringing in a unitary Pentecostal family, and her new work with the Food 4 Farmers.

Events, with Diane are always free-wheeling and lighthearted. Copies of "An Unreasonable Person" will be available for purchase and autographing.

All proceeds benefit Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility www.anr.org

Made Easy

Buying Local

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Caught in the Black Web

The Nipomo watershed is an environmental scandal

By Ralph Bishop

Black Drip Tubing: it was the darling of agriculture. It conserved water and harnessed the delivery of chemical nutrients to crops. But its color foretold an ominous threat to the community of both men and nature. It only lasts one season and then its proper disposal potentially erodes the monetary bottom line.

Recycling would seem to be in order. But what happens if an individual finds it more expedient to simply rototill it into the soil, or burn it into the atmosphere on foggy pre-dawn mornings? Or one can always leave it on creek banks and wait for high water. Expand that attitude to storage and mixing of chemicals, inappropriate disposal of everything imaginable type of human and automotive garbage and extruded human waste. Nipomo has found out the hard way over the past seven years what all this means, having survived two floods. Which are the regulatory agencies of the government while millions of dollars of damage was being done? While digesting his barbecue, our Supervisor was quoted as saying “the farmers are not the problem”, in the flooding of the Mallagh Street neighborhood. Instead the mantra “urban trash” was chanted, blaming the victims of the flood for the flood. The fact that there are no urban areas above the Mallagh Street area made no difference. When the photographs were sequenced, it was clear everything we said was true about the 2006 flood and given to the head of the Creek Committee, he chanted “Urban trash.” Daniel Diaz and I are hardly the individuals who would expect to take up the sword (or in this case, the camera) in this battle. No one who knows us would consider us tree-huggers. This was, in our case, an exercise in personal spiritual indignation.

Daniel and I have recorded 260 hours of film and hundreds of photographs to prove that all this has taken place and we are continuously asking the question: How many millions of dollars of damage to the community and nature over how many years does it take for pernicious behavior to become criminal activity? For the past seven years, we have been disappointed. Only recently have we been able to break through the County’s firewalls. Recently the head of the State Water Quality Board took a 2-mile creek walk with us. He was shocked by the degradation caused by the black tubing -- huge masses of rototilled black plastic “confetti are being washed down the Santa Maria River in the direction of the West Main Beach. If one-hundredth of the energy that was spent protecting the guilty was spent on upholding the legal mandate of the County’s Water Quality Board, Nipomo would not be looking at a silent spring. Our heartfelt thanks to the Sierra Club for their honest concern and assistance.

A Call to Action

Nipomo Creek, the Santa Maria River, Oso Flaco Creek and Oso Flaco Lake need your help

The County’s southernmost watersheds urgently need your help. Water quality monitoring data conducted by the Central Coast Water Board indicate that Nipomo Creek, the Santa Maria River, and Oso Flaco Creek and Lake are highly contaminated with toxic pollutants from agricultural and urban runoff. Because of this contamination, these waterbodies are listed as “impaired” on the Clean Water Act 303(d) list and the Central Coast Water Board is developing Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) to improve water quality and restore beneficial uses. Nipomo Creek is listed as impaired for fecal coliform contamination; the Santa Maria River is listed as impaired for fecal coliform, nitrate, unionized ammonia, and chlorpyrifos; dieldrin, endrin, and DDT pesticide contamination; Oso Flaco Creek is listed as impaired for fecal coliform, nitrate and unionized ammonia contamination, and Oso Flaco Lake is listed as impaired for nitrate and dieldrin pesticide contamination. In addition to this toxic chemical stress, you will find large amounts of plastic agricultural drip tubing making its way into the ocean along with other trash and litter that comes from illegal dumping that occurs in these watersheds. What can you do to help?

Learn more about the condition of these waterbodies and plans to improve water quality. You can access the TMDL progress reports on the Central Coast Water Board website at www.waterboards.ca.gov/ccwboard/TMDL/TMDL_projects.html and you can review the CCWP water quality monitoring data at www.ccwp.org. Learn more about the watershed management plans that have been developed for these watersheds and how they are being implemented.

Each of us can start to make a difference now by eliminating our use of synthetic fertilizers and toxic pesticides, by picking up livestock and pet wastes to keep it away from storm drains and out of creeks, by maintaining septic systems to ensure they function properly, and by ensuring that agricultural plastics and household wastes are recycled and trash properly disposed of to keep it out of the creeks and the ocean.

Join others in the community to find solutions to address the root causes of these problems and to get involved in volunteer activities to implement solutions. We need volunteer educators and speakers, stream walk tour guides and monitors, community and creek clean-up organizers and workers, and watershed problem solvers of all trades. If you are interested in helping or would like more information, please call or e-mail Jill Falcone at 788-2767 orjfalcone@co.slo.ca.us.

The goods: Daniel Diaz displays discarded drip tubing and the fused remains from the burning of a clump of tubing retrieved from Nipomo Creek.
**BIRD NEST TERRORIST TELLS ALL!**

By Terry Lilley

"You are arresting me?"

I could only stare at the Pismo Beach police officer. How was it possible? I was sitting on the curb talking to friends four doors up the street from my Shell Beach house. "Officer, I am just trying to save these night heron nests from being cut out of the tree by this local tree trimming service," I said. "I have not violated any law, and Davey Tree Trimming service is violating the federal Migratory Bird Act in my opinion by removing these nests from this city-owned tree. I just called you guys to come out and hold off the operation until Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife can respond to the law." The officer responded by saying he was going to arrest me as a terrorist. Off I went to jail handcuffed in my shorts, no shoes, stuffed into a police car for a trip to jail, where I had to borrow $5,000 to pay an amazing $50,000 bail -- more than double what I make in a year of biological consulting work. The bail bondsman said he had never seen bail set that high for this type of arrest in her 20-year career.

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"I was hit with multiple criminal charges. After eight months of going to court, all of those charges have now been dropped, except one minor probation violation, for which I paid a small fine. Now I am free to talk about one of the most bizarre cases to ever hit the SLO courts. A wildlife biologist turned into the first SLO Co-terrorist, "all in the name of saving a few bird's nests and for love of a night heron named Nellie." This all started three years ago when I and my research partner Sue Sloan were sitting on the curb talking to friends while we were looking for something to eat. We noticed a large bird on a neighbor's lawn and recognized it as a fledgling night heron. We stopped, as we had seen lawn and recognized it as a fledgling night heron. We have made this morning migration almost every day for several years. Both of us have been involved with our coffee to say hello to the ocean and all our animal buddies. We have developed our own language with her that she repeats with gusto every morning.

We have also seen her nesting trees cut down, her siblings die of starvation because their tide pool feeding areas are being destroyed and her blufl top feeding areas covered up by multi-million dollar houses. Out of 15 baby night herons that left the rookery on Morro Street three years ago, Nellie is the only one left alive.

In the summer of 2006, Bunyon Brothers Tree Service cut down a full grown healthy Monterey Pine tree on the bluffs in Shell Beach. This tree was used by Nellie and the herons as one of their main trees for nesting and resting in during the day. After two years, the City of Pismo finally agreed that the tree removal was not done with the needed city approval but they were not going to do anything about it! We complained several times to DFG and they said it was not their issue and we must contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in L.A. We did that, and sent many e-mails and photos, but the Service said they were too far away to investigate. KSBY came out and did a good story on the illegal tree removal and Nellie showed up for her first TV interview.

Shortly after the pine tree was cut down, Forister Tree Service cut ten long-term night heron nests out of a tree on Morro Street. Night herons go back to the same nests every year, so it takes years for them to make a nest large enough for their babies. These colony nesting trees are protected under the Migratory Bird Act even if there are no eggs in the nests. We have a memorandum from the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service outlining this law and how it protects colony nesting birds. Again we called the Police, DFG and the USFWS.

The police responded and again took a report. It was obvious that they were getting upset at the lack of response from the wildlife agencies. The breeding night herons moved out of the tree when the trimmers showed up with saws blazing. They flew down the street to one of the last remaining trees with heron nests built the year before. The owner living near this tree squirted the herons and some of the nests out of the tree. This tree is on City property, and it is where I was arrested.

I was arrested because the police were tired of responding to these wildlife issues. In the police reports from the past few years, the Pismo Police asked DFG and the USFWS to respond to our allegations of violations of the Migratory Bird Act. One of the officers told me that they were frustrated because they could not get any help with the issue. I was arrested to get rid of the problem of reporting the problem.

Last spring, the problem started all over again. On Boeker Street in Alegros Restaurant, an apartment owner chopped down his trees to get rid of the heron that had moved over from Morro Street. There were a few babies in the nests, and they fell out and wandered into traffic. We complained once again. The police showed up once again. Nothing was done once again.

I called Pismo Beach Mayor Mary Anne Reiss and complained. I said that in Morro Bay or SLO, no one would be able to get away with this type of wildlife abuse. She said that people need to make money.

The City of Pismo Beach is simply horrible when it comes to wildlives or coastal protection. They allow homes to be built right on the crumbling bluffs, trees to be removed illegally, illegal fireworks to scare off the birds, and if you wish to complain about it, you may be the next Shell Beach Terrorist!

The sad thing about this whole issue is not my arrest, it is that we are failing to tell Nellie’s message and convince this city that wildlife is just as important as our million dollar homes, 4-wheeled drives and Hummers. There are only a few of these magnificent birds left alive in the Shell Beach area, and they were here 10,000 years before the City of Pismo arrived and decided there is no room for them.

Please go to Nellie’s web page to get more information and photos about her and her family at www.phase.com/riley. Thanks for hearing her message.

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Support our local chapter

We send out an appeal in March to each of our members, asking for contributions. Directly and indirectly, these contributions really do make a difference to us, and are an important part of our Chapter’s budget.

When you make a donation to the Chapter, you support the Sierra Club’s work in your own backyard. You allow us to continue our work to protect wilderness and wildlife, to improve the quality of life in our cities, and to preserve the enjoyment of nature.

Please as generous as you are able—remember, these funds directly affect your way of life in your neighborhood.

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Conservation Element Update: Open House

The San Luis Obispo County Planning Department is inviting you to an open house to discuss the progress of the update of the Conservation and Open Space Element of the General Plan (COSE) and to advise the Department on issues that should be included in the updated document.

The importance of this document and this process to the future of San Luis Obispo cannot be overstated. The COSE will consolidate existing general plan elements that deal with such issues as water, biological resources, open space, energy and air quality into one comprehensive document.

There will be two opportunities to attend the open house:

- **Thursday, March 6** (3:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.), Paso Robles City Council Chambers.
- **Thursday, March 13** (3:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.), South County Regional Center (West Branch St; Arroyo Grande).

At the open houses, County Planning management will seek your opinions on policies in four major issue areas:

1. Water Resources (Groundwater management, water conservation, water quality), biological resources (trees, wetlands, endangered species), air quality (greenhouse gas emissions, smart growth) and energy (transportation, alternative energy).
2. Open space (conservation and open space, biodiversity, smart growth) and energy (transportation, alternative energy).
3. Conservation (infrastructure, urban development, economic development, groundwater management) and energy (transportation, alternative energy).
4. Transportation (transportation, alternative energy, economic development, infrastructure).
Taking Issue

problematic environmental coverage & commentary in our local media


Summary: Democratic presidential candidates are unfairly denouncing the North American Free Trade Agreement to capitalize on voters’ “trade-related anxiety.” (All the responses below are from “Revisiting NAFTA: Still not working for North America’s workers,” Economic Policy Institute Briefing Paper #173, Sept. 25, 2006.)

NAFTA did not cause the current U.S. trade deficit with Mexico, nor did it cost the United States any jobs, on net, though it might have created as couple of hundred thousand.

The United States had a small but relatively stable trade deficit with Canada and Mexico (combined) in the 1980s and early 1990s. After NAFTA took effect in 1994, the United States developed large and rapidly growing deficits with these trade partners. Growth in trade deficits after NAFTA took effect reduced demand for goods produced in every region of the United States and has led to job displacement in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Jobs displaced due to growing NAFTA trade deficits ranged as high as 1.4% of total employment in states such as Michigan. Between 2004 and 2005, the U.S. goods trade deficit with Mexico and Canada increased 14% (U.S. Census Bureau 2006), likely causing double-digit growth in job displacement in 2005.

Growing trade deficits with Mexico after NAFTA took effect reduced employment in high-wage, traded-goods industries, and has led to job displacement in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Jobs displaced due to growing NAFTA trade deficits ranged as high as 1.4% of total employment in states such as Michigan. Between 2004 and 2005, the U.S. goods trade deficit with Mexico and Canada increased 14% (U.S. Census Bureau 2006), likely causing double-digit growth in job displacement in 2005.

A gap between higher- and lower-paid workers has indeed developed in the NAFTA years, but the main culprit is technology, which increases demand for highly educated and trained workers.

Nearly two-thirds of the jobs displaced by growing trade deficits with Mexico and Canada were in manufacturing, which is one of the best sources of good jobs with good benefits for workers with a high school degree or less. These workers were especially hard hit by job displacement associated with rising NAFTA trade deficits.

The impact of NAFTA seems to have been both larger and more positive in Mexico than in the United States. Mexico’s gross domestic product, now more than $875 billion, has more than quadrupled since 1987.

The United States, and the race to the bottom set off by NAFTA has meant nothing better than low-wage work for most Mexican workers, while benefiting large companies, the financial sector, and a thin layer of administrative and professional workers who are earning high salaries. Employment has become increasingly precarious overall, the agricultural sector has suffered a large and steady loss of employment, and real salaries remain below the levels of the early 1990s, as Mexico’s dependence on global imports grows.

Wages in the maquiladora sector are almost 40% lower than those in heavy non-maquila manufacturing.

Among them is the long- awaited elimination of all remaining barriers on American corn exports to Mexico.

A final verdict on NAFTA is not possible yet, because the last deferred provisions won’t be phased in until Jan. 1...

Employment in [Mexico’s] agricultural sector began a steady drop at the end of 1993, falling to 6.8 million employed workers by the end of 2004. The worst hit were corn producers, with a total loss of over a million jobs.

Upshot: Growing trade deficits with Mexico and Canada after NAFTA took effect reduced employment in high-wage, traded-goods industries, resulting in a substantial loss of wage income for such workers. This contributed to growing inequality in wages and falling demand for workers without a post-secondary education, in low-skilled manufacturing, and in the agricultural sector.

Employment in Mexico’s agricultural sector began a steady drop at the end of 1993, falling to 6.8 million employed workers by the end of 2004. The worst hit were corn producers, with a total loss of over a million jobs.

For more information on the problems besetting “free trade” and their solutions, go to www.sierrclub.org/trade

Sierra Club Outings: More and Better!

By Shaba Motsendi Volunteer Coordinator

We would like to increase the number of Sierra Club Outings leaders and the overall number of official outings that the Santa Lucia Chapter has to offer. Sierra Club Outings leaders have expressed interest in variations on the current outings — slimmer hikes, a more structured, educational hike, etc. I encourage you to bring your ideas and feedback to me so we can work with the current leaders to make different things happen.

As part of being certified to lead a Sierra Club outing, we are working toward offering an official group First Aid Training Course if there is enough interest. Getting certified is mandatory for all Sierra Club Hike Leaders, and also it is just great to have the knowledge and capability to help others should it be needed!

I invite any members interested to email me at shaba.srcaclub@gmail.com

I look forward to receiving your comments and suggestions, and to meeting many of you and sharing the experience of enjoying, exploring, and protecting the planet!
Classifieds

Next issue deadline is March 12. To get a rate sheet or submit your ad and payment, contact: Sierra Club - Santa Lucia Chapter P.O. Box 15755 San Luis Obispo, CA 93406 sierralclub8@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.; 927-6223
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.
Pasro 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
SLOOG Citizens Advisory Committee--1st Wed. every other month, 8:00 p.m.
SLOOG Board--1st Wed. every other month, 8:30 a.m.

Call for Yosemite Valley Volunteers

The LeConte Memorial Lodge is a 104-year-old museum, library and visitor center operated by the Sierra Club in Yosemite National Park. We are looking for Sierra Club members interested in volunteering for one or two weeks between May 1 and September 28.

Hours of operation are from 10 am - 4 pm, Wed.-Sun., and 8 pm - 10 pm for weekend evening programs. Volunteers enjoy free entrance to Yosemite National Park and free camping at the group campsite during the time they volunteer. For more information visit www.sierraclub.org/education/leconte/volunteering.asp or contact Bonnie Gisel, the LeConte Lodge curator, at leconte.curator@sierraclub.org or (209) 403-6676 (before May 1). After May 1, call (209) 372-4542.

For schedule, trailers, info, and reviews of films at SLO Library, go to www.hopedance.org

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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 outing 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.

### Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park

**Six Sierra Club California Fundraising Cruises Scheduled for 2008**

- **April 4-7, May 2-5, July 18-21:** 4 islands ($775)
- **August 23-27, September 13-17, 5 islands ($925)**

Explore the wild, windswept isles of Channel Island National Park. In spring the islands are ablaze with wildflowers. In summer, the pristine waters of the Marine Sanctuary entice swimmers, snorkelers and kayakers. All year long, enjoy unusual plants and flowers, seals and frolicking sea lions, sea and land birds. All cruises depart from Santa Barbara aboard the 68’ twin diesel *Earth*. Fee includes all meals, snacks, beverages, plus the services of a ranger/naturalist who will travel with us to lead hikes on each island and point out interesting features.

To make a reservation mail a $100 check, payable to Sierra Club, to leader: Joan Jones Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732. Contact leader for more information (626-443-6706; joanholtz@earthlink.net).

### Outings and Activities Calendar

**Sat., Mar. 15th, 8:00 a.m. Rocks Corral Exploratory Hike: Come take a 10–13 mile, with unknown elevation gain as this is an exploratory hike on the Avenales Ranch East of Pozo. We should have plenty of wildflowers, and pleasant weather. Bring lunch, water, sturdy hiking shoes, and plan to be out all day. Meet at the Pacific Beverage Co. in Santa Margarita. This is a very challenging hike. Limit 20 people. For details, reservations and meeting place call Gary (473-3694/59) Rain or threat of rain cancels.**

**Sat.-Sun., March 16-17, Ghost Town Extravaganza: Come with us to this spectacular desert landscape near Death Valley to explore the ruins of California’s colorful past. Camp at the historic ghost town of Ballarat (flush toilets & hot showers). On Sat, do a very challenging hike to ghost town Lookout City with expert Hal Fowler who will regale us with tales of this wild west town. Later we’ll return to camp for Happy Hour, a potluck feast and campfire. On Sun, a quick visit to the infamous Riley town site before heading home. Group size strictly limited. Send $8 per person (Sierra Club), 2 sase, H&W phones, email, ride share info to: Ldr: Lyngis Gerard, P.O. Box 294726, Phelan, CA 92329, (760) 868-2179. Co-ldr: Don Peterson (760) 375-8599 CNRCC/Desert Committee.**

**Sat., March 22, 9:00 a.m. Cerro Alto-Long Hike. Join the leader on this Easter weekend hike. The 7.1 mile hike is of moderate difficulty. There is about 1700 ft. of elevation gain. Meet at the Cerro Alto campground which is about 8 miles east of Morro Bay and 12 miles west of Atascadero. Drive to the day use parking area at the back of the camp ground. Probably there is a day use fee unless you have an Adventure Pass. The views of Chorro Valley and the coastline from the top of Cerro Alto are spectacular. This hike has the possibility of ticks and poison oak. Bring lunch/snacks, water and dress for the weather. There will be a refueling stop at Taco Temple after the hike. For info, contact Chuck at 441-7957 (3C).**

**Sat., March 29th, 8:00 a.m. Machesna Mountain Hike: Take a 12 – 15 mile, with 3000 foot elevation gain hike through the Machesna Wilderness. Starting from American Canyon Campground, we will climb 1500 to an open meadow and pond below Machesna Mountain itself. After lunch we will climb another seven hundred feet to a ridge overlooking the Carrizo Plain. We will soon start our descent to a lush green valley, before climbing up to our final rest stop. We should have plenty of wildflowers, and pleasant weather. Bring lunch, water, sturdy hiking shoes, and plan to be out all day. Some of us may go to the Pozo Saloon after if open. Meet at Pacific Beverage Company in Santa Barbara. This is not a beginner’s hike. Limit 20 people. For details, reservations and meeting place call Gary (473-3694/59). Rain or threat of rain cancels.**

**March 30, 0930, Sun., Easter, COASTAL DUNES HIKE, 3 mile hike. Call or e-mail a few days before for details: <bdenneen@kcbx.net>, (929-3647).**

**Sat., Mon. April 5-7, Birds, Flowers, and Fences in the Carrizo: This is an opportunity to visit and to assist an outstanding and relatively unknown national monument. On Saturday, we will assist monument staff in the removal of fence wires to allow pronghorn antelope free access to the range. Sunday is reserved for sightseeing. The views from the Caliente Mountains are spectacular; if rain has been sufficient, there will be spring flowers; and the monument is known for the number and variety of raptors present. Those who can stay on Monday will continue our work with the monument staff. Contact leader Craig Deutsche, 310-477-6676, or destzech@earthlink.net CNRCC Desert Committee.**

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