**Diablo and Desperation**

PG&E’s move to relicense the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant 15 years ahead of schedule is a case of spend first, study later.

By the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility, [www.a4nr.org](http://www.a4nr.org)

When the Pacific Gas and Electric Co. held a surprise pre-Thanksgiving press conference announcing that it had filed to renew its license to operate the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant for another twenty years – a renewal of a license that is still fifteen years away from expiration — it was clear that the folks in the executive suites of PG&E are suffering from a severe case of premature application.

Just days before Thanksgiving, PG&E sent a press release to the media that they were going “to make a major announcement regarding California’s energy future.” Any hope that their vision of California’s energy future would involve, say, a wind farm at the Diablo Canyon nuclear site were soon dashed.

In an attempted full-court press, PG&E trotted out local school officials, the tax assessor, and Greenpeace turncoat Patrick Moore to trumpet their belief that adding twenty more years to Diablo Canyon’s lifespan would be a boon for county coffers. The Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility was tipped off to the press conference and spoiled PG&E’s fun by making sure that the media knew the utility’s action flew in the face of the interests of consumers, state regulatory agencies and the...continued on page 9

**The Year in Review**

**JANUARY**

The Sierra Club submitted comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Los Osos Wastewater Project calling for the following:

- tertiary—not merely secondary—treatment of effluent,
- increased water conservation,
- abandonment of water-wasting sprayfields for disposal of treated effluent outside the groundwater basin
- an “ag exchange” program for that effluent that would reduce pumping of the stressed lower aquifer
- a pressurized effluent collection system and ponding to reduce sludge production
- moving the treatment plant from its proposed Tonini Ranch site to the smaller Giacomazzi site, over the basin. (See August entry.)

The Sierra Club joined with North County residents to successfully...continued on page 8

**JANUARY 25:**

Environmentalists Rendezvous
Steynberg Gallery
- see page 2

**January 16:**

Sharing the Dream
Laguna Middle School
- see page 11

**DON’T MISS**

**Please recycle**

This newsletter printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper with soy-based inks

*Don’t panic!* The year got off to a great start with the break-up of the developer-fueled Ovitt/Lenthall/Achadjian power trio on the County Board of Supervisors.
Visit us on the Web!
www.santalucia.sierraclub.org

Bi-Monthly General Meeting
Environmentalists Rendezvous
7 p.m., Tuesday, January 26
Steinberg Gallery, SLO

It's Getting Ridiculous
Supervisors are watching ag policy drift away

Two articles from the Santa Ynez Valley News were reprinted in this space in our last two issues (“Are We ‘Protecting Agriculture?’”, Oct., Nov./Dec.), providing a helpful vantagepoint from south of SLO County on the very familiar problems that Santa Barbara County has been experiencing. By allowing commercial events on agriculturally zoned land, and the increased density and intensity of this laissez-faire policy: Ag land turning into de facto commercial zoning, accelerating the loss of active agriculture.

On October 6, the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors had finally moved decisively to head it off. Board in the October 6 meeting indicated a primary ag use is not a sufficient condition to qualify for a temporary event permit, and that events must be secondary and incidental to that agricultural use. The neighbors objected, the local advisory council objected, and the hearing officer ignored the Board, the hearing officer ignored the advisory council’s interpretation that prohibits using a well for a temporary event. Ten years time limit.” That’s a ten-year requirement applies. Staff is not bound by the advisory council’s actions,” said staff planner Karen Nall. Also: “The Board in the October 6 meeting indicated a primary ag use is not a sufficient condition to have five acres of grape vines and no winery, the applicants did not meet the minimum requirement to have at least five acres of active agricultural use to qualify for a temporary event permit. Nor did they qualify for events under the Winery Ordinance—allowing six events per year, with up to 80 people—be ended, they don’t have a winery. The events requested were more than twice the level allowed under the Winery Ordinance. The neighbors objected, the local advisory council objected, and the property is subject to a deed restriction that prohibits using a well for commercial purposes in this water-stressed area.

Undeterred, staff forged ahead and approved a permit. “Staff is not bound by the advisory council’s actions,” said staff planner Karen Nall. Also: “The Board in the October 6 meeting indicated a primary ag use is not a sufficient condition to have five acres of grape vines and no winery, the applicants did not meet the minimum requirement to have at least five acres of active agricultural use to qualify for a temporary event permit. Nor did they qualify for events under the Winery Ordinance—allowing six events per year, with up to 80 people—be ended, they don’t have a winery. The events requested were more than twice the level allowed under the Winery Ordinance. The neighbors objected, the local advisory council objected, and the property is subject to a deed restriction that prohibits using a well for commercial purposes in this water-stressed area.

The Executive Committee meets the third Friday of every month at 12:00 p.m. at the chapter office, located at 547 B Marsh St., San Luis Obispo. All members are welcome to attend.

Andrew Christie
EDITOR
sierraluculb@gmail.com
Karen Merriam
Melody DeMarth
Jack McCurdy
EDITORIAL BOARD
The Santa Lucian is published 10 times a year. Articles, environmental information and letters to the editor are welcome. The deadline for each issue is the 11th of the prior month.

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c/o Santa Lucia Chapter, Sierra Club
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San Luis Obispo, CA 93406
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Melody DeMarth
ACTING CHAIR
Cal French
MEMBER
Dawn Ortiz-Logg
MEMBER
Steven Marx
TREASURER
Linda Seeley
MEMBER
Cal French
COUNCIL OF CLUB LEADERS

Change of Address?
Mail changes to:
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85 Second Street, 2nd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105-3441
or e-mail: address.changes@sierraclub.org

Outings, events, and more!
Continued on page 10

SANTA LUCIAN

The Executive Committee meets the third Friday of every month at 12:00 p.m. at the chapter office, located at 547 B Marsh St., San Luis Obispo. All members are welcome to attend.

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The Sierra Club has a strong policy against genetically modified organisms released into the environment as genetically engineered food, a practice that constitutes an ongoing science experiment that has drafted all consumers and ecosystems as guinea pigs. The rush to permit the sale of genetically modified foods without the usual scientific testing requirements has been driven by the corporate bottom line. That bottom line: Create an ever-growing market for the company’s Roundup herbicide and take ownership of the world’s seed stock.

On November 11, the North County Farmers Market Board, sponsor of the Templeton Farmers Market, voted unanimously to require the labeling of genetically engineered produce. NCFMA Board President Mike Broadhurst told the Sierra Club, “Our Board discussed the issue at length and concluded that ensuring our customers’ choice was the right policy for NCFMA. Therefore, at our markets you will find that any produce resulting from GMO crops will be labeled as such.”

Thanks to the 20 people who sent e-mails to the board prior to that meeting and to the people who spoke at the meeting, including Karen Swift of Bear Valley Ranch.

The Santa Lucia Chapter worked with the late Dr. John DiVincenzo, owner of the Avila Valley Barn, to bring about the first known instance of the labeling of a genetically engineered consumer product in the U.S. When the Avila Valley Barn finally labeled Monsanto’s Bt corn as “Our Own G.E. corn” in 2007. Since his death two years ago, it is not known if Dr. DiVincenzo’s labeling policy will continue. We encourage readers to call the manager of the Avila Valley Barn at 595-2816 to ask what the Barn’s policy regarding genetically engineered corn is.

We can all thank the North County Farmers Market Association for their decision on labeling. However, as Monsanto’s world-beating GMO business plan is no friend to consumers or small farmers — and it fully realized would spell the demise of organic farming — genetically engineered produce should be excluded from all Farmers Markets in the county. Other Farmers Markets such as the North Coast Growers Association of Humboldt County, quite logically take an anti-genetic engineering stand. Ours should, too. Tell NCFMA manager Sandra Dimond that Monsanto and Farmers Markets don’t mix.

Call her at 748-1109, or e-mail her at Sandra@createabang.com. You can also get this message to Peter Jankay, Market Administrator for the South County Farmers Market Association, at 544-9570.

Cal Poly grew Monsanto’s Roundup-Ready silage corn this year. We don’t know if Cal Poly is continuing to grow Monsanto’s Roundup-Ready alfalfa or if they grew Bt sweet corn. The Cal Poly students at Farmers Markets say they are not selling Bt corn. Questions regarding Cal Poly’s Monsanto crops should be directed to Dr. Jeff Wong at 756-2428.

Hayashi and Sons continued to sell it at Farmers Markets in Arroyo Grande and Templeton. Over the summer, thanks to stalwart volunteers, we were able to leaflet on the Bt corn issue at all of those markets.

For more information call Jesse Arnold at 927-3996 or go to www.slofree.org.
The View from Here

I'm writing this note to you from a little cabin in the rainforest on the Puna coast, Big Island, Hawaii. At night tree frogs sing me to sleep. Each morning I greet my two gecko families, one green, one tan, as they climb about my walls and screens (there are no windows here) praising the ocean break against the lava laden cliffs, and later I will watch the surfer turtles troll the foam for treasures.

I've come to this place for refreshment: for renewal of physical strength, emotional resilience, and intellectual vigor. While two weeks is not enough time to accomplish all this, it is time enough to reflect on the treasures.

Before I traveled here to Hawaii, I realized that my time of leadership is complete. I've given the Chapter my best. My dear colleagues on the Executive Committee have been steadfast, generous and diligent. We work as a team, and count on each other for honesty and balance, humor and poetry. But five years is long enough. I will be leaving the ExCom as of December 31st.

In a few days I will leave this Hawaiian island paradise and return to SLO to celebrate the holidays and begin a new year. I will bring with me the serenity of the rainforest stillness filled with life and a renewed appreciation for the wisdom of nature. These renewed perspectives will inform and guide me to remain open to change; to resist fear; to seek the right course, not the expedient; to promote our cities and county as leaders of a new, green economy. Our Chapter Director is recognized as one of the most well-informed and talented writers and analysts of key environmental issues from their hinterlands. Watersheds do not have doughnut holes. If watershed planning is awkward around these holes, circulation planning is even more so, as must trips will be to and from areas not scrutinized.

To make the process even more awkward, areas for future growth are to be identified, presumably adjacent to existing communities…but how do we know?

The consequence is likely to be a surge of applications for leapfrog development in the midst of our rural and agricultural lands, with the attendant impacts of habitat and wildlife corridor fragmentation, added traffic on rural roads, and increasing stress on farmers and ranchers who want to stay in agriculture.

Show up on Jan. 12 to ask the supervisors not to make smart growth stupid

By Eric Greening

The Board of Supervisors has embarked on a countywide General Plan Update process that threatens to make a mockery of its adopted Strategic Growth Policies.

Until now, updates of the Land Use and Circulation Elements have been done by official planning area. There are 19 of these, such as Estero, Adelaida, and Salinas River. The update process has encouraged maximum participation by the people of that locality, leading to the resultant plan incorporating as much of the community's vision as would be consistent with the rest of the General Plan.

Now, the 19 planning areas have been collapsed into five, and the Board has authorized the rural parts of all five to be updated at once, creating a document that will supersede all existing area plans, at least as they apply to rural portions of the areas. Anything inside an urban or village reserve line is to be left as a hole in the multi-holed doughnut, awaiting future update of the relevant community plans. (One community plan update — Shandon's — is already in progress. Apparently, the rest are in limbo until the Land Use and Circulation Element for the rural areas is completed.)

While Planning Staff claims this helps enact recommendations of the Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC) in redrawing area plan boundaries to reflect watersheds, there are two important differences from the WRAC recommendation: WRAC had envisioned a considerably greater number of planning areas, and had not envisioned separating communities from their hinterlands. Watersheds do not have doughnut holes. If watershed planning is awkward around these holes, circulation planning is even more so, as must trips will be to and from areas not scrutinized.

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continued on page 10

The Doughnut with Too Many Holes

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continued on page 10

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Thank You to Santa Lucia Chapter members!

On November 24, we sent a letter to many of our regular contributing members explaining the current financial straits of the Santa Lucia Chapter:

* National Sierra Club is cutting funding to chapters by as much as 80%.
* Grants once available through national Sierra Club and local foundations are not available in 2010.
* Charitable donations are down at national and local levels.

To cope with this dramatic loss of revenue, the Chapter’s Executive Committee has voted to do the following:

- Eliminate one half-time paid AmeriCorps member.
- Cut staff time by 20%. Our Chapter Director may be less available to assist our members and work on essential projects.
- Sublease up to 2/3 of our office space.
- Reduce the number of Santa Lucian newsletters printed.
- Freeze all expenditures other than core functions.

We are very happy to report that, at press time, we have received generous donations from the following members:

Alexandra Wydaga
Barbara Weymann
Barbara Wilson
Beverly de Witt-Moylan
Rob and Laverne McDonnell
C. and J.P. Collie
Calvin and Letty French
Charles Priloff
Cheryl Ziehl
Clive and Ann Nash
David Hannings
David Weisman
Denny and Betty Mynatt
Dirk and Bonnie Walters
Dominic and Christine Perello
Donald Sauer
Eliane Guillet
Ellie and Erhard Rehkugler
Eugene and Sally Krugier
In (memory of Ann Ricards)
P.J. Nolan
Frances Reith
Franklin Frank
Gary Stein
George and Gwen Taylor
Henry Hammer
Irv and Coralie McMullan
J.R. and E.A. Landrith
Jaime and Melinda Avila
James and Jilda Tate
James and Norma Cole
Jan and Clifford Ojerholm
Jean White
Joan Carter
Joan O’Keefe
Johanna Rubba
John Turrill
Joe Morris
Kenneth Wattelet
Kim Ramos
Kurt Rupper
Leland and Valerie Endres
Lionel and Sally Lerner
Lori Slater
Louise Perino
Luke and Mona Lorge
Maria Junco
Mark and Elana Shefrin
Maureen Kokkas
Melody DeMerritt
P. and S. Larniez
Paul and Barbara Murphy
Peter Reynolds
Philip and Christina Bailey
Ralph Bishop
Randall Jost
Richard Alberts
Richard and Susan Harvey
Richard Kranzdorf
Ruth Moss
Robert and Jamie Carr
Robert and Marilyn McCellan
Robert and Penny Barron
Shields Abernathy
Steven and Jan Marx
Steven and Myra Douglass
Susan Callado
Susan Pel
Tom Willsbach
Valerie Bient
Walter Sanville
Watson Gooch
Wendy McKeown

Thank you, thank you! Your donations will help us weather the next few months, but more is needed to ensure our continuing operation. Anyone reading this should consider doing whatever they can to support the Santa Lucia Chapter so we may continue our important work this year. You can mail a check, contribute online at our website –

What’s Next for the Dalidio Shopping Mall?

by Citizens for Planning Responsibility

Although the California Supreme Court has decided not to review the Appellate decision upholding Measure J, the struggle to save the City of San Luis Obispo’s 1994 vision regarding the Dalidio property is far from over. The developers now have to decide whether to annex into the City and follow the rules, or to develop in the County and follow only Measure J. If the developers decide to proceed in the City, they will be required to dedicate one half of the land into agricultural open space, just as the two other property owners in that area have already done. This will result in preservation of a total of 90 acres of agricultural open space and implement the City’s 1994 General Plan.

Optimistic that annexation is a reasonable possibility, the City is creating a Master Plan for an urban farm on these 90 acres. Other projects in this area, which have followed the rules and have dedicated one half of the land to open space, have met little opposition and were approved quickly. The fastest, least expensive, and most efficient way to provide automobile access, water, sewer, and police/fire protection for the project would be to annex it into the City. Annexing would be a good business decision.

But, of course, developers, like all of them, want to turn an industrial site into a mall and make a profit. Commerce needs to be mixed with agriculture, but the City will require at least half the land to be agricultural. The City’s Master Plan was created by the City’s own staff.

In February, Chapter members will vote for the candidates who will lead the Santa Lucia chapter on its Executive Committee in 2010.

We encourage our members to run for the ExCom and become a part of the dynamic action of Sierra Club leadership on energy, global warming, water and land use issues.

The ExCom meets in February to appoint the chair, vice-chair, secretary and treasurer, as well as program, conservation and outings chairs.

We also appoint a delegate to the Council of Club Leaders, a liaison to the national Sierra Club.

Candidates are elected for a term of three years. Deadline for nominations is January 12. Contact Cal French at calfrench@gmail.com or call the Sierra Club Office at (805) 543-8717.

Call for Candidates

For the Parks

Initiative would secure funding for state parks - Help gather signatures now!

Park lovers are gathering signatures for a state initiative to provide stable long-term funding for California’s endangered state parks. Your help is needed now.

How did California’s 278 state parks, once the best in the country, sink to being among the shabbiest? Call it death by a thousand budget cuts. Our parks are falling apart because of persistent underfunding. The state still owns the lands—the spectacular vistas, historic sites, and beaches—but roofs and sewage systems leak, restrooms aren’t washed out regularly but trails are, and campgrounds and visitor centers are shuttered. The repair backlog in California state parks tops $1 billion, and it’s growing.

Twice in the past two years, the whole state-park system was on the verge of being shut down. Only last-minute budget reprieves kept it open. But nearly 60 state parks are to have reduced hours or calendars because of last year’s budget cuts, and more reductions are expected this year.

That’s why park supporters are placing a statewide initiative on the November 2010 ballot called the California State Parks and Wildlife Conservation Trust Fund Act of 2010. It will protect state parks and conserve wildlife by establishing a trust fund in the state treasury to be spent only on state parks, wildlife and marine conservation, and state conservancies. It will only get on the ballot if volunteers collect the thousands of signatures necessary.

Funding will come from an $18 surcharge on the registration fee for California vehicles, including motorcycles and recreational vehicles but not larger commercial vehicles, mobile homes, and permanent trailers. Surcharged vehicles will receive free admission to all state parks. In comparison, park visitors currently pay up to $125 for an annual pass or $10 to 15 per day at most parks.

In exchange for this small fee increase, California vehicles would be allowed free Day Use entry to our State Parks and Wildlife Preserves. Since many Californians visit a State Park or Beach more than once a year, this is a very fair exchange.

The trust fund will be sufficient to adequately fund state parks, freeing them from annual budget cuts and threatened closures. Money from the general fund currently spent on parks will be available for other vital needs, including schools, health care, social services, and public safety.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Fill out and send in the postcard included in this issue today!
demanded the denial of a permit for a sand and gravel mine before the County Planning Commission. The mine would have had unmitigable environmental impacts on the Salinas River.

On January 6, at the first meeting of the newly elected County Supervisors, we presented each supervisor with his own bound copy of our “Messages to the New Board” as they appeared in New Times over the previous five months, offering policy prescriptions on sustainable food production, affordable housing, local political reform, energy use, and the preservation of agricultural land.

Sierra Club’s California-Nevada Regional Conservation Committee voted to endorse the “Carbon-Free, Nuclear-Free Statement of Principles.” The CFNP campaign has created a blueprint for a clean energy future free of both coal and nuclear power. The Cal Poly Chapter of the Sierra Student Coalition and the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility gave local residents a preview of that future when we brought CFNP founder Dr. Arjun Makkijani of the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research to Cal Poly in October 2008.

FEBRUARY
On February 6, the Strategic Energy Alliance for Change, co-founded by the Santa Lucia Chapter, presented a Renewable Energy Education Forum the Santa Lucia Chapter, and many others pointed out they had no scientific basis for their assertion of a bear surplus. On April 24, a committee exploring the feasibility of establishing a county-wide agricultural and open space district along the lines of the successful model established by Sonoma County, hosted a meeting attended by representatives of ranchers, farmers, the vineyard/winery industry, local governments, the Air Pollution Control District, parks commissioners, businesses, development and legal entities, environmental and conservation organizations (The Nature Conservancy, Sierra Club, SLO Coastkeeper, SLO Land Conservancy, North Coast Watch) and Resource Conservation Districts. The former general manager of the Santa Lucia Chapter reprinted their findings to the group, looking toward a future ballot measure campaign to fund such a district. The committee continued to meet throughout the year, and has identified priority tasks and a timeline for completion.

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MARCH
After multiple Sierra Club presentations over the course of two years, on March 24, the Atascadero City Council voted to join ICLEI/Local Governments for Sustainability, a primary goal of the Sierra Club’s Cool Cities campaign.

APRIL
The Department of Fish and Game rescinded its idea for a black bear hunt in SLO after letters from Los Padres Forest Watch, the Santa Lucia Chapter, and many others pointed out they had no scientific basis for their assertion of a bear surplus.

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MAY
Our Energy Town Hall series continued in Atascadero on May 6, with Supervisor Jim Patterson and Atascadero Mayor Ellen Beraud assisting us in addressing the audience.

On May 9, the California Energy Commission ruled that proponents of solar power plants on the Carrizo Plain would not be allowed to keep secret the results of a wildlife corridor study, citing extensive comments on behalf of the need for full disclosure filed by the Santa Lucia Chapter.

The Chapter’s annual awards banquet and fundraiser was held at the SLO Botanical Gardens on May 30. Michael Fitts of the Endangered Habitats League and national Sierra Club President Allison Chin keynoted with speeches on land use activism and organizing as high lights. Steven Marx, the Chapter Treasurer and Executive Committee member, received the Chapter’s highest award for service to the Chapter and the community.

County’s estimates of sea level rise were over conservative, out of date, and represent global averages. We furnished current numbers from a California coastal-specific study showing likely sea level rise of nearly five feet by the end of the century. As a result, the Planning Commission told the Public Works Department to seal pipes throughout the sewer’s collection system in all areas less than five feet above sea level.

JUNE
Our Energy Town Hall in Grover Beach, featuring Dave Erickson, Technical Director of the Sonoma County Climate Action Plan, kicked off a week of SLO county meetings for Erickson, sponsored by the Santa Lucia chapter. His message: the best, fastest, cheapest way to get to a clean power economy is with local power — generating energy as close as possible to where it’s used.

Confirming disturbing findings first brought to light by the Sierra Club, the SLO County Grand Jury issued its report “Staff Report on the Sale of Oceano Dunes Parcels: Error or Deception?” The grand jury investigated the circumstances in which the County Planning Commission issued a seriously flawed staff report on the proposed sale of County land in the Oceano Dunes to State Parks’ OHV Division. The grand jury found strong evidence of County Planning staff misconduct in the creative editing of land use policies in an apparent effort to back up a finding of “no conflict” with the County’s General Plan. The finding would have helped the OHV Division tighten its grip on its off...
his belief that membership in the Sierra Club renders a juror “untitlable to serve,” serving up “gross conflict,” and “taints” the grand jury’s reports (when those reports come to conclusion that make off-roaders unhappy).

On July 10, La Perla del Mar Chapel in Shell Beach was packed to the rafters for the rally for a Sierra Club/Surfrider sponsored showing of HD under-water footage of marine life shot by biologist Terry Tilly. Off the SLO coast – making the best argument for why we need to extend the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, which currently extends to Cambria, to include all the seamounts off San Luis Obispo County. Making SLO part of the Sanctuary will facilitate a proactive approach to ocean protection, enhancing public understanding of marine resources, helping fund scientific research, and allow local stakeholders to present a position on oil and gas development, ocean dumping and marine mammal issues.

The County granted a lot line adjustment to Hearst Ranch at San Simeon Point, the first stirrings of the corporate moving to take advantage of the many promises for coastal development it wrote into the deal for a conservation easement in 2004. The Sierra Club and SLO LandWatch appealed the County’s permission to reconfigure the lots as inconsistent with our 2004 Coastal Plan. At a July 14 appeal hearing, the Board of Supervisors dismissed our appeal on a 4-0 vote. We appealed to the California Coastal Commission, as did two Coastal Commissioners who gave the County Supervisors a quick lesson in the Coastal Act. The Commission found that our appeals raised substantial issues concerning the County’s approval of the lot line adjustment. A Coastal Commission hearing is pending.

In the wake of the County grand jury’s report of skullduggery surrounding the proposed sale of County land in Oceano Dunes (see June entry), a local off-road tried to kick up some sand with a feverish conspiracy theories that he got into The Tribune, having identified two members of the 19-member grand jury as card-carrying members of the Sierra Club. His moment of media glory resulted in a smack-down by The Tribune’s editorial board for his “creepy, McCarthyesque” take on reality and his belief that membership in the Sierra Club renders a juror “untitlable to serve,” serving up “gross conflict,” and “taints” the grand jury’s reports (when those reports come to conclusions that make off-roaders unhappy).

The SLO Coalition of Appropriate Technology published “San Luis Obispo Guide to the Use of Graywater,” a two-year effort by the Appropriate Technology Coalition –
I have been nothing if not consistent on this Commission.

nately the manufactured controversy fomented by a small group of special interests in this county who have historically maintained a stranglehold on the decision-making machinery of county government has succeeded in perpetuating what is now a self-impacting myth: that I am not fit for public service. And it’s a sad day for me, because I am deeply committed to protecting and conserving this county’s natural and human resources through enlightened land use planning. The last five years have been a deeply rewarding and challenging experience in which I take great pride. This last year in particular has been a pleasure and a joy, because I have so enjoyed working with the four of you. And “work” is the operative word here. In all the years I have been observing, serving on, and interacting with the planning commission, I have never seen a harder working group, or a more thoughtful and substantive commission. I’m proud to have been a part of it. I’m proud of the accomplishments of this commission and staff over the last 12 months, includ-

ing our work on the Grading ordinance, the Conservation and Open Space Element, our courageous denial of the sand and gravel mines and the San Miguel Ranch, and of course our work on the Los Osos sewer.

Gene, you were here when I got here and you’re here to see me go, and every day in between you have been a consummate gentleman and a quiet and steadfast voice for smart growth, agriculture, and I appreciate your contribution.

Carlyn, I’ve known you since long before you took this appointment, and I am so pleased we got to serve together as colleagues for the year. It’s been a pleasure.

Bruce, you have been such a wonderful surprise. You had trepidations about taking this job because you hadn’t done this kind of work before, but you do your homework and you ask good questions, you advocate for your position and keep an open mind, and I don’t think anyone can ask for anything more from their planning commissioner.

Anne, I almost feel like we’re theodile friends at this point, we’ve been in the trenches together for so long. And I think we’ve made a really good team as we’ve taken on some of the challenges like the Veiwsed ordinance, the condo conversion, temporary events and mobile home ordi-

nances, and the Smart Growth amendments. In particular, you had the back up through the Santa Margarita Ranch hearings, and I will always remember that. Thank you.

And I can’t leave without acknowledg-
ing all the members of the public who come to these hearings year after year to participate in the decisions that shape our communities. You inform those decisions, you improve the outcomes, and you make a difference. And while you may not always get the result you want, you have to know that San Luis Obispo County would not be the lovely, livable place that it is today without your continued advocacy and engage-

ment, and I look forward to joining you, again, shortly.

The silver lining here is that I know I am leaving the county’s re-
sources in competent, compassionate hands. I know that you will welcome my replacement warmly and you will mentor him as he works his way up the learning curve. And I hope you know that you can call on me if I can ever provide a perspective or institu-
tional recollection that you may find useful.

I only hope I have contributed to the future well-being of this county half as much as I have been personally enriched by this experience. It’s been an honor, and it’s been a labor of love.

Namaste.
By Seba B. Shroyer

"Diablo Canyon..." According to Seba B. Shroyer of The Ocean Conservancy, in a report to the Plastic Debris Rivers-to-Seas Conference, "Marine debris is one of the most pervasive and solvable pollution problems plaguing the world's oceans and waterways." The major sources of debris come from consumption activities taking place on land that get washed into our waterways and into the ocean, and include wrappers, beverage containers, cigarettes and related waste materials.

Although plastic food containers are bad, polystyrene (a product family that includes Styrofoam) is much worse. Styrofoam, recognized by the recycling number 6, can leach into the food and drink the containers hold and the water bodies they subsequently end up in. Styrene mimics estrogen in the body and can disrupt normal hormone functions; possibly contributing to thyroid problems, menstrual irregularities, and other hormone-related problems. Last year, as breast cancer and prostate cancer. It doesn't biodegrade, but breaks down into smaller and smaller pieces which often end up in the marine environment and are eaten by fish and birds. The plastic toxins accumulate in their tissues and are taken up by humans when they in turn eat the fish and birds. An accumulating body of research and a greater understanding of the problems of marine debris have convinced the California Ocean Protection Council and numerous environmental groups to focus on a strategy to reduce plastic waste, and almost 100 municipalities have banned polystyrene and plastic bags.

Last year, the state Assembly and Senate passed Assembly Bill 42, which would have required three-dimensional seismic mapping of the area around the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, a very good idea in light of the newly discovered earthquake fault less than a mile offshore, which is only the latest previously unknown fault to have been discovered around Diablo. In October, for no good reason, Governor Schwarzenegger vetoed the bill. It remains a very good idea, so the Santa Lucia Chapter and the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility gave the bill's author, Assemblyman Sam Blakeslee, a copy of a very limited, hot off the press edition of Diablo Canyon Area: Seismic Hazard of the Earth: A Preliminary Report.

(1) Raise awareness about the problems caused by single-use polystyrene containers in our coastal and marine environment and the availability of alternatives.

(2) Persuade businesses on the Eastary that provide take out food and drink in polystyrene food and beverage containers to switch to biodegradable alternatives.

(3) Produce educational and presentation materials to share with businesses and the public.

If you would like more information or to sign up for a presentation for your group, please send an email to kimsierraclub8@gmail.com. And lose the foam.
Winery, Spare Those Trees

Alarmed at the number of wineries now on Vineyard Drive in Paso Robles — seven in a four-mile stretch, and six in another two miles — concerned neighbors weighed in last year when another Vineyard Drive landowner requested a permit for yet another winery.

Local resident Alison Denlinger requested a hearing on the Minor Use Permit for the Teckman Winery proposal. She got that hearing, before a County Planning hearing officer, on December 4. The Board upholds the decision, commercial event centers will proliferate on Ag land through the less-than-rigorous Minor Use Permit process.

Because the Supervisors did not uphold the decision, commercial event centers will proliferate on Ag land through the less-than-rigorous Minor Use Permit process. For example, the Supervisors did not explain the lack of analysis of the cumulative traffic impacts of all the events and all the public tasting rooms that would be concentrated in that area.

A dozen letter-writers, including the Santa Lucia Chapter, weighed in. Santa Lucia Chapter, weighed in. Planning staff visited the site, and agreed. Upshot: No oak trees will be removed, no tasting room, production limited to 2,500 cases, no amplified music, no event center.

"Just goes to show that together we can (sometimes) make a difference," wrote Denlinger.

Dallidio continued from page 5

us, are free to make bad business decisions. Measure J now allows the Dallidio developers great freedom to make bad business decisions. They could decide to build a 560,000 square foot shopping mall and huge sewer plant next to established homes, without mitigating the negative impacts including gridlock.

But if they build the mega-mall, how could anyone get there? No one—not the County, the City, CalTrans, nor the developer—can afford to construct the approximately $72 million Interchange necessary to prevent gridlock generated by a project that size, in that location. If they do the Measure J route, the developers will face yet another groundswell of community opposition and constant monitoring by DPR.

CPR & the urban farm

We are happy to announce that CPR has been named a stakeholder in the creation of the Master Plan for the 90 acres. What form should the urban farm take? See the SLO City website, slocity.org/naturalresources/urbanfarm/

Update: Reserve or Feedlot?

In our October issue, Jeff Kypser of Los Padres ForestWatch reported on the shocking state of the Carrizo Plain Ecological Reserve, portions of which have clearly been allowed to become a commercial feedlot for cattle, with severe environmental degradation – erosion, trampled wetlands, hillside terracing, and other evidence of grazing inside the Reserve where cattle are prohibited — all in violation of the lease agreement administered by the California Department of Fish and Game.

Los Padres ForestWatch, the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club and five other conservation groups sent a letter to DPR and the Wildlife Conservation Board detailing the destruction and demanding action to protect Reserve resources.

On October 30, Fish and Game Regional Manager Jeffrey R. Single wrote back to say that the Department is "actively working with the operator to rectify this issue and have directed the lessee to remove the cattle from all pastures which do not meet minimum standards for that pasture. We have directed him to repair fences which are in disrepair if cattle will be present."
Classifieds

Next issue deadline is January 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 sierrachubbi@gmail.com

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green directory

Be smart... be green!
CONTACT us... to be SEEN!
ph: 805-473-5064 or email: Solstice222@aol.com

Got Graywater if You Want It

The Sierra Club has on hand a limited supply of The San Luis Obispo Guide to the Use of Graywater, the new manual produced by the Appropriate Technology Coalition – SLO Green Build, the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club and the San Luis Bay Chapter of Surfrider. Graywater systems turn a waste product that can comprise up to 80% of residential wastewater into a valuable resource for irrigation and other non-potable uses. Harvesting graywater to meet your non-potable water needs utilizes an appropriate technology that can recover initial costs quickly. No permit required.

$10 each, while supplies last. E-mail kim.sierraclub@gmail.com, or call (805) 543-8717 to reserve your copy.

Sharing the Dream invites you to the 15th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday event

When: Jan. 16th 2010
11- 5 pm.
Where: Laguna Middle School Multi-Purpose room.
Activities: Music by: Louie Ortega, Al “Shival” Redwine, Higher Movement dancers, California Arts International, David Smith, Tim Jackson, & House of prayer choir plus Martin Luther King Videos.
Entrance Fee: $10
Lunch provided by Bon Tempe Creole Cafe, served for $5 a plate.
Contact: sharingthedream@kcbx.net
Outings and Activities Calendar

All 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 Chair Joe Morris, 772-1875. For information on a specific outing, please call the outing leader.

Sat., Jan. 9th, 9:30 a.m. Cerrro San Luis Hike. Start the New Year outdoors with a hike up Cerrro San Luis. Meet at 9 a.m. at all of SLO in 2010. Meet at the Fernandez Road parking area (Marsh Street to 101 south on- ramp) at 9:30 a.m. for an energetic and just a little strenuous hike to the summit (1000 ft. elevation gain). Trail is mostly round trip. Boots or sturdy hiking shoes are recommended. Leader: Mike Sims, 459-1701, msims@slonet.org

Sun., Jan. 10th, 10 a.m. Eagle Rock Nature Trail. Pole Cats is dedicated to leading local Sierra Club day hikes and modeling the benefits of using trekking poles. 2.5 miles/220 feet elevation change. The trailhead is located across from Cuesta College at El Chorro Regional Park. From SLO, take Highway 1 North and turn east (right) at the first of two turn signals to El Chorro Regional Park. Follow the signs to the Day Use area, past the ball fields and Botanical Garden. Park in the Day Use area at the end of the road, just before the locked gate. Confirm with David Georgi at polecatleader@gmail.com 458-5575 for upcoming activities. Bipeds welcome.

Fri-Sun, January 22-24, Wilderness Restoration - Death Valley National Park. Come help protect and restore Death Valley National Park from abuse by illegal off-road traffic. This wilderness restoration project along the park's scenic eastern boundary in the Amargosa Valley involves installation of signs, raking out vehicle tracks and moving rocks. Meet late Friday afternoon, or early Saturday morning, or early Saturday afternoon, or early Sunday afternoon, or early Sunday morning. Will be in a Park Service camping area (no water; portable toilets). Leader: Kate Allen, k.allen@wildblue.net, (661-944-9565). CNRRC Desert Committee

Sat., Jan. 30th, 10 a.m. Quarry Trail. Pole Cats is dedicated to leading local Sierra Club day hikes and modeling the benefits of using trekking poles. 2 miles/220 feet elevation change. Meet at the at the Cabrillo Peak trailhead. From SLO, go 12 miles north on Hwy 1 to Los Osos/Baywood Park exit just before Morro Bay. Go south on Southbay Blvd. and drive 7 miles to the Starboard entrance. Continue straight for 2 miles and look for the dirt parking lot on the left. It is easy to miss. Do not wait at the Live Oak trailhead, which is shortly after the Quarry trailhead. Confirm with David Georgi at polecatleader@gmail.com or 458-5575 for upcoming activities. Bipeds welcome.

Tues., January 26, 7 p.m. Bimonthly General Meeting: 1st Annual Environmentalists’ Rendezvous. What are the major environmental groups in SLO County up to? Here’s a unique opportunity to meet seven key players, all in one place. The roundtable contact will feature staff from the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility, Audubon Society, ECO-SLO, Morro Bay Nat. Estuary Program, SLO Land Conservancy, and our own Sierra Club. Each chapter will mention their premier projects and plans for 2010, allowing time for questions. oil under the gaze of the great-horned owl from Pacific Wildlife Care. Steyngberg Gallery, 1531 Monterey St., SLO. Free. Info: Joe, 772-1875

Sat-Sun, January 30-Jan. Fencing a Wildlife Area! Contact Leader: J. Amargosa Valley. The benefits of using trekking poles. 2

Jan. 1, 9:30 a.m. Mussel Rock Hike with Kara Blakeslee. You are invited on the annual Bill Derenne hike to Mussel Rock/Paradise Beach in the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes, on New Year's Day. Bill has led this hike for countless years, but may not go the whole distance this time. (We'll see about that!) Meet at Guadalupe Beach (take Main Street to the west from Santa Maria to parking lot on the beach, or drive south on Highway I through Guadalupe, turning right/ toward the west on Main Street). Bring: water(!), food, layered clothing, sunscreen, hat, and shoes comfortable for a beach and dune hike. If you like it, perhaps bring a poem, or something inspirational to share with fellow hikers. Expect a moderately strenuous hike of 4-5 hours, depending on your speed. Kids are welcome, and there’s no problem turning back early. Sadly, Pito has to stay at home. We will lunch afterwards at a great restaurant in Guadalupe. If you do come, please let us know so we have an idea of what to expect. If you are willing to help as a leader or “sweep,” let us know, or if you have any questions. karaslo@charternet.net

The Ventana Wilderness Alliance Trail Workdays in the Big Sur Area. The Ventana Wilderness Alliance is hosting many volunteer opportunities to help keep and maintain trails on the Big Sur Coast. No experience is necessary, just the desire to be outdoors and work with others. You may be able to just come for the day or spend the weekend, depending on trip location.

Sat., January 9th, 9 a.m. - Morning Glory Trail. Meet at the end of Sternen Creek Road.

Sunday, February 7th, 8 a.m. - Montana de Oro State Park. Meet at the Visitor Center.

To sign up or to get more information, contact Craig Bettencourt, Trail Crew Leader at jholtzhln@aol.com

Central Coast Concerned Mountain Biker Trail Workdays around San Luis Obispo County. The Central Coast Concerned Mountain Bikers host many volunteer opportunities to help keep and maintain trails on the Central Coast. No experience is necessary, just a desire to be outdoors and work with others. You may be able to just come for the day or spend the weekend, depending on trip location.

Saturday, January 9th, 9 a.m. - Morning Glory Trail. Meet at the end of Sternen Creek Road.

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They’re there, they’re gorgeous, you have to have one for your desk, one for your wall, and a great many more for friends and family! And when you buy direct from the Chapter, you support the Sierra Club’s conservation work in San Luis Obispo County.

Siera Club

2010 Sierra Club wall calendar: $12.50

desk calendar: $13.50

to order, call 543-7051

Or just relax at sea. The Channel Islands are Galapagos USA! Marvel at the sight of whales, seals, sea lions, rare birds & blazing wildflowers. Hike the wild, windswept trails. Kayak the rugged coastline. Snorkel in pristine waters. Discover remants of the Chumash people who lived on these islands for thousands of years. Or just relax at sea. These 3-4 day “live aboard” cruises are sponsored by the Angeles Chapter Political Committee & Sierra Club California Political Committee. Depart from Santa Barbara aboard the 68’ Truth, $590 for May and September; $755 for July & August, includes an assigned bunk, 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 leaders: Joan Jones Holtz & Don Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732. Contact leaders for more information (626-443-0706)

Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park, May 7-9; Jul 16-19; Aug 6-9; Sep 10-12.

The Channel Islands are Galapagos USA! Marvel at the sight of whales, seals, sea lions, rare birds & blazing wildflowers. Hike the wild, windswept trails. Kayak the rugged coastline. Snorkel in pristine waters. Discover remants of the Chumash people who lived on these islands for thousands of years. Or just relax at sea. These 3-4 day “live aboard” cruises are sponsored by the Angeles Chapter Political Committee & Sierra Club California Political Committee. Depart from Santa Barbara aboard the 68’ Truth, $590 for May and September; $755 for July & August, includes an assigned bunk, 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 leaders: Joan Jones Holtz & Don Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732. Contact leaders for more information (626-443-0706)

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