



**SIERRA
CLUB**

September 2004
Volume 41, No. 8

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GENERAL MEETING

Come celebrate the birthday
of the Wilderness Act!
Sept. 21 @ 7:00 p.m.

NEXT HEARST HEARING: Windsor 9/15

We made a difference at the Wild-
life Conservation Board hearing on
the Hearst Ranch conservation
plan. We need you to write a letter
or attend the Coastal Conservancy
meeting on Sept. 15 to protect
public access! Check for updates
at www.santalucia.sierraclub.org

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CALENDARS ARE HERE!
Order early!
Call Bonnie at 543-7051**

Free eco-tours of Morro Bay Estuary for low-in- come families.

From Black Hill to Oyster Bill's
Barge, kayak lesson for kids,
lunch on the sandspit. Sept. 8, 9;
Oct. 6, 10. Groups of 10. Con-
tact Mandy Davis, Baysong Eco-
Tours, 772-8796,
wildheartcomm@hotmail.com



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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

Hearst Ranch: Inching Toward a Fair Deal



Attendees sign in at the Sierra Club picnic rally held just before the July 15 public workshop on the Hearst Ranch Conservation Plan at the Cayucos Vets Hall.

All summer long, they called up or came to our door. Members, friends and colleagues; grave, sympathetic, concerned: "You're being pummeled," they'd say. "The Sierra Club is getting hammered on the Hearst deal."

They were referring to our efforts to correct the glaring problems in the proposed Hearst Ranch conservation easement, and the opposing efforts of the Hearst Corporation's mighty p.r. machine, which has enlisted a number of local residents as cheerleaders for the plan, including many who would have serious problems with it if they took the time to study the details. The details were not an issue for our carefree local newspaper of record, which, after the terms of the deal were unveiled on July 12, stepped up its breathlessly approving coverage, running numerous editorials that attacked the Sierra Club and asserted that "the deal's solid from start to finish" but were factually challenged and foggy on specifics.

In the run-up to the August 12 meeting of the Wildlife Conservation Board in Sacramento to vote on initial funding for the plan – the first of three state agency funding votes – news reporting on the Hearst Ranch deal took on a sharply different tone outside the SLO media gulag. The day after the terms were disclosed, the *Sacramento Bee* candidly reported that they "would result in less public access to the corporation's beachfront property" and that "Hearst would have more agricultural and residential development rights than were previously disclosed." The *San*

Jose Mercury News – the *Tribune's* sister newspaper – and *L.A. Times* provided further contrast to both the tone and content of local coverage. Both the *Mercury News* and the *Bee* editorialized against the deal in their August 9 editions. (A call for "Open space, open government" appearing in the former, and "Hearst Ranch mystery: State negotiates a squishy land deal" in the latter).

On August 3, the state Legislative Analyst's Office weighed in with the first thorough scrutiny of the deal by a public agency (Read it at www.lao.ca.gov). They had "significant concerns with the proposed transaction" and made four recommendations to strengthen resource protections and monitoring and "ensure that the state's significant investment is protected in perpetuity." Two days later came the California Coastal Commission's staff report and conclusion that the Hearst Ranch Conservation Plan is inconsistent with the California Coastal Act, with nine recommendations for improvement.

The Commission and the Legislative Analyst agreed that the

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Chapter Kicks Off 20/2000 Campaign

by Tarren Collins, Chapter Chair

If you're an environmentalist in SLO, you know the meaning of the term "high-maintenance relationship." There's a lot of love, but it's a lot of work.

In the last twelve months, the Santa Lucia chapter has done a lot of work. We:

- worked with State Parks to oversee the finalizing and implementation of our consent agreement to restrict off-road vehicle activities among fragile nesting areas of the western snowy plover at Oceano Dunes;
- successfully weighed in with the Morro Bay City Council to deny State Parks its request to kill crows to save plovers at Morro Bay Strand State Beach, and submitted to Parks a list of non-lethal methods for dealing with crow predation and protecting plover nests; all tested and recommended by wildlife biologists as alternatives to—and often more effective than—lethal removal;
- joined the successful effort to urge Morro Bay and Cayucos to finally turn away from their endless string of waivers from the Clean Water Act and take the first step on the road to full tertiary treatment of waste water, rather than continuing to pour it into the ocean at less than secondary treatment levels;
- joined the environmental contingent that traveled to the Watsonville meeting of the Regional Water Quality Control Board and testified on behalf of the conditional waiver program for ag run-off, resulting in the historic vote to finally monitor, regulate and enforce the water quality of the Central Coast's pesticide-laden agricultural run-off;

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

—John Muir



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Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to Sierra magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.



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or e-mail:
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the Web!

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

Outings, events, and more!

Santa Lucia Chapter General Meeting

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, WILDERNESS ACT

September 2004 is the 40th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act, which has proved fundamental to the preservation of wilderness areas and the values of the Sierra Club.

To commemorate the occasion, Cal and Letty French will present a program based upon their 40 years of hiking and backpacking throughout the western U.S., and their equal number of years of wilderness advocacy and Sierra Club service.

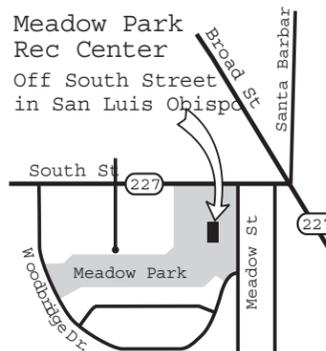
Discover our Chapter's potential wilderness areas, see slides of beautiful back-country and discuss wilderness achievements.

Open to Sierra Club members and the general public. Bring your friends. Refreshments will be served.

Tuesday, Sept. 21, 7:00 p.m.

Meadow Park Rec Center

San Luis Obispo



Save the date!!

Chapter Executive Committee Elections in October Nominations Needed Now!

You? You, average Santa Lucia Chapter member, can run for a seat on the Executive Committee? Yes!

The ExCom is the chapter's administrative body; we need people who inspire participation, can take minutes, organize committees, provide publicity, and/or organize members. Great conservationists may apply and are welcome, but the Chapter needs people to handle the mundane needs of organization. You may say "I can't be Conservation Chair," or "I can't be Political Chair," but those are not ExCom positions. If you have some time and would like to help this great organization, please volunteer to serve on ExCom.

The two highest vote-getters will serve 3-year terms; the next two will serve 2-year terms. Members of the ExCom whose terms are expiring are Tarren Collins, Tim O'Keefe, and Sarah Christie, with one open position. Continuing members are Colby Crotzer, Eliane Guillot, and Steve Marx.

Members of the Nomination Committee are Letty French, chair <lmfrench@tcsn.net> 805-239-7338, Steven Marx <smarx@calpoly.edu>, Richard Kranzdorf <rkranzdo@calpoly.edu>, Ann McMahon <amcmahon@slonet.org>, and Tarren Collins <tlclaw@fix.net>.

You may nominate yourself or suggest anyone else to any member of the committee. Members may also run by petition, signed by 25 members of the Chapter in good standing. The nomination period closes on September 23. Petition candidates need to be submitted to the Nominating Committee by 5:00 pm on October 4 in the Chapter Office. A short ballot statement (250 words or less) and a photograph will be needed by October 8 from all candidates (nominated or petition) for publication in the Santa Lucian.

Get on the Road to Somewhere

from Chapter reports

This fall, all political eyes will be focused on the handful of battleground states where experts say the presidential election will be determined and many other races will be decided. It is in these same states that the Sierra Club will be focusing its efforts to educate and mobilize its members and sympathetic environmental voters. Sierra Club activists who live in those states will be at the center of the action and will have countless opportunities to participate - attending and organizing rallies, making phone calls, walking neighborhoods.

But what about the rest of us in the red and blue states — isn't there some way for us to be a part of what is arguably the most important election for the environment in all our lives?

Yes. The answer is to get on the Road to Somewhere - either literally or figuratively.

This fall, the Sierra Club will be trying to talk to more people, knock on more doors, make more phone calls and mobilize more members and voters than in any previous election. And we need your help to do the job. Whether you want to help by making calls from the comfort of your home, or organize a mailing party at your local group or chapter, or take a working vacation this fall to help with on-the-ground efforts in a nearby state, there is something to meet your needs in the Road to Somewhere program.

We have already scheduled the first of our fall volunteer-to-volunteer weekends for September 18-19, during which there will be an opportunity to travel to a nearby state to talk one-to-one with fellow (but infrequent voting) Sierra Club members.

Go to <http://www.sierraclubvotes.org/> for more information. And send us your name today, and we will make sure to get back to you with the full menu of Road to Somewhere options to choose from. Send your name, address, phone number and email address to road.somewhere@sierraclub.org.

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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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Human Rights & Responsible Trade Committee Adopts Chapter Resolution on Immigration

Sierra Club Ties Human Migration to “Free Trade” Policies of Globalization

A resolution on immigration and trade endorsed by the Santa Lucia Chapter’s Executive Committee last February has been adopted by the Sierra Club’s Human Rights & Responsible Trade Campaign.

Originally drafted at the end of 2003 by a committee of the John Muir Sierrans caucus in response to the Sierra Club’s long-simmering debate over immigration, the resolution makes a direct connection between the trade and development policies of the West — collectively known as economic globalization or “free trade” — and the social and environmental havoc they have brought to less developed nations, resulting in rising pressure to migrate. The resolution concludes that “rising human migration is primarily an effect, not a cause, of environmental destruction.”



Ellis Island, 1910

“The resolution makes it clear that environmental advocates of immigration reduction should shift their energies from a project that heaps more penalties on the poor, and focus instead on reforming the policies that are creating world-wide poverty, despair and desperation,” said Sarah Christie, Chair of the Santa Lucia Chapter’s Political Committee. “The Chapter was pleased to endorse the resolution due to its sharp focus on globalization and unfettered corporate power, and we’re even more pleased to see it adopted by Sierra Club’s International Programs.”

“This is one of those issues that bridges several committees,” said Jim Mays, Chair of the Sierra Club’s Human Rights & Responsible Trade Committee, “and none specifically focuses on the background causes of immigration.”

“We really appreciate the Santa Lucia Chapter helping to educate Club members about the real causes of global migration and U.S. immigration,” said Stephen Mills, Director of International Programs. “We definitely want our members to be aware, as the resolution states, that the reasons people migrate have more to do with global economic, labor and environmental policy than U.S. immigration policy.”

The immigration issue is expected to be on the Club’s 2005 ballot.

The Sierra Club’s Human Rights & Responsible Trade Campaign was created to educate Americans about the link between human rights and environmental issues, insure that individuals’ rights to speak out on behalf of the environment are recognized and respected everywhere, and focus on the use of international trade rules to undermine environmental protections and democratic rights in the name of “free trade.” We must replace “free trade” with trade that is clean, green, and fair. For more information, go to <http://www.sierraclub.org/trade>.

Santa Lucia chapter: Resolution on immigration and trade

WHEREAS the human and civil rights of all immigrants are codified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

WHEREAS U.S. policies on agriculture subsidies, trade, security, international development lending and family planning have a greater bearing on how many people cross our borders than U.S. immigration policy or any reform thereof;

WHEREAS the exploitation of less developed countries has resulted in their economic and environmental impoverishment, known to be a major cause of global population growth and increased migration;

WHEREAS rising human migration is therefore primarily an effect, not a cause, of environmental destruction, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Santa Lucia Chapter calls upon the Board of Directors to formally recognize and oppose corporate globalization and U.S. overconsumption of natural resources as primary causes of impoverishment, environmental degradation, and migration.

“Sometimes, those of us in the anti-globalization movement are called utopianists. [But] if utopianism is the problem today, then it’s corporate utopianism. To keep arguing that a system that ... removes power from communities and puts it into global bureaucracies, that marginalizes and makes homeless millions of farmers and workers, and that devastates nature in entirely unprecedented ways—to keep arguing that such a system can survive for long is corporate utopianism. I really don’t think it’s going to work.”

— Jerry Mander, “Economic Globalization and the Environment,” *Tikkun*, Sept./Oct. 2001

Saw Swallows, Saved Same



Safe haven: More than thirty swallow nests intact in the eaves of the Avila Beach p.o.

Shirley Goetz is passionate about wildlife in general, and about the swallows of Avila Beach in particular. So last May, when she saw postal workers scraping under-construction swallow nests off the front of the post office where they were considered a nuisance to public walkways, she called the Sierra Club Chapter office to complain. We called the post office, reminded them of the protections accorded to swallows and their nests under federal law, and recommended the use of bird netting in the eaves of the building.

As a result, the determined swallows were allowed to rebuild their nests and Avila Beach postal clerk Kim Simpson has become an avid conservationist. During nesting season, he would give Shirley a call when chicks fell out of the nests, and she would come over to pick them up. Between the two of them and Pacific Wildlife Care, they saved eight birds this season. Next year, swallow netting will be put in the corners over the post office entrance, and seasonal awnings are being considered over the walkways on the sides of the buildings where the birds are likely to relocate, away from the main pedestrian traffic.

“I can’t thank the Sierra Club enough for their intervention,” said Shirley. “It made all the difference.”

Shirley is now taking bird rehabilitation training from PetCo so “I can rehab the birds right in my house.”

Welcome Cambria Group! Chapter Members Organizing Around Desal Plans

Jack and Bea Morrow have formed a task force of the Santa Lucia Chapter to tackle pressing environmental issues in Cambria. Pressing issue number one: Desalination.

They decided to form a Cambria group after attending the Chapter’s general meeting in June – “Water for Profit: the Story of Corporate Water Privatization.” There, the vivid description of the corporate takeover of Stockton’s municipal water company, as related by Dale Stocking, Delta Sierra Group Chair with the Mother Lode Chapter, moved Jack and Bea to action. It can happen here.

In November 2003, the Chapter formally took a position opposing private ownership of desal plants – changing drinking water from a public resource to a private commodity, for sale to the highest bidder. The Cambria Task Force will further develop the Chapter’s desal policy and work on local land use issues.

Cambria residents should contact co-chairs Bea and Jack at 927-5785, jlmmorrow@earthlink.net for information on upcoming meetings of the Task Force.

(Not) Killing Crows to Save Plovers Club Intervenes in State Parks’ Plan for Morro Bay

On July 26, the Morro Bay City Council turned down a request by State Parks for an exemption from the city’s municipal code that would allow it to trap and shoot crows, known to prey on the eggs of the threatened western snowy plover on Morro Strand State Beach.

The Santa Lucia Chapter had submitted comments to the City recommending against lethal removal and pointing out the experience and findings of other West Coast communities with crow/plover predation problems (crows are primarily attracted by beach litter and open trash cans) and the successful non-lethal crow control program developed by Santa Barbara Audubon at Coal Oil Point Reserve. We also noted the findings of the Department of Fish and Game’s Species Conservation and Recovery Program when they studied the problem in 2002.

Their report found that “when territorial birds are lethally removed, non-breeding birds often quickly reoccupy the vacant area. Shooting and trapping may also become more difficult as the corvids [crows and ravens] become wary. For these reasons, successful lethal removal may require constant effort for an indefinite period of time with the initial cost-effectiveness lost over the long term.”

The report concluded that “limiting availability of anthropogenic food sources [i.e., trash, litter] in locations where corvids occur with threatened and endangered species can, in some cases, be implemented quickly and with relatively little cost.”

The City Council decided State Parks had not looked at all the options and voted 5-0 to deny an exemption from the local ordinance protecting wild birds. The Chapter has sent the region’s State Parks superintendents a list of promising non-lethal crow control techniques and contact information for biologists who have found that alterations in plover nest enclosure design successfully thwart crow predation on nests. [The day after the City Council vote, Parks ordered open trash cans removed from the parking areas of Morro Strand State Beach. It’s a start.]



Hearst Deal

continued from page 1



We collected 2,000 cards and letters to the Governor and State Resources Agency ...



... and State Resources Secretary Mike Chrisman (left) and California EPA Chief Terry Tamminen (center) took delivery from Chapter Chair Tarren Collins.

deal as written does not achieve what we had all hoped (and what the Hearst Corporation had led everyone to believe) would be its outcome: An overall agreement that would include easements and other transfers of interests in land that would preserve in perpetuity the unique living resources on the entire ranch (habitat, ecosystems and species), protect scenic values, provide significant public access – i.e. all lands west of Highway 1 transferred to State Parks and a future connection of the Coastal Trail to inland public lands — and preserve the bulk of the ranch as an ongoing cattle agricultural operation. With the questionable exception of the ag component, the Coastal Commission found that the proposed deal does none of these things.

The main problems as agreed on by those who have independently analyzed the deal are:

- missing information related to ranch management, monitoring, and baseline conditions;
- minimal public oversight to ensure that all parties comply with the terms of the easement;
- a reduction in coastal access that the public has enjoyed for decades;
- the amount and location of allowable development fails to protect views and habitat; and
- proposed intensive resource extraction that is not compatible with a conservation easement.

Sierra Club and allied organizations and activists fought for and won a 30-day public comment period and public hearing, rather than the 10-day rush to rubber-stamping that was originally planned. Hearst said it would agree to a change of zoning on the parcels previously proposed for development back to Agriculture and Open Space.

At its August 12 meeting, the Wildlife Conservation Board was urged to delay the vote to fund the deal until the blanks were filled in and the proposal had been sufficiently amended to provide real conservation protections. The urging came from nine state legislators, including state Senator Byron Sher and Representative Lois Capps, two state agencies, the chair of the Joint Legislative Budget Committee, environmental groups, including the California Coastal Protection Network, Defenders of Wildlife, Surfrider Foundation, Natural Resources Defense Council, Environmental Defense Center, California League of Conservation Voters, Friends of the RanchLand, the Environmental Center of San Luis Obispo, and 1,300 members of the Sierra Club's Great Coastal Places campaign, whose postcards were hand-delivered to the board members. PasoWatch withdrew its previous endorsement of Hearst's one-page "Framework," noting that its vague promise of conservation had been broken by the deal subsequently negotiated. California Audubon has also pronounced the plan deficient.

Urging immediate approval with no questions asked were 70 local residents brought to the Sacramento hearing on a Hearst-chartered bus, the staff of the land trust that brokered the deal, two members of the SLO Board of Supervisors, and state Senator Bruce McPherson.

Before a packed hearing room, after four and a half hours of debate, the three members of the Governor-appointed Board agreed to provisionally vote \$34 million toward funding the deal contingent upon the clarification of vague language in the easement and the addition of details on how violations will be determined, strengthening state oversight, and ensuring that buildings will not obstruct views from Highway 1 or Hearst Castle.

Progress was made; much room for improvement remains. Will the public interest prevail? We are girding for the next round of the battle to save this unique world-renowned reach of landscape and the public right of access. Much depends on public participation.

"The WCB acknowledged several of our concerns and conditioned their approval of funding accordingly," said Pat Veasart, Sierra Club California's State Chapter Liaison. "We have an opportunity to further improve the deal when the Coastal Conservancy meets on September 15." For starters, there must be public review of the Baseline Resource Inventory before approval, the State must be added to the easement as a direct party or a third party beneficiary to assure proper enforcement, Hearst should deed to the State *all* coastal lands west of Highway One, not just 43%, and the amount of allowed development must be reduced to ensure compliance with the *conservation* purposes of Proposition 50, the bond issue that is funding the deal.

Check for updates at www.santalucia.sierraclub.org/hearst/hearst.html.

An Evening Picnic on the Sand Spit

by Jack Beigle

Summer evenings in Morro Bay are usually warm and calm. When we launched our ten boats a moderate wind was still blowing from the should drop any minute. But it didn't wind as we crossed the estuary to the

As we beached our boats and the incoming tide we noticed a three-the dune, silhouetted against the for a short while, then he went over group of does to feed in a safer place.



northwest. I told everyone that it drop. It was an easy paddle into the sand spit.

pulled them up the beach above point buck standing on the top of evening sky. He kept an eye on us the crest. He probably led his

Check the outing schedule and join us on the water.

SLO Creek Day 2004

Ever hiked or biked along one of the creeks in San Luis Obispo? Looked for birds flitting around in the creek understory? Picnicked or helped your kids find fish and bugs in the cool water? If you have, or if you just like to get involved in helping to maintain the health of our beautiful creeks, your day has come!

Specifically, September 25th – the 13th annual San Luis Obispo Creek Day, hosted by the Land Conservancy, the City of San Luis Obispo, and Central Coast Salmon Enhancement, Inc.

Over the course of a year, an amazing amount of garbage accumulates in local creeks. It is important to remove it prior to the winter season because winter flows can carry all the garbage to the ocean. Garbage also degrades the habitat quality of our streams and can contribute to unpleasant odors. Did you know that storm drains empty into the creek without treatment? That steelhead trout still migrate from the ocean through San Luis Obispo? That Cape ivy is a threat to local ecology?

Each Creek Day, volunteers help clean our local creeks to improve habitat and reduce flooding risks. The event also includes a watershed education fair with hands-on displays showing important creek values. The success of Creek Day depends on the volunteers, who help with garbage removal. This year looks to be a dirty one, and well over 100 hearty volunteers will be needed to help out. If you are involved with a service group and are interested in participating, contact the Land Conservancy: They can plan a larger section of the creek for your group. Also, there are several "family-friendly" sites.

Upon arrival at the mission plaza at 9:00 a.m., a staff member will assign you a section of a creek for clean-up. You will be provided with a map to your creek site, trash bags and gloves. Upon your return to mission plaza, a scrumptious hotdog lunch will be provided.

Exhibitors with booths set up at the mission plaza will have hands-on displays and offer opportunities to learn more about our local creeks.

In Memoriam

We gratefully acknowledge recent donations made to the Santa Lucia Chapter in memory of Mary Jane Tate, a former teacher and avid environmentalist who helped found a Sierra Club chapter in Bakersfield.

Donations were made by Katie Karikka, Mike and Vanessa Armstrong, and the Central Coast Strutters.

A donation in memory of Pete Wagner was made by Dr. and Mrs. Roscoe Boyer. Pete was chair of the Chapter's Conservation Committee and a leader of the efforts to curb the environmental hazards posed by Duke Power and the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant until he passed away last November.

Thanks to all for keeping their memories alive and contributing to the cause they loved.

Chapter Campaign

continued from page 1

- joined the fight that kept genetically engineered rice out of San Luis Obispo;
- held three public rallies in the campaign to hammer the proposed Hearst Ranch conservation easement into a better deal for the people of California than the deal the Hearst Corporation has cut for itself, locating and gathering together the volunteers necessary to bring critical mass to the biggest land conservation issue in the state and convince agencies, legislators, boards and commissioners that the Hearst Deal is woefully inadequate, needs to be fully examined in the State legislature, and sent back to the negotiating table;
- put the City Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors on notice that the proposed Rural Planned Development ordinance is an attack on the County's General Plan and a ploy that would subdivide our remaining agricultural land out of existence;
- started North County groups in Cambria and Paso Robles;
- awarded grants in support of ECOSLO's school organic gardening project and alternative to pesticides outreach program, the Atascadero Land Preservation Society's work protecting open space in the Blue Oak woodlands, and San Luis Obispo Mothers for Peace in their efforts to educate the community on the issues surrounding PG&E's proposed expanded nuclear fuel storage facility and extended operations at Diablo Canyon.

Chapter leaders are spearheading efforts to extend the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary to SLO coastal waters, stop the Marketplace development before it turns SLO into L.A. North, and block determined efforts to go the wrong way in green-lighting a power plant proposal that would cripple both the Coastal Act and the Morro Bay National Estuary.

All this effort has not come cheap, nor is environmental activism a great way to be popular. Mounting effective campaigns, engaging in public education, and fighting back against a frequently hostile and misinformed local press — simultaneously — requires commitment and cash in equal amounts.

Just to clarify: We're talking about the local chapter of the Sierra Club — a one-room office on the corner of Marsh and Nipomo in downtown SLO, one part-time staffer and a cadre of volunteers who have to find the time to live their lives and make a living in between doing all of the above — not the national Sierra Club that is headquartered in San Francisco, sends out that very attractive monthly magazine, and is 750,000 members strong. National gives the chapters an annual stipend to keep the doors open and pay the utility bills. The rest depends on you.

There are 2,500 Sierra Club members in the Santa Lucia chapter. If 2,000 of you send in \$20 each by the end of the month, we can do a lot more than keep the doors open.

If you don't, we're going to have to cut back. Way back. Please re-read the foregoing list and think about what "cutting back" could mean.

We live in a uniquely beautiful place that is in constant danger of being loved to death, despoiled, exploited, cut up, sold off, bought up and built over. The dozens of hikes, outings, and kayaking trips the Chapter conducts every month are all about the joy of living here. Everything else we do is about the responsibility of living here.

Please think of how much living this kind of life is worth to you. And then think of supporting the local chapter of the Sierra Club as part of that cost of living.

p.s.: I hope you realize that "20/2000" is just a catchy phrase. In the realm of fundraising, it is considered a given that far fewer than 2,000 of our members will actually respond to this appeal. Therefore, it's a necessity that those of you who can afford to give more than \$20 do so. Also, I know that many of you happened to pick up this newsletter in a coffee shop or a local store and are not members of the chapter. We don't mean to exclude you — so don't feel constrained by that catchy phrase!

Santa Lucia Chapter
P.O. Box 15755
San Luis Obispo CA 93406

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Address _____

YES, I want to support the work of the Chapter!

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Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club

Donations to our chapter support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying program, and therefore are not tax-deductible.

The Land Use Plan from Hell Rural Planned Development Ordinance Threatens County



Coming soon to SLO?

The proposed Rural Planned Development ordinance includes provisions that would result in the development of parcels as small as 20,000 square feet scattered across the county's agricultural lands, permit the development of land zoned as "Open Space," and the development of land parcels without regard to their ability to support development.

The Sierra Club has pointed out to the SLO County Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission that the proposed RPD ordinance would essentially cancel San Luis Obispo's General Plan and violate a state law that has been in effect since January 2003.

The County Agricultural Commissioner's office has noted the proposal's "potential significant environmental effect on agricultural resources and operations...due to the creation of substandard parcels, conversion of capable soils to non-agricultural uses creating new areas of residential development in the rural portions of the county, and land use incompatibilities as a result of increased residential development in agricultural areas."

In response to a 3-page letter from the Santa Lucia chapter highly critical of the proposed ordinance, San Luis Obispo Planning Director Victor Holanda has asked the chapter to assist the City in determining "how the proposed ordinance could be modified, the process altered, and perhaps how some new concepts or approaches could be considered."

The chapter welcomed Holanda's invitation and is working with communities in neighboring counties that have genuine ag land preservation measures in place. We will be happy to draft language improving on the proposed ordinance, but it will replace the current draft, which is not worth trying to fix. It would be a completely different ordinance, one that does not encourage increased development density on ag land but replaces the proposed Rural Planned Development Ordinance with one that actually protects agricultural land.

Accelerating the loss of ag land by giving land owners even more incentive to cash out and subdivide has nothing to do with smart growth or planning. The Board should listen to the Agriculture Commissioner and reject the RPD ordinance out of hand when it comes before them in October.

People Power vs. Marketplace



Democracy in action: Petitions arrive at City Hall.

On August 2, on the steps of City Hall, members of Save San Luis Obispo delivered petitions signed by more than 5,000 citizens of San Luis Obispo — more than twice the required number — demanding a ballot referendum on the huge proposed Marketplace project. The "big box" development would bring with it bad air, gridlock traffic, increased danger of flood damage and loss of prime ag land on the Dalidio

property. In July, CPR also filed suit to overturn the approval of the project by the City Council, which overrode the Planning Commission's recommendation to reject the plan.

SSLO managed its signature-gathering feat in less than two months. "Eight weeks ago, we were five people sitting at a table looking at the Environmental Impact Report," said CalPoly professor Eugene Judd on the City Hall steps. "We said 'This cannot stand!' We don't have to roll over and let this become one of those places none of us want to live in."

"You drive through Bakersfield, Fresno, Tulare — they all look alike," said Mission Real Estate owner Frank Dufault. "San Luis Obispo is one of the top five most livable cities in the country because of our wonderful, unique downtown. For me, our downtown is what SLO is. And the people of SLO, the community, should be the ones who make this decision."

Jan Marx, chair of the Sierra Club Dalidio Project Task Force, has told the mayor and City Council that the Marketplace project's supposed benefits "are far outweighed by the environmental and economic harm that would be done to the city."

The Santa Lucia Chapter has called for the Dalidio property to be redesignated Agriculture/Open Space in the General Plan, with a Special Flood Plain Management Zone.

By Any Means Necessary

Duke Insists on License to Kill

by Jack McCurdy

On August 2, Duke Energy won approval from the California Energy Commission for its plan to build a new power plant in Morro Bay. It now faces a major hurdle when the Central Coastal Regional Water Quality Control Board holds its conclusive hearing in the fall.

Duke needs a CEC license and a water board discharge permit to replace the 47-year-old existing plant with a new, larger and, by most accounts, a more environmentally-damaging facility that will have a life span of some 50 years.

Despite strong opposition from the California Coastal Commission, the California Department of Fish and Game, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Coastal Alliance on Plant Expansion (CAPE), the Santa Lucia Chapter and even its own staff, the California Energy Commission (CEC) voted 5-0 to license a new Morro Bay Power Plant that even the CEC conceded will kill 16% of the crab and fish larvae in the Morro Bay National Estuary. A team of marine scientists hired by the water board and CEC concluded it will kill up to 33% of the larvae.

In a process called once-through cooling, the plant would divert hundreds of millions of gallons of water a day from the Estuary for cooling purposes—killing the larvae swept up in the water—and discharge the heated water into Estero Bay at Morro Rock.

Those larvae are not the only casualties but just “proxies,” as the CEC staff described them, for the “hundreds of species” that weren’t counted in the year-long study by marine scientists of aquatic life carried into the plant and destroyed. They are proxies “for all the other ‘silent partners’—the small, entrainable (so small that they are capable of being sucked through screens and into the plant) life stages of clams, worms, etc. and the phytoplankton and zooplankton” that live in the Estuary.

“Duke Energy is proposing to build the largest new power plant in California on one of the smallest National Estuaries in the United States, using the most ecologically damaging cooling option available.”

“The fact that the power plant entrains hundreds of species underscores that the impact is on the ecological system, not just a single species population,” according to the final staff report on the project. The tiny plankton, worms and other such organisms “form the basis of the ecosystem food web,” on which larger fish, birds and mammals rely. “The estuary also provides resident and nursery habitats for a variety of fish,” and as a nursery, it contributes significantly to offshore stocks for both commercial and sports fishing, which federal studies show generates revenue in the hundreds of millions of dollars for coastal-related enterprises.

The plant’s destructive effects also are part of an even greater “cumulative impact” in combination with other stresses stemming from urban and residential growth and runoff, resulting in growing sedimentation buildup in the Estuary as well as metals, pathogens and bacteria in the water.

“California has lost over 90% of its wetlands and estuaries,” the staff said, and now “Duke Energy is proposing to build the largest newly constructed power plant in California on one of the smallest National Estuaries in the United States, using the most ecologically damaging cooling option available.”

Ignoring its staff’s 30 years of experience in the field, the CEC in April 2003, issued a preliminary decision allowing once-through cooling but also excluding the statutorily-guaranteed role of the Coastal Commission in having its comments on the project included in the CEC decision. It was Duke’s idea, submitted to the CEC in 2002.

After four revisions of the decision over the past 16 months, the CEC relented (its own search of the legislative history of the relevant state codes showed it was wrong) and agreed to incorporate the Coastal Commission’s findings into the final document. But it still called into question some of the Commission’s conclusions, which the Commission objected to as a violation of state law.

Calling it an “environmentally damaging decision,” Peter Douglas, executive director of the Coastal Commission, told the CEC in a July 27 letter that approval of “the proposed project at this time would result in significant and unmitigated environmental impacts to the marine life of Morro Bay.” The Commission strongly opposed a project with once-through cooling but was overridden by the CEC, which has the power to do so under certain circumstances.

The Commission along with CEC staff, Fish and Game, CAPE and the Chapter all support the use of “dry cooling,” instead of once-through cooling, at the plant. Dry cooling recirculates a limited amount of fresh water that is cooled by a bank of fans and uses no Estuary water and is used elsewhere in California and throughout the world.

But the CEC ruled that dry cooling is infeasible on the plant site, which was one key basis for justifying an override of the Commission, despite the fact the CEC staff, the Commission, Fish and Game, CAPE and the Chapter as well as the CEC’s own consultants agreed it is feasible.



Diablo Canyon’s Glowing Future

Our Neighborhood Nuke Plant Wants \$\$\$ for New Lease on Life

by Andrew Christie

The nuclear power industry is essentially madness running in a loop. The continued operation of nuclear power plants means the continued generation of the world’s deadliest substance, with no known means of disposal. In order to create the industry, the government promised the plant operators that it would one day find a way to take the waste off their hands. For more than twenty years, as Rebecca Solnit, author of *Savage Dreams: A Journey into the Landscape Wars of the American West*, points out, the industry’s hopes have been pinned on Yucca Mountain, Nevada, the proposed federal nuclear waste depository. But Yucca Mountain — volcanic, seismic and porous — is, as Solnit notes, “a truly lunatic place to put seventy-seven thousand tons of high-level nuclear waste.” And on July 9, a federal appeals court ruled that the intense radiation from the waste meant the standard for safe storage at Yucca Mountain could not be the 10,000 years the feds were banking on, but 300,000 years hence. As the Nevada state attorney put it, “the department will have to apply a standard that all their own evidence says they can’t meet.”

The happy vision of nuclear waste trundling over interstate highways within half a mile of 50 million Americans (and a statistical likelihood of up to 500 accidents per year) has been dashed, yet PG&E continues to insist with a straight face that it needs to replace its generators at the Diablo Canyon plant to keep the plant alive for another twenty years, continuing to produce its deadly end product that will continue to pile up in San Luis Obispo on a “temporary” basis. And they want to charge you a mere \$706 million for the privilege.

On August 3, the San Luis Obispo Mothers for Peace, Sierra Club, Public Citizen, Greenpeace and Environment California filed testimony as Intervenor in a case that will determine whether PG&E will be allowed to replace the aging steam generators.

The testimony was filed at the California Public Utilities Commission in San Francisco in response to PG&E’s application to the CPUC to be allowed to spend \$706 million to replace the generators and charge ratepayers to recover the costs, plus a profit margin, for the benefit of its shareholders. Approval of the project may extend the operation of Diablo Canyon until 2025.

And that cost is a low-end estimate. The Intervenor’s testimony identifies three categories of potential Diablo Canyon plant upgrades that should be included in the CPUC’s evaluation of PG&E’s request:

- * seismic retrofits in light of new information about earthquake risks
- * replacement of other aging plant components
- * post-9/11 security enhancements.

The Intervenor’s seismic expert, Jay Namson, recommended “...that the Commission direct PG&E to undertake the necessary analyses and studies regarding potential costs associated with mitigating the risks of a close-proximity thrust earthquake at Diablo Canyon prior to reaching a decision on PG&E’s application. In order to fully evaluate the costs associated with Diablo, the Commission should give serious consideration to the question of whether PG&E has erroneously excluded consideration of a potentially significant capital cost. The history of DCNPP itself demonstrates that drastic and very costly action in response to erroneous assumptions regarding earthquake hazards can and do occur.”

At Diablo Canyon as elsewhere, the money proposed to be spent on patching up decaying nuclear plants and propping up the nuclear power industry could be better spent on new non-nuclear plants. Across the country, the relics of our ill-starred atomic age obsession are shambling into senility, the perfect time to begin making the switch to new gas-fired plants and alternative energy sources. Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry has pledged

to commit the country to a non-nuclear alternative energy future.

“You’d have brand new power plants that last decades longer than the Diablo Canyon plant, and you wouldn’t be producing radioactive waste on the earthquake-prone coast of California,” said Rochelle Becker of San Luis Obispo Mothers for Peace. “That’s the best use of our money.”

The Public Utilities Commission will consider PG&E’s proposal during twelve days of public hearings in San Francisco, beginning September 21. A decision on the fate of the Diablo Canyon plant is expected by the end of the year. Details are at www.mothersforpeace.org, or call 858-337-2703.



In August, Rochelle Becker (center) briefed the San Luis Obispo Mothers for Peace on the group’s regulatory and judicial actions against the Diablo Canyon plant and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. On the state and federal level, the Mothers for Peace have more active legal actions pending against the nuclear power industry than any other group in the nation.

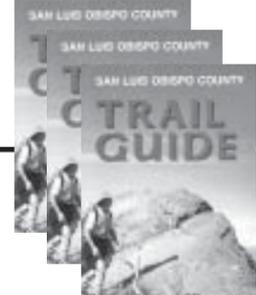
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Yes, I would like to help the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club preserve precious lands on the Central Coast

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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.

Wed., Sep 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 5:30 p.m., Informal 2-hour hikes around San Luis Obispo. Check web site at <http://santalucia.sierraclub.org/index/index.html>, or e-mail gfelsman@onemain.com for meeting location.

Sat., Sept. 4, 9:30 a.m., CANOE/KAYAK MORRO BAY SAND SPIT CLEANUP. Help us improve the estuary by cleaning a section of the Morro Bay Sand Spit. See what rare and unusual treasures you can find. After lunch we will have a short business meeting to discuss future outings. Bring your boat and equipment, PFDs, picnic lunch, gloves and binoculars. We will provide trash bags. Meet at Morro Bay State Park Marina. LOW TIDE 7:34 A.M. 2.2, HIGH TIDE 2:12 P.M. 5.0' Jack Beigle 773-2147

Sun., Sept. 5, COAST HIKE. To a remote area of dunes with Chumash midden, coreopsis, flowers, steep dunes. Confirm and details a few days before at 929-3647 or bdenneen@slonet.org Bring lunch, water, windbreaker and a desire to explore.

Sun., Sept. 5, 8 a.m., Valencia Peak Southern Route Conditioning Hike. This is a 2-hour, 4.5-mile hike with over 1,200 foot elevation gain. Bring water, sturdy hiking shoes and dress for the weather. Everyone is welcome, but this is a vigorous conditioning hike. It is intended who want to maintain a high fitness level. It is not for those who want to get into shape, as they are likely to be left behind. Meet at the Coon Creek Parking area at the very end of Pecho Road in Montana de Oro. Leader Al (534-0462)

Sun., Sept. 12, 9:30 a.m., PISMO DUNES PRESERVE. Meet at Melodrama in Oceano. Drive about a mile to a secret way to the most spectacular dunes to a remote lake. Total distance about 4 miles. Slide down steep dune faces. Confirm and details a few days before at 929-3647 or bdenneen@slonet.org

Sat., Sept. 18, National Public Lands Day, Soldier Meadows in the Black Rock Desert. Join the BLM,

Friends of Nevada Wilderness, Friends of the Black Rock and several other organizations for a day of volunteer work protecting hot springs and the endangered species that live there from years of human impact. The evening dinner, campout and speechifying will take place at the historic Soldier Meadows Ranch. To RSVP or for more information, contact Joey Carmosino at Winnemucca BLM, (775) 623-1771 or Brian Beffort at Friends of Nevada Wilderness at (775) 324-7667.

Sat., Sept. 18, Sloan Canyon Clean up, Sloan Canyon NCA near Las Vegas. Join the BLM, Friends of Nevada Wilderness and Friends of Sloan Canyon as they clean up litter and other impacts at Sloan Canyon. Contact Susan Potts for more information, (702) 650-6542.

Sat-Sun. Sept. 18-19, Owens Lake, Manzanar carcamp. Spend a pleasant weekend in Lone Pine/Independence area. Sat, visit Eastern Sierra Museum, LA Aqueduct sites, Manzanar and new NPS visitor center. Sun, we'll visit Owens Lake with Owens Valley Committee chair Mike Prather and see firsthand how shallow flooding the dry lakebed has created a potential wildlife sanctuary for migrating shore birds. Carcamp at Diaz Lake (fee). Owens Valley Committee fundraiser. Send \$15 check (payable Owens Valley Committee), sase, email, H&W phones, rideshare info to Leader: Andrea Leigh, PO Box 8341, Van Nuys, CA 91409, bobacat@backpacker.com, (818-988-2433), Asst: Nan Kaeser. CNRCC Desert Com/Angeles Chap

Sat-Sun. Sept. 18-19, Protect and Enjoy the McCain Valley. Join us on National Public Lands Day (Saturday) in the higher and cooler parts of eastern San Diego County. In cooperation with the BLM and perhaps other volunteer groups we will sign boundaries and eradicate vehicle tracks at several locations along the McCain Valley road. Camping is at the delightful Cottonwood campground with a potluck on Saturday night. Sunday is reserved for recreation: a hike to Sombrero Peak or a trip into Lost Valley as the group decides. Contact Ldr: Craig Deutsche, deutsche@earthlink.net, (310-477-6670). Co-Ldr: Larry Klaasen. CNRCC Desert Com

Sun., Sept. 19, 9:30 a.m., POINT SAL. Meet at the end of Brown Road. Hike 2.5 miles to 'saddle' and thendecide: hike to ocean, point or turn around. Bring lunch, water, dogs that do not chase cattle, windbreaker and optional Mt. Bike. Confirm and details a few days before at 929-3647 or bdenneen@slonet.org

Sun., Sept. 26, 9:30 a.m., BICYCLE GUADALUPE to OCEAN. Meet at Dune Centre Parking lot with bike and helmet. An easy, educational tour of Guadalupe and then to Pacific. Confirm a few days

before at 929-3647 or bdenneen@slonet.org

Sun., Oct. 3, 9:30 a.m., MUSSEL ROCK. Meet at Guad. Beach. Dogs on leash OK at this time. See proposed parking lot. Bring binoc for the birds. Hike along spectacular Pacific. Confirm and details a few days before at 929-3647 or bdenneen@slonet.org

Sat-Sun., Oct. 9-10, Silver Peak Range Bristlecone Survey. Just east of the 14,000'+ White Mountains where the famous bristlecone pines reside, lies the 9,300'+ Silver Peak Range. We've heard reports of bristlecones growing in certain high eastern cirques. The authoritative "Atlas of Nevada Conifers" has no solid data for bristlecones in the range. We'll explore the rugged area with two dayhikes; carcamping in between. With luck we'll be able to acquire herbarium specimens, photos, and map coordinates to document the rumored populations. If we fail, that's good data too! Contact Bob Ellis 510 525-8742 bobellisds@earthlink.net. SF Bay Chapter/CNRCC Desert Com

Sat., Oct. 9, 10 a.m., CANOE/KAYAK MORRO BAY. Join us for a different day on the bay. This will be our second annual car rally type outing for canoes and kayaks. Bring your boat, equipment, PFDs, sunscreen and a picnic lunch. Meet at Morro Bay State Park Marina HIGH TIDE 7:59 A.M. 4.5' LOW TIDE 2:17 P.M. 2.4' Jack Beigle 773-2147

Sun., Oct. 10, 9:30 a.m., PISMO DUNES PRESERVE. Meet at Melodrama in Oceano. Drive about a mile to a secret way to the most spectacular dunes to a remote lake. Total distance about 4 miles. Slide down steep dune faces. Confirm a few days before at 929-3647 or bdenneen@slonet.org

Sat-Sun., Oct. 16-17, Crescenta Valley/CNRCC, Mojave O: Mysteries of the Desert and Primitive Carcamp. Come with us to beautiful, remote Black Canyon north of Barstow to enjoy one of the finest displays of ancient Indian rock art on public land in the Mojave Desert. Our easy Saturday hike will take us to petroglyphs, Indian Caves, 19th century inscriptions and other desert mysteries. Saturday night potluck and campfire. 2wd drive OK. Sign up early; number of participants strictly limited. Send check for \$5 per person (Sierra Club), 2 SASEs, email address, H&W phones, rideshare info to Reserv/Ldr: Lygeia de Jesus, 1550 N. Verdugo Rd. #40, Glendale, CA 91208, (818-242-7053), Co-Ldr: Bill Spreng.

Sun., Oct. 17, 9:30 a.m., BICYCLE GUADALUPE to OCEAN. Meet at Dune Centre Parking lot with bike and helmet. An easy, educational tour of Guadalupe and then to Pacific. Confirm a few days before at 929-3647 or bdenneen@slonet.org

Sat-Sun., Oct. 23-24, Owl Canyon/Rainbow Basin Geology Weekend. Car camping field trip to explore one of the most amazing geological



Photo by Joaquin Palting

formations in the Mojave desert just outside of Barstow. Natural history and the effects of offroading will be the focus of the trip. We will also be joined by a geology expert from the BLM to explain the local phenomena and enjoy driving and hiking opportunities in the area. Potluck Saturday night. Bring your geology books, camera, and binoculars. For info and directions contact Ldr: Alice Kettering, hikerbiker@netzero.net, (661-269-9737). San Gorgonio Chap/CNRCC Desert Com

Sun., Oct. 24, COAST HIKE. To a remote area of Nipomo Dunes. Confirm a few days before at 929-3647 or bdenneen@slonet.org

Sun., Oct. 31, 9:30 a.m., POINT SAL. Meet at the end of Brown Road. Hike 2.5 miles to 'saddle' and thendecide: hike to ocean, point or turn around. Bring lunch, water, dogs that do not chase cattle, windbreaker and optional Mt. Bike. Confirm and details a few days before at 929-3647 or bdenneen@slonet.org

Fri-Sun., Oct. 29-31, Celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Mojave National Preserve. Camping will be at the Hole-in-the-Wall Group campground Friday and Saturday nights, with the celebration on Saturday night including potluck, campfire and surprise activities. Saturday will be a hike to Cima Dome, a unique feature of the park, and Sunday the hike will be from Midhills Campground to Hole-in-the-Wall (approx. 6 miles) through Wildhorse Canyon. More details will be available at a later date. If you are interested or want to reserve a spot for this great weekend contact Carol Wiley, earthlingwiley@webtv.net or 15457 Eto Camino Road, Victorville, CA 92394. San Gorgonio Chap/CNRCC Desert Com

This is a partial listing of Outings offered by our chapter.

Please check the web page at www.santalucia.sierraclub.org for the most up-to-date listing of activities.