Fracking California: A Disaster Waiting to Happen

by Kathryn Phillips, Director
Sierra Club California

Fracking is an ugly, largely unregulated process that forces massive amounts of water, sand, and an unknown cocktail of chemicals into the ground, the end result of which is to release more dirty fossil-fuel pollution into our environment.

As news of fracking’s destructive impacts from states like Pennsylvania and Wyoming spreads across the country, it is no wonder Californians have grown worried about what might happen in our own backyard, and are demanding a moratorium to stop any new fracking from taking place.

The state already has two of the most polluted air basins in the nation—the San Joaquin Valley and the Los Angeles region—where air pollution is responsible for more than 3,800 premature deaths and costs local economies more than $28 billion annually, according to a 2008 study by California State University, Fullerton.

At least 680 communities also currently rely on polluted water due to groundwater contamination. Add fracking to that mix and you have a disaster waiting to happen. It promises more water contamination, more air pollution, more land destruction, and will only hasten climate catastrophe.

On the national level, fracking for oil and gas is still largely exempt from common-sense environmental laws like the Clean Air and Clean Water acts. With these loopholes in place, the industry essentially has a free ticket to frack U.S. public land without fearing any repercussions.

Up to now, protecting air and water quality has only been possible at the state and local levels, and often even that has proven to be difficult. In California, by the industry’s own estimate, more than 600 oil wells have been fracked in the last decade, with virtually no oversight or monitoring by the agency that provides well permits.

Last year in California, legislators tried to rein in the industry’s irresponsible fracking practices by introducing bills that called for greater public notice and regulatory oversight. These proposals were quickly shut down by oil lobbyists, who represent one of the most powerful interest groups working in the State Capitol.

Then just two months ago, the New York Times published an article highlighting how the Monterey Shale formation—which stretches from the northern San Joaquin Valley into Los Angeles County, and west to the coast—could turn California into the nation’s top oil-producing region, literally changing the Golden State’s landscape overnight.

The story put a national spotlight on how oil and gas companies are quickly buying up leases on federal land so they can expand oil fracking in California, just as they are doing for natural gas in Pennsylvania.

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Sierra Club General Meeting
Tuesday, May 21, 7 p.m.
Climate Change Comes to the Central Coast

Noted meteorologist and writer of the “Weatherwatch” column for the Tribune, John Lindsey visits us tonight with a stimulating talk on how global warming has already affected aspects of Central Coast weather, giving graphic displays of his own collected data and discussing what patterns we might expect to see in the future.

PLUS: Amanda Wallner of Sierra Club California on “Why We Need a National Marine Sanctuary.”

Steynberg Gallery, 1531 Monterey St., SLO. Info: Joe Morris, 549-0355

COLAB vs. Democracy
The attack on California’s most important environmental law is pretty vacant

By Andrew Christie, Chapter Director

Andy Caldwell, local conservative talk radio factotum and Executive Director of the Coalition of Labor, Agriculture and Business (COLAB), has taken me to task.

On March 14, Caldwell hied himself to his blog and wrote the following, under the title “Taking Back America’s Moral High Ground”:

We are at a cross road [sic] in American history where a majority of Americans will soon be required to succor and support through the government. These citizens don’t seem to care that our government has nothing to give to them but what it has taken away from some other citizen in the form of taxation, regulation or outright confiscation. A recent example of this phenomenon is the debate about reforming the California Environmental Quality Act. The local Sierra Club director claims CEQA protects democracy. He can only make that claim if you define democracy as the ability to take away a person’s rights and opportunities without compensating them for their loss.

Naturally, I was surprised to learn what I meant when I made that claim. But then I remembered that Americans have the right to be free of the tyranny of reactionary talk-show hosts who insist that we must abandon any claim they want us to make, the way that they want us to make it. What I actually said, at the end of a letter to The Tribune responding to Caldwell’s attack on CEQA, was this:

As much as CEQA is about protecting the environment, it’s about protecting democracy. It gives the community a voice in protecting what we must do to significantly impact that community and its quality of life. Reformers like COLAB & co. are painting a crude cartoon of CEQA in their campaign to convince the public to surrender their power to protect their communities.

My brief reference to democracy was, I think, pretty clear and straightforward. Caldwell’s reference to democracy, even though it is the ostensible subject of an entire blog post, is oddly vague and much less clear. It therefore requires further exploration to determine what he is trying to say — and trying not to say — in his conception of democracy.

Let’s set aside the fact that Caldwell is simply wrong on the facts. Right-wing reframing 101 allowed him to reinterpret what I wrote as needed in order to engage in unseemly blivion — and inadvertently open up the serious question of what democracy is — but nothing in CEQA allows for what the law defines as the “taking” of property or imposes land use restrictions so severe as to require compensation to property owners, and then denies that compensation. (The alert reader can quickly test Caldwell’s claim that CEQA does the unconstitutional things he says it does. In the four decades CEQA has been in effect, has it been struck down by the Supreme Court as unconstitutional? No. Okay.)

More bad news for COLAB’s let’s-get-CEQA-to-protect-constitutional-rights argument: On March 29, a trial court struck down the main provision of AB 900, a stealth bill from the California Senate that would gut CEQA to protect constitutional rights argument. Caldwell would have it, but in some nether realm besmearred by citizens who have used a tool given to them by government that allows them to demand an accounting from the purveyors of sprawl, toxic waste incinerators, power plants sited in...
The Last Remaining Seats...

Help us Celebrate 45 Years of Saving the Central Coast!

• 3–7 p.m., Saturday, May 11, in the Edna Valley

A fundraising event for the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club. Grilled tri-tip or similar (market availability), tapenade, focaccia, grilled calamari, portobellas & veggies; green, quinoa & potato salads; beer, wine, & the music of Ranchers for Peace. $10 per person. Tickets available at santalucia.sierraclear.org/give.htm, with location & map at sierraclub@gmail.com or (866) 543-8717.

Our special presentation: “John Muir’s Yosemite”

with thanks to our generous sponsors:

DUNES continued on page 10

Off-Roaders Hit the Wall

Before it was even released in March 2010, the Air Pollution Control Distric’s Phase 2 South County Particulate Master Study became the favorite bull’s-eye, punching bag and skeet-shooting target of the off-road lobby and their friends in local politics.

The study’s finding that off-highway vehicles in the Oceans Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area are the primary culprit in creating the worst air pollution on the Central Coast
Sierra Club Endorses Carlyn Christianson for SLO City Council

The Santa Lucia Chapter is pleased to endorse the candidacy of Carlyn Christianson in the special election for San Luis Obispo City Council. For city residents who uphold environmental values, it’s no contest. As the only candidate in the race with substantial land use planning experience, Christianson is clearly the woman for the job at the historical moment when the city is embarking on an update of its Land Use and Circulation Element (see below). This is the council that will chart the future of land use in the city for the next 25 years, and Christianson has proven her MVP status in such policy deliberations when she was on the City Planning Commission during the Conservation and Open Space Element update, and in helping craft the South Hillside Conservation Plan. She has a low tolerance level for shenanigans (a good thing -- see below again).

When she moved to the County Planning Commission, we disagreed with Christianson’s votes on the Carzzo Plain solar projects and the Los Osos sewer, but she voted down the Huasna Exelon oil field project and has overall been a good environmental vote there. Meanwhile, she has already hit the ground running as a member of the LUCE Update Task Force. She is the best choice for SLO City Council. Donate or volunteer for that cause at carlfromcouncil.org.

SLO City Goals: Hide & Seek

When the San Luis Obispo City Council met on April 9, the sole agenda item was a 604-page staff report entitled “Strategic Budget Direction and Major City Goal Work Programs for the 2013-15 Financial Plan.” The 600-page staff report set some kind of record. It contained not a single mention of the city’s 25,000-piece LUCE update community survey, the survey’s overwhelming response from residents, and the clear preference expressed by a majority of respondents to prioritize funding for the acquisition and maintenance of natural open space. The staff report followed only a handful of two previous 300-page staff reports on the setting process, both of which, in their more modest bulk, also managed to include not a word on this subject. And more open space for peaks, hillsides, and the greenbelt were the only categories of city services for which a majority of respondents said they were willing to pay more. All in all, priority #1 and spending goal #1 could not have been communicated more clearly to the City by the largest segment of the citizenry to have participated in the LUCE update or the city budget-setting process.

At the council meeting held one week earlier -- and one day after April Fool’s Day -- an earnest gentleman stepped up and offered the speculation that the Sierra Club could have exerted some kind of undue influence and somehow skewed the results of the 25,000-piece survey. He mused that based on the theory of this impossible feat of manipulation, the council should focus instead on the input of the relatively few people who have been showing up at community update meetings (irrespective of the fact that those meetings would be much easier to manipulate via a much smaller subset of the population, for anyone who was so inclined). By the same logic, the President of the United States should be chosen by the Iowa Caucuses. President San-torum would surely find this an attractive notion. If this seems absurd, we are obligated to report that this “minority rules” logic did, in fact, result in the down-grading of open space acquisition from the category of “Major City Goals,” where the LUCE update survey results obviously should have put it, to the status of “other important Council objectives” in the City’s 2013-15 financial plan. That was one outcome of what looks increasingly like a staff policy of making the LUCE update survey results invisible in City policy.

Blurred vision

In the realm of “other” to which open space has been relegated due to the efforts of the City administration to ignore the results of the LUCE survey, things continue to slide. The open space objective in the city goals is down-graded from “Increase the pace, quality, permanence, and relevance of the City’s Greenbelt Program,” neatly eliminating the goal of protection for creeks and peaks -- not just the greenbelt -- as expressed by the majority of survey respondents. Having thus narrowed the scope of lands to be protected, the estimated final work product is stated as the acquisition of “additional real property through use of RODENTICIDES” continued on page 9
to the land however they please is supposedly under threat and must be protected from, well, you. If you file a CEQA lawsuit to protect your neighborhood or stream or oak woodland or the water you drink or the air you breathe from the impacts of a big box store or sprawling subdivision development, you are somehow “the minority,” imposing your tyrannical will on the rights of “the minority,” which has somehow become a big box store’s CEO, board of directors and shareholders.

This is the full measure of the logic of COLAB’s argument and the incoherence of its concept of democracy. (For good measure, after attack ing the “majority of Americans” who are “receiving their succor and support through the government” — resurrect ing the 1776 Declaration recently worked so well for Mitt Romney — Caldwell ends his blog post with a call for revolution. One must assume it would be a revolution that will not include half the population, who presumably dwell in those rogue “communities and jurisdictions” that practice the kind of democracy COLAB doesn’t like.)

Of course, CEQA doesn’t just apply to corporations and giant development firms. Individuals, local governments and small businesses must comply with it, too. It’s democratic that way. If you propose to do a project and carry the potential to impact the environment, CEQA requires an accounting and mitigation of those impacts.

That’s why COLAB and their ilk always attack environmental regulations with lurid scenarios of the little guy caught in the tentacles of heartless bureaucracy (See: conservative politicians invariably invoking “small business” when they want to hand tax breaks to big donors and multinational corporations). But in his New Times op ed and subsequent blog swipe at me, Caldwell gives the game away. What COLAB really believes is that the little guy — when the little guy has the power of legal recourse placed in his hands by democratically elected representatives — is the problem. Caldwell makes it clear that COLAB doesn’t have much use for communities, the public interest, or the common good. That’s the wrong kind of democracy. COLAB’s fuzzy fantasy of every-man-for-himself / I-can-do-whatever-I-want democracy and “the moral high ground” floats in a warm bath of sound bites, slogans and anecdotes, and pops like a soap bubble when exposed to actual democracy and the actual moral high ground.

For a real-world example of both, let’s hear from Gordon Nipp, vice chair of the Kern-Kaweah Chapter of the Sierra Club.

“Our chapter became involved through CEQA...” he writes, “the city of Bakersfield was proposing to use air pollution mitigation for the cumulative impacts of the many dozens of new, large projects we were approving. As a result of CEQA litigation, developers agreed to pay air pollution fees [that] have funded more than $1.5 million in local air pollution reduction grants. For example, some such grants funded replacement of older, highpolluting diesel school buses with new, natural-gas school buses that not only reduce air pollution but also signific antly reduce health risks for students and faculty.”

Nipp concludes: “By informing and empowering the public, CEQA stands as a major component of our democratic system. Our own community is much improved as a result of this law. It’s empowering the American justice that the ordinary citizen can have this sort of attention from the government and from the development community. Weakening CEQA is weakening our democracy. “We’re not wild-eyed radicals. We’re asking for clean air.”

Or as the Natural Resources Defense Council and California League of Conservation Voters put it when they surveyed multiple case studies of CEQA litigation, the record “repeatedly demonstrates...the critical importance of citizens’ right to exercise their legal rights under CEQA. Time and again, the courts have decided that public and private developers have failed, sometimes in blatant disregard of the statute, to take actions to protect the public health and environment of California citizens. The record of these published decisions is not a reason to weaken CEQA — it is a reason to preserve and strengthen it to make it more effective.”

And for the really big picture, place Caldwell’s distortion of majority rule/ minority rights alongside Topsoil and Civilization by Tom Dale and Vernon Gill Carter.

Historical records of the last 6,000 years show that civilized man, with few exceptions, was never able to continue a progressive civilization in one locality for more than 30 to 70 generations (800 to 2,000 years). In most cases the more brilliant the civilization, the shorter was its progressive existence. These civilizations declined in the same geographic areas that had nurtured them, mainly because man himself despoiled or ruined the environments that helped him develop his civilizations.

If you agree that we are members of a community, and that rules and full democratic participation are necessary to preserve both our community and the natural world, go to www.ceqa works.org and help stop the more future-oriented members of our state legislature from “reforming” the California Environmental Quality Act out of existence.

It’s now a good time to remind them what democracy is.
It’s Time to Warrior Up

The frack rush is turning western Pennsylvania into Nigeria. Will we let it happen here?

Metis elder and clan mother Hua Anwar looked out on a packed crowd at the San Luis Obispo Grange Hall and said “Thank you for showing up for the water. It’s time to warrior up.”

She was talking about the breaking wave of economic frenzy known as fracking that is washing over the country and California. The process injects 600+ chemicals — the names of which the public is not allowed to know, courtesy of the Trade Secrets Act — and millions of gallons of water at high pressure deep into the earth to squeeze out previously inaccessible oil or gas deposits. Heavily tainted water is then stored in pits lined with the equivalent of plastic pool liners, which inevitably age, crack, and leak the toxic brew into the surrounding soil and water.

That’s why SLO Clean Water Action made sure an April 16 stop in San Luis Obispo was on the itinerary of a week-long speaking tour exposing the reality of fracking in the Golden State. The tour wove through six affected communities in the largest shale regions of Central and Southern California — Chico, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, San Diego, and Culver City — and provided a menu of options, from state regulation to local “rights-based” bans, to oppose fracking in our backyards.


Price told the crowd that 150 communities in California have joined the fight to stop fracking.

On April 18, in the wake of a landmark legal victory against fracking on public lands, the Center for Biological Diversity and the Sierra Club filed a new lawsuit challenging the Obama administration’s auction of an additional 17,000 acres in Monterey, San Benito, and Fresno counties for drilling and fracking.

The lawsuit against newly appointed Interior Secretary Sally Jewell and the Bureau of Land Management says the government did not fully consider the dangers fracking poses to watersheds, endangered wildlife and air quality before auctioning off the leases in December.

“The federal government has to stop shrugging off the dangers of fracking pollution to California public lands,” said the Center’s attorney, Brendan Cummings.

One week earlier, a federal judge, in response to a previous lawsuit by the Center and the Sierra Club, ruled that the BLM had violated the law by issuing other oil leases in Monterey County without considering fracking’s threat to the environment. It was the first court opinion to find a federal lease sale invalid for failing to address the risks of fracking. The court has asked for a joint recommendation on next steps in the case. The Center and the Sierra Club believe the lease sale should be set aside. At a minimum, no drilling or fracking on the leases will be allowed before a thorough analysis of the environmental risks has been completed.

“The Sierra Club opposes opening any new areas for oil and gas drilling, especially when long-term impacts to our health, environment, and climate are still largely unknown.” said Michael Brune, Executive Director of the Sierra Club. “Instead of leasing land for more dirty fuel drilling, the Obama administration needs to double down on clean energy.”

Sierra Club Files Fracking Suit

Center for Biological Diversity and Sierra Club sue Interior Secretary for auctioning 17,000 acres of federal land for fracking in Monterey, San Benito, Fresno Counties

-- only SLO appearance --

Jesse Colorado Swanhuyser

will tell you what you need to know about the secret trade agreement that will FRACK our lands, CANCEL our laws, offshore millions of American JOBS, and attack the environment and public health...and what you can do to fix it.

6:30 p.m.
Tuesday, May 28,
SLO City/County Library
Community Room. Free.

For more information, contact;
905-643-8717
sierraclub8@gmail.com
April 11 was Academy Awards Night for the 40 graduating seniors of Atascadero High School’s GreenHound Academy.

The Academy’s awards bestowed by the Academy on its first graduating class at the evening’s Senior Celebration included certificates of completion and special recognition, graduation sashes and scholarships.

A GreenHound is an AHS student who has made a commitment to sustainability. Students in grades 10-12 take three “green” core classes and one elective together. Ninth graders are in a green study hall as GreenHound candidates.

“We started from scratch,” said Ed Cabrera of the program’s birth four years ago, midwifed by himself and science teacher John Miron. The program got off to a rocky start, with a future very much in doubt, until the students sat down with the faculty and told them “this is what we think you need to do.”

“The students were dedicated enough to make it a sustainable program,” he said.

The Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club co-sponsored the Academy’s Senior Celebration as longtime supporters of the GreenHounds. Sierra Club personnel have given talks to GreenHound classes on alternative energy, and the GreenHound Academy was awarded two of our first grants in the first two years of the Chapter’s high school eco-grants program, helping underwrite the Academy’s organic garden and campus recycling and composting bin programs.

The Chapter has also facilitated informal mentoring of GreenHound students by college students in the Empower Poly Coalition.

By the time the April 11 ceremony drew to a close — with a student singled out for special recognition for pulling out of a spiral of absences and failing grades when the program helped him discover his gift for video production, and another who lost her parents in her freshman year receiving a $1,000 scholarship in recognition of the additional responsibilities she took on — the evening had become something special.

In his closing remarks, Principal E.J. Rossi summed up the sentiments in the room, saying “we get to see our kids demonstrate greatness.”

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Above Den mother & GreenHound coordinator Annie Turner keynoted the ceremony: "Because of your commitment to saving our planet, this community is a better place."

Left The eighteen Academy graduates who were awarded the Green Sash “for putting in the extra time” will wear their sashes at the Atascadero High School graduation ceremony in June.

Below GreenHound Academy co-founder Ed Cabrera chillaxes with the grads.

GreenHound Academy sending its first graduates into the world

The sun shines not on us but in us. The rivers flow not past, but through us; tingling, vibrating, exciting every cell and fiber in our bodies, making them sing and glide.

- John Muir

Youth Grassroots Leadership Training: Apply Now

The Sierra Student Coalition is taking applications for the summer Sprog, its award-winning grassroots leadership training led by and for young organizers.

For over twenty years, Sprog has brought new energy into our movement by creating a safe and fun atmosphere for young people to learn how to run environmental campaigns that win.

This summer, the SSC is offering six Sprog trainings:

- Northwest (6/23-30 - Girl Scout Camp Evergreen, Longview, WA)
- Mid-Atlantic (7/10-14 - Baltimore, MD) Note: this is the only Sprog happening in a city.
- Midwest (7/14-21 - Bradford Woods, Martinsville, IN)
- Puerto Rico (7/22-29 - Campamento Maria Emilia, Añasco, PR) Note: this Sprog is held entirely in Spanish.
- Southeast/Gulf-Coast (7/28 - 8/4 - Girl Scout Camp Wahi, Brandon, MS)
- Southwest/California (8/11-18 - Foster Lodge, Mount Laguna, CA)

Applicants may apply directly, or teachers and mentors may nominate a young person to attend. Tuition or travel scholarships available. All can be done on line at http://ssc.org/sprog. Got questions? Email the SSC’s Training and Leadership Development Director: tim.harlan-marks@sierraclub.org.
Taking Issue

Reviewing problematic environmental coverage & commentary in our local media


Summary: The manager of the Cambria farmers market disagrees with the Sierra Club’s suggestion that Genetically Modified Organisms should be kept out of our local farmers markets.

GM proponents claim that genetic engineering of crops is no more risky than natural/conventional breeding. But in fact, genetic engineering is different from natural/conventional plant breeding and poses special risks. In particular, the genetic engineering and associated tissue culture processes are highly mutagenic, leading to unpredictable changes in the DNA and proteins of the resulting GM crop that can lead to unexpected toxic or allergic effects.

“GMO Myths & Truths”

- Most resistance to GMOs is based on belief because people don’t understand the underlying facts.

- There is a profound difference between the types of unintended effects from traditional breeding and genetic engineering.

- Dr. Louis Pribyl, FDA microbiologist

“Genetically modified plants could contain unexpected high concentrations of plant toxicants [that could be] uniquely different chemicals that are usually expressed in unrelated plants.”

- Dr. E.J. Matthews, FDA Toxicology Group

“The FDA is trying to fit a square peg into a round hole...[by] trying to force an ultimate conclusion that there is no difference between foods modified by genetic engineering and foods modified by traditional breeding practices. The processes of genetic engineering and traditional breeding are different, and according to the technical experts in the agency, they lead to different risks.”

- Dr. Linda Kahl, FDA compliance officer

The unforeseen consequence of increased lignin in Bt corn, a trait that biotechnologists had not intended to create, went undetected for five years. “The possibility that some genetically modified counterparts represents an unintended effect with no determined cause,” said Lehman.

The percentage of U.S. processed foods that include at least one genetically engineered ingredient is estimated at about 70 to 80 percent, according to a 2010 fact sheet from Colorado State University. Even foods labeled as natural, a term that has no legal meaning, may contain genetically engineered crops.

Upshot: The percentage of U.S. processed foods that include at least one genetically engineered food is estimated at about 60 to 70 percent, according to a 2010 fact sheet from Colorado State University. Even foods labeled as natural, a term that has no legal meaning, may contain genetically engineered crops.

A recent poll showed 65% of Americans don’t want to eat genetically modified food. But manufacturer AquaBounty plans to sell it without a GE label. You won’t know you’re eating it. Over 300 consumer, health, fishing, environmental, parent, and animal rights groups are opposing FDA approval. The Los Angeles City Council unanimously opposes it. Whole Foods and Trader Joe’s have pledged not to sell it.

A ban on any GMO products would limit consumer choice. As a farmers market manager, I am reluctant to do so.

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Rodenticides

continued from page 4

pets, and “non-target” wildlife. Wildlife can be poisoned by directly consuming baits that contain mouse and rat poison. Mountain lions, hawks, coyotes, fishers, foxes, and other non-target wildlife can also succumb to secondary poisoning after consuming a dead or dying rodent. Children are particularly susceptible to accidental poisoning. From 1993 until 2008, the American Association of Poison Control Centers received between 12,000 and 15,000 reports annually of rat and mouse poison exposures to children under six years of age.

In 2008, after more than a decade of agency review and public involvement, EPA announced the agency’s conclusions regarding the safety of rodenticide products containing any of ten listed active ingredients. EPA concluded that rodenticides containing these ingredients that are sold for consumer use must be packaged in a protective “bait station” designed to prevent children, pets, and wildlife from coming into contact with the toxic bait. Several restrictions were put in place to limit consumer access to “second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides,” due to the increased risk that these products pose to non-target wildlife.

Manufacturers were given until June 2011 to adopt the safety measures that EPA recommended. Of the nearly thirty companies that sell mouse and rat poison products in the United States, Reckitt Benckiser LLC has chosen to voluntarily adopt EPA’s risk mitigation measures. Reckitt Benckiser’s products are sold to consumers as pellets or powder, without adequately protective bait stations and in several formulations that include second-generation anticoagulants. These twelve rodenticides are the only ones remaining on the market that fail to comply with the safety measures that EPA asked registrants to adopt by June 2011.

In February 2013, EPA published a notice of intent to cancel the registrations of the twelve rodenticide products. The cancellation would result in their removal from the consumer market. This is the first cancellation proceeding initiated by EPA in over twenty years. By law, EPA may initiate cancellation of a pesticide that poses “any unreasonable risk to man or the environment, including unreasonable potential economic, social, and environmental costs and benefits of the use” of the pesticide. Of the nearly thirty companies that sell mouse and rat poison products in the United States, Reckitt Benckiser is the only one that has refused to voluntarily adopt EPA’s risk mitigation measures. Reckitt Benckiser’s products are sold to consumers as pellets or powder, without adequately protective bait stations that prevent access by children, pets, and wildlife. In addition, eight of the twelve products contain second-generation anticoagulants, which EPA has determined pose unacceptable hazards to non-target wildlife.

The Sierra Club and our allies will focus on the threats these rodenticides pose to wildlife, including coyotes, bobcats, foxes, raptors, and the Pacific fisher. SLO County is home to the federally endangered San Joaquin kit fox, which is exposed to rodenticides used in agricultural, industrial, and residential areas in Central California. Kit foxes prey primarily on small mammals; thus, the use of rodenticides not only reduces their food supply but also can poison kit foxes that consume contaminated rodents.

In 2011, the Club entered into a settlement agreement for the two solar projects in San Joaquin kit fox habitat in the Carrizo Plain. We required the project proponents to contribute $200,000 for legal, scientific, and advocacy services to effectuate a ban or restrictions on rodenticides harmful to the kit fox and other wildlife. Our intervention in the EPA proceeding will continue our efforts to protect the kit fox and other wildlife from the harmful effects of rodenticides.

The acquisition and burning of dirty fuels is destroying the earth. End our dependence on dirty fuels. Join Hands to embrace Clean Energy.

It’s easy. On Saturday May 18th, SLO County will join hands in solidarity with people all over the world who care about preserving our oceans, oxygen, drinking water and food from dangerous, dirty fuels.

The acquisition and burning of dirty fuels is destroying the earth. Ending our dependence on dirty fuels is essential to the survival of our planet. We will join hands to say NO to dirty fuels and YES to clean energy.

San Luis Obispo County!

Say YES to clean energy!

Say NO to offshore oil drilling!

Say NO to offshore seismic testing!

Hands Across The Sand has been a global success with thousands of events in all 50 states and nearly 50 countries worldwide from New Zealand to Hawaii. Joining hands is fun, empowering, immensely important and sends a powerful message.

Join Hands to end our dependence on dangerous, dirty fuels. Join Hands to end global warming and climate change. Join Hands to embrace Clean Energy.

Hands to end global warming and climate change. Join Hands to embrace Clean Energy.

Chapter Wins Anthony Prize

On April 25, the Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment named the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club the winner of its 2013 Anthony Grassroots Prize for Organizational Stewardship in recognition of our work to raise awareness of Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) and getting it included in the local planning process. CCA empowers local communities to replace fossil fuel-generated electricity with renewable power, and incentivizes energy efficiency programs. The Anthony Prize is awarded annually to recognize an outstanding example of grassroots environmental stewardship.
emissions have passed rights-based ordinances — binding laws that place the rights of residents and nature above the legal “rights” of corpora-
tions — 15 of them banning fracking. It is distinct from the regulatory regime in that “regulations say how much damage they can do in your community,” whereas rights-based ordinances vanna harmful activity.

The riveting centerpiece of the night was an address by Doug Shields, former city councilman from Pittsburg, the first city in the nation to pass a ban on fracking, asserting its rights of its
citizens to a non-toxic environment.

“Six percent of wells endanger public health in search of

Six percent of well casings will fail
cancer.”

Paul Ferrazzi of the L.A. Citizens Coalition (gas

SLOcleanwater

TAKE ACTION

Send a message to the EPA
EPA Region 9 Administrator Jared Blumenfeld needs to hear from you
blumenfeld.jared@epa.gov

Dear Mr. Blumenfeld,

The worst air quality on the Central Coast of California is caused by PM10 pollution.

It is a direct health threat to thousands of our citizens, and it significantly exceeds the federal threshold for safe exposure set by your agency, yet the EPA has not taken action to bring San Luis Obispo county into attainment for this significant pollutant.

You know that our county exceeds the federal threshold for PM10 pollution. Please issue a finding that San Luis Obispo County is in non-attainment.

Sincerely,
Your Name Here
Classifieds

Next issue deadline is May 13. 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
sierrahub8@gmail.com

CYNTHIA HAWLEY
ATTORNEY

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
LAND USE
CIVIL LITIGATION

P.O. Box 29 Cambria California 93428
Phone 805-927-5102 Fax 805-927-5220

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, 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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REALTY

GREEN HOMES

Pismo to San Simeon
A portion of any commission donated to the Sierra Club

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LAW OFFICES OF BABA NAFCY
Baba Naficy - Attorney at Law

Santa Lucian • May 2013
Outings and Activities Calendar

Seller of travel registration information: CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.

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., May 4th, 9 a.m. Plants and Birds at Santa Margarita Lake. Co-led by leaders of the Audubon and the California Native Plant Society, this 4-mile walk will furnish an opportunity to see a variety of late spring wildflowers, migrant birds and their nesting behaviors. Bring snacks and water for a picnic lunch afterwards (no tables, so bring blanket, if desired). From Hwy 101, go east at the Santa Margarita/Rwy 58 exit, driving through Santa Margarita, then right on 58, continuing in 2 miles onto Pozo Rd for 14.8 miles, and turn left (after a small bridge) on River Rd, going 2.3 miles. Parking lot for the River Rd. access will be on the left. Allow about an hour for the drive from SLO. Info.: Bill Waycott, 459-2103 or bill.waycott@gmail.com.

Sat., May 11th, 7:15 a.m. Big Sur Botany Hike. Join us on an outing focused on the floristic diversity of the southern Big Sur mountains, co-led by expert guide Neil Havlik. This is a moderately strenuous 10-mile hike, 2200 ft. gain, going through several changes in plant communities. The Cruickshank Trail first ascends to panoramic views of the southern Big Sur coast, then into Villa Creek Canyon and Buckeye Camp (hunch stop). It continues across Redwood Creek to Soda Springs trail junction. Bring lunch, snacks, water, and dress in layers for changing weather. Ticks are heavy; be prepared for the possibility of poison oak in the area. At your own option, you could consider hiking to either Kirk Creek or Plaskett Creek campgrounds before and/or afterwards. Meet at the Pacific Valley C.D.F. station, about a mile from Plaskett Creek campground. Leader: Carlos Diaz-Saavedra, 546-0317.

Sun., May 19th, 10 a.m. Sycamore Springs Trekking-Pole Hike. 2-mile hike to model the benefits of using trekking poles, 700 feet elevation gain. Meet near the entrance of Sycamore Springs Resort, 1215 Avila Beach Resort. Confirm beforehand with leader: David Georgi, 458-5575 or pdcocalleader@gmail.com.

Tues., May 21st, 7-9 p.m. Bimonthly Meeting: Climate Change Comes to the Central Coast. John Lindsey, noted meteorologist and writer of the “Weather-Watch” column for the Tribune visits us tonight with a stimulating talk on how global warming has already altered some aspects of Central Coast weather, giving graphic displays of some of his own collected data, and discussing what patterns we might expect to see in the future. Plus: Amanda Wallner of Sierra Club California on “Why We Need a National Marine Sanctuary.” Seybarg Gallery, 1531 Monterey St., SLO. Info: Joe Morris, 549-0355.

Sat., June 1, ECOLOS Hike-A-Thon, Laguna Lake Park, ECOLOS’s first annual SLO County Hike-A-Thon, in honor of National Trails Day. The June 1 Laguna Lake hike will kick-off with a light brunch, music and mingling, docent-led hikes, registration booth, and exhibitors with giveaways. The June 29 after party will feature dinner and dancing with live music from local favorites Proxima Parada and The Red Willows, along with an awards ceremony and prizes to top participants! Participants are asked to register, log their outdoor adventures, and seek out pledges that will benefit the work that ECOLOS does on trail restoration, cleanup efforts, docent training and advocacy, partnering with government, non-government, and community organizations to unite county-wide efforts in open space conservation and recreation. Interested in being an event sponsor? Volunteer? Want to get a head start on pledging? Pre-registration information can be found online at ecolos.org. Contact event coordinator Victoria Carranza at hike@ecolos.org or (805) 544-1777 or visit 75 Higuera St., Suite 100, for details.

Thurs., May 16, 5:30 p.m., SLO Botanical Garden. California Ethnobotany: useful plants of SLO County. Ever wonder how humans survived before modern conveniences like grocery stores, pharmacies and department stores? Discover how indigenous people of the Central Coast used the bountiful flora to not only survive, but thrive! Join the SLO Botanical Garden for an intriguing class focusing on the many useful plants of SLO County by Bay Area herbalist Tellur Fenner, owner-director of the Blue Wind Botanical Medicine Clinic and Education Center in Oakland. California’s indigenous plant use (past & present) is astounding in its scope and complexity. This informational journey will discuss the vast field of California ethnobotany through an interactive slideshow, detailing the historic and present-day use of a number of native California edibles/medicinal plants. A large selection of plant samples will be incorporated into the class with the aim of engaging the students’ sensory awareness on all levels. This in-depth introductory course should prove insightful and rewarding for anyone interested in knowing more about the unique flora of our state. Call (805) 541-1400 x304, or e-mail education@slobg.org.

Activities sponsored by other groups

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