



SIERRA
CLUB

Nov./Dec. 2006
Volume 43 No. 10

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VOTE TWICE!

There's more than one election happening this month. Your ballot for the Santa Lucia Chapter Executive Committee is on page 2.

COMING IN DECEMBER:

No general meeting. Happy Christmas, Hannukah, Kwanzah, and a joyous New Year!



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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

“You Have Five Years”

Landmark SLO energy summit opens window of opportunity on “community choice”

“Smart Energy Solutions: It's Our Choice” took over the SLO Vets Hall on October 10 for a day of panel discussions, booths and exhibits.

The Santa Lucia Chapter and the Sierra Club California Energy and Climate Change Committee were two of the event's thirteen organizing sponsor groups and members of the steering committee that planned the event over the previous six months. It was a truly diverse group of local business and environmental organizations, and the teamwork paid off as several hundred attendees took off a few hours or all day to get the word on what can be done to move our community to a clean energy economy.

This would not just be good for the environment. This would probably be the best thing to happen to the environment in this community in the last hundred years.

- Paul Fenn on Community Choice Aggregation (CCA)

Dr.s David and Judith Goodstein proclaimed it “the best energy conference we've ever been to, and we've been to them all over the world.”

Dr. Goodstein, Cal Tech Vice Provost and author of *Out of Gas: The End of the Age of Oil*, grounded the proceedings at the start with an overview of where we are what we're up against: Increasing demand on decreasing fossil fuel resources, with increasingly dire impacts from their emissions. To the first problem, Dr. Goodstein predicted “civilization will come to an end in this century, when the fuel runs out. Predictions can be wrong. I hope I am wrong.” To the second

problem, after giving an overview of the incontrovertible evidence of global climate change, he concluded that “we are

doing an uncontrolled experiment with the climate of the only planet we have. It is a very foolish experiment.”

Attendees went forth from that sober assessment to an all-day series of panels that explored every aspect of what can be done to prevent Dr. Goodstein's dire predictions from coming true. By general consensus,

the panels delivered on the summit's name and promise.

All the pieces

Local architects on the cutting edge of the green building movement such

continued on page 5



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photo/Kevin Walsh

It's time for America to get smart about energy and be less dependent on dwindling oil reserves. We need to increase our use of clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar power.

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Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Santa Lucia Chapter General Meeting

Otters in the Mist

The Marine Life Protection Act & You

Join us as Steve Shimek, Executive Director of The Otter Project, gives us the lowdown on the historic local network of Marine Protected Areas that was just declared by the California Fish and Game Commission and lets you know what you can do right now to make sure we secure and this first step on the road to the creation of a "Yosemite under the sea" for the Central Coast.

Thursday, November 16, 7:00 p.m.

**Ludwick Community Center
 864 Santa Rosa St.
 (at Mill)
 San Luis Obispo**

Refreshments provided



BALLOT

Santa Lucia Chapter Elections November 2006

Households with two members may return their ballots in the same envelope.

You must write your Sierra Club membership number(s) on the envelope. Do not write a membership number the ballot.

Households with more than two members may make duplicate ballots.

Mark an "X" in the box next to the candidate's name. Vote for no more than 2. Order drawn by lot:

Cleve Nash

John Ashbaugh

Tracy Haydon

Do not write your name on this ballot. Put ballot in envelope, print your name and Sierra Club membership number on the envelope. Return to:
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 Santa Lucia Chapter
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 San Luis Obispo, CA 93406**

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This ballot is for the second member of a two-member household

BALLOT

Santa Lucia Chapter Elections November 2006

Vote for no more than 2.

Cleve Nash

John Ashbaugh

Tracy Haydon

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 Santa Lucia Chapter
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 San Luis Obispo, CA 93406**

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 Jack McCurdy
 Tarren Collins**
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Mariko Fujinaka
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The Santa Lucian is published 10 times a year. Articles, environmental information and letters to the editor are welcome. The deadline for each issue is the 7th of the prior month.

send to:

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Santa Lucia Chapter

2006 Executive Committee

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Cal French
 MEMBER ccfrench@tcsn.net

John Ashbaugh
 MEMBER jbashbaugh@charter.net

Cal French
 COUNCIL OF CLUB LEADERS

The Executive Committee meets the fourth Wednesday of every month at 3:00 p.m. at the chapter office, located at 1204 Nipomo St., San Luis Obispo. All members are welcome to attend.

Standing Committee Chairs

Political
 Sarah Christie
 Richard Krantzdorf

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Membership
 Cal French

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 Gary Felsman 805-473-3694

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 San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

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 Andrew Christie 805-543-8717

**Chapter office hours are
 Monday-Friday, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.**

Change of Address?

Mail changes to:

Sierra Club National Headquarters
 85 Second Street, 2nd Floor
 San Francisco, CA 94105-3441

or e-mail:
 address.changes@sierraclub.org

Visit us on the Web!

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Outings, events, and more!

Vote for your 2007 Chapter Executive Committee

Your ballot for the Santa Lucia Chapter's Executive Committee election is on the facing page. Vote for the candidates whom you think are most capable of governing the Santa Lucia Chapter.

The winners of this election will start their terms when the outgoing ExCom adjourns their December meeting. The newly-elected ExCom will then convene a brief meeting to elect Officers and set the date for their January meeting.

IMPORTANT VOTING INFORMATION

- Cumulative voting is not allowed. (More than one vote for one individual)
- Vote only one ballot per member. A second ballot is included for two-member households.
- Deadline for receiving ballots is 5:00 pm on 8 December 2006 at the

Chapter office.

• Enclose your ballot in an envelope and clearly write your name and SierraClub membership number on the envelope. Then sign it.

Like this:
Printed name
Membership Number
Signature

Mail to the address on the ballot, or you may drop it by the office at 1204 Nipomo St. in SLO between 11:00 am and 5:00 pm

Your membership will be verified, then the ballot removed and separated from the envelope. Both are saved until the new Executive Committee orders them destroyed.

To all you new members out there who still haven't filled out the interest survey you received with your welcoming letter: Please fill it out and return it, even if all it says is you can't help just now. Your email address would be nice to have.

We appreciate it!

Membership Committee

An Earth-Friendly Thanksgiving

By Diana Artemis, Co-Chair Sierra Club National Sustainable Consumption Committee and the National True Cost of Food (TCOF) Campaign.

It's the holiday season once again. In the over-

stressed times we live in can we pause and do better to put thanks and love back into our holiday celebrations? The Sustainable Consumption Committee (SCC)'s True Cost of Food Campaign makes it clear that our choice of food, now more than ever during the holiday season, affects our earth, our health and what we leave as a legacy to our children and our children's children. Let's pause and think about where the food we eat came from and at what cost to the environment.

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Eco-Friendly Recipe Ideas

* if you choose to offer a turkey to your family and guests, please obtain your bird from a local, organic farmer and ensure the animal was raised and slaughtered according to the **humane seal**... For more information about the **humane seal**, see: <http://www.humaneseal.org/>

For More Thanksgiving Recipes, Visit These Informative Sites

<http://vegweb.com/food/events/index-thanksgiving.shtml>
www.vegan.com/current/thanks.html
www.shepherds-rod-message.org/health/eats.html
www.tazarat.com/thanksgiving.html

Tracy Haydon

Hello, Fellow Santa Lucians! I am running for a position on the executive committee. In the past year, I have gotten to know several of you, in working with Karen Merriam and Steven Marx. As a bookkeeper by trade, I have been able to assist Steven in his position as Treasurer this past year. It has been a great pleasure to be of assistance to him & to the Sierra Club. I am a single parent, and as my teen-aged son is well on his way to becoming a grown man (he is seventeen) I find myself

ist. So when Karen Merriam called me a couple of years ago and asked me to fill a vacancy on the Executive Committee, I readily agreed – and now I ask for another full term to continue working with such wonderful people as Karen, Cal, Steve, Cleve, Jack, Katherine, and of course our able Chapter Director Andrew.

I'm a part-time history instructor at Hancock College, and my wife and I just became "empty nesters" with two adult daughters now off to college in Chicago. I serve as liaison to the Chapter's Political Committee, and I took an active part in their deliberations that led to the endorsements for local candidates and ballot measures in the '06 election. I've been anointed as the Chapter's historian/archivist, and I am committed to providing historical content for future editions of the *Santa Lucian* and other local publications. In April, I was appointed to the SLO City Planning Commission. Veteran voters of SLO County will remember that I also ran for State Assembly in 1992 and '94; I remain active in politics at all levels.

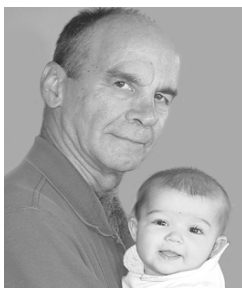
Cleve Nash

I am a former editor of the *Santa Lucian* and a former founding board member of North Coast Small Wilderness Area Protection.

"Former," frankly, because a few years ago I got selfish. I wanted more time to spend in my hobbies of wildlife photography and bicycling. I figured contributing money to organizations fighting the good fight was sufficient.

I can't say I haven't enjoyed the period of shirked personal responsibility. But events during those years leave no conscionable alternative other than to do whatever I can to help this country regain the values of John Muir.

One of my gravest concerns is what I perceive as a diminishing of those values with each generation. Sierra Club is graying and, I fear, losing contact with the future. If elected, I will push for initiatives that reach out to young people and present them wonders no Nintendo or Ipod can.



able to be on less of a "survival mode," and am now able to focus more of my attention on my fellow neighbors and my community.

I have always thought it incredibly important to take an active part in my community and to be an example to my son of what just one person can do to make a difference. As we see the changes happening in our world globally and locally, it has never been more important to be that voice and action for positive progress & change. I know my life experiences and optimistic personality combined with my hard working, go-to attitude, and high moral and ethical standards would be a great contribution to the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club. I thank you in advance for considering me for a position on your executive committee.

John Ashbaugh

I first joined Sierra Club at the age of 21, when I moved to Berkeley for graduate school. After more than 30 years, three masters degrees and a doctorate (Educational Leadership), I remain a committed environmental-

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What is Eco-Cuisine?


In his book, *Eco-Cuisine: An Ecological Approach to Gourmet Vegetarian Cooking*,

Ron Picarski writes, "Ecology is an awareness of the interrelationships between living organisms and their environment. Eco-Cuisine is about the human diet and its relationship to our personal health and the natural environment. We must begin to look at food as a route back to nature and a way to understand our connections with natural cycles. We need to live in harmony with nature and within our biological boundaries that are part of that natural system."

During This Holiday Season Let's Think About Our Health, Our Children's Health and The Health Of Our Planet

A delicious cooked meal, especially if it's shared with friends and family, provides nourishment for the spirit as well as the body. Food that is locally grown by organic farmers is healthy for our communities and local economy. Respecting the earth and its animals when producing and eating food creates the harmony that we seek in relating to each other and our planet and allows us truly to celebrate in a way that honors our earth and each other. Historically, food was a celebration of life: Growing, preparing and eating the fruits of the field were once one of the strangest ties to community spirit.


As Sierra Club members, let's lead the way. This year invite your friends, neighbors and fam-



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Taking Issue

problematic recent environmental commentary & coverage in our local press

“From planning to traffic, Measure J passes the tests”
The Tribune, October 15, 2006

Summary: The Tribune claims the Dalidio Ranch project is necessary to fund traffic projects, that bond funding will pay for the developer's shortfall, environmental concerns will be addressed by “county plan checking” and the permit process, and Measure J opponents “are not letting facts get in the way of their arguments.”

We don't like land-use planning decisions being made through the initiative process; yet, having seen Dalidio whipsawed for 14 years, we understand his frustration and why he chose that channel for project approval.

[The bond funding/taxing district plan] wouldn't cost taxpayers a dime.

If Dalidio had submitted a project that complied with the City Land Use Element and had an adequate Environmental Impact Report, he could have succeeded long ago instead of failing repeatedly.

Measure J does not call for or include a Target or Lowe's. No specific tenants are mentioned in the Measure. According to the terms of the initiative, future owners may change the tenants they actually bring in.

Target and Lowe's would be the anchor stores for the Dalidio Ranch

Ballot box planning has already occurred in the county: Voters approved the Williams Bros. shopping center in Paso Robles in 1980 after the city denied the project.

That was a local -- as in city -- vote on a city project. The Dalidio Ranch Initiative is a County vote on a local project which primarily affects a city.

Studies -- and common sense -- show that traffic problems already exist at the Madonna-101 and Los Osos Valley Road-101 interchanges. These arteries will become unacceptable clogged in another decade regardless of whether a Dalidio project is built. The answer to that dismal prospect is to build a Prado Road overpass...

“The SLOCOG staff has called Measure J's numbers insufficient to pay for changes to road systems that will be needed to handle the added traffic. A March 2006 Caltrans analysis

predicted that the Dalidio project would generate 30,800 average daily trips.” [- “What Measure J does – and does not include,” *The Tribune*, Oct. 23, 2006.]
The project is so big that severe, unmitigated traffic impacts would occur even *with* the Prado Road interchange. With the project and the Prado/101 interchange, LOVR/Madonna and Prado/Higuera intersections fall below “D” level of service, and all of the 101 ramp queuing is worse. The latest EIR shows we'd be better off with no development and no interchange. Without the Dalidio Ranch, we don't need the Prado interchange. It's only purpose is to service the development of Dalidio Ranch. Upgrading infrastructure we already have -- i.e. the LOVR bridge and interchange -- would fix existing traffic problems, and that upgrade is already in the pipeline. The new capacity added by the Prado Interchange is not even sufficient to serve the new demand added by the project.

Measure J deserves voter approval because it will fulfill the longstanding vision conceived by smart government planners more than a decade ago.

Measure J violates the City and County General Plans. The 1994 vision of smart government planners called for half the property to be preserved as open space. Measure J would pave more than two-thirds of the land under big box retail, hotel, and parking lot.



Dalidio's proposed solution to bridge the large gap between the funding offered through the initiative and the actual (fast-rising) cost of the interchange is verbal. It is a campaign promise, not part of the initiative, whose language could not change once it was circulated. There is no way a vote for the initiative would bring into being any promise not explicitly written into the initiative. The problems are there; the solutions aren't. And larking real environmental review, there is no way to measure the practicability or effectiveness of any proposed solution. Dalidio's proposed bond to fund the Prado interchange would divert County funding from improvement of the LOVR-101 interchange, as well as from Willow Road-101, Brisco Road-101, and Highway 46-101. Anyone living outside the city of SLO supporting Measure J would be voting to cut into the economic viability and infrastructure development of their own town.

Dalidio then sought input from an advisory group of community leaders. Vic Montgomery, a principal of RRM Design Group, re-designed a master-planned project, adopting many of the group's suggestions.

There was a single meeting of the “Lenthall committee” for the general public, attended by about 60 people, a rather small fraction of the County's population. Most of those attending that meeting wanted to preserve as much of the ag land as possible at the Dalidio site. The RRM design team responded to that input by *reducing* the amount of on-site open space to the current design's 30%.

Measure J locks into place 103 conditions that were taken from the original certified environmental impact report on Dalidio's 2005 Marketplace proposal.

In the EIR for the previous Marketplace proposal -- a significantly different project from the Dalidio Ranch proposal -- the traffic impacts were listed as “Class 1,” meaning not all impacts could be mitigated. The current project will have similar impacts, but there will be no Environmental Impact Report to discover and resolve these major traffic impacts. The 2004 EIR, at the request of the developer, was *decertified* by the City in order to nullify a lawsuit over the inadequacy of the EIR. County residents thus will never know whether the EIR on any previous Dalidio project was adequate, because there is no certified EIR for any previously proposed Dalidio project. Even if there were, it could not be transferred to this project.

Opponents say Measure J means the project will avoid the scrutiny of environmental regulators. That's simply not true... The project will be subjected to the stringent nuts and bolts of county plan checking and building permit processes and the project must fully conform to myriad state and federal environmental regulations... Measure J doesn't circumvent environmental review at all.

Let's hope the *Tribune's* editorial board reads their newspaper's news stories:
“But the project does not fall under the California Environmental Quality Act. In the normal government process, CEQA is triggered by a request to amend the General Plan and approve a project review. Measure J eliminates that requirement because it is a citizens' initiative. Because it does not go through traditional county procedures such as General Plan review, and thus is not subject to CEQA, the Dalidio Ranch project will not face any public hearings at the county Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors. It also avoids environmental review by the county and specific review by the county staff on such matters as architecture, signs and landscaping. ...”
“Some concerns will be covered under state law — how to handle naturally occurring asbestos or lead paint in demolished buildings, for example. Others — such as idling trucks from construction — will not be dealt with, according to Aeron Arlin Genet, planning manager for the district. Those fall under the CEQA, she said, and because Measure J is a citizens' initiative, it does not have to face the CEQA process. Genet says the county will have to rely on the good will of the developer in those cases.”

-- “What Measure J does – and does not include,” *The Tribune*, Oct. 23

Watch the video on Channel 25

Showtimes:
7:00-7:30 p.m. MW-Sat
8:00-8:30 p.m. M,W,Th & F
9:30-10:00 p.m. M,W,Th-Sat

Energy Summit

continued from page 1

as Marilyn Miller Farmer and Andy Pease discussed ways to build homes that are low impact and energy-smart, toward the goal of zero-energy homes. Light tubes, photovoltaic solar heated water, structural insulated panels, and straw bales were the order of the day. Commercial builders got the word on energy-efficient commercial buildings from a panel of builders and architects moderated by Turko Semmes of Semmes and Co. and SLO Green Build: Financiers get quick pay-backs and more controlled energy costs on projects that are easier to sell or lease; builders enjoy cleaner construction materials, a healthier workplace and showplace projects; and owners get a reduced cost of

the Department of Environmental Services for the City of Arcata, reported on Arcata's progress in monitoring the city's greenhouse gas emissions and setting reduction targets. Arcata is well down the road on which Atascadero, Morro Bay and San Luis Obispo took the first step when their mayors recently signed on to the U.S. Mayors Agreement on Climate Protection. "Local experts wrote our greenhouse gas reduction plan," said Diemer. "We didn't need to hire any expensive consultants. And from what

we are currently investing in aging nuclear plants and imported natural gas, the worst possible energy strategy, says Fenn, we should be able to transfer that investment to the best energy strategy without a lot of concern that the downside could possibly worse than the downside we're looking at now. "It's a matter of the appropriate role of the public sector," he said. "Government needs to steer us toward what we need to happen."

Fenn, the author of San Francisco's Solar Power Facility pro-

also fundamentally democratic in that everybody in the community gets green power, not just those who can afford it at a premium price. Revenue bonds can be issued by a Joint Powers Agency, consisting of county and city governments or a city alone.

To get started, said Fenn, "It's just a matter of performing the needs analysis and learning what you've got here."

In response to a question from the audience, Fenn allowed that a CCA program of green power and energy

You get what you code for. We have class-segregated zoning — "low density" for our sort of people; "high density" for people with cooties. Our zoning has decreed living next to poor people to be the equivalent of living next to a steel mill.

- Rick Cole, City Manager, Ventura



Begging to differ: Plug In America's Marc Galler, center, takes issue with *Green Car Journal* editor Ron Cogan, left, on the issue of hydrogen vs. electric vehicles.

operation and maintenance, reduced risk of "sick building syndrome," higher productivity employees and happier clients

Probably the day's best verbal fireworks display came in the panel "New Vehicle/Transportation Options," which featured a lively exchange between proponents of hydrogen fuel cell vehicles (Ron Cogan of *Green Car Journal*) and electric cars (Marc Galler of Plug In America). Cogan pointed out that fuel cells are twice as efficient as the internal combustion engine and hold the promise of decentralized energy production for uses beyond powering cars and trucks. Galler countered that the vision of a hydrogen-powered future is many years and billions of dollars away, whereas battery-powered transportation is here now with 100 years of development behind it, and can be used to retrieve and revive cars otherwise consigned to junkyards.

In "How to Build Local Will to Change Our Energy Future," Tam Hunt, Energy Program Director with the Community Environmental Council in Santa Barbara, said that it all comes down to promoting demand for renewables in meeting California's mandated goal of 20 percent renewable energy by 2010. Demand must be created for distributed generation — power produced and used closer to the source. Demand can be created by such measures as "feed-in tariff" — used in Europe — must be established here, allowing solar panel users who are plugged into the grid to not only watch their meters spin backwards, but get paid for the energy they're putting in.

Karen Diemer, Deputy Director of

I've seen and heard here today, San Luis Obispo has more than enough of the talent you need to put together an emissions inventory, reduction plan and implementation plan."

Putting it Together: Community Choice Aggregation

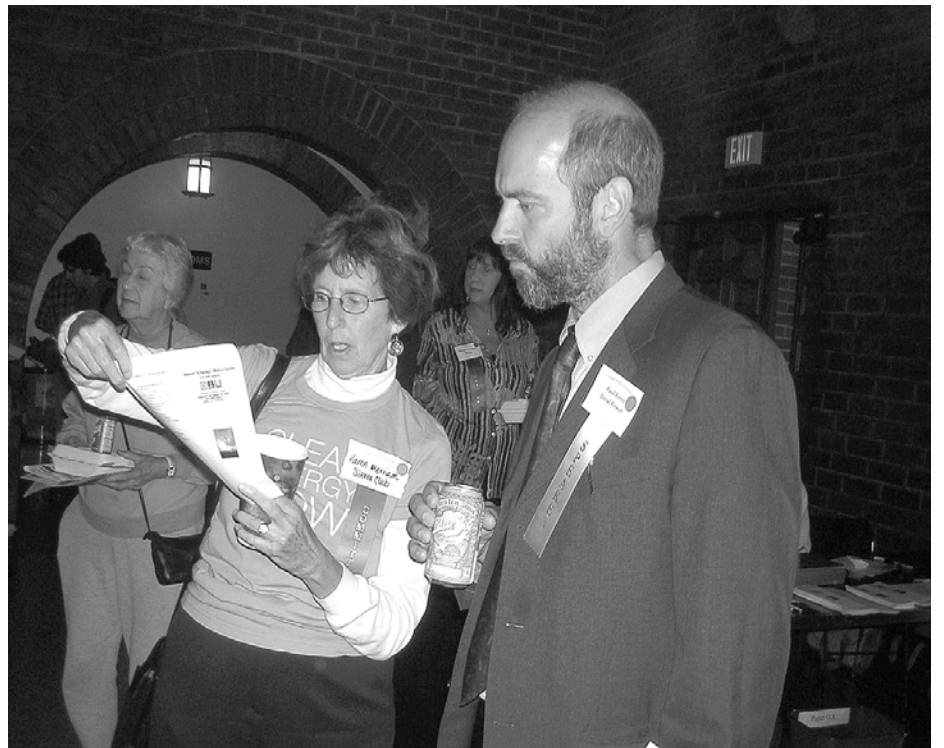
The day's keynote address and follow-up panel "Community Choice: Community and Regional Energy Production," featured Paul Fenn, the founder of Local Power in Oakland.

"The fundamental error," said Fenn, "is that our government is perfectly willing to subsidize nuclear power — a noxious, dangerous fuel source — but is unwilling to subsidize a clean, harmless fuel source." Since

posals — the nation's largest — and of the bill that became California's Community Choice law in 2002, introduced Summit attendees to the concept of community choice aggregation (CCA), which allows communities to combine their energy-buying purchase power and put out competitive bids to buy up to 100

would "probably be the best thing to happen to the environment in this community in 100 years," he said.

David Rubin, PG&E's Director of Service Analysis, said that PG&E will work with any community that want to change to CCA and reviewed the steps necessary for a community to take advantage of community choice



Chapter Chair Karen Merriam and Paul Fenn check the schedule.

percent green power while also getting much better rates from providers as a public entity than private entities. CCA, in addition to meaning greener power, offers a set contract with a reliable rate structure with purchasers not at the mercy of steep price jumps (see: natural gas). CCA is

aggregation: 1. draft an ordinance, 2. send an implementation plan for energy procurement to the Public Utilities Commission, 3. give citizens an opt-out option from the plan. "All you need is a city attorney and a consultant to prepare the plan for city council"

continued on page 6

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Energy Summit

continued from page 5

cil," said Rubin.

Steve Heckerth of Energy Conversion Devices stepped back for a look at the very big picture – the amount of energy in received sunlight vs. the amount of energy stored in the earth — pointed out that solar energy can provide peak-load power more efficiently than it's being done now, and cheaper, at 25 cents per kilowatt hour compared to PG&E's 33 cents per kWh, and that this would mean a big boost to the local economy by way of significantly greater job creation compared to the handful of folks employed at a traditional power plant.

At the panel "How to Build Local Will to Change our Energy Future," Tam Hunt of Santa Barbara's Community Environmental Council agreed that CCA "is as close to a silver bullet as we have." Hunt sees community choice as the best way to build demand for alternative energy, and demand it what will lower prices and establish the market.

For Public Citizen's Smitty Smith, "CCA means you can create your own power company, owned by the community. Suddenly you can make dramatically different choices."

Smith, director of Public Citizen's Texas office, summed up the day for many attendees at the summit. "In times of chaos like this," he said, "power tends to decrease at the federal level and local power becomes

important. How we meet our needs locally will determine how we survive and triumph economically, and we can then export our success. Though Texas is now number-one nationally in wind energy production, Smith noted that California is still the front-runner in energy policy, setting the benchmark for the rest of the country.

Aggregate purchasing goes along with aggregate power, said Smith. In Texas, cities are switching to alternative fuel and hybrid electric vehicles for their municipal fleets by making multi-city purchase orders. "This lowers the price, and convinces GM and Ford that there's a market," said Smith. "City and county investment packages can make a lot of difference."

"In three to five years, we're going to start seeing significant impacts on the way we live from the changes that are happening now," he said. "That means you've got three to five years to get your act together and lock in these alternative energy sources before the prices go through the roof. We're importing wind turbines; we should be manufacturing them."

After the Summit, HopeDance held a special screening of Kilowatt Ours at the SLO Library. "Buy a copy of this film, take it home, hold a house party, show it to your neighbors," said Smith. "It's the story of how a couple in Georgia reduced

their energy consumption 50%, then spread the word. Doing something like that is the most important single thing you can do right now."

The Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility threw an after-summit party at the home of Linda Seeley and Mike Wollman.

Attendees recapped the day's events, with ANR Executive Director Rochelle Becker focusing on how the various strategies for meeting our sustainable future energy needs could work with the Alliance's goals of prohibiting the relicensing of California's aging nuclear plants.

Among those dropping by after the Smart Energy summit were Jim Adams of the environmental staff at the California Energy Commission, who hadn't been a visitor to SLO for almost 20 years, but pledged to actively solicit input from the community in crafting the new study mandated by Assemblyman Blakeslee's AB 1632. Steve Heckerth provided good information on the new directions in both cost savings and economies of



After the Summit: Smitty Smith of Public Citizen, Rochelle Becker of ANR, Jim Adams of the California Energy Commission, and Tam Hunt and program associate from the Community Environmental Council at Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility's party.

scale possible with the thin-film solar power transformation. Smitty Smith discussed the differences between what areas with municipal power can do in contrast with those depending on privately owned power generators, and how to garner more citizen involvement.

Tam Hunt of Santa Barbara's Community Environmental Council was on hand to discuss how we can look at the three counties of the central coast — from Ventura to San Luis Obispo — and work to form alliances.

Ken Smokoska of Sierra Club California added to the discussion with comments on the progress being made in Chula Vista and other forward-looking energy communities.

Oso Flaco - Paddling the Pond

By Joe Dickerson

As small as it is, Oso Flaco Lake is a unique and thoroughly enchanting place to kayak or canoe. It's also the only place we paddle where the safety instructions could include the phrase, "if you fall out of your boat...stand up".

When an Oso Flaco paddle was first proposed a couple of years ago, I must admit that I was less than enthusiastic. But after just a few minutes on the lake I realized that it was destined to become one of my favorite places on the central coast to paddle. This little lake surrounded by towering dunes, and a major attraction for over-wintering birds can be a truly magical place.

On October 8 we met at the parking area and portaged nine boats the half-mile or so to the beginning of the boardwalk were a small gap in the reeds allows boats to be launched. The portage was made easier by an eclectic collection of wheeled conveyances, with Mike Baird getting style points for the creative application of a hand truck. Unfortunately, the small gap in the reeds was flanked by some well-established nettle plants and several of us paid the price of brushing against them on the way into the water.

Although we were a little early for the peak birding we still spotted ruddy ducks, blue winged teal, cinnamon teal, sora rails (heard not seen), cormorants, and about a bazillion coots. The raptors were in evidence including northern harriers and red shoulder hawks. Last spring we



witnessed a peregrine falcon dive bombing a group of ruddy ducks. Oso Flaco is a fantastic birding spot whether you visit by boat, strongly recommended, or hike the dunes and boardwalk. Two of our group spotted raccoons that were being a bit shy this trip although we saw dozens of them last spring.

After a leisurely couple of hours paddling the circumference of the lake (anti-clockwise) we hauled out and repeated our portage back to the parking area. Lunch and swapping stories of what we saw, past paddles adventures and plans for future ones, including coming back to Oso Flaco sometime in the spring, completed another wonderful day on the water.

Would you like to join us sometime? Email me at slopaddlers@aol.com and we'll put you on our mailing list.



The enormous success of the SMART ENERGY SOLUTIONS SUMMIT held at the Vets Hall, San Luis Obispo, October 10, 2006, is the result of the generous contributions of the following people and organizations (Additional & Continuing information may be found at www.smartenergysummit.org)

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A Special Thanks also to our Keynote Speakers

Dr. David Goodstein, Vice Provost, Cal Tech, Pasadena; Mr. Paul Fenn, Director, Local Power, Oakland; to the 30 panelists who shared their knowledge & expertise; and Larry Allen and the Impromptu Band!

Classifieds

January issue ad deadline is **December 12**. To acquire a rate sheet or submit your ad and payment, contact:

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.

HELP WANTED - NOW

For questions or application, please call Andrew Chrisite, Chapter Director, 543-8717, or Karen Merriam, Chapter Chair, 544-6628

VOLUNTEER AND DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR
 20 hours per week - work from home, or at the Chapter Office Reports to Chapter Director. No financial compensation available - yet. This experienced individual will be a self-starter, committed to creating a sustainable environment, willing to work as part of a dynamic team, and possessing positive people skills. Help the Chapter Director and Board to build the capacity of the Chapter in our community's efforts to achieve a sustainable, efficient, fossil-free energy future. Grant search and writing abilities a plus. Ability to organize events, and to care for and nurture volunteer efforts, is essential.

OFFICE ASSISTANT
 10 hours per week - work at the Chapter Office No financial compensation available - yet. Reports to Chapter Director. This flexible and optimistic person will enjoy working with database entry, filing, putting out

Thank You letters with Quick Books software, answering phones and assisting the Chapter Director in maintaining the Chapter office. Familiarity with basic computer operations, Excel and Word essential. Ability to use Pagemaker and Photo Shop earn extra praise.

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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.

Sun., Nov. 5, 0930, Sun, BIKE TOUR of WOODLANDS: We'll bicycle about 8 miles the roads of this 'instant city'. Meet at junction of Willow & Albert Way. On the last bike-tour we saw a "city" replacing a 1,000 acre "euke forest"—you have to see it to believe it—amazing. Who said water is limited on the mesa? Call 929-3647 or <bdenneen@kcbx.net> a few days before to confirm and for details.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12 CANOE/KAYAK MORRO BAY: Here is a chance to get a little exercise before that Thanksgiving Dinner. Join us for a picnic and a short hike on the sand spit. Bring your boat and equipment, PFDs, binoculars and your picnic lunch. LOW TIDE 10:48 PM. 3.1' PUT IN 10:00 AM Joe Dickerson 693-9534 or 688-5025 HIGH TIDE 3:48 PM. 4.0' LAUNCH AT MORRO BAY STATE PARK MARINA

Sun., NOV. 12, 0930, KAYAK OSO FLACO, I have an extra kayak but U have to move it & mine. Bring binos. See a lot of birds (maybe Whistling Swan). Call 929-3647 or <bdenneen@kcbx.net> a few days before to confirm and for details.

Sat, Nov 18 - Quail Mountain - Joshua Tree National Park: Quail Mountain is the highest point in the park at just under or over (depending who measures it) 6000 ft. We're going to make a shuttle hike out of it, almost a loop, a "shloop". This is a grand overview. On a clear day you can see the Santa Rosas, Salton Sea, and Mexico. There was a fire on Quail in the 70's and the scars are still visible but not dominating. This is an all day hike with an elevation gain of around 2400 ft. Wear good boots, layerable clothing, three quarts of water and enough food for lunch and snacks. Call Ann and Al Murdy at 760-366-2932 (directly, no messages) or email aemurdy@eee.org. CNRCC/San Geronio Chapter

NOV.19, 0930, Sun. COAST HIKE, See a remote area of the dunes, 3-4 miles, bring water, dogs OK. Call 929-3647 or <bdenneen@kcbx.net> a few days before to confirm and for details.

NOV. 23, 0930 THANKSGIVING CALLENDER DUNES HIKE, Meet at west end of Callender Rd at Hwy# 1, Hike to Chumash midden in dunes. Thanksgiving potluck feast to follow at Bill's Hostel. Reservations required<bdenneen@kcbx.net>

NOV. 26, Sun, BIKE TOUR of WOODLANDS We'll bicycle about 8 miles the roads & golf trails of this 'instant city'. Meet at junction of Willow & Albert Way. A "city" replacing a 1,000 acre "euke forest"—you have to see it to believe it—amazing. Call 929-3647 or <bdenneen@kcbx.net> a few days before to confirm and for details.

November 23,24,25,26 - Stone Ridge Trailwork Trip. Leader: Mike Heard - heard@pobox.com Crew members will spend their Thanksgiving holiday performing medium-to-heavy maintenance on selected areas of the Stone Ridge Trail, as determined by the previous trip's survey results. E-mail Leader for more information. Sponsored by Ventana Wilderness Alliance.

Sat-Sun, Nov. 25-26 - Soda Mountains Backpack: North of Interstate 15 and east of Barstow the Soda Mountains are a proposed wilderness area in current legislation before Congress. We will travel a loop route that follows several washes and crosses a low saddle. Although we must carry water, the total distance is about 15 miles and the elevation gains are modest. This is classic desert exploration and should be a suitable introduction for learning desert backpackers. For information contact leader: Craig Deutsche, deutsche@earthlink.net, (310-477-6670). CNRCC Desert Com

Sat., Dec, 2nd, 8:30 a.m. Big Sur Coastal Hike. Come explore the Southern Big Sur Area on hopefully a clear day. Tentative Hike is the Baldwin Ranch Road to an overlook. Hike will be about 8 miles, with 2000 foot elevation gain. Bring lunch, water, and dress for the weather. Meet at the Washburn Day Use area just north of Cambria. We probably have a refueling stop at the Main Street Grill in Cambria after the hike. Rain or threat of rain cancels. For info, call Gary at 473-3694 (3D)

Sat., Dec. 9, 8:00 a.m., Cruikshank Trail to Alder Creek Camp; Join the leader on this late fall hike in the Silver Peak Wilderness in southern Big Sur. This is a moderately strenuous hike of about 10-11 miles and approximately 2400 ft of elevation gain. We will start on the Cruikshank Trail and climb to Upper Cruikshank Camp. From there, we will drop down to Villa Camp on the Buckeye Trail and then ascend to Alder Creek Camp which is located on Willow Creek Road. You can expect great views, redwoods, and a creek crossing or two. There is a possibility of poison oak. Bring water, snacks, lunch, and dress for the weather. Meet at the Washburn Day Use area just north of Cambria. We probably have a refueling stop at the

Main Street Grill in Cambria after the hike. Rain cancels. For info, call Chuck at 441-7597 (4D)

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9 SANTA MARGARITA LAKE DAY TRIP: Our goal for this outing is to enjoy a leisurely paddle on Santa Margarita Lake. We will all eat lunch at the campsite, then paddle to the end of the lake and back to our cars. Bring your boat and equipment, PFDs, food and water. Contact Joe Dickerson at 693-9534 or 688-5025 regarding park fees and details IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL JOE DICKERSON AT 693-9534 OR 688-5025

DEC. 3, Sun. KAYAK OSO FLACO, I have an extra kayak but U have to move it & mine. Bring binos. See a lot of over-wintering birds (white pelicans?). Call 929-3647 or <bdenneen@kcbx.net> a few days before to confirm and for details.

DEC. 10, 0930, Sun., TOUR de NIPOMO. Bicycle ride stopping at Park, Native Garden, Creekside Preserve, Dana Adobe, High School. Meet at Nipomo Library. Eight miles with many stops. Kids OK. Call 929-3647 or <bdenneen@kcbx.net> a few days before to confirm and for details.

DEC. 21, WINTER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION A gathering to celebrate the days starting to get longer. Details not firm—suggestions? <bdenneen@kcbx.net> or 929-3647

Whales, Pinnipeds & Wildflowers: Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park

April 13-16 May 4-7 July 20-23 4-day, 4-island cruises visiting San Miguel, Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz & Anacapa Islands. \$775

August 25-29 September 15-19 5-day, 5-island cruises visiting all five islands included in Channel Islands National Park: San Miguel, Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz, Anacapa, & tiny Santa Barbara Island. \$925

All cruises depart from Santa Barbara. Prices include assigned bunk, All meals, snacks, beverages, & services of a ranger/naturalist who will travel with us to help identify, seals & sea lions, birds & wildlife, plants & flowers, whales & other creatures of the sea. We'll also see remnants of the rich culture of the Chumash people who lived on these islands for thousands of years.

Each island is unique & offers its own special charm: **San Miguel** for its white, sandy beaches and huge congregation of elephant seals; **Santa Rosa** for its rare Torrey Pine forest; **Santa Cruz** for high mountains, deep valleys & the famous Painted Cave, **Anacapa** for the west coast brown pelican rookery, steep cliffs, a picturesque lighthouse and excellent snorkeling waters. **Santa Barbara Island** for pristine waters and a friendly colony of frolicking sea lions. All islands have rugged shorelines, dotted with sea caves, & inhabited by an abundance of wildlife. Activities include hiking, kayaking, snorkeling, beachcombing, or just relaxing at sea.

In spring the islands are ablaze with colorful wildflowers. In summer, the enticing, pristine waters of the Marine Sanctuary, churning with colorful fish and sea lions, will delight snorkelers and swimmers.

These cruises are fundraisers to benefit Sierra Club political programs in California.

To make a reservation, sent \$100 check payable to Sierra Club to leader Joan Jones Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, 91732. (626-443-0706; jholtzhl@aol.com). Website: www.truthaquatics.com/hiking.htm

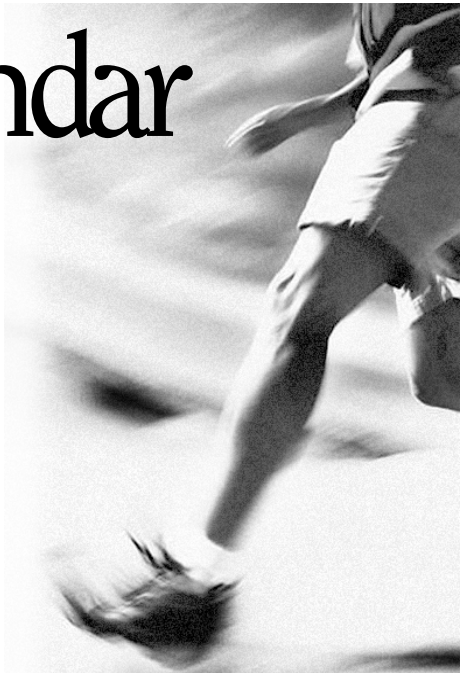


Photo by Joaquin Palting

DEC.25, 0930, Mon, CHRISTMAS CALLENDER DUNES HIKE, Meet at west end of Callender Rd at Hwy# 1, Hike to Chumash midden in dunes. White Elephant & Potluck Feast to follow at Bill's Hostel. Reservations required. Call 929-3647 or <bdenneen@kcbx.net> a few days before to confirm and for details.

JAN.1, 0930, Mon, 30th ANNUAL NEW YEARS MUSSEL ROCK HIKE.

Meet at west end of Main St. near Guadalupe on beach. Hike to top of Mussel Rock to start the new year off with a new beginning Bill Denneen 1040 Cielo Lane, Nipomo, 93444. Call 929-3647 or <bdenneen@kcbx.net> a few days before to confirm and for details.



San Miguel, Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz, Anacapa, & tiny Santa Barbara Island. \$925

All cruises depart from Santa Barbara. Prices include assigned bunk, All meals, snacks, beverages, & services of a ranger/naturalist who will travel with us to help identify, seals & sea lions, birds & wildlife, plants & flowers, whales & other creatures of the sea. We'll also see remnants of the rich culture of the Chumash people who lived on these islands for thousands of years.

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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.