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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

## Sanctuary in Our Grasp

After two decades, we have a path to a national marine sanctuary for the central coast

Bowing to overwhelming public demand, on June 13 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) re-established the process by which the American people can nominate nationally significant marine areas as potential new national marine sanctuaries.

With the announcement of the new process, the Central Coast Marine Sanctuary Alliance and Sierra Club California, working with the Northern Chumash Tribal Council, is preparing to submit a nomination package for the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary, which is proposed to span the central coast from Cambria to the Channel Islands.

John Podesta, counselor to President Obama, at the start of Capitol Hill Ocean Week, when the State Department hosted the "Our Ocean" Conference, bringing together 400 participants from more than 80 nations, including government officials, scientists, and leading international institutions to review the state of the science and determine concrete actions that can



SANCTUARY continued on page 5

## Oil Strategy First, Projects Second

By Tracy Del Rio, President, Huasna Foundation  
Linda Reynolds, Chair, Mesa Refinery Watch Steering Group

North America's shale oil boom that started this decade has been compared to the gold rush fever that swept the nation in 1849 – except that the California gold rush lured young men to a wild, lawless place in search of fame and fortune, while shale oil is luring corporate oil and gas interests to modern-day central California in

search of market share and profits. New, unconventional oil extraction methods involving horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing – or 'fracking' – along with steam injection, has made shale oil that was trapped in rock newly accessible.

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## Super-Toxic Rat Poisons Coming Off the Shelves

d-CON production to cease under legal settlement

Following decades of pressure from conservation, public-health and animal-rights groups, the maker of the rat poison d-CON agreed on May 30 to pull its super-toxic rat poisons from store shelves by early next year.

Reckitt Benckiser, the parent company of d-CON, had been challenging a decision by the Environmental Protection Agency to limit the sale of super-toxic rat poison to avoid unintended consequences of poisonings of children, pets and wildlife. Poisonings have been documented in at least 25 species of wild animals in California,

including mountain lions, hawks, endangered San Joaquin kit foxes and northern spotted owls, as well as numerous cats and dogs.

The Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club was an intervenor in the EPA proceeding that resulted in the agreement to pull the rodenticide from retail sale. (See "Sierra Club Challenges Rogue Rodenticides," May 2013). Earthjustice represented the Sierra Club, Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife and the American Bird Conservancy, siding with the EPA in Reckitt Benckiser's challenge to the Agency's cancellation order.



"This is a significant victory for families, pets and wildlife," said Jonathan Evans, toxics and endangered species campaign director at the Center for Biological Diversity. "While the fight isn't over until all of these hazardous products are off the market, this decision keeps the worst of the worst products from residential consumers."

Under the terms of the agreement with the EPA, d-CON will stop

making super-toxic rat poisons by the end of 2014, which will be replaced on the shelves with safer products by March 2015. These super-toxic poisons — known as second-generation anticoagulants — will still be available for bulk sales to agricultural users and by licensed pest-control operators.

"D-CON's days are numbered," said Greg Loarie, an attorney with

RODENTICIDE continued on page 7

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## Sierra Club General Meeting

7 p.m., Wednesday, July 30

### What's Next for the Pismo Preserve?

One of the most momentous efforts in years to add permanent open space in our county, the SLO Land Conservancy's Pismo Preserve project would add 900 acres of ranch land above the city of Pismo Beach, with rolling hills, ten miles of trails, and ocean views. Its habitat would support protection of steelhead, California red-legged frog, and other vulnerable species.

Hear its story and the latest developments from biologist and Land Conservancy Board member Brooke Langle, with accompanying visual slides of the area.



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



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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## Are We Taft?

Kern County made a choice more than 100 years ago, but it wasn't really a choice.

Oil was discovered, oil companies and oil company money moved in, local governments were very happy to get the jobs and tax revenues, and the rest is history.

Kern County today is the place where Big Oil and Big Ag converged in California and now reign supreme, while the people choke on the worst air pollution in the nation.

Can they at least console themselves, while breathing ozone and particulate matter and living with the inheritance of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, lung cancer and shortened lives, that when the bargain was struck that traded a healthy environment for a bustling economy, at least the terms of the deal were upheld?

No. In a piece of random symmetry, Kern County's average ozone concentration is more than 14 times the national average, and its median household income is \$14,000 below it. 22.5% of its citizens live below the poverty level, compared to 15.3% nationwide.

#### Meanwhile in SLO County

In May, the Huasna Valley Association asked the candidates for 4th District Supervisor "to state for the record your position on allowing oil production in the south county."

The replies of both Caren Ray and

Lynn Compton were variations on the theme of "it depends."

Ray, to her credit, noted that the issue "threatens to affect the very character of our whole district [with] three projects: Porter Ranch, PXP, and tangentially, the Phillips Rail Spur project." She then ticked off the impact categories covered by the California Environmental Quality Act that would make it unlikely that she would support any such project, she said... unless the project applicant can "show that they can mitigate any such impacts to a satisfactory level."

Compton pronounced herself an empty vessel, to be filled by "the sentiments of the citizens," saying that being a Supervisor "isn't about what I personally want, but what the constituents who are affected by Board decisions in the Fourth District want." As it is never the case that "the constituents" all want the same thing, this left the candidate a considerable amount of wiggle room.

Neither candidate answered the bigger question posed by the Huasna Valley Association and Mesa Refinery Watch, as spelled out in detail in the article on our front page.

We second the motion by HVA and MSW for a moratorium on all the oil projects coming down the pike (and heading down the tracks) until the

TAFT continued on page 9



Big oil Taft is the site of California's largest bronze statue, the 40-foot Oilworker Monument, unveiled in 2010 during "Oildorado Days" the city's 100th anniversary celebration.

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MEMBER  
Victoria Carranza (12/15)  
MEMBER

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COUNCIL OF CLUB LEADERS  
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TREASURERS

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

#### Committee Chairs

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# About Those Felony Indictments...

At the June 11 meeting of the Diablo Canyon Independent Safety Committee, John Geesman, attorney for the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility, arose to remind the committee that the company whose safety practices they are presuming to assess finds itself under indictment on twelve felony counts – an historic and unprecedented circumstance for a Nuclear Regulatory Commission licensee.

The criminal case against PG&E is focused on the September 9, 2010, explosion of a poorly maintained natural gas pipeline in San Bruno that killed eight people and destroyed 38 homes.

DCISC Chairman Peter Lam quickly replied to Geesman's comments to point out that the federal indictments against PG&E "have nothing to do" with the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant.

Geesman responded that the issue is PG&E's corporate culture, not which energy source happened to be

involved in an incident leading to charges of criminal negligence.

"If a Diablo Canyon employee was under indictment for twelve felony counts" unrelated to his actions at the nuclear power plant, Geesman asked, "would he be allowed into the parking lot?"

After a moment of silence, DCISC member Robert Budnitz said that, in his experience, when something goes wrong in a company "with a zillion divisions," it may be that "sometimes the root cause is in the division, sometimes it's at the top" and Geesman's point was well taken.

### Pattern and practice

PG&E's corporate culture -- the consistent pattern of behavior it has demonstrated over decades, and that fact that PG&E's nuclear power plant has not been immune to or isolated from it -- is indeed something the DCISC should be mindful of.

In 1982, PG&E told state regulators



**Is it hot in here?** Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility attorney John Geesman raised the delicate matter of PG&E's twelve felony indictments in the context of the safety of their nuclear power plant at the June 11 meeting of the Diablo Canyon Independent Safety Committee in Avila Beach.

its cooling system had little or no effect on the marine environment. That statement was false.

Per the Nuclear Information Resource Service, PG&E, under its obligation to the Regional Water Quality Control Board, submitted a series of reports about the plant's effect on the surrounding marine environment in Diablo Cove in 1982. In 1994, the Department of Fish and Game discovered that PG&E's data contained only information that showed the plant had little or no effect on the marine environment around its reactors. In a joint statement issued after the discovery that PG&E had suppressed data detrimental to its

claims, the state and federal environmental protection agencies said "Evidence indicates PG&E omitted more than half of the actual test results, which showed up to a 90 percent reduction in sea life as it passed through the cooling system."

The damage to biologically important marine habitat around the reactor was catastrophic, including the loss of 97 percent of the kelp in the cove due to Diablo's hot-water discharge and the near obliteration of the already threatened black and red abalone populations. These findings had never

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## Speaking Truth to Nuclear Power

Last May, in advance of the primary election, the *Diablo Daily*, the newsletter for employees of the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, ran a "meet the candidates" feature wherein nine local candidates were asked how much they love nuclear power.

Eight of the candidates obliged, extolling the Diablo Canyon plant for its jobs, tax revenues, electricity and support for community organizations.

Of the nine, Heidi Harmon, running for State Assembly, was the only candidate to mention San Bruno and the felony indictments arising therefrom — helpfully quoting from the *San Jose Mercury News*: "The federal indictment alleges that San Francisco-based PG&E knew it had faulty records and was warned by employees, regulatory agencies, auditors and other experts about the deficiencies related to Line 132, the gas pipeline that exploded in San Bruno" (the only time, we'd be willing to bet, that any of those words have appeared in the *Diablo Daily*). Even more helpfully, she pointed to the finding by the former NRC Senior Resident Inspector "that ground motion from an earthquake involving the Shoreline, San Luis Bay and Los Osos faults could be greater than critical safety systems at Diablo Canyon are designed to withstand."



## OutsideIn SLO Launching August 13

By Heidi Harmon, Chair, Chapter Climate Change Task Force

With sea level on the rise, wildfire season becoming more extreme and threats to our public health growing, it's time to take climate change personally.

As the National Climate Assessment shows, we are currently experiencing the effects of global warming here in our local communities. These effects will continue to grow, especially in the area of public health with drought-induced food shortages, increases in mosquito born disease, and heat stress.

But help is on the way. The California State Health Department is partnering with the San Luis Obispo County Public Health Department to undertake their first pilot program to be proactive around this growing concern. What is becoming more understood is that helping communities understand the health challenges associated with climate change is an effective way of growing their understanding of the outcomes of global warming.



A key component of this program is inviting the public to make life style changes that have benefits to both their health and to their environment. Suggestions like biking instead of driving will be encouraged as ways of improving both our bodies and our climate's health. Another suggestion is for people to buy food as local as possible in order to increase health while decreasing our carbon footprint.

While these suggestions may be standard for some, there is still a large part of our local population that has yet to embrace these ideas. The hope is that many of the people already doing work in the health fields will be eager to share this information with their patients and clients.

The program will be called OutsideIn SLO and will launch on August 13.

## When Nukes Get Naked



It was one of those blissfully unaware media moments: revealing and unself-conscious, like a naked baby running down the beach.

It came in the *New York Times* story "Under Revised Quake Estimates, Dozens of Nuclear Reactors Face Costly Safety Analyses," appearing in the *Times* on April 5.

Specifically, it was the caption under the photo accompanying the story: "At least one of the reactors at Indian Point in Buchanan, NY, will be analyzed to try and show it can withstand severe earthquakes."

It was an inadvertently accurate description of how the Nuclear Regulatory Commission rolls. For both that captive regulatory agency and the industry which holds it captive, the objective of a safety analysis — contrary to the usual goal of a scientific study — has long been not to discover the truth of the matter and determine *whether* a nuclear plant is safe, but, as the too-candid caption had it, "to try and show it can withstand severe earthquakes," an objective that has traditionally ushered in much data-massaging and "pencil engineering," lowering standards to accommodate plants that can no longer meet them.

True for Entergy and Indian Point; true for PG&E and Diablo Canyon.

## Air Alerts On Line

The Sierra Club has rolled out our newest digital tool: a text alert system for bad air days.

With this new system, mobile subscribers can receive instant alerts on their phones when the EPA issues ozone warnings for their area.

Texting a keyword like AIRALERTS to 69866 automatically adds you to our air alerts group.

The system will be maintained through October. Every day, the software will automatically check the EPA's online feed of air alerts in your area. You can ask for more information. The initial message will give you basic information and a way to learn more.



Check it out at [BeyondCoal.org](http://BeyondCoal.org) or text AIRALERTS to 69866.

Share! Go to [sc.org/airalert](http://sc.org/airalert) and share the page with your friends on Facebook or Twitter.

# Our Planning Problem

### Why do County planners think coastal law is just a suggestion?

The June 3 meeting of the County Board of Supervisors offered a textbook lesson in how coastal development works in California, with a vital take-home message: the California Coastal Act, as codified in the Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance and Local Coastal Plans adopted by coastal counties, is the law. It's what a city or county is supposed to refer to in order to protect its coastal resources when issuing a Coastal Development Permit.

But that lesson also begged the question: When will the SLO County Planning Department take home that message?

Fresh off the debacle of the fencing of the Ontario Ridge trail, when the County forgot about a public access easement and misread coastal policies, allowing a land owner to illegally block public access and coastal views (see "Coastal Commission Saves Trail from County Planning Dept.," March), County planners were ready for an encore performance. The Loperena project, a proposed large house on a small coastal bluff in Cayucos, was it. (See "Busting the Coastal Act in Cayucos," June.)

The spectacle on offer at the June 3 Supervisors meeting consisted of a lot of people – County Planning staff and consultants, the applicants and their consultants – trying to convince the Supervisors that something very simple was really very complicated.

It was all about the definition of a coastal bluff, and the requirements that must be followed by anyone proposing to build a house on one. In California, if the toe of a bluff has been subject to marine erosion any time in the last 200 years, it is defined as a coastal bluff under the California Code of Regulations. That means any structures on

the bluff-top need to be set back 25 feet from the edge of the bluff so as not to aggravate erosion. You can't put a house on that bluff that is too big to accommodate a 25-foot setback.

But that was too simple for County Planning, and too inconvenient for the applicant. For the better part of three hours, Planning staff and various consultants waved their arms and talked about fluvial bluffs (formed by creeks) and the placement of fill, produced archival aerial photos, etc., all in service to the cause of making the coastal bluff at the end of Studio Drive not be a coastal bluff.

Supervisor Bruce Gibson cut

through the dazzling display of geological knowledge and the arguments that had nothing to do with the simple legal standard the Supervisors had to meet. He noted that the Environmental Impact Report the Planning Commission had certified was "completely non-responsive to the question of what is a coastal bluff." When he asked the senior planner point-blank why County Planning had taken the position it did despite repeated letters from state coastal analysts informing them of the correct interpretation of the statutes and coastal policies, she replied that "we didn't feel" the bluff should be considered a coastal bluff. At the end of the hearing, the

Supervisors determined that any structure built on the bluff must be set back from the bluff top. They continued the hearing to October, giving the applicant a chance to come back with a re-designed project that conforms with the Coastal Act and the County's Local Coastal Plan. Meeting adjourned.

It was just one on a lengthening list of demonstrated pitfalls inherent in the client service relationship that County Planning continues to cleave unto as their business model.

When this project came to them, they obviously didn't ask themselves "How can we best protect the county's natural resources?," but "How can we help shoe-horn this large house into this tiny lot?"

SLO County Planning staff have been vocal in their distress over their chilly relations with the California Coastal Commission – "why doesn't the Coastal Commission seem to trust this county?" is the plaintive question that echoes through the hallways of the Department of Building & Planning. They are mystified as to why this should be so.

Here's a tip for County officials seeking the answer to this question and a solution to the mystery:

Think back to the April 10, 2014, meeting of the Planning Commission, where the Loperena project got a certified EIR and an approved Coastal Development Permit despite warnings from Coastal Commission staff that the project presented multiple violations of the Coastal Act.

Then recall the June 3 meeting of the Board of Supervisors, when the project on appeal almost got the same permission from the Supervisors, which was where the Board was heading but for Gibson's idea of moving for a continuance.

Recall the attempts by Planning staff and several supervisors to disregard, play down or dismiss the input received from the staff of the California Coastal Commission and to substitute their opinions for what is printed in the California Code of Regulations, the attempt to redefine what the Coastal Act says a coastal bluff is and the requirements for development thereon.

Then catch a clue.



## Report: SLO County Local Food Roots are Strong

A new report assessing San Luis Obispo County's food system links the vitality of the county's agriculture with the health of its residents and its food businesses.

Conducted by the UC Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (UC SAREP) and Central Coast Grown (CCG), the San Luis Obispo County Food System Assessment examines the relationships between agriculture, regional environmental quality, human health, and local livelihoods.

"We found that the county food system in San Luis Obispo is thriving, with increased agricultural sales and

school districts beginning to participate in garden-based education," said Jenna Smith, Executive Director of Central Coast Grown. "But there are many opportunities for improvement."

In 2007, farmers in San Luis Obispo County sold \$4.3 million of agricultural products directly to consumers, an increase from previous years.

The report suggests that continued promotion of local and direct marketing of food can assist all producers, including new farmers, in entering the market place and bolster the local food system overall.

Those markets will be especially important as the number of farmers in

the county grows. In 2007, there were 850 more agricultural producers than ten years prior. The majority of farms in 2007 reported gross sales of under \$250,000 per year, with nearly half of all farms in the county reporting less than \$5,000 in

annual sales.

"Unfortunately, we have little information available to define who these small-scale farmers are, what they are growing, how they impact local employment, and how they might interact with the local food system," said Mary Bianchi, UC Cooperative Extension County Director in SLO County, who advised on the report.

In a parallel survey conducted by Central Coast Grown, they asked farmers and restaurant owners of the challenges to selling and buying locally. "Our survey reinforced the findings of the SLO Food System Assessment," said Smith. "Both farmers and restaurant owners reported a need and value for localized distribution channels."

The report also addresses access to healthy food as a component of the county's food system. Participation in food assistance programs like Cal-Fresh and food distributed by food banks in San Luis Obispo County have both increased over the last decade, though overall food insecurity in the county has improved marginally.

The report recommends ways that increasing food access for the public

and improving markets for local producers can reinforce one another. Finding ways to expand food processing and distribution capacity with food-focused community development strategies such as mobile markets, community farms, and farm-to-school bring agriculture into neighborhoods and schools and help close the gap between producers and consumers.

San Luis Obispo County also faces water quality and water quantity challenges that are echoed throughout the state. Nitrate contamination from both urban and agricultural sources affects local lakes, rivers, and streams. Groundwater and coastal stream resources both present significant challenges for agriculture and rural communities dependent on them for drinking water.

"Accounting for those concerns within the context of the entire food system may bring a broader scope to the discussion along with the potential to leverage the efforts of the many groups already working on water resources issues," said Bianchi.

The Food System Assessment is available at [www.centralcoastgrown.org](http://www.centralcoastgrown.org).

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## Sanctuary

continued from page 1

be taken at all levels to help protect ocean ecosystems.

NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries serves as trustee for a system of 14 marine protected areas, encompassing more than 170,000 square miles of America's ocean and the Great Lakes, protecting sites ranging from a Civil War shipwreck to coral reefs and tiny atolls.

NOAA's statutory mandate to identify, designate and protect marine areas of special national significance was established in 1972 under the National Marine Sanctuaries Act. Since 1995, when the agency deactivated the Site Evaluation List, it has been impossible to add any new sanctuaries to the system. Since then, members of Congress, state and tribal governments, non-government organizations, academic institutions and others have inquired about designating a national marine sanctuary in their coastal communities. For the first time in 19



**Now is the time** For twenty years, the waters of the central Coast have been the "hole in the doughnut" between the Monterey Bay and Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuaries, making the waters off SLO a target for the next offshore drilling push or scheme to dump toxic waste water from the San Joaquin Valley.

years, the process has been reactivated.

"The Site Evaluation List, which tended to be an agency-driven, 'top-down' approach to sanctuary nominations, will be replaced by the sanctuary nomination process, which is based on a grassroots approach," said Basta.

"Our national marine sanctuaries not only protect special places in America's oceans and Great Lakes, they promote responsible and sustainable ocean uses to protect the health of our oceans for future generations," said Kathryn D. Sullivan, Ph.D, NOAA administrator and under secretary of

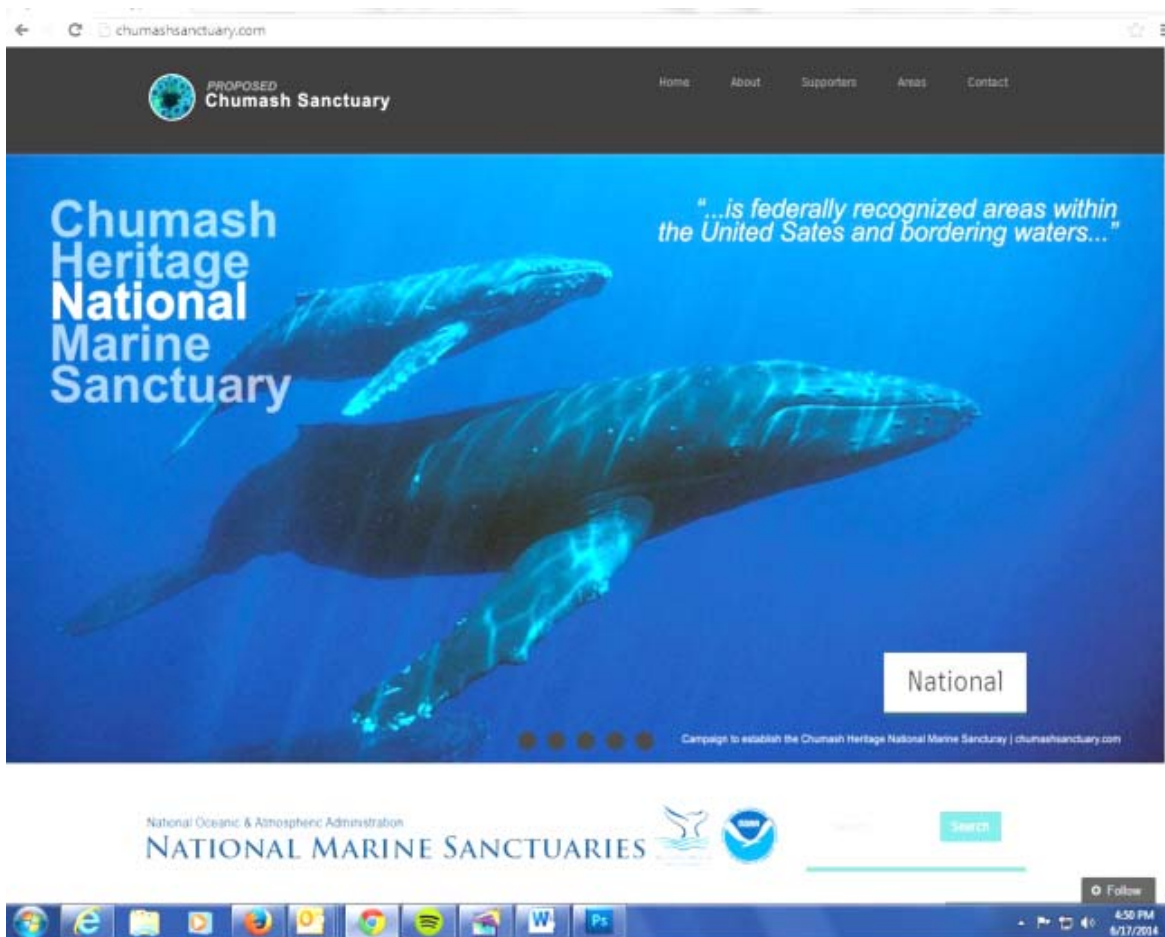
commerce for oceans and atmosphere. "This new process increases the public's involvement in the stewardship of our oceans, which is central to NOAA's overall mission. We look forward to hearing from the public about places in the marine and Great Lakes environment they feel deserve special status and protection as national marine sanctuaries."

The June 13 announcement will not result in the automatic designation of new national marine sanctuaries. The nomination process will result in an inventory of areas NOAA will consider for national marine sanctuary designation, taking into account input and support from various local, regional and national interests and organizations. Consideration also will be based on a proposed area's national significance and the feasibility of managing it. NOAA may designate new sanctuaries and implement their associated regulations only after a nominated site has gone through a separate, public process that typically takes several years to complete.

"This is America's opportunity to protect its treasured places and ensure that they, and the resources contained within, are conserved for generations to come," said Basta.

### Why Sanctuary in 1 minute:

<http://www.nominate.noaa.gov/video.html>



**Support the campaign to establish the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary. Go to [www.chumashsanctuary.com](http://www.chumashsanctuary.com)**

## A Call to Action to Protect Our Oceans

Remarks of John Kerry, U.S. Secretary of State, June 9, 2014



The ocean covers almost three quarters of our planet and sustains life on Earth as we know it. But our ocean is at grave risk today — and we know the reason why.

Human activity threatens the world's ocean. Often illegal international fishing practices are decimating fisheries. A garbage patch twice the size of Texas floats in the Pacific Ocean, evidence of the trash we cast into our waterways. Rising carbon dioxide levels from emissions increase ocean acidity, endangering coral reefs and other marine life.

The warning could not be starker: Unless these trends are reversed, the effects across the planet

will be profound. The damage will be felt whether you live on a coastline or hundreds of miles from the nearest ocean's edge. The ocean produces half the world's oxygen, creates the clouds that bring fresh water and regulates our climate. More than a billion people eat fish for their primary source of protein. Fishing is a \$500 billion global industry, and one in six jobs is marine-related in the United States.

The good news is that we know what is behind the degradation of the ocean. We know the steps required to counter the dangers and restore the health of our ocean for this generation and those to come. We know the science to change the future for the ocean.

What we also know is that the global political will to address this urgent peril

has yet to be summoned. We must change the equation. The plight of the ocean compels us to fight complacency and build consensus for action...

That's why we will hold the State Department's first ocean conference on June 16 and 17. Government leaders from around the world — heads of state and foreign ministers — will join scientists, environmentalists, and business leaders to discuss the threat to our ocean and the steps that should be taken to reverse the damage and restore the balance.

We intend to create a global movement to protect the ocean and its resources. We will debate real solutions and come up with concrete plans for implementing them. We also have sent out a call to action that lays out the crucial steps all of us can take to ensure that a healthy ocean allows us to continue to enjoy its bounty....

In a few days, I will ask leaders from around the world to act now to take action to save our ocean. I'm convinced the ocean conference will be an important catalyst, that governments and experts can lead the way. But I know it will take more to win this crucial struggle.

What we do as individuals will ultimately make the difference. Some acts are simple. Don't throw trash into waterways. Buy sustainable seafood. Volunteer at least one day a year to clean beaches or waterways in your community. Others require sustained commitments by people everywhere to make certain saving the ocean is a priority for their government.

In observing World Oceans Day yesterday, we recognized that protecting our ocean is not a luxury. It is a necessity that contributes to our economy, our climate and our way of life. Working together, we can change the current course and chart a sustainable future.

**Santa Lucia Chapter's Annual Fundraiser**  
Sunday, August 3rd, 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
Tolosa Winery, 4910 Edna Road, San Luis Obispo

# “The Face of the Wild:” Last Remaining Seats

## Limited to 100 guests

A hundred guests can purchase tickets to “Sierra Club: The Face of the Wild,” the 2014 fundraiser for the local chapter of the Sierra Club, to be held August 3rd at the Tolosa Winery in SLO. But those tickets are going fast.

Tickets are \$100 each. Admission includes a catered dinner, special dessert from Avila Valley Barn, Tolosa wines, music, raffles and auction items. Tickets are available online through Brown Paper Tickets at <http://thefaceofthewild.brownpapertickets.com>. The cost of the tickets is not tax-deductible.

The event will commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act. “We are pleased to have Matt Sayles from Los Padres ForestWatch on hand to speak on what the Central Coast Heritage Protection Act, just introduced in Congress by Lois Capps, would mean for the protection of wild lands in San Luis Obispo County,” said Chapter Chair Michael Jencks.

Bidders at the event’s auction can win a tour of the Wind Wolves Preserve in Maricopa, a night of luxury camping, Sea Landing adventure for 2, edible plant hike and forest feast, a gift basket from Splash/Petit Soleil/Mama Ganache Artisan Chocolates, and

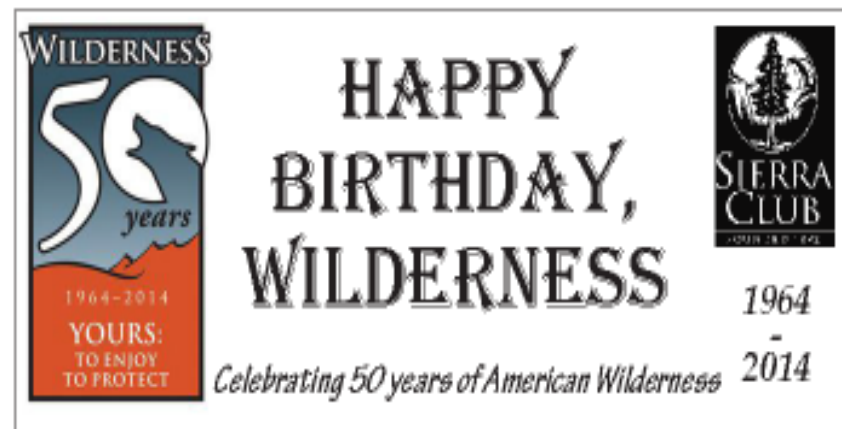
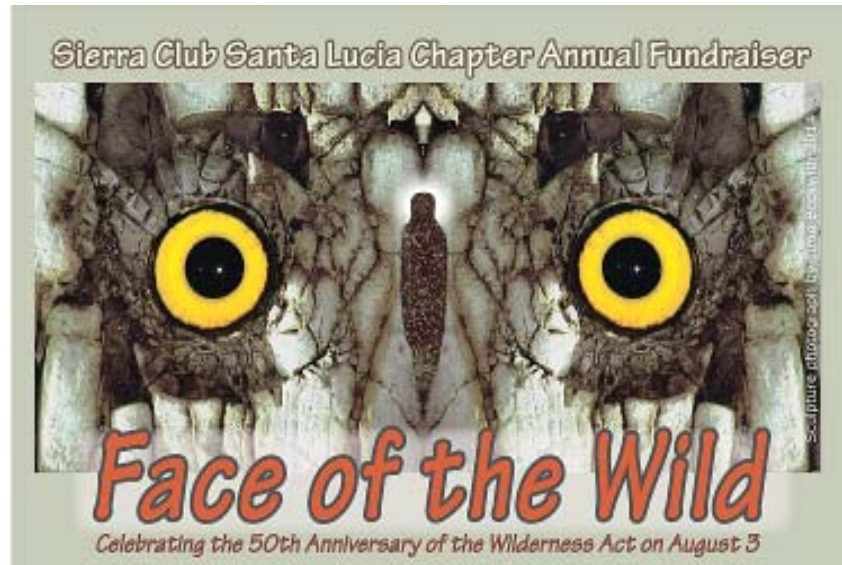
original art by top local artists, including animal masks created especially for the event.

The highlight of the auction will be two \$6,000 “I Dreamed of Africa” safari packages, each including luxury accommodations for two for six days and nights at a South African safari lodge, with no minimum bid.

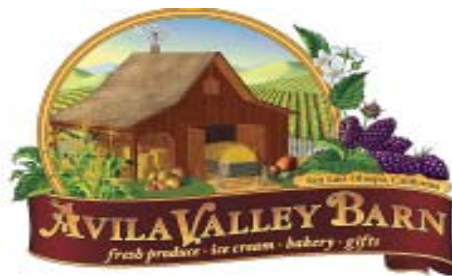
This is going to be a special evening, and the venue can accommodate no more than 100 guests, so we’re urging everyone to purchase their tickets as soon as possible.

Sierra Club: The Face of the Wild will take place on Sunday, August 3rd, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., at Tolosa Winery, 4910 Edna Road, San Luis Obispo, with dinner catered by Two Chefs Catering, dessert by Avila Valley Barn and music by Moon Pie. The event is sponsored by Tolosa Winery, Splash Café, Mama Ganache Artisan Chocolates, Petit Soleil Bed & Breakfast, West Coast Printing, Claire Dierksen Graphic Design, The Wildlands Conservancy, Whereabout SLO, and Five Cities Security, Inc.

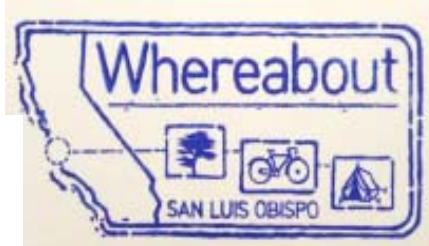
For more information, contact the Sierra Club office at [sierraclub8@gmail.com](mailto:sierraclub8@gmail.com) or 805-543-8717.



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# Talking Water

If you want to talk to someone who can give you the straight skinny on California's water woes, you can't do better than Conner Everts. As the Executive Director of the Southern California Watershed Alliance, he works with community groups on watershed and conservation programs from Santa Barbara to Ensenada. He was elected president of the Ojai Groundwater Basin Management Agency, has served on the State Desal Task Force and eight boards, including Water for California, the Casitas Municipal Water District, and as chair of Public Officials for Water and Environmental Reform (POWER) and senior advisor to the Environmental Justice Coalition for Water.

That's an extremely abbreviated version of his bio. When we heard Conner would be available for our May 22 general meeting, we grabbed him. If you were at the Steynberg Gallery that night, you know why. If you weren't, here's a taste:

**On recycling:** "In many places they're recycling water -- that's waste water, it's kind of a euphemism to call it recycled water, but it's treated four or five times, then filtered through the ground, comes back up three to five years later, and is treated again. That's allowed Orange County, with all the growth and development they've had, to keep their water demand flat and their aquifer full."

**On desalination:** "It's not that I don't like technology, it's what is the appropriate thing that we do first? What are the things we can get immediate response for, and what's the thing that uses the most energy to get the least amount of water, and that happens to be desalination. Australia built six large plants for billions of dollars. They're still paying for those plants. Only the two in Perth in the far west are still operating. For the rest, it doesn't pay to even run them at this point; demand's dropped down to the point they don't even



**Point taken** North County Watch President Sue Harvey and Santa Lucia Chapter Director Andrew Christie chatted with Conner Everts at the Steynberg Gallery in SLO.

need them. We have to do a lot of other things first before we look at ocean desalination."

**On the drought:** "It's hard to tell people right now you should go out and buy rain barrels and cisterns, but you have to get prepared for what's coming next. In Santa Monica, an environmental group called Tree People has a 200,000 gallon tank underneath their parking lot; it will fill in a heavy week of rain and that's all the water they need for the rest of the year."

**On the Paso Robles groundwater basin:** "Because of the drought, we're finally talking about groundwater regulation statewide. The reason why we have government -- and some people don't like this fact -- is because we fail to do it properly locally. When you have people with their personal wells going dry, and some smaller farmers and some households, and people having to move, and people trying to drill down 2,000 feet, there's a real problem. We're using AB 2453, Katcho's bill, as an example of where we don't want to go. He was willing to put something forward that essentially privatizes the decision and takes a lot of people out of the discussion. But this is a perfect example of what you don't want to do. Corporations from far away are acquiring land [over the basin]. When only landlords of property have an opportunity to vote, that's wrong and it's unconstitutional. If you ranch or you live there or you're a student, you should be able to be involved. We need to make sure this isn't a precedent for other parts of the state while we're trying to work on long-term regulations and short-term solutions."

# Suddenly Democracy

## The Paso groundwater basin catches a break

At the June 17 meeting of the SLO County Board of Supervisors, it was no longer possible for the board majority to avoid reality: the "hybrid" groundwater management district proposed for the Paso Robles basin in AB 2453, the bill that Assemblyman Achadjian is pushing to form it, is heartily loathed by the majority of the people who would be directly affected by its formation.

As had been the case in all previous board meetings on the "hybrid" district, opponents outnumbered supporters by about two to one.

As proposed, the district would shut out the majority of residents, whose votes would be cancelled out by the

votes of the largest land owners. Once formed, only landowners could serve on, or vote for, the nine seats on the district board. Once that happened, the ag operators then firmly in charge of the district would set about burying the potential land use regulations and water conservation measures they have always hated, and initiating expensive water importation schemes to finance expansion of their operations, for which everybody would get the bill. Water speculators would then descend, and the "wheeling" of water -- charging for the storage of excess "paper water" allocations in the basin, and extracting and exporting real water

for huge profits -- would commence in earnest. (See "Paso in the Cross-hairs," June.)

As written, no non-land owners could vote for -- or serve as -- district board members.

Despite its widespread unpopularity, the bill passed the Assembly and was rolling forward in the Senate, when Supervisor Debbie Arnold stepped up.

A request from the state legislature for the supervisors to weigh in on a minor amendment to allow non-land-owning residents to serve as the token minority in three of the nine seats became the catalyst that brought the bill back before the Supervisors, who had previously endorsed it on a 3-2 vote.

At the June 17 meeting, Arnold insisted that the Supervisors not agree to any of the proposed amendments to the bill unless a further amendment was included to require formation of the district by general election -- i.e. one land owner, one vote -- not an acreage-weighted vote where 30 large land owners could cancel out the votes of thousands of residents. Arnold's stubborn insistence on

fundamental democracy won the votes of Supervisors Frank Mecham and Caren Ray.

"That just killed AB 2453," said visibly stunned Board chair Bruce Gibson, the strongest supporter for the "hybrid" district on the Board. Before the meeting, bill sponsors PRO Water Equity and the Paso Robles Agricultural Alliance for Groundwater Solutions had already signaled their opposition to the bill if were to become democratized. An amendment restricting each land owner to a single vote to form the district takes power from the big growers who have supplied the main engine -- and the money -- that has been powering the "hybrid" district concept that would have put them permanently in the driver's seat.

As we go to press, the bill is scheduled to be heard in the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee, which will take up the Board's proposed amendment. At any time, Assemblyman Achadjian could pull the bill if supporters decide it no longer gets them what they want.

We understand the position in which Supervisor Gibson found himself. His

*DEMOCRACY continued on page 10*



**Electrifying** Some democracy broke out at the County Board of Supervisors on June 17 and the Paso basin won a potential reprieve from a terrible bill.

## Rodenticide

*continued from page 1*

Earthjustice. "These poisons have been putting our children at risk and devastating our wildlife for far too long."

"We are pleased the d-CON company has finally accepted EPA's scientifically-based decision to remove these poison products from retail shelves," said Cynthia Palmer, pesticides program manufacturer at the American Bird Conservancy. "This is a victory for eagles, owls, hawks and other wildlife, and for children and pets as well."

"The lingering effects of these second-generation poisons have been wreaking havoc up the food chain for years, impacting endangered species such as the San Joaquin kit fox," said

Sarah Friedman, senior campaign representative at the Sierra Club. "This agreement is an important step toward protecting fragile wildlife species from unnecessarily toxic poisons."

Reckitt Benckiser's agreement to abide by the EPA regulations came two days after the environmental groups intervened in another legal action by the multinational chemical giant challenging new state regulations by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife limiting the sale of super-toxic rat poisons to licensed specialists and restricting their use to areas within fifty feet of man-made structures.

The state's new restriction on retail sales and use of second-generation

anti-coagulant rodenticides is due to take effect July 1.

Safe alternatives to rat poison can be used to address rodent outbreaks in homes and rural areas. Effective measures include rodent-proofing of homes and farms by sealing cracks and crevices and eliminating food sources; providing owl boxes to encourage natural predation; and utilizing traps that don't involve these highly toxic chemicals. For more information visit [SafeRodentControl.org](http://SafeRodentControl.org).

Anticoagulant rodenticides interfere with blood clotting, resulting in uncontrollable bleeding that leads to death. Second-generation anticoagulants -- including the compounds brodifacoum, bromadiolone, difethialone and difenacoum -- are especially

hazardous and persist for a long time in body tissues. These slow-acting poisons are often eaten for several days by rats and mice, causing the toxins to accumulate at many times the lethal dose in their tissues, poisoning predators that eat the weakened rodents.

Studies have documented second-generation anticoagulants in more than 70 percent of wildlife tested, including bald eagles, mountain lions, and endangered San Joaquin kit foxes. Over a 10-year period rodenticides caused, on average, more than 160 severe poisonings of pets annually.

According to data from the EPA, each year up to 10,000 children are accidentally exposed to rat poison in their homes.

# Drive Electric Week, Sept. 15-21

National Drive Electric Week, September 15-21, is a nationwide celebration to heighten awareness of the widespread availability of plug-in vehicles and highlight the benefits of all-electric and plug-in hybrid-electric cars, trucks, motorcycles, and more. They are fun to drive, less expensive and more convenient to fuel than gasoline vehicles, and are better for the environment, promote local jobs, and reduce our dependence on oil.

Started in 2011 as National Plug In Day with the simple idea to hold simultaneous events across the country on the same day, by popular demand we are expanding to an entire week of events and changing the name to emphasize the thing we all want to do: drive electric. We expect National Drive Electric Week 2014 will again grow to include more events in more cities with more drivers reaching out to share the many advantages of driving electric with the public.

Each event is led by local plug-in drivers and advocates and typically includes some combination of EV parades, ride-and-drives, electric tailgate parties, press conferences, award ceremonies, informational booths, and more. Plug In America,

Sierra Club, and the Electric Auto Association are pleased to partner with the many other organizations and individuals working to bring National Drive Electric Week to communities across the country.

We're celebrating Drive Electric Week because these new vehicles are so much better, and we want to share the news. Come join us for an event where you'll get to see and possibly drive an electric vehicle and learn from real drivers what they already know:

- Electric vehicles are fun to drive. They are smooth and quiet, and their high torque – even at low speeds – provides instant accelerator response, and also better performance in snow.
- Electric vehicles are easier and cheaper to fuel. Fuel for EVs costs much less than for gasoline vehicles.

Fueling your car with electricity is about five times cheaper than fueling with gasoline. It is much more convenient to simply plug in when you arrive home than to stop by a gas station to fill your gas tank.

- Electric vehicles are cheaper to maintain. Maintenance for all-electric vehicles costs much less than for gasoline vehicles. They require no oil changes and have 10 times fewer moving parts than a gasoline-powered car. There's no engine, transmission, spark plugs, valves, fuel tank, tailpipe, distributor, starter, clutch, muffler, or catalytic converter.

- Electric vehicles are cleaner. Less gas means less pollution, even when taking into account the emissions from the generation of electricity.

- Electric vehicles are going mainstream. Electric vehicles are selling better out of the gate than did the first

hybrids. Well over 100,000 plug-in vehicles have been sold, and the rate is accelerating as more cars come to the market.

- Electric vehicles are creating good American jobs. We are building advanced technology vehicles and components in at least 20 states, creating thousands of new, good jobs.

- Electric vehicles make for a more stable and secure United States. We need to stop feeding our oil addiction by sending nearly \$1 billion overseas each day.

To find an event near you, volunteer to organize an event or learn more about how to host an event, visit <http://driveelectricweek.org>.



## We Need to Go Farther, Faster

On April 26, Robert Freehling of Sierra Club California's Energy-Climate Committee addressed the annual meeting of the Club's California-Nevada Regional Conservation Committee at Rancho El Chorro. Freehling presented a Powerpoint summary of a report on accelerating the renewable energy production and greenhouse gas reduction in California by focusing on our electricity sector.

California must go beyond its current goal of aiming to reduce emissions to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. The

critical goal is to reduce as much greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) as soon as possible. The more CO2 and other GHGs that go into the atmosphere, the more damage to the planet and the greater the risk of crossing tipping points that could result in irreversible damage to the human habitability of earth.

Sierra Club California believes the GHG reduction we have seen in the electricity sector provides strong evidence concerning the ability of the state to set new, higher targets for

renewable energy.

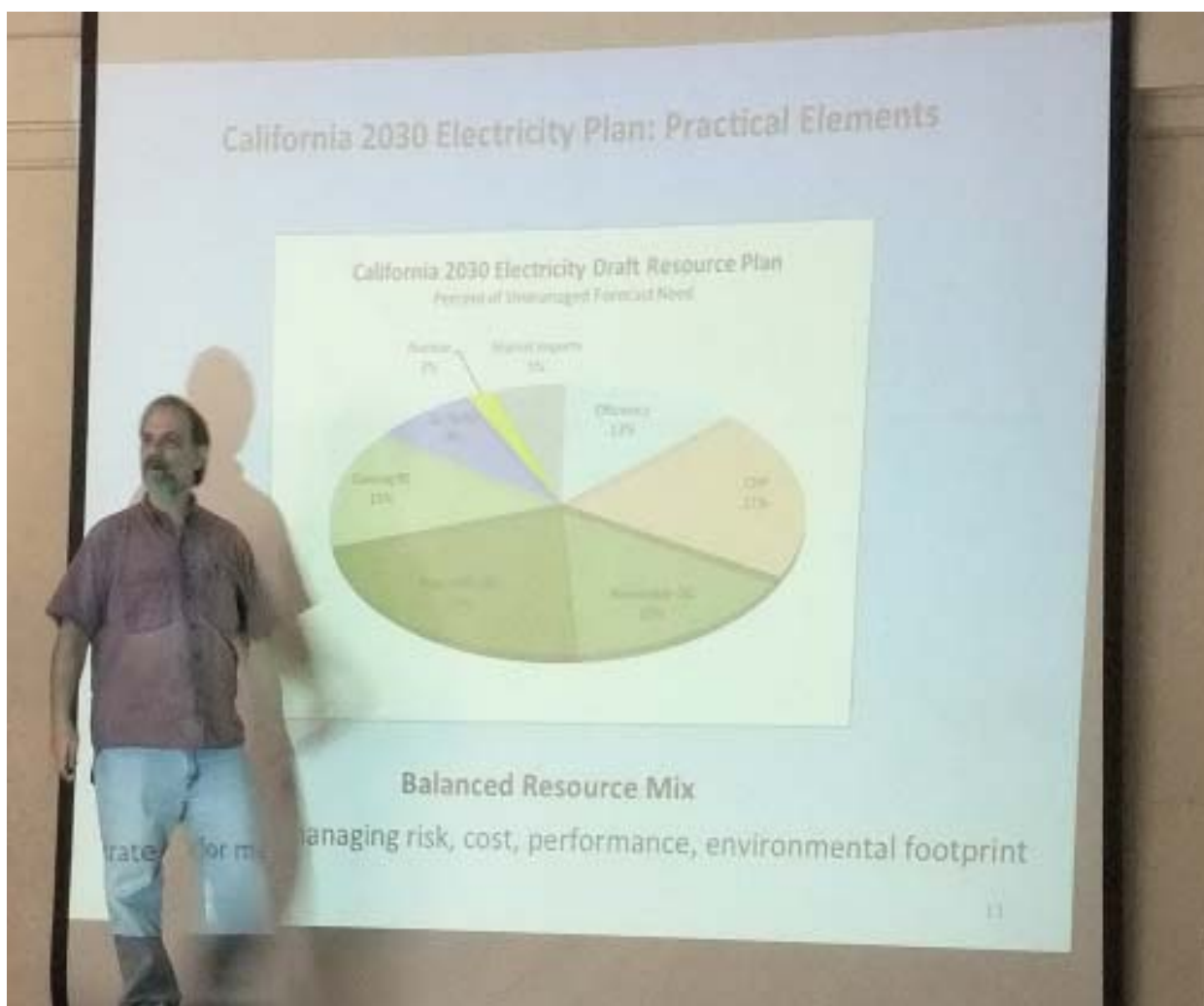
The electricity sector is an especially important sector to move more quickly. A common strategy to reduce GHGs in many sectors of the economy is to "electrify" processes that rely on fossil fuels such as gasoline fuel for transportation, natural gas for space and water heating and gas combustion for industrial processes. By "greening the grid" sooner, all of the others processes that rely on substituting electricity for GHG producing dirty fossil fuel dependent processes, will

result in deeper emissions reductions sooner.

Of the renewable energy options being pursued by the state, "wind and solar have very different energy production profiles," said Freehling, "with solar producing energy during the day, and wind producing more at night. In fact, wind and solar make excellent complements, with each balancing the eccentricities of the other to provide better reliability than either individually. Using a diverse mix of resources is a very important design concept for building a renewable energy system."

"Most or maybe even all solar PV could potentially be sited in urban and other areas where there is electricity demand. Much is made of the better solar resource of the desert; but the resource difference between, say, L.A. and the desert, is not really that large — ranging from 10% to 20% better in the desert — and a large fraction of that desert solar energy advantage is lost in the transmission and distribution system. Large-scale solar and wind development and local distributed generation both can contribute a lot, and a balanced mix helps to mitigate risk, cost, and performance."

A Renewable Portfolio Standard goal of 70%, when combined with the effects of energy efficiency and new behind the meter self-generation, would very likely reduce GHG 80% below 1990 levels.



**Sounds like a plan** Robert Freehling explained how to bring renewable energy sources on line and cut carbon emissions at a higher rate and on a faster time line than current state targets at Sierra Club California's Rancho El Chorro meeting.

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# Report: the Rise of Crude-by-Rail

## First major analysis of booming bomb train industry

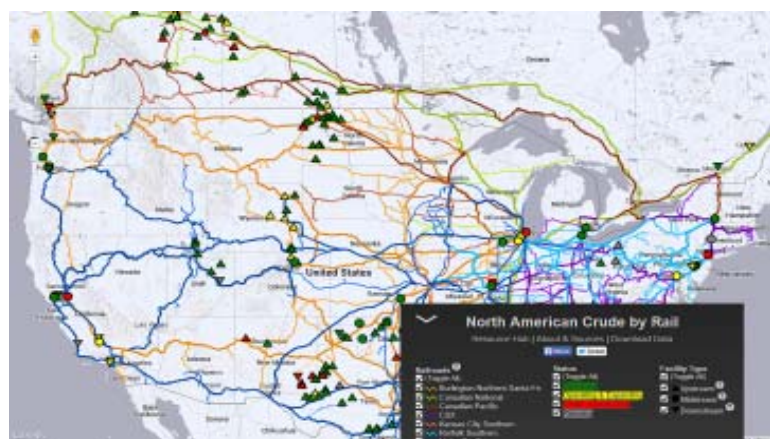
Oil Change International has released the first major exposé of the burgeoning crude-by-rail industry in North America, detailing where crude trains are being loaded and unloaded, how many oil trains are crossing the North American continent, and what companies are involved.

*Runaway Train: The Reckless Expansion of Crude By Rail in North America* is the first in a series, exposing North America's booming crude-by-rail industry. It is published in conjunction with the launch of a unique interactive online map of crude-by-rail terminals and potential routes in North America.

The report and map can be found at [www.priceofoil.org/rail](http://www.priceofoil.org/rail)

"This analysis shows just how out of control the oil industry is in North America today. Regulators are unable to keep up with the industry's expansion-at-any-cost mentality, and public safety is playing second fiddle to industry profits," said Lorne Stockman, Research Director of Oil Change International and author of the report.

"This is what the All of the Above Energy Strategy looks like – a runaway train headed straight for North American communities," Stockman said.



[sierraclub.org/beyondoil](http://sierraclub.org/beyondoil)

The report shows that there are currently over 230 crude-by-rail terminals in Canada and the United States either in operation, expanding, under construction or planned.

Today, one million barrels of crude oil per day are loaded and unloaded on the North American rail network, meaning roughly 135 trains of 100 cars each are moving dangerous crude oil each day through the continent. But if used at full capacity, existing loading and unloading terminals could handle 3.5 times more crude-by-rail traffic, and by 2016 that capacity could grow to over five times current levels.

"Communities are already waking up to the dangers of oil trains barreling through their backyards, with spills, explosions and derailments happening all too often," Stockman said. "This report and online tool will help provide the critical information that's been sorely missing in order to shine a light on what's really going on, and to help stop the runaway train of crude-by-rail in its tracks before more damage is done."

The oil industry is simultaneously pushing both new pipelines and increased crude-by-rail on the North American public, and recent pipeline spills and train accidents show that neither is safe. Spills from both transport methods are on the rise.

This report comes ahead of a nation-wide week of action planned for July 6 – 13 in opposition to oil by rail organized by Oil Change International, Forest Ethics, 350.org, the Sierra Club, residents of Lac-Mégantic, and a number of other organizations. See more at [www.stopoiltrains.org](http://www.stopoiltrains.org).

Future reports in this series by Oil Change International will look at the economics of crude-by-rail, safety, and climate change issues. See [www.priceofoil.org/rail](http://www.priceofoil.org/rail) for the links to reports and data.

## Oil

*continued from page 1*

The recoverable yield from California's shale oil deposits has been greatly over-estimated, and was recently downgraded by the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) by over 95%. In San Luis Obispo County, the deposits are often located close to expanding communities where oil industry operations could endanger agriculture, tourism, housing, business, employment, education and quality of life.

In addition to local shale oil, there is a non-local, unconventional oil source that interests the oil and gas industry – North American (primarily Canadian) tar sands. Using rail transportation, low cost crude oil extracted from tar sands would be transported, through neighborhoods, to the Phillips 66 refinery at Nipomo for eventual domestic use, and export overseas.

As a result, central coast regional planners have seen a growing number of oil related proposed projects including oil exploration, extraction, transportation, refining, storage, and remediation. In southern San Luis Obispo County and northern Santa Barbara County, these include:

- Nipomo mesa Santa Maria Refinery rail yard construction
- Huasna Valley oil field development (under litigation)
- Porter Ranch oil exploration
- Price Canyon oilfield expansion
- Industry initiative to explore over 7,700 potential oil drilling sites
- Rerouting of trucks containing petroleum contaminated soils.

Each project creates overlapping potential impacts for our water supplies and air quality, and each have safety, economic, property, health, and quality-of-life ramifications for every central coast county. Taken together, this growing list of projects may have combined impacts for the region that would be understated if the projects were analyzed individually.

For example, our county relies

heavily on groundwater for domestic use and agriculture. However, oil drilling projects produce toxins that can easily find their way into water sources through a leaking well casing, an uncontrolled rock fracture, or a surface spill. Project applicants often claim that these risks are statistically small, but when accidents involving crude oil happen – and they do happen – the results can be devastating to residents and business, and could ruin an aquifer for generations. These risks are disproportionately amplified as projects are added.

Under the California Environmental

Quality Act (CEQA), these so-called "cumulative impacts" include "past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects", which "when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts."

So far, the potential cumulatively considerable impacts of all these projects have not been examined. The large upsurge in oil related projects heading our way calls for something more comprehensive than what's been done – a publicly debated strategic approach to oil projects in the county – one which outlines

conditions under which the county would or would not consider oil production, refinement, and transportation projects, and which can help guide future planning decisions.

We urge San Luis Obispo County to stop and reassess the growing oil project lineup, and start work today developing such a comprehensive oil strategy with input from concerned residents and business interests. Until a comprehensive oil strategy and energy plan is debated and implemented, San Luis Obispo County should take the opportunity to impose a moratorium on all pending oil projects.

## Taft

*continued from page 2*

County has assessed their cumulative impacts and decided what kind of county we want to be.

The County's history is cratered with reasons why that would be a good idea:

- The 1926 Union Oil Tank Farm explosion and subsequent toxic contamination of 900 acres for 85 years & counting.
- The 38-year-long oil spill under the Guadalupe/Nipomo Dunes – twice the size of the Exxon Valdez spill.
- The razing of Avila Beach and dispersal of its residents.
- Leaking century-old oil transfer lines close to creeks and water bodies all over the central coast – unmonitored and unnoticed until the Sierra Club pointed out the problem to the Regional Water Board in 2011 and got a monitoring program on the Board's to-do list.

The only difference between our position and that of the Huasna Valley Association and Mesa Refinery Watch is that we believe the County long ago made a decision and came up with a plan. It doesn't need to come up with a new plan; it needs to stand by its current one.

In comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Santa Maria Refinery rail spur extension project, the Sierra Club, Natural Resources Defense Council, Communities for a Better Environment, Center for Biological Diversity et al noted that:

The San Luis Obispo County General Plan sets forth goals to improve the environment, based on public, community-based input from County residents. The Plan sets forth goals relating to the community's expressed needs to see a decrease in air pollution, decrease in traffic, and decreased industrial development. The Project, however, will increase all of those issues, wholly conflicting with the General Plan's over-arching environmental goals.

In other words, if, in the face of pressure to approve these projects, County officials do not stand up for the General Plan and what their

citizens have told them they want this place to be, the ultimate outcome will be inevitable, and it won't take 100 years. In the fullness of time, by decree of the most powerful, profitable and destructive commercial enterprise in human history, we will be Taft.



Oilymandias The Golden Driller, Tulsa, OK.

**Democracy**

*continued from page 7*

support for the bill was based on his determination to act with urgency and get a management plan in place for the Paso basin by the most expedient means at hand. It could be said that he wanted a water district in the worst way, and that's the way it was written.

If he turns out to be right about the fate of the newly democratized AB 2453

and its demise is imminent, the way will then be clear for the Board to do what should have been doing for the last two years: Start managing the Paso Robles groundwater basin in its capacity as the County Flood Control and Water Conservation District – no special legislation and no new district necessary.

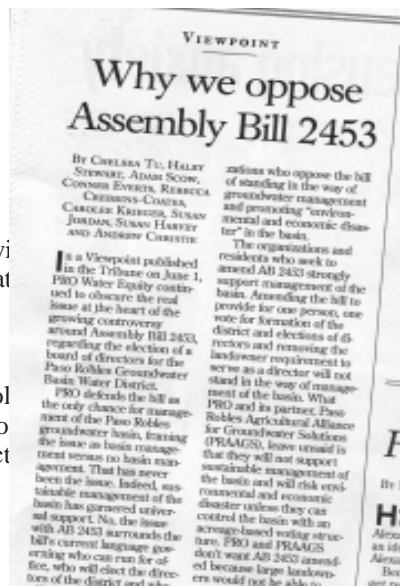
**Testimony of the Sierra Club, SLO County Board of Supervisors, June 17, 2014**

Thank you Mr. Chairman, I'm Andrew Christie, director of the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club. I'm reading from the Senate Governance and Finance Committee staff report for their meeting tomorrow:

"AB 2453 would establish a hybrid governance structure for a new water district in San Luis Obispo County. But the law already authorizes the County to manage the groundwater basin, and the County has a groundwater management plan in place, with an enhanced plan under development. The San Luis Obispo County Flood and Water Conservation District also can exercise its authority to manage groundwater.... The Committee may wish to consider whether a new statute is needed given the ample opportunities for groundwater management in the basin."

In other words, managing the basin is part of what you were elected to do, you are as qualified to do so as you are to sit as the board of the Integrated Regional Waste Management authority and the Air Pollution Control District. This should be part of your job.

This legislation started out as an overly-complicated bill with too many opportunities for mischief. It is getting more complicated, and the proposed amendments don't foreclose the opportunities for mischief-making. You have all of the tools you need to manage the basin. We suggest you get more actively engaged as the County Flood and Water Conservation District, hire the necessary staff, hold meetings in north county as the CFWCD, and seriously address the balancing of the basin. We have yet to hear a compelling reason why this course is not being pursued, and, it seems, the staff of the Senate Governance and Finance Committee also sees no reason why you could not do this. Thank you.



We called it Sierra Club, Defenders of Wildlife, Center for Biological Diversity et al called out AB 2453 in the June 13 *Tribune*.

**SLO Land Use and Circulation Element Update Now Available**

Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the City of San Luis Obispo's update of its Land Use and Circulation Elements must be received by **July 28**. Responses will be included in the City record for the project. Send comments to Kim Murry, Deputy Director, Community Development Dept., 919 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401. Email: [kmurry@slocity.org](mailto:kmurry@slocity.org). View the Draft EIR at [www.slo2035.com](http://www.slo2035.com). Copies available at the Community Development Dept. and the City Library. CDs available at the Community Development Department, 919 Palm Street..

**Indictments**

*continued from page 3*

been reported to state or federal agencies.

This triggered a cease & desist order from the Department of Fish and Game and the Water Quality Control Board. PG&E's lawyers beat down the order with threats to out-spend and tie up state regulators in court indefinitely. PG&E eventually settled with the State of California for \$14 million and was required to reanalyze the effects of its cooling system through an independent review. This fine was seven times higher than any fine ever levied by the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission for any violation and one of the largest environmental settlements since the Exxon Valdez disaster.

The NIRS concluded that the extensive litigation between PG&E and state water authorities revealed the lengths to which PG&E is willing to go to cover up facts, avoid mitigation and delay compliance.

**But wait, there's more**

Then there's the manner in which PG&E chose to handle the discovery of the Hosgri Fault in 1967. When the fault was found 500 feet from the site of the proposed nuclear power plant, PG&E told the Atomic Energy Commission it was not going to study the fault further because doing so could "possibly delay the project" and "would only complicate a contested hearing." That story was buried for more than a decade.

Per Energy-net, PG&E fought the necessity for a seismic retrofit of the plant for three years, offering the concept of "the Tao Effect, which said that the bigger the structure, the less damage a quake would have."

It was finally forced to rebuild seismic bracing in 1976. Then a new engineer discovered the reversed blueprints that resulted in the seismic supports being installed backwards on both reactors.

After their operating license was pulled and after "several more scandals, including one where PG&E was caught doctoring up the final report on the problems at the facility, the NRC forced them to do a massive redesign and rebuild program." By 1984, Bechtel Corp., the largest nuclear engineering firm in the world, "had found over 6,000 construction errors, which left the total construction costs for Diablo at over \$5.8 billion."

In the 1960s, PG&E announced the Bodega Atomic Park, two 1,100-megawatt reactors. The Sierra Club challenged the utility's claim that the site wasn't near the San Andreas Fault. PG&E was finally forced to hand over documents "that showed the likelihood of faulting on site. When the AEC asked for further fault studies, the utility quietly withdrew its request to build the reactors."

PG&E's attempt to run a reactor at Humboldt Bay resulted in the stainless steel clad fuel rods breaking open, "boosting radioactive releases out the stack to over 85 million picocuries per second.... Rather than remove the dangerous fuel rods, the utility rotated new zirconium rods in during the next three refuelings. By 1970, Humboldt was labeled the dirtiest reactor in the U.S. The term 'Sponge' was coined to describe PG&E's practice of bringing in outside labor to deal with its dirty refueling." (Read the full story of PG&E's nuclear history in California at [Energy-net.org](http://Energy-net.org).)

We commend the Diablo Canyon Independent Safety Committee for agreeing that the corporate culture at the Pacific Gas & Electric Company which resulted in the disaster in San Bruno may also pertain to operations at Diablo Canyon.

**10<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CLAIR TAPPAAN LODGE FUNDRAISER**  
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Next issue deadline is **August 12**. To get a rate sheet or submit your ad and payment, contact:  
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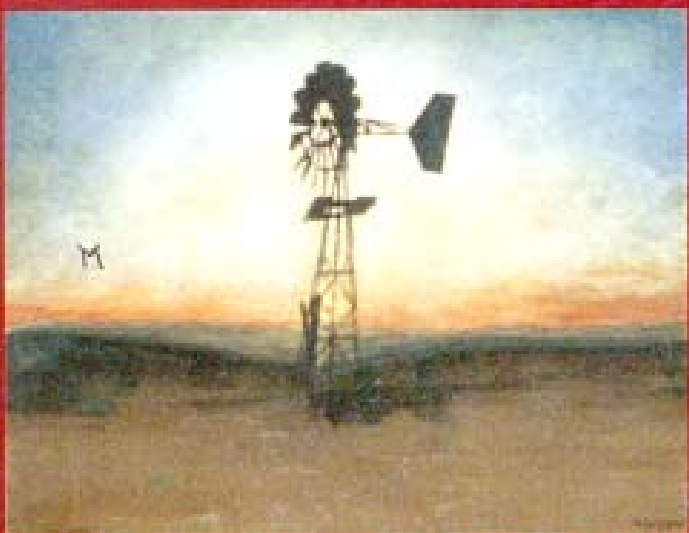
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# Outings and Activities Calendar

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.

**Fri., July 4th, 9 a.m. Valencia Peak and Beyond.** 5-7 mile hike in Montana de Oro State Park, 1500 ft. gain, through hills to summit of Valencia Pk., then down along Oats Peak trail to its peak, weather permitting. Bring water, non-slip shoes, and dress for the changing weather. Meet at Valencia Peak trailhead in the park. Leader: Gary Felsman, 473-3694.

**Mon., July 7th, 10 a.m. Hazard Peak Trail in Montana de Oro.** 5-mile, 1000 ft. gain, steady climb to summit. First mile is sandy, remainder—dirt. Plant list provided. Duration about 3 hrs. Meet at Hazard Canyon parking area, 1.6 miles from park entrance. Leader: Vicki Marchenko, 528-5567 or [vmarchenko57@gmail.com](mailto:vmarchenko57@gmail.com).

**Sat., July 12th, 8:30 a.m. Cruikshank Trail to Old Salmon Creek Station.** 9-mile, 2500 ft. gain hike in southern Big Sur with beautiful coastal views. Route begins at Cruikshank trailhead, heading east and south on Buckeye trail. There will be a car shuttle between the trailheads. Poison oak definitely present along trails. Meet at Washburn Day Use Area in San

**Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park. 3-Days, 3-Islands: July 22-24, August 24-26, September 14-16.** Join us as we explore these enchanting islands! Hike wild, windswept trails bordered with blazing wildflowers. Kayak rugged coastlines. Marvel at pristine waters teeming with frolicking seals and sea lions. Train your binoculars on unusual sea and land birds. Watch for the highly endangered island fox. Look for reminders of the Chumash people who lived on these islands for thousands of years. Or just relax at sea. A ranger/naturalist will travel with us to help lead hikes, point out items of interest and present evening programs. All cruises depart from Santa Barbara. The \$590 cost includes an assigned bunk, all meals, snacks, and beverages plus the services of a ranger/naturalist.



Simeon State Park, about 1 mile north of Cambria. Extreme heat will postpone the outing. Leader: Carlos Diaz-Saavedra, 546-0317.

**Sun., July 13th, 10 a.m. Walk in Los Osos State Oak Reserve.** Come on an easy, 1.3-mile walk, 100 ft. gain through a unique ancient oak forest with sandy to firm dirt trails. Plant list provided. Children over 7 with family members welcome. Directions: on Los Osos Valley Rd. from SLO, soon after entering Los Osos, meet in Oak Reserve parking lot across from Eto Rd. Leader: Vicki Marchenko, 528-5567 or [vmarchenko57@gmail.com](mailto:vmarchenko57@gmail.com).

**Sun., July 27th, 2 p.m. Musical Walk of Historic San Luis Obispo.** Join us on a guided tuneful stroll past ten special landmarks in the historic core of SLO. Hear the stories behind an ancient adobe, the stagecoach stop, home of SLO's first physician, residence of the first local millionaire, SLO's last existing gaslight, a forgotten WPA project, and more, accompanied by recordings of period songs from Mission days to World War II. Duration about 1 1/2 hrs. Meet at NW

To reserve space, send a \$100 check, written to Sierra Club to leader Joan Jones Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732. For more information contact leader: 626-443-0706; [jholtzhl@aol.com](mailto:jholtzhl@aol.com).



corner of Nipomo and Dana Sts. Leader: Joe Morris, 549-0355.

**Sun., Aug. 3rd, 9 a.m. West Cuesta Ridge Hike.** Moderately strenuous, 8-mile, 2000 ft. gain hike to top of West Cuesta Ridge from the end of Stenner Creek Rd, following the Shooters trail along ridge to the Sargent Cypress Botanical Area, then down the Morning Glory trail to starting point. Bring water, snacks, and dress in layers for changing weather. Hat, sunscreen, and sturdy shoes are recommended. Meet at the end of Stenner Creek Road, about 2 miles from Hwy 1. Leader: Bill Waycott, 459-2103 or [bill.waycott@gmail.com](mailto:bill.waycott@gmail.com).


**Sat., Aug. 9th, 8:30 a.m. Southern Big Sur Traverse.** 9-mile, 2200-ft gain hike in Silver Peak Wilderness, crossing from Cruikshank trailhead to Buckeye camp and on to Soda Springs trailhead, with great coastline views. Buckeye camp set in large, shady meadow is our lunch stop. Trip involves a car shuttle. Ticks and poison oak are both possible on the trail. Bring lunch, snack, water, and dress for changing weather. Meet at Washburn Day use area in San Simeon State Park, about 1.7 mile north of Windsor and Main in Cambria. Trailhead is about a 40-minute drive north from Cambria. Probable stop for eats afterwards. Leader: Chuck Tribbey, 441-7597.

**Sun., Aug. 10th, 10 a.m. Chumash Crespi Trail Hike.** 2-mile, 500 ft. gain hike through beautiful oak grove in Morro Bay State Park. Plant list provided. Directions: from South Bay Blvd., between Morro Bay and Los Osos, turn onto Turri Rd to trailhead parking lot, 1/2 mile more on the left. Leader: Vicki Marchenko, 528-5567 or [vmarchenko57@gmail.com](mailto:vmarchenko57@gmail.com).

**Sun., Aug. 17th, 2 p.m. City Walk: Mission-Era San Luis Obispo.** Easy, guided stroll past the Mission, several



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




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John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club, in Yosemite

adobes, the old stagecoach stop, home of SLO's first physician, and other landmarks to hear stories of the early days of SLO, the Chumash natives, and the Gold Rush pioneers. Meet under the clock at the corner of Monterey and Osos Sts. Leader: Joe Morris, 549-0355.

## Activities sponsored by other organizations

**Sat., Aug. 9, 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. Where are Bears? SLO Botanical Gardens.** How is the wild bear population dealing with rapid environmental changes throughout SLO and Monterey County? Join Rocky Thompson, Senior Wildlife Biologist with the California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, to learn the status of the native bear population. Learn where these elusive bears reside, how you can avoid interaction or encourage wildlife health. Presentation is \$5 for members, \$10 non-members. Followed at 2 p.m. by a free docent-led tour of the Garden. No preregistration required. For more information email [education@slobg.org](mailto:education@slobg.org). County Parks charge a \$3 parking fee on weekends and holidays, April – September. Carpool and save!

**Sat., Jul. 26, 2 p.m. Climate Change Revisited: What's New and What Can We Do?** UU Social Room. The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship's Green Team has the great privilege of welcoming Prof. Ray Weymann, an astronomer with 40 years experience at universities and observatories, past vice-president of the American Astronomical Society and more recently founder of the Climate Science Rapid Response Team. He will bring his vast experience to present the latest, evolving understanding about global warming and his take on what works in dealing with it—both locally and internationally. Ample time will be left for questions and discussion. For further information, contact Joe Morris, Green Team chair, 549-0355, or view Dr. Weymann's website: [www.centralcoastclimatescience.org](http://www.centralcoastclimatescience.org) for much useful content.