




September 2010
Volume 47 No. 8


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BIONEERS
Revolution from the Heart of Science

OCTOBER 15, 16, 17, 2010
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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

the November 2 election

Clean Energy Under Fire

NO on Prop. 23

Proposition 23 would suspend California's clean energy and clean air law, AB 32. Two Texas oil companies are spending millions to push this deceptive ballot proposition that would continue our addiction to oil and kill off California's clean energy and air pollution reduction standards.

Four years ago, with support from businesses, environmental and health organizations, California passed AB 32, a law that sets new clean energy and pollution control standards in California, holding polluters accountable and requiring them to reduce air pollution that threatens human health and contributes to global climate change. This law has launched our state to the forefront of the clean technology industry, sparking innovation and clean energy businesses that are creating hundreds of thousands of new clean tech jobs.

Proposition 23 will kill those jobs, innovation, and billions of dollars of investment in California.

Clean energy businesses represent one of the few bright spots in our economy. Since 2005, California green jobs have grown ten times faster than the statewide average. 500,000 employees work in clean technology or green jobs in California. The number of California green businesses has increased 45% and green jobs expanded by 36% from 1995 to 2008. From 2007 to 2008, when state employment fell 1%, green jobs continued to grow 5%.

Proposition 23 will put California at a significant disadvantage in the race to be the nation's clean energy leader. Since the passage of AB 32, California's clean technology sector received \$9 billion in cumulative venture capital investment, including \$2.1 billion of investment capital in 2009 -- 60 percent of the total for North America.

If AB 32 is repealed, it will send a chilling message to investors. According to the State Legislative Analyst,



the suspension of AB 32 could "dampen additional investments in clean energy technologies or in so-called 'green jobs' by private firms, thereby resulting in less economic activity than would otherwise be the case." The Clean Economy Network confirmed that prognosis in a report which found that Prop. 23 will result in billions of dollars in lost private investment and jeopardize hundreds of thousands of jobs and thousands of clean energy businesses. The report also found that Texas-based oil companies Tesoro and Valero, the companies bankrolling Prop 23, have spirited more than \$9 billion in profits out of California and into Texas over the past five years.



Mayor of SLO: Jan Marx

Jan Marx has served on the San Luis Obispo City Council, the Planning Commission and the County Parks and Recreation Commission. She is well known for her concerns for environmental protection. In her previous stint on the Council, Marx spearheaded the City's successful Recycled Water program. She is keen

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Mayor of Morro Bay: Betty Winholtz

Councilwoman Winholtz has the vision thing. Her city's wildlife habitat, waterfowl, water conservation policies, bike lanes, and urban forest will be safe in her hands, and since those things are all closely related to the reasons why people want to visit Morro Bay and spend money, the economy will likewise benefit from her election to mayor. She played a major role in bucking bureaucratic inertia in order to pull the Morro Bay-Cayucos wastewater treatment plant project to the brink of sustainability. To make sure that crucial project happens the right way, residents need to make sure she's the mayor. With Winholtz holding the gavel, all residents will be heard. Help make it happen at www.winholtzformayor.org/.

YES on Prop. 21

California's 278 state parks have long been an integral public asset that residents and visitors alike enjoyed, and it is imperative we maintain these priceless assets for our children and future generations. With our state parks facing an insurmountable funding crisis and irreparable damage, We must provide our parks with sustainable and reliable funding. Proposition 21, the State Parks and Wildlife Conservation Trust Fund Act of 2010, would provide a dedicated funding stream for state parks through an \$18 annual State Park Access Pass vehicle registration surcharge and provide vehicles free admission to all state parks.

Sierra Club California joins a coalition including the State Parks Foundation, The Trust for Public Land, Save the Redwoods League, Defenders of Wildlife, Surfrider Foundation, State Park Rangers Association, Audubon California, State Lifeguard Association and the Ocean Conservancy in supporting Proposition 21 and the adequate funds it will finally provide to protect state parks and conserve wildlife. For more information, visit www.yesforstateparks.com/.

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

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Enclose check and mail to: **F94Q W 2500 1**
 Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

General Meeting

Wednesday, September 22, 7 p.m.

“The Greatest Mountaineer Ever?”



from Glen Dawson collection

To equal the climbing prowess of John Muir, there's only one contender: Norman Clyde. His superhuman feats in completing first ascents of 130 mountain peaks in America—usually with a ninety-pound pack and iron skillet—will never be equaled. Clyde's curmudgeonly style only added to his legend. Biographer Bob Pavlik presents a slide program with rare photos, stories, and reminiscences of his friends and fellow climbers. Meeting begins with conservation news & letter writing.

Steinberg Gallery, 1531 Monterey St., SLO
 Info: 772-1875.

The View from the Chair

by Melody DeMeritt
 Chapter Chair

Several changes have happened in the last six months to encourage me about the health and strength of the Santa Lucia Chapter.

First, many of you generously responded when we called or wrote to ask for financial help last spring. Thank you so much! Even though many of us feel the pinch of recession, including the National Sierra Club, you came through for your local Chapter.

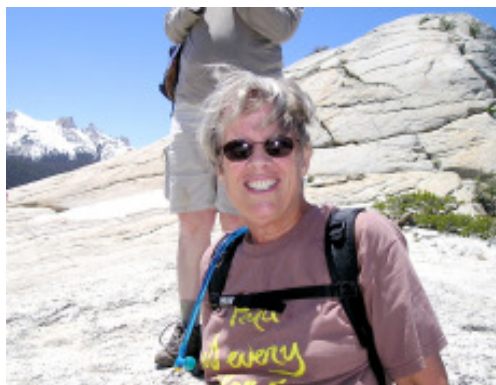
Second, our Executive Committee, the volunteer leaders of the Chapter, reduced the average age of its members by several years when we welcomed three new members, all under 30. And they are already very busy:

* Jono Kinkade will attend this fall's Council of Club Leaders meeting at Sierra Club headquarters in San Francisco.

* Megan Worthington has brought in resources from the California Conservation Corps, including volunteers who made our move to the new headquarters easy.

* Liz Tracy has brought her expertise with event management to organizing our fall wine & cheese & chocolate tasting, with silent auction -- location and date TBA.

Third, the aforementioned move to our new headquarters at 974 Santa Rosa Street. By doing this, we



reduced our monthly rent by nearly 60%. This belt-tightening was mandatory to meet the funding reductions meted out to chapters by National Sierra Club. When those funds were reduced by more than 80%, we quickly set about reducing our overhead.

Of course, I have a wish list for the next six months. I wish for great attendance and big fun at our fall fundraiser. I wish for ongoing, sustainable financial support through regular donations from our members. I wish for great voter turnout at all the elections this season.

Sierra Club is the only environmental organization that is national and local at the same time. We have the power of a national organization. But even more importantly, we have the wisdom and street smarts of local people who know what happens in their areas. So here's my final wish: join your local Chapter, attend our bi-monthly events, and support the work that we can all achieve together.

SANTA LUCIAN

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Santa Lucia Chapter

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 TREASURER

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Megan Worthington
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Jono Kinkade
 MEMBER

Liz Tracy
 MEMBER

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The Executive Committee meets the third Friday of every month at 2:00 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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Outings, events, and more!

A Loss for Morro Bay

I knew Ray McKelligott as a friend and fellow activist in Morro Bay for many years. We lost Ray in July, at age 85.

Ray and his wife Marion moved to Morro Bay 25 years ago. As lovers of nature, they chose a place to settle that overlooked the Chorro Valley. Here they could listen to coyote, hawks, owls, and songbirds while receiving visits from squirrels, raccoons, and opossums.

Ray knew that he had found a community and environment worth fighting for. At the county level, he represented a statewide mobile homeowners association. He spent hours listening to homeowners from dozens of parks in San Luis County and testified before the Board of Supervisors on their behalf.

At the municipal level, he was tireless. This is a short list of just some of his activities:

- He worked with the City of Morro Bay on its mobile home rent control ordinance, still in place today.

- He worked with the Citizens Action League.

- He became a founder and then president of Advocates for a Better Community.

- He attended many hearings as a member of the Coastal Alliance on Plant Expansion.

- He was one of the directors of SAVE THE PARK.

Ray was a man of courage focused on social justice and conservation. We will miss him.

- Melody DeMeritt

Endorsements*continued from page 1*

on seeing to it that the Council puts more energy and resources into implementing that agreement, and has pledged to see that the Ahwahnee Principles are embedded in city planning elements, along with green house gas emission targets, requiring all future development to take climate impacts into account at the planning stage. Marx is also an advocate for alternative transportation—by bus, van, bike and foot—with enhanced infrastructure support. Go to janmarx.com and lend her your support.

**Morro Bay City Council:
Jack Smith**smithformbcouncil.ning.com**SLO City Council:****Dan Carpenter**[facebook: Dan Carpenter for](https://www.facebook.com/DanCarpenterforSLOCityCouncil)[SLO City Council](http://www.slocitycouncil.com)**Kathy Smith**twitter.com/kathy4council**Andrew Carter**twitter.com/slocarter**Cambria CSD:****Harry Farmer****Valerie Bentz**www.valerie4ccsd.org**SLO City Measure H: No**

position. We encourage the City to stake out the dimensions of the proposed Prado Road extension/widening on site prior to the election so that residents can see exactly what is proposed on the ground.

NO on Prop. 26

Companies that pollute or harm the public's health should be required to pay to cover the damage they do. Prop 26 was placed on the ballot by oil, tobacco, and alcohol companies that want the taxpayers to foot the bill instead. Chevron, ExxonMobil, and Phillip Morris provided virtually all the funding to get Prop 26 on the ballot. It will require a 2/3 vote to implement payments by these companies for harm done to the environment or public health, making these payments much harder to enact and leaving taxpayers to foot the bill. Sierra Club California joins the League of Women Voters, American Lung Association, California Nurses Association, Peace Officers Research Association of California, California Federation of Teachers, Consumer Federation of California and local governments in opposing Prop 26.

National:

- Barbara Boxer - Senate
- Lois Capps - Congress

State:

- Hilda Zacarias - Assembly, 33rd District
- Gavin Newsom - Lieutenant Governor
- Kamala Harris - Attorney General
- Dave Jones - Insurance Commissioner
- Debra Bowen - Secretary of State
- Bill Lockyer - State Treasurer
- John Chiang - State Controller

Katcho's Way

In his bid for a seat on the State Assembly, the drumbeat of Katcho Achadjian's campaign has been about the central myth of his political career: that he is a "moderate." In his twelve years on the Board of Supervisors, Achadjian allegedly has been the swing vote, the pragmatic centrist, the regular guy who is just there to do the right thing and achieve the greatest good for the greatest number.

It is an image belied by reality and his record. Only two examples need be cited. For the most graphic audiovisual representation of the kind of politician Achadjian is, anyone who has not yet already done so should go to YouTube, type in "kookoo for katcho stuff," and watch a three-minute video record of Achadjian's combination of a vindictive temper tantrum and an attempt to exculpate himself for his Nov. 2007 vote for the notorious Cayucos Viewshed Ordinance.

One year after that memorable moment, as the Three Amigos — the pro-development County troika of Achadjian/Ovitt/Lenthall — were coming to the end of their trail, leaving behind them the wreckage of bad land use policies and wink-&-nod deals for developers, the three men capped their record with a career worst: the approval of the Santa Margarita Ranch development — a massive project that, if built, will obliterate the largest privately owned oak savannah left in the state and would mean, as *The Tribune* noted, "growth so dramatic that the current Santa Margarita, and the quiet lives [residents] live there, would be little

more than a memory."

This time, the vote was so egregious there could not even be an attempt at an excuse. Having obviously agreed on the strategy beforehand, Achadjian joined his two colleagues in near total silence throughout four hearings that went right up to Christmas Eve and the end of the board majority's term, barely speaking except to vote "no" on any motion to take the time to actually review the project's massive impacts or try to work out a compromise, and to vote "yes" when it came time to deliver the goods for his friends: a permit for a development project that violated planning standards and the County's General Plan six ways from Sunday.

The late, great Anne McMahon, former district aide to Supervisor Jim Patterson, described the results in an e-mail she sent out the day after the vote:

Supervisors Ovitt, Lenthall and Achadjian - the triumvirate which has presided over so many really awful decisions that I have lost count - sunk to a new, pathetic and shameful low Tuesday evening, voting in favor of the Santa Margarita Ranch developers.

It was almost surreal. After hours of public testimony barely scratching the surface of all that is wrong with the proposed development, it took them almost no time at all to give their buddies three thumbs up, ignoring the preponderance of evidence against the project, discounting and insulting the

credibility of their own hard-working staff, snubbing their own Planning Commission and dozens of individuals, and rebuffing strong opposition from the League of Women Voters, the county Water Resources Advisory Committee, Caltrans, the Department of Fish and Game, the Upper Salinas-Las Tablas Resource Conservation District (representing *real* ranchers), the county Air Pollution Control District, the Sierra Club, ECOSLO, North County Watch, and more.

Why was I expecting anything different? Why did I let myself believe that maybe - maybe just this once - one of them might do the right thing?

Maybe because this time the evidence was overwhelming, clear, and decisive. And this time there was no outpouring from the Farm Bureau or Cattlemen's Association mobilizing their members to turn out for the meeting. This time it was so clear that these developers had overreached, blinded by their own arrogance, ambition and confidence that they had the three votes they needed to prevail. How could any reasonable person possibly justify supporting this madness?

Supervisors Patterson and Gibson did their very best to bring some sanity and credibility to the process, both clearly articulating why they could not support the proposal. Sadly, it

was the triumvirate of arrogance, ignorance, and sheer absurdity that prevailed.

The hope that "one of them might do the right thing" was primarily directed at Achadjian. Many of those who testified at those hearings implored him to remember that brief, long-ago day — literally from another century — when he really was an occasional swing vote on the board. At the final hearing, the Sierra Club asked that he "acknowledge that we have rules for a reason, that there are some things worth protecting, and there is a value and an imperative beyond the calculation of private profit."

He didn't.

We bring you this memory-jogger as a public service, so that you will remember to do three things: 1) make sure you are registered to vote, 2) volunteer with the Hilda Zacarias for State Assembly campaign, and 3) vote for Hilda Zacarias and tell all your friends to do likewise.

This will be well worth your time not just because Katcho Achadjian spreading his brand of crony politics around the state capitol -- enriching his friends and impoverishing the environment on a statewide scale -- is a distressing thought, but because in her record of public service, Hilda Zacarias is everything Katcho Achadjian is not.

Go to <http://hildazacarias.com/> to find out what you can do to help send two people where they belong: Ms. Zacarias to Sacramento, and Mr. Achadjian back to his gas stations in Arroyo Grande.



It blots out the sun Voters should never forget Katcho's vote on Santa Margarita Ranch.

Farmers Markets Say No to GMOs

By Jesse Arnold

For the past few years, SLO GE-Free has been educating consumers about the farmers markets that allow the sale of Monsanto's genetically engineered Bt corn. That work continues.

The good news is that you will not find Monsanto's Bt corn at the majority of farmers markets in our country. We think it is time to thank

those markets and encourage them to see that Bt corn doesn't come to their market in the future.

So a thank-you to the following farmers markets that have stated their opposition to genetically engineered produce: Cayucos, Avila Beach, Grover Beach, Shell Beach, and the Morro Bay Saturday markets.

The Nipomo Sunday market does not have Bt corn. The manager of the Paso Robles Friday and Saturday

markets has said they don't have Bt corn "so far" and if they did, "We would require labeling."

Even if a small market doesn't have a policy against genetically engineered produce, Bt corn is not likely to be sold at a small market because the big growers who use the Monsanto Bt technology would not make enough money to justify selling at a small market.

Each of us can exercise our con-

sumer power and spend our money at markets that do not support the Monsanto Corporation. And we can thank the managers and vendors who don't.

We believe this information is correct, but it's subject to change and we make no guarantee as to its accuracy. We urge consumers to ask questions and be informed.

Call Jesse Arnold at 927-3096 if you have questions.

Bag It!

By Lesli Daniel
Environmental Advocacy Intern
Sierra Club California

Californians use approximately 19 billion single use plastic bags each year. However, less than 5% of all single use plastic bags are recycled. Instead, many of these plastic bags become litter in our oceans and our communities. The California legislature is poised to pass a bill banning single-use plastic bags. But there is stiff opposition from the American Chemistry Council and other industry groups.

There have been several attempts to pass single-use bag bans since 2006, but this year we have a viable bill in AB 1998, The Single-Use Bag Reduction Act, authored by Assembly-



member Julia Brownley (D-Santa Monica).

AB 1998 would:

we just need that extra push from you to get it through the Senate.

Single-use bags have several environmental impacts:

1. Ban single-use plastic bags at grocery stores, retail pharmacies and convenience stores.
2. Offer recycled-content paper bags for a minimum fee of \$0.05/bag.
3. Require the sale of reusable bags.
4. Does not apply to bags for bulk items (e.g. produce) or raw meat.

This bill has the backing of grocers, labor, environmental groups, and ocean protection groups. The Governor has said he'll sign it. Now

namics of single-use plastic bags have made them a huge source of litter. They are the one of the most common waste products collected during coastal cleanups.

- Hidden costs. You might think that single-use bags are free, but is estimated that it costs \$18-\$30/year on your grocery bill. Then there are the millions of taxpayer dollars spent on litter abatement and recycling.

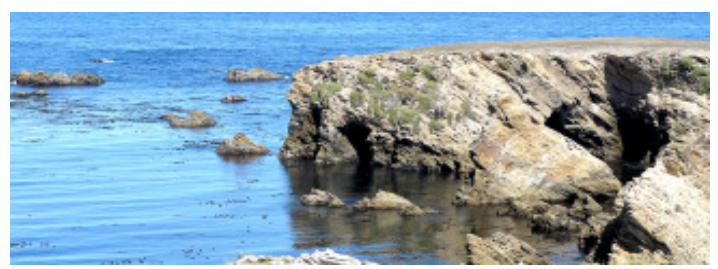
- Harm to wildlife. Plastic bags (which resemble jelly fish in the water) or pieces of plastic bags can easily be mistaken for food or prey by seabirds, marine mammals, fish, and sea turtles. Littered plastic items harm hundreds of wildlife species, some of which are threatened or endangered species.

A 1997 study found that at least 267 species have been affected by ingestion of or entanglement in marine debris worldwide. Currently, 86% of all sea turtle species, 44% of all seabird species, and 43% of all marine mammal species, have had reported problems of entanglement or ingestion of marine debris. Plastic bags were the most common plastic item found in the digestive tract of 408 leatherback sea turtles according to a 2009 study that reviewed historical necropsies.

Recycling isn't the answer. The California Legislature enacted a law in 2006 that required grocery stores and pharmacies to recycle single-use bags, but that program is capturing less than 5% of bags.

To learn more, visit HealTheBay.org.

- Ocean pollution: An estimated 60-80% of marine debris is from plastics, and 90% of the floating debris is plastic. Eliminating single-use plastic bags is one way we can stop growing the North Pacific Trash Gyre, which is now estimated to be twice the size of Texas.
- Litter. The aerody-



EMPLOYMENT ENJOYMENT

The closer I get to work
the more beautiful the drive becomes.
As I wind through the park
the scenery changes nearly every bend.
The mountaintop road reveals a panoramic view of bay and sea
then slopes down to pass through large groves of fragrant eucalyptus
while the next turn levels out and takes me down a corridor of bright dunes
and flowery hillside.

I feel like I'm driving into summertime
as if my own private beach awaited with strong sunshine and heady sea air
at the end of this narrow thistle-lined lane
overflowing with cheery wild buckwheat and lemony monkey flower.

Nearly there I take the sharp corner by the picturesque cove and inspect how
busy the beach is with visitors climbing on the rocks.

The closer I get to work
the more often I see bunnies up ahead as they veer into the road and dart
into the bushes
and the more the air smells like sage
and the more relaxed I become
as I open the gate to Point Buchon Trail
where I'm blessed to work as a gatekeeper
blessed to watch birds, and clouds, and whales.

- Kalila Volkov

A NIGHT FOR THE BUFFALO

FEATURING MUSIC BY

GOOD SHIELD

PHOENIX AFTERBUFFALO

STORYTELLING AND VIDEO BY MIKE MEASE -
CO-FOUNDER OF BUFFALO FIELD CAMPAIGN

5:30 p.m. Wednesday October 6
Ludwick Community Center, 864 Santa Rosa St., SLO

SIERRA CLUB SANTA LUCIA CHAPTER

info: 805-602-6411
megan.worthington@ccc.ca.gov

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WWW.BUFFALOFIELDCAMPAIGN.ORG



Risk and reward SLO climate change panel deliberates.

Brace for Impact

Climate change is here. Now what do we do?

The organizers of the July 14 SLO Climate Change Adaptation Workshop were blunt: climate change adaptation measures are like the air bag in your car. We should work to curb emissions to halt climate change, but we are going to need that

air bag because a crash is coming.

The Local Government Commission has selected one inland and one coastal region in California in which to focus its study of local effects of climate change and potential adaptation strategies. (Go to www.lgc.org/adaptation/slo).

San Luis Obispo is the California coastal county that will serve as the

laboratory in the effort to comply with the state law mandating reduction of carbon emissions. The July 14 LGC workshop at the SLO Embassy Suites was the third and final meeting presenting information and getting feedback from stakeholders, elected officials, city managers and the general public. The resulting priorities and strategies will help local governments prepare for the impacts of climate change in a way that provides benefits across multiple ecosystems, and includes consider-

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Here Comes the Neighborhood

Pismo Beach City Council denies development, saves canyon, open space

Item 7B on the July 6 agenda of the Pismo Beach City Council was the end of a long road, and a happy ending to a distressing story, for many residents of the Pismo Heights planning area (see "A Very Poor Plan for Pismo," June 2009), as well as a textbook example of "how to save your neighborhood" that could serve as a primer for all county residents.

For several years, the residents faced and fought the prospect of their canyon views – designated Open Space in the city's General Plan – being turned into the "Canyon Oaks" housing development in a swap the city was backing for a developer's land on Price Canyon Road – 24 not-too-desirable lots that have access and traffic issues, which the owner was very willing to trade for lush canyon lots a short distance away.

Neighbors organized and turned out in droves at every step of the process to oppose the project. Originally denied, the project was resuscitated by the Planning Commission and passed along to the City Council, trailing a list of the zoning code changes and General Plan and Local Coastal Plan amendments necessary to do the deed.

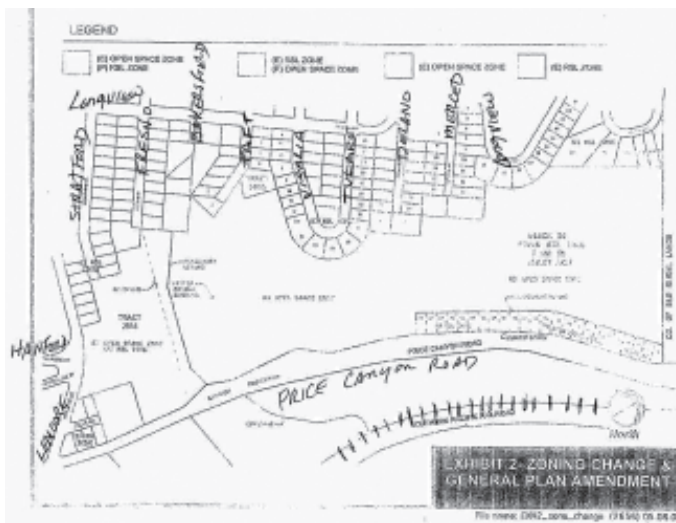
As California Coastal Commission staff pointed out in a letter to the City the week before the city council hearing, the canyon is a protected resource area, impacts to a live oak woodland would likely be significant, and the plan called for building on slopes in excess of a 30 percent grade — all in violation of the city's Local Coastal Plan.

City staff at the July 6 hearing immediately moved to contradict and disagree with Coastal Commission staff, as did the developer and his representative. As the Sierra Club pointed out: "This project needs to be approved by the Coastal Commission. And they clearly don't agree with your staff's or the applicant's assessment of the project's impacts to coastal resources."

At the end of long hearing and a parade of speakers opposed to the project along with a smattering of those affirming that it would mean more property taxes for the city's treasury, the Council voted 3-1 to deny the development permit. Councilman Ted Ehrling refused to rezone open space for residential development, and expressed public safety concerns, saying he had seen a fire "sweep up a box canyon in three seconds." Ed Waage said "open space should stay open space." Mayor Pro Tem Shelly Higginbotham was "really uncomfortable" with the increased traffic on a road that is already



Not this canyon Pismo Heights residents organized to save their canyon from development.



"horrible," and said of open space, "once it's gone, it's gone, and we'll never get it back." Kris Vardas was the lone dissenting vote.

Good job, Pismo City Council. And great job, Pismo Heights neighbors, who set up a website (welovepismo.beach.org), took pictures of the developer's property and the canyon land he wanted to swap it for, and put them side by side, showing to devastating effect the contrast with the developer's three scrubby roadside acres and the six acres of beautiful canyon property he coveted.

The residents made sure to keep KSBY and *The Tribune* updated at every turn as the issue wound its way through the process.

Let's hope this was a prelude of things to come for the Price Canyon plan, a massive proposed commercial/residential development on unincorporated land north of the city involv-

ing 634 houses, 200 hotel rooms, conference center, vineyards, etc., much of it on steep slopes.

With the Canyon Oaks project, a neighborhood and a canyon were at stake. The impacts of the Price Canyon project -- and Pismo's sprawling march toward the city of SLO -- would be felt countywide.



No deal Would-be Canyon Oaks developers (in front of monitor) got a decision they didn't want at the standing room only July 6 meeting of the Pismo Beach City Council.

Chapter Wins Coastal Commission Appeal

Public access restored for Harmony Coast project

On August 11, after four years of unproductive negotiations with development permit applicants by California Coastal Commission staff, the Commission finally heard the Santa Lucia Chapter's 2006 appeal of an egregiously wrong-headed decision by the County Board of Supervisors. Coastal Commissioners voted overwhelmingly to uphold our appeal.

Under the Coastal Act, new development requires a dedication of public access. This is not a point of debate, though the applicants gave it a good try at the Coastal Commission's August hearing in SLO.

Santa Lucia Chapter Director Andrew Christie pointed out that, in 2006, the SLO County Board of Supervisors, at the behest of Supervisor Katcho Achadjian, ignored Local Coastal Plan and Coastal Act policies requiring public access for the

Harmony Coast project, actually reducing promised access by deleting a condition from the applicant's permit that would have required an Offer To Dedicate (OTD) public access along the shore, 25 feet above the mean high tide line.

The property is on China Harbor, used by kayakers, surfers and fishers, and adjacent to a state park. The Harmony Coast is a vital link in the California Coastal Trail. We argued that the project should be conditioned to require a bluff top trail alignment for the Coastal Trail, as even a 25-foot OTD would not provide adequate public access at high tide if located on the beach portion of the property.

As fate would have it, the very same Supervisor Achadjian who pushed hard for the bad Board decision in 2006 is a sitting Coastal Commis-



Wrong again Coastal Commissioner Katcho Achadjian's opposition to public access to the coast put him on the losing end of a 10-1 vote.

sioner in 2010. Saying, "in order not to disappoint Mr. Christie, I won't be supporting the motion" to uphold the appeal and reinstate public access as a condition of the permit, Katcho insisted that the development was not new development, hence applicants were not obligated to honor their permit condition requiring them to

provide public access to the coast.

Katcho immediately got to see what his fellow Commissioners thought of his interpretation of coastal law, from the perspective of the losing end of a 10 to 1 vote.

The Sierra Club corrected SLO County's four-year-old Katcho-sized mistake, and our coast won.

Bioneers is Here

OCTOBER 15, 16, 17, 2010
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA

SLO will partner with world's premier environmental conference

Founded in 1990, Bioneers/Collective Heritage Institute is a nonprofit organization that promotes practical environmental solutions and innovative social strategies for restoring the Earth and its communities.

They do this via a radio and book series (you are probably familiar with Bioneers if you listen to KCBX with any regularity), a youth initiative, and, for the last twenty years, one of the world's largest annual environmental conferences, held in Marin County and augmented by satellite conferences across North America. The Bioneers Conference brings together the most brilliant, compassionate thinkers, innovators, eco-warriors, artists and scientists engaged in the complex mission of saving the planet.

The "Beaming Bioneers" program allows select communities to broadcast the morning plenary sessions in a simulcast. About a dozen cities around the world participate. In the afternoon, these "Beaming" sites will then hold their own regionally relevant breakout sessions, where topics of local interest will be discussed.

This year, the Central Coast joins the roster of Beaming Bioneers conference partners, with the satellite conference site for our region located at Cal Poly.

"Our inaugural conference will take place at the Spanos Theater in the Performing Arts Center at Cal Poly over the weekend of October 15th," said Stacey Hunt of Ecologistics, host of the 2010 Central Coast Bioneers Conference. "We are committed to capturing the sense of excitement, hope, connection and inspiration that is so much a part of the Bioneers conference in Marin. We invite everyone here to be part of a weekend that will change your life."

That's not hype. This event can be the single most inspiring, engaging, rejuvenating experience of your year. Because Bioneers is constantly cruising for exceptional talent on the cutting edge, speakers routinely show up at Bioneers just before they break out onto the national/international stage. Attendees heard Wangari Maathai the year before she won the Nobel Prize for environmental protection, Van Jones two years before President Obama appointed him as his green jobs czar, Paul Stamets just before he was awarded international patents for micro-fungi that eat oil. The list goes on.

Space is limited. For information or to register, go to www.ecologistics.org/centralcoastbioneers/, or call 548-0597. Get ready to be inspired, fascinated, galvanized, and best of all, recharged.

CELEBRATE ∞ COLLABORATE ∞ CONNECT

BIONEERS
Revolution from the Heart of Nature

Join us for the Inaugural
Central Coast BIONEERS Conference
October 15, 16 and 17, 2010
Performing Arts Center Complex
Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

- Panels and workshops of local interest with leading speakers in their fields
- Live morning satellite feed from the main stage at the International Bioneers Conference held in Marin
- Moving Image Festival featuring films showcasing environmental and social issues
- Youth programs
- Local, organic, sustainably grown gourmet food - vegan entrees available
- Music
- Marketplace

For up to date information on speakers and workshops and to register, go to www.ecologistics.org/centralcoastbioneers

Space is limited

www.ecologistics.org/centralcoastbioneers
805.548.0597


Central Coast Bioneers a program of Ecologistics, Inc. a California 501(c)(3) corporation

ECOLOGISTICS

THE BIONEERS CONFERENCE 2010
Breakthrough Solutions for People and Planet

Carrizo's Solar Alternatives

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA RENEWABLE MASTER PLAN



Westlands Water District


Putting California At The Forefront Of Global Clean Energy Production & Economic Opportunity

- Approximately 30,000 acres of disturbed and contiguous farmland undergoing study as the Westlands Clean Renewable Energy Zone (CREZ) by the Renewable Transmission Initiative (RETI)
- Successful master planning sets the stage for California to meet its near and long term goals for the RPS, while providing certainty to future renewable development
- The broader Westlands area has an estimated potential of accommodating up to 5 GWs or more of renewable power by 2020
- Proximity to existing substations and transmission lines. The Westlands study area is strategically placed near a future planned foundation line corridor that will be designed to connect the different renewable zones in California.
- The Central California Renewable Master Plan is a more environmentally superior alternative to permit for large scale solar than constructing in protected lands in remote desert areas
- Allows large scale solar energy to be produced within California

Solution: The Central California Renewable Master Plan


Westlands Water District (Westlands) covers over 600,000 acres of farmland in western Fresno and Kings Counties. Due to salinity contamination issues, a portion of this disturbed land has been set aside for retirement and will be taken out of production under an agreement between Westlands and the US Department of Interior. This situation positions the Central California Renewable Master Plan for permitting success, solving permitting challenges that are hindering most California projects.

The Central California Renewable Master Plan includes approximately 30,000 acres of disturbed land for renewable development. This acreage is within close proximity to existing transmission corridors and substations, as well as future planned foundation line corridors. The master planning of thousands of acres for utility scale solar generation is a relatively new concept for energy developers but the environmental community and California policymakers are starting to see its benefits. This type of planning better aligns the generation and transmission planning for renewables, resulting in more efficiently developed projects with a better chance for long-term success.




➤ **Gamering Major Environmental Support**

The Central California Renewable Master Plan is undergoing study as a CREZ in the RETI Phase 2A updates. Westlands and the Anthem Group are working with environmental groups to identify the Westlands study area as a critical renewable energy zone in order to meet California's renewable goals.



➤ **A Solution For Today... And Tomorrow**

The far-reaching benefits of this project enables California to set up a process for planning transmission system upgrades and new corridors that will create billions in economic development for California. The template laid out in the Central California Renewable Master Plan provides regulatory and permitting confidence for developers and utilities to orderly construct transmission and generation over a 10-year horizon to meet the 33% by 2020 RPS goal.



➤ **Linking California To A Greener Future And Economic Vitality**

Led by the Anthem Group, the Central California Renewable Master Plan represents the most viable opportunity for California to advance its renewable energy goals. Over a 20-year horizon the potential estimates of total project investment for the 5 GW solar plant could reach well over \$10 billion and will provide California with a much-needed economic boost.

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA RENEWABLE MASTER PLAN

Please contact the Anthem Group at (916) 709-9289, dan.anthem@gmail.com or PO Box 582844 Elk Grove, CA 95758-0051 for questions or inquiries on the this project.

Do we oppose what we support, or vice versa?

A few months ago, an interesting dialog took place on *The Tribune's* website. Readers were writing in to comment on an article the paper had just printed about the solar power plants proposed for the Carrizo Plain.

One poster claimed that the Sierra Club supports the projects, even though they would do great damage to the fragile environment of the Carrizo. *Booo, Sierra Club!*

A second poster responded that the first poster must not have been paying attention to the recent county hearings on the Conservation and Open Space Element if he thought the Sierra Club supports the projects, because the Sierra Club obviously opposes the projects, despite the clean, renewable energy they would bring. *Booo, Sierra Club!*

There will always be those whose interests are served by scribbling a cartoon on a wall and writing our name under it. We don't think we can clear up confusion for people for whom the creation of confusion is the goal, but we know there are some honestly confused folks out there, so let's clear this up: 1) We support the review of environmentally preferable alternatives to these projects that would meet the project goals, and 2) there is no publicly available plan for a solar power project on the Carrizo Plain. (These words are being written in mid August, and there likely will be at least one such project, with a second close behind it, by the time you read this – "project" being defined as a formal description written by consultants hired by an applicant, attached to an Environmental Impact Report, submitted to the County for permit review and available to the public for comment. Meanwhile, there is no project to support or oppose.)

Some of our colleagues, as long-time proponents of solar power, are unhappy with us for not "supporting" these projects. But how do you support a project when you haven't

Here are two Above and below are two potential alternatives to solar power plants on the Carrizo Plain.

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Sierra Club Priority: Distributed Generation for Renewable Energy

To increase the production of renewable energy, Sierra Club California supports an emphasis on a high distributed generation (DG) approach, primarily through the use of photovoltaic (PV) solar as a priority for the rapid increase in the percentage of renewable sources of electricity towards reaching and then going beyond California's 2020 objective of 33%. We will promote California installing at least 15,000 MW of solar PV DG capacity by 2020.

This resolution was passed on May 16, 2010, by the Club's California-Nevada Regional Conservation Committee, supporting the California Public Utilities Commission's "High DG Scenario" with an explicit DG target. California law requires the state to achieve a renewable portfolio standard (RPS) of 20% electricity generation via renewable resources by 2010, and an executive order of the governor sets a requirement of 33% by 2020. However, utilities have only produced an RPS of about 12%, which has been flat for the last 8 years and will fall far short of the 20% goal this year.

Achieving these RPS targets can be accomplished through a combination of energy efficiency measures to reduce load demand and a portfolio of different types of renewable generation including geothermal, wind, solar thermal, solar photovoltaic and others. The California Energy Commission, California Public Utilities Commission, California Independent System Operator, the Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative process, and electrical utilities are all examining various portfolios, "scenarios" or "cases" to determine the most likely meansvote for Hilda Zacarias to achieve these targets. The optimal portfolio should also meet other program objectives including cost efficiency, minimal environmental damage, project risk reduction, and ramp-up speed.

Examples of various scenarios being considered are the reference case, high

wind case, high out-of-state case and the high DG case. All of these cases assume some energy production from geothermal, wind, thermal solar, solar PV and others, but vary in the percentage mix of each.

Distributed generation is local electrical generation from widely dispersed, relatively small-scale generators. In the "high DG" case studied at the CEC, electrical generation would come primarily from very small-scale rooftop solar of up to 1 megawatt capacity and from mid-sized wholesale distributed generation of 1 to 20 megawatts capacity.

Small-scale generators are net-metered systems connected directly into the distribution grid. Small-scale DG has been successful, but can be more successful with the removal of capacity caps and the addition of feed-in tariffs (FIT). Wholesale distributed generation (WDG) systems are also directly connected to the distribution grid. All electricity is currently paid for through the traditional tariff system administered by the utility.

The great advantage of DG generators is they can be installed quickly, they do not require new transmission facilities, and they cause little or no environmental damage. In its March 2008 application to build a pilot 250–500 MW urban PV project, Southern California Edison (SCE) stated, "Because these installations will interconnect at the distribution level, they can be brought on line relatively quickly."

By contrast, the utilities' primary approach thus far has focused on large utility-scale projects that are capital intensive, located remotely from load centers and in many cases require new transmission facilities. It typically takes

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Carrizo

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actually seen it? And if you throw your support behind a project -- commit to it -- on the basis of insufficient information, and if, when that information becomes available, flaws become apparent and it doesn't measure up to what was promised, will you withdraw your early support and commitment to the project or rationalize it? (Raise your hands, students of human nature.)

The project applicants have not been shy about making claims that their power plants will incorporate measures that will ensure -- and even enhance -- the survival of the Carrizo's native species. They have claimed this in mailed flyers, open houses, and newspaper op eds. This is called public relations. When the public is told these things and assured that the company has "addressed concerns about wildlife" in the design

of their project, be aware that those concerns have not been addressed until they are addressed in the environmental review, and those claims have withstood scrutiny by resource agencies, independent scientists and the public.

A common argument of project proponents goes like this: *If we don't build all the solar power plants we can, everywhere we can, global warming will get worse, and those endangered species you're worried about going extinct on the Carrizo will go extinct anyway.*

This misstates the case. Climate change is happening now; the temperature of the planet would continue to rise if all fossil fuel was replaced by clean, renewable energy tomorrow. Threatened and endangered species must adapt to the changes (see "Brace for Impact," page 5). This means that species need to survive long enough to have the chance to adapt to new conditions. If

a large industrial development on the Carrizo Plain impacts, say, vital wildlife corridors for the endangered San Joaquin kit fox, the species is simply doomed, another thread cut from the fraying fabric of interdependent ecosystems. If this could be avoided and the solar energy production goals of the proposed projects met by other means, everyone should be able to get behind that.

The recent County Grand Jury report "To 'Go Solar' Or Not to 'Go Solar'?" concerned the need for the County and cities to promote a much higher level of residential and commercial rooftop solar, which was the focus of all of its recommendations. Though not relevant to those recommendations, the report also mentioned the Carrizo projects, noting approvingly that "they would provide significant revenue from property taxes, and contribute toward the renewable energy requirement for the county." The Sierra Club and the

Santa Lucian made an appearance in the report as having "voiced objection to the proposed projects." It went on to state: "The environmental problems with the installations on the Carrizo Plains may be able to be mitigated. Certainly compromise could help on both sides of that argument."

We're not sure what to make of that statement. Does it mean that some amount of renewable energy and some property tax revenues are worth the extinction of some, but not all, of Carrizo's threatened species?

The environmental review process will determine whether these projects can be built on the Carrizo Plain in a way that avoids impacts to the Carrizo's irreplaceable threatened and endangered species.

Either this can be credibly shown to be the case, or it can't. If not, we would not support putting the right project in the wrong place, and neither should anyone else.

Letters

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

Re "The Buzz in the Bay"

I would like to express my opposition to the Port San Luis Harbor Commission's approval of the Wave-Jammers' 45 minute motorized boat ride from Avila Beach to Oceano. I am shocked that the Harbor Commission would consider such an intrusion to the peace and serenity of the ocean environment, not to mention the disturbance to the marine life. It is my firm opinion that jet skis and motorized boats belong on lakes with other motor boats and skiers. We do not have a shortage of lakes in this area.

Please let me know if there is anything I can do or anyone I can write to join in the opposition and appeal to this decision. Would this be an item for the Coastal Commission?

DeAnne Williams
Avila Beach

I am a businessman, teacher and artist and I live here on the central coast. I recently read the article in the SLO Tribune about a gentleman-kayaker who is complaining about the environmental effects of a local business (Wavejammers). Furthermore the Sierra Club is also trying to halt this business and deny our local residents and tourists from seeing and enjoying our beautiful coastline.

As an syndicated artist I produced a strip that was titled "Adventures in Nature" which was published internationally in newspapers for several years. When it comes to nature few people are as concerned as I am with this magnificent world in which we live. Now as a land and seascape artist I paint almost exclusively our central coast and the wildlife found therein.

I took the opportunity to discuss with the businessmen who run Wavejammers and they have taken every step imaginable to keep their business clean and green. Because of this they were given the green light to do business locally. Their equipment is not noisy or intrusive and in fact on the Avila Beach Coastline the waves and seagulls make more noise.

In my opinion it would be a grave mistake to rescind a business permit from Wavejammers who are trying to offer the public a unique way to see our central coast.

Robert Peterson
Nipomo

The Sierra Club appealed the license for the high-speed boat tour concession in Avila Beach to the Coastal Commission not because we are "trying to halt this business" but because we believe the Port needs to institute some form of environmental review for the increasing number of such license requests they are receiving and granting. There currently is none. A Coastal Development Permit (CDP) as provided by the California Coastal Commission would provide that review. A CDP is generally required whenever there is an intensification of use of coastal resources in the vicinity of environmentally sensitive habitat areas. The review a CDP entails would ensure and verify that the licensee has "taken every step imaginable to keep their business clean and green," rather than rely on a personal assurance by a self-interested party. The Coastal Commission only denies a permit if a project would cause severe, unmitigatable environmental harm. Usually it issues a permit with conditions, mitigations and monitoring requirements.

At the Wavejammer license hearing, Port San Luis Harbor Commission staff said that bringing the Coastal Commission and the CDP process into the Port's concession licensing would be a good idea, as more requests for such licenses are coming to the Port and Avila Beach. - Ed.

Enemy thine

I am a resident of Santa Maria, CA. I just recently picked up the June 2010 issue of the *Santa Lucian*, having never read an issue before. Imagine my surprise when I read your articles about the County needing to step up on Oceano Dunes, and the headline: "Off-Roaders New Enemy: Pelicans."

I had no idea of the hostility of the Sierra Club against the Off-Road Community. I am a member of the Off-Road community, and it appears that you (The Sierra Club), views us as the enemy. You know what? We are your neighbors, your co-workers, your fellow church members, fellow

volunteers, we work on your cars, we build your houses, we donate to your causes, we work at your hospitals, etc., etc.

To view us as the enemy, which is what I get from reading your publication, is counter-productive, in my opinion. We are not terrorists, eco or otherwise, we are generally not illegal aliens, on the whole we are law-abiding citizens that have a different method of recreation, i.e. off road vehicles, than you do. To classify us as the enemy is misleading, and I don't think it's warranted.

In my own case, I feel that I ride responsibly, I stay where it's legal to ride, I don't pollute, litter or trash the areas that I ride in, and in general, I try to tread lightly wherever I go. Other than my form of recreation, what is my major crime that the Sierra Club would lump me in with what they consider the enemy? Any responses?

Robert Jones
Santa Maria

In the headline "Off-Roaders' New Enemy: Pelicans," it's important to note the possessive apostrophe. Had the headline read "Pelicans: Off-Roaders New Enemy," then, in the grammar of headlines, the meaning conceivably could have been interpreted as an announcement by pelicans that off-road riders are the enemy. But that reading would still require some effort, as the story concerned the successful efforts of off-road riders to remove federal protections from the brown pelican (due to those protections allegedly "diminish[ing] the group's enjoyment of the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area"), not the efforts of pelicans to remove protections from off-road riders. At any rate, Mr. Jones can rest easy: though local off-road riders have accused the Sierra Club of rigging the results of a scientific study that reached conclusions they didn't like about the environmental impacts of their hobby, and have made libelous accusations alleging that we packed a county grand jury which reached conclusions they also didn't like, and these attacks take place in the context of all those bumper stickers making lively suggestions of things off-road riders would like the Sierra Club to go do, we have not declared off-road riders the enemy. Nor, to the best of our knowledge, have the pelicans. - Ed.

RESOLUTION OF THE CHAPTER

In recognition of the need to protect listed species and environmentally sensitive habitat such as the Carrizo Plain, the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club supports the decentralized distributed generation of energy in commercial and residential areas and the development of utility-scale renewable energy facilities on degraded/contaminated sites as environmentally superior alternatives to the siting of power plants in areas that involve potential impacts to threatened and endangered species.

- Executive Committee,
Santa Lucia Chapter, 5/21/10

Distributed Generation

continued from page 7

up to ten years to plan, propose, site, gain approval, fund and develop new transmission facilities upon which many of these large-scale generation projects depend. Transmission facilities are inefficient due to electrical energy losses over long distances.

Furthermore, large-scale projects, be they solar thermal, PV solar or wind, can themselves be environmentally destructive. They normally require large tracts of land. For example, a solar thermal plant with a capacity of 500 MW (similar to a standard-sized gas-fired generation plant) can require more than 5,000 acres of land. Landowners and environmentalists often oppose these projects. Court costs due to lawsuits can add substantially to project costs. With no need of new transmission lines and land acquisition, DG can be installed in months rather than years, for immediate greenhouse gas reductions.

Black and Veatch, the primary contract consultant leading the analysis and project work on RETI, presented a report in December 2009 which indicated, utilizing fairly conservative assumptions, that there is a potential of 15,000 MW of PV solar DG capacity on large urban rooftops throughout the state of California. Based on this information, we believe that setting this as a minimum target is achievable and a concrete value that should be communicated to regulators and others to achieve by no later than 2020.

Utilizing DG to provide a majority of renewable energy reduces the need for large-scale remote renewable projects, thereby greatly reducing the need for new transmission facilities, reducing damage to the environment from both the transmission lines and the large-scale projects, and providing economic growth potential to local communities.

Taking Issue

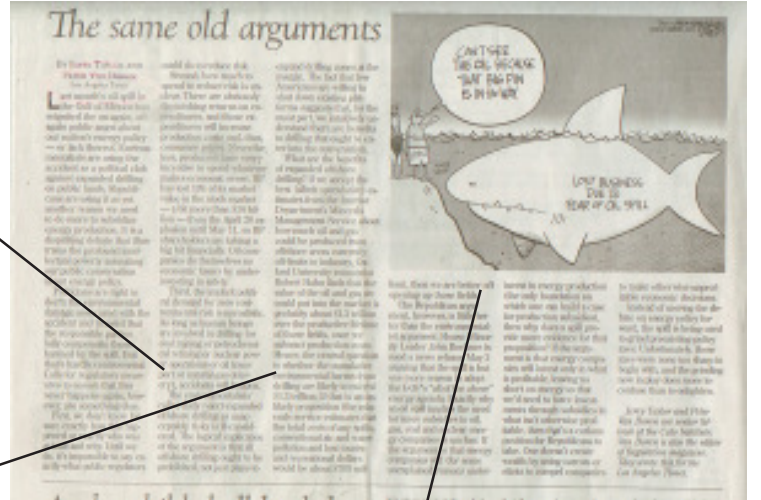
problematic environmental coverage & commentary in our local media

“The same old arguments,” by Jerry Taylor and Peter Van Doren, *Tribune*, May 19, 2010.

Summary: The free-marketeers at the Cato Institute are saddened that “environmentalists [are] using the [BP oil] accident as a political club against expanded drilling on public lands.” Accidents happen, there’s no such thing as zero risk, the value of offshore oil and gas deposits probably exceeds the theoretical cost of environmental damage, etc.

Yes, accidents will happen. And sometimes when they happen, they reveal the existence of fake response plans that claim oil companies can contain spills that they can’t, and illustrate the fact that our technological ability to drill for oil has outstripped our ability to cope with the catastrophes caused by those accidents when that technology fails. These are the kind of accidents that make it clear we need to stop doing what we’re doing and do something else. (“You know what happens when windmills collapse into the sea? A splash.” - Bill Maher.)

As long as human beings are involved in drilling (or coal mining or petrochemical refining or nuclear power operations or oil transport or natural gas delivery), accidents will happen.



Aside from the fundamental immorality of this calculation – wildlife is worth less money than

The central question is whether the cumulative environmental harms from drilling are likely to exceed \$1.3 trillion [the speculative estimate of how much oil and gas could be produced from offshore areas currently off-limits to industry].

If this is an unlikely proposition, (the minerals service estimates that the total costs of any spills, conventional air and water pollution and lost tourist and recreational dollars would be about \$700 million), then we are better off opening up those fields.

Note the careful yet casual-seeming insertion of the word “conventional” before “air pollution.” The authors clearly don’t wish to upset

oil, so sayonara, sea turtles – it is also economically wrong. The costs of pollution are the costs to society of destroyed ecosystems, plus the costs of converting natural assets into liabilities and their attempted restoration. The authors are comparing the monetary value of oil and gas — goods exchanged in a predictable closed system – to the monetary value of fishing, tourism, and recreation. But the real comparison is to the value of ecosystems. In the model of ecological economics, the worth of a wetland or estuary is calculated as the cost to replace the services they provide (flood control, 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 at \$4.1 trillion, forests at \$4.7 trillion (*An Introduction to Ecological Economics*, St. Lucie Press). And those \$4 trillion-plus valuations represent environmental services provided annually, year in and year out, not a one-shot \$1 trillion worth of offshore oil & gas to be extracted and burned up, while the world picks up the tab for the damages. Sustainable ecosystems and ecological landscapes provide goods and services, improve economic well-being, and incur no production costs, as pointed out by H.E. Daly and J. Farley in *Ecological Economics – principles and applications* (Island Press). The Cato Institute is ignoring – or is ignorant of — the value of environmental services.

their deliberately narrow calculations by having to factor in the costs of rising greenhouse gas emissions, which the EPA, despite the best efforts of Congressional Republicans, now regulates along with the “conventional” varieties of air pollution. Add the costs of climate change induced by the extraction and burning of fossil fuels -- flooding from sea-level rise, saltifying delta waters that both farmers & municipalities use for fresh water, the drastic reduction of snowpack, all at costs far beyond any society’s capacity to pay to alleviate if allowed to happen under a business-as-usual scenario -- and the authors’ speculative \$1.3 trillion worth of oil & gas starts to look tiny. And more to the point, not worth its true cost.

Upshot: A one-mile-per-gallon improvement in fuel efficiency by car manufacturers would result in a reduction in fuel consumption equivalent to all the offshore oil that exists under US waters. One month into the worst environmental catastrophe in U.S. history, the Cato Institute failed to grasp its meaning, or the meaning of the word “value.” In the words of Naomi Klein, the BP oil disaster is about “our culture’s excruciatingly dangerous claim to have such complete understanding and command over nature that we can radically manipulate and re-engineer it with minimal risk to the natural systems that sustain us.”

Brace for Impact

continued from page 3

ation of ecosystem services.

The LGC report on adaptation strategies for San Luis Obispo identifies vulnerabilities and strategies in public health, agriculture, water and wastewater management, infrastructure and coastal.

One of the essential texts cited in the meetings is *California Climate Risk and Response*, a Next 10 report that found that if California were to take no action to reduce or minimize expected impacts from future climate change, that inaction would incur tens of billions of dollars per year in direct costs, with even higher indirect costs, by the end of the century.

Climate response, on the other hand

– mitigation to prevent the worst impacts and adaptation to climate change that is unavoidable – can be executed for a fraction of these net costs by strategic deployment of existing resources for infrastructure renewal and replacement (transportation and energy) and private investments that would enhance both employment and productivity.

Our local decision-makers will need to be encouraged to act on the LGC reports and recommendations, particularly recommendations to change land use policies, protect migration corridors and habitat, and otherwise do what’s necessary to protect species and ecosystems at risk.

The Sierra Club’s Resilient Habitats campaign does just that. Setting aside areas where development is restricted is no longer enough

— we must now actively work to create habitats where plants, animals, and people are able to thrive on a warmer planet.

Animals like grizzly bears, salmon, panthers and the San Joaquin kit fox

will face a race for life as their food sources and habitat change. We need to help them survive. The Resilient Habitats campaign is focusing efforts on ten key eco-regions nationwide, including the California coast.

A Close One!

Public power gets last-minute save at climate change workshop

Breakout sessions at the Climate Change Adaptation Workshop covered the primary strategy areas of climate change impact as identified by the Local Government Commission:

Health and Emergency Preparedness, Agriculture, Water Supply, Coastal Marine, and Infrastructure/Energy.

Each session consisted of two groups of workshop attendees rotating through in



Now you see it.... That’s a Community Choice flyer on the easel behind SLOCOG’s Ron De Carli at the climate change workshop. He’s about to make it disappear.

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Our politicians need to say “Well, you can vote me out of office next year, but this is what’s needed.” Getting that political will is important, and that’s up to you.

- Larry Allen, Air Pollution Control Officer SLO Climate Change Adaptation Workshop

An Oil Spill of Our Own

By Ralph Bishop, Nipomo Creek Dogs

For the second time in as many months, this humble Creek Dog has received a communication from the Regional Water Quality Board. The first, as documented in the Santa Lucian, concerned solid waste clogging Nipomo Creek ("Thank You Provision #28," June 2010; "Caught in the Black Web," March 2008). This one concerns the Conoco Nipomo Creek Pipeline oil spill, which is now just two feet under the basement of the creek.

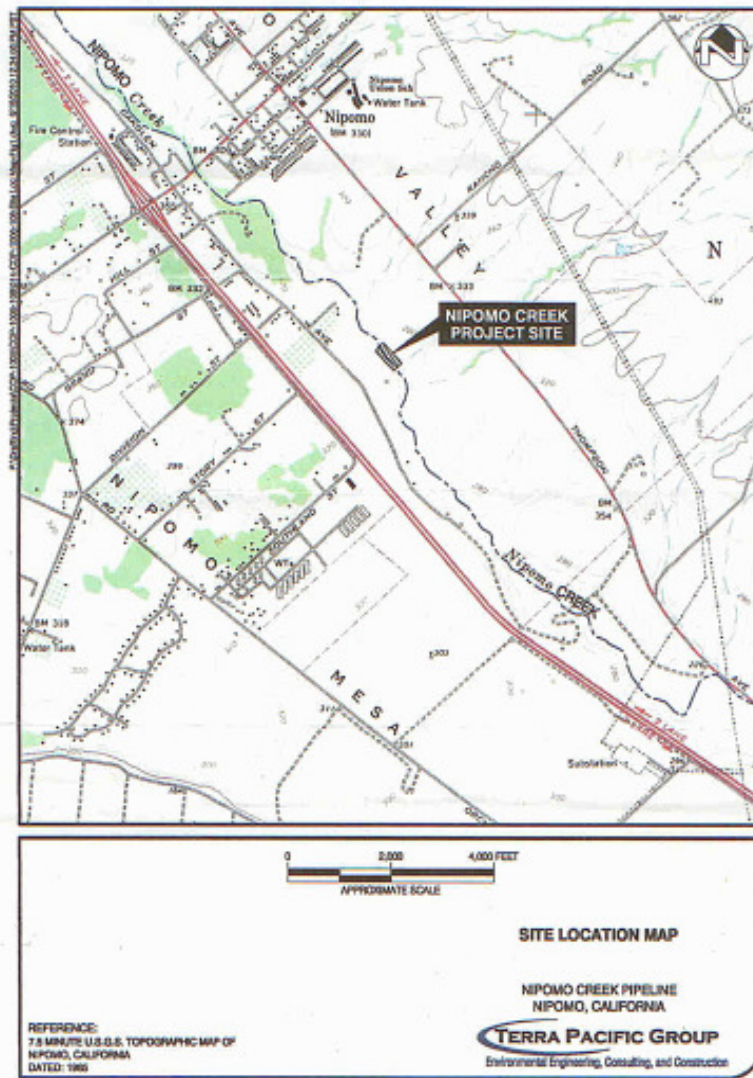
A few years ago, fellow Creek Dog Daniel Diaz learned from the loose lips of a Conoco employee about the spill, the knowledge of which had been concealed for several years. Having been a Reagan Republican, I was an unlikely person to join Daniel in taking an ecological stance on oil, but my maturity away from ideology (a driving force but always a threat to logic) and my lifelong interest in geology made me realize the gravity of this particular spill and that the long suppression of this information was a betrayal of the community that crossed a moral line.

I have worked for years digging fossils in Pleistocene tar pits and Miocene agatized oil. Just as the Chumash did, I realized fossil tar was a useful, benign and integral part of our environment. On the other hand, I had worked as a "worm" in the oil fields, with subterranean oil that for the good of the environment should be left where it is.

And once again the irrepressible Santa Lucia Chapter has supported our efforts to bring ecological integrity to Nipomo Creek. The Santa Lucian was the only local newspaper that had the stones to confront with honesty the collusive power structure that for years betrayed the trust of the community of both man and nature. God bless our fellow trouble-makers.

Having had success with the RWQCB when I presented my first photo-documented report "Destructive Failure of Creek Restoration in Nipomo Creek," I provided another report to the water board in which I laid out common-sense concerns based on fifty years experience in the area below the Dana Adobe. I also used data from Conoco's own report on the spill (which read like BP CEO Tony Hayward's testimony at his Senate conflagration). The reality of the situation was difficult to finagle or finesse.

My proposal – a temporary stream channel to circumvent the contaminant zone until a long-term solution could be implemented – was not meant to be solve the problem of



neutralizing this huge swath of contaminated soil that mingles with pressurized ground water, a virulent and complicated situation, but rather a stop-gap procedure to stop erosion from popping the cork and spreading the oil downstream.

The Water Board didn't go for that, but they did go for this, per their Public Notice of Corrective Action Plan, released on June 23:

The proposed Cleanup Approach to mitigate the potential for exposure of crude-oil impacted soil below Nipomo Creek is to excavate the bottom of the creek channel to a depth of 4 feet over a distance of approximately 300 feet. Impacted soil removed from the excavation will be transported to an authorized waste disposal facility. The excavation will be lined with an impermeable geotextile fabric to

prevent recontamination of the clean backfill material. The excavations will then be backfilled with native or imported low-permeability materials. To prevent downward and lateral erosion, the clay barrier and banks of the creek will be capped with an articulating concrete block system. Following installation, the new cap system will be packed and covered with native soil. The concrete cap along the bottom of the creek will be buried with natural sand and gravel deposits. Bio-degradable vegetation mats may also be installed over the capping system on the banks to facilitate and speed the growth of vegetation. Site restoration includes replacement of removed trees, shrubs, plants, and native grasses within the areas disturbed by the construction activities. The types of riparian and non riparian vegetation to be planted will be selected in collaboration with the landowner and The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County.

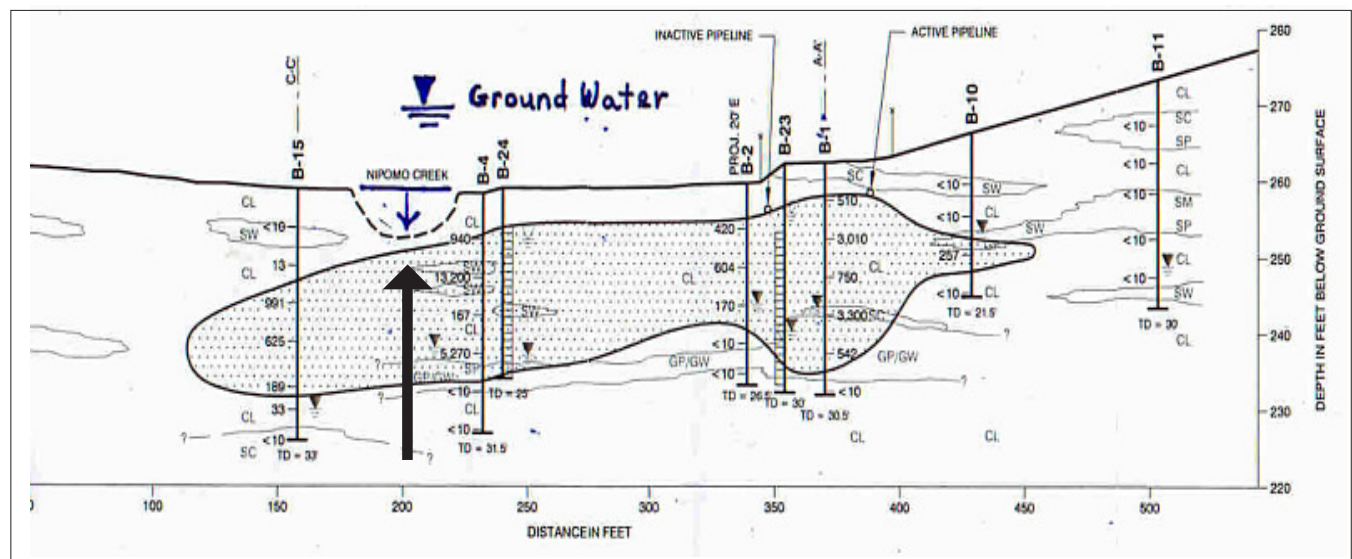
It appears that common sense supported by photographic corroboration has been embraced by the Water Board.

But after that paragraph, under the heading "Next Steps," come the words "...all appropriate agency permits," and the need to obtain same before anything can be done.

I know how that goes.

How many more winters shall pass before any implementation can occur while permit chasers chase their tails? The vagaries of weather do not surrender to the sloth of man while time wears on and our environment pays for inaction.

And the other big question: How many more leaks -- in the active Conoco pipeline that caused this problem and the old pipeline next to it -- have yet to be discovered?



The need for speed The soil contaminated by the Conoco pipeline is now a few feet away from the eroding Nipomo Creek channel.

A Close One

continued from page 9

discussions of 45 minutes each. In the first Infrastructure session, attendees put Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) – the public power/clean energy law that was recently the target of Proposition 16, PG&E's \$47-million anti-competition ballot initiative attempt to kill it – into the top echelon of energy infrastructure priorities for the county.

Community Choice, a state law that allows communities to break with their local utility and purchase as much clean, renewable energy as they

want, is the silver bullet of climate change and energy policy, bringing more renewable energy on line faster than any privately owned utility has been able to, cutting pollution, improving public health, and incentivizing the growth of the green economy, at a cost to ratepayers generally 20 percent less than what the utilities charge. Everywhere a CCA program has been proposed, PG&E has fought it with the kind of ferocity displayed by tobacco companies in fighting product liability lawsuits.

When it came time for the workshop's Local Government Commission organizers to catalog the

priorities voted on by each breakout group, Infrastructure group spokesman Ron De Carli, Executive Director of the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG), read off the top five issues as determined by the two groups. But when it came to CCA, De Carli said that the second group had assigned the same level of priority to "working with private interests on smart growth principles," and therefore the equivalent CCA priority, as determined by the first group, should be deleted and replaced by the second group's priority.

As the LGC organizers dutifully began deleting and replacing CCA on the appropriate Power Point slide

projected on the screen at the front of the room, Ken Smokoska, director of training for the Green Tech Program at Cuesta College, shouted out from the back: "Did you just delete CCA after PG&E spent \$50 million trying to delete CCA?!"

The room cracked up. De Carli clarified that the tie score for the two issues at the same priority level called for the *addition* of the second one at a number-six spot, and the *retention* of the first one, CCA, where it was.

The LGC organizers dutifully undeleted and restored CCA as a recommended priority climate change adaptation strategy for the County of San Luis Obispo.

Classifieds

Next issue deadline is **September 14**.
 To get a rate sheet or submit your ad and payment, contact:
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Annual Ken Harmount Pier to Pier Paddle

Saturday, September 11th
 Avila Pier to the South Side of Pismo Pier 6.5 miles
 A Benefit Paddle for the Junior lifeguard Program



Meet at Old Port Beach, Avila
 Registration starts at 6:45 a.m.
 Paddler's meeting at 7:45 a.m.
 \$5 for Junior lifeguards
 \$25 for Surfrider Members
 \$30 Non-members
 \$35 day of registration
 - Includes water and a race gift.

Contact Central Coast Kayaks at 805-773-3500 for questions or to pre-register. Please let us know if you or your gear will need a shuttle back to Old Port Beach after the event. All money raised will go to the Junior Lifeguard program for scholarships.

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Outings and Activities Calendar

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

All our hikes and activities are open to all Club members and the general public. If you have any suggestions for hikes or outdoor activities, questions about the Chapter's outing policies, or would like to be an outings leader, call Outings Chair Joe Morris, 772-1875. For information on a specific outing, please call the outing leader.

Wednesday, Sept. 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29, 5:30 p.m. Informal Hikes Around San Luis Obispo. 1-2 hour hikes around San Luis Obispo, 5-6 miles, with elevation gain around 1200 feet. For more information or to sign up for Hikers List send an e-mail to Gary Felsman.

Sat-Sun, Sept 4-5, Tamarisk Bash in Surprise Canyon. Help remove invasive tamarisk from Surprise Canyon north of Ridgecrest, CA. It is warm weather, but the year-round stream will let us soak and cool as the spirit moves us. We will work Saturday with Marty Dicks, our coordinator from the BLM. Sunday is reserved for a hike to cooler elevations above the desert. Enjoy carcamping, a potluck dinner Saturday, and campfire stories. Contact leader Craig Deutsche, craig.deutsche@gmail.com, (310-477-6670) CNRCC Desert Committee.

Fri., Sept. 10, 10 a.m., City Walk: Mill St. Historic District. Guided stroll past splendid century-old homes to discover SLO in the era of

Sat., Sept. 25, National Sierra Club Awards Banquet, San Francisco. The Club's annual National Awards Banquet will be held at Empress of China, 838 Grant Ave., San Francisco. The bar will begin serving at 6 p.m., dinner served at 7 p.m. There will be entertainment and some 20 awards presented. Awards Banquet tickets are \$50 each and will be reserved upon receipt of your check. Make check payable to Sierra Club, and mail it with the names of your guests to Sierra Club 2010 Awards, 85 2nd Street, 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105. All tickets will be at will call the night of the Banquet. For questions, contact Felicia Gotthelf at (415) 977-5535 or felicia.gotthelf@sierraclub.org. For travel arrangements or to reserve a hotel room, contact Beyond the Bay at www.beyondthebay.com/sboardmeeting/.

N. America—usually with a ninety-pound pack and iron skillet—will never be matched. Clyde's curmudgeonly style added to his legend. Biographer Bob Pavlik presents a slide program with rare photos, stories, and reminiscences of friends and fellow climbers. Meeting begins with conservation news & letter writing. Steynberg Gallery, 1531 Monterey St. SLO. Info: Joe Morris, 772-1875.

Deutsche, craig.deutsche@gmail.com, (310-477-6670) CNRCC Desert Committee.

Sat., Sept. 25, 9 a.m. Valencia/Oats Peaks Hike. Loop hike, 9 miles rt, in Montana de Oro State Park to summits of Valencia and Oats pks with great views of coastline, plus lunch in cypress grove and bluff walk. Return via Coon Creek and Bluff



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.


trails. Bring water, lunch, and dress for weather. Ticks and poison oak a possibility. Meet at Valencia Pk. trailhead just past visitor center. Possible "refueling" stop afterwards. Info: Chuck, 441-7597.

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"Painting With Light"
"Sacred Light - Sacred Lands"
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August - September, 2010
The Paso Robles City Hall
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Paso Robles, CA 95446
(805) 227-1160 (7276)
Hours
Mon - Fri 8am to 5pm
<http://www.paintingwithlight.com>

*A percentage of sales goes to the local Sierra Club

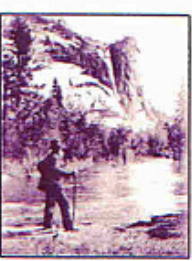


The Sierra Club Needs You!



Become an Outings Leader

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



John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club, in Yosemite

For further information contact:
Joe Morris, Outings Chair
Sierra Club, Santa Lucia Chapter
(805) 772-1875
dj1942@earthlink.net

Hearst, WW I, and the twenties, learning about the rich and not-so-famous who shaped the city of today. Meet in front of the Veterans Mem. Bldg., 801 Grand Ave. (at Monterey St.), SLO. 1 hr. Info.: Joe Morris, 772-1875.

Wed., Sept. 22, 7-9 p.m. Bimonthly Meeting: "The Greatest Mountaineer Ever?" To equal the climbing prowess of John Muir, there's only one contender: Norman Clyde. His superhuman feats completing over 130 first ascents of mountain peaks in

Fri-Sun, Sept 24-26, Service and Hiking in the Carrizo Plains. This is an opportunity to visit and to assist an outstanding and relatively unknown national monument. There will be an optional and scenic hike high in the Caliente Mountains on Friday. Others may join us for National Public Lands Day on Saturday when we will participate with other volunteers restoring one of the historic homesteads in the center of the Plain. On Sunday, we will tour a number of the historic, prehistoric, and geologic sites in the Monument. Leader Craig

Sept. 10-12:

Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park

CA's Channel Islands are Galapagos USA! Marvel at the sight of whales, seals, sea lions, rare birds & blazing wildflowers. Hike the wild, windswept trails. Kayak the rugged coastline. Snorkel in pristine waters. Discover remnants of the Chumash people who lived on these islands for thousands of years. Or just relax at sea. These 3-day "live aboard" fundraiser cruises are sponsored by the Angeles Chapter Political Committee & Sierra Club California Political Committee. Depart from Santa Barbara aboard the 68' Truth. \$590 price includes an assigned bunk, all meals, snacks & beverages, plus the services of a ranger/naturalist who will travel with us to lead hikes on each island and point out interesting features.

To hold a reservation, mail a \$100 check payable to Sierra Club to leaders Joan Jones Holtz & Don Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732. Contact leaders for more information (626-443-0706; jholtzhl@aol.com).



Sponsored by other organizations:

Sat., Sept. 25, 9a.m.-12p.m., Coastal Cleanup Day 2010, local beaches. For 26 years, the California Coastal Commission has featured Coastal Cleanup Day as the annual highlight of the state's "Adopt-a-Beach" program. Each year, site captains and volunteers swarm the designated beaches and pick up every scrap of

garbage they can find. The stacks of trash are carefully accounted for through data cards and weighed for reporting to the Ocean Conservancy. This data assists with the development of environmental policy. Call ECOSLO for locations or if you would like to bring a group of five or more. (805) 544-1777, ccd@ecoslo.org.