The Moment of Truth (in labeling) is Near

As of August 15, Big Food and the biotech industry had committed more than $25 million to the effort to defeat Proposition 37, the November ballot initiative that will require genetically modified food to be labeled. Most of the “No on 37” money is coming from Monsanto, DuPont, other pesticide companies, and Pepsi/Pirito Lay, Nestle, and Coca-Cola. Supporters of the initiative include the American Public Health Association, Consumer Federation of America, California Certified Organic Farmers and the Organic Consumers Association. Thousands of the one million signatures that put Prop. 37 on the ballot came from SLO County.

GMO Myths and Truths Report

Genetically modified crops are promoted on the basis of a range of far-reaching claims from the GM crop industry and its supporters. They say that GM crops:

- Are an extension of natural breeding and do not pose different risks from naturally bred crops
- Are safe to eat and can be more nutritious than naturally bred crops
- Are strictly regulated for safety
- Increase crop yields
- Reduce pesticide use
- Benefit farmers and make their lives easier
- Bring economic benefits
- Benefit the environment
- Can help solve problems caused by climate change
- Reduce energy use
- Will help feed the world.

However, a large and growing body of scientific and other authoritative evidence shows that these claims are not true. Evidence presented in this report indicates that GM crops:

- Are laboratory made, using technology that is totally different from natural breeding methods, and pose different risks from non-GM crops
- Can be toxic, allergic or less nutritious than their natural counterparts
- Are not adequately regulated to ensure safety
- Do not increase yield potential
- Increase pesticide use
- Create serious problems for farmers, including herbicide-tolerant “superweeds,” compromised soil quality, and increased disease susceptibility in crops
- Have mixed economic effects
- Harm soil quality, disrupt ecosystems, and reduce biodiversity
- Do not offer effective solutions to climate change
- Are as energy-hungry as any other chemically-farmed crops
- Cannot solve the problem of world hunger but distract from its real causes – poverty, lack of access to food and, increasingly, lack of access to land to grow it on.

Based on the evidence presented in this report, there is no need to take risks with GMOs when effective, readily available and sustainable solutions to the problems that GM technology is claimed to address already exist. Conventional plant breeding, in some cases helped by safe modern technologies like gene mapping and marker assisted selection, continues to outperform GM in producing high-yield, drought-tolerant, pest- and disease-resistant crops that can meet our present and future food needs.

Lead author Michael Antoniour, PhD, is head of the Gene Expression and Therapy Group, King’s College London School of Medicine, an expert in the use of genetic engineering technology who holds inventor status on gene expression biotechnology patents. Download a PDF of the full GMO Myths and Truths report at http://earthopensource.org/index.php/reports/gmo-myths-and-truths.

Then go to www.carpetrightnow.org to find out what you can do about it.

Food Lobby’s “Highest Priority” is Fighting GMO Labeling in California

By Michele Simon, Nationofchange.org
August 1, 2012

In case you had any doubt that California’s Prop 37—which would require labeling of food containing genetically-modified organisms (GMOs)—is a significant threat to industry, a top food lobby has now made it perfectly clear.

In a recent speech to the American Soybean Association (most soy grown in the U.S. is genetically modified), Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA) President Pamela Bailey said that defeating the initiative “is the single-highest priority for GMA this year.”

You may not know the Grocery Manufacturers Association, but its members represent the nation’s largest food makers—those with the most at stake in the battle over GMO labeling.

Democracy School: What You Need to Know Now

by Jeanne Blackwell

Do we or do we not have a right to clean water? And if we do, do we or do we not have a right to ban hydro-fracking in our county, the process used increasingly by oil and gas companies across the nation—courtesy of a fistful of exemptions from laws protecting our water, air and ecosystems, leaving a trail of polluted aquifers and flaming kitchen taps?

SCHOOL continued on page 7

Don’t Miss:

“Bitter Seeds”

Sept. 13, SLO

- see page 2

Please recycle

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

FOOD LOBBY continued on page 9
Sierra Club General Meeting

Thursday, Sept. 13, 7-9 p.m.
Bitter Seeds

Genetically engineered foods (GMOs) are raising safety and ecological concerns for the future, but the effect they are having on farmers in Third World countries is their most devastating immediate consequence. Farmers in India must buy the seeds for every harvest — no seed-saving allowed — from agribusinesses like Monsanto, who control their use and price, along with the mandatory expensive pesticides and fertilizers that must be used with them. The result has been massive debt and a growing wave of suicides by farmers who have lost everything. Winner, Oxfam Global Justice Award and the 2011 Green Screen competition award at the International Documentary Film Festival in Amsterdam. Come see this gripping new documentary and hear how you can help pass the state ballot initiative to label GMOs. Steynberg Gallery, 1531 Monterey St, SLO. Info.: Joe Morris, 549-0355.

My Piece of America

Californians, share your favorite wild places
By Amanda Wallner, Organizer, Sierra Club California Coast Resilient Habitats Campaign

The Sierra Club has unveiled a new online hub to recognize, share and help protect America’s most treasured outdoor places, including the California Coast, the Sierra Nevada, the San Gabriel Mountains, and the Berryessa Snow Mountain region.

The “My Piece of America” site highlights ongoing work by the Sierra Club to permanently protect public lands in today’s technology-driven age — including campaigns in the four highlighted regions.

“The Sierra Club’s mission to explore, enjoy, and protect the planet is as vital today as any time in the Sierra Club’s 120 year history,” said Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune. “We want to reconnect people with their sense of joy and wonder, and provide a way to channel that renewed passion into enduring land protection so this and future generations can enjoy the great outdoors.”

The “My Piece of America” website is built to not only allow users to upload and view content of their favorite special places, but also to connect with conservation campaigns on the ground in California. Visitors to the site can learn about, take action on and join the Sierra Club’s work to protect the coast, the Sierra Nevada Mountains, the San Gabriel Mountains, and the Berryessa Snow Mountain region.

The Sierra Club is working on the ground to protect these special wild places through community-driven efforts for permanent protection combined with statewide campaigns to end forest clear cutting and counteract the effects of climate change will have on California’s wildlife.

By trip giveaways, beautiful photos, personal stories and action opportunities, the site will provide an engaging invitation to be a part of America’s lands legacy. America’s public lands belong to us all.

For more than a century special places like the Sierra Nevada and the Big Sur coast have been saved so that people from all backgrounds can enjoy all they have to offer. Today, millions of people recreate, retreat, and recharge in America’s parks, national monuments, wilderness areas, and other public lands. But we’re not done yet; our members continue to work so that places like the San Gabriel Mountains and the Berryessa Snow Mountain region can be enjoyed by future generations for years to come.

California’s coast is a string of nature’s gems, attracting more the 12 million visitors each year. Our campaign is working with people throughout the state to safeguard natural systems that will protect wildlife and ensure that Californians have clean water, a thriving tourism economy, and an unparalleled wild legacy to pass on to future generations.

Our public lands have also become an unparalleled outdoor recreation economy, which contributes 408,000 jobs throughout the state to safeguard our natural systems that will protect wildlife and ensure that Californians have clean water, a thriving tourism economy, and an unparalleled wild legacy to pass on to future generations.

For more information, visit the website at www.sierraclub.org/MyPieceofAmerica.
Why Nuclear Power is Not an Energy Solution
by Sarah Hodgdon, Director of Conservation

Americans come from coast to coast are pushing to end the nation’s addiction to polluting, 19th century fuels — coal, oil, natural gas — by embracing renewable, job-generating energy sources such as wind and solar.

With clean energy prosperity in sight, there are well-meaning people who suggest that nuclear power could be part of the solution. The Sierra Club respectfully but vehemently disagrees with them, and a growing group of concerned volunteers has, in fact, begun accelerating the Club’s efforts to address this dangerous industry.

Japan’s Fukushima nuclear disaster only made it clearer that the nuclear industry stands in the way of the clean energy future our children expect, says volunteer Leslie March, who is helping to lead the Club’s “No Nukes” campaign. “We need to heed the lessons learned from this disaster. Our aging reactors are up for re-licensing. Twenty-three have the exact same model design as Fukushima and another 12 are very similar. This is huge,” March says, “where and how we store radioactive waste. Nuclear power is not clean, nor it is green. The climate-disrupting pollution spewed during the nuclear fuel processing cycle decreases any benefits.”

The reality is that nuclear power is prohibitively expensive, it’s propped up by subsidies, it endangers workers, it hurts the land, it’s unsafe, and it’s vulnerable to terrorism. (Check out www.sierraclub.org/nuclear/faq.pdf)

The Sierra Club takes a solutions-oriented approach to addressing environmental threats, including climate disruption, and it’s imperative that we get the solutions right. This push to move beyond nuclear power complements the work the Sierra Club’s 1.4 million members and supporters are doing on virtually every front.

It complements, for example, our work to protect water resources because water pollution is a frequent result of nuclear power and radioactive waste storage.

It complements our Resilient Habitats Campaign because we’re protecting our wildlands and treasured landscapes from uranium mining and drilling.

It complements our environmental justice work because the nuclear industry imposes its impacts disproportionately on poor neighborhoods and communities of color. In short, there are lots of reasons I’m happy to see our volunteers joining this effort, Susan Corbett, who works on the No Nukes team as chair of our South Carolina chapter, notes that money spent on nuclear plants could be put to much better, much more productive use, if spent on true clean energy innovation. “Old nuclear plants,” she says, “are ticking time bombs of deterioration — failure in those cases can mean an economic and environmental disaster for the adjoining communities.”

And of course, there’s the radioactive waste: “The transportation of radioactive waste puts many communities far away from reactors in danger,” says Susan.

With new information leaking daily about the consequences of Fukushima, the time is ripe to spread the truth about this threat to our health and environment. A Sierra Club Activist team with more than 130 members is working on this campaign at the local and national level.

“The fights may be local, but often we have to persuade elected officials and decision-making agencies at the federal level,” says Susan. The U.S. can do better than fossil fuels and nuclear power. Join our Nuclear-Free Campaign today.

On Hold

Nuclear Regulatory Commission halts reactor construction and licensing. Most reactor projects already stymied by bad economics and cheaper alternatives

On August 7, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) put a hold on at least 19 reactor licensing decisions — nine construction & operating licenses and eight research, one operating license, and one early site permit — in response to the landmark Waste Confidence Rule decision handed down two months earlier by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit.

The NRC action was sought in June 18, 2012, petition filed by 24 groups urging the NRC to respond to the court ruling by freezing final licensing decisions until it has completed a rulemaking action on the environmental impacts of highly radioactive nuclear waste in the form of spent, or ‘used’, reactor fuel storage and disposal.

In halting the NRC action, the groups also noted that most of the U.S. reactor projects were already sidelined by the huge problems facing the nuclear industry, including an inability to control runaway costs, and the availability of far less expensive energy alternatives.

Diane Curran, an attorney representing several of the groups in the Court of Appeals case, said “This Commission decision halts all final licensing decisions — but not the licensing proceedings themselves — until NRC completes a thorough study of the environmental impacts of storing and disposing of spent nuclear fuel. That study should have been done years ago, but NRC just kept kicking the can down the road. Today’s Commission decision, we are hopeful that the agency will undertake the serious work.”

San Luis Obispo Mothers for Peace spokesperson Jane Swanson noted that “Mothers for Peace in 1973, as part of its challenge of the original operating license for the Diablo Canyon nuclear plant, argued that the Atomic Energy Commission, predecessor of the NRC, should not allow the handling of radioactive waste without knowing how to isolate those wastes from the environment.”

Hot Ticket at Central Coast Bioneers Conference: Community Choice

Many people believe that Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) is an idea whose time has come for San Luis Obispo County.

The Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club lobbied successfully to get evaluation of the feasibility of a CCA program added to the County’s Climate Action Plan in 2011.

The following year, when the City of SLO’s Climate Action Plan was being drafted, the Chapter, joined by the Energy Group of Transition Towns of San Luis Obispo County, got a provision included in the City’s plan to complement the County’s.

Eric Vezin, team leader of the Energy Group, says the group has undertaken organizing for development of a community choice energy program for San Luis Obispo County.

“We are reaching out to a broad base of interested people, elected officials and city and county staff to pass a resolution to commit to researching what community choice will make possible here.” Eric will report on the Energy Group’s pro-gress as part of the “Earth – Our Local Conversation” Transition Towns workshop on Friday, October 19, at the Central Coast Bioneers Conference.

What is CCA?

Established by law in six states to date, Community Choice Aggregation is a market-based tool that enables cities and counties to pool the energy demands of the residences and businesses in their jurisdictions to purchase or develop power on their behalf. Communities who want to...
How Mr. Havlik Made Us Happy

By Andrew Christie
Chapter Director

On July 1, The Tribune’s front page was occupied by a richly deserved tribute to San Luis Obispo Natural Resources Manager Neil Havlik on the occasion of his retirement.

It is appropriate to applaud his legacy: 6,500 acres of natural open space and hiking and biking trails. It also should be mentioned, per Dan Buettner’s book “Thrive,” that Neil Havlik’s legacy is one of the primary reasons for the high levels of personal well-being and maximized quality of life that led to SLO’s designation as the happiest city in America.

But the article fostered a potential misconception: that the Natural Resources Protection Program created seven years ago as the result of a tussle between economic and environmental interests—a “messy and intense” struggle that gave birth to the co-equal positions of natural resources manager and economic development manager—was a fight that ended in 1995, and today the forces of development and preservation function in automatic equilibrium. (The “two apparently contradictory positions...now work cooperatively, as protecting and promoting the city’s natural resources are an essential part of its economic vision.”)

Those who recall more recent city history, such as the fight circa 2004-2006 to maintain the integrity of natural open space and the concept of passive recreation in the Conservation and Open Space Element might beg to differ with that conclusion.

Likewise the Johnson Avenue area residents who rose up in 2007 to beat back the proposal to develop the upper reaches of the hillsides that dominate the community. As recently as 2011 a proposal was floated to move the Natural Resources Program into the Park and Rec department (a park and natural open space are two very different animals) and demote the position of natural resources manager; terminating that equilibrium of co-equal interests “meant to strike a balance between development and preservation.”

In each instance, people had to stand up and say “No!” In 1993, it was SLO residents saying “no” to the idea of city policy dominated solely by an economic development manager that started the messy two-year fight that created the Natural Resources Program and made it co-equal with Economic Development, creating the space in which it was possible for Neil Havlik to make the visionary deals that preserved 6,500 acres of open space and wildlife habitat.

That fight was based on the awareness that environmental protection is a long-term concern that rarely corresponds with the short-term needs of cash flow, quarterly profit goals, or keeping share prices high and investors happy. Nor are “protecting and promoting” necessarily the same thing, a fact well known to those city residents witnessing Bishop Peak being loved to death thanks to the nationwide promotional efforts of the City and the Chamber of Commerce, generating a level of use for open space far out of line with the surrounding neighborhoods which the open space was meant to serve and negating the purpose of preserved open space: the chance to make a quiet connection with nature. (In a 2008 Tourism Analysis, the County identified the “Tourism Backlash” of traffic and crowding.)

San Luis Obispo’s economic special interests did not completely change their outlook on life in 1995. As the current update of the city’s Land Use and Circulation Element goes forward, it would be good to remember that the same competing interests are still at work. Keeping that balance depends on the continued willingness of neighborhoods and the environmental community to contend with the interests of private profit. It was the Johnson Avenue uprising of 2007, not “working cooperatively,” that saved the hillsides and made it possible, five years later, for the City to purchase the land at a bargain price.

And in 1995, things could have gone this way: no messy fight with business interests = no Natural Resources Program = no 6,500 acres of preserved open space = SLO not the happiest city in America.

It was ever thus. Thrive (Chapter 5) makes it clear: eternal environmental vigilance is the price of happiness.

Nukes (continued from page 3)

Now, 39 years later, the NRC has been forced by the federal court to acknowledge this necessity.

Future actions by the agency will determine whether public confidence is enhanced or further weakened. Lou Zeller, executive director of Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League, another petitioner to the Court, said: “It appears that the Commissioners have, at least initially, grasped the magnitude of the Court’s ruling and we are optimistic that it will set up a fundamentally transparent, fair process under the National Environmental Policy Act to examine the serious environmental impacts of spent nuclear fuel storage and disposal prior to licensing or relicensing nuclear reactors.”

Former NRC Commissioner Peter Bradford said “It is important to recognize that the reactors awaiting construction licenses weren’t going to be built anytime soon even without the Court decision or today’s NRC action. Falling demand, cheaper alternatives and runaway nuclear costs had doomed their near term prospects well before the recent Court decision. Important though the Court decision is in modifying the NRC’s historic push-the-power-plants-but-postpone-the-problems approach to generic safety and environmental issues, it cannot be blamed for the ongoing descent into fiasco of the bubble once known as ‘the nuclear renaissance.’”

slo seed exchange

The sixth annual SLO Seed Exchange is happening Friday, October 5, 6-9 p.m., at the SLO Library Community Room

Open to the public - FREE educational event

Speaker: John DeRosier, CSA biodynamic grain farmer and teacher

Greg Ellis, One Cool Earth & Garden Matchmaking will assist in developing the evening program.

Information: 805-543-5364
www.facebook.com/SLOSeedExchange

co-sponsored by the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club.

The SLO Seed Exchange has been asked for the second year to donate seed for the STRIDE/HealSLO/CAFES summit in mid-October. Seed savers among us are contributing their organic style homegrown lettuce, parsley, dill, arugula, cilantro, radish, carrot, and calendula seed—3,000 to 5,000 seeds of each variety—for a Salad Bowl seed packet to be given to each of the 250-300 summit attendees.
Taking Issue

problematic environmental coverage & commentary in our local media


Summary: Corporations seeking maximum profit from the explosive growth in popularity of organic foods are intent on trying to dilute the definition of “organic.” And this somehow proves that Big Government is bad, the federal organic standard should be abolished, and it should be left up to individual producers to define “organic” however they wish.

“Former U.S. Senator John E. Sununu’s dual career as a contributing op-ed writer for The Boston Globe and an advisor to a lobbying firm is raising ethical questions. A review of Sununu’s columns reveals that they have not contained disclosures about his ties to lobbying giant Akin Gump, where he serves as a “senior policy advisor.” Indeed, Sununu has written about issues related to Akin Gump’s lobbying without disclosing his role in the firm…. Political ethics watchdogs found the Globe’s lack of disclosure troubling. Sununu should have a tag line running at the bottom of all his columns, disclosing his affiliation with Akin Gump; Mary Boyle, a vice president of Common Cause, said many wonder exactly why Akin Gump or one of its cases, his affiliation in the industry is relevant.” – “John Sununu: Lobby Shop Employee and Boston Globe Columnist,” by Joe Strupp & Oliver Willis, Media Matters for America blog, Jan. 17, 2012.

History tells us that, far from restraining the power of big companies, an overbearing regulatory bureaucracy benefits them just about every time. Last month, the White House released e-mails detailing the deal it cut with PHRMA — the drug industry’s lobbying arm — to win support for Obamacare. And the size and market share of America’s biggest banks have only grown since the passage of Dodd-Frank banking regulations.

..."Would enabling insurance companies ‘to work around the rules in their favor?’ is a key issue. That’s precisely the reason why a federal organic standard is crucial. It would strengthen the organic standard and make it harder for big money players to game the system.

And it’s still a lot better than the alternative: “In a recent study for the Soil Association, Shane Heaton found that more than 500 food additives are permitted in non-organic processed foods, and that organic food products specifically exclude the use of hydrogenated fats (also known as trans-fats), phosphoric acid, aspartame, monosodium glutamate (MSG) and sulphur dioxide. [Food additives] are permitted in non-organic processed foods, and that organic food products are free of a federal standard, so can Monsanto, Archer Daniels Midland (both on Akin Gump’s client list), and every other agribusiness giant engaged in the cashless quest for less regulation and more profit — precisely the reason why a federal organic standard is needed to be established.

In the Senate, Sununu twice tried to secure federal regulation of the insurance industry, saying of his National Insurance Act that it emphasized “the importance of a clear, consistent regulatory framework. The fragmented system currently in effect has no place in a modern economy.” The federal charter made possible by his bill, said Senator Sununu, would enable insurance companies “to work under a uniform set of regulations and an effective federal regulator.”

Such are the fickle winds of shifting political fashion and the strange ways they can blow in the interval between one’s planning? And the truth — the truth is, these are the strange ways they can blow in the interval between one’s planning?

And of course, the truth is, the truth is, the truth is... The organic farmers of Vermont — or New Hampshire or anywhere else — can decide for themselves what constitutes “organic.”

The organic standard is being weakened by some corporations and their lobbyists. And the problem is the laws themselves, not the parties trying to bend the rules in their favor? Is there perhaps a clearer picture available of what’s really going on?

The federal Organic Standards Board has 15 members appointed by the USDA and is required by law to meet quarterly to conduct business. The board was established by the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990. The legislation would protect the organic farming industry and its expanding consumer base by granting the USDA’s National Organic Program (NOP) the legislative authority it needs to more effectively protect the integrity of organic products.

The Organic Trade Association supports the passage of the Organic Standards Protection Act, which, if enacted, will give the U.S. Department of Agriculture and National Organic Program additional tools to safeguard the integrity of the USDA organic seal comply with the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990. The legislation would protect the organic farming industry and its expanding consumer base by granting the USDA’s National Organic Program the legislative authority it needs to more effectively protect the integrity of organic products.

Upshot: As a lobbyist, former Senator Sununu has learned a new vocabulary with which to befuddle big business. The sight of crocodile tears shed for the federal organic standard, flowing from this source, is akin to the calls from Sununu’s former colleagues to reform health care by abolishing health care reform. He is deploying a political strategy that “Taking Issue” fans have seen before, when Sacramento Bee columnist Dan Walters called for the “reform” of the California Environmental Quality Act (“Dark side to liberal government,” Tribune, Sept. 7, 2011), as dissected in our October 2011 issue. In the Walters/ Sununu form of anti-regulatory magical thinking, weaknesses in a regulatory regime always demonstrate the need to dispense with those regulations, not strengthen them or make it harder for big money players to game the system.

Whether tyranny flows from the monarch or the bureaucracy, big government never serves the little guy well — a lesson that Organic farmers of America have learned the hard way.

And it should never be used as an argument for abandoning the idea of regulation.

“, “[National Organic Standards Board member] John Foster...was a grower, researcher and organic inspector. Foster said unannounced inspections are one method to improve the organic system. The Organic Trade Association is also on record as being in favor of the recommendations. The standard board recommended mandatory unannounced inspections for at least 5% of certified operations each year. ‘...The vote of the NOSB demonstrates a strong willingness by inspectors of organic farmers' – ‘If organic farmers of America are in compliance every day,’ Foster said. ‘In my many years as an organic inspector, I came to see that this kind of procedure has improved not just compliance with the standards, but also provided real business value regardless of scale.’”

As a lobbyist, former Senator Sununu has learned a new vocabulary with which to befuddle big business. The sight of crocodile tears shed for the federal organic standard, flowing from this source, is akin to the calls from Sununu’s former colleagues to reform health care by abolishing health care reform. He is deploying a political strategy that “Taking Issue” fans have seen before, when Sacramento Bee columnist Dan Walters called for the “reform” of the California Environmental Quality Act (“Dark side to liberal government,” Tribune, Sept. 7, 2011), as dissected in our October 2011 issue. In the Walters/ Sununu form of anti-regulatory magical thinking, weaknesses in a regulatory regime always demonstrate the need to dispense with those regulations, not strengthen them or make it harder for big money players to game the system.

Whether tyranny...
About that Economic Development Strategic Plan...
What exactly is the problem?

August 6, 2012
TO: SLO City Council
FROM: Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club

Following are our comments on the Draft Economic Development Strategic Plan (EDSP).

The Plan seems to take its title as an article of faith that reducing developer impact fees will create hundreds of jobs, with no support for that claim. The Council should request a range of studies on this subject — if such exist — before accepting this premise.

We would apply the same criticism to the alleged need for “permit streamlining,” which also needs examination along the lines of perception vs. reality. On its first page, the staff report states that said streamlining would “optimize the City’s development review process,” and that “based on community input, this would also include a review of City environmental review procedures.” On Page 43 of the EDSP we learn that “community input” and “the public engagement process” consisted primarily of interviews with 31 individuals, in search of “an insider perspective,” primarily from the business community.

This input presents a notable contrast with the finding that appears at the bottom of page 37 of Appendix A, that in comparison to other regional governments, “the City appears to process permits efficiently with some of the shortest processing times.”

The use in the staff report of the politically loaded term “job creators,” which was devised by one of the parties seeking advantage in the current presidential election, does not seem appropriate in a staff report. We would hope to see it replaced going forward by the word “companies.”

The idea promoted by the Plan that the City should abandon its nearly decade-long policy of requiring developers to pay their fair share of the costs of development and infrastructure and the City be required to subsidize those costs should be considered in light of how successful the current policy has been.

In its comparison of development fees charged by the City to those charged by the County, Paso Robles, Santa Barbara and Davis in Appendix A, the background report mentions on page 35 that “only the city of San Luis Obispo and the County of San Luis Obispo impose fees related to affordable housing on commercial development,” without elaboration. This statistic is evidently considered to be so important it is re-stated, in a boldface call-out, on page 37.

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**Trade Treaties and Democracy: It’s Time to Be Afraid**

In my judgment, GATT [The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade] is an end run around the environmental gains of the last century. And if there were any investigative reporting worth a cent, they would be telling you that in the papers. They don’t tell you that...

-David Brower, first Sierra Club Executive Director

*University of Colorado at Boulder, 1993*

The Trans-Pacific Partnership trade treaty negotiations have been widely and correctly criticized for lack of transparency (see “Our World Global Governance for Real,” June, and www.sierrachub.org/trade).

Corporate insiders have not only been privy to the negotiating texts but have helped to write them. In aiming to create a “NAPTA on steroids” involving many Pacific Rim nations, it is Congress and the American people who have been left in the dark about details, though some are now beginning to leak out.

If that isn’t scary enough, consider two other facts: first, that multinational corporations believe that allocated amounts of money on “free speech” including that which may support (or tarnish) specific candidates in elections, and second, that treaty law takes precedence over national law. The combination amounts to a corporate curtailment of national democracy.

In negotiations for previous “Free Trade” treaties such as NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement), we thought of our government as bargaining for the collective best interests of our nation, and the rhetoric was that jobs which might be lost would be offset by an increase in trade and overseas markets. We might have disagreed but there was at least the pretense that the government’s aim was the greater good, a good result for the U.S. and a win-win overall. I think politicians actually believed this, and perhaps some still do, but it’s much harder to believe now, and I think this is the reason for trying to bypass Congress and the American people with the TPP.

Multinationals have realized that by putting together their own enormous rule book on how the international economy works, one which will be the product of years of negotiations and many governments, they can present a treaty which is extremely resistant to major overhaul and which they can push into effect. In the U.S., the Supreme Court’s Citizens United decision has given them a license to use all their financial muscle in the political arena. Thus the present equation is not of nation bargaining with nation, but multinational interests out-muscling national democracies. This is a march toward global economic integration while leaving democracy behind. We need to hold very tightly to democracy, as if it were a child in danger of being swept away by a powerful river.

To fight that current, I think we’re going to need all the democratic power we can muster.

I’m not authorized to speak for Sierra Club on this matter. The opinion expressed here is that of South County Chapter. It should work not only for increased transparency but also for a full stop to these negotiations. There is a lot more at stake here than just imports and exports.

**School**

*continued from page 1*

Asserting our right to clean water by placing a statutory ban on fracking in price canyon is not a “NIMBY” issue; if we lose our water and our local ecosystem without so much as a drop of our water and our local company can legally poison every option: without this ordinance, a offense, which means violators go to prison.

The statement that 72% of the land is designated “Open Space” and 33% protected by a conservation easement are also misleading and deceptive.

Most of us already know that the 33% proposed for conservation easement is land whose dope makes it unbuildable; under these circumstances, the easement is meaningless. A conservation easement should be viewed as a way to prevent development or to alter the project so that the impacts become less.

It is only appropriate that we recognize that Pismo Beach’s desire for massive development in Price Canyon is not solely a Pismo Beach concern. There are ramifications from this action throughout the area and at least the entire South County. Any development proposal should be treated as such.

The message is that more work on the EIR is needed before it becomes a meaningful document for decision-making. An EIR is not merely a bureaucratic requirement; it is meant to be a revealing and meaningful document where creative energies are harnessed to address impacts from a project or to alter the project so that the impacts become less.

**School**

*continued from page 6*

On building codes

We are oriented so that installation of solar panels will be facilitated. Why not just require the installation of rain gardens in the neighborhood? Would the City of Pismo Beach be willing to waive the exorbitant fees which currently discourage the use of active solar installations? Is the developer resistant to doing so because it’s not a priority in their bottom dollar strategy? Are there areas of the code that current as proposed? I find the EIR grossly lacking in specifics on this issue. This is not a “NIMBY” issue; if we lose our water and our local ecosystem without so much as a drop of our water and our local company can legally poison every option: without this ordinance, a offense, which means violators go to prison.

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Underpinning the importance of gaining public trust.

Assertions about the impacts being less.

Should work not only for increased transparency but also for a full stop to these negotiations. There is a lot more at stake here than just imports and exports.

**School**

*continued from page 8*

Not how much degradation of air quality should we expect? Will the future air on the Central Coast be comparable to the air quality of Los Angeles or the Bay Area (which is a significant reason why many of us left those areas)? Just how much of the emissions of various types should be expected? And will it accumulate in the narrow Price Canyon? Will this be a good location for Senior Housing (as proposed)? I find the EIR grossly lacking in specifics on this issue. This is not a “NIMBY” issue; if we lose our air quality, then we have nothing of our quality of life to share.

On building codes

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**School**

*continued from page 1*

Asserting our right to clean water by placing a statutory ban on fracking in place will, by stipulation, confer the right to impose the penalties for violations. We can make a violation of our Right to Clean Water ordinance by a hydro-fracking company a capital offense, which means violators go to jail.

Outrageous, you say? Consider the option: without this ordinance, a company can legally poison every drop of water in our community and in our local ecosystem without so much as a mother-may-I. How do we do it? Thought you’d never ask.

Democracy School teaches citizens and activists how to reframe exhaust- ing and often discouraging single issue work (such as opposing toxic dumps, factory farms, and fracking) in a way that makes it possible to confront corporate control on a powerful single front: people’s constitutional rights.

Global Exchange and the Commu- nity Environmental Legal Defense Fund are coming to SLO on October 12 and 13 to hold a Democracy School session. Go here: www.celdf.org/democracy-school or read “Rights vs. Wrongs” in the June Santa Lucian to get a preview.

You can sign up yourself or find someone you know who can use this tool and put it to good use. We need people from every community. It will cost $120. This covers the cost of materials, speaking fee and out-of-pocket expenses for the instructors. Also, this assures us that if there is a legal challenge to the resulting ordinance, we have legal backup from CEDLF’s legal team, also at no cost to you or your organization. This is an extraordinary deal. And you can bet your bottom dollar there will be classes every hour to keep them fresh. They are all potential sponsors and donors. We will have little placards made up that these businesses can stick in their windows as we’ve done at the Riggs to Clean Water is Everybody’s Business.

CELDIF and Global Exchange are looking for a show of commitment from this community before they invest their time and energy in this. I’ve told them that we can do whatever it takes to get this done and in record time. Now is the time to show them what we are made of.

Maximum permitted attendance for a Democracy School session is thirty people. So far fifteen have signed up. Just email me if you want to get on the sign-up list or find out if there are any remaining spaces: leannewater@gmail.com.

**Santa Lucian**

• September 2012

[Image 238x51 to 738x233]
CCA continue from page 3

increase the amount of non-polluting, renewable energy they are using at CCA as a mechanism for doing so. In 2002, with the help of PG&E and AB 117, the ability of communities to implement Community Choice Aggregation programs was signed into law in California. Thanks to lobbying efforts by PG&E, Southern California Edison and other utility giants to block implementation of the law, the state’s first CCA did not launch until May 2010, when Marin Clean Energy went online, committed to reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and increased use of renewables.

The Marin Energy Authority is a non-profit public agency which includes the County partners and all of its cities and towns, who together oversee the county’s clean energy program. Its board is made up of representatives of the Cities of Belvedere, Larkspur, Mill Valley, Novato, San Rafael and Sausalito, the Towns of Corte Madera, Fairfax, Ross, San Anselmo and Tiburon, and the County of Marin.

How does it work?
Unlike a municipal utility, a CCA does not own the transmission and distribution systems. Instead, the CCA is responsible for providing energy to its citizens and choosing the source and price of that energy. For example, Marin Clean Energy partners with PG&E to deliver electricity and maintain the power lines. PG&E reads the electricity meters, issues monthly bills, and provides maintenance and repair services as they always have. Marin Clean Energy offers two programs to its customers. “Light Green” electricity is 50% renewable or more and has had otherwise been available to PG&E customers. “Deep Green” electricity is 100% renewable energy and costs one penny more per kilowatt-hour.

Inclusion in the CCA is not required, and household and business customers can opt out and have the utility company continue providing their power. As of July 16, 2012, Pacific Sun reports that 80% of Marin County had switched from PG&E to Marin Energy.

Even more exciting is the potential for CCAs to develop their own generation projects that not only increase local employment but increase the resiliency of the community to outside power disruptions and economic turmoil. Marin Clean Energy has signed contracts for more than 45 megawatts of new solar to be built in California in 2012, including a solar project at the San Rafael Airport. The airport project is being built by Synapse Electricity, a Maui-based company, and will create 25 jobs during the construction phase. The project will provide enough energy to power 200 homes per year. Marin Clean Energy has contracted for new biogas projects in Yuba and Solano Counties.

Barbara Counties and 23 cities within those counties. era California has formed the San Diego Energy District Foundation to establish a CCA. We’re Really Getting Clean Energy?

Critics of a separate view of CCA is that it is impossible to tell, when you plug your coffee maker into the socket in your home, where exactly that electricity is coming from. The energy grid is not an isolated “container” and electricity can come from everywhere – solar plants, nuclear reactors and dirty coal plants. How can you be sure that the energy you are buying is actually what is being delivered to you?

The Pacific Sun provides an excellent analogy by the late Marin County Supervisor Charles McGlashan, who was a key player in the creation of Marin Clean Energy. He said “the electrical grid is like a pond. . . .[and] electricity is like water in the pond. Putting dirty water (fossil-fuel generated electricity) into the pond dirties the entire pond; putting clean water into the pond cleans its entire contents, displacing dirty water with clean – or dirty water with clean.”

The most important thing is what goes into the pond. McGlashan would say. If producing a cleaner energy grid is the goal, supporting companies that produce clean electricity and supply it to the grid is the means to that end.

We’re Really Getting Clean Energy? The Pacific Sun’s McGlashan points out that the development of local generation projects would provide jobs and create income to offset municipal expenditures. Even more importantly, feasibility studies indicate that, over time, CCAs should reduce electricity rates compared with the rates from investor-owned utilities (such as PG&E) because of the higher costs of private financing. In a pilot project funded by the California Energy Commission, Marin Clean Energy reported that it was about 5.5% compared to 12.9% for investor-owned utilities.

The California Energy Commission is excited about the potential for Community Choice Aggregators to increase the amount of renewable energy that is produced and consumed in the state.

The LCC recommends creating a rate stabilization fund which will allow the CCA to hold prices steady, even if fuel prices rise. Veibum believes that a serious investigation must be performed and analysis made of the risks and benefits to the community. “I think we will find,” he says, “that clean renewable energy choice will provide opportunities for significant local renewable energy, local economic development and a vehicle for innovation.”

CCA in SLO County? As we all know, PG&E is the electric elephant in the County’s living room. However, there are new energy decisions by our local elected officials. LEAN Energy U.S. reports that PG&E spent $44 million on Proposition 16, a ballot initiative in California to block CCAs from being formed. CCAs are currently active in six states. Illinois this year grew from 20 aggregated communities to over 250, according to Shawn Marshall, Executive Director of LEAN Energy, and Utah, New York, Connecticut and Colorado are contemplating CCA legislation.

Marshall says that LEAN Energy will provide advisory service to community leaders, local governments and consumers working toward establishment of CCAs in their communities. “We will provide workshops and resources such as sample formation documents and network of CCA experts and practitioners.”

Does the political will exist in San Luis Obispo County to achieve the goal of community choice? “I think we can generate it,” says Eric. “There may be politics in the state legislature, however PG&E is an important partner in our energy system. A collapse of the electricity grid would be much more beneficial than an antagonistic one.”

Losing Sleep and Waking Up Worried?

For confidential professional help, call Jill Denton, LMFT Experienced Teens & Anxiety Therapist 805-534-1101 www.accesstolife.com giving our community since 1979

Paso Basin Overdraft Vote Sept. 25.

A crucial vote on the declining Paso Robles Groundwater Basin is scheduled for September 25 at the Board of Supervisors. The vote will consider amendments to the General Plan that designate the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin at a Level of Severity III (L03 III). The amendments will prohibit further subdivision of lands in the Paso Basin until the basin is no longer in overdraft. The amendments will apply only to lands within the county.
The letter below from the Santa Lucia Chapter’s Executive Committee appeared in the Tribune on Saturday, July 14. It detailed arguments made by a biotech industry rep against the labeling of genetically engineered food and provided a website for those interested in helping out with Proposition 37, the campaign to pass the ballot initiative for labeling GMOs.

The Tribune printed a total of twelve letters over the period July 14-16. On the 16th, eleven of them were reproduced on the Tribune’s website.

The twelfth, the sole omission, is the one reproduced below.

It would be difficult for the Tribune to claim an oversight in the transfer of the letters from their July 14 edition to their website, as there were only two letters printed that day — the second, ours, immediately following the first. Both appeared on the same page.

But they didn’t try to make that claim. When we called the Tribune to inquire as to how this omission came about, both their Web Editor and the Opinion Page Editor declined to return our calls.

In the absence of an explanation from the editors, one is left to speculate as to what might have transpired during the lag time between the appearance of our letter in print on Saturday and the reproduction in cyberspace of all letters from that weekend, except ours, on Monday. Somewhere in that 48 hours, perhaps someone had a chat with someone else. Perhaps a decision was made not to give further exposure to a letter refuting the dubious arguments of the ag biotech industry and spreading the word on the Right to Know initiative to label GMOs.

The month before peculiar doings transpired on the Tribune’s website, the campaign for the California Right to Know Genetically Engineered Food Act estimated that Big Food would spend between 50 and 100 million dollars statewide on the effort to defeat Proposition 37.

An no innocent explanation has been forthcoming for the omission that occurred on the Tribune’s website over the weekend of July 14, the reader is left to surmise that, as far as one Central Coast media outlet is concerned, some of that cash need not even be spent.

Food lobby
continued from page 1

labeling. For example, soft drink and snack giant PepsiCo, cereal makers Kellogg and General Mills, and of course, biotech behemoth Monsanto.

According to state filing reports, so far GMA has spent $375,000 on its efforts to oppose the labeling measure, with its members adding additional out-of-state lobbying power in the tens of thousands of dollars.

Never mind polling demonstrating that a whopping 90 percent of Californians think they deserve the right to know what they are eating. GMA also isn’t bother to mention the more than 40 other nations (including the European Union, Brazil and China) that already require food makers to disclose GMOs.

Lobbying to undermine health

This is hardly the first time the nation’s most powerful trade association of food manufacturers has marshaled its resources to oppose common-sense food and nutrition policy—on the national and state levels.

As I documented in my book, Appetite for Profit, for years GMA flexed its lobbying muscle in state legislatures all over the country fighting bills that were simply trying to remove junk food and soda from school vending machines.

But food makers love labels, don’t they?

It seems rather ironic that the same food makers taking advantage of every inch of food packaging space to convince shoppers to purchase its products would object so strongly to labeling for something they claim is not harmful.

Indeed, in recent years, the federal government, recognizing that food companies’ so-called “front of package” labeling is out of control, commissioned not one but two Institute of Medicine reports to make recommendations to fix the problem and un-confuse consumers.

Unwilling to tolerate government intervention designed to help Americans, the Grocery Manufacturers Association has been aggressively promoting its own new nutrition labeling scheme it calls “Facts Up Front.” But as Food Politics author Marion Nestle has explained, this is an obvious end-run around the feds.

Here is how that’s described in its own voluntary program: Facts Up Front is a nutrient-based labeling system that summarizes important information from the Nutrition Facts Panel in a simple and easy-to-use format on the front of food and beverage packages.

Translation: We are intercepting information already required on the back of the package, now placing it in a format we like better on the front.

See how that works? The food industry is always in charge. That’s why the nation’s largest packaged food lobby and its members are shaking in their boots over 90 percent of Californians wanting to see GMO labeling on food.

And no wonder, because as GMA President Pat DiVentra has told their audience: “If California wins, you need to worry about the next state.”

Very worried.

The GMA has earned an anti-consumer reputation in Washington and state legislatures for opposing just about every food safety, fair trade, animal welfare, and consumer right-to-know legislation put forward by public interest groups.

The possible Clean Water Act estimated that Big Food would spend between 50 and 100 million dollars statewide on the effort to defeat Proposition 37.

To your state.”

In Case You Missed It....

In Case You Missed It....

Our letter to the editor setting the record straight on the labeling of genetically modified food appeared in the July 14 print edition of The Tribune (right) but never showed up in the oddly jumbled letters section of the web edition (above).

Now you see it...
A Proposal to Deny Communities the Ability to Protect Public Health and the Environment

It is becoming a late-summer Sacramento perennial: as the end of the legislative session nears, certain legislators push to weaken the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the state law that helps make sure more pollution isn’t added with every sizeable construction project. As we went to press, multiple large-scale attacks were being mounted and draft bill language for a “California Priority Project Plan Implementation Act” was circulating among legislators, with the clear intent of weakening CEQA’s environmental review.

In response, environmentalists and labor leaders joined forces and signed on to “California Priority Project Plan Implementation Act” was circulating among multiple large-scale attacks were being mounted and draft bill language for a

A draft CEQA exemption circulated in the Capitol Building would exempt projects that are consistent with the density, use type and intensity shown in a general plan, specific plan, community area plan, sustainable communities plan or other land use plan for which an EIR has been prepared.

1. Proposal Exempts Large-High-Polluting Projects from Environmental Review.
   - The exemption would rely on outdated land use plans as old as 20 or 30 years. An EIR on these plans prepared so long ago could not possibly have considered current circumstances or required mitigation measures for impacts on them. These outdated plans will not have considered environmental impacts such as global warming or toxic chemical contamination whose toxicity was recognized

2. Exemption Cuts SB 375, Landmark, Bipartisan Greenhouse Gas Law and other CEQA Infill Reforms.
   - The exemption would treat residential sprawl the same as transit-oriented development, undermining the policies of The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act and related legislation.
   - Residential sprawl that destroyed prime farmland, increased traffic and vehicle miles travelled, increased energy consumption, increased air pollution, and increased greenhouse gas emissions would get as much CEQA relief as transit oriented development. Although the exemption has introductory findings about the benefits of SB 375 and its planning process, it would allow projects to be exempt even if the sustainable communities strategy did not comply with GHG targets set by the Air Resources Board.

   - The exemption shifts attention from CEQA to outdated planning and zoning decisions, thereby creating new avenues of litigation against those decisions. Although the exemption provides no limitations on standing, timelines for lawsuits to be disposed, mandatory mediation, or other streamlining currently available under the CEQA process.

4. Proposal Turns Back Clock to Promote Urban Sprawl over “Smart Growth.”
   - The exemption treats 1970’s-era urban sprawl the same as infill development, eliminating 30 years of progressive CA land use policies that promote higher density, affordable urban development over sprawl that destroys parklands and prime agricultural lands.

5. Proposal Exempts Projects based on Outdated Plans and Information.
   - The exemption would rely on outdated land use plans as old as 20 or 30 years. An EIR on these plans prepared so long ago could not possibly have considered current circumstances or required mitigation measures for impacts on them. These outdated plans will not have considered environmental impacts such as global warming or toxic chemical contamination whose toxicity was recently understood.

6. Exemption Would Apply Even Where Plans Conflicted with One Another.
   - This exemption would apply to a land use if it is authorized by one plan even if it conflicted with another plan such as the sustainable communities strategy under SB 375. The exemption would allow uses to proceed without environmental review even if there were fundamental conflicts in planning documents.

housing shall be made a mandatory requirement as a percentage of all future development, with no option for in lieu fees, we would consider that a worthwhile exchange. We urge the Council to give staff direction to that effect.

We commend to the Council’s attention the caveat concluding the comparison in this section: “The level of services and quality of life desired by the City also should be factored in — not only because they are highly valued by the community, but also because they help to fuel job growth.”

We would extend this caveat to cover the Plan’s function as an argument for the reduction of impact fees and forcing the city and taxpayers to make up the difference, the “streamlining” of the environmental review process, the lowering of standards for construction of infrastructure, and the incentivizing of development. The national landscape is littered with hollowed-out municipalities that sought to compete with each by incentivizing development with “streamlined” checklists permitting, tax holidays, slashed development fees, and an increase in the burden of the cost of development infrastructure placed on their general funds and their residents. We do not recommend that San Luis Obispo set off down that road.

Instead of taking to heart the draft Plan’s evident proposition that the City needs to become more like Santa Barbara, Paso Robles, or Davis, we suggest that consideration be given to the possibility that the City’s current impact fees and environmental review process may have more than a little to do with its aforementioned level of service standards and the consequence of a quality of life currently ranked the highest in the nation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,
Classifieds

Next issue deadline is September 14.
To get a rate sheet or submit your ad and payment, contact:
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Pismo to San Simeon

CYNTHIA HAWLEY
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CIVIL LITIGATION

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Hold Your Water
“Slow it, sink it, spread it” is the mantra of enlightened water managers who know that water works best when it stays on the land where it falls.
Now that mantra can be yours, too, along with healthier soils, happier wildlife, and reductions in your water bill, thanks to the tips and techniques in Rainwater Management for Low Impact Development, a publication of the Appropriate Technology Coalition -- SLO Green Build, the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club and the Surfrider Foundation, available for $10 postage paid, while supplies last. Mail your check to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 15755, SLO 93406.

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Outings and Activities Calendar

All our hikes and activities are open to all Club members and the general public. Please bring drinking water to all outings and optionally a lunch. Sturdy footwear is recommended. All phone numbers listed are within area code 805 unless otherwise noted. Pets are generally not allowed. A parent or responsible adult must accompany children under the age of 18. 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, 549-0355. For information on a specific outing, please call the listed outing leader.

Sat., Sept. 8, 9 a.m. Over the Top Hike, Cerro San Luis. Moderately-paced, 5-mile hike over Cerro San Luis via Rock Garden Trail, about 2.5-3 hrs. duration, led by geologist. Some steep hills and a rocky section. Bring boots and water. Meet at parking lot/restroom area at Laguna Lake. Info.: Mike Sims, 459-1701 or mxisiml@siendo.org. Rain cancels.

Sat., Sat., Sept. 8, 9 a.m. Four Trail Hike in Montana de Oro. Moderately strenuous, 10-mile loop hike, 2700 ft. gain, into many different areas of the park. From Valencia and Oats Peaks, get excellent views of coastline and backcountry, then descend along Coon Creek and walk ocean bluffs. Bring adequate water, snacks, hat, sturdy shoes, and dress in layers for variable weather. Ticks and poison oak possible. Plants, animals, and area geology will be discussed. Meet at Valencia Peak trailhead, 100 yards past visitor center. Info.: Bill Waycott, 459-2103 or bill.waycott@gmail.com.

Sat., Sat., Sept. 8, 9:30 a.m. Pt. Sal Road Hike. Your choice of a 5 or 10-mile hike, both moderately strenuous. 5-mile hike, both moderately strenuous. Both 5-6 hrs., hike continues down to beach. Bring plenty of water, snacks, sunscreen, hat, and sweater in case of cool weather. Meet at main gate to Pt. Sal Park—end of Brown Rd, 3.9 miles from Rt. 1. Info.: Andrea Ortiz, 934-2792.

Sat., Sat., Sept. 8, 10:30 a.m. The Big Bright Star Service Trip. Assist BLM specialist Marty Dickies in Wilderness Area north of Ridgecrest, putting up barriers, concealing illegal routes, placing signs. Sunday, long hike through wilderness area to Cortez Creek and monitor a cherry-stem vehicle corridor. Early fall Ponderosa forest and chaparral! Contact leader: Craig Deutsche, 310-477-6670 or craig.deutsche@gmail.com, CNRCC Desert Committee.

Sun., Sun., Sept. 9, 9:30 a.m., Oso Flaco Beach Family Hike. Easy 2-mile hike along boardwalk to beach, learning about local plants and animals and playing on the beach. Bring a picnic “brunch.” to eat at the beach. Meet at Oso Flaco Beach parking lot (34 parking fee). From Hwy 1, go west on Oso Flaco Rd. to the end. Info.: Andrea Ortiz, 934-2792.

Fri-Sun, Sept. 21-23. National Public Lands Day in Black Rock. Service work in Black Rock Desert High Rock Canyon Immigrant Trails NCA. All meals but lunch provided. Close to the date, for details, contact Graham Stafford, 775-686-8478 or graham@grahamstafford.com, Great Basin Group-Tupaje Chapter.

Sat., Sat., Sept. 22, 10 a.m. Guided Walk of Mission-Era San Luis Obispo. Do you know where SLO’s first physician lived, locations of the “hanging tree” and stagecoach stop? Find out and more on an easy stroll past the Mission, several adobes, and old Chinatown. Hear stories of the early days of SLO, the Chumash, and Gold Rush pioneers. Families welcome. Meet at NW corner of Monterey and Osos Sts. Leader: Joe Morris, 549-0355.

Mon., Mon., Sept. 24, 9 a.m. Islay Road, Barranca and Ridge Trail Hike. Moderate 9-mile, 1800 ft. gain, hike in Montana de Oro State Park. From Islay Rd., we will ascend Barranca Trail to great views of back country, then onto Ridge Trail to Hazard Peak. with great coastline views. Bring lunch, water, and dress for weather. Ticks and poison oak possible. Meet at parking lot across from ridge Trail trailhead, about 3 miles from park entrance. If you get to the visitor center, you have gone too far. Possibility of eats after hike. Leader: Chuck, 441-7597.

Fri-Sun, Sept. 29-30. National Public Lands Day in the Carrizo Plain. Visit this scenic and lesser-known national monument with optional hike to Caliente Mountains on Friday. On Saturday, we will fence a backcountry road to protect resources. Sunday, tour historic, prehistoric, and geologic sites. Contact leader: Craig Deutsche, 310-477-6670 or craig.deutsche@gmail.com, CNRCC Desert Committee.

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

Pall at Clirp Tappana Lodge


September 28 - 30: Fly Fishing.

October 5 - 7: Opera in the Mountains.

October 12-14: Yoga and Wine Tasting.

Located in Tahoe National Forest in the Sierra Nevada, Spaces limited. Call (800) 679-6775. Cost for weekend activities include 6 meals, 2 nights lodging and all of the activities, unless otherwise stated.

The Sierra Club Needs You!

Become an Outings Leader

• Lead hikes and camping trips
• Introduce others to nature
• Explore the outdoors
• Make new friends
• Protect the environment
• Get healthy exercise

For further information contact:

Joe Morris, Outings Chair
Sierra Club, Santa Lucia Chapter
549-0355
jmholtzhln@aol.com.

Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park

September 9-11

Explore the wild, windswept islands of Channel Island National Park. Enjoy the frickling seals and sea lions. Try your binoculars on rare sea and land birds. Hike trails bordered by blanketed wildflowers and plants found in no other place on earth. Kayak or snorkel the pristine waters—or just relax at sea. All tours depart from Santa Barbara aboard the 68’ twin diesel Truth. $599 fee includes an assigned bunk, all meals, snacks, beverages, and the services of a ranger/naturalist who will travel with us to lead hikes, call attention to items of interest and present evening programs. Proceeds will go to benefit Sierra Club California’s political programs. To make a reservation, mail a $100 check, payable to Sierra Club to leader Joan Jones Holts, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732. Contact leader for more information, 626-443-6706; jholtzhln@aol.com.

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