Don’t Miss:
Dying Green: the ultimate recycling
Friday, March 28 - see page 2

Vote for Arjun Makhijani
Put an energy visionary on the Sierra Club Board of Directors

All eligible Sierra Club members — life members and members who have renewed at least once — will soon receive election materials to vote for members of the Sierra Club Board of Directors. (Those who have signed up for internet notification should receive their notification from the election vendor.)

Any organization that’s been around for awhile has had its ups and downs in terms of leadership. In the Sierra Club’s 122 years, we’ve lacked out in a big way more than a few times, as when the organization has been steered or advised and counseled by the likes of Martin Litton, Edgar Wayburn, Wallace Stegner and William E. Colby. (Kids: google ‘em.)

It is in that context that we wish to bring to your attention the presence of Arjun Makhijani on your 2014 ballot for the Sierra Club’s Board of Directors. Dr. Makhijani, president of the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research, holds a Ph.D. in engineering with a specialization in nuclear fusion from the University of California at Berkeley. He has produced many studies on nuclear fuel cycle issues, including nuclear waste, over the past twenty years. He is the principal author of the first study ever done on energy conservation potential in the U.S.

And more to the point for this discussion, he is the author of Carbon Free and Nuclear-Free: A Roadmap for U.S. Energy Policy, the first analysis of a transition to a U.S. economy based completely on renewable energy, without any use of fossil fuels or nuclear power. (Download it here for free: http://ieer.org/resource/reports/carbon-free-and-nuclear-free/.)

Dr. Makhijani sums up the findings of his report thusly: “We can solve the problems of oil imports, nuclear proliferation as it is linked to nuclear power, and carbon dioxide emissions simultaneously if we are bold enough.”

We trust you catch our drift. The Santa Lucia Chapter is very pleased to endorse Dr. Makhijani for the Board of Directors. This is the guy who knows how to phase out fossil fuels and nuclear energy and replace them with renewables and efficiency. He is the right Sierra Club board director at the right time, so let’s get him on board. And nothing against any of the other fine candidates on your ballot, but if you want your vote to carry maximum weight, vote only for Arjun Makhijani. Balloons must be received by April 16.

Fracking Moratorium Bill in State Senate

State Senators Holly Mitchell and Mark Leno have introduced a bill to impose a moratorium on fracking and well stimulation in California unless there is certainty that the practices will not harm public health, the environment and the economy.

Fracking and well stimulation are technologies that have in recent years been used in oil and natural gas fields around the country to literally break up and dissolve rock deep in the earth to gain access to previously inaccessible oil and gas reserves. The technologies employ hundreds of harsh and toxic chemicals, including acids, mixed with large quantities of water. Fracking and well stimulation has been linked to high levels of air pollution, surface and groundwater pollution, high levels of water consumption, and earthquakes.

Senate Bill 1132 would impose a moratorium until completion of an expanded study of frackings’ impacts, which must then be followed by a determination that the public health, the environment and the economy will not be harmed if fracking resumes.

“Senators Mitchell and Leno have placed before the legislature the opportunity to take the next logical step to protect Californians from a dangerous practice,” said Kathryn Phillips, director of Sierra Club California. “Last year the legislature passed a bill, SB 4, that would begin regulation

Fracking continued on page 3

Dying Green continued on page 2

Sierra Club General Meeting

7 p.m., Friday, March 28
Green Burial: The Ultimate Recycling

Traveling from the Bay Area to speak to us tonight is a dynamic speaker, environmental filmmaker Rob Caughlan, co-founder of Friends of the River and first president of the Surfrider Foundation (www.robscaughlan.com). Rob will discuss the options and rationale for the growing trend of environmentally sustainable burial. The meeting will begin with the short, award-winning documentary, “Dying Green.” Q&A will follow.

Steynberg Gallery, 1531 Monterey St., SLO Information: 549-0355
(If you are a member of the Cal French Circle, you’re invited to a reception for Rob Caughlan before the event! See Outings & Activities, page 12.)

Reclaiming the Conversation
Our thanks to the Tribune for cleaning up its website. But...

Maybe it’s not quite the same thing as politely waiting out a calumniated river or leaving your campsite in better shape than you found it, but The Tribune’s decision to ban posting comments on its website through the commenter’s Facebook page—and hence, to their names—has had a widespread local echo.

Ever since, there have been a lot of wide open spaces below posted letters and viewpoints which, around this time last year, would have been filled with a dozen or more anonymous posts slamming the author, liberal, socialists, intellectuals, out-of-towners, nattering nabobs, prescient communicators of property and/or guns, family members of public officials and anybody else the poster didn’t particularly care for. Charges, counter-charges, rumors, gossip, casual slander and lots of it were the order of the day.

When the day came for the commenters to put their names to their carping, it dawned away overnight. A 2013 University of Wisconsin study, per Ars Technica, “presented a convincing picture of the way social media is changing the way we write on the internet. Readers’ interpretation of the risks associated with nanotechnology differed depending on the tone of the comments; readers exposed to uncivil comments were more likely to attribute potential risks to nanotechnology.”

That’s right: angry, agenda-laden troll commenters are bad for you and your ability to engage in independent thought.

That study persuaded Popular Science to disable the comment function for articles on its website. The Tribune’s solution to its troll problem was much more elegant than the Popular Science shut-down: Invite the public to comment anonymously and then, in an endless loop.

It’s like watching the parable of the blind men and the elephant, playing into the climate change denial playbook. It’s like watching the parable of the blind men and the elephant, playing into the climate change denial playbook.

The Trib handed those folks that opportunity to recirculate one more time all the repetitively discredited facts to the climate change denial playbook.

The latest round was kicked off on February 2 when The Tribune editorialized on the Atascadero City Council’s attempt to delete the impacts of climate change from its Climate Action Plan (see “We Sent a Book to the Atascadero City Council,” page 4, and “Taking Commies,” page 10). The Tribune suggested the city council should have “stuck up for science.” This was followed by a rebuttal from aggrieved council members, which was followed by the usual letters from those taking advantage of the opportunity to recirculate one more time all the repetitively discredited facts from the climate change denial playbook.

We look forward to the day when We Trib to the Tribune on the day when The Tribune implies there’s still any legitimate scientific debate about human-caused climate change by giving deniers ink whenever they want to seize on the latest anecdote—in a vacuum to claim that climate change isn’t happening, and therefore there’s absolutely no problem with extracting, refining and burning more and more fossil fuel.

Dear Tribune editorial board: You know the debate is over. We know you know the debate is over. Pretending that it’s okay to keep printing those claims is bad for you, and the planet, and your children’s future.

We look forward to the day when we can congratulate The Tribune on joining the L.A. Times in making one more policy change to further clean up the public dialog.
Santa Lucian • March 2014

Get On the Bus

On March 15th, Sierra Club will join with Don’t Frack California, Californians Against Fracking, 350.org, Food and Water Watch, CREDO Action, SLO Clean Water Action, and 5,000 other folks from all over the state to send a message to Governor Brown, nice and loud: It’s time to stop fracking in California!

What: Tell Governor Brown, Don’t Frack California
Where: The Capitol Lawn, Sacramento, CA

California is experiencing one of the worst droughts in our history. Communities are struggling to figure out where their water will be coming from. Governor Brown’s solution is to call for conservation from our citizens, but not from big oil and gas.

On Saturday, March 15th, we’ll be making sure Governor Brown and his administration hear us loud and clear: Climate leaders don’t frack.

Buses will be heading to Sacramento from Chico, Fresno, Merced, Marin, Berkeley, Oakland, San Francisco, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Benito, Bakersfield, Tulare County, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, San Diego, and Orange County.

California’s future is on the line — let’s fight for it.

Fracking the Coast

In the summer of 2013, the Associated Press discovered that fracking from offshore rigs in the waters off Southern California was a common practice, but the oil companies had neglected to inform California regulators that it has been going on.

On February 12 in Pismo Beach, a state regulatory agency attempted to come to grips with offshore fracking for the first time, as the California Coastal Commission met to hear a staff report on the situation.

The wildlife-rich Santa Barbara Channel, host of the world’s largest summertime gathering of blue whales, is of special concern. On the day of the hearing, at virtually the same moment when Coastal Commission deputy director Allison Dettmer was assuring commissioners that no fracking was occurring in the Santa Barbara Channel, the federal government approved three fracking operations in the Channel.

Multiple oil and gas industry representatives at the hearing assured the commissioners that the process was sufficiently regulated and posed no threat to the environment. Santa Lucia Chapter Director Andrew Christie replied: “Fracking’s backers like to claim the process can be done safely and cleanly and without harm to human health and the environment. They say that while clinging to fracking’s exemptions from the Clean Air, Clean Water, and Safe Drinking Water Acts. They say that while making pay-offs to families in legal settlements in exchange for non-disclosure agreements that forbid every member of a family, including seven-year-old children, from ever talking to anyone about fracking for the rest of their lives…. The burden is on the oil companies and regulators to prove that what they are doing is not causing harm, and is in fact maintaining and enhancing the marine environment, in accordance with Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act. They have not done so.”

Sierra Club California organizer Michael Thornton came to Pismo Beach last month, joining with more than two dozen other speakers from the Center for Biological Diversity, Ocean Foundation, Surfrider, the Environmental Defense Center, the office of Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson and the public to urge the Coastal Commission to take action against the practice of fracking from offshore oil rigs.

Oil industry reps also tried to point out that the EPA’s regulations are adequate to meet the requirements of these health-threatening practices. Since then, several new studies and reports from around the country have underscored just how harmful fracking and well stimulation are to public health, water supplies and the air. This bill builds on last year’s actions and will ensure that Californians have complete information about fracking and well stimulation before those techniques are allowed to continue in California.

“More than half of Californians have said in public opinion surveys that they want an end to fracking in this state. It doesn’t make sense to them to let big oil pump toxic chemicals into the ground, including near aquifers, and hope for the best.”

Since then, several new studies and reports from around the country have underscored just how harmful fracking and well stimulation are to public health, water supplies and the air. This bill builds on last year’s actions and will ensure that Californians have complete information about fracking and well stimulation before those techniques are allowed to continue in California.

The Sierra Club will be reaching out to members throughout California to help make sure this bill gets the support it needs to get it through the Senate by May 30 (after which it goes to the Assembly for consideration).

Step one for SLO folks: On March 15, get on a bus to Sacramento!
In the wake of the Atascadero City Council’s decision to water down and cast doubt on the description of the impacts of climate change in their Climate Action Plan, the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club sent the council a copy of the book "The Truth about Global Warming" by Haydn Washington and John Cook. The book provides an overview of climate science, explores the ideological and psychological roots of denial, the confusion over the difference between denial and genuine skepticism, and describes five types of climate change denial, including the type that is currently pervasive in the city council — i.e. the argument that climate change requires more proof (and always will).

The Club sent the book to the council to help council members learn the reasons why global climate change is an accepted scientific fact, as demonstrated in over 10,000 peer-reviewed studies and the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and the ways in which the scientific evidence of climate change is distorted by deniers.

The book points out that the consensus on climate change is based on a preponderance of evidence, that science proceeds on the preponderance of evidence, not absolute proof, and that if we wait for such proof before we take precautionary action, no action will ever be taken.

We hope the book will be particularly helpful to those city council members who recently proclaimed themselves “well-educated and well-read” (see “Taking Issue,” page 10).

In the foreword to the book, climate change denial is described as “a way of life that does not acknowledge the true cost of living, an economy that does not take into account environmental damage and loss.” The Atascadero City Council is not alone in its failure to understand that, so after they’ve read the book, we encourage their members to pass it along to others who need to get the message.

**Tell Us Again What’s Wrong with “1 Person, 1 Vote”**

On February 18, the Board of Supervisors voted 3 to 2 to support special legislation to form a water district to manage the Paso Robles groundwater basin. Assemblymember Katcho Achadjian would introduce the bill in this legislative session.

The draft legislation is a “compromise” — see the Paso Robles Agricultural and Water Rights Alliance for Groundwater Solutions (PRAAGS), representing large ag interests over the basin, and ProWater Equity, which was formed to represent the interests of residents with plummetting well levels, but wound up capitulating to PRAAGS on the critical issue of the voting structure for water district directors (see “Paso Robles Basin Sold Out,” January).

Supervisors Bruce Gibson, Frank Mecham and Adam Hill — Debbie Arnold and Caren Ray dissenting — voted for approval despite grave concerns expressed by many residents over the two critical issues: the proposed voting structure for the district board, heavily weighted to favor landowners over residents, and the omission of any bar against banking water and exporting it out of the basin.

The board majority was apparently under the impression that compromise is an ultimate value and a universal good — as if any compromise is good because it’s a compromise — even if virtually all the concessions are on one side. Acquiring to a voting structure that one side (PRAAGS) originally wanted to be entirely “proportional to land ownership” and which will now be mostly proportional to land ownership, is not really a compromise.

PRO Water Equity’s representative told the board he couldn’t see any way that any combination of directors in the proposed hybrid board structure — six voted in by landowners, three by residents in a general election — could take over the board. We told the board we have no trouble conceiving of how a permanent majority of six directors with a common interest in making a profit from commercial agriculture will find common ground in routinely outvoting three directors in the permanent minority whose interest is in hanging onto enough water to stay in their homes.

The Paso Robles groundwater basin has 30 million acre feet of potential capacity, making it the biggest target in the state for corporate growers with designs on a future payday that could amount to billions of dollars, and equally tempting for the County should it wish to use it to park future unused allocations from the State Water Project — aka “paper water” — thereby establishing a legal claim that will allow it to sell real water to developers around the county.

The recent history of increasing corporate control over public water infrastructure in California was detailed ten years ago by Public Citizen in its study of the formation of the Kern Water Bank, “Water Heist: How Corporations are Cashing in on California’s Water.” The report concluded:

The corporate interests that pervade the water districts that call the shots throughout the state are setting up insider water trading systems to facilitate the ease with which water flows to money.

At one point in the hearing, Debbie Michael, chief consultant for the State Assembly’s Local Government Committee, chaired by Assemblymember Achadjian, was asked by Supervisor Caren Ray whether changing the voting structure in the proposed legislation would affect the chances of its passage.

The question prompted this exchange:

**Michael**: These types of issues bring a lot of support and opposition based on resident voting and land owner voting. … The general trend over the last hundred years, I would say, in spite of irrigation districts, is to move away from landowner-based districts and voting. So I don’t know –

**Ray**: And toward…?

**Michael**: Toward resident voting, or one person per parcel, one person per vote. Away from land owner but more a registered voter type designation.

Supervisors Mecham, Gibson and Hill chose to ignore this information and a hundred years of legislative preference and instead insisted on approval of the language in the proposed legislation with no changes.

We reminded the board, as we are wont to do, of our favorite quotation from Supervisor Mecham. When he was discussing the establishment of a water district with a reporter last year, Mecham went to the heart of the matter, saying: “I just hope we are not in the situation where the guy with the most money wins.”

**Keep hope alive.**

**Water as an asset class will, in my view, become eventually the single most important physical commodity-based asset class, dwarfing oil, copper, agricultural commodities and precious metals.**

- Willem Buiter, chief economist, Citigroup

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**WANT TO HELP OUT?**

Do you have a knack for organizing? Be a part of the team that puts together the Santa Lucia Chapter’s annual fundraiser! We have openings for folks who want to help with securing food or wine donations, sponsorships or auction items, renting chairs & tables, designing invitations and table centerpieces, working on publicity and promotion… let us know what you’re interested in and we’ll plug you in. Give us a call at 543-8717 or drop us a note at sierrachub8@gmail.com. Let’s chat!
How Cambria Came to This

Drought is an act of God. Bad planning and “bonus water” is not

Now it’s an emergency. By all estimates, Cambria has until the end of June to find a supply of water, or there won’t be any more. Cambria’s water quality supervisor, Bruce Gibson, is the “canary in the coal mine,” for the severe drought that is facing many California communities in the not-too-distant future.

In terms of planning, it is also a mirror in microcosm and potential harbinger of things to come for California in its pursuit of the Delta Plan – aka the Twin Tunnels – which Governor Brown and the State Water Resources Control Board are eyeing as the Cambria Community Services District has pushed desalination, despite all warnings and available options, as the silver bullet that would end all water woes.

In other words, Cambria’s situation today could be the harbinger of the local hydrology, but of choices and policies pursued and alternatives dismissed by a helpless Community Services District that was hell-bent on bringing a desalination and desalination project to life with the goal of busting the town’s building moratorium – a scheme it tried to hide such footnotes and euphemism in its Water Master Plan.

The CCSD pursued this single course of action long past the point when it had become obviously untenable.

The consequences of those choices made and roads not taken are most painfully obvious when seen in light of the comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for Cambria’s Water Master Plan as subm itted to the CCSD by the Otter Project Company, LLC, the Sierra Club, ECOSLO, Deval Response Group of Environment NOW and Surfrider Foundation of the United States.

Here is what we told the Cambria CSD back then. (Emphasis added for historic irony.)

Nowhere in the project description or any other section of the DEIR were the project goals and objectives clearly stated. Without a clear picture of these goals and objectives, the DEIR cannot sufficiently or objectively evaluate the project alternatives’ ability to meet the goals and objectives.

The project description does not adequately or accurately document the existing conditions.

The project description calculates residential use at 135 gallons per person per day (we assume this includes the 50-percent “quality of life” bonus – see below.) Commercial demand was assumed to be zero and total demand for non-potable water do not appear to be analyzed. The 135 gallons per person per day for residential use is excessive and the need for this volume is unsubstantiated. Even 90 gallons (back-calculated from 135 gallons – 50 percent “quality of life” bonus) seems excessive for a community supposedly under strict water conservation measures.

According to the most recent US Geological Survey report, Estimated Water Use in the United States in 2000, domestic water use in California is approximately 95 gallons per person per day. According to the 2003 Pacific Institute Report “Waste Not, Want Not,” which uses a rounded up figure of 100 gallons per capita total actual water use in the United States was 100 gallons in 2000. Of those 100 gallons, 80.5 gallons was for indoor use and 39.5 gallons was used outdoors. (Note: the ratio of indoor to outdoor water use is approximately 67/33% by volume is unsubstantiated. Even 90 gallons per person per day as stated above is excessive and the need for this demand for non-potable water do not appear to be analyzed. The 135 gallons per person per day for residential use is excessive and the need for this volume is unsubstantiated. Even 90 gallons (back-calculated from 135 gallons – 50 percent “quality of life” bonus) seems excessive for a community supposedly under strict water conservation measures.

with seawater desalination which may foreseeable impact the environment include its large global-warming footprint (associated with emissions and the energy needed to run the facility), plant siting (including, but not limited to considerations for future sea level rise), possible growth improvements in marine environments (which has been cited as a mitigation sensitive impact), brine discharge to the marine environments (which has been cited as a mitigation sensitive impact) or other cumulative impacts (including, but not limited to the proliferation of small desal plants in the region, as opposed to one large, community-level, public, water supply planning).

Additionally, the DEIR cites that seawater desalination is a “very reliable water supply source,” which operates under the assumption that the desalination facility will run properly.

Seawater desalination facilities are known to be plagued with technical and operational problems that prevent them from functioning in their designed capacity such as the permitted facilities in Tampa Bay, Florida and Marina, California. The matrix, Table 3-6, includes cost and funding – these sections are totally inappropriate for a DESIE and CEQA analysis that is used to evaluate the environmental consequences of proposed actions and alternatives.

This matrix and discussion should be either shown without factoring in cost and funding, or should be eliminated entirely.

The subjectivity of the matrix is a serious problem. First, each category is given equal weight, as noted above, which is entirely inappropriate in a CEQA document meant to compare environmental costs and benefits. Next, the matrix appears to handicap ideas such as “seasonal storage alternates” discussed in Task 9 but not carried forward into the DEIR. Local, smaller scale, less expensive, easier-to-permit projects such as using the Perry Creek Dam or Upper Steiner Creek Dam could provide additional water to both residents and groundwater if designed appropriately.

The subjectivity of the “reliability” score is also a problem. We do not understand how a solution as technical and energy dependent as desalination can be more feasible (scored 5 of a possible 5) than a reservoir solution (scored 2 of 5) or demand management (scored 2 of 5). Few, if any, desalination plants in the United States are able to operate at the capacity they were designed for. The “permitting” score is simply not realistic. The Coastal Commission has twice rejected the desalination plant. Certainly, being rejected by the Coastal Commission once and again on appeal should score as “very difficult to obtain” (a score of 4 of 5). It must be noted that the final evaluation shown in Table 3-6 of the DESIE

perhaps unfairly characterizes the funding availability of the Seawater Desalination alternative against all other alternatives giving it a score of 4 of possible 5 (75% cost reduction).

Public funding of desalination plants is far from a certainty! Examples of 75-

The proliferation of small desal plants in the region, as opposed to one large, community-level, public, water supply planning.

Funding opportunities for sewage treatment plant upgrades (so that water can be better re-used), water recycling projects, and water conservation programs:

- Small Community Wastewater Grant Program. Provides grant assistance for the construction of publicly owned wastewater treatment facilities for small communities (max. pop. 20,000) with financial hardships (max. annual MHI $37,994).

- Water Recycling Construction Program & Water Recycling Facilities Planning Grant Program. Grants and loan funds for the design and construction of water recycling facilities, which include wastewater treatment facilities, pump stations, and recycled water distribution systems.

- Clean Beaches Initiative Grant Program (Prop 84) $37 million. Grants and bonds to help local agencies, non-profit organizations, and public agencies implement projects to protect and restore California’s coastal water quality.

- Ocean Protection Council. Protection of Beaches, Bays, and Coastal Water (Prop 84) $208 million – grants to fund the goals of Governor Schwarzenegger’s Ocean Protection Act, which has a main objective to improve ocean and coastal water quality.

- State Coastal Conservancy: Protection of Beaches, Bays, and Coastal Waters (Prop 84): $135 million.

- Division of Financial Assistance. Administers the implementation of the State Water Resources Control Board’s financial assistance programs, which includes loan and grant funding for construction of municipal sewage and other water recycling projects, etc.

- State Revolving Fund. $200-$300 million annually. Implements the Clean Water Act and various State laws by providing financial assistance for the...
emphasize on landscape irrigation. Such measures may include the addition of rain sensors to ensure irrigation systems shut-off during periods of rain. The installation of evapotranspiration (ET) controllers may also become part of future landscape irrigation efficiency improvement measures.

Further reductions in indoor water use should include a numeric target such as 45 gallons per person per day as is suggested as easily attainable in the Pacific Institute Report “Waste Not, Want Not.” Outdoor water use should be reduced to an absolute minimum or banned. In a setting as beautiful as Cambria, natural landscaping should be required. Advantages of natural landscaping include:

- no fertilization required
- no additional water
- more water available for other uses and other people
- zero to near zero work needed for maintenance
- no land knowing
- erosion reduced to a minimum
- natural landscaped plants take full advantage of rainfall
- when water restrictions are implemented, natural landscaped plants will survive, while more traditional plants may not
- increased habitat for native flora and fauna
- where heavily forested, provides shade on homes and businesses
- native plants rarely become invasive

And again, the 50 percent “quality of life” bonus, a 50-percent increase above current use is entirely inconsis-tent with the concept of “water demand management.” One hundred and thirty-five gallons of water per person per day is wasteful and inappropriate.

Build-out reduction program: While we question the decision-making behind the 864 residential water connection commitments that have been previ-ously approved by the CCSD with no water available, we agree with the CCSD’s desire to limit water con-nections to no more than 4,650 as con-firmed by the CCSD’s Board of Directors’ meeting of July 24, 2003. However, we see no commitment to limit any of the 864 total connections. Instead, we see a proposal for a “modular” desalination facility that could be easily enlarged. Or, if actual use is less than 135 gpd, the surplus could be used for additional connec-tions. As noted in the DEIR, the CCSD will become a ‘major player’ in the local real estate market as it buys lots and sells water connections. Stated more simply, the project description overrates desalination and underrates living within local means through local solutions, water recycling, and conservation. Growth-inducing aspects of the desalination proposal are understated.

As already noted, impacts to land use appear to be narrowly defined in the DEIR as consistency with existing regulatory and planning policies. We believe it is also appropriate to document change to land use patterns and consider the environmental consequence of those changes. Certainly increasing the developed land area by 20 percent would be a very significant change and requires evaluation.

We find it ironic that the non-descript, undefined water management program is deemed to have no impact, but that the consequences of the planned fifty-percent quality of life bonus have not been evaluated or even mentioned. This increase in water use if applied outdoors will change a relatively arid urban landscape into an irrigated one....

5.9 - Hydrology and Water Quality As previously stated, the DEIR appears to focus solely on the site specific impacts and ignores the broader impacts of growth, increases to the urban footprint, and increases to the amount of impermeable surfaces contributing to the acknowledged flooding problem.

And again as stated before, the DEIR states for the desalination facility:

“A future project-specific EIR/EIS would need to further determine the potential impacts to storm water and ocean water quality after more details become known regarding the desalina-tion facility. Additionally, the EIR/EIS would analyze alternative desalination facility sites.”

Fragmenting the permitting of a project in order to ‘facilitate’ the permitting process is inappropriate. It is in this document that impacts that should be recognized and evaluated. And it is in this document that alternative siting of the desalination facilities should be addressed.

In the subsection entitled “cumula-tive impacts” it is noted that the project will increase the amount of impervious surface. Yet, with no mention of the proposed 20% growth, it is simply stated that by complying with local ordinances impacts will be less than significant. We see no substitution for the claim that increase in stormwater runoff due to an increase in impervious surface will be mitigated in any way. Cambria has an acknowl-edged flooding problem and we see no quantitative descriptive of how growth

will be mitigated.

6.0 - Alternatives

We believe Table 6.1 heavily and inappropriately leans towards the desalination alternative. Further, using cost and funding availability is an inappropriate screen in a CEQA analysis. Please refer to our more detailed comments on table 3.6. A very significant omission of this CEQA analysis is any discussion of alterna-tive siting for the desalination facility. This document is completely incapable without these siting alternatives. It is inappropriate to segment the permit-ting process and defer discussion of alterna-tives to a later process. As noted, San Simeon Creek has signifi-cant biological, cultural, estuary, and marine resources. Impacts to these resources have not been studied or quantified for this report and no alternatives have been offered. This document is clearly deficient.

Another notable omission from alternatives analysis is brackish water desalination. Brackish water desalina-tion should also be investigated as a viable alternative, as this source water is less energy intensive to desalinate and the brine produced (and subse-quently discharged) is less saline. A possible source for this water could be the contaminated Santa Rosa wells, as this water supply source is not currently considered usable. Imple-mentation of the wish water desalination project here could serve to make use of this otherwise unusable water and reduce the need for expansion of the desalination project. Other possible sources should be investi-gated as well.

In summary, as very clearly shown in Table 3.2, the “quality of life” bonus drives this proposal. Without the “quality of life” bonus, Cambria has a net annual surplus of water of 221 acre-feet. These numbers are based on data that dates to before agricultural irrigation rights in both water basins were retired. Reframing the question without the “quality of life” bonus leads to solutions that include conservation, water recycling, and local storage. It is the “quality of life” bonus that should be more fully discussed in the DEIR, but is instead hidden in footnotes and ancillary documents.

When the average California uses 95 gallons per capita per day, it is appropriate to sacrifice any public resource or endure any impact so that the people of Cambria can have 135 gpcd? Or is the 135 gpcd simply a way to justify more water production and growth? Either way, we feel conserva-tion, water recycling, and perhaps some additional local storage capacity – essentially living within the means of the local aquifer – offer the most sustainable and reasonable solutions for Cambria.
Coastal Commission Saves Trail from County Planning Dept.

County’s inestitute overcomes, fences to come down on Ontario Ridge

Last month, matters were coming to a head on the question of public access to the Ontario Ridge trail in Avila Beach and the sudden appearance of fences across the trail (“You Did Not Just Fence Off My Trail,” February). Just before a dispute resolution hearing on the matter that was scheduled for the February 13 meeting of the California Coastal Commission in Pismo Beach, motivated local hikers discovered a public access easement the County had recorded for the land in 2009 and then forgotten about.

Thus ended the dispute. Kami Griffin, assistant director of the SLO County Planning Department, told New Times “This is frankly embarrassing for the county, and I’m glad that this existing easement was found before the planned Coastal Commission hearing. When we thought about the easement, it changed our position.” Actually, it was even more embarrassing for them.

When Ontario Ridge land owner Rob McCarthy erected a chain link fence topped with barbed wire to block the trail as part of an ongoing dispute with the Coastal Commission over his desire to build a house that would violate multiple land use policies in the County’s Local Coastal Plan (LCP), the County Planning Department consulted the LCP and decided that he did not need a Coastal Development Permit to build the house on the undeveloped land equivalent to a single-family residence, hence his fence was exempt from permit requirements.

Mr. McCarthy planned to build a house on the undeveloped land someday, therefore government officials did not need a Coastal Development Permit to build the house on the undeveloped land.

The fence did not block coastal views as part of an ongoing dispute with the Coastal Commission over his desire to build a house that would violate multiple land use policies in the County’s Local Coastal Plan (LCP), the County Planning Department consulted the LCP and decided that he did not need a Coastal Development Permit to build the house on the undeveloped land equivalent to a single-family residence, hence his fence was exempt from permit requirements.

Public access to the coast was not impaired because when members of the public reached the fence and found their access to Pirate’s Cove blocked, they could turn around, hike back to Shell Beach, get in their cars, and drive in on Cave Landing Road.

This unique reading of coastal policies by the County was the basis of the dispute to be resolved at the scheduled February 13 dispute resolution hearing.

Once again, as so often been the case, the residents of SLO County have the California Coastal Commission to thank for saving us from our County’s perpetually peculiar interpretations of the California Coastal Act.

Climate Action Across America: April 21-25

By Iowa Climate Advocates

It is time for the United States Congress to take climate action. The fight against climate change cannot be won by a single person or a single policy. It will require comprehensive policies supported by Congress and sustained over many decades that lead our country and the world to the climate action we so urgently need. Even if a Congressional representa-tive has opposed climate action in the past, recent events and new scientific assessments give every Congressional representative a chance to recognize the need for climate action.

Recent climate disasters like Hurricane Sandy, Typhoon Haiyan, Colorado flooding, flooding in Miami, western wildfires, and widespread ice storms are moments when people can recognize the need for action. So, too, are new scientific assessments. Last summer, over 200 scientists who identify themselves as evangelical Christians told Congress that action is “urgently needed” to address climate change, and the American Geophysical Union released an updated statement on climate change calling for “urgent action.”

Listening to America’s scientists and responding to climate disasters as they happen, even a skeptical Congress can learn to act on climate change. If you do not believe that Congress can act, please change the way you think. If you don’t believe that Congress can act, then the forces that oppose Congressional action have won. Congress can act – and it is up to us to lead the way.

“Climate Action Across America,” a national initiative organized by Iowa Climate Advocates, is a dedicated week-long effort over Easter recess, April 21 to April 25, to convince Congressional representatives that it is time for climate action.

It is really quite easy. The idea is that groups, large or small, would arrange meetings with their Congressional representatives or just visit their local in-district Congressional offices across the country during that week to share letters, postcards, and petitions from local citizens urging Congress to support action to fight climate change (e.g., a carbon tax, greenhouse gas regulations, hazard mitigation, disaster assistance, etc.)

Great March for Climate Action

The Great March for Climate Action, showing the country growing grassroots support for action on climate, left Los Angeles on March 1. Here are the dates the march will be in selected cities across the country:

Phoenix – April 8
Albuquerque – May 12
Denver – June 17
Omaha – August 1
Des Moines – August 11
Chicago – September 6
Toledo – September 24
Cleveland – October 4
Pittsburgh – October 14
Washington – November 1

Walkers, volunteers, and financial supporters are needed for the whole march, for states, and for individual locations. For more information, including the rest of the scheduled stops in the timeline, please visit www.climatemarch.org.

Awaiting the Moment of Truth

Mark your calendars now for the national climate change and lobby of Congress Marches. Citizens Climate Lobby, June 22 to June 24, in Washington, DC. Whether you can attend or not, this is another moment when Americans can speak up together for climate action.

To get involved with Citizens Climate Lobby, its monthly conference calls, its advocacy efforts for carbon fee legislation, and its regional meetings, visitwww.citizensclimatelobby.org.

On February 3, outside the County Courthouse in downtown SLO, more than sixty people showed up for a candlelight vigil and to send the President a message about the Keystone XL pipeline. The protest came three days after the State Department released its final environmental review, attempting to downplay the massive climate change impacts that approval of the pipeline would trigger. In response, hundreds of vigil like this one took place in cities across the country this evening. As we go to press, Secretary of State Kerry and President Obama have not yet made a decision on Keystone.
New information from the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) showing that even a small fire in a nuclear reactor pool could render 9,400 square miles uninhabitable for decades, displacing as many as 4.1 million people. As the groups point out in their petition, the NRC has never before acknowledged such dire pool fire risks in its reactor licensing decisions. The information undermines the NRC’s conclusion in prior environmental studies for reactor licensing and re-licensing that the impacts of spent fuel storage during reactor operation are insignificant.

In the Peach Bottom study, the NRC also revealed for the first time that the costs of transferring spent fuel out of risky high-density storage pools are economically feasible, given the enormous damage that a pool fire could cause. Additionally, the NRC concluded that the likelihood of spent fuel pool fires could be affected by reactor accidents, and committed to studying the problem further. At their request, the groups are seeking the NRC to conduct a new environmental impact study that incorporates the new and significant information generated as part of the post-Fukushima investigation into the risks of severe accidents in the reactor pools where spent fuel is stored. They contend that, in the meantime, the NRC should suspend all reactor licensing and re-licensing decisions.

Diane Curran, an attorney with Harmon, Curran, Schiff & Eisenberg, L.L.P., and Mindy Goldstein, director of the Turner Environmental Law Clinic at Emory University, filed the petition on behalf of the groups. Curran said “If a pool fire accident occurs such as was studied in the Peach Bottom case study, the resulting widespread contamination and displacement of people could have enormous socioeconomic impacts, matching or exceeding the devastating effects of the Fukushima accident on Japanese society.”

The NRC has concluded that the “safety” benefit of reducing the density of spent fuel in storage pools would not be great enough to justify an order requiring all operating reactor licensees to thin out their pools. But the NRC focused on the risk of cancer, which is only one effect of a pool fire. The groups contend that NRC must protect not only public health and safety but the environment as well. The environment includes broader values, such as ecological health and socioeconomic well-being. The Fukushima accident illustrates the fact that land contamination and relocation of people can have enormous effects on society and the environment, regardless of the number of deaths or cancers.


**San Luis Obispo Hosts 20th International Film Festival**

Environmental offerings on the schedule

Now in its 20th year, the San Luis Obispo Film Festival will feature five days of film screenings, panels, and celebrity-padded special events, March 5-9. Individual screening tickets are not pre-sold, so the best way to guarantee your seat is to buy a Festival Pass. For all regular screenings, all passes allow priority admission for up to 15 minutes before screen time. After that, seats are on a first-come, first-serve basis. Programs of note for the environmentally inclined:

**American Mustang.** The wild horses of the American West in stereoscopic 3-D. Thursday, March 6th, 7 p.m., Park Cinema, Paso Robles. Saturday, March 8th, 10 a.m., Downtown Theater, SLO.

**Wild Horses.** Two generations of women bear witness to the brutality common to wild horse roundups in the American West. Thursday, March 6th, 7 p.m., Park Theater, Paso Robles. Friday, 7 p.m., La Perla del Mar, 205 Windward, Shell Beach.

**Antarctica: A Year on Ice.** What it’s like to live and work at the bottom of the world for a full year. Filmed over 15 years by Frozen Planet photographer Anthony Powell. Thursday, March 6th, 1 p.m., Avila Beach Community Center, 911 San Miguel Street, Friday, March 7th, 10 a.m., Park Theater, SLO.

**A Birder’s Guide to Everything.** David Portnoy, a 15-year-old birding fanatic, thinks he’s made the discovery of a lifetime, and embarks on an epic road trip with his pals to solidify their place in birding history. Things don’t go as planned. Saturday, March 8th, 1 p.m., Downtown Theater, SLO. Sunday, March 9th, 4 p.m., Park Theater, SLO.

**Icebound.** The heroic 1925 Serum Run, in Which more than thirty men, and at least 150 dogs, risked their lives to save children of Nome, Alaska, from a deadly outbreak of diphtheria. Narrated by Sir Patrick Stewart. Saturday, March 8th, 4 p.m., Downtown Theater, SLO. Sunday, March 9th, 4 p.m., Park Theater, SLO.

**Wind.** Is an animated short from Germany about the daily life of people who seem helplessly exposed to the weather. However, the inhabitants have learned to deal with their difficult living conditions. The wind creates a natural system for living. Friday, March 7th, 4 p.m., Avila Beach Community Center.

**For full schedule, go to skolfilmfest.org**

**Uncle Sam’s Nuke Loan: $6.5 Billion**

On February 19, Department of Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz announced a $6.5 billion loan guarantee for new nuclear reactors.

In response, Sierra Club Washington representative Radha Adhar, said “It’s no secret why there hasn’t been new nuclear reactor construction in America in three decades. Nukes are simply too expensive and risky. And with the availability of alternatives like wind and solar, propping up nukes with taxpayer money makes little sense. There are cheaper, cleaner, and faster ways to get to a clean, safe energy future that won’t saddle our children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, and generations to come with toxic, highly volatile nuclear waste.”

Renewable energy technologies like wind and solar have already begun to replace nukes, coal, and natural gas, saving American families money without the threat of toxic pollution. The wind and solar energy sectors both had record-breaking growth in 2012, and support tens of thousands of jobs.

“With immense gratitude,

Elizabeth Bettenhausen
Cambria
Billboards: Signs of Technology Past

By Rosemary Wilvert and Sherri Danoff

Something we take for granted: There are almost no billboards along Highway 101 in the City of San Luis Obispo. Yet immediately beyond city limits, both north and south, a barrage of advertisements impose themselves upon the view.

New billboards are prohibited by both SLO County and City, and their General Plans encourage removal of existing billboards. Unlike the City, the County has not developed a program for retiring the existing billboards. These “grandfathered” billboards are the focus of a group of citizens, Protect Scenic 101 (PS101).

PS101 recognizes that the County’s asset most treasured by residents, its scenery, is also its best tourist draw. Attractive scenery along Highway 101, SLO County’s main travel corridor, is blighted by billboards, whereas Santa Barbara County, our strongest tourism competitor to the south, has largely retired its billboards.

Vested interests might say that tourists need the information on the signs for eating and lodging venues. Maybe in the past, but today travelers rely on publications or online sources with reviews. Billboards, an outdated technology, annoy more than help. PS101 is sensitive, however, to the financial concerns of landowners, sign companies, and advertising businesses. That’s why it uses the word “retire” in its mission statement: “to retire the billboards within unincorporated SLO County’s Hwy 101 view corridor.”

PS101 hopes to engage these vested interests in billboard removal. They, in turn, could benefit from compensations such as public recognition, advertising space in parking structures, or buy-out of the land lease. Donation of grandfathered billboard rights can entitle an income tax deduction.

PS101 is first focusing on billboards from the top of the Grade to the Avila Beach exit at San Luis Bay Drive. If you’re among those who’d like not to have advertisements forced upon you as you drive, there are ways you can help: Participate in PS101 meetings and/or endorse its mission as an individual or an organization.

For more information, email sherri39@charter.net or rwilvert@sbcglobal.net, or call (805) 595-2208 or (805) 544-8365.

Together, we can create an even happier San Luis Obispo County.

Avila Bird Sanctuary is Nigh

Any day now, the official signs will go up proclaiming Avila Beach a bird sanctuary, the culmination of two and half years of relentless effort by Avila resident Shirley Goetz, and testimony to her powers of public persuasion. (See “Bird Sanctuary Taking Off,” April 2013.)

On December 3, the County passed a resolution authorizing the sanctuary. Shirley picked up the signs from The Sign Place in SLO on Valentine’s Day and delivered them to the County Public Works Department.

“This was a valentine to Avila Beach from Mother Nature,” said Shirley, “and the best valentine I ever got.”

Getting ready Public Works staffer Glenn Marshall and Shirley Goetz prepare for the big day.

Then and now In 2011, Shirley Goetz began her determined journey to have Avila Beach declared a bird sanctuary when she discovered someone had illegally knocked swallows nests off the Avila Beach Community Center and broken the eggs (left). By December 2013, she had an official County proclamation in hand declaring the town a sanctuary (right).
Taking Issue

Reviewing problematic environmental coverage & commentary in our local media

“Climate change not settled science,” by Roberta Fonzi and Heather Moreno, The Tribune, February 6, 2014.

Summary: Two Atascadero City Councilmembers who insisted on deleting or watering down all references to the impacts of climate change in their city’s Climate Action Plan respond to the Tribune editorial “Atascadero leaders should have stuck up for science.”

Study, debate and vigorous peer review has determined that global climate change has greatly accelerated since the industrial revolution as a result of human-generated carbon emissions, and we are risking planetary disaster unless the climate change denial industry succeeds in blocking significant action to curb those emissions.

“A free-thinking contrarian, risking ridicule.”

Richard Lindzen has endeared himself to denials by theorizing that global climate change is no big deal. Here’s what fellow MIT professor Kerry Emanuel has to say about his colleague’s widely discredited claims: “It just seems deeply unprofessional and irresponsible to look at this and say, ‘We’re sure it’s not a problem.’ It’s a special kind of risk, because it’s a risk to the collective civilization.” In a room filled with 100 scientists, Lindzen has to say something about his colleague’s widely discredited claims: “I think it’s not a problem.” It’s a special kind of risk, because it’s a risk to the collective civilization.” In a room filled with 100 scientists, Lindzen would be one of three claiming the science of climate change and its impacts is in doubt. In addition to the book we sent to the Atascadero City Council after they stripped out the reality of climate change from their Climate Action Plan (Climate Change Denial: Heads in the Sand), we commend to Fonzi and Moreno’s attention Merchant of Doubt: How a Handful of Scientists Obscured the Truth on Issues from Tobacco to Global Warming for insight on this phenomenon.

Debating tip: When you find it necessary to inform your audience that you are educated, you are losing the argument.

Ultimately Atascadero’s CAP exceeded greenhouse gas reductions mandated by the state without breaking the community bank or destroying its character.

More than 75 percent of the projected emission reductions in Atascadero’s Climate Action Plan are based on the idea that large amounts of commercial development will “hasten ‘retail leakage.’” Basically, the city plans to continue permitting more and more development, based on a study that concluded that this will induce more residents to shop, dine and recreate in Atascadero rather than driving out of town to do so, thereby reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gas emissions. It would be interesting to know if the study factored in the well-known principle that the conversion of land for development constitutes one of the most significant sources of GHG emissions, and the average daily generation of 10,000 car trips and consumption of up to 28,000 KWh hours of energy by a WallMart SuperCenter, and VMT resulting from more people driving into Atascadero to partake of all those enhanced shopping, dining, recreating and SuperWallMart-ing opportunities that will be keeping residents from driving out of Atascadero. If Atascadero’s CAP can’t be met, Atascadero will fall short of its emission targets by a wide margin.

Upshot: The difference between the relatively quick acceptance of the facts of disease transmission via microbes in the 1880s and the inordinate dispute over the facts of climate disruption via the combustion of fossil fuels a hundred years later is explained by the existence, in the latter instance, of a larger lobby of fossil fuel consumers in government-funded laboratories with plenty of resources… Evidently this wasn’t “heroic” enough for the screenwriters, who spend the rest of the film inventing conflicts and dramas for him to overcome.” In the course of attempting to deny science, Fonzi and Moreno mistake Hollywood for history.

* It is perhaps fitting that a historical anecdote chosen to support climate change denial happens to be false. The belief that Louis Pasteur was prosecuted and driven into exile comes from the 1936 Warner Bros movie The Story of Louis Pasteur. It was an invention of the film makers, as noted by the New York Times, which liked the movie even though its dramatic incidents, which obviously made an impression on councilmembers Fonzi and Moreno, do not correspond with “such biographical evidence as one might encounter in said Britannica,” and in fact “nothing of the sort happened.” The blog of onecologist Elizabeth Kingsley, “And you call yourself a scientist!...”, dedicated to critiquing Hollywood’s treatment of scientific subjects, points out that Pasteur’s scientific career was spent in government-funded laboratories with plenty of resources…

**We call upon precedent. In the 19th century, Louis Pasteur, a French chemist, advocated the theory that germs cause disease. He was ridiculed, persecuted, even prosecuted by the state and forced to flee France for a number of years. Pasteur was right, the vast majority of medical doctors were wrong as we now know, resulting in millions of lives being saved.”

Louis Pasteur was not right because he was, as the city councilmembers fancy themselves, a contrarian voice of dissent attacked by establishment critics, but because his theory was supported by data and scientific observation. (Fonzi and Moreno and their fellow deniers more closely resemble the French medical establishment of the 1880s, fiercely defending their beliefs against unwelcome information.) Pasteur’s predictive models for microbes and immunity conferred by vaccination proved to be correct. The predictions of climate scientists in the 1980s concerning increased atmospheric carbon pacing increased global temperatures, increasing glacial melt, sea level rise, the rate of species extinction, size and intensity of wildfires and extreme weather events, etc., have also proven to be correct -- as and if anything, overly conservative.

Hey, science is never settled.

**“Climate change not settled science,” by Roberta Fonzi and Heather Moreno, The Tribune, February 6, 2014.**

**Upshot: The difference between the relatively quick acceptance of the facts of disease transmission via microbes in the 1880s and the inordinate dispute over the facts of climate disruption via the combustion of fossil fuels a hundred years later is explained by the existence, in the latter instance, of a larger lobby with a heavier investment in the status quo. That lobby and its line of defense & denial stretches from the executive suites of Exxon Mobil (and, until March 2012, General Motors) to the disciples of Ayn Rand, the majority party in the U.S. House of Representatives, and the Atascadero City Council – all pledging fervent allegiance to the status quo. The logical incoherence of their position is most visible when they style themselves as free-thinking rebels against the establishment. As Climate Change Denial: Heads in the Sand points out, denial is a common human defense, one that “can become a pathology when it endangers the ecosystems humans [and all other living things] rely on.”

**Postscript:** On February 14, the National Science Foundation released the results of a poll that found one in four Americans are unaware that the Earth revolves around the Sun. Looking at the bright side, Daily Kos observed “this does not mean, as several outlets are reporting, that… 26% think the Sun revolves around the Earth. We don’t yet know exactly how they phrased the question. Maybe most of that 26% gave ‘I don’t know’ as an answer. Maybe. All we can definitively say from the report is that only 74% of Americans know the fact that the Earth revolves around the Sun.”
Classifieds

Next issue deadline is March 14. 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 sierrachub@sierrahub.org

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FROM THE RED HILLS

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Use in and for Good Health
A Special Event for Members of the Cal French Circle

As a benefit of membership in the Cal French Circle of donors to the Santa Lucia Chapter, our most generous supporters will get personal time with distinguished visiting environmental leader Rob Caughlan at a 6 p.m. wine & cheese reception prior to our March 28 program at the Steynberg Beverage Co., Santa Margarita. Leader: Craig Deutsche, craig.deutsche@gmail.com or 310-477-6670. CNRCC Desert Committee.

Sat., Mar. 15th-17th, Turtle Mts. Wilderness Restoration. Annual wilderness trip with BLM and CA-NV Wilderness Committee, celebrating 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act and more. Tall tales, nostalgia, and celebratory good cheer. Contact Vicky Hoover, 415-977-5527 or hoover@sierraclub.org. CNRCC Wilderness Committee.

Sat., Sun., Mar. 22nd, 9 a.m. Adobe Trail Hike. Eight-mile, mildly strenuous hike through range grass and up oak-covered hill, north of the Sierra Madre range, continuing to hilltop for views of Mt. Abel and Mt. Pinos. Bring sturdy shoes, hat, sunscreen, water, and dress in layers. Meet at carpool pt., take Hwy. 101, then west on Hwy. 166, going under the underpass and turning left on Hutton Rd. Park along roadside at intersection of Hutton Rd. and Cuyama Lane. Option to meet at trailhead at 9:30 a.m.: from Hwy. 101, drive east on Hwy. 166 for 22 miles—trailhead on left side of the road. Pass through unlocked gate for parking. Trail is directly behind green gate. If you reach Rock Front Ranch, you have gone too far. Leader: Andrea Ortiz, 264-4672.

Sat., Mar. 22nd, 10 a.m. Sycamore Springs Trekking Pole Hike. "Pole-cats" dedicated to leading local Sierra Club groups on day hikes and modeling the benefits of trekking poles. This outing is 2 miles, 600 ft. elevation change. Meet near the entrance to Sycamore Springs Resort, 1215 Avila Beach Drive. Confirm beforehand with Leader: David George, 5575 or likkipedex@gmail.com.

Sat., Apr. 5th, 8 a.m. Machesna Wilderness Hike. Four-mile hike to Teutonia Pk. in afternoon and evening pouthick. Six-mile Saturday hike around Harber PK. from Hole-in-the-Wall. Take plenty of water, and dress in layers for the weather. Meet at Washburn day use area of San Simeon State Park, about 2 miles north of Cambria for carpool. Those interested contact Vicky Hoover, 415-977-5527 or hoover@sierraclub.org. CNRCC Wilderness Committee.

Activities sponsored by other organizations

Sat., Sun., Apr. 12th-13th Wind Wolves Preserve Nature Festival. Wind Wolves is a 95,000-acre nature preserve owned by The Wildlands Conservancy in the San Emidgido Mountains. It boasts a great diversity of habitats, including grassland, salish scrub, riparian woodland and oak woodland. Wind Wolves invites you to come explore during their Spring Nature Festival. There will be hikes, presentations and family activities led by nature educators and nature enthusiasts. All events are free. TWC wants to get people in the region out to Wind Wolves to inspire the next generations of land stewards. Reservations for events required, check out the Wind Wolves Facebook page, website, or call for more information: 661-858-1115. www.wildlandsconservancy.org/preserve_windwolves.html.