



SIERRA
CLUB

May 2005
Volume 42, No. 5

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GENERAL MEETING

"The Art of Outings"
Wednesday, May 18th,
5:30 - 7:00 pm,
- See page 2

Mark your calendar:

June 21: Democracy and
Environmental Activism,
with Peter Douglas

August 20: **Annual Picnic**



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SANTA LUCIAN



Protecting and
Preserving the
Central Coast

The official newsletter of the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club • San Luis Obispo County, California

Our Toxic Burden

Pesticides are Taking an Internal Toll

The pesticide lindane is banned in 17 countries, but we still use it in the U.S. as a seed treatment and head lice shampoo for children. According to the Pesticide Action Network, one dose down the bathtub drain is enough to pollute 6 million gallons of water and costs \$250,000 an ounce to clean up.

Children in the city of Seattle who eat food bought off supermarket shelves have pesticide residues in their bodies six times higher than that of children who eat at least 70 percent organically grown food.

Cancer registry data and epidemiology surveys in Sweden and the United States show the correlation between the appearance and increase of Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma and several pesticides linked to it — a pattern of spikes in the disease after each chemical was first registered for use, and declines after it was banned

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Pam Heatherington (right), Executive Director of ECOSLO, chats with Mary-Ann Warmerdam, Director of California's Department of Pesticide Regulation. Representatives of ECOSLO, the Santa Lucia Chapter, California Rural Legal Assistance and Neighbors at Risk met with the DPR chief three months after she was appointment by Governor Schwarzenegger last October to guide California's policies on pesticides.

California, Fund the Coastal Commission

By Mark Massara
Director, Sierra Club Coastal
Programs

When I am feeling discouraged, I draw inspiration from all those Californians who, more than thirty years ago, through their tireless work, passed an initiative that led to the creation of our Coastal Act to protect

California's coast for future generations. Their selfless effort led to the creation of our Coastal Commission which has succeeded in protecting so much of our precious coastline

from developer's constant attacks. The pressure from development has never and will likely never go away, and that is why we owe it not just to

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Gary Lynch

Genetically Modified Truth

Do Cal Poly's Genetic Engineers Know What "Organic" Means?

By Jesse Arnold

I've been gardening organically for the last 30 years. I've grown corn over those years and have had very little trouble with corn earworms. Last year, most of my ears had no worm damage.

So the story in the *Tribune* headlined "Organic is good in theory, not in market, study says" caught my eye. The accompanying photo showed an ear of corn

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"Every good thing,
great and small,
needs defense."

— John Muir



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Outings, events, and
more!

Santa Lucia Chapter General Meeting

GETTING OUT & ABOUT IN SLO

Exploring, enjoying, and protecting our corner of the planet

Thousands of visitors and residents of San Luis Obispo have been exposed to the natural beauty of this area through outings led by members of the Santa Lucia chapter. The Chapter establishes and maintains local trails, including the Felsman Loop, Bishop Peak Trail, Poly "P" Trail, and Eagle Rock Nature Trail, and publishes the San Luis Obispo County Trail Guide, now in its third edition.

Join Gary Felsman for an evening of everything you need to know about our dunes, sandspits, grasslands, coastal scrub, mud flats and Morros, and how to enjoy them to the fullest.

Refreshments provided

Wednesday, May 18, 5:30 p.m.
Ludwick Center, Room A
864 Santa Rosa Street (corner of Mill)
San Luis Obispo



Environmental artist Carol Paulsen explains activism through art at The Open Space of Democracy: Is Environmentalism Dead?, the topic of the April General Meeting.

New Chapter Historian Feeling Gray and Green

By John B. Ashbaugh, Ph.D.

When I first joined the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club, Jerry Brown was still Governor and Jimmy Carter was in the White House. I'd just moved to San Luis Obispo after a couple of internships with the Brown Administration in Sacramento: I'd decided that the best place to test drive my new Masters in City Planning (Berkeley, 1976) would be in a local agency rather than the Resources Agency in Sacramento, and SLO County was hiring a team of people to write a whole new General Plan. I got lucky, and so did my new bride, Patricia, who has been a Public Defender for SLO County ever since.

I've never regretted the decision to come to the Central Coast, and I've never backed off from my Sierra Club attachment. When I was first elected to the Executive Committee in 1980, Jan Clucas was Chapter Chair – and now I'm replacing Jan as the Chapter Historian. It's an honor to try to once again to fill her shoes, and now that I'm a history teacher (a career change in the mid-1990's), it seems right to be asked to be in charge of the Chapter's archives. I guess my growing proportion of gray hairs is a good accent to my solid-green ideology.

You can expect a regular column in the *Santa Lucian* from me and a collaborator or two. If you have any stories to tell about how this Chapter has fought the good fight, let me know. I hope to highlight some of the best untold stories about how this Chapter has helped to protect the environmental legacy of San Luis Obispo County. There are some genuine heroes who have "gone to the barricades" in fighting offshore oil, Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, and any number of damaging development projects throughout the Central Coast. And there are stirring stories about how we have put together coalitions to build support for new State Parks, Nipomo Dunes Wildlife Refuge, Carrizo Plains National Monument, and on and on. There are a few disappointments along the way: We never did achieve the creation of a Big Sur National Park or Monument. And we are still fighting a sometimes-lonely but always significant battle to strengthen regulatory protection and public access on Hearst Ranch.

I'll never forget the admonition of Gary Snyder -- poet laureate of California and a friend of Jerry Brown -- to a small group of us in Santa Cruz one evening in 1972, when he pointed out that in the long run, nature has incredible healing power and there is *nothing* we small-minded humans can do that can disrupt the evolutionary power of natural laws: Long after humans become extinct on this planet, entirely new orders of plants and animals will arise from the primordial ooze that we have "left behind." Is that a comforting thought? I'm not sure – but meanwhile, I'm planning to shoulder arms and join up once again with this small but energetic group of environmentalists who fight the good fight every day to prevent the extinction of all life forms in this corner of the planet. I look forward to working with you, too – whether you're coming of age in the New Millennium, or coming from the Jerry Brown/Jimmy Carter generation like me.

SANTA LUCIAN

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John Ashbaugh
MEMBER

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The Executive Committee meets the fourth Friday of every month at 5:00 p.m. at the chapter office, located at 1204 Nipomo St., San Luis Obispo. All members are welcome to attend.

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Forest Campaign Intensifies as Final Plan Looms

Los Padres Targeted for Drilling

By Bill Corcoran
Sierra Club Senior Regional Representative

The pressures on the national forests of central and southern California continue to grow. More and more homes crowd up to the boundaries of the forests, industry seeks permission to exploit the land for profit, and all levels of government treat the forests as a convenient location for power lines and highways. The Forest Service has targeted the Los Padres National Forest for oil drilling despite potential harm to the endangered condor and the further diminishment this would bring to the wildness and

beauty of our forest.

While the Los Padres National Forest has not yet faced the kind of urban encroachment and damage that has put so much of the national forests to the south at risk, that will change as California's population continues to grow. In particular, demands for increased motorcycle and all-terrain vehicle use of the Los Padres will increase, bringing more noise and pollution to the forest.

Bringing people together to keep our national forests great places to

visit is the mission of the Sierra Club's Southern California Forests Campaign. Sierra Club volunteers and staff are working to ensure a better future for the Los Padres, Angeles, San Bernardino and Cleveland National Forests, which together cover over 3.5 million acres stretching from Big Sur to Baja.

In August, the Forest Service is expected to release the final version of its management plan for the Los Padres National Forest, which will set its direction for the next fifteen years.

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Desal Task Force Meets

By Jack and Bea Morrow
Co-Chairs, Desalination Task Force

The Chapter's Desal Task Force met on March 16 at the home of the Morrows in Cambria.

Fourteen members were present, including six Sierra Club representatives and the Chair of the Cambria Community Services District, a marine biologist and a geophysicist, as well as several people actively working on the project.

A major subject was steps taken or planned to mitigate possible adverse impacts of a desalination plant in Cambria, including damage to marine life from intake of seawater and discharge of brine.

We hope a model approach can be developed as a guide for Sierra Club policy on this issue.

Tanks Again

When the County Planning Commission approved the Cambria Community Service District's plan to seize and violate a conservation easement by cutting down trees in one of the world's most endangered pine forests to build new water tanks (see "Tanks!," January SL), ECOSLO and the Santa Lucia chapter immediately appealed the decision to the Coastal Commission.

On April 14, ECOSLO's Mike Zelina and a stalwart Sierra Club crew -- Chapter Chair Karen Merriam, Great Coastal Places Campaign Chair Tarren Collins, and Coastal Program Director Mark Massara -- traveled to Santa Barbara and testified for the protection of threatened Monterey pines and the

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Diablo Canyon Report is a Disaster Area

Public Utilities Commission Urged to Go Back to Drawing Board

Over the course of the evening of April 19 and the afternoon of the following day, San Luis Obispo residents stepped up to the microphone in the community room of the City/County Library and told the California Public Utilities Commission that their Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) on the proposed replacement of the steam generators at the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power plant just doesn't cut it.

PG&E wants to extend the life of the aging plant out to 2025 by replacing the generators, which cur-

rently are predicted to fail by 2014. The DEIR on the project refrains from studying the environmental impacts of another eleven years of operating a nuclear power plant at Diablo Canyon -- producing and storing that much more nuclear waste on site, destroying that much more fish and marine habitat via the plant's ocean water cooling and thermal discharge -- or the advantages of replacing the plant with an alternative clean energy facility.

At the meeting, the Santa Lucia

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SHOTS FIRED IN ESTUARY

State Fish & Game Commissioner Reviews Morro Bay Hunt

Bob Hattoy of the California Fish and Game Commission came to Morro Bay on April 18 to hear the concerns of local citizens about the annual wildfowl hunt in the Morro Bay National Estuary.

The Commissioner interviewed and received hunt data from representatives of the Sierra Club, Morro Coast Audubon Society, Morro Bay City Council, a Morro Bay kayaking outfitter, and naturalist Mandy Davis, who has been leading efforts to have the annual hunt restricted as to time and place.

Surveying the estuary from a promontory in Morro Bay State Park, Hattoy

was dismayed to see the short distance to shore and live-aboards from the primary hunting areas in the estuary's grassy islands, saying "clearly something needs to be done" about the hunt.

The Sierra Club wants the hunt banned due to public safety concerns, lack of enforcement,

and the pressure placed on the black brant, whose numbers are declining, during its annual migration. "We find there is no alternative to an outright ban on hunting in the estuary," said the Club's Santa Lucia Chapter Chair Karen Merriam.

The Fish and Game Commission will begin the process of reviewing state wildfowl regulations on June 24.



Left to right: Morro Bay City Councilwoman Betty Winholtz, Morro Coast Audubon Education Chair Kara Hagedorn, California Fish and Game Commissioner Bob Hattoy and naturalist Mandy Davis survey the hunting grounds in the Morro Bay estuary.

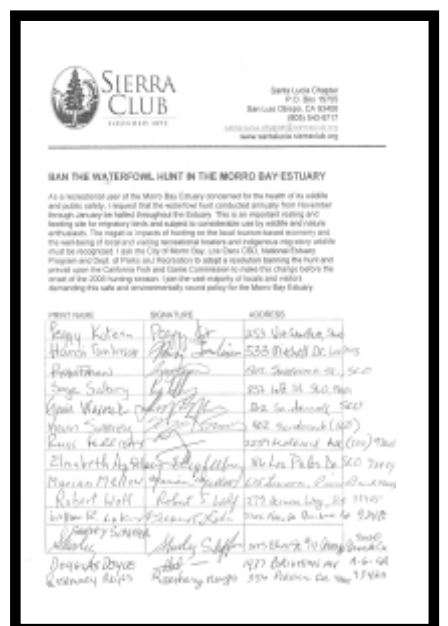


Before the first CPUC meeting, David Weisman and some friends from the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility demonstrated the cost of going ahead with PG&E's proposed project at Diablo Canyon.

Sign the Hunt Ban

Go to the Chapter's website to download, print out and send us the petition to ban hunting of wildfowl on Morro Bay: www.santalucia.sierraclub.org/estuary/estuary.html

Read the eye-opening article, "Democracy and Mandy Davis in Morro Bay" on Earth Island's on-line eco journal, www.faultline.org/archives/002224.html



Pesticides

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or restricted. The spike in NH lymphoma in the US began in 1947, two years after the introduction of 2,4-D -- aka "The mother of all pesticides."

The cumulative weight of statistics like these led to the drafting and passage of the Stockholm Conven-

hoops before it can regulate the infamous chemicals banned by the treaty, or permit essential additions — such as lindane — to the list.

The Sierra Club and seventeen other national environmental organizations have called on Congress to

"Corporations...are not controlling the full costs of their operation, and we are picking up the tab for their externalities in form of disease, illness, lower immunity, altered reproduction, birth defects, cancer... That's a mortal trespass, an unforgivable transgression that must be stopped."

-- Corporate biographer Jack Doyle, *Multinational Monitor*

tion on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the first global agreement ever to seek to ban an entire class of chemicals because of their effects on human health. The treaty will phase out or ban outright 12 of the world's most dangerous chemicals, including 8 pesticides. After 3 years of negotiations, the treaty went into effect in May 2004, but the US Senate has not yet ratified it.

The Bush administration wants procedural hurdles written into the US implementation of the Stockholm Convention that will hamstring the Environmental Protection Agency and force it to jump through endless

demand strong implementation language in the ratification of the Stockholm Convention by the United States, dispensing with the cost-benefit standard that has historically rendered the EPA powerless to regulate any substance, including asbestos, without meeting an impossible burden of proof. Precaution in the face of toxic chemical threats must become the watchword and the means by which US chemicals policy is streamlined and brought into the 21st century, and the EPA is given the authority to ban or restrict persistent bioaccumulative toxics.

TAKE ACTION

When she came to SLO in January, CA Dept. of Pesticide Regulation Director Mary-Ann Warmerdam agreed to assist in providing regional water boards with data on pesticides in agricultural runoff, and consider increasing the frequency of pesticide training for farm workers and creating a state-run test plot for research of organic and "least hazardous pest control" techniques.

She has yet to follow through on any of these commitments. Feel free to encourage her.

Contact:

Mary-Ann Warmerdam, Director
Dept. of Pesticide Regulation
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95812
(916) 445-4300

Chapter Conservation Chair Appointed to Toxics Committee

Santa Lucia Chapter Conservation Committee Chair Pam Heatherington has been appointed to the seven-member national Sierra Club Toxics Committee.

Toxic chemical pollution threatens every American family and every community. In a single year, state and federal governments allowed polluters to dump more than 175 million pounds of cancer-causing chemicals into our air and water.

The committee will address Superfund cleanup, brownfields re-

development, hazardous substances, public health as it relates to toxics in our environment, and many other issues.

"My primary goal on the committee will be to press the issue of the body burden created by pesticides in every man, woman and child, and the need to hold the manufacturers accountable for their product's ill effects," said Heatherington.

The national committee reports to the Club's Environmental Quality Strategy Team (EQST).

Genetic

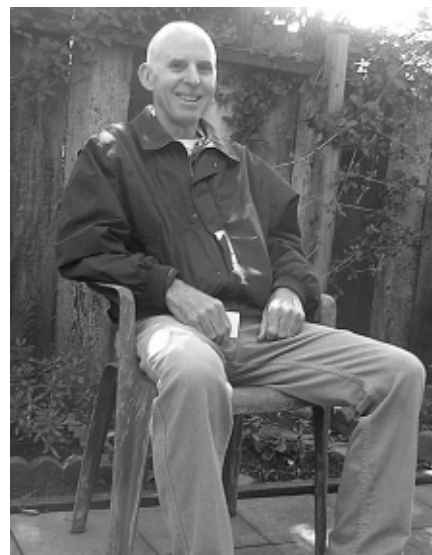
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being eaten by two worms. Above the photo were the words "organic or engineered corn?" The caption under the photo said, "Corn earworms feast on unengineered corn in a test plot at Cal Poly."

The picture and the words implied that Cal Poly grew a test plot of organic corn, that the corn being devoured by worms was organic corn, and that the organic corn was not well accepted in the market test done by Cal Poly.

Only trouble is, none of that is true. Cal Poly didn't grow or sell any organic corn for its study. The corn being devoured by worms was simply unsprayed conventional corn.

Since Cal Poly didn't sell any organic corn in its test, it had no market data to support a conclusion about how organic corn does in the market.



Jesse Arnold

Organic agriculture is being attacked by the biotech industry because it challenges the need for genetically engineered crops. Please go to a farmers market, talk to an organic grower and learn first hand what organic is about. Organic growers work in harmony with nature. They use methods that have stood the test of time. They enrich their soil with compost and other natural fertilizers to grow strong plants which resist diseases and pests. They use natural predators and barriers and least toxic natural ingredients to control pests. They protect our environment and provide wholesome food for us.

Don't Answer That

In formulating their study of corn engineered to produced the pesticide Bt, a Cal Poly researcher was quoted as saying two of the questions they were researching were "Can I produce the corn cheaper, and will the public buy it?"

But when their report came out ("Consumer Response to Bt Sweet Corn in a Politically-Charged Environment"), it gave no cost figures on producing Bt sweet corn and gave no figures on sales of Bt sweet corn.

One could guess that no cost figures were given for growing Bt sweet corn because producing it is not cheaper. It is no secret that Bt corn seed costs more than conventional corn seed.

And since no sales figures were given for Bt corn, one could guess that there was not an overwhelming demand from consumers for Bt sweet corn.

The researchers did do an opinion survey, asking consumers to identify the most important factors in their

choice of sweet corn. The top three factors were "Appearance" 36%; "Prefers Organic" 24%; and "Quality" (flavor and freshness, etc.) 18%.

Growing Bt corn could help with appearance by reducing worm damage, but the Cal Poly researchers found that the only way they could produce corn with zero worm damage was to grow Bt corn *and spray it*. That certainly doesn't support the argument that growing Bt corn means you don't have to use insecticide, especially when you consider that Bt corn has the pesticide engineered into every cell of the plant.

The corn itself is registered as an insecticide with the EPA.

Those who "prefer organic," (24%), certainly don't want Bt corn, and Bt corn has nothing additional to offer for qualities such as flavor and freshness, (18%).

Clearly, Bt sweet corn is not the choice of most consumers. And as more consumers learn how little safety testing has been done on Bt corn, fewer are likely to want to try it.

The Bt/ottom Line

Consumers should understand that genetic engineering is based on patenting of seeds, which places in the hands of a few the genetic heritage of the food crops we all depend on to live.

Here are my suggestions for consumers:

1. Demand labeling of genetically engineered food. Don't buy Bt corn and other GE crops.
2. Grow some of your own food.
3. Buy fresh produce from a certified organic farmer at a farmers' market. Buy organic or ask for organic products at the super market or wherever you shop.
4. Buy produce from a community-supported agriculture farm. You contract with the farmer to pay a set amount for a weekly delivery of produce. Call 756-6139 or email ssarrouf@calpoly.edu. Website: www.calpoly.edu/~sarc/csa.htm.

Remember: Buyer beware! Ask the genetic engineering proponents to show you a non-industry-sponsored long-term study that shows the crop they are promoting is safe for human consumption or for the environment. Remember the wise consumer saying: If it seems too good to be true, it probably is.

Tanks

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perpetuity of conservation easements, the Commission found substantial issue in the appeal and tabled the permit.

"With the ink barely dry on the Hearst Ranch Conservation easement, we are faced with a precedent-setting threat to the integrity of conservation easements," said Collins. "Land nearby that is not covered by an easement could be condemned if the CSD needs more land at the tank site."

The Commission will take up the tanks and alternative plans at its June meeting.

Calendar of Events

Chapter Programs and Planning

May 15 10:00 am	Chapter leadership meeting: Karen Merriam's home
May 17 4:15 pm	Conservation Committee Meeting
May 21	Bob Jones Trail Day - volunteer to table!
May 1, 5:30 pm	General Meeting - "Focus on Outings"
May 27 5:00 pm	Executive Committee Meeting
June 4 - 5	Sierra Club California Convention, Rancho El Chorro
June 8 5:00 pm	State Parks HCP Sooping meeting, Embassy Suites, SLO
June 2 4:15 pm	Conservation Committee Meeting
June 21 6:30 pm	General Meeting, Ludwick Ctr - "Activism and Democracy"
June 24 5:00 pm	Chapter Executive Committee Meeting
Aug. 20 12:00pm	Chapter Annual Summer Picnic

Forests

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The draft plan for the Los Padres did not recommend formal designation of important wilderness-quality areas and, like the plans for the other three forests in the region, emphasized motorized recreation over sustainable, non-motorized recreation.

A forward-thinking final plan will protect wilderness, wild streams, and non-motorized recreational opportunities. A failed plan will allow for more development, leaving the forest less beautiful and less healthy.

When the final plan is released, it will cap a three year process by the Forest Service, the federal agency that manages these forests for us, to develop a new management plan for the Los Padres and the other three southern California national forests. Conservation groups, including the Sierra Club, assembled a Conservation Alternative for the agency to consider as it developed its plan. Last year, thousands of Sierra Club members attended Forest Service



open houses and submitted comments on the draft management plans.

Their comments were important because the draft management plan from the Forest Service fell far short of the levels of protection needed to halt, much less reverse, the overall decline of our region's forests.

The plan failed to recommend permanent protection for a number of wilderness quality areas on the Los Padres, including additions to the Chumash, Sespe and Matilija wilderness areas.

Federal designation of rivers and streams as Wild and Scenic brings stronger protection of recreational and environmental values. An example of a missed opportunity in the draft plan for increased protection is

San Carpoforo Creek, which was not studied in the forest plan update for eligibility as a Wild and Scenic River, even though it was nominated by conservation groups.

San Carpoforo Creek is one of the two most important steelhead streams in San Luis Obispo County and provides habitat for the threatened red-legged frog and sensitive yellow-legged frog.

The impending release of the final plan is a great opportunity to get involved in protecting these magnificent wild places so near our own backyards. It's up to us to protect our forest for a generation to come.

You can keep up-to-date about opportunities to take simple actions to protect the forest by filling out and returning the postcard you'll find in this issue. If there is no postcard in your copy, visit www.sierraclub.org/ca/socalforests and join the campaign there.

You can also help the campaign develop a list of the ten most threatened places on the Cleveland, Los Padres, Angeles, and San Bernardino National Forests. If there is a place you think is suffering from abuse or neglect, let us know through our website (www.sierraclub.org/ca/socalforests) or by calling campaign

Coastal Commission

continued from page 1

ourselves, not just to our children and our grandchildren, but also to the memory of those who came before and did this monumental work, to protect the Coastal Commission and to make it stronger.

The Commission is not popular with everyone in Sacramento. Some of our public officials, under pressure from special interests eager to develop the coast, see the Coastal Commission as an agency that interferes with interests of their donors. But since the Commission is very popular with those who enjoy the beach, public access, clean surf and protected natural areas on the coast, efforts to get rid of the Commission are often "behind the scenes" rather than in full view of the public.

The fastest, most effective way to hamper the Coastal Commission is to cut their budget so they don't have adequate funding to do their job. Year after year, the Commission faces unreasonable budget cuts which make it harder and harder for them to fulfill their mandate of protecting the coast.

The only way to stop this "chipping away at the Coastal Commission" is to find a guaranteed, sufficient funding source for coastal protection in California.

The Los Angeles Times agrees that this is essential. The Times ran an editorial on February 19 in which they said: "Californians created the Coastal Commission in 1976 to protect the states prized shoreline. In its nearly 30 years, the agency and its leaders have demonstrated extraordinary ingenuity and commitment to that task. But without permanent and stable funding, the state can't do what voters asked it to."

organizer John Monsen at 213-387-6528 x203.

Working together, we can make great progress in protecting our local national forests for a generation to come.

TAKE ACTION

By returning the postcard enclosed in this newsletter, the Sierra Club's Southern California Forests Campaign will keep you up-to-date on the final management plans for Los Padres National Forest.

We'll also alert you to simple actions you can take to keep the Los Padres a great place to visit.

To learn more about the campaign, visit

www.sierraclub.org/ca/socalforests or call Campaign Organizer John Monsen at 213-387-6528 x203.



San Luis Obispo Water Reclamation Facility

SLO to Reduce Toxics from Wastewater Plant

By Andrew Christie

The chemical family of trihalomethanes (THMs) have been known to cause tumors, cancer and other serious diseases in animals. One – chlorodibromomethane — is on the Prop. 65 lists of human carcinogens.

To bring the permit for San Luis Obispo's water reclamation plant into compliance with the California Toxics Rule, the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) has been demanding a reduction in the amount of THM's coming from the city plant and flowing into San Luis

Obispo Creek as a byproduct of the plant's chlorine disinfection process.

The City balked, saying it would need at least five years to implement reduction measures and offering to place a conservation easement on

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Join our E-mail Alert List
Get notification of important upcoming meetings and decisions on issues of environmental concern for Central Coast residents. Send your e-mail address to sierra8@charter.net (Sorry, Santa Lucia Chapter members only.)

I couldn't agree more. I wrote a Letter to the Editor in response, as did another of our Great Coastal Places activists, which the Times printed.

Please help me spread the word. Take a minute today to write a letter to the editor of your local paper. Your letters can help show the paper how much we all care about the coast and the Commission, and if the letters get published, they help edu-

cate our friends, neighbors and even our decision makers. After you send your letter, send me a copy, too (savethecoast@sierraclub.org). That way I will know to keep my eyes open for your letter, and it lets me collect all of our letters to the editor, so we can hand deliver them to decision-makers in the future.

Thanks for your commitment to protecting California's great coastal places.

Parks Habitat Conservation Plan Taking Shape Off-Road Vehicle Lobby Ready to Rumble, June 8

The California Department of Parks and Recreation, in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Department of Fish and Game is preparing a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for all State Park units in the San Luis Obispo Coast District.

The Parks Dept. decided to pursue a plan after the Sierra Club sued them for allowing Pacific snowy plovers and their nests to fall prey to off-road vehicle use at Oceano Dunes (see "Plovers Win," January 2005 SL). An HCP is a federal requirement, to obtain an "incidental take" permit allowing the harassment, harm, pursuit, shooting, wounding, killing, capture or collection of endangered or threatened species as "incidental" to visitor and park operations.

The Habitat Conservation Plan must describe how harmful actions will be minimized or mitigated. Once it has an approved HCP, State Parks can request permits from the Fish and Wildlife Service for take of the plover, Morro shoulderband snail, California red-legged frog, and steelhead trout.

A sense of how the Fish and Wildlife Service currently views wildlife conservation, can be gleaned from the words of Paul Henson, assistant manager of the agency's California-Nevada Operations Office. As recently reported by the *Tribune*, Henson had this to say about the federal decision to reduce designated critical habitat for the plover: "There are going to be areas where beach recreation should be a priority. If that impacts plovers, hopefully they are doing well enough in other areas that they can withstand that contact."

At an April 19 HCP workshop, attendees broke up into small groups, with one person at each table taking notes and presenting concerns and questions to Parks officials as the basis for discussion at the June meeting, posted on Parks' website at www.slostateparks.com. Off-road enthusiasts and industry lobbyists are expected to turn out in force for the final HCP meeting, scheduled for June 8 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in SLO, from 5:30 to 9 p.m.

Can Cayucos and Morro Bay Clean Up Their Act?

Find Out on May 19; Senator Boxer Ready to Help

Here's one of the Central Coast's less felicitous distinctions: Cayucos and Morro Bay are two of only three communities on the West Coast that, three decades after the Clean Water Act was passed, still get a waiver from that law and pumps primary-treated wastewater – the lowest form of sewage treatment – into the ocean. Everybody else has long since upgraded to secondary or tertiary treatment – the highest level – before releasing their wastewater into the environment.

Last June, a lot of concerned Cayucos and Morro Bay citizens,

SLO Wastewater

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surrounding undeveloped land meanwhile so as to somehow mitigate any potential damage to the environment and public health by its ongoing toxic discharge.

In public comment on the proposed discharge permit renewal on March 25, the Santa Lucia Chapter and ECOSLO blasted the City for both these responses. Chapter and ECOSLO staff met with plant officials and water board staff in February and asserted that, at minimum, simple operational changes should be implemented to reduce THMs as interim measures, with monitoring to gauge compliance. Water Board member Bruce Daniels said **“The City should be ashamed of itself for even suggesting a conservation easement as mitigation, setting aside land while continuing to pollute.”**

The water board is legally barred from ordering a discharger to implement a specific pollution reduction method, and may only set targets for reduction. The Chapter suggested that interim mitigation goals could be written into the compliance schedule in such a way that their description would require the use of the “simple operational changes” proposed without the discharger being directly ordered to use a specific method.

Water board staff agreed, and added the following wording to the plant's Waste Discharge Requirements:

“Discharger shall implement any changes, or combination of changes, that the Discharger determines will be effective in reducing trihalomethanes,” or “may instead implement alternatives to any feasible changes identified by the Trihalomethanes Reduction Evaluation, if the Discharger demonstrates to the Executive Officer's satisfaction that the alternatives will have comparable efficacy in reducing trihalomethanes.”

The Water Board agreed that everything possible must be done to shorten the five years claimed to be necessary to bring the plant into compliance with the law. The Board also approved an “alternative chlorine limitation” and increase in monitoring.

along with ECOSLO, Surfrider, Sierra Club, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and the Ocean Conservancy, all crowded into the Vet's Hall to strongly encourage the Cayucos Sanitary District and the Morro Bay City Council (both in charge of the two communities' wastewater treatment under the Joint Powers Agreement) to kick their Clean Water Act waiver habit and go to full secondary treatment, and preferably tertiary. The Joint Powers agreed, and ten months later came back with a plan and a timeline: They could complete the wastewater plant upgrade...in fifteen years.

Back everyone came on April 6 – crowding into Cayucos Elementary auditorium this time – to point out to the Joint Powers that nobody has ever taken 15 years (Los Osos doesn't count) to build or upgrade a wastewater treatment plant. The Santa Lucia Chapter urged multi-tasking to perform different tasks simultaneously and telescope the timeline, and warned that Proposition 50 funds that are still available for local wastewater treatment projects won't be available much longer, and are unlikely to be replaced by other major bond funds years any time soon. We also informed the Powers that Senator Barbara Boxer's office had told us the previous day that, once the communities have a project on the table, the Senator is willing to step in and assist in securing federal funds to help build it.

Once more the message came through loud and clear, and the Powers told their consultant to go back and find the quickest way to bring the wastewater treatment plant to full secondary treatment and do a facility rehab, and also the quickest way to get to full tertiary treatment, and to bring back those options to the

A Bit of Whimsy

By Jack Beigle

We put in eight boats at the Morro Bay Estuary for our “Boating Letterbox Rally.” This is a sport car rally event that we have adapted for small boats.

One paddler from each boat takes an envelope from a letterbox. The envelope gives instructions on how to find the next letterbox. They launch their boats and paddle to the next letterbox, where they again take one envelope and proceed to the next letterbox. The instructions are not the same on each envelope, so we had boats going in various directions about the estuary.

We all ended up in the same spot for lunch with five envelopes. Each envelope contained one playing card. We added the face value of each card (Aces were one & face cards were ten.) and the paddler with the highest number won a free dinner at Hometown Buffet. It was great fun!

After our picnic lunch on the sand spit we hiked across the spit to check out the spring wild flowers. The



NRDC Attorney Anjali Jaiswal told the Cayucos Sanitary District and Morro Bay City Council that 15 years to bring their wastewater treatment into compliance with federal law is way too long.

members of the Board and the City Council — and this time, do it in one month, not ten.

And that's just what they're going to do.

The next meeting will be held May 19 at 7 p.m., in Morro Bay. Call Bonnie Connelly at 995-3290 for the location. Then wade in!

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Diablo

continued from page 2

Chapter pointed out the basic flaw in the premise of the 500-page report, its introductory statement that “The

existence of the operating nuclear power plant through the NRC authorized license period and its ongoing effects on aesthetics, marine biological resources, land use, public safety, etc., are not a consequence of the Proposed Project.”

In fact, the point of the Proposed Project -- replacing the steam generators -- is to allow the Diablo Canyon plant to continue to exist and operate to the end of its current licensing period and potentially well beyond, with all its ongoing impacts. It could not do so otherwise. The basic premise of the report is flatly wrong, and the entire report therefore fatally flawed.

The Chapter joined the Mothers for Peace, the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility and others in calling for a completely new draft of the report, one that includes everything the current draft omits.

The full text of the Santa Lucia Chapter's remarks can be read on our website at www.santalucia.sierraclub.org/diablo/diablo.html.



higher than average rainfall this year has produced a spurt of growth and the trail was very overgrown. We were able to find the well and it was full of water. There was evidence that the wildlife were still using it. The paddle back to the marina went well. It was another great day on the estuary.

Check the outing schedule and join us on the water.

Classifieds

Classified ads are \$10 and are limited to 20 words. They are due by the last week of the month prior to publication (**next deadline is April 18, 2005**). Please submit your ad and payment to:
Sierra Club - Santa Lucia Chapter
p.o. Box 15755
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406
sierra8@charter.net

Local Government Meetings

- City of SLO--1st & 3rd Tues., 7:00 p.m.; 781-7103
- Arroyo Grande--2nd and 4th Tues., 7:00 p.m.; 473-5404
- Atascadero--2nd & 4th Tues.; 466-8099
- Cambria CSD -- 4th Thurs.; 927-6223
- Grover Beach--1st & 3rd Mon., 6:30 p.m.; 473-4567
Grover Beach Planning Commission-- 2nd Tues.
- Morro Bay--2nd & 4th Mon.
- Paso Robles--1st & 3rd Tues., 7:00 p.m.; 237-3888
- Pismo Beach--1st Tues., 5:30 p.m.; 773-4657
- Los Osos CSD board-- 1st Tues. & 2nd Mon., varies
- California Coastal Commission-- 3rd Tues., varies
- SLO County Board of Supervisors-- every Tues.; 781-5450
- SLO Council of Governments; 781-4219
SLOCOG Citizens Advisory Committee--1st Wed. every other month, 6:00 p.m.
SLOCOG Board--1st Wed. every other month, 8:30 a.m.

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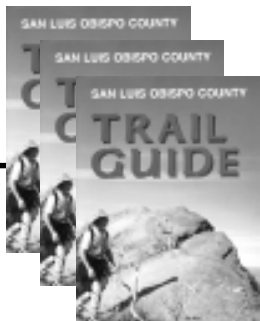
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Environmental 911

Here's an easy way to report on environmental concerns or to get information on issues affecting our ecology: Call 911! That's just a catchy title, though. The real number is... (drum roll):

(415) 977-5520 or environmental911@sierraclub.org

A Will . . .

. . . is a way to protect the environment as well as yourself. If you do not have a will, the state decides how your property and other affairs are handled. Decisions made now can later provide financial security for family, friends, and the Sierra Club. You may even direct your bequest to a specific Club program or your home Chapter.

For more information and confidential assistance, contact

John Calaway

Sierra Club Planned Giving Program

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Outings and Activities Calendar

All of our hikes and activities are open to all club members and the general public. If you have any suggestions for hikes or outdoor activities, questions about the Chapter's outing policies or would like to be an outings leader, call Outings Leader Gary Felsman (473-3694). For information on a specific outing, please contact the outing leader. Outings Leaders please get your outings or events in by the 1st for the next month's outings.

Hiking Classifications:

Distance: 1 = 0-2 mi., 2 = 3-5 mi., 3 = 6-9 mi., 4 = 10-12 mi., 5 = 12 mi. or more.

Elevation Gain: A = 500', B = 1000', C = 1500', D = 2000', E = 2500', F = 3000' or more.

Sat-Sun., Apr. 30-May 1, North and South of Shoshone. This carcamp will take us to a number of unusual sites at the southern end of Death Valley. On Saturday Susan Sorrells, lifelong resident of Shoshone, will take us to a number of recently discovered early man sites and fossil finds. That evening we attend a classic performance by Martha Becket at the Death Valley Opera House. On Sunday a geology teacher will take us to visit sites of geological interest in the (recently flooded) Furnace Creek Wash and along the Badwater road. For more info contact leader: Wendy Van Norden, wvannorden@hw.com, (818-990-9085). CNCC Desert Com

May 1st, Sun., 0930 POINT SAL: Meet at end of Brown Rd (which is 1.5 miles south of Guadalupe off Hwy #1) at locked gate at 0930, climb 2.5 miles to 'pass'/saddle and then decide what next. Bring water, windbreaker and a lunch. A group might be hiking 'all the way' to Paradise Beach and then Guadalupe Beach (if interested, e-mail me as we have to arrange a pick up). Call or e-mail a few days before for details: 929-3647

Wed., May. 4, 11, 18, 25. 5:30 p.m. Informal 1-2 hours hikes around San Luis Obispo. Check Website at www.santalucia.sierraclub.org, or e-mail gfelsman@onemain.com for meeting location.

Sun., May 8, 7:00 a.m. Hike to Pimkolam Peak (Junipero Serra or Santa Lucia). Join the leader on this strenuous hike to the highest point in the northern Los Padres National Forest. The hike is 12 miles with 3800 ft of elevation gain. We will pass through several different ecosystems, including oak forest, chaparral, and pine forest. There are also some wonderful rock outcroppings near the trailhead. The view from the top is magnificent. On the peak is an abandoned fire tower

which can be climbed. This is an all-day outing as the drive to the trailhead is about 1 1/2 hours. Tentative meeting place is the Las Tablas Park and Ride, on the West Side of Highway 101. From SLO take 101 north to Las Tablas Exit. Turn left, and the parking area is on the left, will carpool from there. Drivers should bring driver's license, auto registration, and proof of insurance which is required by Fort Hunter Liggett. Bring sufficient water, lunch, good hiking shoes, and dress for the weather. The trail may be brushy in places and there is a possibility of poison oak. No Adventure is needed. Please confirm with the leader. For info and confirmation contact Chuck at 927-3769. (5F)

Sat-Sun., May 14-15, Alabama Hills, Manzanar and Lone Pine Lake. Join us at our beautiful creekside camp in the high desert near Lone Pine. On Sat., we'll hike a moderate 6 mi rt, 1600' gain from Whitney Portal to beautiful Lone Pine Lake, followed by a potluck feast and campfire. On Sun., we'll be taking a driving tour through the Alabama Hills on our way to the WWII Japanese-American internment camp at Manzanar. Send \$5 per person (Sierra Club), 2 sase, H&W phones, email, rideshare info to Ldr: Lygeia Gerard, 1550 N. Verdugo Rd. #40, Glendale, CA 91208; 818-242-7053. Co-Ldr: Bill Spreng; 760-951-4520. Crescenta Valley/CNCC Desert Com

SATURDAY MAY 14/15 CANOE/KAYAK LOPEZ LAKE OVERNIGHT. Get out your camping gear again and spend the night with us at Encinal Camp. It is always interesting at Encinal. With luck we should have a high water level. Bring your boat and equipment, PFDs, camping gear, warm clothing, food and water. Phone Jack Beigle 773-2147 for reservation, park fees, and details.

WHALES, PINNIPEDS, & WILDFLOWERS: ISLAND HOPPING IN CHANNEL ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK, AUGUST 26-30, 2005

Here is your chance to join us in a visit to all five islands of Channel Islands National Park. This 5-day, 5-island trip departs from Santa Barbara on the 68'twin diesel Truth early Friday morning, August 26, returning Tuesday afternoon, August 30. All participants are encouraged to board the boat Thursday, August 25 to facilitate an early Friday morning departure.

Each island is unique and offers its own special charm. San Miguel's white, sandy beaches & huge congregation of elephant seals; Santa Rosa's rare Torrey Pines forest; Santa Cruz's high mountains, deep valleys & the famous Painted Cave; Anacapa's west coast brown pelican rookery, steep cliffs, a picturesque lighthouse, and excellent snorkeling waters; tiny, but pristine, Santa Barbara Island's rocky shores, home to a colony of friendly sea lions and a rolling grassy landscape shelter for a plethora of sea and land birds. All islands have rugged shorelines, dotted with sea caves & inhabited by an abundance of wildlife.

This cruise will be strictly informal. Each guest will be assigned a bunk with reading light and privacy curtains. The price, \$775, includes sumptuous meals, snacks, and guided tours. A park ranger will travel with us to lead hikes & to help identify the dolphins, whales, sea lions, seals & numerous species of bird & plant life. Other activities may include kayaking, snorkeling, beachcombing, or just relaxing at sea. Proceeds will benefit the Angeles chapter political committee. To make a reservation, send a check for \$100, payable to Sierra Club, to leader Joan Jones Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732. For more information, call 626-443-0706, or e-mail jholtz@qol.com.



May 15th, Sun. COAST BIKERIDE: Meet at Melodrama in Oceano at 0930 with bike & helmet. I'll show you my secret passageway to the dunes and then we'll tour the Central Coast to see Coastal Commission access points. We might get to Bob Jones bikeway. An easy ride with many stops, turn around any time U run out of 'steam'. Call or e-mail a few days before for details: 929-3647

May 22, Sun. BLACK LAKE CANYON: Meet at junction of Guadalupe Rd and Leguna Nigra. Hike down into the Canyon seeing Zenon Way controversy, oak woodland, euke problems, biodiversity, wildflowers and maybe some of the rare flora and fauna of the cyn. Call or e-mail a few days before for details: 929-3647

Sun, May. 29th, 8:00 a.m., Oats Peak. Join us for the 2.5-hour, 6-mile round-trip hike with 1300 feet elevation gain. Everyone is welcome but beginners will fall behind due to elevation gain. Meet at the visitor center in Montana de Oro State Park. Details, call Leader Al at 534-0462 (3C)

May 29th, Sun., 0930 POINT SAL: Meet at end of Brown Rd (which is 1.5 miles south of Guadalupe off Hwy #1) at locked gate at 0930, climb 2.5 miles to 'pass'/saddle and then decide what next. Bring water, windbreaker and a lunch. A group might be hiking 'all the way' to Paradise Beach and then Guadalupe Beach (if interested e-mail me as we have to arrange a pick up). Call or e-mail a few days before for details: 929-3647

Wed., June. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29. 5:30 p.m. Informal 1-2 hours hikes around San Luis Obispo. Check Website at www.santalucia.sierraclub.org, or e-mail gfelsman@onemain.com for meeting location.



Photo by Joaquin Palting

June 5th, Sun., 1030 NIPOMO NATIVE GARDEN: A celebration of: National Trails Day, Non-Mom's Day, Vasectomy Pledge Day and Bill's B-Day (eight-ohhh-no). Tour of garden and ancient oaks followed by BBQ, music, a keg & festivity. Sort of a potluck but meat, beer, real plates and silverware (no plastic) provided. Call or e-mail a few days before for details: 929-3647

Sat-Sun., June 11-12, Telescope Peak (11,049'). Climb the highest peak in Death Valley with spectacular views of the highest point (Mt. Whitney) and the lowest point (Badwater) in the contiguous US. 14 mi rt, 3000' gain, moderate/slow pace, no tigers, but must be well conditioned. Hike Sat. followed by potluck and campfire. Group size strictly limited. Send \$5 per person (Sierra Club), 2 sase, H&W phones, email, rideshare info to Ldr: Lygeia Gerard, 1550 N. Verdugo Rd. #40, Glendale, CA 91208; 818-242-7053. Co-Ldr: Bill Spreng; 760-951-4520. Crescenta Valley/CNCC Desert Com.

Fri-Sun., June 24-26, White Mountain (14,246) Carcamp and Hike. Climb one of California's fourteeners, third highest point in the state. 15 mi rt, 3300 ft vertical gain. Moderate/slow pace, no tigers, but should be in good condition. Meet at Grandview Campground (dry) Friday night. Saturday morning we carpool to the trailhead, lunch at the top and then return for happy-hour pot luck. Sunday we will explore the two Bristlecone Pine Forests as time permits. Bring enough water for weekend, comfortable hiking shoes and clothes and a dish to share for happy hour. For more information contact Ldr: Kate Allen; kj.allen@att.net, (661-944-4056). Antelope Valley Group/CNCC Desert Com.

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