



SIERRA
CLUB

September 2005
Volume 42, No. 8

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sea lions rock!**
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Sea Lions are coming to town!
Sunday, September 25th
Bring the kids!
Palm Theatre
Times: 10 AM
RSVP: (805) 543-0717
817 Palms St.
San Luis Obispo

Join us for the premiere of the award-winning documentary "California Sea Lions: An Intergenerational Story" narrated by Hollywood actor Sean Astin (The Lord of the Rings). It's like you are on an incredible journey along the California coast where intergenerational sea lions live, play and give birth to their pups in the Channel Islands.

Watch as marine biologists and Marine Mammal Rescue Centers work to study and protect these amazing "kissers of the sea."

You'll even get a chance to meet filmmaker Alan De Haven who'll be there to answer questions.

This is sure to be an entertaining and educational experience for the whole family!

Proceeds to benefit the environmental programs of the SLO Coast Alliance. For more information about the film and to view a trailer, log on to www.rteff.com

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Tickets:
Adults: \$20.00
Kids: \$5.00

Sean Astin



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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

Commission to Community: Drop Dead Fish & Game ignores residents on Morro Bay hunt

On August 18 and 19, the California Fish and Game Commission came to SLO but refused to hear most of the citizens who came to speak on the Morro Bay waterfowl hunt, spurned the pleas and concerns of the few who were able to speak, ignored the petition signatures of thousands in favor of banning or restricting the hunt, and delivered lectures and scoldings in response to protests. Executive Director Robert Treanor was visibly upset to see so many people "being paraded" into the public meeting, where they had some thought of speaking publicly and thereby unduly taking up the Commission's time.

The Commission also tried to ignore a request from a member of the Morro Bay City Council to consider



Silent rebuke: Audience reacts at state Fish and Game Commission meeting, August 18.

"I really wish you folks would figure out how to get along."

-- State Fish and Game Commissioner Michael Flores to meeting attendees after voting to move back the start time of the Morro Bay hunt to 7 a.m. Watch the video at www.slospan.org

an alternative to a ban of the hunt — a compromise of time & place restrictions — and, when later in the meeting Commissioners were forced to address it due to the determined perseverance of the Morro Bay Vice Mayor, they quickly made a motion to deny any such consideration and struck it down (That is, they refused not just to implement the compromise, but to consider voting on the compromise!)

The following day, they voted to move the 8 a.m. start time of the hunt back to 7 a.m. -- at the request

of nobody -- ensuring a wake-up shotgun serenade for Bay residents, starting this November.

The numbers of those who are fully aware of and alarmed by the fact that birds are hunted in the Morro Bay National Estuary, next to and frequently across the poorly demarcated line between the shooting zone and the City bird sanctuary, has now significantly increased, thanks to the "deal with it" arrogance of the Fish and Game Commission. (Genuine thanks are due Commissioner Bob

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Executive Committee Nominations Open

You, average Santa Lucia Chapter member, run for ExCom? Yes! ExCom is our administrative body; we need people who can take minutes, organize committees, inspire participation, provide publicity, and organize members. Great conservationists may apply and are welcome, but the Chapter also needs people to handle the needs of organization. If you have some time and would like to help this great organization, please volunteer to serve on ExCom.

Three slots are open for this fall's election, so we need at least five people willing to help. Each person who is elected will be expected to serve a three-year term. The Executive Committee meets once monthly at a time and place mutually agreed upon. Members of the Nomination Committee are Letty French, chair, lmfrench@tcsn.net 805-239-7338, Jack Beigle jbeigle@charter.net

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Economy vs. Environment? Ask the Salamanders

The Santa Lucia Chapter has submitted comments to the US Fish and Wildlife Service disputing the agency's economic analysis of the impacts of designating critical habitat for the threatened California tiger salamander in 20 California counties, including San Luis Obispo.

"The central conclusion of the analysis — that 20 counties would

incur \$367 million in 'lost development opportunities' over twenty years — is absurd," said Chapter Chair Karen Merriam. "The Service is calling \$27,000 added on to the cost of a \$2 million home a 'potentially disproportionate economic impact' that should be avoided at the price of exempting thousands of acres from the

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

—John Muir



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Santa Lucia Chapter General Meeting

REPORT FROM THE SUMMIT, CALL FOR ESTUARY VOLUNTEERS

Sept 20, 7-9 p.m.

Direct from the Sierra Summit in San Francisco, the Sierra Club's first national environmental convention and exposition, we'll hear a report from Chapter delegates on the future of the Club and our environmental protection programs.

Then Annie Gillespie, Volunteer Monitoring Coordinator for the Morro Bay National Estuary Program, will tell us about the Program's volunteer training. The Program expects to be very busy collecting data once the rainy season comes and is interested in recruiting volunteers for water quality monitoring. It's a minimal monthly time commitment and a great opportunity for a wide range of volunteers. The data collected is frequently called upon by numerous agencies making environmental management decisions.

Tuesday, September 20
7 - 9 p.m.
Ludwick Center
864 Santa Rosa Street
(corner of Mill)
San Luis Obispo

Next:

At our October 18th meeting, Mark DiMaggio, Paso Robles High School teacher and straw bale house builder/owner will speak on "Global Environmental Options 101: What we all need to know!"

Goodbye, Betty



Chapter Treasurer Steven Marx played the recorder as old friends gathered to reminisce about Betty Schetzer

On August 20, Sierra Club members gathered in the backyard labyrinth at the home of Chapter Chair Karen Merriam to pay tribute to long-time member Betty Schetzer, one of our community's outstanding activists throughout her long life, which ended on July 14 in the manner of her choosing.

Many remembered Betty's generosity of spirit. If she was your friend, she was your friend for life. John Ashbaugh remembered her as his mentor, saying "I wish I had that grit, that sense of direction and centeredness" – and as a constant inspiration, unstoppable, happy to be a thorn in the side for a good cause.

Jack Beigle recalled a lesson Betty taught him: "Don't beat yourself up over making mistakes. Learn from it, correct it, and go."

A few weeks earlier, the *Tribune* paid tribute to Betty's "unwavering sense of justice, compassion

and clarity" as someone who "battled for civility in an era of polarity."

In Memoriam

The Chapter gratefully acknowledges recent donations made by Michael and Merna Pelczar and by Peg and Ted Lebrez in memory of the Chapter's late, beloved Conservation Chair, Pete Wagner.

We gratefully acknowledge a recent donation of Sandy and Howard Amborn in memory of Phil and Harriet Amborn.



Pete Wagner, on the job

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Santa Lucia Chapter

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

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Salamander

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regulatory requirements of critical habitat protection.”

The Chapter noted that the analysis is based on traditional neoclassical economics, which can't calculate “natural capital,” the worth of a wetland, estuary, forest or other natural landscape. In ecological economics, this is determined by a calculation of the cost to replace the services the environment provides — flood control, storm protection, fertilizer, pollination, water purification, climate regulation, etc. — services lost to development.

Restoration ecologists have long noted the negative economic effects of the loss of natural capital to development, but the Service's analysis simply treats the requirements of the Endangered Species Act and critical habitat designation as costs and negative economic impacts, and does not factor in the costs of development to society — soil erosion, air and water pollution and fragmented and destroyed ecosystems, converting natural assets into liabilities and incurring future restoration costs.

Recently, a Cambridge University research team found that an intact ecosystem is worth 82% more than the same parcel after being clear-cut, drained, paved or otherwise developed.

“Nowhere in the Service's draft economic analysis is there an estimate of the value of the lands in question in terms of natural services provided vs. their conversion into million-dollar homes,” said Merriam.

In insisting on negative economic impacts of critical habitat and ignoring the negative economic impacts of the loss of such habitat, as well as the economic benefits of protecting and preserving it, the Fish and Wildlife Service is coming to resemble an auxiliary of the Homebuilders Association more than the principal federal agency charged with administering the Endangered Species Act and protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats.

July 29, 2005

Field Supervisor, Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-2605
Sacramento, CA 95825

Comments on the Draft Economic Analysis, “ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF CRITICAL HABITAT DESIGNATION FOR THE CALIFORNIA TIGER SALAMANDER IN 20 CALIFORNIA COUNTIES”

The draft economic analysis does not make appropriate assumptions regarding current practices and likely regulatory changes imposed as a result of the designation of critical habitat.

The terms of the draft analysis are the terms of neoclassical economics, in which goods are exchanged and profits made in a predictable closed system with no resource constraints.

These terms render the draft economic analysis inadequate to its task. The obvious faults of the neoclassical model have given rise to the alternative model of ecological economics, in which the worth of a wetland, estuary or forest is determined by a calculation of the cost to replace the services they provide (flood control, storm protection, fertilizer, pollination, water purification, fish nursery, climate regulation, etc.) On this basis, the dollar value of the world's wetlands is estimated at \$4.9 trillion annually, coastal estuaries \$4.1 tril-

lion, and forests at \$4.7 trillion. (Costanza, 1997). An intact ecosystem is worth 82% more than the same parcel clear-cut, drained, paved or otherwise developed (Balmford, 2002).

The Service's approach to critical habitat designation could be improved and modified. There is other information that would indicate that the designation of critical habitat would or would not have impacts on small entities or families.

Nowhere in the Service's draft economic analysis is there an estimate of the value of the lands in question in terms of natural services provided vs. conversion into million-dollar homes.

The American Association for the Advancement of Science has estimated that the benefit:cost ratio of an effective program for the conservation of the world's remaining wild nature would be at least 100:1. Some portion of that value and benefit would derive from the 382,000 acres in question if all were designated critical habitat for the tiger salamander and subject to mitigation/avoidance, but the Service's analysis does not account for or calculate the value of this “natural capital” — sustainable ecosystems and ecological landscapes, which incur no production costs, provide goods and services and improve economic well-being (Daly & Farley 2004).

There are no potentially disproportionate impacts to areas within Alameda, Contra Costa, and Monterey Counties sufficient to justify excluding portions of these areas from the final designation.

Taken on its own terms, the central conclusion of the Service's analysis — that 20 counties will incur \$367 million in “lost development opportunities” over twenty years, for which reason the Service presumes to exempt three counties from Critical Habitat Designation in order to provide relief from a presumed extreme economic burden — is dubious in the extreme. The example given of such “potentially disproportionate economic impact” is a calculation of \$27,000 added on to the cost of a \$1.9 million home in Monterey County.

This is the alleged “impact” the Service proposes to avoid at the price of exempting thousands of acres from CHD.

The process by which the \$367 million figure was arrived at is explained halfway through the draft analysis:

“The predicted price changes are modest when viewed in relation to the generally high price of new housing in the study area. However, these price increases are applied to all new housing to be built in the Census tracts containing critical habitat since this is the relevant market. Thus, critical habitat may cause housing market impacts well outside of the immediate footprint of critical habitat.”

In other words, the draft analysis presumes to raise the price of each and every theoretical house to be built over the expanse of the entire Census tract, the presents the spectre of developers making slightly more money due to a modest price in-

crease as a consequence of the economic impacts of regulation, mitigation and on-site avoidance. We would dispute the real-world application of this analysis, as should the Service. The draft economic analysis takes the quest for theoretical adverse economic impacts of CHD to the point of absurdity.

The draft economic analysis incorrectly assesses the effect on regional costs associated with land use controls that derive from the designation of critical habitat.

The Service's draft economic analysis states that “The Regulatory requirements to avoid onsite impacts and mitigate offsite affect the welfare of both producers and consumers.” It fails to analyze the effect on the welfare of producers and consumers from the absence of those regulatory requirements and the failure to perform mitigation and avoid onsite impacts. It includes no scenario and makes no study of nor provision for the regional ecosystem goods and services provided by the vernal pools, grasslands and oak woodlands that would be lost if development proceeded without CHD...

The Service's analysis simply treats regulation, mitigation, and on-site avoidance as costs and negative economic impacts, and does not factor in the costs to society of degraded, fragmented and destroyed ecosystems — the result of non-regulation, non-mitigation and non-avoidance of on-site impacts of development — nor the additional cost of the effective conversion of these assets into liabilities, nor the future costs of restoring them. (Aaronsen 2005). There is no full-cost accounting of the additional costs of that conversion in the form of soil erosion, air and water pollution as economic externalities borne by society, versus private profits realized by developers. ...

The draft economic analysis does not assess all relevant impacts.

The ESA requires that critical habitat analysis must take into account “the economic impact, and any other relevant impact, of specifying any particular area as critical habitat.” 16 USC § 1533(b)(2) (emphasis added).

In 2001, the U.S. 10th Circuit Court of Appeals instructed the Service to conduct a full analysis of all of the economic impacts of proposed CHD, regardless of whether those impacts are attributable co-extensively to other causes (New Mexico Cattle Growers Assn v. U.S.F.W.S.). The definition of “impact” is the force of impression of one thing on another: an impelling or compelling effect (Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary). “Impact” is not defined as a negative either by the dictionary or the 10th Circuit, but the draft economic analysis overwhelmingly devotes itself to the negative economic impacts of CHD. It largely omits positive economic impacts of inclusion of critical habitat, and wholly omits negative economic impacts of exclusion.

In two instances, the draft analysis seems to understand the value-neutral definition of “impact.” In citing avoidance requirements resulting in “housing price increases” that would give “potential gains to developers and landowners who benefit from the increased price,” and forecasting

Thank You, L.A. Times

The Los Angeles Times has lately been doing some serious digging for “the story behind the story” on major



land use and conservation issues in San Luis Obispo.

On August 15, the Times cast a critical eye on the way conservation easements and the Transfer of Development Credit program are being

administered here. On August 20, a Pulitzer-worthy front-page tale exposed the behind-the-scenes struggle to preserve the Carrizo Plain National Monument, a struggle that has resulted in the death of monument manager Marlene Braun (see “Let That be Her Monument,” June 2005 *Santa Lucian*). Both are must-reads.

Go to www.latimes.com/news/local and type “Ranch's Easement” or “Suicide Casts a Shadow” in the search window. Free registration is required for the latter.

that increased price may lead to increased demand and this will lead in turn to “greater demand for home remodel projects likely to be met by small firms.”

Thus the draft analysis is aware of its obligation to present both negative and positive economic impacts. We may presume the omission of the positive economic impacts of critical habitat designation was not the result of a deliberately narrowed scope but because the analysts were ignorant of them. ...

The benefits of inclusion of the areas proposed to be excluded from critical habitat likely outweigh the benefits of exclusion.

The economic analysis fails in its intent to assist the Secretary in determining whether the benefits of excluding particular areas from the designation outweigh the benefits of including them, as it does not contain an analysis of the benefits of inclusion. It is silent on the economic benefits of the preservation of ecosystems, and equally silent on the costs of development and its concomitant loss of ecosystem services. Once these factors are acknowledged, it is not necessary to even attempt to calculate dollar figures to perceive that they clearly outweigh the cited benefits of exclusion — i.e. avoiding a \$27,000 addition in the cost of a \$1.9 million home. (“In every case we looked at, the loss of nature's services outweighed the benefits of development, often by a large amount” (Balmford, 2002)).

Our understanding of the workings of the natural world has improved in the years since the passage of the Endangered Species Act. Developments in economics and conservation biology reflect that change. The Millenium Ecosystem Assessment, particularly in the report “Living Beyond Our Means: Natural Assets

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Sept. 17 is California Coastal Cleanup Day



Adopt-A-Beach program and takes place every year on the third Saturday of September, from 9 a.m. to Noon. In 2005, that day falls on September 17. Coming at the end of the summer beach season and near the start of the school year, Coastal Cleanup Day is a

Every September, 50,000 volunteers turn out at more than 700 cleanup sites statewide to conduct what has been hailed by the Guinness Book of World Records as "the largest garbage collection" (1993). California Coastal Cleanup Day is the country's premier volunteer event focused on the marine environment.

Since the program started in 1985, over 650,000 Californians have removed more than 10 million pounds of debris from our state's shorelines and coast. When combined with the International Coastal Cleanup, organized by The Ocean Conservancy and taking place on the same day, California Coastal Cleanup Day becomes part of one of the largest volunteer events of the year.

Coastal Cleanup Day is the highlight of the California Coastal Commission's year 'round



great way for families, students, service groups, and neighbors to join together, take care of our fragile marine environment, show community support for our shared natural resources, learn about the impacts of marine debris and how we can prevent them, and to have fun! Coastal Cleanup Day is also the kick-off event for Coastweeks — three weeks of coastal and water-related events for the whole family.

Participating in Coastal Cleanup Day is easy. Pre-register with your local Coordinator (ECOSLO - 544-1777; miranda@ecoslo.org), or simply show up at a drop-in site — go to www.coastal.ca.gov for information, or call (800) COAST-4U or e-mail coast4u@coastal.ca.gov.

Join your neighbors on Saturday, September 17, from 9 a.m. to Noon for the 21st Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day.

Be part of the solution to marine pollution!

We can phase out nuclear power

A Report from the California Energy Commission's historic workshop

By Rochelle Becker
Chair, Sierra Club Diablo Canyon Task Force,
Executive Director, Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility

Over two days of California Energy Commission panels on August 15 and 16 in Sacramento, the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility, Mothers for Peace and concerned citizens came together with representatives of the California Public Utilities Commission, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and advocates of both renewable and nuclear power, and asked questions that deserve answers:

- Would ratepayer money be better spent on newer/cleaner technology for our state's future power generation?

- How many jobs could be created in California's renewable energy industry?

- Would California benefit from this growing technology — supported by both parties and our governor?

- Would California be in the forefront of marketing this technology to the nation?

- Would this not make our energy resources more secure?

Two former NRC Commissioners ended the last workshop on the status of nuclear power in California by listing the reasons why the state cannot trust today's Nuclear Regulatory Commission to protect its citizens' health and safety. It was made clear that the federal Department of Energy is unable to responsibly and legally address permanent safe storage of growing stockpiles of high-level radioactive waste — bad news for the residents who live by nuclear plants and recently licensed high-level radioactive waste storage facilities.

These condemnations of federal oversight agencies told attendees that:

1) After three decades, our country is no closer to solving the problem of permanent safe storage of radioactive waste than when nuclear plants were licensed.

2) High-level radioactive waste will remain in vulnerable spent fuel pools until licenses expire, AND dry casks containing radioactive waste will likely remain on our earthquake active coast "in perpetuity."

3) Casks holding highly radioactive waste may need to be "repackaged" up to four times to keep radioactivity isolated while on site.

4) Radioactive waste at nuclear plants in California, closed since the 1980's, remains at the reactor sites even if the plant itself has been decommissioned.

The Commissioners also spoke about energy policies that favor



"Smitty" Smith, head of Public Citizen, Texas, came to SLO to speak at an Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility event on August 9, en route to the California Energy Commission's "Nuclear Issues" panel in Sacramento.

nuclear power and are inconsistent with market economics and/or democratic governance, including:

- Tax credits, loan guarantees and risk insurance solely for new nuclear plant output
- Efforts to further streamline a licensing process that has been continuously cut back for 25 years
- Extension of liability limitations to new nuclear power plants
- Government efforts to revive spent fuel reprocessing, suspended by Presidents Ford and Carter.

The Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility has been working closely with the California Energy Commission on the issue of nuclear power as part of our state's energy mix, and was pleased to be included among the prestigious panelists brought together for this unprecedented workshop. One could not help but come away convinced that California's deficit economy would and could become a booming economy based on clean non-radioactive technology. California's remaining nuclear plants produce 4,000 MW of energy that can be replaced easily with conservation, energy efficiency, sustainable energy, and a commitment to developing new technologies. California can phase out production of nuclear waste on our coast in 20 years or less.

This meeting will serve as the basis for the Energy Report — the Energy Commission's planning document for the future of energy production in our state.

To read the presentations from all panelists, go to: www.energy.ca.gov/2005_energypolicy/documents/index.html#0815+1605

To support the work of the Alliance to pass legislation to amend current law and prohibit license renewals for California's nuclear plants, go to: www.a4nr.org. Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility P.O. Box 1328 San Luis Obispo 93406

Supervisors Ease High-Income Housing Crisis

By Sue Harvey
Chapter Executive Committee

On August 16, in a "Let them eat cake" moment, Supervisors Harry Ovitt, Jerry Lenthal and Katcho Achadjian threw the County's General Plan out the window and voted to approve the conversion of sixty acres of Ag land in rural Templeton for the construction of eleven million-dollar-plus estate homes.

District 1 Supervisor Ovitt justified this zoning-change lurch into sprawl and loss of agricultural lands by claiming "We are losing (housing) inventory. We build it for one segment of society and don't allow anyone else to move up."

With an all-time low of 11% in the county's Housing Affordability Index — the percentage of households able to afford a median-priced home — the question for the Supervisor is: What will the other 89% be moving up from?

Supervisor Patterson dissented, asking "Is this the type of housing we need?" Supervisor Bianchi also voted no also, showing a clear grasp of how sprawl happens ("With housing, we need to put it where it belongs.") On August 22, the *Tribune* delivered a well-aimed brickbat at Supervisors

Ovitt, Achadjian and Lenthal, pointing out that their real estate section has "plenty of inventory of homes in the million-dollar range."

Couched in this insult to those who live here now and have little or no hope of owning a home or moving up to a million-dollar estate is the claim that we have already built all the housing we need and then some for your "segment of society." I'd wager most of the buyers of those eleven homes will be from out of the county.

The next time Supervisor Ovitt leads a contingent of business owners around the county to tout our attractions and benefits, he can tour them past our million-dollar home inventories and assure them their workers can "move up" any time.

Supervisors Ovitt, Lenthal and Achadjian should direct their attention to the Voices page of the August 9th *Tribune* and David Broder's column "Affordable housing: Carlsbad figures it out."

They could at least have the courtesy to pass an inclusionary housing ordinance before they approve any more million-dollar estate housing.

California/Nevada Conservation Committee: Call for Agenda

The California/Nevada Conservation Committee will meet Saturday, September 24th and Sunday, September 25th, 2005, at Rancho El Chorro in San Luis Obispo. All Sierra Club members are welcome.

If you have an action item, discussion item or committee/task force report you wished placed on the agenda, please contact Allan Eberhart at valliali@jps.net. The text of any proposed resolutions must be available for posting before the meeting. Any action items that are not placed on the agenda prior to the

meeting will be added with the consent of the body on Saturday.

If you are interested in being nominated or wish to nominate someone, contact Vicki Lee, CNRCC Nominating Committee Chair.

Workshops will be conducted Saturday morning before the general meeting. If you wish to hold a workshop, please let Alan know now.

Workshops to date include Energy and NCC Charter: An opportunity for additional comments on, responses to and suggestions for the proposed Charter.

Hunt

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Hattoy for pleading with his fellow commissioners to allow the citizens of SLO to be heard, to no avail.)

Thanks to everyone who turned out for these meetings, as well as the Morro Bay City Council and LOCAC meetings, wrote letters to the editor, signed a petition, sent a postcard or an e-mail, and otherwise made the wishes of the overwhelming majority of our citizens known. And finally, thanks to the Commission for thoroughly misreading this community, thereby galvanizing it on this issue like never before.

Any further offers of compromise as to hunt time and area restrictions are unlikely. The Commission's actions have laid the groundwork for the future, guaranteeing heightened public protest and numbering the days of California's most inappropriate wildlife hunt. Stay tuned.

Peter Douglas Marks Twenty Years of Saving the Coast

On Thursday morning, August 11th, as the California Coastal Commission met in Costa Mesa, Sierra Club's Great Coastal Places Chair Tarren Collins and Coastal Program Director Mark Massara made a presentation to Peter Douglas commemorating his 20th year as Executive Director of the California Coastal Commission.

A framed coastal photo was engraved with the caption:

"To Peter Douglas: Commemorating twenty years of service to the people of California and a lifetime spent protecting the coast. With gratitude, Sierra Club's coastal activists." It was presented by Great Coastal Places Campaign Chair Tarren Collins:

"I am here today representing the 5,000 members of Sierra Club's Great Coastal Places Campaign. As the volunteer leader for this remarkable coastal protection network and as someone who has dedicated my time to statewide coastal protection, I am humbled by the opportunity to speak for a moment about California's premier coastal champion, Peter Douglas.

"Peter has been a personal hero to me and a positive example for anyone who wonders if an individual can make a difference. Peter's self-

Who's Afraid of TDCs?

You, hopefully. Planning Commission urging emergency stop to failed land use program

By Sue Harvey, PasoWatch, and Maria Lorca, Creston Citizens for Ag Land Preservation

A review of the county's Transfer of Development Credit program is scheduled for October 4 at the Board of Supervisors. We are requesting an urgency moratorium on the program until all of the concerns raised by the public are addressed.

The TDC program is supposed to direct development away from rural and ag land ("sending sites") and toward urban areas and existing development ("receiving sites"). One small problem: No cities have agreed to be receiver sites. Cities like Paso Robles that wish to create a green belt around the city have to participate in the county's efforts to stop sprawl and preserve ag and rural lands. When any developer inside the city wants a variance or General Plan amendment for their project, the

cities should require them to buy TDC's. Until cities agree to participate in the program, we will merely be creating and moving development chess pieces around on the rural county map.

On May 12, 2005, the County Planning Commission sent a letter to the Board of Supervisors making the following recommendations on the Program: an urgency moratorium to stop all new applications while the ordinance is being modified; establish a sending site criteria that brings the transfer ratio closer to 1 to 1 (one lot retired: one lot created); strengthen receiving site criteria; consider requiring a merging of underlying parcels on the sending site; strengthen the conservation language regarding allowable uses (See *L.A. Times* August 15, "Ranch's Easement Spawns Controversy"); consider removing ag land as a receiver site; consider requiring all

receiver sites be within or contiguous to urban reserve lines.

The *Times* article highlighted serious flaws with the county's TDC Program and has raised the hackles of the California Council of Land Trusts. The article focuses on the Las Tablas Ranch owned by Donn Bonnheim. There are only three recorded easements in the County Program: Bonnheim at 5,408 acres generating 173 development credits; Denny at 52 acres; and Choin, acreage unknown.

The Bonnheim site is the key to making the TDC Program look successful. Without Bonnheim, only about 56 acres have been preserved. Of the 173 Bonnheim credits that have been offered for sale, 116 went to convert ag lands west of Templeton, and 57 credits are scattered throughout rural north county. 40% of the current applications are to subdivide land zoned for agriculture.

To generate the 173 credits from the 40 existing lots at the Bonnheim site, appraisals were used to determine the development value of not more than two houses on each of the 40 parcels. The difference in value to the property with and without developments rights was considered. Bonus credits were then added. The Grand Jury, the reviewing appraiser and many citizens have questioned how and why the program allows this excessive multiplication of lots and resulting rural sprawl.

At the time that the credits were awarded, significant questions were raised by the appraisal review. The original appraisal estimated the loss in value to the property due to the TDC easement at 66% of the value of the ranch prior to the agreement. The reviewing appraiser noted "...this seems extremely high...." The review questions the effect the Williamson Act easement might have on the valuation, the problem of the underlying parcels not being merged, and the appropriateness of some of the comparison properties, assigning "highest and best use" as cattle ranching when portions of the ranch abut highly successful vineyards. This method of determining credits is no longer used, but credits based on these questionable methods are still being sold, and the Board of Supervisors voted last year to extend the life of these credits to 2011 and added much of the county's rural land as potential receiver sites, presumably in an effort to make a market for the unsold credits. None of the north county credits have been placed within urban reserve lines as advised by the 2001 Grand Jury Report on the TDC Program.

One appraisal of the property notes

continued on page 6



A Short Portage on the Las Tablas Arm of Lake Nacimiento

By Jack Beigle

The portage was only 100 yards from our parking spot to the shore of Franklin Creek. It is beautiful. The steep valley is covered with trees to the water's edge. This entire arm of the lake is a no-wake zone so ski boats did not bother us. Our hosts, Letty and Cal French, led us on a delightful paddle to the confluence of Las Tablas Creek.

We explored upstream as far as we could, and then returned, downstream, where Letty pointed out a bald eagle's nest. There were two eaglets that had not yet fledged. One climbed to a branch that was about 3 feet above the nest and off to one side. As we watched it spread its wings and half flew, half fell into the nest. Flying lesson number one was successfully completed.

After resting in the nest, it climbed again to the same branch.

We beached our boats in a small cove and enjoyed our picnic lunches while we visited and scanned the shoreline for birds. After lunch we continued down to where we could see the party boats, ski boats and jet skis zooming around.

We returned upstream and left the noise and frantic activity behind. You can feel the joy in the serenity of a quiet mountain lake. When we approached the eagle's nest our eaglet was still on his perch trying to get up the nerve to try his second flying lesson.

The take out and portage to our cars went well. Our grateful thanks to our leaders and hosts, Letty and Cal French for inviting us to their lovely home on Lake Nacimiento.

Check the outing schedule and join us on the water.

less work has helped to preserve a clean and healthy coast and to ensure that California's beaches and bluffs are developed responsibly in a way that protects the rights of all Californians. Those of us who work every day to ensure that our beaches are accessible, our water is clean and our coastal views are protected all owe a debt of gratitude to Peter for his clarity of vision, his unsurpassed dedication and his lifetime of public service.

"So I stand here today, representing business owners in Orange County, surfers in Marin, hikers in Humboldt and families from Fresno and Bakersfield and Sacramento who count on protected beaches for their Summer escapes; and on behalf of all of these individuals from all over California I would like to present this gift to Peter as a token of our great esteem.

"As Peter has said many times, 'the coast is never finally saved,' but rather 'it is always being saved.' But for the thoughtful and inspiring stewardship of Peter Douglas, many tens of thousands of people would be unaware of the risks facing California's coast, and countless coastal treasures could be lost forever.

Thank you, Peter."



Tarren Collins, Coastal Commission Vice Chair Sara Wan, Peter Douglas, State Assemblymember Pedro Nava and Sierra Club Coastal Program Director Mark Massara commemorate Douglas's 20 years of coastal service.

Nominations

continued from page 1

805-773-2147, Val Endres, VFENDRES@cs.com 805-544-1180, Leslie Krisnk, lkrisnk@arb.ca.gov 805-473-7325. When they contact you, please say "yes."

You may nominate yourself or suggest anyone else to any member of the committee. Members may also run by petition, signed by 25 Chapter members in good standing. Nominations close Friday, September 23; petitions need to be submitted to the Chapter Office by 5 p.m. on October 4.

Penguins March, Sea Lions Rock!


California Sea Lions - an Unforgettable Encounter, narrated by Sean Astin (*Lord of the Rings*), will have its SLO theatrical premiere at the Palm Theater, 817 Palm Street, at 10 a.m. on Sunday, September 25.

This film has already delighted audiences of all ages. Official selection of the Newport Beach Film Festival, the Woods Hole Film Festival, The Ocean Film Festival, and the Channel Islands Film Festival (winner - Audience Choice Award, Best Film), **California Sea Lions-an Unforgettable Encounter** features the sea lions as they behave in their aquatic environment. Awkward on

Sea Lions are coming to town!

Sunday, September 25th

Bring the kids!


Palm Theatre
Time: 10 AM
RSVP: (805) 543-8717
817 Palm St.
San Luis Obispo

Join us for the premier of the award-winning documentary "California Sea Lions-An Unforgettable Encounter" narrated by Hollywood actor Sean Astin (The Lord of the Rings). It'll take you on an incredible journey along the California coast where inquisitive sea lions live, play and give birth to their pups in the Channel Islands.

Watch as marine biologists and Marine Mammal Rescue Centers work to study and protect these amazing "clowns of the sea."

You'll even get a chance to meet filmmaker Alan De Herrera who'll be there to answer questions.

This is sure to be an entertaining and educational experience for the whole family!



Tickets:
Adults: \$20.00
Kids: \$5.00

Proceeds to benefit the environmental programs of the SLO Coast Alliance. For more information about the film and to view a trailer, log on to: www.riofilms.com

FUNDRAISER

land, amazingly graceful in the water, performing amazing acrobatics two feet below the surface.

ONE SHOW ONLY! DIRECTOR IN PERSON!

A benefit for SLO Coast Alliance
\$20 adults - \$5 children. Tickets may be reserved in advance via e-mail at sierra8@charter.net, or by calling Sierra Club at (805) 543-8717.

Salamander

continued from page 3

and Human Well-being," has defined the benefits of ecosystem services in a peer-reviewed framework. In order to reflect those changes and maintain its function as the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people, and to properly administer the Endangered Species Act, the Service must update its assessments of the economic effects of critical habitat designation in accordance with the present-day understanding of natural capital, ecosystem services and the economic impacts of environmental conversion.

Based on an economic analysis that omits to state the positive economic benefits of CHD via the preservation of natural capital through mitigation, on-site avoidance and non-development, the Service cannot make the necessary evaluation on which to base a decision to exclude portions of designated counties from critical habitat designation due to "potentially disproportionate economic impacts."

Sources:

Aronson et al. 2005. Natural Capital: The Limiting Factor, Restoration Ecology, 05-091.
Balmford, Andrew. 2002. Economic

Inclusionary Housing: Good Idea, Let's Enforce It

Current projections indicate that the population of California may reach 58.7 million by 2040. In the face of such intense growth, fragmented and competitive local land use planning has contributed to severe environmental and ecological deterioration, including strained and polluted water supplies, loss of valuable agricultural lands and open space, increased numbers of endangered species due to loss of critical habitat, increased energy consumption, and a lack of affordable housing near places of employment.

The Sierra Club therefore strongly supports a strong, enforceable inclusionary housing ordinance in the adopted Housing Element of the General Plan for San Luis

Obispo County. This is one of several ways to address our community's housing needs.

Developers should be required to build affordable units as a condition of development. If they are given an option to contribute fees in lieu of providing actual units, they will always exercise it and the goal of mixing affordable units with market rate units will not be met. In-lieu fees should only be available to projects where requiring housing is truly infeasible.

Affordable housing should remain affordable, through rent controls or deed restrictions, for the life of the unit(s), not "as long as possible." These provisions should be managed

and implemented by a county-wide Housing Authority, with equal participation from the Board of Supervisors, as well as every incorporated city in the county.

Lastly, we note that affordable housing should not be relegated to otherwise undevelopable, marginal or controversial land, such as wetlands, contaminated sites, lands outside of Urban Service Lines or areas with high habitat value. Too often, affordable housing is used as an excuse to build on lands that should not be built on. This compromises not only the integrity of the habitat and larger ecosystem, but the integrity of the planning process.

Oct. 1: Sampling Sustainable Systems, a Benefit for Mothers for Peace

You are invited to attend workshops and displays exploring alternative forms of energy on Saturday, October 1. It is going to be a fascinating showcase of sustainable energy sources and their practical application to homeowners and prospective home builders. Mothers for Peace is putting this day together - with "a little help from their friends" - as a fundraiser.

The day's events will take place at two venues: **The San Luis Botanical Garden** and the **San Luis Sustainability Group of Architects' Complex**. You can begin the day at either venue from 10 o'clock on.

At the **Botanical Garden** there will be three different presentations, every hour on the hour between 10:00 and 2:00.

1. Steve Best, Earthbound Energy Resources, will present the fascinating technology of geexchange for heating and cooling.

2. John Ewan of Pacific Energy Company comes to us with 25 years of experience of solar energy systems. He will give you insight into the many options for off-grid and

grid inter-tie such as the Palm Theater. (At the Garden's amphitheater.)

3. Representatives from the Sustainability Group will provide educational tours of the partially built Education Center - a completely sustainable building.

At the **Sustainability Group of Architects' Complex** on Tassajara Creek Rd. near Santa Marguerita, there will be on-going presentations and tours dealing with natural heating, cooling, venting, and lighting, straw bale construction, solar electric systems, micro hydroelectric systems, and solar water heating.

Tickets are available at BooBoo Records on Monterey St., SLO; Pacific Energy Co. on Santa Barbara St., SLO; the two locations of the day's events. \$15 adults, \$25 for two tickets; \$10 for students. Children accompanied by adults are free. All donations are tax deductible. Please make all checks payable to Mothers for Peace.

To include your business card as an advertisement in the written material, send it to PO Box 164, Pismo Beach, CA 93448 with a \$50 check. Contact Bobbe Scott at 541-6099 or Evy Justesen at 546-8907 for more information.

TDCs

continued from page 5

that 1,026 "very rough steep" acres were purchased from the BLM in November of 1996, the year the county adopted the TDC Program. The property owner applied to become a sending site the following year and was awarded TDC credits for this parcel.

One of the purposes of the TDC Program is to retire antiquated subdivisions. To date, not one lot in a single subdivision has been retired.

A portion of the Bonnheim property is under an automatically renewed Williamson Act contract that postpones development and restricts all uses to agricultural in exchange for significant reduction in property taxes. Remote land under Williamson Contract is not considered to be under pressure for immediate develop-

Oct. 15: Green Earth Expo 2005

Healthy Home Healthy World Healthy Kids

Saturday, October 15th * 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.* San Luis Obispo Vets Hall, 801 Grand Ave, SLO.

Featuring Green Businesses and Non-Profit organizations * 20 workshops on Living Green * Local Organic Farmers * Delicious Food & Live Music * Green Car Show * Arts & Crafts * Healing Arts * Solar Demonstrations * Fun hands-on art activities for kids * Raffle Prizes * Meet your local elected Representatives * and more.

Join in the celebration of all the great things that are happening in our community and around the world.

- Keynote speaker Ocean Robins - 7:30 - 11:00 p.m. Dance to the sounds of Hip Deep

This year's event is a fundraiser for ECOSLO and Information Press.

The Green Earth Expo 2005 website is up and running!! There you will find all the information about the Expo:

www.greenearthpromotions.org

ment, as it takes ten years after giving notice to come out of Williamson. The Bonnheim property was not under pressure for premature conversion to residential use. A TDC Program that allows development rights to be sold prematurely should be highly restrictive and demand the highest standards of conservation.

Defenders of the program claim the easement has achieved its primary purpose of preventing development of the ranch. There is no evidence the land was to be subdivided. Some of the parcels were extremely difficult to develop, yet development rights were sold from them.

This is just a snapshot of the problems with the TDC Program, but County staff and the Board of Supervisors have resisted attempts to fix the flaws in the program.

TAKE ACTION!

Come to the County Board of Supervisors meeting on October 4th or contact the Board and tell them you want the program eliminated. The price for this kind of "conservation" is too high.

New County Government Center, SLO, 9 a.m. Call 781-5450.

[NOTE: On August 23, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issued a Final Economic Analysis excluding proposed critical habitat for the California Tiger Salamander in 12 census tracts in six counties, dropping 183,557 acres from the initial proposal. The Service claimed that an Office of Management and Budget guidance memo on how to assess the costs and benefits of proposed regulatory actions "acknowledges that it may not be feasible to monetize, or even quantify, the benefits of environmental regulations due to either an absence of defensible, relevant studies or a lack of resources on the implementing agency's part to conduct new research."

The Service did not cite another passage from the guidance memo that instructed "Even when a benefit or cost cannot be expressed in monetary units, you should still try to measure it in terms of its physical units. If it is not possible to measure the physical units, you should still describe the benefit or cost qualitatively," and "if the non-quantified benefits and costs are likely to be important, you should carry out a threshold analysis to evaluate their significance."

The Service did none of the above. The rule will take effect on September 23.]

Classifieds

October issue ad deadline is **September 16**. To acquire a rate sheet or submit your ad and payment, contact:

Sierra Club - Santa Lucia Chapter
 p.o. Box 15755
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93406
 sierra8@charter.net

Local Government Meetings

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

Meeting Minutes

from recent Chapter meetings

Conservation Committee meeting
 Aug. 16, 2005

Meeting was called to order by Chair Pam Heatherington at 4:15pm
 Present: Jack McCurdy, Sue Harvey, Jan Marx, Pam Heatherington
 Absent: Leslie Krinsk, Janice Rohn
 Staff: Andrew Christie
 Guests: "Grassroots" students from Cuesta college, City Planner Jeff Hook

Jeff Hook made a presentation regarding the Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE) staff draft, which is being reviewed by the Planning Commission (PC). He told us that staff did not intend to weaken environmental protection of the 1994 Open Space Element in the consolidation process. Committee members pointed out that, in fact, many changes which he had made had weakened environmental protection. He indicated that he was open to all comments from the Sierra Club, and offered current revisions as proof (attached). He said that whenever it is pointed out to him by the SC, ECOSLO or Don Dollar that the old language was more protective than the new language, he is changing it back to the original in the next revision. The Planning Commissioners are being asked to review the consolidated new element without reference to the 1994 Open Space Element, which Conscom members let him know was unprecedented. Hook is putting limitations on the development of Open Space back into the draft, expanding the greenbelt, new section on viewsheds, green building standards, setting a higher bar for builders. He will post the next draft on the web prior to the Planning Commission meeting at which it will be considered, **October 12**. Planning Commissioners should be encouraged to read the 1994 Element prior to reading the next draft. SC should submit detailed comments and new language to the PC.

Old Business

Ag Liaison Committee: Sue Harvey reported that the presentation regarding the issue of agricultural criteria for TDCs which she and others made before the Ag Liaison Committee had been productive. The committee agreed on a moratorium on TDCs when the Gen. Plan Amendment and Planning Commission letter come before the Supervisors Oct 4.

Cambria CSD: The CSD wishes to allow parking in a wetland conservation easement. Jan will attend to monitor the CSD Board's attempts to intimidate environmentalists through abuse of process re Pine Knolls tanks.

Marine Life Protection Act: will be considered August 18 by Fish and Game at the new BOS office. SC is supporting the full Pigeon Point to Point Conception MLPA study area in the draft prepared by the Blue Ribbon Committee.

Chicago Grade Landfill Expansion: Draft EIR has been issued and Andrew is coordinating review and working with neighborhood groups who have asked us for assistance.

New Business

Pam brought up the fact that the sewage spill from the SLO city plant also contained chemicals, but that was not covered in the press. Pam will draft a letter asking the city what type of water testing they did after the spill and we will refer the matter to the ExComm.

Los Padres National Forest will be subject to oil drilling: SC is reviewing appeal options.

Letter from Jesse Arnold re: Labeling of genetically modified foods will be referred to ExCom.

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A Will . . .

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

For more information and confidential assistance, contact

John Calaway

Sierra Club Planned Giving Program

85 Second Street, 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105-3441
 (415) 977-5538.

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Outings and Activities Calendar

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

Hiking Classifications:

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

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

Sun., Sept. 4th, 8 a.m. Valencia Peak Southern Route Conditioning Hike. This is a 2-hour, 4.5-mile hike with over 1200-foot elevation gain. Bring water, sturdy hiking shoes and dress for the weather. Everyone is welcome, but this is a vigorous conditioning hike. It is intended who want to maintain a high fitness level. It is not for those who want to get into shape, as they are likely to be left behind. Meet at the Coon Creek Parking area at the very end of Pecho Road in Montana de Oro. Leader Al (534-0462)(2B)

Sun., Sept. 4th, 9:30 a.m. POINT SAL: Meet at end of Brown Rd at locked gate at 0930 climb 2.5 miles to 'pass/saddle and then decide what next. Bring water, windbreaker, lunch. A group might be hiking 'all the way' to Paradise Beach and then Guadalupe Beach (e-mail me if interested). Call or e-mail a few days before for details:929-3647 or BDenneen@SLONET.org

Sat-Sun., September 10-11th. Desert Protection and Restoration. We will participate together with an off-road vehicle group in a National Public Lands Day project sponsored by the Ridgecrest Office of the BLM. The area, lying between the Spangler Hills open OHV area to the north and the Golden Valley Wilderness to the south, has incurred considerable damage from illegal OHV activity. Projects will include general trash pickup, signing the boundary of the open area to the north, installing limited use area signs, building vehicle barriers to prevent entry to the wil-

derness area to the south, and camouflaging and restoring illegal vehicle trespass routes. Saturday will be a workday followed by a potluck dinner. On Sunday there will be options for a hike and/or a trail ride. Info and sign-up with Ldr: Craig Deutsche, (310-477-6670), deutsche@earthlink.net. CNCC Desert Com

Sun., Sept. 11th, COAST HIKE: Call or e-mail a few days before for details:929-3647 or BDenneen@SLONET.org

September 16 - 18th CATALINA ISLAND FUN IN THE SUN: Paradise awaits you at Camp Emerald Bay. In this three-day splash you will experience: Beautiful beaches, Great snorkeling, Crystal blue water, Spectacular views, Swimming, Hiking, Kayaking, Dancing, Great Catered Food, Lots of fun people(200+), Hot showers, Sunbathing and just relaxing in your own personal style. Trip fee includes: R/T Catalina boat, camp & landing fees for two nights, platform tent w/bed and mattress or wood cabins w/electric lights/outlets (sleeps 8, \$20 per person extra for 2 nights), hot showers, flush toilets, campfires, kayaks, dancing, leader led hikes/activities, plus catered meals from Fri lunch to Sun brunch and happy hours. After receiving confirmation of reservation by email, please send check (made out to Sierra Club) and one self addressed stamped envelope to: GERARD BAILEY - 740 Mission Drive, Camarillo, CA 93010. You may also use our paypal connection; there will be an additional fee of \$5. Send \$199 check w/Sierra Club # (\$225 check non-member), add \$20 for optional cabins made to "Sierra Club." Sierra Club -20'S & 30'S Singles Section/ Crescenta Valley/ OCSS (sign up at www.sc2030.org)

Sat-Sun., September 17-18th. Carcamp and Service in the Owens Valley. We'll work on removing tamarisk, and then take short hikes to view wildlife and special areas. We'll visit the lower Owens River Delta area. If the weather is hot, we can retreat to the higher mountain meadows. Camp at Diaz Lake County Park just south of Lone Pine; fee required Meet Saturday morning at 0900 in the campground. Potluck Sat night. Bring all your food and camping gear, gloves, loppers and handsaws (if you have them.) and clothes for all kinds of weather. Mike Prather, Owens River Committee activist and outstanding birder, will be our resource specialist. For more information, contact Leaders: Cal and Letty French, 14140 Chimney Rock Road, Paso Robles, CA 93446, (805-239-7338). Prefer e-mail: ccfrench@tcsn.net. CNCC/Santa Lucia Chapter

SAT., Sept. 17, 9:30 a.m. CANOE/ KAYAK MORRO BAY SAND SPIT CLEANUP. Help us improve the estuary by cleaning a section of the Morro Bay Sand Spit. See what rare and unusual treasures you can find. After lunch we will have a short business meeting to discuss future outings. Bring your boat and equipment, PFDs, picnic lunch, gloves and binoculars. We will provide trash bags. HIGH TIDE 10:32 AM. 5.5', LOW TIDE 4:19 PM. 2.2' LAUNCH AT MORRO BAY STATE PARK MARINA. Details call Jack Beigle 773-2147

Sat., Sept. 17, 9:30 a.m. Oats Peak - Coon Creek Loop. Enjoy a wide variety of scenery and habitat on this 9 mile, 1500 ft. hike in Montana de Oro SP. Lunch break in the Coon Creek cypress grove. Possible ticks and poison oak in places. Meet at visitor center. Bob Schwartz, 441-9508, <rws_usa@yahoo.com> (3C)

Saturday September 17th-3 PM-Guadalupe Dunes Beach Hike at Low Tide. Meet at the Dunes Visitor's Center in Guadalupe, shortly after the Sta Maria River Bridge on the right side of S.R. 1. Will carpool to the Dunes after a short visit to the Center. Bring sandals, water, sunscreen, a hat and a windbreaker. Optional dinner afterwards at a local Mexican restaurant. Call Eliane at 473-0288 before 8 PM to confirm.

Sat, Sept. 17, 5:15 p.m., SUNSET/ MOONRISE HIKE AND POTLUCK AT POINT SAL Road: Moderate 5 mi. RT hike with uphill most the way to our dinner destination and mostly downhill on the way back. Come and watch as the sun goes down and the full moon comes up a few minutes later. Bring a daypack with food to share, as well as a plate, utensils, and water for yourself. Meet at the Orcutt Long's Drugs parking lot, NE corner of Bradley and Clark, at 5:15pm. Always contact the leader; hike particulars can change. JIM 937-6766 (AR)

Sept. 18th, Sun.0930, POINT SAL: PS clean-up (one day late). When the road was open we'd get tons of litter—now we get maybe 20 items. Dogs that do not chase cattle are welcome. Meet at end of Brown Rd at locked gate at 0930 climb 2.5 miles to 'pass/saddle and then decide what next. Bring water, windbreaker, lunch. A group might be hiking 'all the way' to Paradise Beach and then Guadalupe Beach Call or e-mail a few days before for details:929-3647 or <BDenneen@SLONET.org>

Sat, Sept, 24th, 8:30 a.m. A hike to a swimming hole: Come take a 7 mile hike with 1800 foot elevation gain to Villa Creek Camp in the Silver Peak Wilderness located in southern Monterey County. Bring lunch, water, and what ever else you might like if you plan to take a dip in the swimming hole. Meet at Spencer's



Photo by Joaquin Palting

Market in Morro Bay. Cambria residents meet at the Washburn Day Use area at 8:45 a.m. As we will be arriving shortly there after. Details call Gary 473-3694.

Sun., Sept. 25th, 8 a.m. Cerro San Luis Conditioning Hike. This is a 2 hour, 4 mile hike with an 1100 foot elevation gain. Everyone is welcome, but this is a fast paced conditioning hike where beginners will fall way behind due to the steep elevation gain. Meet at the Maino Open Space parking area between the two Hwy 101 entrance ramps at the southern end of Marsh St. in SLO. Leader Al (534-0462) (2B)

Sept. 25th, Sun.0930, BLACK LAKE CANYON: Meet at junction of Guadalupe Rd. and Leguna Nigra to hike down Xenon Way, see oak-woodland, a man-made canyon, giant crabgrass and protected areas. Call or e-mail a few days before for details:929-3647 or BDenneen@SLONET.org

Sat., Oct. 1st SURF BEACH: Celebrate the opening of Surf Beach by walking south 3.5 miles. Meet at 1pm in Surf Parking Lot west of Lompoc where West Ocean has turned southward near Surf Railroad Station. Bring water and a snack. Low tide is at 3:32pm. Dogs welcome. Always contact the leader; hike particulars can change. CONNIE 735-2292 (AR)

Oct. 2nd, Sun., 0930 MUSSEL ROCK: We'll hike along coast, into dunes, see Chumash midden, track mountain lions and (hopefully) get to the top of Mussel Rock to read poetry & HDT. Dogs on leash permitted at this time of year. Call or e-mail a few days before for details:929-3647 or BDenneen@SLONET.org

Hug a Sequoia! SEPT 30 - OCT 2

Outing in the Sequoia Monument

You are invited by the Sierra Club's Sequoia Task Force on a Fall Outing in the magnificent Giant Sequoia National Monument, about 90 minutes east of Porterville, California. You can arrive anytime after 2:00 pm Friday, September 30. Saturday morning we will have several hikes and see a wide variety of spectacular scenery. If we are lucky, the aspens will be

changing colors and the dogwood will be turning red! We will hike through the Wheel Meadow Grove down the South Fork of the North Fork of the Tule River. Later we will take a short but steep jaunt to a secret waterfall. We will enjoy the vista from Dome Rock with an overview of the Kern Valley and views into the high peaks of Sequoia National Park;

We will visit sites where the Sierra Club is challenging logging to measure stumps and count rings to determine the ages of these recently felled trees. Saturday night potluck.

Bring own food and gear. Tents recommended but not required. \$10. Details, Carla at cac@ocsnet.net, 559-781-8445. RESERVATIONS REQUIRED BY SEPTEMBER 25th.

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.