



SIERRA
CLUB

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General Meeting

7 p.m., Friday, September 28, St. Stephens Episcopal Church, SLO:

Sierra Club interns spearhead our 2008 European Smart Energy Tours, chapter campaigns. Get the lowdown.

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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

Time to Get Los Osos Right

Last July, SLO Green Build, the San Luis Bay Chapter of Surfrider and the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club asked the County's Los Osos Wastewater Treatment Project Team to approve and build a treatment plant for Los Osos that would solve the multiple problems surrounding the Central Coast's 30-year waste water problem from hell.

On August 7, the Board of Supervisors, to its credit, refrained from extending the expiring Coastal Development Permit for the Tri-W project site, the major source of controversy, litigation and delays on the project since it was issued.

In comments submitted to project manager Paavo Ogren and the Technical Advisory Committee and the members of the County's Project Team, the Santa Lucia Chapter said that we consider construction of wastewater treatment facilities to have been an imperative in Los Osos for the last 30 years in order to protect the Morro Bay Estuary from pollution and the continued degradation of wildlife habitat. We noted that the Los Osos area is threatened with salt water intrusion due to overdraft of its aquifer in excess of maximum sustainable levels, and that a Level of Severity III has been declared for Los Osos' water supply. Local growers have stated their willingness and desire to use recycled



Ground zero: The Tri-W site

nitrogen-rich recycled wastewater. The use of such water on crops reduces the need for and use of nitrogen fertilizers, whose excess application results in the leaching of nitrates into water bodies. The nitrogen content in nitrogen-rich water is wholly taken up by plant roots rather than leaching into water bodies as a pollutant.

We urged the County to hold foremost in its project selection criteria the imperative that treated wastewater is a

resource to be utilized, not a pollutant to be disposed of. At the conclusion of screening potential technologies and sites for the treatment of Los Osos' wastewater, the treatment and disposal option selected should provide for the recharge of the aquifer and protection against saltwater intrusion, minimal sludge disposal and the recycling and re-use of treated water, thereby reducing water demand and use.

The San Luis Bay Chapter of the Surfrider Foundation and SLO Green Build are urging the county to focus on sustainable technology and design principles, and on considerations for the impact of sea level rise and other potential impacts of global warming.

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As Goes California

The truth behind the campaign for nuclear salvation

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

An initiative has been filed for next year's state ballot that seeks to pave the way for the construction of more nuclear power plants in the state.

Since 1976, California law has imposed a moratorium on siting any new reactors until a way has been found to permanently and safely store high-level radioactive waste. In the realm of nuclear power politics, this is perhaps the most obvious, common-sense law on the books anywhere in the country. Imagine what the citizens of Japan would give right about now to have had a law just like it, long before this summer's seismic portent of very bad things to come for their nation. The nuclear lobby has been unable to meet the simple terms of this law or find a way around it, so now they're hoping to vote it out of existence.

Here's what's heading for California: A massive ballot initiative campaign promising that nuclear power is the way and the light and the path to salvation from global

warming, so let's just get rid of that silly old law and its unpleasant reminder that we still don't know what to do with all that ultra-toxic waste product, a problem the feds and the nuclear industry have not been able to solve in fifty years of trying and fifty years of promising.

Global warming is a problem that needs to be solved. But building more nukes is not any part of the solution. Even if you think they are worth the

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2007 Chapter Elections

Elections for the Executive Committee of the Santa Lucia Chapter are coming up.

Yes, Sierra Clubber, you can run for a seat on the Executive Committee and have a say in decision-making in the Sierra Club. The ExCom is an adminis-

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photo/Sevin Walsh

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

Add your voice to protect the planet. Join the Sierra Club today.

Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!



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Outings, events, and more!

In Memoriam

Thanks to Bob and LaVerne McDonnell for their donation in memory of Mickey Sharpsteen.

Thanks to Ralph Tomlinson Jr., Elizabeth Johnson and Jim Patterson for their donations in memory of Lynn Christie.

Thanks to Christopher and Colleen Pflanz for their donation in memory of Bea Morrow.

Thanks to Don and Bethany Griffith for their donation in memory of Stanford Smalley.

General Meeting: September 28

How They Spent Their Summer Vacation

The students of the Empower Poly Coalition engineered our 2008 European Smart Energy Tour during



internships at the Chapter's office and worked on Chapter campaigns. Find out what they learned, and what you can learn from them!



Friday, Sept. 28, 7:00 p.m., SLO
St. Stephens Episcopal Church, 1334 Nipomo St.
at Pismo- Enter parking lot off Pismo.

About Those Layoffs...

A brave face is being put on the looming cuts of hundreds of jobs at the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant by PG&E, the county's largest employer. It is said the company will probably absorb those workers elsewhere, or will probably re-hire them in the future when business conditions change and it realizes it needs them after all, etc.

"Probably" is nice, but...

"Diablo Canyon had 1,700 employees in 1998 before a series of layoffs led to the present 1,400 level; now they propose a second round of layoffs to pare down to the 1,000 range," says David Lochbaum, a former nuclear engineer and one of the nation's top independent experts on nuclear power. "The more money handed to PG&E by the state, the more jobs are lost at Diablo Canyon. It would seem a wiser investment for Californians to be putting money into cleaner energy and more jobs."

Lochbaum's sentiments are backed up by a 2003 report by Environment California's Research and Policy Center, "Renewable Energy and Jobs: Employment Impacts of Developing Markets for Renewables in California." The report found that full realization of state renewable energy programs, such as California's goal of 20 percent renewable energy by 2017, would create an estimated 119,000 person-years of employment. Overseas renewable energy markets would create an estimated additional 9,700 new jobs for Californians by 2017, totaling 78,000 person-years of employment. At an average salary of \$40,000 per year, total job growth would have payroll benefits of \$8 billion.

"Renewable energy technologies have the potential to grow California's economy and provide thousands of high-tech, high-paying jobs," says Bernadette Del Chiaro, clean energy advocate for the Research and Policy Center. "With the right programs, California could develop a 'Green Energy Valley', similar to Silicon Valley, while bringing all the environmental benefits of clean, locally produced energy."

A report by the French research institute Detente compared the results of investments in wind energy and nuclear energy and found that the same level of investment generated 2.3 times more energy from wind, and five times more jobs.

Then there's solar. The manufacture of solar photovoltaics is expected to be a \$40 billion industry by 2025. "Solar power not only creates pollution-free and reliable electricity, it creates more jobs per unit of energy than all other technologies," says Del Chiaro. "By expanding our solar market, we could export solar panels like we export vegetables, computer programs and Hollywood movies."

So take heart, soon-to-be-former Diablo employees. The county backed

the wrong horse, but it's not too late to change. The job losses at our local nuclear dinosaur can be matched and surpassed by those to be had from an expansion of clean, renewable power.

One key is the requirement of a Renewable Portfolio Standard. The higher the target for renewables required as a percentage of the country's energy portfolio, the greater the stimulus to clean power development, and the greater the economic development and environmental benefits. This fall, the House and Senate will vote on the final version of an Energy Bill that -- thanks in large part to Sierra Club lobbying efforts -- will include a Renewable Electricity Standard that could finally allow us to join the worldwide boom in renewable energy markets. The other key is a "feed-in tariff" -- i.e. getting paid by the power company when your meter spins backwards. This has been the trigger for Germany's explosive solar energy industry. As Reuters reported last August, it gives "anyone who generates power from solar, wind or hydro a guaranteed payment from the local power company. The power firms are obliged to buy solar electricity for 49 cents per kilowatt hour -- or nearly four times market rates. This can work out at a better return than putting money in the bank."

That's how you go about expanding renewable energy. California can have a feed-in tariff, too, of course... just as soon as the utility lobbyists let us. There seems to be some delay, there. Can't imagine why.

Which brings us back to Diablo Canyon. The *L.A. Times* ran a strong series of editorials on nuclear power in July. If you missed them, go to: http://www.truthout.org/docs_2006/0724070.shtml and http://www.precaution.org/lib/07/prn_mirage_of_nukes.070730.htm

In a single paragraph, the *Times* skewered every "environmental" argument being put forward for building new nukes:

"The potential for wind power alone is nearly limitless and, according to a May report by research firm Standard & Poor's, it's cheaper to produce than nuclear power. Further, the amount of electricity that could be generated simply by making existing non-nuclear power plants more efficient is staggering. On average, coal plants operate at 30% efficiency worldwide, but newer plants operate at 46%. If the world average could be raised to 42%, it would save the same amount of carbon as building 800 nuclear plants."

And that, as they say, is pretty much that. But you might as well mention the jobs advantage over nuclear, too. The *Times* didn't, so we did. There is no "probably" in a clean energy economy.

SANTA LUCIAN

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COUNCIL OF CLUB LEADERS

The Executive Committee meets the third Friday of every month at 4:00 p.m. at the chapter office, located at 547-B Marsh St., San Luis Obispo. All members are welcome to attend.

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Whose Choice is it Anyway?

Sand-bagging local green power initiatives is strictly business for PG&E

from Chapter reports

The Pacific Gas and Electric Company, while publicly promoting its commitment to renewables and clean energy, has been working privately to undermine a state law that gives communities the option of getting their power from renewable energy sources.

The Community Choice Act, passed by the California legislature in 2002, introduced the concept of Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) to the state. Under CCA, cities and counties can pool their resources and shop for energy from suppliers other than PG&E or one of the other two large private utilities designated to serve their area, contract for a competitively priced energy package that protects their citizens from price hikes and is up to 100 percent derived from renewables, and establish their own municipal green utility. Municipalities have access to better financing than private utilities, and don't have to pay out stratospheric executive salaries or profits to shareholders.

The benefits of CCA to communities seeking to build models for energy use and local initiatives to curb greenhouse gas are obvious. Paul Fenn, author of California's Community Choice Act, speaking last October at the San Luis Obispo Smart Energy Solutions Summit, said CCA "would not just be good for the environment; it would probably be the best thing to happen to the environment in this community in the last hundred years." Tam Hunt of Santa Barbara's Community Environmental Council says CCA is "as close to a silver bullet as we have" for building demand

for alternative energy, establishing a market, and lowering prices.

The Sierra Club SF Bay Chapter approved a Community Choice Aggregation campaign plan in November 2004. The Sierra Club California/Nevada Regional Conservation Committee followed in June 2005 with unanimous approval. Multiple Chapters and Groups in California, including the Santa Lucia, Redwood, Los Padres and Tehipite Chapters, and Marin and North Alameda Groups, have active campaigns promoting CCA implementation plans. The Energy/Climate Change Committee of Sierra Club of California has had CCA as its #1 priority for the last three years.

For at least that long, PG&E, the



Our utility has an image problem.

state's largest, for-profit investor-owned utility, has publicly stated its support for Community Choice Aggregation, taking the position that while losing customers may look like a threat to their business model, they are content to continue making their profits from supplying the power lines and infrastructure that must still

be used to transmit electricity to and within communities. PG&E is one of the founding members of the local Strategic Energy Alliance for Change, chaired by the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club, which sponsored last October's energy summit here. Implementation of CCA in San Luis Obispo is the top priority of SEA Change and the Santa Lucia Chapter.

But now that cities and counties are starting to begin implementing CCA — San Francisco intends to use it to meet its newly established 51% renewable energy/efficiency standard — a large gap has opened between PG&E's words and deeds.

Specifically, PG&E is devoting significant resources to the defeat of Community Choice Aggregation implementation plans. The strategy appears to be a full-court press by PG&E against Community Choice.

In Fresno, PG&E's efforts have resulted in the pull-out of that city from the regional CCA implementation plan. (The other participants are determined to go forward.) On June 25, the San Joaquin Valley Power Authority filed a complaint against PG&E before the Public Utilities Commission of the State of California (CPUC) for unlawful interference in their CCA plan. San Joaquin requested that the court "immediately issue an Order to Show Cause requiring PG&E to appear before the Commission at the earliest possible opportunity to demonstrate why it should not be held to be in violation... as a result of activities before prospective CCA customers undertaken at the expense of PG&E's Ratepayers." The SJVPA asked the Commission to "issue an Expedited Order requiring PG&E to immediately cease and desist from the activities described

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for public consumption...

"Each community will need to decide on its own exactly what it is desirous of doing and whether CCA is the right approach for them to pursue. PG&E supports Community Choice Aggregation as an option; we're happy to work with communities that want to pursue it.... PG&E has long been a supporter of customer choice.



PG&E's David Rubin at the SLO Smart Energy Solutions Summit

We supported the deregulation that took place in the late 1990s, which provided an opportunity for customers to choose power suppliers other than PG&E, and we supported CCA for the same reason. It provides communities with an opportunity to self-select their power supply. But I'll go a little bit further than that as well. A number of people have asked me why PG&E supports energy efficiency, why PG&E supports solar, and the notion is that we promoting these types of ways that our

customers can manage their energy use is somehow in opposition to our business model. But it really is our business model to work with our customers, to help them manage their bills, and also manage the impacts of energy use on the environment."

- David Rubin, Director of Service Analysis, PG&E, Smart Energy Solutions Summit, San Luis Obispo, Oct. 10, 2006

Greenwashing: Don't You Believe It

By Ben Eckold, Empower Poly Coalition

If you're a casual reader of national media publications, whether the source is websites or magazines, then you are probably fairly aware of the recent buzz being generated about issues like sustainability and global warming. Even for us hardcore enviro-nerds, the constant onslaught of cookie-cutter articles and Leonardo DiCaprio lambasting can be, well, annoying. What's worse, in my opinion, is the deceptive marketing used primarily by oil companies and utilities to appear environmentally sensitive. This kind of deceptive marketing is called greenwashing.

Taken directly from the all-knowing Wikipedia, 'greenwash', a contraction of green and whitewash, is a pejorative term that environmentalists and other critics use to describe the activity of giving a positive public image to questionable environmental practices. The term "greenwashing" was originally confined to describing misleading instances of pseudo-environmental advertising. But lately, as corporations' efforts to portray themselves as environmentally virtuous have diversified and proliferated, so have the charges of greenwashing. The term is

now used to refer to a wider range of corporate activities, including, but not limited to, certain instances of environmental reporting, event sponsorship, the distribution of educational material, and the creation of "front groups." Whatever strategy is used, the main objective of greenwashing is to give consumers and policy makers the impression that company is taking the necessary steps to solve a problem while misdirect attention from its true ecological footprint.

This is an important line of thought. Are we accepting alternatives to fossil fuels that are viable... or easily promoted? Are huge energy subsidies in-

involved (look to the most recent Presidential Address and the reference to "alternatives")? Do these companies stand to gain regardless of whether their investments succeed or not? It will be fantastic if this all works out to be for the greater environmental good, but frankly those of us who are working to identify viable solutions to our energy and global warming problems don't have time to waste on inaccurate corporate media designed to mislead and misinform the public.

The problems with greenwashing: -Most obviously, greenwashing is misleading. It attempts to deceive us,

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Can Home Depot Clean Up Its Act?

By Teddy Llovet, Bulbs Across America

Earlier this year, the Home Depot in San Luis Obispo donated energy-saving light bulbs to my Bulbs Across America community service program so I could demonstrate various CFLs (compact fluorescent light bulbs) and their benefits. I was grateful for their donation and I viewed Home Depot as a "green" partner in conscious climate change.

In June, the county's Integrated Waste Management Authority (IWMA) implemented the "San Luis Obispo Take Back" program for dead household batteries, fluorescent tubes and compact fluorescent light bulbs. Retailers throughout SLO County who sell household batteries or fluorescent tubes and compact fluorescents will now take those items back from the public for free. . . except our local Home Depot! (The SLO Home Depot now has a new manager, who says he personally will take back fluorescents. Let's see if he joins the "take back" program. Go to www.iwma.com and click on "fluorescent tubes and bulbs" for a complete list of county stores participating in "Take Back" program.)

A former Home Depot employee told me "they do not have a hazardous waste box for compact fluorescent bulbs. Many fluorescent tubes and compact

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Los Osos
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“The idea is for Los Osos to be a showcase of appropriate technologies and green sewer design with water reclamation, without chemical treatment,” said Surfrider’s Mary Fullwood. “Los Osos in so many ways is a white canvas ready to be painted, in an area of sensitive habitats — some of the greatest beauty in the world, on a National Estuary now also afforded the highest level of preserve status as a State Marine

Reserve. Because of the environmental protections, we are looking at Los Osos as a showcase, a place where there is a ‘Sustainability Land Use Design Plan’ where cutting-edge new technologies are implemented and brought into mainstream culture through shifts in building codes, etc., and we then see this showcase ripple out further into the county, state, country, where appropriate.”



SLO GE Free 2007 Corn Survey

Genetically engineered Bt corn was developed by the Monsanto Corporation. It is created by inserting into the DNA of the corn a gene from a bacterium *Bacillus thuringiensis* which produces a toxin that kills the corn ear-worm. Bt corn is registered with the EPA as a pesticide, but approved by the Food and Drug Administration for human consumption and not required to be labeled. In April 2004, Vermont became the

first state to require manufacturers of genetically modified seeds to label and register their products. In June 2006, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously for a precautionary moratorium on the planting of genetically engineered crops in the county, based on the recommendations of the GE Subcommittee of its Public Health Commission. The Commission noted health risks, risk of con-

tamination, lack of long-term human health testing, and the lack of regulation and failure of the federal government to follow its own limited standards for GE crops. The report contrasted sharply with the near simultaneous report of the San Luis Obispo Health Commission, which supported the status quo: No moratorium, no monitoring, no labeling. The SLO County Board of Supervisors directed the county’s farmers to see

if they could find a way that genetically engineered and conventional and organic crops can coexist. From May through July, SLO GE Free conducted a survey of all the growers of sweet corn we could find in San Luis Obispo County. The results are reported in the grid below. SLO GE Free thanks all those who responded to the poll.

Growing & Selling

Are you growing genetically engineered (GMO) corn, also known as Bt corn or Roundup Ready Corn?

If you are growing genetically engineered corn, are you labeling your corn as genetically engineered/GMO?

Are you growing certified organic corn?

If you are growing certified organic corn, are you labelling your corn certified organic?

Do you sell your corn at retail?

Contamination Concerns

Are you aware that genetically engineered corn is being grown at two locations in San Luis Obispo County?

Are you concerned that genetically engineered corn being grown in the county might contaminate your field or seeds?

	LeFort's Organic Crops	Clark Valley Farming	Highland Ranch	Chapparal Gardens	Overly Growers	Blue Sky Gardens	Jack Gibson	Park Organics	Mike Broadhurst	Mt. Olive Farm
Are you growing genetically engineered (GMO) corn, also known as Bt corn or Roundup Ready Corn?	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
If you are growing genetically engineered corn, are you labeling your corn as genetically engineered/GMO?										
Are you growing certified organic corn?	no	yes	no	yes	no		no	no	no	yes
If you are growing certified organic corn, are you labelling your corn certified organic?		yes		yes				no		yes
Do you sell your corn at retail?	no longer growing corn	yes-farmers mkts. & CSA	no	yes-Avila farmers mkt.		corn maze for pumpkin season		yes - farmers mkt.	no longer growing corn	yes - farmers mkt. & our farm store
Are you aware that genetically engineered corn is being grown at two locations in San Luis Obispo County?		yes	no	no	no	no		yes	yes	no
Are you concerned that genetically engineered corn being grown in the county might contaminate your field or seeds?		yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	yes

Conclusion

Buyer beware. When you go to buy corn, ask what kind it is. Genetically engineered seed and crops are not allowed under the organic standard. No Certified Organic corn can be genetically engineered. When buying from other than a certified organic grower, ask whether the corn has been genetically engineered.

Notes

Cal Poly Crops Dept. did not respond to the survey. Dr. John Peterson, Department Head, said: “It is a horribly biased surey and I’m not in a postiong to respond to it.” Dr. Jeff Wong said that Cal Poly is growing genetically engineered Roundup Ready silage corn. The corn will be polinated before it is harvested. Proximity to Cal Poly’s sweet corn and potential for contamination is unknown.

Elections

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trative body; we need people who can take minutes, organize committees, inspire participation, provide publicity, and organize members. (You don’t have to do it all; one or two of those is great.)

Dr. John DiVencenzo did not respond to the survey. He has stated publicly that he grows genetically engineered Bt sweet corn and that he will begin labelling this year.

Jack Gibson did not respond to the survey, but has said he uses organic techniques and grows a conventional hybrid called Sweetie, which is very popular at the Cambria Farmers Market.

The majority of Blue Sky Gardens’ corn is fed to livestock after pumpkin season.

Hayashi & Sons did not respond to the survey or a phone call.

Conservationists are welcome, but the Chapter also needs volunteers who like to handle the needs common to all organizations. If you have some time and would like to help this great organization, please volunteer to serve on ExCom.

Each winning candidate will be elected to a three-year term. The Executive Committee meets once monthly at a time and place mutually agreed upon.

You may nominate yourself or suggest anyone else to any member of the committee. Submit nominations to Letty French, lmfrench@tcsn.net, 239-7338.

Alternatively, members may run by petition, signed by 25 members in good standing of the Chapter. The deadline for submission of petitions at the chapter office and close of nominations is 4 p.m. on Friday, September 21.

Home Depot

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fluorescent bulbs, either intact or broken, end up in the trash compactor at our local store, which is for non-toxic waste material only.” (It is illegal to throw any fluorescent lights, or other mercury-containing items, into the trash.) “In the garden department,” he said, “plants that die or don’t look healthy enough to sell are simply thrown away down the trash chute -- whole flats, not one or two plants -- along with the plastic pots which could be recycled.” The SLO store does recycle cardboard and paper, he assured me.

I am left wondering exactly what Home Depot’s corporate policies were. Our local Home Depot does not seem to adhere to earth-friendly practices in their recycling or hazardous waste disposal program. I decided my policy is not to patronize Home Depot in SLO and to let others know why. I will support my (smaller) local retail store and order what I need through them.

New Nukes

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risk in the name of fighting global warming — the waste, spills, quakes, meltdowns, proliferation, terrorist strikes, etc. — they are not worth the money and time, diverting both of those precious commodities from the energy solutions we should be spending them on. Building nuclear power plants to save us from global warming is like building a pier to save a drowning man. While the pier contractor was arguing his case, you'd be thinking that there must be a better way, a faster, cheaper way, to solve this urgent problem. And you'd be right. Hopefully, you'd quickly come to wonder why you're even listening to that guy.

Scientists say we have about ten years to pull back from the brink of global warming's worst impacts. That's ten years if we're lucky; ten years, starting now. The average time to get a nuclear

power plant designed, permitted, built and operational is...ten years. That's what you call a deal-breaker.

But even if it weren't, here are seven more, all of which can be found reported at length, with copious footnotes, in the GRACE Energy Initiative report "False Promises: Debunking Nuclear Industry Propaganda:"

- Global warming emissions resulting from electrical generation could be cut by 47 percent right now by implementing improvements in the efficiency of power generation.
- A dollar invested in efficiency displaces almost seven times as much carbon as a dollar invested in nuclear power.

Decentralized power plus energy efficiency cuts far more greenhouse gas emissions, much faster and cheaper, than nuclear power.

- Nuclear power is not a "zero emissions" energy source. The mining, milling, processing and transport of uranium is fossil-fuel intensive. The phenomenon of "peak oil" is about to meet "peak uranium." More nuke plants would mean more uranium mined; declining quality and scarcity means an intensification of effort and an even higher level of greenhouse gas emissions, equivalent to that of natural gas-fired power plants. The entire output of two coal

plants is required to power the uranium enrichment facility in Paducah, Kentucky.

- *Hey, renewables are great, except when the sun doesn't shine and the wind doesn't blow, right?* This is probably the single favorite line of the nuke promoters, after "nuclear power is a zero emissions energy source," and just as wrong. The International Energy Agency has studied this objection and answered it with the simple solution of mixing energy from different sources: On-site solar photovoltaics, plus wind farms, geothermal, etc. — different types of power integrated from different locations overcome any concerns about intermittency.

A Stupid, Stupid Plan

On March 11, 2007, State Assemblyman Chuck DeVore (R-Irvine) headlined his blog entry for the day: "You stupid, stupid man!"

Assemblyman DeVore went on to reveal that he was quoting one Roger Davenport, who had written an e-mail to the Assemblyman commenting on DeVore's authorship of a bill that would lift the moratorium on building nuclear power plants in California. The state legislature put the ban into effect in 1976, to remain in effect until such time as a method for the safe, permanent storage of nuclear waste has been found.

That time has not come, but DeVore wants to lift the ban anyway, reasoning that if we start building new nuclear plants now, they'll be ready to go on line in about ten years, and "an approved storage method ought to ready by then."



Orange County Register

"Seven billion dollars!" State Assemblyman Chuck DeVore (right).

with a straight face the Nuclear Energy Institute's estimate of an average production cost for nuclear energy of 1.72 cents per kilowatt hour, which omits the billions of dollars socked to rate-payers for radioactive waste disposal, plant construction, maintenance, decommissioning and dismantling. He then calculated nuclear's percentage of America's annual 3,881 billion kWh of

not theoretically — they are not required to pay. The cost of a full core meltdown at Three Mile Island could have been \$560 billion, according to the federal government's estimate. \$560 billion minus \$7 billion equals \$553 billion of subsidized liability. That's before adding the costs of research, waste storage, plant decommissioning, bond interest, etc.

The other subsidy that didn't register on DeVore: \$61 billion, in 1995 dollars, that was spent over five decades (plus another decade's worth since Zepezauer and Naiman wrote) on nuclear power research. All that taxpayer money poured into nukes created much of today's non-level energy playing field. Wind and solar power get one-tenth of the federal dollars and tax breaks lavished on coal, oil, gas and nukes. DeVore does not acknowledge, and does not seem to be aware of, the reason for subsidies and the effect they have on market pricing. He appears to believe that some natural law has pegged the prices of wind, solar and nuclear power at their present levels.

DeVore looks at the economics through the wrong end of the telescope and gets results that say "more nukes." After correcting his math, the real numbers say "it's the subsidies, stupid." (See Taking Issue, "Solar Power Captures Imagination, Not Money," page 8).

DeVore says he's doing this because nukes are the answer to global warming. (For the real answer, see "As Goes California," above). He concludes his fateful blog entry: "I think nuclear is the way to go — but what do I know, I'm just a 'stupid, stupid man'."

He is also the author of the grievously misnamed California Zero Carbon Dioxide Emission Electrical Generation Act, which will be coming back to life on your ballot next June under a similar name.

Let the voter beware.

- Hey, what about France? The pro-nukers always point proudly to our plucky Gallic friends, their oodles of reactors, their 70%+ dependency on nuclear power. Much less mentioned: The summer of 2006, when a record heat-wave wracked that country, forcing power reductions and reactor shut-downs across France. You can't operate your nuclear reactor when the cooling water is too warm. Global warming has made nuclear utilities, our alleged savior from global warming, the victim of irony: They will become increasingly unreliable as the water gets warmer.

- About 2,000 new reactors would have to be built worldwide to make a dent in carbon emissions. Do you have a trillion dollars you're not using? Do you know of a hundred-plus safe, permanent waste repository sites you haven't told the Department of Energy about?
- Nuclear energy received 60 percent of all federal energy R&D funding from 1948 to 1998. Renewables got 10 percent. Energy efficiency got 7 percent. Yes, there's something wrong with this picture. No, we shouldn't help perpetuate this formula.

California is the nuke lobby's Golden Domino, and if it falls prey to the hype that nuclear power must be part of our efforts to curb global warming, then we have turned out the beacon of a truly sustainable, renewable light that the nation and the world is watching.

We can defeat this ill-conceived initiative. We need to reach out to all of our friends, our families, our co-workers, our religious community; everyone has a stake in this, and if we share this information we will succeed.

We have started a listserv dedicated to defeating the initiative to allow the building of new nuclear power plants in California. This will be an informational listserv for the purpose of educating people about the issue and working to bring people and groups from all over California to work together to stop this initiative. Please go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/nonewnukesca> and sign on.

Rochelle Becker will receive the Sierra Club's Alliance Award on September 29 at the Club's annual awards banquet in San Francisco.

Another Good Argument

In a February blog entry, Assemblyman DeVore wrote that "Currently built nuclear power plants feature one-tenth the moving parts of 30-year-old designs and are 1,000 times less likely to fail (on top of an already very good safety record in the West)." But there are no nuclear plants being "currently built" in the U.S. All 106 existing reactors are those 30-year-old designs. Presumably, DeVore is referring to "next generation" plants, which are in the planning stage, a very long way from "built." No doubt, after the headline-making earthquake in Japan last July, Mr. DeVore is glad he wrote "in the West" last February

regarding the safety record of nuclear plants. But, in fact, he's wrong there, too. The safety record of U.S. plants is a history of lax and defective federal oversight and a long list of serious violations, accidents and near meltdowns, with major disasters narrowly averted by fortunate timing, dumb luck or the grace of God.

But the real point of interest here is that DeVore is making an excellent argument against the relicensing of existing nuclear power plants — all, by his admission, 30-year-old designs, with ten times the moving parts of the "next generation" and 1,000 times more likely to fail.

His bill died a quick death, but will try again next year in the form of a ballot initiative.

In an effort to disprove Davenport's assessment of his I.Q., DeVore devoted the rest of his lengthy blog entry to an attempt to disprove the assertion that nuclear power is heavily subsidized.

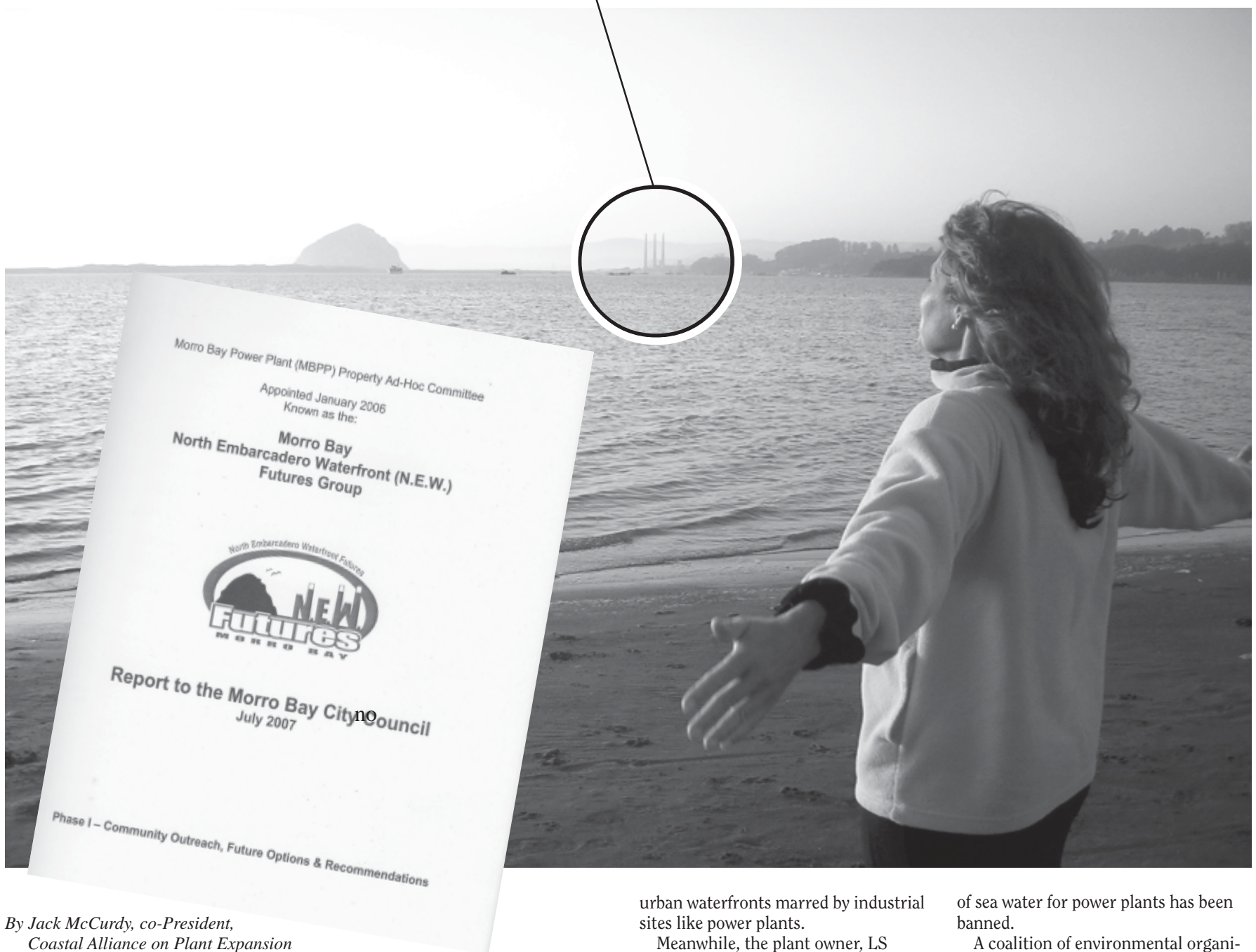
Citing a 1996 article entitled "Take the Rich Off Welfare" by Mark Zepezauer and Arthur Naiman, he quoted a total nuclear industry subsidy of \$7.1 billion a year. Considering this a staggering sum, he wrote "I do not for a moment believe this accusation, but, for the sake of argument, let's accept it." Even more acceptingly, DeVore cited

electricity production, and concluded that nuclear power produces "about \$53.5 billion worth of electricity. A \$7.1 billion subsidy, if true, is equal to about 13 percent of the value of nuclear power."

His biggest mistake: Going along with Zepezauer and Naiman in estimating the nuclear industry's insurance liability cap as worth only a \$3 billion portion of an alleged \$7.1 billion in total subsidies. But the insurance subsidy is not the cost of the theoretical \$3 billion in additional insurance coverage that nuclear utilities are not required to buy; it's the full cost of damages beyond their \$7 billion liability cap that — in reality,

The Dream Draws Near

Morro Bay power plant starts to edge out of the picture



By Jack McCurdy, co-President,
Coastal Alliance on Plant Expansion

The odds keep mounting against a new power plant being built in Morro Bay, or the existing one continuing to operate.

In July, the Second Circuit federal appellate court rejected an appeal by the power utilities of the court's landmark January decision that, in effect, prohibits the use of sea water for cooling power plants.

That means the U.S. Supreme Court is the last resort for opponents of the court's mandate that alternative cooling technologies, which do not use ocean, estuary, river or lake water and thereby harm the environment, are now required for both new and existing plants. Legal experts believe the chances are slim that the high court would accept an appeal.

A few days after the Second Circuit denied the appeal, a special citizens committee created by the Morro Bay City Council last year to study alternative uses of the power plant site recommended formation of a liaison committee "to look at the future of the site with the owners." In a key action, the Council, whose 3-2 majority has consistently supported a new plant, voted to implement the recommendation of the Morro Bay Power Plant Property Ad-Hoc Committee, aka the North Embarcadero Waterfront Futures Group.

It was a milestone in the process of exploring a new future for the plant, coming two years after numerous residents proposed examining other options for the plant site when Duke Energy sold the plant and exited California, sending a clear signal that the opportu-

nities such merchant generators saw in the deregulated California energy market were drying up.

Last year, when the City Council formed the New Futures Group, the possibility of the removal of the old plant and the 103-acre plant site being redeveloped generated many ideas for optional uses. They included some type of tourist-serving development, like a marine museum, an arts and culture mecca, a convention center, and possibly a hotel or other housing.

In its report to the Council, the New Futures Group recommended seeking additional ideas from the community, an investigation into costs and benefits of alternative uses of the site, consideration of the formation of a redevelopment agency, drawing up optional development plans and exploring grants and funding.

Whether the city, a redevelopment agency, or private developer would pursue redevelopment has not been addressed, but the report suggested consideration of retaining an outside firm to investigate these possibilities.

Passage of the \$5.4 billion parkland, open space and clean water bond issue on last November's ballot is a possible source of funding for redevelopment of old power plant sites along the coast. It contains funds to help restore

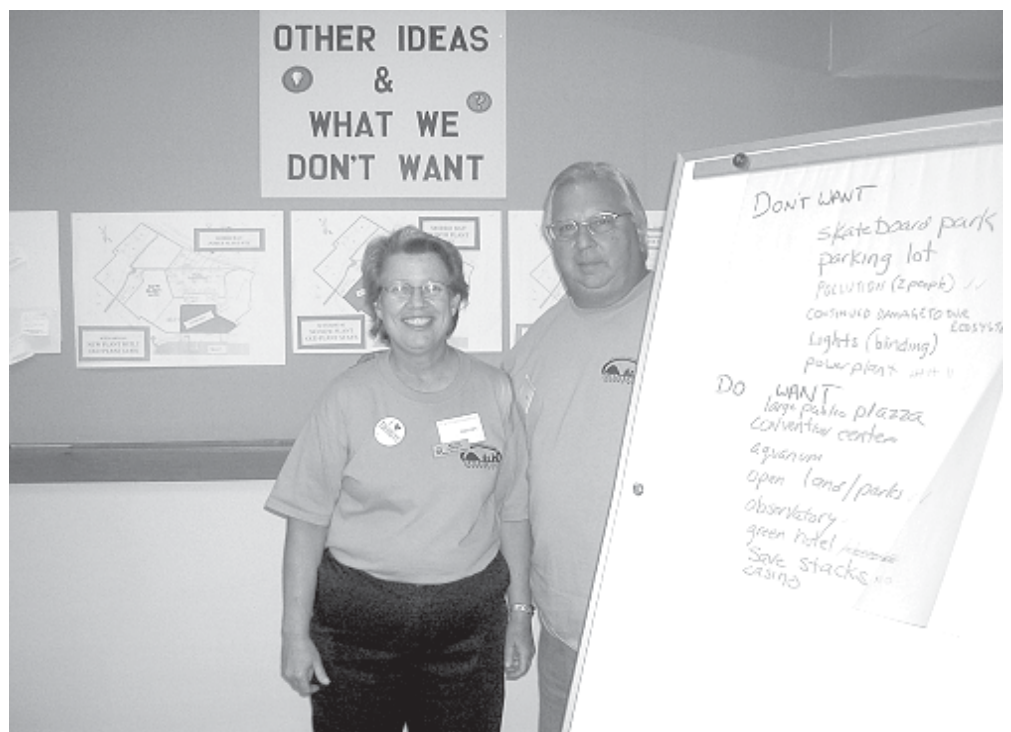
urban waterfronts marred by industrial sites like power plants.

Meanwhile, the plant owner, LS Power, now a subsidiary of Dynegy, Inc., refuses to say what its plans are for the Morro Bay plant, the same stance taken by Duke Energy. Therefore, its application for a federal permit to operate a new plant remains stalled before the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. That application, if pursued, would have to be considered by the board under the new requirements mandated by the Second Circuit, which means no further use of water from the Morro Bay National Estuary for cooling.

The Jan. 25 Second Circuit decision calls into question whether the current (extended) permit is legal, now that use

of sea water for power plants has been banned.

A coalition of environmental organizations, including the Sierra Club, is urging the State Water Resources Control Board to adopt a new state policy prohibiting or phasing out use of sea water for cooling by the 21 coastal plants in light of the Second Circuit decision. Although the decision may be appealed to the Supreme Court, the state water board could take the initiative and enact a state policy that goes beyond federal policy on power plant cooling, just as the California Air Resources Board has adopted air quality standards more stringent than the federal Clean Air Act requires.



Melody DeMeritt and John Meyers at the New Futures Group September 2006 community workshop in Morro Bay.

Thanks to Our Generous Donors!

The support of every one of our members is essential to the continuing success of our conservation initiatives.

Remember, every dollar that you contribute will be matched, through September 31!

- For an unrestricted donation, mail your check payable to Santa Lucia Chapter, Sierra Club.

- For a tax-deductible donation, make your check payable to Sierra Club Foundation - SLO Land Preservation Fund.

If you are not yet a member, clip out the membership form on page 2, mail it in, and receive your membership gift.



New membership forms go to the listed Boulder, Colorado, address. Send all donations to:

Sierra Club
P.O. Box 15755
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406



For one more month, a generous donor will match every contribution to the Santa Lucia Chapter, up to \$25,000.

Until October 1, every dollar you donate to the Chapter is worth double!

Letters

send to: sierraclub8@gmail.com, or P.O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406. Letters may be edited for space.

In its enthusiasm for all things “green,” *Santa Lucian* needs to be more discriminating among shades of green lest its praise become mere background noise.

Cases in point are two recent reports on Cal Poly’s “energy saving” “green energy” photovoltaic installation atop Engineering West, a building largely occupied by the College of Architecture. The first report was absolutely breathless, the second somewhat calmer, and both were misleading.

First off, Cal Poly didn’t “do” this solar project. The PV panels, which cover close to an acre of rooftop, were put there and are owned by a private for-profit company which will sell the power generated to the university for several decades at a premium “green energy” price. Cal Poly, by doing nothing other than paying for this expensive power, thus gets green energy bragging

rights.

But does this “green power” installation actually save any energy? One assumes it must, but assumptions without facts can lead one astray. In the truly green world, PV installations are preceded by measures to conserve as much electricity as possible before any panels are ordered and installed. There are many reasons for this, the most obvious being it’s not green to waste energy, whatever the source. Cal Poly skipped this important step. It did nothing to improve electric energy performance of Engineering West, an energy dinosaur, prior to going solar, so as a result this vast PV array provides only about a quarter of the building’s electricity! In the normal scheme of things, this omission would be economically and environmentally crazy, but under the public-private partnership that produced the Engineering West project, the par-

ties both get what they want — green publicity for the university, a steady long-term profit center for the installer — and green common sense becomes irrelevant to both.

The breathlessness with which *Santa Lucian* reports every minor alleged green eruption on campus lacks historical perspective. The state of California began commissioning deeply green buildings during the Jerry Brown administration in the 1970s — a long, long time ago, in other words. Over the years, the state has pioneered and regularized various green design strategies, while Cal Poly has not. In fact, I cannot think of a single building on campus that’s impressively green in design and function. Cal Poly has a long way to go just to catch up with the mainstream environmental building movement, let alone do anything innovative. In light of that, *Santa Lucian*’s indiscriminate cheerleading for every claimed green measure on campus seems a bit strained, and very misleading to readers, given the vast gap between what is on campus, and what could and should be on campus.

Santa Lucian would do more for the planet by keeping pressure on Cal Poly to do what it should do (big things!) instead of endlessly praising it for doing so little.

Richard Schmidt
San Luis Obispo

Spring 2008: European Smart Energy Study Tour

The Sierra Club Santa Lucia Chapter’s European Smart Energy Study Tour will bring together policymakers and business people on a trip through Northern Europe. Travelers will visit model cities that champion energy efficiency and conservation, smart growth, green building, innovative transportation, and utilization of renewables. The aim is to see “real time” application of cutting-edge technology and policy.

The programs, policies, and creative designs that are found in many European cities provide excellent examples to establish a distributed energy portfolio in San Luis Obispo County. Sierra Club’s Energy Tour takes a holistic approach to energy planning with the aim of inspiring comprehensive policy-making and implementation.

The trip will emphasize identifying new planning ideas and concepts in the early stages of our local energy policy formation and the development of an implementation plan for a regionally distributed energy economy. The cities chosen are all comparable -- in climate, population, geography, or all three -- to the Central Coast.

Northern Europe is at the forefront of building comprehensive energy policies



that encourage both an increase in energy performance standards and the promotion of ‘smart energy’ sources. The trip will include visits to England, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, and Sweden.

Empower Poly Coalition Vice Chair and Sierra Club summer intern Nancy Cole (left) goes over details of the Smart Energy Tour with Chapter Chair Karen Merriam and Treasurer Steven Marx.

The two-week trip will take place in the spring of 2008. We will return armed with the knowledge of how to make what they do there work here!

For more information, call (805) 543-8711.

The two articles by Cal Poly Industrial Technology student Steven Fishback and Business student Katie Wolfe that appeared under the heading “Cal Poly’s Power” in our July/August issue stated that “only one building has been equipped with solar panels, and only a few General Education classes have been devoted to sustainable teaching” in the three years since Cal Poly officially “acknowledged the importance of teaching and practicing sustainable resource use;” that the solar installation on the Engineering West building generated “quite a small percentage of Cal Poly’s total energy needs, but it is a step in the right direction;” and that the university is behind other campuses in the CSU system in the use of renewable energy.

Indiscriminate cheerleading would seem to be in the eye of the beholder. Energy efficiency and conservation are the top priorities of the Sierra Club’s Energy Resources policy, and that element was lacking in Cal Poly’s solarization of Engineering West. But as the campus’s first foray into renewable energy and step in the right direction, it earned a Pollution Reduction Award from the county Air Pollution Control District – not a noticeably breathless or indiscriminate regulatory agency. Green campus initiatives spearheaded by the Empower Poly Coalition, such as the Power House, and by the Renewable Energy Institute under the leadership of Margot McDonald are the most exciting things happening on campus. A local representative of Sierra Club California now sits on “Access to Excellence,” a CSU planning group formulating a ten-year plan for every campus in the system. Next summer’s UC/CSU Sustainability Conference holds much promise (www.sustainability.calpoly.edu)

Cal Poly having taken the first step, all this should greatly assist it in taking the additional steps necessary to help the campus get to where we all want it to be.



present

See globalization through the eyes of the women who live on its edge.



Steynberg Gallery
1531 Monterey SLO

7 p.m.
Saturday,
Sept. 22

Free admission

Maquilapolis: City of Factories documents the daily struggles of women factory workers in



Tijuana. Find out how a group of women bravely took a stand against the corporate giants who deny them their basic rights.

at the screening, sign up for a Sierra Club sponsored US-Mexico border tour, October 27-28, in San Diego, Tijuana and surrounding areas.

Taking Issue

problematic environmental coverage & commentary in our local press

"Solar Power Captures Imagination, Not Money," by Andrew Revkin and Matthew Wald, *New York Times*, July 16, 2007.

"Solar power is hot topic but far from mainstream," *The Tribune*, from the *New York Times*, July 16, 2007.

Summary: The *Tribune* reprinted on its front page an abridged version of a story on solar power from the *New York Times*. The *Tribune's* abridgement wound up telling a story that wasn't just shorter than the story the *Times* reporters wrote, but a different story. The *Tribune* leaves the impression that solar just isn't up to the challenge; the *Times* examines the reasons why that impression has come about.

Did the *Tribune* just print the first five paragraphs and trim the rest? Were they just editing for space?

Not quite. The *Tribune's* editors cut one particular sentence from those first five paragraphs. In the original story, the reporters write of solar power that "moving the technology from niche to mainstream... is unlikely without significant technological breakthroughs." The next sentence in the *Times*, cut from the *Trib*, is this:

And given the current state of research in private and government laboratories, that is not expected to happen any time soon.

The *Tribune's* version then ends with a government estimate of the miniscule percentage of total U.S. energy supply that solar is expected to provide in the future, and ends with the ominous statistics on new coal-burning power plants.

The omitted sentence is a springboard and introduction to the rest of the *Times* story, which is about the reasons why solar power has not yet broken through to the mainstream:

Research on solar power and methods for storing intermittent energy has long received less spending...than energy options with more political support.

for decades, conventional nuclear power and nuclear fusion received dominant shares of government energy-research money.

"Coal and nuclear count their lobbying budgets in the tens of millions," says Rhone Resch, president of the Solar Energy Industries Association. "We count ours in the tens of thousands."

Government spending on energy research has long been shaped by political constituencies. Nuclear power, for example, has enjoyed consistent support from the Senate Energy committee no matter which party is in power -- in large part because Senators Jeff Bingaman and Pete V. Domenici, the Democratic chairman and the ranking Republican, are both from New Mexico, home to Los Alamos National Laboratory and a branch of the Sandia National Laboratories.

In the current fiscal year, the Energy Department plans to spend \$159 million on solar research and development. It will spend nearly double, \$303 million, on nuclear energy research, and nearly triple, \$427 million, on coal, as well as \$167 million on other fossil fuel research and development.



After encouraging 346 research groups last year to seek grants for surmounting hurdles to harnessing solar power, the Energy Department this year ended up awarding \$22.7 million over three years to 27 projects -- hardly the stuff of an energy revolution, several scientists said.

"There is plenty of intellectual firepower in the U.S.," said Prashant V. Kamat, an expert in the chemistry of solar cells at the University of Notre Dame, who has some Energy Department financing. "But there is limited encouragement to take up the challenge."

Upshot: The *Times* reporters began their story by noting that "the trade association for the nuclear power industry" conducted a poll and found an overwhelming public preference for solar power as society's primary future energy source. They went on to show that solar is still only a small part of the energy mix because of politics and pork, not technology. By omitting the point of the story -- that a renewable energy future is a matter of political will and reorienting misplaced funding priorities -- the *Tribune's* media managers changed the story into the spin of a competing energy industry, designed to obscure this fundamental fact. It became a story that could have been written by a trade association instead of the story that was printed in the *New York Times*.

"Dalidio asks state to identify opponents," by Bob Cuddy, *The Tribune*, July 28, 2007

"Early victory for Measure J opponents," by Bob Cuddy, *The Tribune*, July 28, 2007

Summary: Seemingly inexplicably, Ernie Dalidio has revived a year-old complaint against his opponents in the 2006 ballot initiative fight over the development of his ranch. Even more mysteriously, his complaint is against opponents in an election that he won. The mystery cleared up only if one went on to read the less prominently featured local lead story that day, which is not mentioned in the first story. No mystery as to which side of the issue our daily paper of record is on.

The items of interest here: Timing and placement.

4-inch headline, front page.
1-inch headline, Local section.

The re-airing of charges over political donations that were aired throughout the Measure J campaign, eight months after the election, is considered front-page news. On the same day, the courtroom victory of Measure J's opponents, now allowed to introduce as evidence in their case Dalidio's ballot campaign and documents describing how the San Luis Obispo City Council came to approve his previous development plan – a legal victory, not just an attempt to influence public opinion with a press release and a filed complaint — is only local news.

"Flak" was originally an acronym derived from the German term for an anti-aircraft barrage in which cannons fire exploding shells into the air, hoping enemy planes will be flying near one when it explodes. In current military parlance, flak is what jets release when pursued by a missile in order to confuse the missile's guidance system and throw it off course. The case against Measure J centers on its attempt to transform the authority of elected decision makers into ministerial (automatic) decisions, the damage it does to the County's General Plan, and its attempt to trump state law. Dalidio's representatives failed in their attempt to narrow the evidence in the case, and then, on the same day, trained their flak cannons on the court of public opinion.



Dalidio also alleges that the Downtown Association, through its advisory committee to the City Council, illegally used public funds to influence voters in the Measure J election...

Three days later, the *Tribune* noted the perplexity of the City Attorney and

Downtown Association General Manager Deborah Cash: "City Attorney Jonathan Lowell said he was puzzled by Dalidio's complaint because the association had stopped taking sides after Lowell advised them not to last year [after the previous Dalidio ballot measure election]. Cash also was perplexed. 'I'm in the dark about this,' she said. 'To me, it doesn't make sense.'"

Upshot: Both stories should have been front-page news. They were, in fact, two halves of the same story, and should have run that way, not as separate, unconnected stories, with the more important one clearly indicated as less important. The *Tribune's* managers, who could not credibly omit altogether the news of the courtroom win of Measure J's opponents, instead submerged it and made it as difficult as possible for the reader to make the connection between a courtroom victory and an opponent's p.r. retaliation for it.



"Nuclear plants are rarely damaged by earthquakes," Associated Press, *The Tribune*, July 18, 2007.

"Nuclear power plant mishap is a warning," from the *Orlando Sentinel*, *The Tribune*, August 4, 2007.

Summary: There's no cause for alarm: The earthquake-caused fire and radioactive releases at Japan's Kashiwazaki-Kariwa nuclear plant should be seen as reflecting inherent problems with Japanese nuclear power plants, not with nuclear power or inevitable human fallibility.

The operator acknowledged afterward that the earthquake was stronger than the plant was built to withstand. In the United States, by contrast, regulators require plants to be designed so that their reactors shut down safely if struck by the strongest quake considered possible in their region.

This is a non-sequiter; the Japanese reactors were also designed to shut down, and did so. That's not the problem. As the *New York Times* reported, the Tokyo Electric Company admitted that "the force of the shaking caused by the earthquake had exceeded the design limits of the reactors,

suggesting that the plant's builders had underestimated the strength of possible earthquakes in the region." The builders of the Diablo Canyon plant did not know of the existence of the Hosgri fault. When it was discovered, they retrofitted the plant, pronounced it capable of withstanding an earthquake of 7.5 magnitude, and proclaimed that the strongest magnitude earthquake that could strike the plant is a 7.2.

Generally, plants adhering to [Japanese] government guidelines...are considered safe in quakes up to 7.75 magnitude.

Those guidelines were not put in place until 1995. Japan's leading seismologist, Katsuhiko Shibashi, warns that the 6.8 magnitude shock exceeded the design capabilities of the Kashiwazaki plant

by a factor of three. Japan's earthquake experts assess the probability of an 8.0 quake within the next 30 years to be 87 percent.

Upshot: The Kashiwazaki plant essentially caught a 90-pound fish on a 30-pound test line. We must now hope that U.S. engineers and geologists somehow know more -- or are better guessers -- than their Japanese colleagues.

PG&E*continued from page 3*

in this complaint and from other similar activities that violate the Commission's general standard of conduct relating to PG&E's marketing and related activities to prospective CCA customers; and issue an order establishing specific standards of conduct applicable to PG&E's marketing and related activities to prospective CCA customers."

In its August 16 issue, *Platt's Electric Power Daily* reported that, in San Francisco, PG&E has admitted to circulating to community groups "a position statement pointing out what it views as flaws in the city's [CCA] plan." *Platt's* noted that San Francisco supervisor Ross Mirkarimi has said that "PG&E lobbies local officials, from the mayor to the board of supervisors, in an effort to discredit the CCA plan" and that this is the utility's "normal course of business."

"I think there is also this expectation that those neighborhood community groups [that have benefitted from PG&E grants and donations] show a loyalty to PG&E that also potentially translates into not aligning with any effort that could suggest public power, or could suggest community choice aggregation," Mirkarimi said.

It would be a mistake to think that PG&E is trying to bump off Community Choice Aggregation because it is run by people who are clueless about the im-

Under CCA, decisions about rates, generating resources and public benefit programs will be made locally and be accountable to local customers.

- Calif. Local Government Commission

pacts of global warming and the need to get away from non-renewable power and switch to as much clean, alternative energy generation as possible, as fast as possible. They know that. But PG&E is a corporate organism with a defense mechanism and hard-wired survival instinct, much like a mountain lion chasing a competitor out of its territory. (The primary difference: A mountain lion won't put on a public face of cooperation with its competitors.) PG&E must make a profit for its investors. It cannot, by law, allow any other consid-



Last January, while hosting a solar panel inauguration event at a San Francisco LGBT Center, PG&E executives were met by protesters who "felt that PG&E's attempt to celebrate solar and the concept of 'Green' smelled disingenuous, given that the company actually owns 0% solar, only 2% wind, and has long lobbied to cut the amount of solar energy it has to buy," as reported by Aliza Wasserman of the San Francisco Bay Area Independent Media Center.

eration to interfere with that mandate. And it makes its profits by generating enormous amounts of energy at single locations and transmitting that energy over long distances. As Rebecca Solnit put it in "Reasons Not to Glow" in the July/August 2007 issue of *Orion* magazine: "Nuclear power plants, like coal-burning power plants [and all other power plants], are about retaining the big infrastructure of centralized power production and, often, the habits of obscene consumption that rely on big power."

PG&E's current policy – strenuously trying to stamp out CCA while publicly stating that it wishes to help communities with CCA implementation — is the kind of strategy that fails when exposed to sunlight. Better if PG&E tried to do with CCA what the movie

studios did after they gave up trying to kill off television and VCRs: Find a way to make money off it. They could transform their business and marketing model, get into the distributed/on-site energy generation manufacturing & financing business in a big(ger) way, and start helping communities choose local green power.

This time, for real.

Greenwashing*continued from page 3*

making us think that a company with an awful environmental track record actually has a great one. Not all environmental advertising is dishonest, of course. But any advertising legitimately labeled as "greenwashing" is dishonest, and that's a problem.

-Greenwashing could result in consumer and regulator complacency. If one corporation in a particular industry gets away with greenwashing, other corporations will follow suit, thereby creating an industry-wide illusion of environmental sustainability, rather than sustainability itself. This creation of the illusion of environmental sustainability could have dire social consequences as consumers will continue to use products and support companies that further environmental degradation and reduce the quality of living conditions for future generations.

- Greenwashing may also engender cynicism. If consumers come to expect self-congratulatory ads from even the most environmentally backward corporations, this could render consumers skeptical of even sincere portrayals of legitimate corporate environmental successes. Thus well-meaning companies, companies committed to responsible behavior with regard to the environment, have every reason to be critical of companies that greenwash.

Two of the largest oil producers in the world, Shell and BP, are quickly emerging as leaders in the world of renewable energy. Shell is one of the top five wind power generators in the US, while BP plans to produce 550 megawatts of wind energy in 2007, one-sixth of the total projected US wind energy output, according to the Boston Globe. I'm wondering if the big oil companies have suddenly found eco-religion, or if the recent developments are simply an attempt to "greenwash" away the climate-spoiling sins of their products. On one hand, I feel that any effort to develop renewables should be embraced, regardless of who is footing the bill, or what their motives may be. On the other hand, the planned 550 megawatts worth of BP installations seem like a drop in the barrel for a company netting \$20 billion in profits every year (in Alaska alone the company plans to invest \$5 billion in the next five years on oil exploration and production). And while their planned installations may account for one-sixth of all wind energy production in the U.S., they will amount to less than 1% of worldwide wind energy production in 2007.

At least they are changing, right? If the oil companies have any vision in their long-term business plans, they will have to diversify, and have new products ready when the oil begins to dry up. 'Big Oil' will be forced go green if it's the only alternative to 'No Oil.' Some minor comfort is gained from the knowledge that one day petroleum won't be the cheapest energy. Supply and demand will dictate what product the big energy corporations sell, hopefully at an honest price. I just hope that by then it isn't already too late...

California Coastal Cleanup Day

Saturday, September 15, 2007
9 a.m.-noon



Local sponsorship provided by: The Tribune, Southern California Gas Company, SLO Journal, City of Pismo Beach, New Times, Chevron, HopeDance, Sierra Club - Santa Lucia Chapter, First Bank of San Luis Obispo, Morro Bay Estuary Program, City of Morro Bay, Information Press, SignCraft, Coast National Bank, Central Coast Surfboards, Womens' Press, and Moondogies.

Eco Slo

the Environmental Center
of San Luis Obispo

For more information about how you can help, including beach clean up sites, visit www.ecoslo.org, or call us at (805) 544-1777.

We Love What We've Done with the Place

Last July, as the Sierra Club acquired a wonderful new office space, we also "acquired" some art work. Our new office used to be part of the Johnson Art Gallery and the walls were crying for some color and interest. Chapter Chair Karen Merriam and longtime friend Evy Justesen talked about the space and came up with a solution: Let's hang some paintings on the walls.

Evy has been part of a group of about nine painters who have been meeting bi-monthly for over five years with Mary Renzi as their mentor. They call themselves the San Luis Artists' Collective -- when they need a label -- and are Marcy Adams, Judy Carroll, Julie Frankel, Mary Kay Ghiglia, Sue



McKey, Noel Middlecamp, Jeanette Wolff, and Liz Yost.

There will be a rotation of artists and work to keep the walls

interesting and varied. All the work is for sale, and the artists will donate 25% of the sale to the Santa Lucia Chapter.

It is a wonderfully symbiotic relationship!



"Dolly Llama,"
by Evy Justesen

Classifieds

June issue ad deadline is **Sept. 14.**
 To acquire a rate sheet or submit
 your ad and payment, contact:
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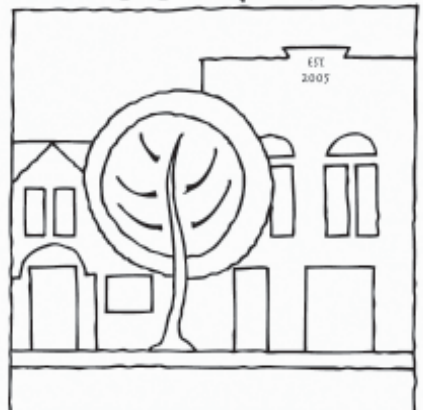
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ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER OF SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

Local Government Meetings

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

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Send request to:
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SEARCHING FOR CONNECTION
An Exploration of Trauma, Culture, and Hope
 by Karen Merriam

126-page hardcover
 ISBN 0-9777334-3-2
 \$22.95 plus \$4.95 S/H

Truthsayer Press
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 San Luis Obispo, CA 93406
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"Searching for Connection offers hope, inspiration, and meaning to those who have been traumatized, to family and friends of those touched by trauma, and to those who have dedicated their lives to helping the victimized and traumatized. Most importantly, it illustrates that one can endure with dignity and survive with meaning, even in the face of terrible experiences."

—Beverly Engel, M.F.T., psychotherapist and author of Breaking the Cycle of Abuse

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Karen Merriam's *Searching for Connection: An Exploration of Trauma, Culture, and Hope* delves into the heart of traumatic experience, where important connections to safety, hope, and strength are severed. Even in the darkness of traumatic events, however, personal and collective resources can be discovered and brought to bear to help oneself and others endure. Through a series of personal stories and case studies, Merriam develops a paradigm of traumatic experience that reveals the common factors that allow individuals to survive and to overcome nightmare experiences. Amazingly, survivors often discover within themselves untapped resources they have never known before.

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"AWAKENING THE DREAMER" Symposium

September 29th, 1-5pm, Refreshments and discussion, San Luis Obispo Library. \$10 Donation requested

If you are ready to move your concern for the world's people and wildlife to inspired action and to be linked to a growing movement of "blessed unrest" that will change the dream of our industrial culture, we invite you to join us. For more information, please go to www.pachamama.org or call 237-1135.

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.

SEPT. 2, 0930, Sun., WOODLANDS. A bicycle tour of the "instant city" with many stops. Meet at junction of Willow Rd. & Albert Way. Must wear helmet. Call 929-3647 or <bdenneen@kcbx.net> a few days before to confirm and for details.

Wed, September, 5, 12, 18, 26, 5:30 p.m. Informal Hikes around SLO. Typically 2 hours or so. Details call 473-3694 or e-mail Gary Felsman for location.

Sat., Sept. 8th, 8 a.m. Tanbark Trail, Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park. This is an all-day trek to Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park Partington Cove Area. The hike itself is 7 - 8 miles with 1800-foot elevation gain to old Tin House overlooking the Big Sur Coast. Lots of redwoods. A running creek. Return trip will either be back down the way we came or down the fire road, then a short walk back along Highway 1. Hopefully it will be clear. Meet at the Washburn Day Use area, about 2 miles north of Cambria on Highway 1. It is about 1 1/2 hours to the trailhead. Call Gary at 473-3694.

Sat., Sept. 15th, 0930 POINT SAL CLEAN-UP. Part of CA. Coastal Clean-up. Details just before event as access in transition. Call 929-3647 or <bdenneen@kcbx.net> a few days before to confirm and for details.

Sept 15-17 - Big Sur Backcountry Trail Work Trip. Help clear the logs off of the North Coast Ridge Trail, above

Cook Springs. Amazing views of the San Antonio Watershed, Salinas Valley, and Lake San Antonio. A short hike to Gas Can/Tin Can Camp (informal name) allows for fantastic views of the Ocean, valleys below, and Junipero Serra. Meet at the entrance to Cone Peak Road at 8 a.m. on Saturday. This will be a 3-day trip, covering about 3 miles of moderate Ventana Wilderness Trails. Water and picnic table at Cook Springs, no water at trailhead. This is a moderately difficult trip, with opportunity to participate in or observe traditional logging techniques for clearing trails, as well as brushing and treadwork. No experience necessary! Participants should be able to backpack four miles and come prepared for at least an overnight stay. Minor amounts of poison oak, which should be avoidable with care. Tools provided upon request! Participants should bring gloves, eye protection, long sleeve shirt, long pants, boots, bug net, water, and first aid kit at a minimum. The main draw of all our trips is the Saturday night potluck appetizers, so feel free to bring an appetizer of your choice to share with your friends! Leader David Knapp. For more information, directions, and any other questions, email daveknapp@ventanawild.org (Sponsored By Ventana Wilderness Alliance)

Sun., September 16, CANOE/KAYAK MORRO BAY

Here is a chance to see a bit of the back bay. We will either paddle Chorro Creek or Shark Inlet. Bring your boat and equipment, PFDs, binoculars and a picnic lunch that you can eat in your boat. Lowtide 6:39 a.m. 1.98'. Put in: 10a.m. Hightide 1:55p.m. 4.14'. Launch at Morro Bay State Park Marina. Joe Dickerson 693-9534.

Sat., Sept. 22, 8:00 a.m., Vicente Flat Hike: Join the leader on this moderate 10.2 mile hike from Highway 1 to beautiful Vicente Flat campground. There is about 1700 ft of elevation gain. The hike will provide great views of the Big Sur coast and you will get to have lunch among the redwoods. This will be an all-day event. Bring water, lunch, and dress for the weather. There is a possibility of ticks and poison oak. We will meet at the Washburn day use area in Cambria and carpool. It is approximately a 50-minute drive from Cambria. There will be a refueling stop in Cambria after the hike for those who are interested. For info, contact Chuck at 441-7597.

Sun., Sept. 23, 0930, BIKE TOUR OF NIPOMO, Meet at Library with bike & helmet. An easy ride on bikeways to Nipomo Native Garden, Park, Creek-side Preserve, Dana Adobe (if time & interest). Call 929-3647 or <bdenneen@kcbx.net> a few days before to confirm and for details.

Annual Creek Day - Volunteers Needed! Saturday, September 29,

2007 9am-12pm, Mission Plaza. San Luis Obispo and Additional Countywide Sites. Remove litter from local creeks and make a big difference in just 3 hours. Join hundreds of other volunteers for some fresh air and exercise, and help take out the trash on Creek Day. Dress in long sleeves and closed-toed shoes. Gloves and bags provided. Visit www.creekday.org or call 544-9096 for more information. Sponsored by the Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County and the City of San Luis Obispo.

Sun., Sept. 30, 0930, NIPOMO CREEKSIDE PRESERVE. Meet behind Adobe Plaza in old town Nipomo. My easiest hike, see new trail to Nipomo Creek. We'll probably go to Dana Adobe as well. Call 929-3647 or <bdenneen@kcbx.net> a few days before to confirm and for details.

SEPT 2007 ANNUAL MCAS PELAGIC TRIP : Sun., Sept. 30, from 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Out of Morro Bay, heading out toward the Santa Lucia Banks, but going wherever the birds are...all within San Luis Obispo County waters. Expect a good variety of sea mammals Boat: The 55 ft "Fiesta". We used this boat last year and although it is smaller than we have had in the past, it is also substantially faster. (See www.morrobaysportfishing.com for photo.) There will be NO "hot galley" this year since it wasn't used last year. Leaders: Tom Edell and Brad Schram, both expert and experienced pelagic trip leaders. Cost: \$75 per person. Sign up early. Last year we filled up by August. For more information and an Application Form: contact Maggie Smith at

Whales, Pinnipeds & Wildflowers: Channel Islands National Park



September 15-19

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

Depart from Santa Barbara. Prices include assigned bunk, All meals, snacks, beverages, & services of a ranger/naturalist who will travel with us to help identify, seals & sea lions, birds & wildlife, plants & flowers, whales & other creatures of the sea.



Photo by Joaquin Palting

milleniummaggs@charter.net or call her at 805-710-4356.

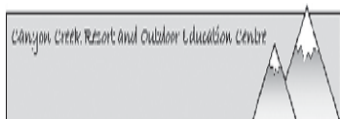
Sat.-Mon., Oct 6-7 Service Trip in the El Paso Wilderness (South of Ridgecrest, CA). Help install tortoise ramps in two guzzlers. Desert tortoise can become trapped in these watering spots; ramps will enable them to drink and to get out safely. BLM will supply ramps and tools. Two and a half mile hike on Saturday to work site, carrying tools. Visit to interesting archeological site along the way. Sunday, shorter hike to work site, visit to historic area afterwards. BLM Wilderness Coordinator Marty Dickes will direct the installation efforts. Car camp Friday and Saturday nights. Happy hour and potluck dinner Saturday night. Ldr: Kate Allen 661-944-4056, kjallen@qnet.com

We'll also see remnants of the rich culture of the Chumash people who lived on these islands for thousands of years.

Each island is unique & offers its own special charm. Activities include hiking, kayaking, snorkeling, beachcombing, or just relaxing at sea. In spring the islands are ablaze with colorful wildflowers. In summer, the enticing, pristine waters of the Marine Sanctuary, churning with colorful fish and sea lions, will delight snorkelers and swimmers.

These cruises are fundraisers to benefit Sierra Club political programs in California. To make a reservation, send \$100 check payable to Sierra Club to leader Joan Jones Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, 91732. (626-443-0706; jholtzhln@aol.com).

Website: www.truthaquatics.com/hiking.htm



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