



SIERRA
CLUB

April 2005
Volume 42, No. 4

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GENERAL MEETING

"Environmentalism and the Open Space of Democracy," April 13
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Upcoming General Meetings

Wednesday, May 18th, 5:30 - 7:00 pm, Ludwick Center
Out & About in the County
Learn about great places to hike, to kayak and canoe, and where new trails are being constructed. Hosted by Chapter Outings Leaders

August: **Annual Picnic**



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SANTA LUCIA

LUCIAN



Protecting and Preserving the Central Coast

The official newsletter of the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club • San Luis Obispo County, California

Shots Fired in Estuary

Chapter Weighs In on Morro Bay Hunt, Calls for Ban

On March 14, the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club and the Environmental Center of San Luis Obispo conveyed to the Morro Bay City Council the demand of their members to ban hunting in the Morro Bay Estuary.

Chapter Coordinator Andrew Christie addressed the Council on behalf of the Chapter and the ECOSLO board of directors, both of which recently voted to call for an end to the hunting of wildfowl in the estuary.

The black brant, the primary target in the estuary hunt, is declining throughout its migratory range. The Morro Bay Estuary is one of the last major resting and foraging grounds for the brant remaining on the west coast. Hunting enforcement by the Department of Fish and Game, chronically under-funded, is thin to non-existent, with the result that loons, grebes, and other non-game waterfowl in the estuary are killed



Black brant

Daniel Bergmann

during and out of season. The effects of the hunt go beyond direct mortalities, causing harassment and stress to all migratory birds attempting to rest or feed during their migration. Residents and tourists have reported birdshot in their yards or spraying the water in front of their kayaks.

Mandy Davis, a biologist, wildlife educator and tour guide who has lived on the estuary for five years,

testified on the hunt's public safety issues at the March 14 meeting. Davis is seeking to restrict the hunt from seven days a week to three during the season and put the crucial grassy islands area off-limits. Shortly after she began circulating a petition, she came under heavy pressure from

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Diablo's Bad Deal

PG&E is proposing a plan to bring the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant into compliance with state and federal water regulations.

The Diablo Canyon plant's cooling system is causing significant degradation of marine species and habitat and large declines in fish populations in Diablo Cove and beyond. Of the

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Join the Marketplace Farewell Party

On April 26, thanks to the hard work of Save San Luis Obispo, a grassroots coalition of neighbors, environmentalists, students and small business-people, SLO City voters will get the chance to decide the fate of the massive Marketplace mall. Measures A, B, and C on the ballot will require a "NO" vote to halt the massive L.A.-style monster development proposed for the Dalidio farm.

Between now and then, there are voters to be called, envelopes to be stuffed and precincts to be walked. Call 543-7561, drop by campaign headquarters at 861 Palm Street (next to the Palm Theater), email info@savesanluisobispo.com, or visit www.savesanluisobispo.org to find out how you can help.

Send donations large and small to Save San Luis Obispo, PO Box 3412, San Luis Obispo 93403-4312.



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

—John Muir



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Santa Lucia Chapter General Meeting

ENVIRONMENTALISM AND THE OPEN SPACE OF DEMOCRACY

Bring a friend and join us for mind-expanding discussions

This is an opportunity to explore ideas and issues, as well as to gather support for what you care about. No lectures - no easy answers - no "my way is the right way."

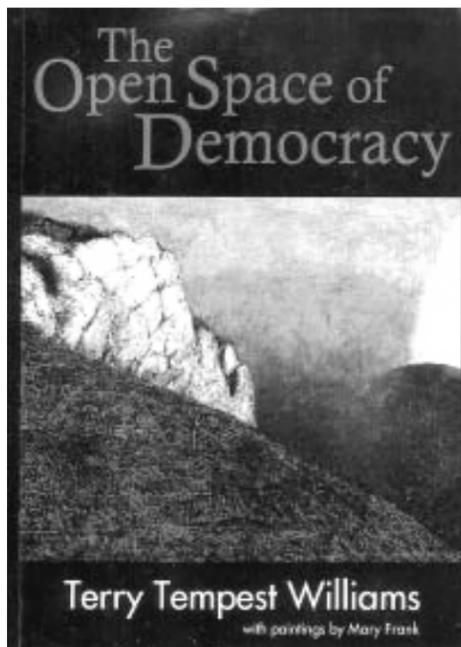
We're aiming for a **good exchange of ideas** that will help each person to become a little clearer about their own participation in personal and collective activism.

This is the beginning of a series of open forum discussions of the key questions facing us today such as: what are environmentalists fighting for? What do "environment" and "democracy" have to do with each other? How do I get involved without being overwhelmed?

Refreshments provided

Wednesday, April 13, 5:30 p.m.
Ludwick Center, Room A
864 Santa Rosa Street (corner of Mill)
San Luis Obispo

The Open Space of Democracy, by Terry Tempest Williams, is available for five-day loan at the Sierra Club Santa Lucia Chapter Office, located in the Environmental Center of SLO, 1204 Nipomo Street (corner of Nipomo and March St.), downtown San Luis Obispo.



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

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sierraclub.org](http://www.santalucia.sierraclub.org)

Outings, events, and
more!

Creeping Up On the Coast

Only Sanctuary Can Trump the Next Oil Spill

On February 12, the federal government extended offshore oil leases — and the possibility of future oil drilling — in 36 locations off Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo.

As the *L.A. Times* noted in that day's edition, "the tracts, located at least three miles off the coast, were...never developed because of regulatory hurdles and declining oil prices. The leases were supposed to expire within five to 10 years if oil companies did not make diligent progress in developing them. Yet the Minerals Management Service has repeatedly extended them, sometimes at the behest of oil companies waiting for a surge in oil prices."

The very same Minerals Management Service, the *Times* noted, "recently objected to a proposed boundary expansion of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, saying it could affect 'future potential oil and gas resource recovery' around an undersea mountain called the Davidson seamount" (See "Sanctuary Now!," January *Santa Lucian*).

When the *Monterey Herald* got a

copy of that memo and pointed out the obvious intent of the feds, Minerals Management Director Johnnie Burton responded, "The administration supports all existing moratoriums on offshore leasing in California. Therefore, there are no plans for activities within the Davidson seamount area, as your editorial suggested." The MMS is now being sued by ten environmental organizations for failing to adequately study the environmental impacts of the lease extensions.

The picture painted could not be clearer: The "surge in oil prices" is well underway and the fox is moving into the henhouse and setting up light housekeeping. The obvious designs of the Bush administration make the protection of the Davidson Seamount and the coast of San Luis Obispo an urgent imperative. The southern boundary of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary must be extended to include the waters off San Luis Obispo, finally precluding any overtures to offshore oil drilling off our coast. (National Sanctuary status has no effect on fishing.)

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HopeDance

Hope Dance MEDiA presents FILMS, slide shows and talks In SLO at the SLO Library, Osos and Palm streets.

Co-sponsored by CodePink, Information Press, Sierra Club, & the Green Party.

Friday, April 8, 7pm, \$5 and \$10 Donations — fundraiser for Health Care for All, SLO chapter. Films and Discussion: Judith Bourque's biographical documentary, THE REAL PATCH ADAMS, plus two short films about Canadian insurance and single-payer legislation in California

Saturday, April 9, 7pm, Donations. Palestinians and Jews in Dialogue. A 12-year-old Jewish-Palestinian Living Room Dialogue Group on the San Francisco Peninsula, the oldest in North America, keeps learning to change "enemies" to partners, and ignorance to understanding of both people's narratives. Co-founders Libby and Len Traubman will facilitate the evening.

Thursday, April 14, 7pm, Donations. DOING TIME, DOING VIPASSANA. Bringing an ancient meditation technique which helps people control their lives to India's prison system. Golden Spire Award winner, 1998 San Francisco International Film Festival.

Friday, April 15, 7pm, Donations. Presentation/Talk with Frank Kahl on SOCIAL SECURITY, WALL STREET, AND THE BIG LIE. Kahl is a retired economist living on the Central Coast, a college professor for 35 years, peace and justice activist, author and book reviewer.

Thursday, April 21, 7pm, Donations. SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTING: INVESTING WITH YOUR VALUES by Jack A. Brill, with Wes Roe and Christopher Peck. Apply your personal values to both make money and help make a better world. Brill is co-founder of Natural Investment Services Inc, a Registered Investment Advisor and co-author of *Investing With Your Values*.

Friday, April 22, 7pm, Donations. TOUCHED. A documentary about people who believe they have had contact with aliens and the Harvard psychiatrist who believes them. A look at the human experience and how people respond when the unexplained intrudes into their lives. Winner, Best Documentary, Female Eye Film Festival, Toronto.

Friday April 29, 7pm, Donations. THE TAKE, a film by Avi Lewis and Naomi Klein. (2004; new release). After Argentina's economic collapse of 2001, 30 unemployed auto-parts factory workers occupy their idle factory and end up lobbying their government to legalize new cooperatives. Go inside the lives of ordinary visionaries as they reclaim their work, their dignity and their democracy.

PUC Protest

By Jack McCurdy
Conservation Committee

On February 25, the Santa Lucia Chapter's Executive Committee resolved to support the filing of a protest with the California Public Utilities Commission to require a thorough review by PUC staff of the proposed contract for sale of electricity from the Duke Energy-owned Morro Bay Power Plant to PG&E.

Three weeks later, the Coastal Alliance on Plant Expansion (CAPE) and the City of Morro Bay filed a formal protest with the California Public Utilities Commission urging rejection of the contract on legal, environmental, regulatory and financial grounds and asking for evidentiary hearings. As a regulated utility, PG&E needs PUC approval to implement the three-year agreement for sale of up to 650 megawatts of electricity.

CAPE, a nonprofit citizens group, questions how the PUC could authorize operation of the plant under a sales contract when the plant is not in compliance with new Environmental Protection Agency regulations and its federal discharge operating permit has expired. In addition, independent studies have established for the first time that use of water from the Morro Bay National Estuary to cool the plant's generators kills billions of crab and fish larvae, representing a significant adverse impact under the U.S. Clean Water Act. Mitigation of this impact has not been addressed, as required by EPA regulations.

CAPE and the City both contend that the plant cannot operate legally without a lease for use of the public tidelands where heated water from the plant is discharged next to Morro Rock. The lease expired November 15, and Duke and the City are at an impasse in negotiations. Duke has offered \$250,000 a year, and the City is demanding \$10 million annually under a three-year pact. The City insists it would be illegal to accept less because that represents market value, which is required under a state tidelands trust policy.

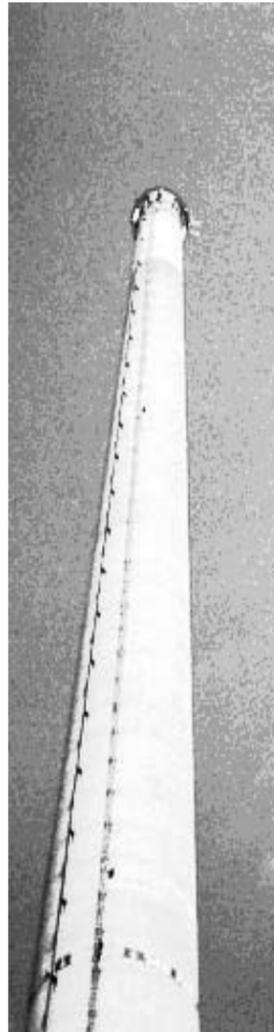
CAPE contends the plant should not be authorized to operate now that major impacts on the marine life of the Estuary have been established unless steps are taken to comply with EPA regulations, such as installation of dry cooling, which would use no ocean water, to replace plant cooling with Estuary water.

The CAPE letter points out that nothing is being done to require Duke to seek a new discharge permit. Duke has caused the current delay in the review by the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board of a proposed replacement plant in Morro Bay, and required hearings have been postponed indefinitely.

The City maintains that without seeing the contents of the contract, it cannot determine how it "will affect the residents of the City, and the environment in and around the City."

CAPE argues that the contract violates the new PUC policy on development of energy sources adopted on Jan. 24. It does not "promote environmentally sensitive resource choices," establish power reserves and provide more "open access" to PUC decisions, all required by the new policy. Instead, it could saddle PG&E ratepayers with costly power from an old plant that Duke has emphasized is highly inefficient.

Many of these concerns, CAPE said, may be resolved if the contract is made public, but, to date, Duke and PG&E have not provided the public, including the City of Morro Bay and CAPE, with any opportunity to review the terms of the Agreement, notwithstanding the contract's impact on rate-paying consumers as well as citizens directly affected by the continued operation of the Morro Bay plant.



A TDC Breakthrough

Planners Listening to North County on Development

By Sue Harvey
Executive Committee

A March 10 study session at the County Planning Commission produced real progress on the Transfer of Development Credit program. The TDC program was established to redirect development away from rural and agricultural lands to urban areas, but which, alas, frequently winds up doing the opposite, with residential "sending" sites transferring development rights to rural "receiver" sites and making hash of efforts to preserve ag land and open space in the north county.

If you get Channel 21 or can get a tape from the library, the March 10 session is well worth watching (schedule at www.slospan.org). Creston Citizens for Ag Land Preservation (CCALP) made a great PowerPoint presentation and submitted comments. CCALP, PasoWatch and the Templeton Area Advisory Group all hammered on the same list of egregious offenses in the TDC program: Lax assessment of impacts in determining the suitability of a receiver site, the inability to consider cumulative impacts, and inadequate criteria for judging receiver sites as suitable for greater density, all of which condemn the TDC program as bad land use policy.

Commissioner Bob Roos took the lead on the Commission and drove home the points about problems with the program. As a result, The Commission has decided to write a letter to the Board of Supervisors encouraging them to make important changes in the program. Stay tuned!

This has significant implications for the policies in the General Plan. Not all policies are created equal — environmental and parks policies in particular seem to be treated like a wish list. The Planning Commission is now asking why, and more power to them.

The planners will be needing all the backing they can get if the necessary substantive changes are to be made.

See You in September?

Our Largest Gathering Ever: Sierra Club Convention to Welcome Thousands to San Francisco, Build Vision for Future — Sign up by May 31 & Save

Sierra Summit 2005 was born two years ago at a Sierra Club Board of Directors meeting. Harvard sociologist and former United Farm Worker organizer Marshall Ganz gave a talk about successful social movements of the past century, and noted that they all held conventions where local leaders celebrated, told their stories, and returned home inspired and energized. Bob Perkowitz, a trustee of The Sierra Club Foundation, asked why the Sierra Club couldn't host a convention, then he offered to do-

nate seed money to get the ball rolling. Former board member Nick Aumen offered a resolution accepting that challenge and charging a task force to pursue it.

A few gallons of blood, sweat, and tears later, and voilà, Sierra Summit 2005, the Sierra Club's first-ever large-scale convention, to be held September 8-11 in San Francisco's Moscone Center.

The summit will feature speakers and entertainment - comedian Bill Maher will headline Saturday night

and pundit Arianna Huffington will speak Sunday at lunch, an exposition featuring more than 150 green and outdoor businesses as well as a cooking stage, a climbing wall, and an on-site eco-house. And at the center of all this activity will be an unprecedented gathering of delegates from chapters, groups, committees, and task forces, who will work together to plot the direction of the Club for the coming years.

"This will be the most inclusive direction-setting process we've ever

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Hunt

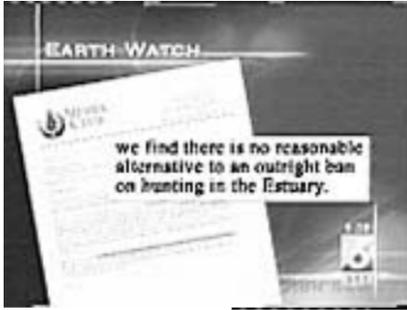
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hunters and was subjected to local legal harassment. Davis's March 10-17 *New Times* article "The Birds are Coming" effectively answered every argument made by hunters in defense of the hunt -- most notably citing the statistic that the pellets from a shotgun blast can travel up to 500 yards.

"We respect the efforts of Mandy Davis and other local citizens who want to restrict the days on which hunting is allowed here," Christie told the City Council, "but rather than making a problem into a slightly smaller problem, we'd suggest eliminating the problem."

Christie read aloud several recommendations from the Morro Bay National Estuary Program publication, "Ten Ways You Can Help the Estuary," which include "keep a respectful distance from birds and wildlife," "don't get too close to birds or marine mammals," and "keep your dog from chasing birds."

"Clearly there's an elephant in this living room, and it's toting a shot-



Merriam: "We find there is no reasonable alternative to an outright ban on hunting in the estuary."



KSBY

gun," said Christie. "That's why we'll be coming back to this Council with public testimony and suggested wording for a resolution for you to vote on and transmit to the state Fish and Game Commission."

"With virtually everyone we talk to about this, we get a two-stage response," said Chapter Chair Karen Merriam. "First, they're incredulous that hunting is actually allowed in the estuary. Second, they want to know how it can be stopped."

The California Fish and Game Commission will be reviewing the issue on June 24 at a meeting in Bishop, and meeting in Morro Bay to render a decision on August 19.



Davis: Request petitions from wildheartcomm@hotmail.com

Corbett Canyon: Rise Up!

About a mile north of Arroyo Grande, the residents of the Corbett Canyon area live in one of those places that are the reason why people want to live on the Central Coast. It is the definition of "the last best place," breathtakingly beautiful rural ranchland where it's possible to live among rolling oak woodlands and wildlife.

It's also possible to make a great deal of money by subdividing and selling off the land for development,

which one neighbor plans to do with 19 acres. The intense development planned for this land would essentially destroy the neighborhood.

On March 10, the Santa Lucia Chapter joined the owners of an adjacent ranch at the County Planning Commission in protesting the planned project. We pointed out the site's steep, unstable slopes and highly erodible soils, the failure of the project design to avoid impacts on and removal of native trees, and

Chapter Asks Rep. Thomas to Oppose "Free Trade" Bill

A delegation from the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club met with Congressman Bill Thomas' district representative at his office in Paso Robles on February 25 to deliver a 4-page letter opposing passage of the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA).

The letter, also signed by ECOSLO and several local ranchers and farmers, stated that "CAFTA sacrifices state and national sovereignty" by shifting power "from democratic governments to corporations, giving them broad rights to challenge community and environmental protections. This monumental shift in power not only deprives citizens of local control, it could leave Congress out of the loop for determining important national policies and safeguards for our public health and the environment."

Sue Harvey and Cal French, members of the Executive Committee of the Santa Lucia chapter and constituents of Thomas' 22nd Congressional district, met with district representative Mike Whiteford during the Congressional recess. Congress will likely vote on CAFTA by Memorial Day.

The trade agreement would extend the length of drug patents and delay studies comparing the effectiveness of patented drugs with their generic counterparts. It would allow "dumping" of agricultural products priced below what it costs farmers to grow them. Other provisions would prohibit any state control over the planting of genetically engineered crops and outlaw the traditional agricultural practice of saving seeds.

"The Sierra Club isn't opposed to international trade," said Harvey,



"we're opposed to trade agreements that take crucial decisions out of the hands of democratically elected representatives and give them to corporate tribunals. This allows foreign corporations to sue governments for damages if environmental and labor laws interfere with their profits, real or theoretical. Corporate lawsuits filed under NAFTA's 'investor-state' provision have already led to over two dozen cases against the U.S., Mexico and Canada, and \$1 billion in claims. CAFTA would intensify and spread this attack on public interest laws."

Rep. Thomas, Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee and a staunch "free trader," is not just feeling the heat from environmentalists on CAFTA, an issue on which the Sierra Club, the Farm Bureau, and many conservative Republicans agree. The February issue of *SLO County Farm and Rancher* noted the Farm Bureau's position "that free trade agreements, such as NAFTA and CAFTA, [have] numerous problems," and their concern "that U.S. and California agricultural exports have been traded away by our government, leaving our own farmer/ranchers at a disadvantage."

As you read this, hearings on CAFTA in the House Ways and Means committee probably will have begun. If you live in Lois Capps' district, call 202-225-3601 to ask for her "no" vote. Her legislative aide is Randolph Harrison. If you live in Bill Thomas' district, call 202-225-2915

For more information, go to www.sierraclub.org/trade/get_involved/

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Newsletter layout artist: Must know (and own) Pagemaker, Adobe Distiller. Work at home, once a month.

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Please call 543-8717. We need you now!



What you have to lose.

the intensive amount of grading required -- all making it obvious that this is far too much development for this site. We said the Commission cannot approve a "negative declaration" -- a superficial environmental document that does not address the damage this project would do to wildlife, habitat and watershed. Unless the proposed project is significantly scaled back, the County must require a full Environmental Impact Report.

We did what we could in sending that essential message, but the Chapter and two brave ranchers willing to ruffle feathers can't do it alone. So here's the message to the residents of the Corbett Canyon area: **You MUST make your voices heard if you want to save this land.** A neighborhood speaking with one voice on a project that will directly impact residents is what makes the difference when it comes to stopping bad development in this county. You must show up at the Planning Commission. You must show up at the Board of Supervisors. You must sign a speaker's card and turn it in. You must speak.

The Planning Commission will hear testimony on the Godfrey Tract Map on April 14 at the San Luis Obispo County Government Center. Call 781-5600 for the agenda.

No Nukes!

The false promises of nuclear energy and the massive economic opportunity we'll lose if Bush has his way.

By Patrick C. Doherty
Senior Editor, TomPaine.com

George Bush's second term will include many historic decisions, but none may be more detrimental for long-term American prosperity — and go as quietly unnoticed — than a large-scale federal commitment to nuclear power.

The nuclear industry has launched a concerted campaign that, if successful, would allow the two halves of the energy industry — oilmen and power companies — to preserve their market dominance. That's dangerous. Preserving the energy status quo will cripple any chance that America will escape from our debt-ridden consumer economy. For America to both grasp the emerging vision of a more equitable and prosperous "innovation economy" and achieve true energy independence, this nuclear assault must be stopped.

The new year saw the launch of a well-orchestrated, multi-pronged campaign calling for America to end its dependence on oil through massive federal investments in nuclear energy. On January 1, the American Enterprise Institute published an article ominously entitled, "The Solution," by William Tucker. In the February issue of *Wired* magazine, Global Business Network president Peter Schwartz echoed the same argument, but geared toward that mag-azine's more libertarian and tech-savvy readers.

Then President Bush singled out nuclear energy in his State of the Union speech. Then he increased the budget for the controversial Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository in Nevada and requested a 50 percent increase over last year's budget for advanced nuclear power research. But most tellingly, Senate Energy Committee Chairman Pete Domenici is out selling his new book: *A Brighter Tomorrow: Fulfilling The Promise of Nuclear Energy*.

The argument Tucker and Schwartz use is radical for conservatives but commonplace within liberal and centrist circles. They state that America's dependence on oil in an increasingly tight market with supplies in unstable regions makes our nation massively insecure. In addition, they remind us that nuclear power is climate-friendly, as it releases no carbon into the atmosphere. Therefore, to satisfy the dual imperatives for energy security and climate change mitigation, we must make America independent of oil for transportation and carbon-laden coal for electricity.

Incredibly, in the months since the November elections, the energy policy debate has shifted from whether security and climate change were even worth considering to full acceptance of the dual threat and laying out proposals to deal with it.

Nuclear Industry's Power Grab
But in shifting the lines of the nation's energy debate, the nuclear industry is also trying to obscure its real objectives. Since the 2004 campaign, energy security and climate change have produced policy options

that talk about how much oil consumption would be eliminated and by when. In the campaign, John Kerry adopted the labor- and environment-led Apollo Alliance's "17 percent reduction in oil consumption by 2020." In December, previously uncommitted centrists (from both parties) embraced the bi-partisan, National Commission on Energy Policy agenda calling for 15 percent reductions in oil consumption by 2025. In late 2004, the Rocky Mountain Institute mapped a path to reduce oil consumption by 76 percent by 2025 and 100 percent shortly thereafter— using proven technology to increase energy efficiency and shift to renewable energy sources.

Nuclear power advocates are avoiding the transparent and market-friendly "X percent reductions by Y date" formula to hide the weakened position of their industry. The reason is simple: They cannot promise any reductions for at least a decade, perhaps longer. Nuclear power in the United States has been on the verge of collapse since the accident at Three Mile Island killed new construction. With aging reactors needing retirement, in the current regulatory environment the nuclear industry will soon have to shut down its heavily

subsidized and privately lucrative power plants. Any new reactors built in the next 10 years would merely replace aging reactors, doing nothing to reduce our oil dependence. In essence, the industry is merely fighting to preserve its 20 percent share of the domestic electricity market.

To do that, the industry is employing a cynical 'bait-and-switch' campaign. Industry advocates are promising the safety, cost and oil-replacing potential of generation-after-next "pebble-bed" reactors, but these designs still need years of research and development. In the meantime, the nuclear industry is working with its congressional allies, like Sen. Domenici, to lift the restrictions on and deliver the subsidies for less-competitive, more expensive 1980s-era nuclear designs to merely replace 30 and 40-year old reactors. These subsidies will cost the taxpayer \$8 billion. It's all smoke and mirrors.

In reality, we won't see pebble-bed reactors replacing oil for 20 years— which may be the Bush administration's goal. Oil companies are making record profits from high oil prices right now -- profits that are possible only so long as America sees oil as a commodity worth fighting for. That requires continued dependence. Yet those companies also recognize that Asian economic growth will, within 20 years, drive oil prices through the roof, making alternatives unavoidable. It all adds up to a well-orchestrated hand-off from one powerful industry to another. Markets be damned.

Denying An Innovation Economy
This preservation of the status quo denies America the opportunity of a century: A chance to build an "innovation economy" that delivers not only energy independence but a booming era of growth— growth in large part made possible by trans-

forming our energy infrastructure.

Economists and business leaders are increasingly talking about the next economic boom being based on innovation, on the application of knowledge to solve problems and deliver higher-quality services and products. The outlines of that "innovation economy" are emerging slowly, but distinctly. Information technology is driving revolutions in biotech, nanotech and materials science. Combining those technological innovations with innovations in the housing market known as 'smart growth' — ending sprawl by integrating efficient transportation and healthier communities— America is poised to enter a new economic boom period.

That innovation economy requires clean, reliable, flexible and efficient energy. Clean, to mitigate climate change and improve public health. Reliable, to power the high-technology industries and services that require high-quality, uninterrupted power. Flexible, to accommodate the innovations in land use and transportation and the advances in efficiency that make turbines smaller and smaller. And efficient, to reduce overall cost and environmental impact.

Nuclear Can't Deliver

Nuclear power can't deliver on these requirements. When the current system was designed, clean, reliable, flexible and efficient were not priorities. Oil was plentiful, carbon emissions were a non-issue, and our technology was rudimentary and dirty. As our economy grew, we increased scale, not efficiency. The simple truth is the system we've got is getting older and more fragile. Crises like California's rolling brownouts and

Diablo

continued from page 1

two best ways PG&E could obey the laws requiring it to stop doing so — i.e. shut down the plant or switch to a closed-cycle cooling system that does not kill the eggs and larvae of marine wildlife — the company would prefer a (cheaper) third alternative: Create an artificial reef and a marine reserve, declare a conservation easement on the surrounding land, and go on destroying the marine environment.

PG&E's proposal contains a clause that's quite a kicker:

TERMINATION OF CONSENT JUDGEMENT

10.1 If, during the Operating Life of the Plant, for any reason any federal or state government entity, or court imposes, whether through the exercise of its discretion or as the result of a change in applicable federal, state or local laws, regulations, ordinances, plans, guidelines, guidance documents, or policies, a requirement that would require the Company to comply with a more stringent standard with respect to thermal effluent limitations than exists in the Plant's current Permit, a copy of which is attached as Exhibit B to this Consent Judgement, or that would require a cooling water system technology that is more costly or burdensome than the cooling water intake and discharge system which existed at the Plant as of August 2000, the Company, in its sole discretion, may elect to rescind the Consent Judgement, including without limitation the Conservation Easement...

It goes on to spell out how the company must notify the board in writing, etc. This is a gun to the head of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, State and Regional Water Quality Control Boards and the California Coastal Commission, threatening to rescind the easement if any additional regulatory requirements are put on the plant in the future. This is so patently ridiculous that on page 11, section 17(a) of the Easement, PG&E states that "The parties acknowledge that the Conservation Easement may not qualify as a conservation easement under Section 815 of the California Civil Code, because Section 815.2(b) provides that "a conservation easement shall be perpetual in duration."

In this regulatory never-land, even though the easement doesn't meet the definition of a conservation easement as defined in the state Civil Code, PG&E is relying on that definition to justify the easement! This is the reason the Nature Conservancy walked away from this deal.

As written, the easement conflicts with PG&E's recently approved Coastal Development Permit for dry cask storage of spent fuel rods, as it precludes all development activities, which would apply to the construction of trails, signs, benches or anything else associated with the now mandated public access.

The Regional Water Quality Control Board should reject this deal.

the big northeastern blackout are only going to become more commonplace.

Nuclear power does nothing to fix this. In fact, it would only reinforce this inefficient system by creating a new generation of massive plants located far from the customers they serve. Consumers would have little choice and the industry would have government over a barrel.

There are better answers. Technology and design advances have opened up a new way to organize our energy grid that encourages high-quality energy and healthy markets. Build a new building or housing development, and you can put a clean new power source with it. Wind turbines already allow rural communities to buy a town-sized wind farm and make money when they sell excess power back to the grid. As solar cells become more efficient, middle-class homes and urban rooftops could be generating— and selling— their own electricity. If that were to happen, big centralized plants couldn't compete with a network of distributed power generators. David will have killed Goliath.

The nuclear industry wants to abort that vision of a clean, efficient and distributed energy future before it is born. With the help of George Bush and Pete Domenici, they might just succeed.

Join our E-mail Alert List

Get notification of important upcoming meetings and decisions on issues of environmental concern for Central Coast residents. Send you email address to sierra8@charter.net (Sorry, Santa Lucia Chapter members only).



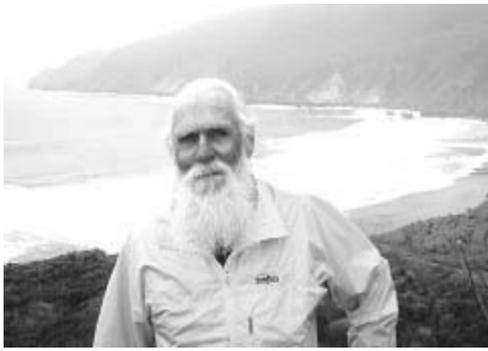
My Country is Heading In the Wrong Direction

By Bill Denneen

Democracy is a strange form of government. It requires its citizens to be informed, and to participate. Americans, in my opinion, have become lazy and just do

not take the time to figure out where we are going. Citizens have permitted our country to head in the *wrong* direction. Maybe we need another revolution to wake us up.

Humans are not sheep. We are thinking organisms with some control of where we are headed. I was a participant in D-Day over 60 years



ago, defending this right. The G.I. Bill gave me an education. These factors *require* me as an elder, responsible citizen, to speak out.

My country ignores the Geneva Convention, ignores the United Nations, destroys the ecosystem that nurtured us, increases our dependence on oil, ignores the population explosion — the only nation out of 190 to *not* fund family planning in Third-World countries — prepares to violate the Arctic Wilderness, puts

our economy in a state of collapse under the weight of horrendous budget deficits, and is on the verge of re-introducing the Inquisition.

Australian Nobel Peace Prize nominee Dr. Helen Caldicott fears the re-election of President Bush will lead to Armageddon: "It's not just the threat from nuclear war," she says, "it's the threat of what's happening to the environment, the global warming which is occurring rapidly now, to ozone depletion, to species extinction, to deforestation; it's the whole thing."

The anti-choice "moral values" lobby is a large, powerful force. This lobby has no objection to a decrease in the death rate — that is the prolongation of life with medicine, vaccination and nutrition. At the same time they object to use of contraceptives, vasectomies, tubal ligations, abor-

tions, homosexuality and sex education, all of which reduce unwanted pregnancies — the birth rate.

President Bush blocked Congressionally approved funding for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for three straight years. This program provides safe, effective contraception and voluntary family planning to poor women throughout the world who want to limit their offspring. The President's action will make even worse the population explosion that is destroying the biosphere. It will actually increase maternal deaths and the number of abortions.

For survival, we need "environmental values" much more than we need "moral values." We are the laughing stock of the whole world.

Sierra Summit

continued from page 3

had," says Greg Casini, co-chair of the Summit Steering Committee.

For years, the Sierra Club has hosted an annual meeting that includes the board of directors and the

Sierra Club Council, where each chapter is represented by a Council delegate. At most, several hundred members have gathered at one time. The Sierra Summit will bring 3,000 members together, 1,000 of whom will be Summit delegates.

"There is broad debate in the environ-

mental community now that so much is at risk," says Summit Co-Chair Lisa Renstrom. "With the summit, we have an extraordinary oppor-

tunity to give voice to our members, and draw upon their experience, passion, and wisdom to set our future."

Other speakers at the summit include Poet Laureate Robert Hass,

documentary filmmaker Ric Burns, "green" architect Bill McDonough, and Robert F. Kennedy Jr., named one of *Time* magazine's "Heroes for the Planet" for leading Riverkeeper in the fight to restore the Hudson River.

There will also be dozens of panels, such as "Women Who Rock," "Working to Build Progressive Media," and "The Impossible Will Take a Little While." Other work-

shops will focus on international tourism, technology and activism, leadership development, campus organization, and more. The Sierra Club Showcase will give participants

a chance to share their activism success stories. The expo will include green lifestyle/organic food exhibits, outdoor equipment retailers, hybrid vehicles — there's even going to be a "green" dollhouse, with miniature functioning solar panels.

Before, during, and after the Summit, volunteers from the Loma Prieta, Mother Lode, and San Francisco Bay

ship size -- one at-large delegate per 5,000 members.

Between now and the summit, says Casini, the Club will be surveying activists about the goals we should set, the roles we should play, the strengths we should nurture, and how we can best build involvement and support for our work in local communities.

To register, go to www.sierra-summit2005.org or call (301) 694-5243. If you sign up by May 31, you save \$75 off the regular Sierra Club member rate. (The registration fee varies depending on whether you are a member, leader, or delegate, as well as whether you attend the whole summit or part of it.)

Want to Be a Summit At-Large Delegate?

Any local Sierra Club member can nominate him/herself as a Sierra Summit at-large delegate from San Luis Obispo. You can organize other members to come to the Chapter Executive Committee meeting and vote for you, if there are more nominees than delegate slots.

At-large delegate nominees must attend the April 22 Chapter ExCom meeting, when the Chapter's Summit delegates will be appointed.

Up the Creek

By Jack Beigle

If you can get the right level of an incoming tide, the cooperation of the weather man, a small group of nature lovers and a little bit of luck, a paddle up the Los Osos Creek can be a wonderful experience. The incoming tide was just right and with that little bit of luck we found the winding channel through the Los Osos Creek Delta.

By quietly paddling in the center of the channel we didn't disturb the hundreds of birds that were feeding along both sides of the channel. We saw dozens of different species ranging from the common American coot, through the sandpipers, sanderlings, snowy and great egrets, willets, godwits, long billed curlews, brown and white pelicans, and several beautiful avocets.

All of a sudden, a large flock of birds took flight. We were not near enough to them to have startled them. Then we saw a peregrine falcon swoop overhead. It didn't strike any prey and continued its flight across the estuary. The flock of birds circled around, landed and continued feeding. It was an exciting show of life and death in nature.

We continued up stream, under the South Bay Boulevard Bridge and watched the cliff swallows nesting high above. Farther upstream we saw two small waterfalls, as the water was still draining from the recent rain. We paddled until the creek became very shallow and almost too narrow to turn our boats around.

Our return down stream was faster but we had a headwind as we paddled across the estuary to the sand spit for lunch. For the finale we had the wind at our backs as we paddled back to the marina. It was another fine adventure on the estuary.

Check the outings schedule and join us on the water.



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chapters will lead outings and explorations to local parks, trail restoration service trips in Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and even a trip to the San Francisco Giants game on Friday night. (All outings will be accessible via public transportation.)

The Summit delegate-selection process is designed to reflect the broadest possible participation while honoring the Club's leadership structure. Each chapter will send four delegates -- its Council of Club leaders delegate, a senior leader, someone under 30, and an outings leader. Another 163 at-large delegates will be selected, based on chapter member-

Oil vs. Sanctuary

continued from page 2

There are two things you can do about this:

1. Attend the June meeting of the California Coastal Commission, which will decide if the lease extensions violate the Coastal Act, and sign up to speak. The meeting will be held in Long Beach over June 8-10. **Call (415) 904-5200 for the location, and the date and time when offshore oil leases will be on the agenda.**

2. Write to State Senator Abel Maldonado to tell him you support expansion of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary to include the entire coast of San Luis Obispo County — and you **don't** support just drawing a "bubble" around the Davidson Seamount to give it Sanctuary status. The southern boundary of the Sanctuary must be extended all the way to Point Conception.

**Senator Abel Maldonado
State Capitol, Room 4081
Sacramento, CA 95814**

When you write, feel free to include two or three points from the Chapter's resolution on the extension of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary at www.santalucia.sierraclub.org/mbnms/mbnms.html

Classifieds

Classified ads are \$10 and are limited to 20 words. They are due by the last week of the month prior to publication (**next deadline is April. 18, 2005**). Please submit your ad and payment to:
Sierra Club - Santa Lucia Chapter
p.o. Box 15755
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406
sierra8@charter.net

Local Government Meetings

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

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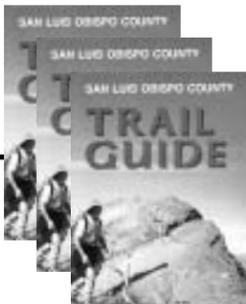
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Environmental 911

Here's an easy way to report on environmental concerns or to get information on issues affecting our ecology: Call 911! That's just a catchy title, though. The real number is. . . (drum roll):

(415) 977-5520 or environmental911@sierraclub.org

A Will . . .

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

For more information and confidential assistance, contact

John Calaway
Sierra Club Planned Giving Program
85 Second Street, 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105-3441
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Outings and Activities Calendar

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

Hiking Classifications:

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

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

Fri-Sun., Apr. 1-3, Service in Carrizo Plains National Monument. In this large, relatively unknown natural grassland tucked between the Coast Range and the Central Valley, miles of barbed wire from former ranching days needs removal to allow pronghorn antelope and tule elk freer access to the plain. Meet Friday at Selby Campground, remove barbed wire on Saturday, then hike Caliente Ridge on Sunday and learn about the area's natural history. Enjoy spring wildflowers, lush meadows, and abundant birds and wildlife in what's been called California's Serengeti. Other features such as Soda Lake, the San Andreas Fault, and native petroglyphs are free to explore for those who'd like to extend their visit. Contact Ldr: Melinda Goodwater, MGoodwa651@aol.com, (408-774-1257). CNCC Desert Com

Sat., April 2, 9:00 a.m., CARRIZO PLAINS/ CHIMINEAS RANCH EXPLORATORY HIKE. Come join us on a six mile loop hike on the recently acquired Chimineas Ranch property. There should be some wildflowers to see. We will meet at the Carrizo Plain Visitor Center and drive from there on dirt roads. It is about a 45 minute drive and higher clearance vehicles are advised. You have the option of driving out to Carrizo Plain on Friday evening and staying in the house adjacent to the Visitor Center. We will be having a potluck gathering there at 8:00 p.m. that evening if you are interested. We will not be able to stay there on Saturday night. It is possible to stay at Selby Rocks public campground if you don't want to drive home that day. Please take note that rain just prior to that Saturday may possibly make the dirt roads impassable. If that happens we will access Chimineas Ranch from Route 166. This would change the meeting place and start time. Please contact Carlos if you are interested at 546-0317.

SUNDAY, APRIL 3 10:00A.M. SANTA MARGARITA LAKE DAY TRIP: Our goal for this outing is to enjoy a leisurely paddle

and check out the spring wildflowers at Santa Margarita Lake. Bring your boat and equipment, PFDs, camping gear, picnic lunch and water. Phone Jack Beigle 773-2147 for park fees and details

April 3, Sun., 0930 POINT SAL: Meet at end of Brown Rd (which is 1.5 miles south of Guadalupe off Hwy #1) at locked gate at 0930, climb 2.5 miles to 'pass'/saddle and then decide what next. Bring water, windbreaker and a lunch. A group might be hiking 'all the way' to Paradise Beach and then Guadalupe Beach (if interested e-mail me as we have to arrange a pick up). Call or e-mail a few days before for details: bdenneen@slonet.org, 929-3647

Wed., Apr. 6, 13, 20, 27. 5:30 p.m. Informal 1-2 hours hikes around San Luis Obispo. Check Website at <http://santalucia.sierraclub.org/index/index.html>, or e-mail gfelsman@onemain.com for meeting location

Sun., April 10, BLACK LAKE CANYON: Meet at junction of Guadalupe Rd and Leguna Nigra. Hike down into the Canyon seeing Zenon Way controversy, oak woodland, euke problems, biodiversity, wildflowers and maybe some of the rare flora and fauna of the cyn. Call or e-mail a few days before for details: bdenneen@slonet.org, 929-3647

Sat-Sun., Apr. 16-17, Pronghorn Protection Carcamp. (Nature Study/Work Party Carcamp): The Carrizo Plain holds a special place in California ecology. With little rainfall and few water sources, the species that live here are both hardy and endangered. Particularly beautiful are the pronghorn antelope which evolved in these wild, open spaces. Then cattle ranching left a legacy of endless fences - which are deadly to the pronghorn. Join us for a weekend in this remote area removing fencing for their benefit. Camp at Selby campground, bring food, water, and camping gear for the weekend. Potluck Sat night. For fence removal, bring heavy leather gloves, old long sleeved shirts and sweatshirts, long pants and boots. Rain cancels. Resource specialist: Alice Koch. For more information, contact Leaders: Cal and Letty French, 14140 Chimney Rock Road, Paso Robles, CA 93446. 805-239-7338. Prefer e-mail ccfrench@tcsn.net. Santa Lucia Chap/CNRCC Desert Com

Sat., Apr. 16th, 9:30 a.m. Cerro Alto: Enjoy Cerro Alto again before it gets too hot on this moderate 7.5 mile, 1700 ft. loop hike, counterclockwise this time just for a change (eucalyptus grove before the peak rather than after). Meet 9:45am at Cerro Alto campground, located off of Hwy 41, 8 miles east of Morro Bay, 12 miles west of Atascadero. Park at headquarters parking lot at end of campground road (parking fee or USFS pass required), or carpool at 9:30am from large dirt pullout on right past Miners Hardware as you leave Morro Bay on Hwy 41. Break for lunch at the top. Bob Schwartz, 441-9508, rws_usa@yahoo.com (3D)

Sat-Mon., Apr. 16-18, Turtle Mountains Rescue. The Turtle Mountains, in the low desert

northeast from Joshua Tree, are known for their colorful volcanic peaks and for the wide variety of minerals found there. Unfortunately visitors along the northern end of this wilderness have left an appalling quantity of trash. We will assist the BLM in collecting the larger objects and bagging smaller debris in preparation for removal. Recreation will include a dayhike to the interior of the area, but our reward will be in knowing that we have helped restore a truly beautiful place. Contact Leader: Sandy Nancarrow, nanclan@jps.net, (707-747-1546). CNCC Desert Com

April 17, Sun. COAST BIKERIDE: Meet at Melodrama in Oceano at 0930 with bike & helmet. I'll show you my secret passageway to dunes and then we'll tour the Central Coast to see Coastal Commission access points. We might get to Bob Jones bikeway. An easy ride with many stops and turn around anytime U run out of 'steam'. Call or e-mail a few days before for details: bdenneen@slonet.org, 929-3647

Sun., April 24, 8 a.m., Valencia Peak Loop Hike. Join us for this 3 hour, 7 mile hike with 1300 feet of elevation gain. There will be beautiful views at the peak and along the bluff trail. Everyone is welcome, but beginners will fall way behind due to the elevation gain and non-stop pace. Meet at the Coon Creek trailhead at the very end of Montana de Oro State Park. Leader Al (534-0462) (3C)

Sun., April 24, 0930 COAST HIKE: It will be to a remote area with wildflowers, a midden and Hutash (Mom Nature). Call or e-mail a few days before for details: bdenneen@slonet.org, 929-3647

Sat., April 30, 8:00 a.m. Machesna Mountain Hike (Tentative). Come take a 12 - 15 mile, with 3000 foot elevation gain, hike through the Machesna Wilderness. Starting from American Canyon Campground, we will climb 1500 feet to an open meadow and pond below Machesna Mountain itself. After lunch we will climb another several hundred feet to a ridge over looking the Carrizo Plain. We will soon start our descent to a lush green valley, before climbing up to our final rest stop. We should have plenty of wildflowers, and pleasant weather. Bring lunch, water, sturdy hiking shoes, and plan to be out all day. Most of us will go to the Pozo Saloon after. Meet at Pacific Beverage Company in Santa Margarita. This is not a beginner's hike. Limit 20 people. For details, reservations and meeting place call Gary (473-3694)(5F)

Sat-Sun., Apr. 30-May 1, North and South of Shoshone. This carcamp will take us to a number of unusual sites at the southern end of Death Valley. On Saturday Susan Sorrells, lifelong resident of Shoshone, will take us to a number of recently discovered early man sites and fossil finds. That evening we attend a classic performance by Martha Becket at the Death Valley Opera House. On Sunday a geology teacher will take us to visit sites of geological interest in the (recently flooded) Furnace Creek Wash and along the Badwater road. For more info contact leader: Wendy Van Norden, wvannorden@hw.com, (818-



Photo by Joaquin Palting

990-9085). CNCC Desert Com

May 1st, Sun., 0930 POINT SAL: Meet at end of Brown Rd (which is 1.5 miles south of Guadalupe off Hwy #1) at locked gate at 0930, climb 2.5 miles to 'pass'/saddle and then decide what next. Bring water, windbreaker and a lunch. A group might be hiking 'all the way' to Paradise Beach and then Guadalupe Beach (if interested e-mail me as we have to arrange a pick up). Call or e-mail a few days before for details: bdenneen@slonet.org, 929-3647

Sun., May 8, 7:00 a.m. Hike to Pimkolam Peak (Junipero Serra or Santa Lucia). Join the leader on this strenuous hike to the highest point in the northern Los Padres National Forest. The hike is 12 miles with 3800 ft of elevation gain. We will pass through several different ecosystems, including oak forest, chaparral, and pine forest. There are also some wonderful rock outcroppings near the trailhead. The view from the top is magnificent. On the peak is an abandoned fire tower which can be climbed. This is an all day outing as the drive to the trailhead is about 1 1/2 hours. Tentative meeting place is the Las Tablas Park and Ride, on the West Side of Highway 101. From SLO take 101 north to Las Tablas Exit. Turn left, and the parking area is on the left, will carpool from there. Drivers should bring driver's license, auto registration, and proof of insurance which is required by Fort Hunter Liggett. Bring sufficient water, lunch, good hiking shoes, and dress for the weather. The trail may be brushy in places and there is a possibility of poison oak. No Adventure Pass is needed. Please confirm with the leader. For info and confirmation contact Chuck at 927-3769. (5F)

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.