



March 2012
Volume 49 No. 3

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Don't Miss

Monumental: David Brower's Fight for Wild America

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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

Ag Pollution: the Time is Now

March 15 is do or die for water quality on the central coast

Water is perhaps our most precious commodity. It is far too precious to waste or use only once.

Our Regional Water Quality Control Board will hopefully vote on March 15 to regulate polluted discharges from irrigated agriculture. Pollution regulations are our most powerful tools to limit over-use of pesticides and nitrates. But for this to happen, we need your support.

The regulations are called the "Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands" -- the "Ag Order" for short. This is a five-year permit that sets the conditions with which farmers must comply, including monitoring, numeric standards, discharges to surface waters, discharges to groundwater, and protection of wetlands and riparian habitat.

This is the primary regulatory tool to protect water quality from agricultural pollution. The permit is for five years, and for the first time, the staff proposal addresses discharges to groundwater and from stormwater. The last five-year permit was to expire in 2009. Due to fierce opposition from agriculture, it was repeatedly extended. But is now poised for a vote.

Essential comments the board needs to hear on March 15 include:



- It is time to make a decision. The Board should VOTE to adopt an order.

- It is time to regulate agricultural discharges. Research and monitoring efforts show that water quality conditions in the lower Salinas and lower Santa Maria watershed are terrible and not improving. Agricultural pollution must be brought under control.

- Please support the staff proposal and consider the suggestions offered by the environmental community stakeholders.

This will likely be an all-day meeting. We need a strong showing to encourage a good decision.

Please support clean water. This has been a long, long effort (see "This is Huge," May 2010; "Comments on the Central Coast Water Board's Regional Draft Order...," Feb. 2011), and we are finally near a vote. We need your support. The Regional Water Board is where you need to be on March 15.

The Regional Water Quality Control Board offices are located at 895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101, San Luis Obispo.

Occupy GMOs

On Saturday, February 18, the general assembly of Occupy SLO, held on the steps of the county court house, occupied itself with the issue of getting genetically engineered foods - aka genetically modified organisms, aka GMOs --labeled in California.

The Sierra Club and local initiative organizer Jeanne Blackwell gave those assembled the low-down on the



state ballot initiative, which needs 580,000 valid signatures to get on the ballot in November.

Helping SLO County in the quest to contribute a significant portion of those signatures is now a priority for

Occupy SLO.

If you want to be a part of the local signature-gathering push, contact Jeanne at jeannegmo@gmail.com.

For more information on the initiative, go to labelgmos.org,

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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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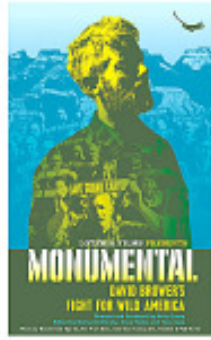
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Outings, events, and more!

Sierra Club General Meeting

Wed., March 21, 7 p.m.

Monumental: David Brower's Fight for Wild America



Bimonthly Meeting: A screening of "Monumental: David Brower's Fight for Wild America." Come see this stirring and beautiful documentary film about the most dynamic, influential, and controversial Sierra Club president since John Muir and the birth of the modern environmental movement. Includes reminiscences by prominent environmentalists like Michael McCloskey and Stewart Udall. Conservation news will begin the meeting. Location: Steynberg Gallery, 1531 Monterey St., SLO. Info.: Joe Morris, 772-1875.

David Brower: Monumental

by Andrew Christie, Chapter Director
 Reprinted from the Santa Lucian, Feb. 2005

Like most people who live in the public eye, David Brower was required to compose a "bio" — an official summary of self, suitable for excerpting by editors or reproduction on the backs of book jackets. His went, in part, like this:

Joined the Sierra Club in 1933, was a world-class climber when it took little class (first ascent of Shiprock, New Mexico, his best), and helped add ten units to the National Park System, keep dams out of Dinosaur National Monument, the Grand Canyon, and the Yukon, lobbied to establish the National Wilderness Preservation System, invented the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review, published or edited about a hundred environmental books, started the Sierra Club Foundation, Friends of the Earth International (now in 58 countries), the League of Conservation Voters, Earth Island Limited (UK), Earth Island Institute (U.S.), Earth Island Action Group, the North Cascades Conservation Council, the Fate of the Earth Conference (in four countries), starting the Global CPR Service (Conservation, Preservation, Restoration), and the Ecological Council of the Americas... once a sophomore dropout from U.C. Berkeley, twice a visiting professor at Stanford, once at Case Western (where he wrote a page in the NYT Sunday Magazine about how to manage the Earth, and Reader's Digest liked it), ten honorary degrees, on Advisory Board of the Yosemite Concession Service, on the "Dream Team" of Interface Corporation, three times nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.... Shiftless procrastinator and master of creative sloth, enjoying the delights of retirement by getting nothing done, talks endlessly, writes the same way.

I first heard David Brower speak at a Patagonia environmental seminar series sometime around 1996. I didn't really meet him until August 1999. The Maxxam Corporation had taken over Kaiser Aluminum and the Pacific Lumber Company, much to the regret of both of those companies. Over two days that August, at the Oakland Marriott, Brower chaired a meeting of the Alliance for Sustainable Jobs and the Environment, which had come together earlier that year when two groups — Kaiser's striking steelworkers and environmentalists fighting to save the Headwaters Forest from Maxxam's ruthless clear cutting — realized they should make common cause.

Three months later in the streets of Seattle, that realization became "teamsters & turtles" allied against the World Trade Organization, making history in images that were beamed around the world.

It was on those thronged streets, in rain, pepper spray, tear gas and rubber bullets, that I met David Brower for the last time. The 87-year-old environmentalist had come there to join with 50,000 purple-Mohawked 18-year-olds, mid-western sheet-metal workers, people of faith, and Asian, European, African and North and South American farmers and labor leaders in their conviction that a better world is possible.

When he left us, less than a year later, I wrote a brief remembrance of him for inclusion in a pamphlet distributed at his memorial service. It went like this:

David Brower, the greatest American environmental champion since John Muir, died on November 5. In the outpouring of eulogies and encomiums occasioned by his passing, one note of irony was always certain to be sounded (and equally certain to have vastly amused Mr. Brower): Namely, the fact that those in the environmental movement whom he irritated and enraged the most, and who devoted a great deal of their time to vigorously opposing him, are those who are now praising him the loudest. The undertone of relief is unmistakable: Now that he's gone, it's safe.

Throughout his life, Mr. Brower struggled against two breeds of Homo Sapiens: Those who do the actual environmental raping and pillaging, and those 'boardroom environmentalists' who aid and abet them by tailoring the tone of their voices and the magnitude of their

SANTA LUCIAN

Andrew Christie
 EDITOR sierraclub8@gmail.com

Thomas A. Cyr
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 EDITORIAL BOARD

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 PRINT MEDIA COORDINATOR

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send to:

Editor, Santa Lucian
 c/o Santa Lucia Chapter, Sierra Club
 P.O. Box 15755
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93406.
sierraclub8@gmail.com

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

Committee Chairs

Political
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Conservation
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 Andy Greensfelder beckers@thegrid.net

Nuclear Power Task Force
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Other Leaders

Open Space
 Gary Felsman 805-473-3694

Calendar Sales
 Bonnie Walters 805-543-7051

Chapter History
 John Ashbaugh 805-541-6430

Activities

Outings
 Joe Morris dj1942@earthlink.net

Canoe/Kayak
 open

Webmaster

Monica Tarzier monica@tarzier.org

Chapter Director

Andrew Christie
 805-543-8717
sierraclub8@gmail.com

Coordinator

Kim Ramos, Admin and Development
kimlramos@yahoo.com

Assistant Coordinators

Yvonne Yip - events & social networking

Santa Lucia Chapter

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

Office hours Monday-Friday,
 12 p.m. - 5 p.m., 974 Santa Rosa
 Street, San Luis Obispo

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The “Cook the Planet in Record Time” Act

by Eric Greening

The headline above should be the “truth in labeling” title of House Resolution 7, the House “American Energy and Infrastructure Jobs Act,” otherwise known as Transportation Reauthorization.

Set to cost \$260 billion over five years, HR 7 makes the Senate’s \$109 billion, two-year version look enlightened by comparison, despite the considerable flaws of that bill (such as collapsing the major sources of funding for pedestrian and bikeways into a program largely inaccessible to jurisdictions that keep their air clean), and the Senate’s even more grandiloquent title: “The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act.”

Federal transportation bills are always dirty and messy affairs, with most of their money going toward highway expansion, but the current House version

drops any pretense of concern for the environment, the climate, or mobility for the many elders, youth, disabled, poor, and conscientious people who don’t drive.

Although funding for more and bigger highways is enhanced, there is no thought of increasing gas taxes as the appropriate user fee. Rather, leasing for vast amounts of new oil drilling in the Atlantic and Pacific (perhaps as close as Point Sal), and opening to the oil industry of the Arctic Wildlife Refuge, are expected to become the cash cows for this orgy of bulldozer action. A rider requiring construction of the Keystone pipeline is likely to be attached.

Meanwhile, every possible escape from the tyranny of the automobile is

under assault. Amtrak operating support is to drop 25%, while Safe Routes to School and the Transportation Enhancement program that funds bikeways and pedestrian improvements would go away entirely. All support for traffic calming would be removed from the Highway Safety Improvement Program, while the requirement that bridges built or rebuilt with federal money be made accessible to bicyclists and pedestrians would be dropped. The “TIGER” program for funding public transit would go away entirely, while Congestion Mitigation Air Quality funding would no longer support projects that reduce pollution, but only those which reduce congestion, which could include road enlargement at the expense of transit and non-motorized funding. Decision-making would shift from local

While bicycle commuting nationwide has increased by 57% in the years from 2000 to 2009, the message of HR 7 is simple: get a car or drop dead.

governments to state departments of transportation, while states would no longer need employees conversant in the design of non-motorized facilities.

While bicycle commuting nationwide has increased by 57% in the years from 2000 to 2009, the message to those who make this benign choice is simple: get a car or drop dead. If you’re too young to drive, drop dead.

Federal transportation reauthorization has been subject to repeated short-term extensions of the last program, maintaining funding levels; the latest extension ends March 31st. While the status quo represented by these extensions is far from ideal, another such extension would be far



ESA - C. Carreau

preferable to anything likely to emerge from a House-Senate conference. The best we can hope for is to limp along with extensions until we can elect a Congress more ready to face reality. We will only get that if

candidates must face questions about transportation priorities, and hear that our own priorities are care for the planet, maintenance rather than expansion of the roads, and safety for all, whether encased in metal or not.

House Republicans’ Desperate Stunt to Pass Worst Transportation Bill Ever

On February 15, unable to find enough votes to pass a comprehensive transportation bill, U.S. House Speaker John Boehner and House Leadership split their appalling transportation proposal into three separate bills in hopes of passing each of them and packaging them into a final bill, without a final vote on the recombined bill. This bill would then be sent to the Senate, which is working on its own bipartisan bill. The combined House bill, which is chockfull of giveaways to Big Oil and terrible transportation policies, would be dead on arrival in the Senate and the President has signaled that he would veto the bill.

In response, Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune issued the following statement:

“Speaker Boehner’s actions today demonstrate just how desperate the Grand Oil Party of the House is to please their Big Oil friends.

“In a display of unapologetic political gimmickry, the House will vote on their damaging transportation bill in three separate parts. One bill would open up our shores and the treasured Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to destructive oil drilling and permit the dirty Keystone XL tar sands pipeline. The second bill would attack Americans’ transportation choices, jeopardizing public transit, eliminating funds to make communities more bikeable and walkable, and gutting our nation’s bedrock environmental review laws. The last piece of this monstrosity would raid pensions for government employees – a cynical attempt to pay for this terrible legislation on the backs of government workers.

“Whether it’s in the form of one bill or three, this transportation bill is not aligned with the priorities and interests of American families. The bill is dead on arrival in the Senate and the President has said he will veto it. It’s time for the House to get to work on the business of the people and stop playing political football to score points with the Big Oil lobby.”

Getting Zipped

Presto! County Planning Commission makes permits disappear and turns a public process private



By Sue Harvey, North County Watch

Coming soon to agricultural land near you: zip lines, bungee jumping, mountain bike courses, cable ski lakes and what the Planning Commission described as “other active rural recreation uses.”

At the January 26 meeting of the Planning Commission, in an amazing bit of “nothing up my sleeve” land use legerdemain, county staff recommended, and 4 of the 5 commissioners agreed, that zip lines are a suitable

accessory use to existing primary agriculture (Commissioner O’Grady voting “no”). Essentially the Commission’s interpretation would allow, without permit, almost any activity that can be described as an accessory to an existing primary use. Following the Commission’s logic, any special event could be an accessory use and no use permit would be required.

Throughout the past year, the owners of Santa Margarita Ranch have been installing a 3,000-foot-long zip line. Absent

any reference to zip lines in the county’s Land Use Ordinance, the ranch proceeded with the installation without any permits. The ranch describes the zip line “canopy tour” as one “component” of their Agricultural and Ecological tour of the Ranch. The zip line ride is an educational tour and so, of course, according to staff, it is accessory to the agriculture, and, as accessory, needs no use permit.

Henceforth, decisions on what accessory uses might be allowed on ag land, without a use permit, will be at

the discretion of the planning staff. The Planning Commissioners who agreed with this interpretation were explicit that the “applicant” would be able to appeal any staff decision on accessory uses.

Missing from their radar was any way in which the public could appeal a staff decision. If no use permit is required, there is no environmental review, no conditions on operations and no public notification of any new planned accessory use.

The four Commissioners and staff were notably unconcerned by issues of General Plan consistency, violations of the Williamson Act, violations of the conditions attached to the open space parcel created by the approval of the Santa Margarita Cluster subdivision, and violations of state law raised by North County watch and concerned speakers at the meeting. In perverse disregard for the rule of law, the assenting commissioners demonstrated that they fully understood that the whole point of the interpretation was to legitimize after the fact the already installed ranch zip line. The zip line, they said, was “all about having fun.” It’s also all about who you know.

The Planning Commission’s interpretation will go to the Board of Supervisors.



The Grand Jury Wants You

by David Georgi

If you would like to participate in a pure form of democracy and learn about local government, you should consider applying for the SLO County Grand Jury.

The grand jury has a tradition that dates back to time of the Norman Conquest of England. During the Reign of Henry II (1154-1189), a “jury of presentment” was established consisting of twelve “good and lawful men” to investigate suspected crimes. Grand juries existed in colonial New England and were included in the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution. In early California, grand juries investigated local prisons and audited county books.

San Luis Obispo County, like all other California counties, has a grand jury that investigates civil issues with the objective of “shedding a light” on all aspects of local government to

Making the Coast Available to All

From Coast 4 U Quarterly, No. 7, Winter 2012

One of the California Coastal Commission's main focuses is making sure all Californians and visitors can access to our beautiful shoreline.

To that end, the Commission recently released a new report that describes and illustrates over 111 access points in the southern portion of our state (San Luis Obispo County and south) it has worked to make public since 1973.

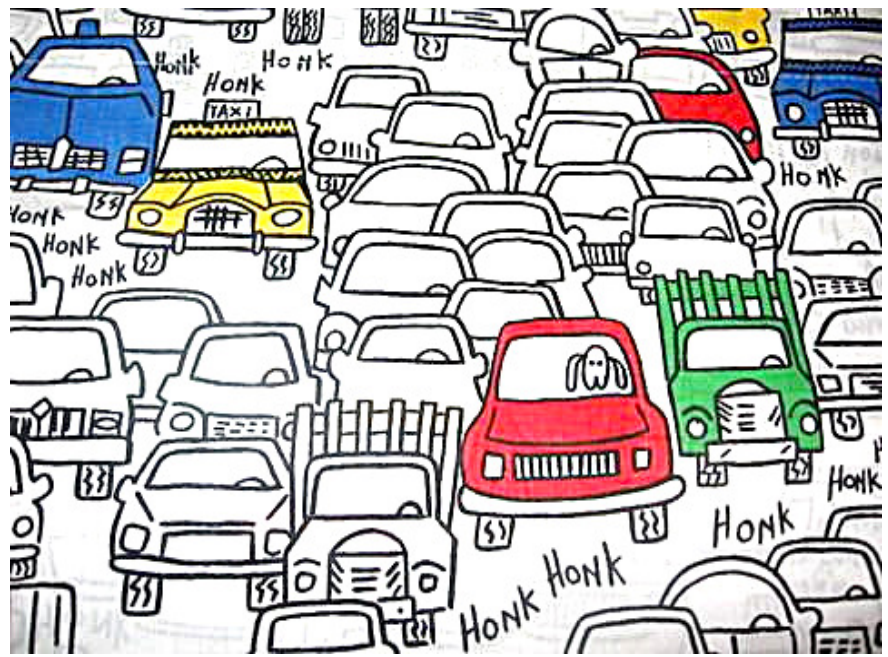
These access points include walkways or stairways from the nearest public road to the shoreline or coastal viewpoint. While many access points have been established,

some have yet to be opened to the public. For example, Los Angeles County has only opened 13 of the 34 acquired sites.

"We know our work is cut out for us because over half the sites in the most populous county are not open," Coastal Access Program Manager Linda Locklin told the LA Times. "That's not good enough."

How accessible is the coast in your county? Find out here: <http://documents.coastal.ca.gov/reports/2012/1/Th5-1-2012.pdf>.

To learn more about the Coastal Access Program and to purchase a Coastal Access guide, please visit our website, www.coastal.ca.gov/access/accdx.html.



LAFCO Traffic Jam

Scathing Caltrans letter on Los Robles Del Mar project not released to public prior to Pismo annexation hearing

The saga of the struggle of Pismo Beach to get permission from the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to proceed with the 182-acre Los Robles del Mar annexation and development has hit a bump, and may be skidding toward a ditch.

The problematic project has become notorious for the City's dubious claims of a reliable water supply. But claims that it will fully mitigate its traffic impacts now appear even less credible.

A January 17 letter sent to LAFCO by the California Department of Transportation lays out a history of the failure of Pismo Beach to comply with necessary fixes in the proposed development plan repeatedly pointed out by Caltrans from 1995 to the present. The Caltrans letter lays out the history of the City's botched studies of the project's traffic impacts, which "have been seriously understated." Further, the agency "strongly disagree(s) with the methodology used to determine the LOS" [Level of Severity]; traffic counts are "unacceptable;" the proposed traffic mitigation measures are "inadequate" and have no identified funding mechanism; and so on.

Above all, for the last 17 years, Pismo Beach has ignored Caltrans as the agency has repeatedly pointed out a glaring problem: the project's environmental studies have completely ignored its traffic impacts on the 101.

One additional problem: No member of the public was aware of the contents of that letter prior to the January 19 public hearing on the proposed development.

LAFCO executive David Church mentioned the Caltrans letter at the January hearing. But copies were not available to the public and the letter wasn't uploaded to the LAFCO website until more than ten days later, after Pismo activists inquired about it.

The annexation is scheduled for a vote at LAFCO's March 15 meeting. As this is an extension of the January 19 hearing, technically public comment has been closed and can only be reopened at the discretion of the chair. Local activist Eric Greening noted that in light of the tardily disclosed contents of the Caltrans letter, this presents a problem: "The revelation of the Caltrans letter, which no one in the public had seen prior to the hearing, and whatever other new material may be brought forward before March 15, create what would seem to be an obligation to allow continued comments, both written and at the meeting, at least on the new material and its implications for their decision," he wrote.

At the March 15 hearing, LAFCO staff will attempt to provide additional information on water supply for the city, the project's water demand, General Plan review of land use/stormwater and drainage/park and recreation issues, the potential for re-design of the project, and traffic issues arising from the project's projected 4,000 car trips per day.

On this last item, it seems unlikely that LAFCO can make an acceptable traffic analysis appear out of thin air by March 15.

In a January 27 *Tribune* Viewpoint, Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District board member Neil Havlik called Los Robles del Mar "a dinosaur." He concluded:

The city of Pismo Beach has doggedly moved forward over the years with this project despite its many drawbacks, design flaws and citizen opposition.... As a result of all of this, the people of the South County are being presented with an out-dated project more akin to L.A.-type developments of the 1960s than anything that is considered acceptable today. Planning standards have changed, community standards have changed and what our citizens expect of the building community has changed. This project is a throwback to earlier times that have no place in San Luis Obispo County today.

On March 15, the Local Agency Formation Commission should make a point of agreeing with those sentiments.

Sierra Club Comments Compel Review of Oil Pipeline Regulation

As the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board was moving to clean up an eight-year oil leak from an abandoned 100-year-old Conoco/Phillips oil pipeline adjacent to Nipomo Creek last summer, the Santa Lucia Chapter wrote a letter to the Water Board expressing concern over the potential environmental impacts that may be occurring elsewhere along the pipeline's path across the Nipomo Creek watershed, and other transfer lines of similar vintage.

After getting no reply, we followed up with comments at the Water Board's September 1 meeting (see "They Spill Your Milkshake," Oct. 2011). The board immediately directed staff to take action on the issue.

On February 17, Water Board staff wrote to the Sierra Club saying that they had evaluated our comments "with respect to active and inactive hydrocarbon pipelines throughout the Central Coast Region" and as a result had "conducted an extensive information gathering effort to better understand the overlapping authority in active and inactive pipeline regulation. Central Coast Water Board staff also contacted two major oil companies to determine what ongoing and planned characterization and risk evaluation." Staff summarized planned additional evaluations and actions regarding potential impacts from active and abandoned pipelines.

The letter concluded, "Central Coast Water Board staff plans to issue requests for information from all major pipeline operators/owners (both active and inactive/abandoned) in the Central Coast Region to gather information on any pipeline assessment work completed to date to help us determine if previously unknown potential threats to human health and water quality exist from inactive and abandoned pipelines."




Staff will use this information to:

- Identify additional locations of inactive/abandoned pipelines,
- Determine existing leak environmental evaluation and response protocols,
- Identify any information from these environmental evaluations showing potential threats to human health and/or the environment,
- Evaluate potential methods for assessing/predicting possible historical release locations from pipelines, and assessing the feasibility of removing or appropriately abandoning sections of inactive pipelines,
- Evaluate/implement appropriate pipeline abandonment methods for inactive/abandoned pipelines, and
- Determine whether further investigation of these pipelines is warranted, based on the priority of each of these individual sites relative to other existing cleanup cases.

The Water Board staff's response to the Sierra Club, along with a summary of the subsequent findings, next steps, and possible additional assessment work, will be submitted to the board as "Site Cleanup Program: Releases from Oil Pipelines in the Central Coast Region" in the Executive Officer's Report at the March 15 Water Board meeting in San Luis Obispo.



Look out below A replaced section of oil pipeline over Nipomo Creek.



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SANTA LUCIA CHAPTER

search: "Santa Lucia" and become our friend!

Protect California Has Successful Launch

by Kathryn Phillips, Sierra Club California

On February 1, environmental activists, the general public, legislators, legislative staff, and even a few industry lobbyists packed a Sacramento hearing room in to witness the launch event of the Protect California Campaign.

The event was a five-panel hearing about key environmental issues and the need to protect California. Panelists ranged from a Stanford scientist who testified about disturbing new research on the effects of air pollution on children's immune systems, to a labor leader who made an impassioned plea for protecting forests from clear cutting and sustaining jobs through better logging practices.

More than 15 legislators attended the hearing. I say "more than 15" because one legislator took time to poke his head into the room and survey the crowd, but decided not to stay.

The legislators who did stay, and deserve kudos for their efforts to protect California's environment, are senators Ellen Corbett, Mark Leno, Christine Kehoe, Alan Lowenthal, Fran Pavley and Lois Wolk, and assembly members Bob Blumenfield, Betsy Butler, Roger Dickinson, Mike Feuer, Paul Fong, Warren Furutani,

Rich Gordon, Jared Huffman, Jose Solorio. Assemblymember Huffman and his staff helped in many ways to launch the campaign, including ensuring we had a place to meet within the Capitol.

The Protect California Campaign is an educational campaign developed by Sierra Club California and allies at environmental and environmental justice organizations. Its purpose is to push back on attacks on environmental protection by helping government officials and others understand the work that remains to be done to eliminate pollution and protect our natural legacy.

Over the next several months, we'll be continuing the educational effort at the Capitol through a series of legislative and other staff briefings. We'll also be working with Sierra Club members around the state to make sure opinion leaders and legislators hear from them about their concerns about the environment and the need to protect California.

If you would like to be more involved in this effort in your local area, sign up on the Protect California website: <http://protectcalifornia.org/contact-us/>. You can also follow the campaign on Twitter (@ProtectCA) and FaceBook (Protect California).



Save the Date!

On March 15 and 16, the western edition of the 2012 Good Jobs, Green Jobs Conference will be held at the Westin Bonaventure Hotel in Los Angeles.

For the last five years, the Good Jobs, Green Jobs Conferences have brought together a diverse group of attendees from labor, environmental, and industry to discuss solutions for a green economy that will create good green jobs. It's important that the environmental community be well-represented to give environmental perspectives on global problems.

The Good Jobs, Green Jobs conferences, usually held in Washington, DC, are sponsored by the BlueGreen Alliance Foundation. This year, to attract wider audiences, the conferences will be offered in four separate locations: Atlanta, Los Angeles, Philadelphia and Detroit.

The BlueGreen Alliance was launched in 2006 by United Steelworkers and the Sierra Club. The Alliance has increased its membership since, uniting nearly 15 million people from organized labor, environmental, faith and human rights groups—all who understand the necessity for good jobs, a clean environment and a green economy.

The BlueGreen Alliance is focusing on the passage of comprehensive clean energy and climate change legislation, restoring the rights of workers in the United States to organize and bargain collectively, and establishing new trade policies that promote growth and prosperity across all sectors of global societies while protecting public health and workers' rights.

Those wanting to attend the Los Angeles conference are encouraged to apply for scholarships to cover transportation, hotel, and registration fees (Sierra Club members, see below). Volunteers from the Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter will offer historic walking tours of downtown Los Angeles and Hollywood for out-of-town participants. For more information, contact Joan Jones Holtz at 626-443-0706; jholtzhln@aol.com, or visit www.greenjobsconference.org.

March 20: For the Parks

By Elizabeth Goldstein
President, California State Parks Foundation

Join the California State Parks Foundation in Sacramento on Tuesday, March 20, for our Tenth Annual Park Advocacy Day and help us send a powerful message of support for California's 278 state parks!

Park Advocacy Day is a unique opportunity for state park supporters to take action by meeting with policymakers and urging them to keep California's state parks open, protected, accessible and well-funded. This year will be especially important as the countdown to park closures continues and as lawmakers grapple with important funding and policy questions that will have significant impacts on our state parks system.

Park advocates will speak with lawmakers about a variety of issues

impacting state parks, including park closures and the governor's proposed elimination of lifeguards on state beaches and a 20% reduction in state park rangers.

We need your help to make sure the voices of park supporters from throughout California are heard!

10th Annual Park Advocacy Day
Tuesday, March 20th, 2012
8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Sacramento, CA

You can register here: <http://my.calparks.org>.

To learn more and register for Park Advocacy Day, please visit our website or call our office at 916-442-2119.



Let's mingle Attendees at a Good Jobs, Green Jobs conference take a break between panel sessions as Jim Hightower greets them on the big screen.

...and We'll Pay Your Way

Exciting news for Sierra Club members, volunteers, staff, and allies. We are sponsoring a delegation — including paid registration fee, hotel, and travel — to the Good Job, Green Jobs regional conference in L.A.

The conference will feature over 40 workshops on green technology, green jobs, responsible investments, and environmental justice in a green economy. Additionally there will be a panel of environmentalist, labor union leaders, and energy specialists.

The event is an excellent opportunity to build coalitions around good jobs that are also

good for the environment. The conference details can be viewed at www.greenjobsconference.org/

We hope to bring a diverse group of Sierra Club volunteers, members, and other important allies to this event. Please contact Michael Sarmiento at MichaelSarmiento@sierraclub.org, if you would like to be part of the delegation.

We would like to bring as many as possible from each region but cannot bring everyone so please reply promptly if you are interested!





Eureka to San Francisco • Sept. 9-13, 2012
5 days • 320 miles

You can enjoy an incredible 5-day bicycle ride in Northern California while supporting **Sierra Club California**.

Climate Ride is a fully supported bicycle ride from Fortuna to San Francisco under towering redwoods, through the Russian River Wine Country, and along the Pacific Coast Bicycle Route.

Climate Ride is more than a bike trip. It's an inspiring journey with 150 like-minded people who are united by their passion for sustainability, renewable energy, and bicycles—the ultimate carbon-free form of transportation. **Climate Ride** also features an acclaimed nightly speakers series, known as the 'green conference on wheels,' where we hear from bright minds in policy, advocacy and innovation.

Please Sign Up for Climate Ride 2012
and Support Sierra Club California

Registration for Climate Ride is \$75 (which includes a beautiful jersey and more), and then you raise at least \$2400 to participate in the five-day, all-inclusive event. The ride is fully-supported by a team of talented leader-hosts, bike mechanics, medics, and massage therapists. When you sign up, you'll be joining many other people who want to do something to help create a better future for us all. Climate Ride is a great way to get involved and experience an amazing adventure, powered by your own energy. The best bet is to sign up early not only so you have time to fundraise and train, but also because spots fill up!

Visit www.climateride.org to find out about the route, tips for getting in shape, and finding sponsors for your trip.

Everyone who registers for the ride gets to choose which organization they will be raising money for – and we hope you will choose Sierra Club California!

Look Closely, Supervisors

These pictures are worth a thousand Climate Action Plans

Last summer, we pointed out in the *Santa Lucian* – as well as the pages of *The Tribune* and a letter to the County Planning Department – that the County's draft Climate Action Plan, the policy document that, it is hoped, will reduce San Luis Obispo's carbon emissions to 1990 levels by the 2020, lacked any mention of one of the biggest tools in the global warming/clean energy toolbox: Community Choice Aggregation (CCA).

California's Community Choice law gives local governments new and important rights to take a major role in achieving the state's clean energy and climate protection mandates. It empowers local governments and citizens to address many destructive impacts of the way we generate and use electricity.

Because we pointed out its absence, the evaluation of CCA was included in the final draft of the County's Climate Action Plan, which was then approved by the Board of Supervisors. This was not enough, however, to get consideration of CCA into the budgeted process for the first phase implementation of the Climate Action Plan. On February 14, County planners presented to the Supervisors the implementation measures they had selected for the first phase, almost all of which are voluntary measures. Community Choice was designated for Phase Two, which is scheduled to commence in about three years.

While we're waiting, we urge the board of supervisors to cast its eyes northward, and also on the two charts at the right. Marin County used CCA to flip the switch on cleaner, greener, non-polluting energy. Today, because it has put a CCA program in place, Marin Clean Energy customers are reducing annual greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 70,000

tons, the equivalent of taking 12,000 cars from the road every year. For an extra \$10 a month, residents of the Marin Clean Energy service area can sign up for "Deep Green," and get 100% renewable energy.

Last March, with this policy in place for less than one year, Marin County exceeded the state requirement to procure 20% renewable energy, with 27% of all energy coming from renewable resources.

As you can see, the investor-owned utilities cannot say the same. They have also failed to meet key requirements for implementation of energy efficiency, co-generation, and other clean energy programs. Community energy provides an alternative for helping to achieve these goals should the investor-owned utilities continue to fall short of the mark.

That's why it was not encouraging to hear County Planning staff at the February 14 Board of Supervisors meeting repeatedly emphasize the need for a continuing close partnership with PG&E, or to hear the PG&E rep cooing approval of the CCA-free voluntary measures in the County's first phase implementation of the Climate Action Plan, while further emphasizing the closeness of PG&E and the County and touting her employer's energy efficiency programs.

PG&E has made it clear statewide that it perceives CCA as a competitor – a cheaper, greener, more effective competitor – to be fought and vanquished. (See "San Joaquin Settlement: PG&E Must Cool It on CCA," June 2008, and "The Useful Death of Prop. 16," July 2010.) At some point, hopefully not after a three-year delay, it would be nice to see some indication from a county planner or one of our elected officials that they grasp this fact.

CA Appoints New Director of Pesticide Regulations

by United Farm Workers

Last month, Governor Brown appointed Brian Leahy as the new Director of California's Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR).

California is now poised to reverse the decision to permit the use of the cancer-causing pesticide, methyl iodide.

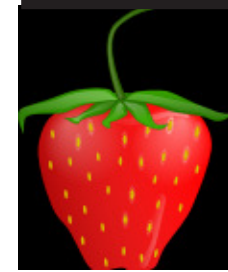
For over a year, Governor Brown has not taken action on methyl iodide, saying that the decision must rest with the incoming head of DPR. That person, Brian Leahy, is now in place. Please join us in calling for immediate action on methyl iodide.

More than 85% of the country's strawberries are grown in California, so actions here will have national implications. It may give the EPA a new opportunity to reevaluate this chemical that has no safe place in agriculture.

Methyl iodide is a known carcinogen that could cause spontaneous miscarriages and contaminate groundwater. Injecting it as a gas into the soil presents unacceptable risks to farm workers, nearby rural communities, pregnant women and children. Clearly, this toxic chemical is dangerous and should be banned.

Urge Gov. Brown & Director Leahy to take action on methyl iodide

TAKE ACTION



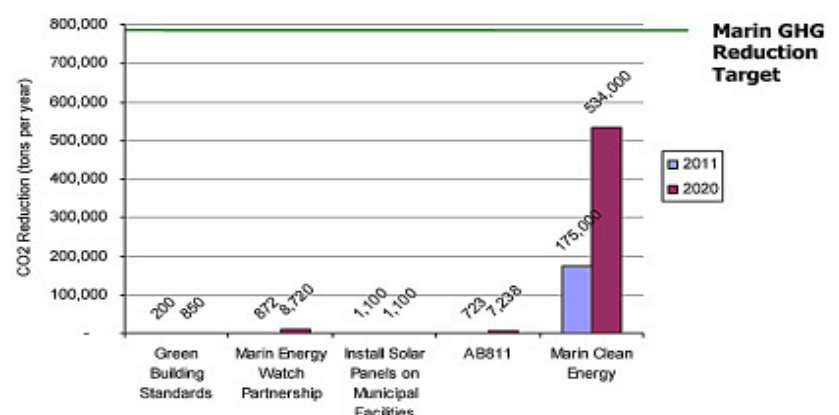
The UFW is joining with a coalition of environmental groups to

send a petition to Director Leahy telling him to prioritize banning of methyl iodide. Sign the petition today! And please add a paragraph personalizing your comment: <http://action.ufw.org/mei212>

After you take action please share this campaign with your friends and family. You can send them an e-mail and post this campaign on your Facebook and/or Twitter page by going to <https://secure.ufw.org/page/share/mei212>

GHG Reduction Programs for Marin County

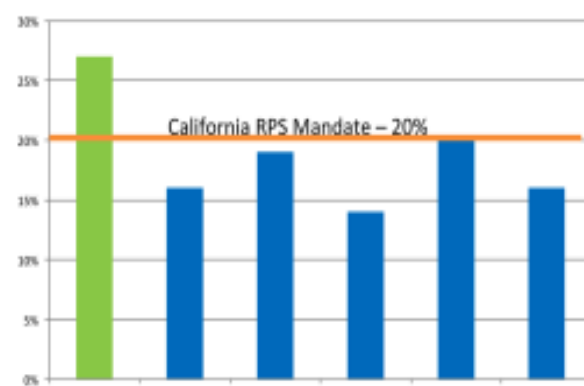
GHG Reduction Goal: 797,130 tons CO₂e



Renewables Portfolio Standard

Expanded Renewables Market

Renewables Portfolio Standard / MEA Procurement – 2010



In first reporting, MEA is exceeding the State's Renewable Portfolio Standard by 40%

Here's what we're not doing The only CCA program that has beaten the odds (and PG&E) and is now up and running in California is the Marin Energy Authority. Its current and projected greenhouse gas reduction targets (top, the bar on the right) and the amount of renewable energy it has generated in one year (bottom, the bar on the left) beat that state's renewables goal, the efforts of all the utilities, and every other climate action "tool in the toolbox." SLO County has decided it will start thinking about the possibility of CCA in about three years.

Sue Harvey Wins Kathleen Goddard Jones Award

In the spring of 2011, Sierra Club, Defenders of Wildlife, the Center for Biological Diversity and local environmental watchdog North County Watch entered into negotiations with First Solar Inc. and the SunPower Corporation in the hope of somehow mitigating the extensive impacts the companies' solar plant projects would inflict on the many threatened and endangered species that inhabit the Carrizo Plain.

Such negotiations proceed from the premise: "We promise not to sue you provided you agree to do the following." As spring turned into summer and frustration mounted, Sue Harvey, president of North County Watch, pulled her organization out of the protracted negotiations and, along with Carrizo Commons, sued the solar companies.

In August, Sierra Club, Defenders of Wildlife and the Center for Biological Diversity signed an agreement not to file suit against the companies in exchange for additional acreage to be preserved, thirty miles of existing fencing to be removed, enhancements to the wildlife-friendly fencing around the solar arrays, and solar company-funded efforts to eliminate rodenticides on the Carrizo and other San Joaquin kit fox conservation areas. The Santa Lucia Chapter did not endorse the agreement.

Two months later, in settlement of the lawsuit filed by North County Watch and Carrizo Commons, SunPower and First Solar agreed to establish a biological working group to monitor the lands during the life of their facilities, decommission the facilities at the end of their 35-year permits rather than apply for permit renewal, place the land in a conservation easement, and fund an endowment for management of the land in perpetuity.

The Kathleen Goddard Jones Award, named for the founder of the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club, has been awarded nine times since it was established in 2002.

Remarks by Andrew Christie, Director, Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club, at the North County Watch tenth anniversary gala, Santa Margarita Community Center, February 4, 2012:

A few weeks ago, I found myself in a living room in SLO with about twenty other people – concerned citizens and earnest young folks, CalPoly students and recent graduates. We had all attended the talk on global warming that Bill McKibben gave in SLO last October and decided afterward to get together as a group to see what we could do about global warming on a local level. The idea was to first identify what resources we have and what obstacles are in our path – pluses and minuses – in the effort to shift from a fossil fuel economy to green, renewable power and curb the emissions causing global climate change.

There was a guy in the front of the room with the usual giant pad of butcher paper and a grease marker, and everybody was brainstorming on the subject of green energy resources and obstacles, and inevitably somebody called out: "Two solar power plants on the Carrizo Plain."

The guy with the grease pen wrote that down. Then he said "Okay, is that a plus or a minus?"

There was a brief silence, and then someone said — and it wasn't me, and I'm not making this up — "It's a plus, because the solar companies are going to dismantle the plants in 35 years and restore the sites as wildlife habitat."

The other people in the room made general sounds of agreement, the guy with the grease pen put a plus sign on the paper, and we all moved on to the



next topic.

And I thought, "I have just witnessed, in microcosm, a preview of a cultural shift."

Cultural shift is a phenomenon that I just made up whereby the next generation comes along and says: "Of course black people don't have to ride in the back of the bus. Of course ten-year-olds don't have to work — seven days a week, in coal mines. Of course you can't walk into a national park and chop down an ancient redwood and make patio furniture out of it. That would be bad. That would be wrong. That would be stupid. Why would anyone do that? We don't do things like that because that's not the way things are. The way things are is the way things should be. Things are the way they are because it's *right*."

None of us walk around 24/7 with the consciousness, the historical details, in our heads of what was done, the blood, sweat and tears that were shed to hand us what we accept and enjoy as our present cultural reality. Nobody is going to be thinking, 35 years from now, "I wonder why the Carrizo Plain has been restored?," or wondering who did that. They're going to accept it because it's right.

But, in fact, corporations do not dismantle their power plants and restore the sites for the convenience of endangered species out of the goodness of their hearts. They have to be forced to do that. Someone has to sue them to make them do that. Quantities of blood, sweat and tears had to be shed in the course of achieving that outcome.

That's why it gives me great personal pleasure to be able to award the highest honor it is within the capacity of the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club to bestow, our founder's award, upon the Chair of our Conservation Committee and the President of North County Watch. And everything I just said was, of course, just one example of her unswerving dedication to environmental preservation, her grace under pressure, her courage under fire.

On behalf of the Executive Committee, I am pleased to present the 2011 Kathleen Goddard Jones award to Sue Harvey.

Nuclear Needs New Rules

Legal challenge by Nuclear Information and Resource Service, San Luis Obispo Mothers for Peace

On February 15, 37 clean energy groups submitted a formal petition for rulemaking to the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission seeking adoption of new regulations to expand emergency evacuation zones and improve emergency response planning around U.S. nuclear reactors.

Calling on the NRC to incorporate the real-world lessons of the Fukushima nuclear disaster, the proposed rules would expand existing emergency evacuation zones from 10 to 25 miles around nuclear reactors and establish a new zone from 25-50 miles around reactors for which utilities would have to identify and publicize potential evacuation routes.

Another improvement would require utilities and state and local governments to practice emergency drills that includes a natural disaster that either initiates or occurs concurrently to a nuclear meltdown.

Currently, utilities do not have to show the capability to conduct an evacuation during a natural disaster—even though, as seen at Fukushima, natural disasters can cause nuclear meltdowns.

The petition would also expand the "ingestion pathway zone," which monitors food, milk and water, from 50 miles to 100 miles around reactors.

"80% of the airborne radiation released from Fukushima went directly over the Pacific Ocean," explained Michael Mariotte, executive director of Nuclear Information and Resource Service, which initiated the petition. "Even so, the Fukushima evacuation zone extended more than 25 miles to the northwest of the site, and the NRC and U.S. State Department both recommended that U.S. citizens within 50 miles of Fukushima evacuate. Such evacuations could not be effectively conducted in the U.S. under current emergency planning regulations. We need to be better prepared and we can't rely on favorable wind patterns to protect the American people."

Dominique French, who is leading NIRS' campaign to improve emergency response planning, added, "The NRC has relied primarily on the 1979 Three Mile Island accident and subsequent computerized accident

simulations to support its emergency planning rules. But first at Chernobyl in 1986, and now at Fukushima, the real world has trumped any possible simulation. The fact is that far too many Americans live near nuclear reactors, but outside existing emergency planning zones."

"Pacific Gas and Electric Company's Diablo Canyon nuclear plant is seen as a poster child by the nuclear industry," said Jane Swanson of San Luis Obispo Mothers for Peace. "It is in a 'low population zone,' and not visible from any roads. However, families and businesses downwind from the nuclear plant and waste storage site do not consider themselves expendable, nor does invisibility negate the threat from two reactors and the radioactive wastes accumulated since 1984 that are stored on a site surrounded by 13 earthquake faults.

"Emergency plans of local and state government advise residents that in the event of a radiological release from Diablo Canyon nuclear plant there are two choices, depending on which way the winds blow: get in our

cars in an attempt to evacuate, or 'shelter in place.' The former leads to congested traffic on the one freeway serving the central coast of California as well-founded worries of families overload the freeway and bring it to a halt. Sheltering means using masking tape around doors and windows and turning off all air intakes into our homes for an unspecified time, in the hope that the emergency lasts only a few days rather than many months as at Fukushima."

"Indian Point, 24 miles from New York City, sits at the epicenter of the most demographically dense area of any nuclear reactor in the nation," said Michel Lee, Steering Committee, Indian Point Safe Energy Coalition. "Even under normal conditions, traffic is congested and regional infrastructure is highly stressed. During the severe snow, rain and wind storms of the past few years, large swaths of the region have been brought to a near standstill.

"And yet the NRC ignores all these realities, preferring to play with its computer models. This is a dangerous game."

Solar Wins

California rejects utility's proposed charge for rooftop solar

by Jim Metropulos, Sierra Club California

On February 10, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) struck down a proposal by San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) to charge their customers who own solar PV systems an extra fee for use of the distribution grid.

This charge would have added up to \$30 a month to the bills of customers who generate solar power for their own use. The effect of this charge would have changed the financial payback and energy savings equation for business and homeowners

investing in their own solar systems — essentially freezing the San Diego solar market and setting a dangerous precedent for other utilities.

Sierra Club California, the Utility Consumer's Action Network, Walmart, the City of San Diego, dozens of solar installers and others protested SDG&E's proposed new fee. Sierra Club intervened in SDG&E's rate case and argued that the proposal was illegal and contrary to California's goal of subsidizing and promoting renewable energy.



The CPUC agreed. "Development of such a rate element could affect not only SDG&E and solar customers, but also PG&E, SCE and other distributed generation and self-generation customers," wrote CPUC Commissioner Mark Ferron in the ruling. "Furthermore...I am concerned that this particular...[charge] may be inconsistent with current law."

In its ruling, the CPUC cited California law that prohibits utilities

from creating a "new charge" that would increase costs for customers that generate their own energy. SDG&E was directed to drop its charge and resubmit its proposal for restructuring utility bills.

While this is a big victory for solar in California, the battle is not over. Sierra Club California will be on the watch for attempts at the Legislature by the utilities to undermine laws that promote customer-generated renewable energy. We will also continue to follow the SDG&E rate case at the PUC.

30th Annual Salmonid Restoration Conference



by Heather Reese, Project Coordinator
Salmonid Restoration Federation

Salmonid Restoration Federation is excited to produce the 30th Annual Salmonid Restoration Conference in Davis, California, April 4-7, 2012.

This year's conference is entitled 30 Years of Fisheries Restoration—Focusing on a New Generation of Watershed Recovery. SRF realizes that we are at a turning point with how we prioritize fisheries restoration and advance towards restoring natural processes and recovering functioning watersheds. This is an ambitious concept and we have a diverse and wide-ranging conference agenda to match our fish-eye view of the future of restoration.

This year's conference will focus on a broad range of salmonid and watershed restoration topics that are timely and of pressing concern including large and small dam removal opportunities, ensuring adequate instream flows, floodplain and coastal lagoon restoration, and innovations in monitoring techniques.

The conference will feature workshops on Fish Passage and Protection, Analytical Measures to Determine Instream Flow Needs for Salmonids, Restoring Floodplain Processes to Increase Salmonid Populations, Community Partnerships to Promote Restoration, and Integrated Population Monitoring in California. Field Tours will include tours of the Yolo Bypass, Putah Creek, Cosumnes River and the McCormack Tract Floodplain, and Suisun Marsh Fish Habitat Restoration and UC Davis Center for Aquatic Biology and Aquaculture.

Concurrent sessions will focus on biological, physical, and environmental issues that affect salmonid restoration and recovery including:

- Genetic Effects of Hatcheries on Chinook Salmon Population Dynamics in the Central Valley
- The Downstream End: the Role of Coastal Lagoons and Ocean Conditions on Salmonid Restoration
- Restoring the San Joaquin: A Future for Chinook Salmon
- Frontiers in River Restoration and Geomorphology
- The Role of Artificial Propagation in Recovering Salmon Populations
- Utilizing Existing Fish Tagging Data to Guide Restoration Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation
- Dam Removal to Benefit Salmonid Recovery
- Floodplain Processes and Restoration: Research and Application
- Managing the Bay Delta for Water and Fish
- Steelhead Restoration and Recovery

Keynote speakers include Jim Lichatowich, author of *Salmon Without Rivers*, and the newly appointed DFG Director Chuck Bonham and California Secretary of Resources John Laird. NOAA Fisheries Deputy Director Monica Medina will also speak.

Other conference events will include the SRF Annual Meeting and membership dinner on Thursday evening, a poster session and reception on Friday night, and a Saturday evening Awards Ceremony, with a banquet and cabaret, including live dance band, Sambada!

For more information about the conference, visit www.calsalmon.org.

Brower

continued from page 2

actions in defense of the natural world to fit the prevailing political winds.

Those who profess environmental concern but render the protection of the Earth's wildlife and vanishing habitat subordinate to organizational harmony or 'process' were Mr. Brower's natural enemies. He never had the time or patience for their favored activities — the building of bureaucracies, the cutting of deals, the choosing of lesser evils. Mr. Brower was an agitator and a stinging gadfly. His drive was relentless. He insisted on the urgency of the peril and the need for action as the first, last, and only concern.

At the board meetings of the organizations he founded or led — organizations from which he invariably was ousted, sometimes more than once — it was clear that he was, well into his eighties, truly the youngest person in the room.

He saw his battles through. He pressed the issue. He kept at the destroyers until the destroyers relented, exhausted. He was unafraid to cause strife and dissent, and grasped the fact that it is usually the ability and willingness to do so which brings about the (temporary) victories in our battles to gain real protections for the wild earth, and an unwillingness to do so or a longing for compromise at any cost that brings about the (permanent) defeats.

David Brower was the embodiment of the concept of the Power of One to make a difference. Those of us who cherish his memory owe it to that memory to let his natural enemies know: He is not gone, and it is not safe."

The Sierra Club will hold a free screening of the documentary "Monumental: David Brower's Fight for Wild America" at the Steynberg Gallery in SLO on Wednesday, March 21, at 7 p.m. For information, contact Joe Morris at 772-1875 or dj1942@earthlink.net.



Letters

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

Not fooled

Just wanted to show you how helpful your publication is in heading off the bastards who try to trick us with dirty tricks. Thank you so much; I'm getting a flood of replies thanking me for sending this warning to my friends.

Vance Hyde
Cambria

Your're welcome! (The writer enclosed an e-mail she wrote and circulated over the weekend of January 7, on the eve of the vote on the single-use bag ordinance banning plastic bags from local grocery stores, when the mystery group calling itself the "Environmental Safety Alliance" was robo-calling most of SLO County to invite residents to a "telephone town hall" on the horrors of reusable bags. E-mails were flying all over the

county that weekend, wondering what it was all about. Ms. Hyde pulled out her just-arrived January issue of the Santa Lucian, summarized the lead story ("Plasticized Catastrophizing") on the efforts of the American Chemistry Council and uber-lobbyist Grover Norquist to pressure SLO into rejecting the plastic bag ban, and made the connection to the scare tactics of the so-called Environmental Safety Alliance as more of the same corporate skullduggery. She advised her friends "Don't be fooled by the call, and please pass the word.")

Ashbaugh on Measure Y: criticism unjustified

In the January *Santa Lucian*, an article criticized SLO City for spending \$765,000 for the Downtown

Jury

continued from page 3

ensure they are being governed honestly and efficiently. Any citizen can apply at http://slocourts.net/grand_jury/forms. The deadline is March 29. Citizens can also obtain a complaint form at this site and complain about anything having to do with local governmental agencies. Grand juries do not have jurisdiction on state or federal matters or on issues under litigation.

When I applied, I was one of 19 jurors selected. One of my main motives was to learn about local government. I was not disappointed. In the first few months, jurors were given extensive training. Key government officials and staffers came to explain what they did in their jobs. I soon was conversant with terms like "Community Service District," "LAFCO," "joint powers agreement," and learned to associate faces with the names that frequently adorn local newspapers. Local news stories now have an operatic drama because I have developed familiarity with the complex political maneuvering and riveting personal motivations that underlie them.

There are many cool features for being on the grand jury. In the first few weeks, you get taken to the Sheriff's Department to be photographed and issued an official badge. You get official grand jury business cards and key to a cute little house downtown, known as the "Grand Jury House." The county pays you mileage for grand jury business and you receive the princely sum of \$15 per day for jury duty. Along with the 19 selected jurors, 11 alternates are

Topaz Solar Farm construction is underway and will continue for the next three years.

For Project Information:
www.topazsolar.com

Questions?
Construction Liaison, Dawn Legg:
(480) 390-6256

To register anonymous comments:
Toll-free Hotline: **(877) 228-3331**

Bringing jobs, clean energy and opportunities to San Luis Obispo County



chosen to fill in as jurors drop out. The grand jury conducts regular business two mornings per week and then pursues individual investigations as necessary.

Grand juries have several specific responsibilities. Jurors tour all holding cells and evidence rooms in the county. They are shown complete tours of the prison and disaster center. Each week, the foreperson reads any new citizen complaints and the jury decides whether to investigate it. Each complaint is given a number, and it is surprising how fast they add up. Grand juries are also empowered to identify cases, that is, issues generated by jurors. Cases are identified by letters. The SLOGJ usually accumulates several dozen cases and complaint investigations in

a year.

Grand juries possess several powers. Witnesses can be asked to testify, and the proceedings are recorded for later reference. Witnesses are admonished that everything asked and answered during the interview, including who said what, is confidential. Jurors are under the same admonishment. Witnesses can be sworn, as in a court case. And, if necessary, witnesses can

Who Has Time?

Who has time to watch clouds
Drift over autumn-hued trees,
To observe a bee or humming bird
As they tirelessly gather nectar,
To sit patiently and witness the tide
Go from high to low?

We all do.

Think of the hours spent
In mindless pursuits:
Trolling the internet; chattering
About inconsequential things
(whispering sweet nothings is fine);
Clattering our carts down miles
Of supermarket aisles,
overwhelmed with options.

Stop whatever you are doing and just observe,
Absorb, breathe and above all, really see.
My dad liked the saying: "In the land
Of the blind, the one-eyed man is king:"
Be that king (or queen).

- Judith Bernstein

be subpoenaed. Government agencies are required to provide any documentation needed by the GJ.

The GJ is organized into committees and subcommittees for specific investigations. When an investigation ends, the pertinent committee appoints a juror to write a draft report following a prescribed template. The

JURY continued on page 10

Letters

continued from page 8

Improvement Project now underway ("Don't Ask Y"). The article argued that Measure Y had made no provision for downtown improvements, and implied that the City's Open Space Program was being short-changed by diverting this money toward the downtown.

This implication is simply inaccurate – and it is unwise. In 2006, this community built a solid coalition of environmentalists, business groups, property owners, and neighborhood activists to pass Measure Y, which provides over \$5.6 million annually for the City. This money is to be spent for a broad set of priorities set forth in Measure Y, including open space along with improving traffic congestion, storm drains, streets, public safety services, and for senior citizens needs.

In FY 2010/11 alone, Measure Y revenue enabled the purchase of over \$900,000 on open space. Another \$424,200 was spent on parks facilities.

It's vitally important that all those who helped pass Measure Y in 2006 understand that we must occasionally spend Measure Y money for priorities other than their own particular interests. SLO business advocates don't complain when we use Measure Y funds for open space, bicycle paths or parks. Environmentalists should applaud when the Council spends Measure Y money on open space and on infrastructure, streets and storm drainage. In fact, all these priorities [are] under the same category: "Essential infrastructure."

The City Council will soon decide whether to place a "son of Measure Y" on the November ballot to renew this essential revenue source after its

original authorization expires in April 2015. We're going to need the same coalition of environmentalists, business community, neighborhood activists, seniors, and families that helped us to succeed in 2006. I sincerely hope that the Sierra Club will be a part of that coalition.

Councilman John Ashbaugh
San Luis Obispo

On the issue of short-changing and diverting, we invite the Councilman to peruse the pie chart labeled "Use of Measure Y Revenues," to be found in each of the City's "Budget-In-Brief" reports from 2007-09 through 2011-13. They track the steady decline of spending on "Open Space Preservation" (a Measure Y funding priority) from 6 percent to 2 percent of the Measure Y pie, concurrent with the rise of spending on "Downtown Improvements and Beautification" (not a Measure Y funding priority) from 2 percent to 4 percent. We also draw his attention to the November 15, 2011, Council Agenda Report on the downtown beautification project, which notes under the heading "fiscal impact/alternatives" that the Council had the option of cancelling the project and restoring funding "to the Measure Y reserve to be reallocated for other priority work."

Then there's the city's Capital Improvement Plan and its proposed reduction of annual payments from the General Fund into the Open Space Protection Fund from \$237,500 to \$75,000 starting in 2013, despite the promise to voters that Measure Y would be used in part to provide more -- not less -- general fund revenues for open space protection.

This is not an argument about funding things business proponents

like vs. things environmental advocates like. In light of the above, several things would have to happen before the Sierra Club would consider endorsing "Son of Measure Y:"

- *The city council will not again allow city staff, after the fact, to use the goal-setting process to conflate priority spending issues — as identified by citizens in multiple surveys and cited in the language of the ballot measure — with projects not thus cited but desired by staff and business interests and falsely depicted in public meetings and city documents as part of the "Measure Y spending priorities" established by the citizens who voted for the ballot measure.*
- *The City will not attempt after the fact to redefine an actual voter-designated priority for a sales tax increase (such as "repairing and maintaining city streets") under a broad category ("essential infrastructure") and then stretch that re-definition to cover a sidewalk beautification project, thereby distorting the meaning of the phrase "Measure Y spending priority" beyond recognition.*
- *The city council*

acknowledges that the argument that sales tax revenues are part of the general fund and therefore can legally be spent on anything the City wishes to is not a good way to persuade a member of the coalition that got Measure Y passed to join in an effort to renew it, or to garner votes for that renewal.



No sale The beautification of downtown SLO was indeed paid for with Measure Y sales tax revenues -- much to the surprise of the citizens of SLO, who did not rank it as a spending priority for Measure Y funds.

Muir's March 2012

For one week this summer, northwest Yosemite will be home to the hikers of the fourth annual Muir's March to restore the valley John Muir so loved.

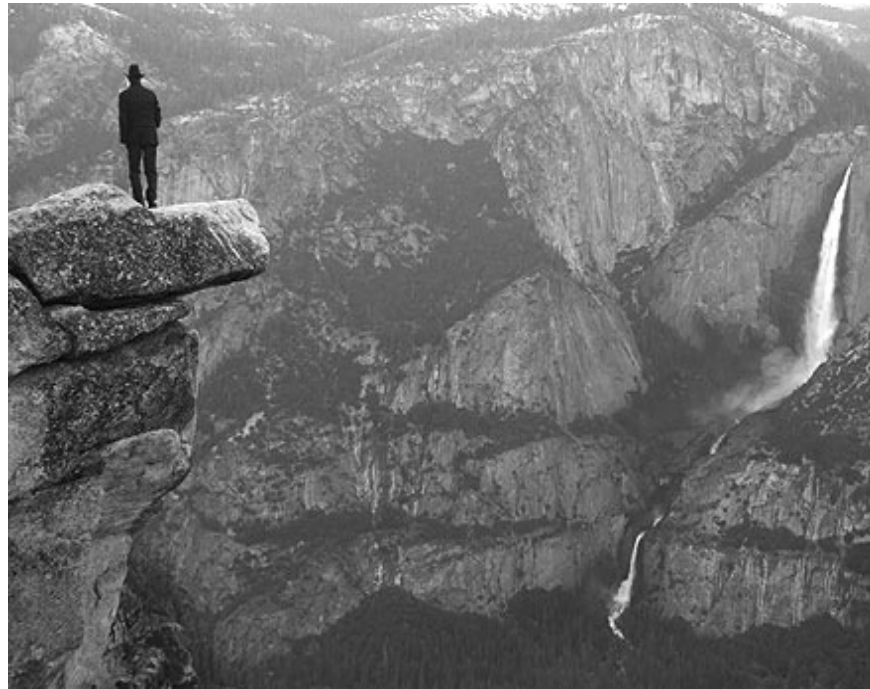
From July 29 – August 4, multiple groups following various routes will march across Yosemite and converge atop the O'Shaughnessy Dam to rally for restoration. Some will march for seven days, some will trek for four, while others will join in on the last day for a one-day hike.

Restore Hetch Hetchy is signing up all levels of backpackers for seven- and four-day trips that start in various locations in the national park and end together on the dam that inundates the breathtaking valley. A day hike starts and ends at the dam on August 4th and coincides with the end of the overnight trips.

Prior to participating, Marchers must raise a minimum of \$1,900 for the 7-day trip and \$1,100 for the 4-day trip. In exchange, each group will be led by expert guides as they traverse some of the wildest, most remote portions of Yosemite: Tillitt Valley, Smith Meadow, Jack Main Valley and the Grand Canyon of the Tuolumne. There's a trip for every age and ability level.

Last year the shortest overnight trip included children ages 7, 8 and 12. Those youngsters and their parents got to view spectacular wildflower meadows and experience some incredible bear-sightings. Laurel Lake was a particularly memorable destination: after spending the first night on the trail there, campers could choose to lounge by the water or walk around the lake for more views.

The 7-day hike through the Grand Canyon of the Tuolumne challenged



and inspired all involved: "Our trek began in Tuolumne Meadows, a paradise of emerald green meadows and snow-capped mountain vistas along the Tuolumne River.... Our last day on the trail, we hiked around the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir to O'Shaughnessy Dam, built to flood the Hetch Hetchy Valley under 300 feet of water back in the 1920s. The sudden transformation of the wild and vital Tuolumne River into a flat, lifeless lake was a shock. It made the purpose of the trip -- to promote the restoration of the Hetch Hetchy Valley back to its former



pristine state, as, in John Muir's words, 'one of nature's rarest and most precious mountain temples' -- resonate even more fully with each of us."

On the last day of the hike, all the Marchers came together with the one-day marchers that included Muir's great-great-grandson, Robert Hanna.

This year promises to be even more spectacular with an even wider variety of trips to choose from. For more information or to register for one of the trips visit www.muirmarch.org or call (415) 956-0401.

Join us as we march in the footsteps of John Muir. Join us on Muir's March!

Jury

continued from page 9

report is reviewed by the committee and then passed to an editorial committee. The revised report is sent to County Council for fact checking, and returned to the whole grand jury, which votes whether to make it public. It takes 12 of the 19 jurors to approve including the investigation report in its final report. The final report is released at the end of the grand jury year and is made available to local news organizations and governmental agencies and published on the grand jury web site. Government agencies that are the subject of investigations must respond to the report.

Each year, the grand jury reviews the previous year's report and investigates any developments. The composition of my grand jury is mostly retired people who have an active interest in local government. Even though we represent many different political views, we have bonded with a mutual respect borne of intense investigation into often thorny issues.

My experience on the grand jury has benefited me in several ways. I achieved my objective of learning the process and players in local government. I gained enormous respect for the various governmental officials, staff and citizens who interact in this grassroots dance of democracy. And perhaps most fulfilling has been a sense of achievement at putting in many hours of hard work and study to understand contentious issues and make coherent recommendations that may have positive effect in our local community.

Buried Treasure Revealed



Dreamy morning
so many of you today
blessed creatures
passing by my little window on
the world
your watery world
your sea cradle
moving you south

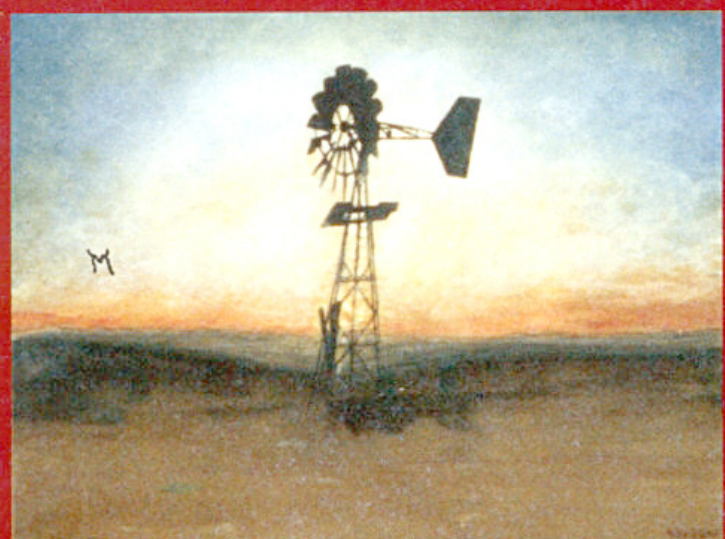
I see you for an instant
mammoth, majestic, magnificent
speckled back, smoky spray
a waving fluke or two
your beautiful breaching bodies

leaving me on the brink of weeping
my heart soaring with every glimpse
buried treasure revealed

The spectacle of whales
humbles me to earth's plenty,
connecting me to its precious bounty
and the wondrous spectrum of its gifts
falling more out of protection
as we grow more out of balance

- Kalila Volkov

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Classifieds

Next issue deadline is **March 16**. To get a rate sheet or submit your ad and payment, contact:

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Rainwater Management




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LAW OFFICES OF BABAK NAFICY
 Babak Naficy - Attorney at Law



1504 Marsh Street
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
 ph: 805.593.0926 - fax: 805.593.0946
babaknaficy@sbcglobal.net

Outings and Activities Calendar

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

All our hikes and activities are open to all Club members and the general public. Please bring drinking water to all outings and optionally a lunch. Sturdy footwear is recommended. All phone numbers listed are within area code 805 unless otherwise noted. Pets are generally not allowed. A parent or responsible adult must accompany children under the age of 18. If you have any suggestions for hikes or outdoor activities, questions about the Chapter's outing policies, or would like to be an outings leader, call Outings Chair Joe Morris, 772-1875. For information on a specific outing, please call the listed outing leader.

Sat-Sun., March 3-4 Death Valley Area Tour. Meet in Shoshone, south of Death Valley 8 a.m. Saturday morning or camp overnight nearby. Tour Badwater, Natural Bridge, Golden Canyon, and Artists Palette with short hikes and lunch stop. Saturday night camp at Texas Springs (fee). Sunday morning, visit Zabriskie Point, then drive through 20 Mule Team Canyon, Death Valley Junction to Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge. Primitive camping for those wishing to stay over Sunday night. Info.: Carol Wiley, 760-245-8734 or desertlily@verizon.net CNRCC Desert Committee.

Sun., Mar 4th, 9 a.m. Rinconada to Big Falls. Moderate, invigorating hike, 10 miles roundtrip and elevation gain of 2000 ft., in Los Padres National Forest. Hike begins on Rinconada trail on to ridge top with panoramic coastal and interior views, then continues west to Big Falls trail, descending to one of county's tallest waterfalls. In area are perennial ponds with salamanders and pond turtles. Bring adequate food, water, hat, sturdy shoes, and dress in layers for changing weather. Meet at Rinconada trailhead, about 10 miles east of Hwy 101 on Pozo Rd. and 3 miles past turnoff for Santa Margarita Lake. Plants, animals, and area geology will be discussed. Rain cancels. Info.: Bill Waycott, 459-2103 or bill.waycott@gmail.com. Car-poolers meet in front of Pacific Beverage Co, 22255 El Camino Real Dr., Santa Margarita, at 8:30.

Sat., March 10, 9 a.m. Over the Top at Cerro San Luis. Meet at parking-lot restrooms (dog park) for walk around and over Cerro San Luis via the Rock Garden trail. Five miles

round trip, lasting about 3 hrs. Moderate pace with a few steep uphill and a rocky section on the trail; great panoramic views of SLO. Boots recommended. Rain cancels. Info.: Mike Sims, 459-1701 or msims@slonet.org.

Sun., March 11, 10 a.m. Sycamore Springs. PoleCats is dedicated to leading local Sierra Club day hikes and modeling the benefits of using trekking poles — 2 miles/200 feet elevation change. Meet near the entrance of Sycamore Springs Resort, 1215 Avila Beach Drive. Confirm with David Georgi at 458-5575 or polecatleader@gmail.com. Bipeds welcome.

Fri-Sun, March 16-18. Whipple Mts. Desert Service. Join CA/NV wilderness committee and Mojave Group for annual service trip with Needles office of BLM and enjoy greening of the desert with elusive saguaro cactus. Work projects given on signup with leader Vicky Hoover, 415-977-5527 or Vicky.hoover@sierraclub.org. Central commissary (fee), CNRCC Wilderness Committee.

Sat., Mar. 17, 9:30 a.m. St. Patrick's Day Pt. Sal Hike. Moderate 5-mile hike to top of hill with beautiful views at Pt. Sal State Beach. Bring water, snacks, hat, sunscreen, and sweater for cooling weather. Wear green if you're Irish or wish you were today! Directions: Hwy 101 south, West Main exit west to Rt. 1, then left 1.8 miles, right on Brown Rd., 4 miles to gate, where we will meet. Rain cancels. Info.: Andrea Ortiz.: 934-2792. Asst.: Joe Morris, 772-1875.

Sun., Mar. 18, 1 p.m. Musical Walk: Historic San Luis Obispo. Come on a

guided, tuneful stroll past seven historic landmarks in downtown San Luis Obispo. Each stop is punctuated by recordings of thematic songs from the Mission days through World War II—minstrels to crooners. Duration about 1 1/2 hrs. Meet at corner of Nipomo and Dana Sts., SLO. Info.: Joe Morris, 772-1875.

Wed., Mar. 21, 7 p.m. Bimonthly Meeting: Monumental: David Brower's Fight for Wild America. Come see this stirring and beautiful documentary film about the most dynamic, influential, and controversial Sierra Club president since John Muir and the birth of the modern environmental movement. Includes reminiscences by prominent environmentalists like Michael McCloskey and Stewart Udall. Location: Steynberg Gallery, 1531 Monterey St., SLO. Info.: Joe Morris, 772-1875.

Sun., March 25, 10 a.m.~Johnson Ranch. PoleCats is dedicated to

Outings Sponsored by other organizations

Sat., March 17, Star Party. Is your telescope gathering closet dust? The Central Coast Astronomical Society is hosting a star-gazing event for those who are passionately interested in astronomy at the Santa Margarita KOA. Take an intergalactic tour of the universe by peeking through telescopes and chatting with real astronomers! Discover planetary nebulae, galaxy clusters, blue giants, and more. This is a great time to visit, as the nights get dark early and the star gazing lasts longer (weather permitting, of course... if it's cloudy or remotely wet, stay home and warm yourself by the fire). All you need to do is walk up the hill if the sky is clear and enjoy the celestial skies. For information, please visit: www.ccastronomy.org.



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.

leading local Sierra Club day hikes and modeling the benefits of using trekking poles — 2.2 miles/150 feet elevation change. The trailhead is located just after Lower Higuera goes under Highway 101 and becomes Ontario Road. Confirm with David Georgi at 458-5575 or polecatleader@gmail.com. Bipeds welcome.

Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park -- 3-Day, Live-Aboard, Multi-Island Cruises

May 6-8, July 8-10, September 9-11.

Explore the wild, windswept islands of Channel Island National Park. Enjoy the frolicking seals and sea lions. Train your binoculars on rare sea and land birds. Hike trails bordered by blankets of wildflowers and plants found in no other place on earth. Kayak or snorkel the pristine waters— or just relax at sea. All tours depart from Santa Barbara aboard the 68' twin diesel Truth. \$590 fee includes an assigned bunk, all meals, snacks, beverages, and the services of a ranger/naturalist who will travel with us to lead hikes, call attention to items of interest and present evening programs. Proceeds will go to benefit Sierra Club California's political programs. To make a reservation, mail a \$100 check, payable to Sierra Club to leader Joan Jones Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732. Contact leader for more information, 626-443-0706; jholtzhln@aol.com.

Outings Sponsored by other organizations

Sweet Springs Nature Preserve. The Audubon Society, which manages Sweet Springs Nature Preserve in Los Osos, needs volunteers on the second Saturday of the month from 9-12 a.m. to help with watering, weeding, planting, etc. Info at www.morro.coastaudubon.org.

Ventana Wilderness Alliance Trail Crew Opportunities

Volunteers are needed for work in the Ventana and Silverpeak Wilderness Areas. Trail crew leader daveknapp@ventanawild.org.

