



May 2013
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SANTA LUCIAN



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

Fracking California: A Disaster Waiting to Happen

by Kathryn Phillips, Director
Sierra Club California

Sometimes fact is so much stranger than anything even the best novelist could write.

Take California, which sits atop a 1,700-square-mile oil shale deposit that is threatened to be accessed by hydraulic fracturing, or fracking. Fracking is an ugly, largely unregulated process that forces massive amounts of water, sand and an unknown cocktail of chemicals into the ground, the end result of which is to release more dirty fossil-fuel pollution into our environment.

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

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

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

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

Up to now, protecting air and water quality has only been possible at the state and local levels, and often even that has proven to be difficult. In California, by the industry's own estimate, more than 600 oil wells have



Photo by Shane Davis, Rocky Mountain Chapter Sierra Club

See: "It's Time to Warrior Up," page 6

been fracked in the last decade, with virtually no oversight or monitoring by the agency that provides well permits.

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

Then just two months ago, the *New York Times* published an article highlighting how the Monterey Shale formation—which stretches from the northern San Joaquin Valley into Los Angeles County, and west to the coast—could turn California into the nation's top oil-producing region, literally changing the Golden State's landscape overnight. The story put a national spotlight on how oil and gas companies are quickly buying up leases on federal land so they can expand oil fracking in California, just as they are doing for natural gas in Pennsylvania.

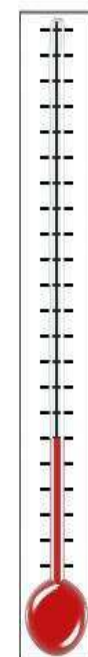
Responding to increased public concerns, California legislators sprang into action in March to establish public protections. They introduced ten bills to address the environmental and public health effects of fracking. Three of those bills call for a moratorium on any new fracking projects until it can be proven that our air, water, public health, and environment will not be harmed.

While these bills move through the legislative process, Sierra Club California and our 150,000 activist members will work to ensure that our policymakers are making decisions based on people, not profits. Protecting our public health

and the environment is essential, especially since we don't know the potential health risks associated with fracking.

Californians are among the most environmentally conscious citizens in the nation. We want clean water, clean air, and solid decreases in greenhouse gas emissions now. We want a moratorium to stop any new fracking and we want our legislature to do the right thing to protect our environment and our health.

Update: 20 from 300



The Chapter is moving steadily up the mountain of financial stability, heading toward the goal re-resented by a regular monthly donation of \$20 from 300 members. Getting there is up to you.

Monthly PayPal, bank bill-pay and personal check donations are now equivalent to 80 individuals at \$20 per month. Twelve of you have already paid an entire year's worth at \$20 @ month in one check.

This means that we are 27% of the way toward reaching our goal of the equivalent of \$20 per month from 300 people. Onward!

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Sierra Club General Meeting

Tuesday, May 21, 7 p.m.

Climate Change Comes to the Central Coast

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

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



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

COLAB vs. Democracy

The attack on California's most important environmental law is pretty vacant

By Andrew Christie, Chapter Director

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

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

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

Naturally, I was surprised to learn what I meant when I made that claim. But then I remembered that Americans have the right to be free of the tyranny of reactionary talk-show hosts who insist that we must make the claim they want us to make, the way that they want us to make it. What I actually said, at the end of a letter to *New Times* responding to Caldwell's attack on the California Environmental Quality Act, was this:

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

My brief reference to democracy

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

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

More bad news for COLAB's let's-gut-CEQA-to-protect-constitutional-rights argument: On March 29, a trial court struck down the main provision of AB 900, a stealth bill from the 2011 legislative session that "streamlined" CEQA by sending legal challenges straight to the court of appeals so as to divest petitioners of most of their day in court and avoid too much legal scrutiny. The court ruled the bill was unconstitutional.

An essential clue to the concept of democracy, COLAB-style, is provided in Caldwell's original *New Times* opinion piece, in which he fretted that "there are too many communities and jurisdictions in our state who specialize in exploiting the vagaries of CEQA to prevent growth and development."

These naughty communities and jurisdictions presumably are not located in the real America, as Sarah Palin would have it, but in some nether realm besmirched by citizens who have used a tool given to them by government that allows them to demand an accounting from the purveyors of sprawl, toxic waste incinerators, power plants sited in

DEMOCRACY continued on page 5



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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SECRETARY

Patrick McGibney
MEMBER

Lindi Doud
MEMBER

Cal French
COUNCIL OF CLUB LEADERS
Lindi Doud, Patrick McGibney
TREASURERS

The Executive Committee meets the second Monday of every month at 5:30 p.m., and the Conservation Committee meets the second Friday at 1p.m. at the chapter office, located at 974 Santa Rosa St., San Luis Obispo. All members are welcome to attend.

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Open

Conservation

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We Are the Sierra Club

interviews with the movers and shakers of the Santa Lucia Chapter

Linda Seeley, Secretary, Executive Committee

How and why did you become a chapter leader?

Well, I had always been a Sierra Club supporter, and especially the Santa Lucia Chapter, because of the vital work they did to protect the wild places in my beloved SLO County. I had huge respect for our intrepid Chapter Director, and I wanted to support his efforts on behalf of our county and region. So when I was asked by former ExComm Chair Karen Merriam to join the ExComm, I jumped at the chance. I knew that our County needed its protectors, and I wanted to fulfill that role.

So we gotta have nukes to combat global warming, right?

Wrong! Nukes are about as bad a solution to global warming as you could ever dream up! The carbon footprint of nukes, from mining and milling, processing, shipment, intensive carbon use in building, not to mention the incalculable carbon footprint of storing the high-level radioactive waste and decommissioning the plants is practically immeasurable. Of course, these costs are never figured into the life cycle of nuclear plants, because the promoters of nuclear energy want us to turn our heads to it. Right here at Diablo Canyon, we are housing over six million pounds of highly radioactive waste in the crosshairs of at least 13 earthquake faults. There's nowhere to put the waste, and there is more being made every single day. It's like building a mansion and forgetting to put in a septic system. To combat global warming, we have to conserve and to turn toward renewable energy. It's as simple as that. Nukes never have been, and never will be the answer. If you believe they are, I have a bridge to sell you.

How does your anti-nuclear work relate to the Sierra Club's mission?

The Sierra Club has had a policy opposing the licensing, construction and operation of new nuclear reactors since 1974, and the phased closure and decommissioning of commercial nuclear reactors since 1979, with many additions and changes to these fundamental policies since that time. All can be found at www.sierraclub.org/policy/conservation/nuc-power.aspx. Since 2011, I have been working closely with the Nuclear Free Campaign of the Sierra Club, which has developed informational materials about 5 aspects of nuclear energy: The Front End (mining, milling, and processing uranium), No New Nukes; Retire Old Nukes; Low Level Waste; and High Level Waste. You can find those materials online. My commitment to the future generations is the motivating force behind my determination to eliminate nuclear energy from the landscape of our county and our nation. If anyone would like to speak to me about my reasons, I welcome the dialogue.

Do you have a favorite place in Nature that you like to visit?

What a question! In this County, it



would take all my fingers and toes to count my favorite places. North Coast beaches? Or maybe the Dunes. No, I think it's Reservoir Canyon. Wrong. For sure it's Montana de Oro's hills. Wait a minute....Point Buchon Trail, where I can see Diablo Canyon! How about the back country around Lopez Lake? Hmmm. It has to be the Carrizo Plain. But then there's Oso Flaco and the Back Bay. Hmm. Give me a few years to think about it. In the meantime, I'll visit all these places again and try to make a decision.

Do you have an environmental hero?

Yes. His name is Andrew Christie.

How do you recommend people get involved?

Come to our fundraiser on May 11th! Then figure out what committee you would like to join - is it the Conservation Committee, or the Political Committee, or Outings? What floats your boat? Would you like to start a new committee? Drop by the office and talk to Andrew. Come to an Executive Committee meeting (we meet on the 2nd Monday of every month at 5:30 at the chapter office) and see what you think of us. Our County and all the critters therein need us now! And that means all of you!

What's your vision of the future of the Chapter?

By this time next year, we will be fiscally solvent, because at least 300 of our faithful members will have pledged at least \$20/month to support the important work that we're doing. We will fiercely protect the land, the water, the air, the wildlife, the sea creatures, and the future generations from the rapacious greed of the Industrial Growth Society. We will have allied ourselves with other groups who work to preserve our precious world, and we will look back at our work and say, "Well done."

Lionel Johnston Wins Bill Denneen Award

Lionel Johnston of One Cool Earth received the Bill Denneen Environmental Award at the April 12 SLO Surfrider meeting. Lionel has been planting more than 2,000 trees per year for over 20 years, working with many youth groups, governmental agencies and environmental organizations.



Well earned Lionel Johnston (right) is congratulated by David Georgi, professor emeritus, California State University.



Listening to the Sea Tiffany Liang, 7th grade, Petaluma.

The winners: 2013 California Coastal Art & Poetry Contest

The California Coastal Commission has announced the results of the 2013 Coastal Art & Poetry Contest for K-12 students.

With nearly 2,300 entries, the competition was fierce. Teachers and parents encouraged their students to think creatively about California's coast and ocean. Acorn Naturalists and Aquarium of the Pacific contributed generous donations, and Chapman University's Tabula Poetica program lent judging assistance.

In addition to being showcased on the Coastal Commission's website, all of the art and the five winning poems will be on exhibit at the Point Reyes Visitor Center in Marin County in May and June, the Ford House Museum in Mendocino from July through September, Channel Islands National Park Visitor Center in Ventura in October and November, and the Birch Aquarium in La Jolla from December through early January.

See all of the winners and honorable mentions at www.coastal.ca.gov/publiced/poster/poster.html.

Off-Roaders Hit the Wall

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

The study's finding that off-highway vehicles in the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area are the primary culprit in creating the worst air pollution on the Central Coast

DUNES continued on page 10


The Last Remaining Seats...




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Sierra Club Endorses Carlyn Christianson for SLO City Council

The Santa Lucia Chapter is pleased to endorse the candidacy of Carlyn Christianson in the special election for San Luis Obispo City Council.

For city residents who uphold environmental values, it's no contest. As the only candidate in the race with substantial land use planning experience, Christianson is clearly the woman for the job at the historical moment when the city is embarking on an update of its Land Use and Circulation Element (see below). This is the council that will chart the future of land use in the city for the next 25 years, and Christianson has proven her MVP status in such policy deliberations when she was on the City Planning Commission during the Conservation and Open Space Element update, and in helping craft the South Hills, Johnson Hills and Cerro San Luis conservation plans. And she has a low tolerance level for shenanigans (a good thing -- see below again).

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



SLO City Goals: Hide & Seek

When the San Luis Obispo City Council met on April 9, the sole agenda item was a 604-page staff report entitled "Strategic Budget Direction and Major City Goal Work Programs for the 2013-15 Financial Plan."

The 600-page staff report set some kind of record. It contained not a single mention of the city's 25,000-piece LUCE update community survey, the survey's overwhelming response from residents, and the clear preference expressed by a majority of respondents to prioritize funding for the acquisition and maintenance of natural open space. The staff report followed on the heels of two previous 300-page staff reports on the goal-setting process, both of which, in their more modest bulk, also managed to include not a word on this subject.

And more open space for peaks, hillsides and the greenbelt were the only categories of city services for which a majority of respondents said they were willing to pay *more*. All in all, priority #1 and spending goal #1 could not have been communicated more clearly to the City by the largest segment of the citizenry to have participated in the LUCE update or the city budget goal-setting process.

At the council meeting held one week earlier -- and one day after April Fools Day -- an earnest gentleman stepped up and offered the speculation that the Sierra Club could have exerted some kind of undue influence and somehow skewed the results of the 25,000-piece survey. He mused that based on his theory of this impossible feat of manipulation, the council should focus instead on the input of the relative handful of people who have been showing up at community update meetings (irrespective of the fact that those meetings would be much easier to manipulate via a much smaller subset of the population, for

anyone who was so inclined).

By the same logic, the President of the United States should be chosen by the Iowa Caucuses. President Santorum would surely find this an attractive notion.

If this seems absurd, we are obliged to report that this "minority rules" logic did, in fact, result in the downgrading of open space acquisition from the category of "Major City Goals," where the LUCE update survey results obviously should have put it, to the status of "other important Council objectives" in the City's 2013-15 financial plan. That was one outcome of what looks increasingly like a staff policy of making the LUCE update survey results invisible in City policy.

Blurred vision

In the realm of "other" to which open space has been relegated due to the efforts of the City administration to ignore the results of the LUCE survey, things continue to slide. The open space objective in the city goals is framed as "Increase the pace, quality, permanence, and relevance of the City's Greenbelt Program," neatly eliminating the goal of protection for creeks and peaks -- not just the greenbelt -- as expressed by the majority of survey respondents.

Having thus narrowed the scope of lands to be protected, the outcome/final work product is stated as the acquisition of "additional real property interests for conservation and open space purposes to serve both citizens and visitors alike..." an outcome which bows to the desire of the Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Vitality Corporation to jack up tourism, but shafts local neighborhoods and ignores the directive in the city's Open Space Ordinance that natural open space areas are to be preserved for use by residents. Local neighborhoods are paying for the



Sierra Club Challenges Rogue Rodenticides

To help EPA save the kit fox, we want D-Con gone

On April 29, the Sierra Club, Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife and the American Bird Conservancy intervened in proceedings at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to defend the EPA's decision to cancel the registrations of twelve rodenticides that fail to comply with

federal safety standards. The Santa Lucia Chapter is serving as the Club's representative in the proceeding.

Rodenticides are designed to kill mammals and thus are highly toxic not only to "target" animals but to people,

RODENTICIDES continued on page 9

Letters

Send letters to: sierraclub8@gmail.com, or Sierra Club, P.O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo, CA 94006. Letters may be edited for space.

Thank you so much for your help a year ago with my hike! We ended up at Cerro Alto and it was *incredible* (pic attached). But of course, if you give a Dan a cookie...well, a little more about me first. In addition to my job on the radio, I'm working on a novel about my freshman year at Cal Poly in 2002. The history and topography of SLO are an important backdrop for my story, so I've read several books on the subject including *Mountains of Fire*. It's a good read, but I'm still left wondering... *Why* are they called the Nine Sisters? Who named them that? I tried to track down Joseph and Sharon Dickerson myself, but can't seem to find an email address. Any info you can spare would be greatly appreciated!

Dan Weir

Can anyone help out Dan? Send your *Nine Sisters* info to sierraclub8@gmail.com



success of tourism expansion efforts with bumper-to-bumper parking, trashed yards, and areas like Bishop Peak getting loved to death. In the city's Conservation and Open Space Element, the first priority for open space management is "protection of existing wildlife and natural habitat." Public access is a secondary priority.

The conflation of interests and blurring of policy to the advantage of certain economic interests by omitting crucial policy elements or pretending that different words in those policies mean the same thing (open space = greenbelt; residents = tourists) is approaching epidemic levels in City planning documents.

To sum up: No, the Sierra Club did not rig the results of the 2012 community survey, or the results of the 1988 survey that produced essentially the same result as the last one: that the majority of the citizens of San Luis Obispo, then and now, want the acquisition and preservation of natural open space to be the first priority of city services, and consider the natural environment -- not job opportunities, not shopping, not entertainment -- to be the most important element in maintaining quality of life, also known as the reason why San Luis Obispo has been identified as the happiest city in America,

per Dan Buettner in *Thrive*. Speaking of which, the Sierra Club also has not altered the history of San Luis Obispo since the 1960s, when, as Mr. Buettner concluded, "the town's focus shifted away from optimizing the business environment to maximizing the quality of life."

"We want you to spend our money on the preservation of natural open space" is what the LUCE update survey told the City. Those survey results should have been -- but weren't -- front and center in the 604 pages of the Strategic Budget Direction and Major City Goal Work Programs for the 2013-15 Financial Plan. The error of their absence should be rectified in every other document that staff produces in both the LUCE update process and the budget goal-setting process going forward.

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Democracy

continued from page 2

endangered species habitat, etc.

To be even more specific – more specific than Mr. Caldwell cared to get – he is saying pity poor Excelaron, besieged by unruly citizens who didn't want their home to be turned into an oil field. Pity the Sacramento developer who just wanted to build several thousand condos, a few hotels and some retail, sell off and get out of town, but was compelled by a spoilsport environmental law to admit that there was no possibility of securing enough water to supply the development. Alas, poor Chevron, which only wanted to be left in peace to expand its Richmond refinery, until the rabble uncovered the evidence of what the real impacts of that expansion would be on their health, impacts which Chevron had chosen not to disclose. Thinking only of their own interests and their own lungs and their own children, those selfish people killed Chevron's beautiful dream of increased profits.

Caldwell blogged: "Historians are clear on one point about the demise of democratic forms of government and that occurs when a majority of citizens realize they have the power to take things away from the minority."

This is COLAB's fun-house mirror version of Thomas Jefferson's concept of minority rights protected under majority rule ("that though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail, that will to be rightful must be reasonable; that the minority possess their equal rights, which equal law must protect and to violate would be oppression"). Fashion a balloon animal out of this principle, and presto: you have a scenario of citizens encroaching on the rights of developers and corporations to pollute and destroy public resources for private gain. This, per COLAB, constitutes the government giving to the tyrannical majority something that it "has taken away from some other citizen in the form of taxation, regulation or outright confiscation."

I don't know but I'm willing to bet that Caldwell and COLAB are fans of the *Citizens United* decision that opened the campaign funding floodgates and allowed unlimited cash to come roaring down from the corporate heights into the beleaguered valley of American democracy. Supporting *Citizens United* would be a philosophically consistent position for them: the right of corporations (a minority) to manipulate elections with unlimited funds must be protected from the majority of the people who don't think that's a great idea.

Yes, dear reader, you are COLAB's tyrannical majority. You are the bad guy in a vision of democracy based on unflinching, solicitous concern for the most wealthy and powerful actors in society, whose right to lay waste

to the land however they please is supposedly under threat and must be protected from, well, you. If you file a CEQA lawsuit to protect your neighborhood or stream or oak woodland or the water you drink or the air you breathe from the impacts of a big box store or sprawling subdivision development, you are somehow "the majority" imposing your tyrannical will on the rights of "the minority," which has somehow become a big box store's CEO, board of directors and shareholders.

This is the full measure of the logic of COLAB's argument and the incoherence of its concept of democracy. (For good measure, after attacking the "majority of Americans" who are "receiving their succor and support through the government" — resurrecting the "47 percent" argument that recently worked so well for Mitt Romney — Caldwell ends his blog post with a call for revolution. One must assume it would be a revolution that will not include half the population, who presumably dwell in those rogue "communities and jurisdictions" that practice the kind of democracy COLAB doesn't like.)

Of course, CEQA doesn't just apply to corporations and giant development firms. Individuals, local governments and small businesses must comply with it, too. It's democratic that way. If what you propose to do constitutes a project and carries the potential to

COLAB doesn't have much use for communities, the public interest, or the common good. That's the wrong kind of democracy.

impact the environment, CEQA requires an accounting and mitigation of those impacts.

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

the actual moral high ground.

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

"Until we became involved through CEQA," he writes, "the city of Bakersfield was requiring no air pollution mitigation for the cumulative impacts of the many dozens of new, large housing projects they were approving. As a result of CEQA litigation, developers agreed to precedent-setting air pollution fees [that] have funded more than \$1.5 million in local air pollution reduction grants. For example, some such grants funded replacement of older, high-polluting diesel school buses with new, natural-gas school buses that not only reduce air pollution but also significantly reduce health risks for student riders."

Nipp concludes: "By informing and empowering the public, CEQA stands as a major component of our democratic system. Our own community is much improved as a result of this law. It's in the best tradition of American justice that the ordinary citizen can have this sort of attention from the government and from the development community. Weakening CEQA is weakening our democracy.

"We're not wild-eyed radicals. We're asking for clean air."

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

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

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

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

Now is a good time to remind them what democracy is.

www.ceqaworks.org



Help them catch a clue Many of our state legislators who should know better are considering multiple bills to pull the teeth from the California Environmental Quality Act. They need to hear from you. Click on the website above to make sure they do.

It's Time to Warrior Up

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

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

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

That's why SLO Clean Water Action made sure an April 16 stop in San Luis Obispo was on the itinerary of a week-long speaking tour exposing the reality of fracking in the Golden State. The tour wove through six affected communities in the largest shale regions of Central and Southern California -- Chico, Monterey, San Luis Obispo,



Laying it down Former Pittsburgh city councilman Doug Shields brought the word on fracking to SLO.

Santa Barbara, San Diego, and Culver City -- and provided a menu of options, from state regulation to local "rights-based" bans, to oppose fracking in our backyards.

The evening's panel discussion featured Ms. Anwar, Steve Murray of Baldwin Hills Oil Watch, Paul Fer-

razzi of the L.A. Citizens Coalition for a Safe Community, Ben Price of the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund, and Shannon Biggs of Global Exchange.

Price told the crowd that 150 com-

FRACKING continued on page 10

Sierra Club Files Fracking Suit

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

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

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

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

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

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

-- only SLO appearance --

Jesse Colorado Swanhuysen

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

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



Jesse Swanhuysen is chair of the Sierra Club Committee on International Trade, Human Rights & the Environment. He has been an organizer for Environmental Defense, Director of the California Coalition for Fair Trade and Human Rights, and a mainstay of the Local Ocean Network that brought about the creation of the Channel Islands Marine Reserves. He currently practices law in Goleta.



For more information, contact;

805-543-8717

sierraclub8@gmail.com



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CHAPTER

And They're Off!



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



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

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

GreenHound Academy sending its first graduates into the world

April 11 was Academy Awards Night for the 40 graduating seniors of Atascadero High School's GreenHound Academy.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- John Muir



Now on Facebook

search: "Santa Lucia" and become our friend!



Youth Grassroots Leadership Training: Apply Now

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

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

This summer, the SSC is offering six Sprog trainings:

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

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



Taking Issue

Reviewing problematic environmental coverage & commentary in our local media

“GMO ban would limit choice,” by Mike Broadhurst, *The Tribune*, March 21, 2013.

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

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

- *GMO Myths & Truths*

“There is a profound difference between the types of unexpected effects from traditional breeding and genetic engineering.”

- Dr. Louis Pribyl
FDA microbiologist

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

- Dr. E.J. Matthews
FDA Toxicology Group

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

- Dr. Linda Kahl
FDA compliance officer

DNA is DNA whether it comes from a plant, a human or a bacterium.

Most resistance to GMOs is based in belief because people don't understand the underlying facts.



GMO ban would limit choice

Widespread contamination of U.S. corn, soybeans and other crops by genetically engineered varieties is threatening the purity of organic and natural food products and driving purveyors of such specialty products to new efforts to protect their markets [and keep] contamination at bay. That goal is rapidly becoming harder, however, as planting of biotech corn, soybeans, and other crops expands across the United States. “Now there is a real shortage of organic grain for animal husbandry and dairy operations,” said Organic Consumers Association national director Ronnie Cummins. -- Reuters, March 12, 2008

In a test several years ago, Cal Poly produced three plots of corn.... Consumers preferred the insect-damage-free corn in this experiment, whether GMO or sprayed.

Between 1999 and 2010, the same period in which so-called GMO crops became the norm for farmers, the

number of monarch butterfly eggs declined by an estimated 81 percent across the Midwest, the researchers say. That’s because milkweed — the host plant for the eggs and caterpillars produced by one of the most gaudy and widely recognized of all North American butterflies — has nearly disappeared from farm fields, they found. It is one of the clearest examples yet of unintended consequences from the widespread use of genetically modified seeds, said John Pleasants, a monarch researcher from Iowa State in Ames, Iowa. “When we put something out there, we don’t know always what the consequences are,” he said.

- “Study ties GMO corn, soybeans to butterfly losses,” *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, March 16, 2012

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

A recent poll showed 65% of Americans don't want to eat

genetically modified fish. But manufacturer AquaBounty plans to sell it without a GE label. You won't know you're eating it. Over 300 consumer, health, fishing, environmental, parent, and animal rights groups are opposing FDA approval. The Los Angeles City Council unanimously opposes it. Whole Foods and Trader Joe's have pledged not to sell it.

- JewishJournal.com, April 11, 2013

the foods from these new plants undergo a stringent testing protocol required by the Food and Drug Administration.

Specific DNA is added to a GMO plant to produce a desirable trait.

The unforeseen consequence of increased lignin in Bt corn, a trait that biotechnologists had not intended to create, went undetected for five years. “The possibility that some Bt-containing corn hybrids have higher lignin content than their non-genetically modified counterparts represents an unintended effect with no known mechanism, says Michael Lehman of the USDA-ARS-North Central Agricultural Research Lab in Brookings, S.D.... ‘If more aggressive tillage is required to handle a growing amount of tougher residue, then decades-long gains in soil and water quality achieved through conservation tillage may be at risk,’ Lehman says.”

-- no-tillfarmer.com

Since the FDA does not require human safety testing, just voluntary safety consultations, we feel California should have more rigorous standards. Just as Cal EPA's pesticide law is more stringent than federal law, we feel California should require appropriate testing of GMOs.

-- Consumers Union

Upshot: The percentage of U.S. processed foods that include at least one genetically engineered food is estimated at about 60 to 70 percent, according to a 2010 fact sheet from Colorado State University. Even foods labeled as natural, a term that has no legal meaning, may contain genetically engineered crops. -- *Boulder Daily Camera*, July 27, 2011

National Train Day Pulls Into SLO

Amtrak Station, Saturday, May 11, noon to 4 p.m.



Whether you are avoiding increased gas prices, frustrating traffic, airline hassles, or reducing your greenhouse gas emissions and electing the most energy efficient way to travel, there’s never been a better time to climb on board and take the train.

May 11 is the sixth annual National Train Day (www.nationaltrainday.com), commemorating the anniversary of the driving of the golden spike that

linked the east and west coasts of the United States, and celebrating our railroad history and future.

The local celebration on May 11 will take place from noon to 4 p.m. at the Amtrak San Luis Obispo Train Station, 1011 Railroad Avenue at Santa Rosa. Parking and admission is free, with light refreshments, railroad souvenirs for kids of all ages, a scale model railroad display from the San Luis Obispo Model Railroad Association, and a display of Amtrak memorabilia. Along with the helpful station agents, hosts and volunteers will be available to answer questions and help with trip planning.

Plus: live music, expanded model railroads and historical displays.

TAKE ACTION

- Attend the meeting of the North County Democratic Club at the Vets Hall, 1000 Main Street, Cambria, on Thursday, **May 9**, at 7 p.m., to support organic farmer Jesse Arnold in his presentation on genetically modified food.
- On **May 25**, join the March Against Monsanto: <http://tinyurl.com/cjyelqq> Facebook.com/MarchAgainstMonstanto (Facebook URL is not a typo).
- On **July 4**, Join the Moms Across America March: www.momsacrossamerica.com
- Write to **Peter Jankay**, SLO Farmers Market, P.O. Box 16058, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406. Urge him to adopt a policy of not allowing genetically engineered food to be sold at the market until long-term human health and environmental safety impacts have been assessed via the “appropriate testing” advocated by Consumers Union for GMOs sold in California.

Rodenticides

continued from page 4

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

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

Manufacturers were given until June 2011 to adopt the safety measures voluntarily. Most rodenticide regis-

trants complied in a timely manner. Except one.

Rodenticide manufacturer Reckitt Benckiser LLC has chosen to challenge the EPA decision. In the absence of these safety measures, their products pose unacceptable risks to children, pets, and wildlife. The company continues to make its “D-Con” brands available to consumers without bait stations and in several formulations that include second-generation anticoagulants. These twelve rodenticides are the only ones remaining on the market that fail to comply with the safety measures that EPA asked registrants to adopt by June 2011.

In February 2013, EPA published a notice of intent to cancel the registrations of the twelve rodenticide products. The cancellation would result in their removal from the consumer market. This is the first cancellation proceeding initiated by EPA in over twenty years. By law, EPA may initiate cancellation of a pesticide that poses “any unreasonable risk to man or the environment, taking into account the economic, social, and environmental costs and benefits of the use” of the pesticide.

Of the nearly thirty companies that sell mouse and rat poison products in the United States, Reckitt Benckiser is the only one that has refused to

voluntarily adopt EPA’s risk mitigation measures. Reckitt Benckiser’s products are sold to consumers as pellets or powder, without adequately protective bait stations that prevent access by children, pets, and wildlife. In addition, eight of the twelve products contain second generation anticoagulants, which EPA has determined pose unacceptable hazards to non-target wildlife.

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

contaminated rodents.

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

Earthjustice, a non-profit public interest law firm dedicated to protecting natural resources, wildlife, and the right of all people to a healthy environment, is representing the Sierra Club and co-intervenors in the EPA proceedings. If we are successful, we will help ensure that these toxic products are removed from the consumer market.

Chapter Wins Anthony Prize

On April 25, the Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment named the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club the winner of its 2013 Anthony Grassroots Prize for Organizational Stewardship in recognition of our work to raise awareness of Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) and getting it included in the local planning process. CCA empowers local communities to replace fossil fuel-generated electricity with renewable power, and incentivizes energy efficiency programs. The Anthony Prize is awarded annually to recognize an outstanding example of grassroots environmental stewardship.

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

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

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

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



San Luis Obispo County!



Say **YES** to clean energy!

Say **NO** to Offshore Oil Drilling!

Say **NO** to Offshore Seismic Testing!

Join a national movement to oppose offshore oil drilling and champion clean energy and renewables. Gatherings like ours will bring thousands of American citizens to our beaches and cities and will draw metaphorical and actual lines in the sand; human lines in the sand against the threat oil drilling poses to America’s coastal economies and marine environment.

Where: Avila Beach (on the west side of Avila Pier)

When: Saturday, May 18th from noon until 12:15pm. Please arrive before 11:30am.

Contact: Brad Snook / chair@slo.surfrider.org

www.handsacrossthesand.com



Dunes

continued from page 3

meant that actions might be forthcoming to protect the public health. This posed a potential threat to the off-roader's favorite playground and to the making of money. Therefore, the study and the APCD had to be discredited.

For the next two years, that's what they tried mightily to do. The Phase 2 study and the APCD were aggressively attacked by South County business interests, libertarian scandal-mongering website Cal Coast News, and off-road enthusiast and self-styled "government watchdog" Kevin Rice, all cheered on by the feverish anti-

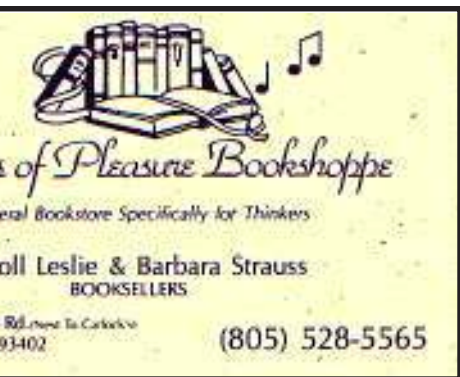
environmental peanut gallery that posts to the websites of CCN and *The Tribune*.

The off-road group Friends of Oceano Dunes filed the inevitable legal challenge to the dust rule based on the APCD study. Rice filed his own suit, claiming the public had not been allowed adequate means to comment on the dust rule at the public hearing as which it was adopted. The California Department of Parks and Recreation, to its everlasting shame, jumped into the clown car, filing a brief in support of Friends of Oceano Dunes

claiming the APCD had no jurisdiction or authority to impose the rule and continuing its long-standing denial that cars on the dunes have anything to do with the clouds of dust descending on Oceano and the Nipomo Mesa and entering the lungs of resi-dents. (State Parks continued to tout its cooperation with the APCD and the County in implementing the dust control rule while its attorney was in court demanding that a judge overturn it.)

On April 19, the court rejected all the claims against the Phase 2 study and the APCD and found that "the District Board of Directors appropriately adopted Rule 1001, which requires State Parks to monitor and reduce sand and dust emissions resulting from OHV riding."

Judge Charles Crandall began his 19-page ruling by noting that "airborne particulate matter levels on the Nipomo Mesa are consistently higher than anywhere on the California coast" and that "as a result of concentrations exceeding both federal and state standards, residents of the Nipomo Mesa are exposed to a serious and continuing health risk" from PM10 pollution. He affirmed the scientific integrity of the APCD's dust studies



Fracking

continued from page 6

munities have passed rights-based ordinances — binding laws that place the rights of residents and nature above the legal "rights" of corporations — 15 of them banning fracking. It is distinct from the regulatory regime in that "regulations say how much damage they can do in your community," whereas rights-based ordinances bar the harmful activity.

The riveting centerpiece of the night was an address by Doug Shields, former city councilman from Pittsburg, the first city in the nation to pass a ban on fracking, asserting its rights of its citizens to a non-toxic environment over the right of oil and gas companies to despoil the environment and endanger public health in search of profit.

"The BS meter is off the charts right now," Shields said of the press to push oil and gas fracking into communities. "Our government institutions have failed us miserably. We're trading our

the federal government in support of their right to frack. A community risks getting sued if it asserts a right to self-governance and bans fracking (see the \$6 million lawsuit Excelaron filed against SLO County just for denying a discretionary permit for conventional oil drilling in the Huasna Valley), but, Shields pointed out, "seven Pennsylvania communities have passed rights-based bans, including Pittsburg, and not one of them has been taken to court."

Shields thinks he knows why. "The governor and the attorney general are not inclined to come to town and say 'you don't really have any right to self-governance.' That kind of thing just doesn't sit well with people." A legal challenge to a rights-based community fracking ban would expose that major glitch in our socio-political superstructure.

"This has to become our civil rights issue," Shields concluded. "It's not a zoning issue any more. This is about the giving up of rights. At that point, it doesn't matter if you're a liberal or a conservative." (A number of local Tea Party stalwarts were in the audience at the Grange Hall busily taking notes, but — with one brief off-point exception — otherwise keeping mum rather than engaging in their usual shout-out/disruption thing. Let's

potentially take this as a good sign confirming Shields' assertion.)

Jeanne Blackwell of SLO Clean Water Action said she hoped the tour will empower and mobilize the local community. "Fracking is a dangerous threat to our health, our groundwater, our ecosystems, and our agricultural economy," she said. "Tonight's event helps us understand the fracking going on right now around us, and give us the tools and strategies to take action against it."



Something smells Paul Ferrazzi of the L.A. Citizens Coalition demonstrates the correlation of oil field "odor events" with toxic gas releases in L.A., home of the largest urban oil field in the U.S.

dependence on foreign oil and gas for dependence on corporate oil and corporate gas."

The water pollution problems presented by fracking are severe. "You can take it to the wastewater treatment plants, but there is no treatment for this," said Shields, other than dilution. "The standard practice of adding chlorine would trigger the creation of trihalomethane, the consumption of which is likely to cause bladder cancer."

Six percent of well casings will fail and leak. That's the industry standard. "Six percent of wells *will* fail," Shields emphasized. "Is a six percent failure rate okay for bridges or airplanes?"

"Let's back up a little bit and start talking about democracy," said Shields after delineating the severe environmental impacts of fracking. "This is about expressing the greatest degree of self-governance possible. You don't have a fracking problem, you have a democracy problem."

Shields pointed out that there is a galaxy of laws and precedents that can be invoked by corporations, states and

TAKE ACTION

Petitions to gather signatures to put a rights-based ordinance on ballots banning fracking in the seven incorporated cities in the county are now circulating. Go to SLOCleanwateraction.org or write to jeannewater@gmail.com to sign or gather signatures.

And watch: YouTube: *The Sky is Pink* (gas industry arguments debunked)

And go to: www.marcellusprotest.org



and gave the plaintiffs a lesson in the procedural history of those studies and the dust rule, explained how science works, described how air pollution is regulated in California, and otherwise let the petitioners know exactly why

their arguments were faulty, their claims were groundless and their petition was denied.

Will the court's decision end the vendetta against the Air Pollution Control District? Not likely. On one of his websites, in a breathless exposé that reads like a parody of a Cal Coast News story,

Kevin Rice tries to manufacture a scandal out of the APCD's production of an award-winning 2-minute music video about simple actions people can take to reduce air pollution.

The video features Mr. Eco — who, Mr. Rice grimly informs us, wears "a coercive super-hero costume" and sings a song whose "lyrics direct children how to live according to the APCD's one-way message." (Sample lyric: *Ride the bus, a bike or a scooter/ carpool to work, be a green commuter.*) Rice wants us to know that "No scientific information lending credence or balance to the message is provided."

The video is, according to Rice, a shocking waste of taxpayer dollars comparable to the General Services Administration scandal over "lavish Las Vegas parties."

No word from Rice or Cal Coast News concerning whatever scandalous sums they may think the APCD is spending on its Clean Air Ambassadors partnership with Cal Poly students and high school environmental programs to provide K-3 environmental education. But we assume an exposé is in the works.



The horror! The hills are alive with the sound of alleged regulatory perfidy.

TAKE ACTION

Send a message to the EPA

EPA Region 9 Administrator Jared Blumenfeld needs to hear from you

blumenfeld.jared@epa.gov

Dear Mr. Blumenfeld,

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

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

You know that our county exceeds the federal threshold for PM10 pollution. Please issue a finding that San Luis Obispo County is in non-attainment for PM10 and give us the federally enforceable tools we need to clean up our air and keep our families healthy.

Sincerely,

Your Name Here

Classifieds

Next issue deadline is **May 13**. To get a rate sheet or submit your ad and payment, contact:
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Outings and Activities Calendar

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

All our hikes and activities are open to all Club members and the general public. Please bring drinking water to all outings and optionally a lunch. Sturdy footwear is recommended. All phone numbers listed are within area code 805 unless otherwise noted. Pets are generally not allowed. A parent or responsible adult must accompany children under the age of 18. If you have any suggestions for hikes or outdoor activities, questions about the Chapter's outing policies, or would like to be an outings leader, call Outings Chair Joe Morris, 549-0355. For information on a specific outing, please call the listed outing leader.

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

Sat., May 11th, 7:15 a.m. Big Sur Botany Hike. Join us on an outing focused on the floristic diversity of the southern Big Sur mountains, co-led by expert guide Neil Havlik. This is a moderately strenuous 10-mile hike, 2200 ft. gain, going through several changes in plant communities. The Cruickshank Trail first ascends to panoramic views of the southern Big Sur coast, then into Villa Creek Canyon and Buckeye Camp (lunch stop). It continues across Redwood Creek to Soda Springs trail junction. Bring lunch, snacks, water, and dress in layers for changing weather. Ticks and poison oak are possibilities. Meet at 7:15 a.m. Santa Rosa Park in SLO or 8 a.m. at Washburn Day Use Area in San Simeon State Park. We will then

drive 40 miles to the Cruickshank TH, first leaving a shuttle car(s) at the Soda Springs TH 4 miles south. To participate, you must contact Bill Waycott in advance at 459-2103 or bill.waycott@gmail.com to be included.

Sat. May 11th, 10 a.m. City Walk: Storybook Houses of 1920s San Luis Obispo. Co-led by local expert Patty Andreen, who lives in the neighborhood, this guided stroll will take you past a dozen daring, delightful, Disney-esque cottages in SLO, explaining their unique architecture and the twenties era that inspired their designs. Meet at corner of Chorro St. and Murray Ave. Info.: Joe Morris, 549-0355.

Sun., May 12th, 9 a.m. Wildflower Walk in Prefumo Canyon. Join us for a special 2-mile saunter through the Irish Hills Open Space preserve. Stroll past a good variety of late-spring wildflowers and learn about chaparral ecology, while overlooking a panoramic vista of a half-dozen morros. Wear sturdy walking shoes. Poison oak present in area. Meet at corner of Los Osos Valley and Prefumo Canyon Rds. Leader: Joe Morris, 549-0355.

Sat., May 18th, 9 a.m. Prewitt Canyon Loop. Come on a southern Big Sur hike with beautiful views. This is an all-day hike of 12 miles and 2,400 feet elevation gain, so not for beginners. It is possible to do a partial hike and retrace your steps. Be aware of the presence of poison oak in the

area. At your own option, you could consider camping at either Kirk Creek or Plaskett Creek campgrounds before and/or afterwards. Meet at the Pacific Valley C.D.F. station, about a mile from Plaskett Creek campground. Leader: Carlos Diaz-Saavedra, 546-0317.

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

Tues., May 21st, 7-9 p.m. Bimonthly Meeting: Climate Change Comes to the Central Coast. John Lindsey,




noted meteorologist and writer of the "Weather-watch" column for the *Tribune*, visits us tonight with

a stimulating talk on how global warming has already altered some aspects of Central Coast weather, giving graphic displays of some of his own collected data, and discussing what patterns we might expect to see in the future. Plus: Amanda Wallner of Sierra Club California on "Why We Need a National Marine Sanctuary." Steynberg Gallery, 1531 Monterey St., SLO. Info: Joe Morris, 549-0355.



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.




The Sierra Club Needs You!

Become an Outings Leader

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

For further information contact:

Joe Morris
Sierra Club
(805) 549-0355
dj1942@earthlink.net



John Meitz, founder of the Sierra Club, in Yosemite

Activities sponsored by other groups

Sat., June 1, ECOSLO Hike-A-Thon, Laguna Lake Park. ECOSLO's first annual SLO County Hike-A-Thon, in honor of National Trails Day. The June 1 Laguna Lake kick-off will feature a light brunch, music and mingling, docent-led hikes, registration booth, and exhibitors with giveaways. The June 29 after party will feature dinner and dancing with live music from local favorites Proxima Parada and The Red Willows, along with an awards ceremony and prizes to top participants! Participants are asked to register, log their outdoor adventures, and

seek out pledges that will benefit the work that ECOSLO does on trail restoration, cleanup efforts, docent training and advocacy, partnering with government, non-government, and community organizations to unite county-wide efforts in open space conservation and recreation. Interested in being an event sponsor? Volunteer? Want to get a head start on pledging? Pre-registration information can be found online at ecoslo.org. Contact event coordinator Victoria Carranza at hike@ecoslo.org or (805) 544-1777 or visit 75 Higuera St., Suite 100, for details.

HIKE - A - THON
JUNE SLO COUNTY 2013



Eco Slo

Pledge for the Month of June
REGISTER NOW!

www.ecoslo.org

Kick-Off	After Party
SAT. JUNE 1	SAT. JUNE 29
Laguna Lake Park	El Chorro Park

Thurs., May 16, 5:30 p.m., SLO Botanical Garden. California Ethnobotany: useful plants of SLO County. Ever wonder how humans survived before modern conveniences like grocery stores, pharmacies and department stores?

Discover how indigenous people of the Central Coast used the bountiful flora to not only survive, but thrive! Join the SLO Botanical Garden for an intriguing class focusing on the many useful plants of SLO County by Bay Area herbalist Tellur Fenner, owner/director of the Blue Wind Botanical Medicine Clinic and Education Center in Oakland. California's indigenous plant use (past & present) is astounding in its scope and complexity. This informational journey will discuss the vast field of California ethnobotany through an interactive slideshow,

detailing the historic and present-day use of a number of native California edible/medicinal plants. A large selection of plant samples will be incorporated into the class with the aim of engaging the students' sensory awareness on all levels. This in-depth introductory class should prove insightful and rewarding for anyone interested in knowing more about the unique flora of our state. Call (805) 541-1400 x304, or e-mail education@slobg.org.

