



SIERRA CLUB

LOMA PRIETA CHAPTER

2023 Chapter Summary

Discover our local impact in 2023

Explore, Enjoy, and Protect
San Benito, San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties

Hello Loma Prieta Chapter friends,

Welcome to our 2023 Annual Summary. It is hard to believe that another year has flown by (again), but it has been a productive and eventful one.

We've achieved a number of environmental successes locally, and perhaps more importantly we are having a significant impact at the regional level on several meaningful long-term actions. Our long-term health is getting stronger as our donors continue their support, while we are further leveraging the Rohloff Bequest to increase the reach of our Bay Alive Campaign. We are also continuing to collaborate with other organizations in an effort to increase our collective environmental voices, and to promote the concerns of under-served communities.

We are, of course, still taking direct action aimed at Climate Change by encouraging steps to minimize its severity as well as mitigate the damage it will cause. We are still promoting the reduction of climate-warming emissions and have several important wins reducing impacts that rising sea levels will have on the Bay Area.

In addition, our regional effort to minimize the entire Bay Area's harm from sea level rise is reaping benefits. Our collaborative voices gave rise to SB 272, which gives the Bay Conservation and Development Commission a voice in developing guidelines for adapting to sea level rise. All that

remains is pressing the notion that strong Nature-Based Adaptation efforts are necessary to mitigate severe harm to our Bay, and need to be in those guidelines.

You'll find more detail on all of this in the reporting from those involved in the action. We are making an important and meaningful impact upon the future of the Bay Area, thanks to your generous support. It would not be happening without you.

To a thriving and healthy future!



Charles Schafer
Chapter Chair



James Eggers
Chapter Director

Millbrae Gateway: Transit-oriented affordable BART housing design was improved by our volunteers, then realized and opened.

Burlingame: Design changes were secured on a massive shoreline office/R&D project in order to reduce negative impacts on bird safety, create more viable habitat areas, and expand creek setbacks.

Menlo Park: US Army Corps of Engineers was convinced to require a design alternative for a new West Bay Sanitary District recycled water facility that will now have fewer destructive wetlands impacts.

Stanford: Open space was successfully protected through our advocacy.

Palo Alto: The natural environment was added as a City Priority. eBike use in Baylands was restricted to paved trails, and an area to support a wildlife corridor connecting Renzel Marsh to the Baylands Harbor marsh was evaluated.

San Mateo: Our Biosafety guidelines were used by the Planning Dept in the interim before the Ordinance.

San Carlos: Biosafety ordinance was adopted.

Redwood City: Biosafety Ordinance was adopted for Downtown area.

Redwood City: We were successful in advocating for City Council to require expanded community engagement in the environmental review process for the massive development project on a former landfill.

Sunnyvale: Riparian habitat and 104 acres of current and future wetlands were protected, with more than 200 acres of new park with robust bird safety and dark sky policies.



- Successfully advocated for stronger language to encourage nature-based adaptation, low-impact design, and wider buffer zones for flood protection infrastructure in groundbreaking sea level rise Planning Policy Guidance by San Mateo County's "One Shoreline" Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District.
- Sponsored and participated in 2023 Climate Summit for San Mateo, attended by more than 300 from community-based organizations, nonprofits, to agency and municipal staff and elected officials.
- Educated the third cohort of our multi-week Bay Advocate Program, including skills for local advocacy and engagement in regional planning impacting the entire shoreline.
- Quickly and successfully mobilized allies and regulatory agencies, helped spur release of supporting documentation, submitted extensive comments on the needed scope of environmental review, and collaborated on a joint letter with five other environmental organizations, all in reaction to an unexpected and drastic proposal to build an offshore flood protection barrier in Millbrae and Burlingame that could have substantial negative impacts on shoreline ecosystems and water quality.
- Spurred a Sunnyvale City Council directive to study closure of redundant interior levee trails near the Water Treatment Plant, in order to reduce human impacts on Bay wildlife.
- Worked closely with the SF Bay Contamination Cleanup Coalition to evaluate the Department of Toxic Substance Control's draft Sea Level Rise Guidance for Cleanup Activities and submitted a comment letter on behalf of Sierra Club California and all three Bay Area chapters.



Castle Rock State Park © Radek Chrapkiewicz

- Secured seats for three Bay Alive volunteer leaders as subject matter experts on two important advisory bodies for the Bay Conservation and Development Commission's Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan: the Advisory Working Group and the Implementation Working Group. Secured the addition of an Environmental Subcommittee to focus on ecological impacts from sea level rise.
- Successfully advocated for the addition of legislative directives in SB272 (enacted in 2023) in order to prioritize nature and ensure environmental justice in the planning and implementation of regional sea level rise adaptation plans. This state law, for the first time, requires every jurisdiction on the Bay shoreline to submit and gain approval for a sea level rise adaptation plan pursuant to coordinated regional guidelines.
- Successfully advocated for the language of "Climate Change & Natural Environment - Protection & Adaptation" to continue as a Palo Alto City Council priority for 2023.
- Educated students from the San Jose Conservation Corps about navigating local governments to create environmental change.
- Advised local community members in Palo Alto and Los Altos in successfully improving ordinance language to facilitate installation of electric heat pumps to reduce emissions from their homes.
- Advocated for the creation of Dark Sky Ordinances; currently, Santa Clara County, Palo Alto, and Los Altos have begun creating these ordinances, and Sunnyvale is prioritizing the creation of an ordinance.

2023 Climate Action Report



Protecting Wildlife, Trees, and the Night Sky for All *Dashiell Leeds, Conservation Assistant*

In 2023, we made great strides to protect birds, and all life that depends upon the night sky, by successfully advocating for Sunnyvale, Palo Alto, Los Altos, and Santa Clara County to create ordinances that reduce light pollution and protect birds from unsafe window design.

We also took steps to protect trees, motivating Santa Clara County to initiate an update to its tree protection and removal ordinance in order to protect ancient oak trees that are more than 150 years old. For example, some of the trees within Stanford are older than the University itself!

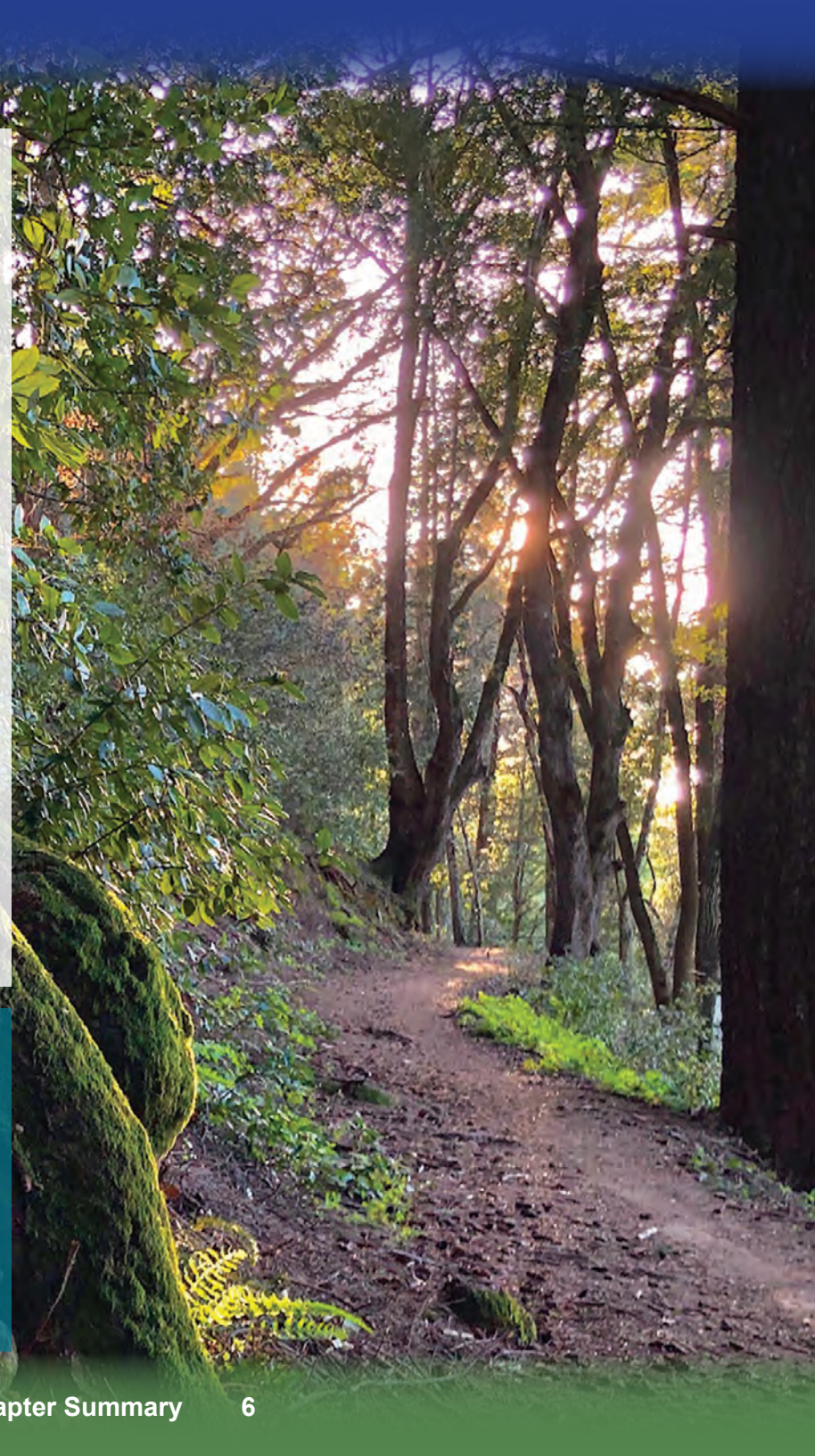
We successfully advocated to amend ordinances in Los Altos and Palo Alto that would have otherwise prevented some residents from electrifying their homes. We are also reviewing and commenting on Climate Action Plan updates in Campbell and Sunnyvale.

Our chapter has also raised our voices to protect a local newt population, which is annually losing 40% of its population while crossing a road to their breeding grounds. We have advocated for a solution which was recently approved by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District.

Individual supporters: 83,745

“Morgan Hill’s Youth Climate Action Team (MHYCAT) was insistent on delivering public comments in spite of our city attempting to repeal our city-wide natural gas ban on new construction. With the help of Dashiell Leeds we were able to write and deliver public comments to the Morgan Hill City Council. With his guidance, we were able to get a historic 5-0 vote, and keep Morgan Hill’s natural gas ban, keeping our pledge to a climate-friendly city.”

Keerthi Sriram
Morgan Hill’s Youth Climate Action Team





Creating Healthier Communities *Gita Dev, Sustainable Land Use Chair*

In 2023 our **Sustainable Land Use (SLU)** committee's advocacy efforts showcased our commitment to sustainable, green urban planning, and responsible biosafety initiatives. We actively promoted urban greening for new state-required Objective Design Standards by timely disseminating guidelines to all cities, emphasizing incorporating open green spaces.

A successful Lifesciences and BioSafety Webinar launched our campaign to educate decision-makers about biotech developments. We followed this by sending SLU Biosafety Guidelines to cities and a Chapter Resolution prohibiting potentially unsafe, biosafety-risk-levels 3 & 4 labs in our chapter. Adoption of biosafety ordinances for San Carlos and Redwood City downtown, coupled with active utilization of our guidelines by the San Mateo Planning Department, underscores our influence in promoting safety standards.

We continued to comment on counties' and cities' planning, with a special focus on San Mateo, in line with a commitment to addressing critical housing and equity issues. The Chapter's advocacy was recognized at the opening of Millbrae Gateway low-income Veterans Housing, in Redwood City which is now requiring community participation in a huge new biotech campus, and in the Stanford Community Plan's protection of open space.

Urban plans, open space, and biosafety policies improved by SLU recommendations: 3



2023 Bay Alive
Jennifer Hetterly, Bay Alive Coordinator

In 2023, Bay Alive continued its impactful journey, achieving advocacy success at local, regional, and state levels. We completed our third Bay Advocate Training Program, strengthened collaborations with environmental and community-based organizations, and laid valuable internal groundwork for continued success, including strategic refinement, capacity building, and improved cross-chapter coordination.

Notably, our three-year advocacy efforts in Sunnyvale culminated in the adoption of a groundbreaking redevelopment plan for the 1,150-acre Moffett Park office district. The plan enhances flood resilience by protecting and expanding wetlands and riparian habitat, mandates the creation of over 200 acres of new park and open space, and includes robust bird safety and dark sky policies safeguarding the Pacific flyway and Baylands wildlife.

Our persistent push for a coordinated regional approach to sea level rise adaptation bore fruit with the revision and enactment of Senate Bill 272 in 2023. This state law addresses a governance gap by requiring Bay shoreline jurisdictions to submit adaptation plans to the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) for approval. Crucially, SB272 directs BCDC to prioritize nature and environmental justice in its Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan Guidelines. With three seats on BCDC advisory groups, we spurred the creation of a natural ecosystems subcommittee, and we're championing policies that prioritize nature and enhance environmental justice, a focal point for our efforts in 2024.

Internally, 2023 marked a period of intentional growth. We shifted to a strategic focus on projects with wide-reaching or precedent-setting impacts, or with significant environmental justice implications. We welcomed three more Bay Advocate Program alumni to our advocacy team, and garnered over 650 new Bay Alive supporters through our "AddUp" platform. We are further positioned for success through strengthened communications, improved inter-chapter coordination, and the imminent completion of a new website.

With a solid foundation and your continued engagement, we eagerly anticipate another dynamic and productive year locally, regionally and state-wide in 2024!

Public Comment Letters: 67

"Sierra Club's Bay Alive Campaign is a valued ally in the urgent work of ensuring long-term ecological health for the San Francisco Bay's shoreline habitats – vital public assets that also are key to our communities' resilience to climate change."

Carin High
Co-Chair, Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge

Cultivating a Great Local Resource



Karen Holman
Midpeninsula Regional Open Space Director
Former Palo Alto Mayor and Councilmember

Times change. Time marches on. There are a lot of sayings about time and its relevance to our daily lives. One that comes to mind as most relevant to the Sierra Club is: Time and time again. Because time and time again the Sierra

Club has led and informed on critical matters of the environment because while indeed times may change, human needs for clean air and access to nature do not.

I've had the privilege of holding elective office for 15 years, and throughout that time the Sierra Club has been a ready resource to educate and advocate. Whether about creek side setbacks necessary for wildlife habitat, the value of protecting open space from development, promoting the critical role of bay lands in countering sea level rise, the Sierra Club has been a most valuable partner.

Individual eNewsletter Subscribers: 24,833



Monte Bello Open Space Preserve © Radek Chrapkiewicz

Exploring and Enjoying, to Protect (2023 Outings Report)



Lisa Barboza **Loma Prieta Chapter Outings Chair**

Back in 1892, Sierra Club Outings were the foundational beginnings of the club. Hundreds of people experienced the magnificent Sierra for the first time, and brought back the experience to their friends and families. This is how the much of the modern environmental movement was started. And it started with Outings.

Our outings range from day hikes to backpacking, peak climbing, Military Outdoors, and backcountry skiing. Our hikes appeal to people of all ages and abilities.

Our outings are a way for new people to become Sierra Club members, learn about botany, birding, geology, and ecosystems, and actually perform acts of conservation while on the trail, removing trash, and sometimes, non-native plants that affect our natural ecosystems.

A conservation theme is vital to our outings, as well as a Land Acknowledgement to respect the native peoples.

Pre-pandemic, the number of our Chapter's official outings annually was 600 hikes, but during the pandemic, only 55 hikes were conducted. In 2023, we rebounded to 200 hikes. Our dedicated leaders are doing a fantastic job.

A highlight of 2023 was our expanded Military Outdoors program, working with Veteran's groups to teach hiking pole use to improve balance and mobility. We participated the July 2023 Veterans Stand Down in San Jose (and were featured in a TV news article), and worked with many Veterans hospitals and organizations, reaching over 200 vets with our events.

So come on a hike sometime, meet others, learn a lot, and have fun! It's not just a hike, it's a community of like minded folks who like to hike and have fun. Many of our hikers form long term relationships, and some even get married.

Hope to see you on the trail sometime soon!
Happy Trails, Lisa Barboza; serving as your Loma Prieta Outing Chair

Outings: 230
Hike Participants: > 1,450



"I have been hiking with the Loma Prieta Chapter for 5 1/2 years, particularly with the Singleaires. Last year I also completed the backpacking training. During election time, I rely on your endorsements to vote in the local elections. I trust your hike leaders better than others as they went through safety trainings and are outdoor veterans. I'm grateful for your work protecting our environment and exercising good stewardship for future generations. Thank you very much for all you do!"

Daphne Wang
Chapter donor, and Singleaires outings member

Water Advocacy: We All Depend Upon It

Carol Steinfeld ***Water Committee Co-Chair***

The Water Committee works to support Sierra Club Water goals locally. 2023 work included advocating against projects that will harm the Bay Delta, such as the Delta Conveyance Project, the Delta Water Quality Control Plan Voluntary Agreements, and various new dam/reservoir projects that depend on exporting more water from the Delta. The committee also advocates for alternative water sources to reduce reliance on imported water from both local sources and the Delta, such as enhanced water conservation, water reuse, and stormwater capture. For example, our committee successfully lobbied for the Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency (BAWSCA) to conduct a series of sessions about alternative water supply possibilities for its member agencies, an unprecedented action for this agency.

To protect our local creeks and water resources, we advocate for projects that improve water quality (green streets, creek cleanups, etc.) and we work to reduce impacts to local streams and riparian habitats resulting from new proposed projects and from large industrial operations (landfills, mining, etc.). “Our committee is one of the most important for tracking these issues and organizing action,” says committee co-chair Carol Steinfeld. “It gives area residents a chance to learn the complexities of water issues in this region and take action.”



30 by 30: Expanding Protected Open Space

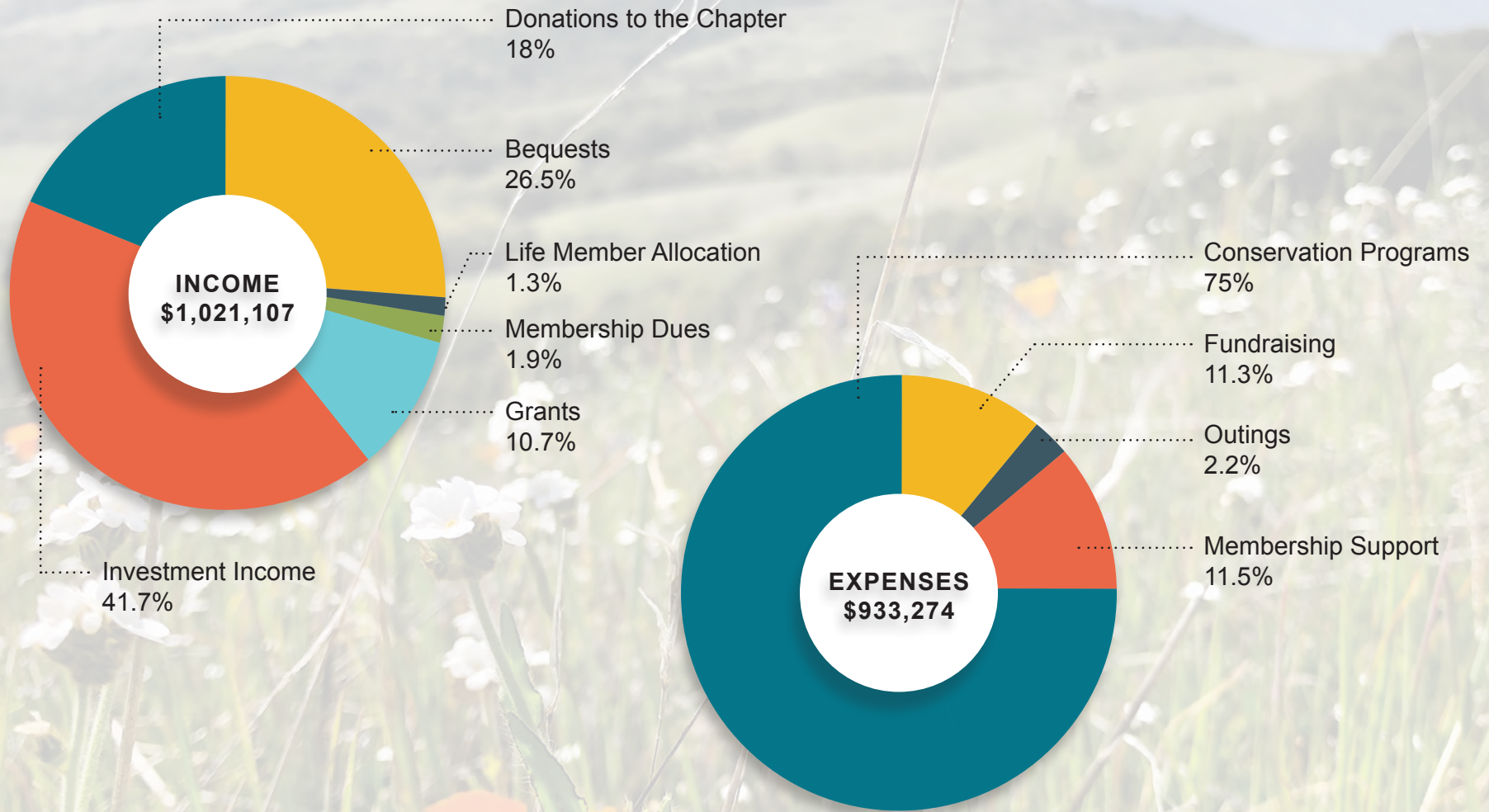


Mary Buxton
30 by 30

30x30 is the international, national, and California campaign to conserve 30% of land and water by 2030. We will continue to coordinate efforts together with the Chapter's flagship Bay Alive campaign to raise awareness of nature-based solutions to protect San Francisco Bay wetlands,

focus on finding ways for the San Mateo Coast team to support expanding marine protected areas, and stay vigilant about the opportunity to purchase the Cargill Redwood City Salt Ponds for restoration and addition to the Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge. We will continue monitoring and advocating for the protection of Coyote Valley, a critical safe passage for wildlife migrating between the Diablo Mountain Range and Santa Cruz mountains.

Expenditure and Income January - December 2023



Monte Bello Open Space Preserve © Radek Chrapkiewicz

Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter Leadership

2023 Executive Committee

Charles Schafer, Chair
Susan DesJardin, Vice-Chair
Mary Buxton, Secretary
Lisa Barboza
Nathan Chan
Sue Chow
Gladwyn d'Souza
Michael Eldredge
Mike Ferreira
Shani Kleinhaus
Ed Larenas
Gary Latshaw
Bruce Rienzo, Treasurer

Regional Groups

Gary Latshaw, Guadalupe Regional Group Chair
Gita Dev and Sue Chow, Peninsula Regional Group
Co-Chairs
Gladwyn d'Souza, San Carlos/Belmont Regional
Group Chair

Political Action Committee

Mike Ferreira, Chair

Conservation Committee

Gladwyn d'Souza and Katja Irvin, Conservation
Committee Co-Chairs

Conservation Sub-committees Chairs

Mary Buxton, **30x30**
Gita Dev, **Sustainable Land Use**
Gladwyn d'Souza, **Transportation**
Susan Hinton, **Plastic Pollution Prevention**

Janet Hoffmann, **Pesticide**
Katja Irwin and Carol Steinfeld, **Water**
Gary Latshaw, **Air Quality Committee**
Karen Maki, **Forest Protection**
John McKenna, **Climate Action**
Martha Schauss, **Wildlife Committee**
Nancy Tierney, **Pacifica**

Outings

Lisa Barboza, Outings Chair

Outings Sections Chairs

Lisa Barboza, **Peak Climbing**
Nathan Chan, **20s-30s**
Gloria Chen, San Jose ICO
Sharon Chuang, Black Mtn Hiking
Dara Hazeghi, **Day Hiking**
Barbara Kelsey, **Hikers Hut**
Glenda Marsh, **Ski Touring**
Judith Ogle, **Singleaires**
Jeannie Sivertsen, **Gay & Lesbian**
Stephen Stearns, **Backpacking**
Brian Swing, **San Mateo Hiking**
Sigal Wilnai, Family Outings
Sandra Winkler, **Sierra Singles**

Staff

Wils Cain, Communications Specialist
Jennifer Chang Hetterly, Bay Alive Coordinator
James Eggers, Director
Justyna Guterman, Development Coordinator
Barbara Kelsey, Chapter Coordinator
Dashiell Leeds, Conservation Assistant

What will be your environmental legacy?



Join me! Invest in a thriving local environment and a just future.

“Protecting our regional environment requires both our activism and financial support. Over the past four dances, I have volunteered thousands of hours

to save trees, which I’m passionate about. Naming the Loma Prieta Chapter in my estate plan allowed me to make a commitment to future generations and gave me the comfort of ensuring that my work will continue long after I’m gone.”

Please join me in the Loma Prieta Chapter Legacy Program for the future, for the environment.”

Karen Maki
Loma Prieta Chapter volunteer activist leader

Find important information about including your Loma Prieta Chapter in your will [here](#).

Please notify us about your plan; contact our Development Coordinator, Justyna Guterman, at Justyna.guterman@sierraclub.org or call **650-390-8494**

Special thanks go to our 2023 Guardians of Nature Benefit Sponsors

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Anonymous

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Lowley Rentals
San Jose Clean Energy
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\$1,000-\$2,499
Bay Maples California Wild Gardens
Peninsula Open Space Trust
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter Singleaires Outing Section
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Sue Chow
Nancy and David Crabbe
Gladwyn D’Souza
Congresswoman Anna Eshoo, 16th Congressional District
Sid and Linda Liebes
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