

Santa Cruz Group of the Sierra Club
Executive Committee
Wednesday May 8, 2024; 630-830 Zoom Meeting Minutes

1. Greetings/Introductions

Present: Mike Guth, Steve Bakaley, Kristen Sandel, Lani Faulkner, Jerry Busch, Jim Danaher, Micah Posner, and member/visitor Cynthia Denny.

2. Announcements

Mike talked about a settlement conference in the Sierra Club lawsuit against CalTrans. Steve showed pictures of two obstacles set up on Beach Drive resident to block the walkway. Lani announced she will be attending the Democratic convention in Chicago as a delegate.

3. Changes to the Agenda (none).

4. Minutes

Minutes from the April 2024 meeting were reviewed and modified, and unanimously passed as amended.

5. Treasurer's Report

Steve Bakaley gave the Treasurer's report. Discussion about whether to again join the SC National fundraising effort. Agreement to discuss this in one year.

6. Coastal Appeal – State Coastal Committee

Mike reported that two new seawall applications were filed recently, one locally, and one for a proposed Humboldt Bay desalination plant. Jerry stated that Humboldt Bay is in the flyway.

7. Transportation Committee report

a. Meeting: Lani gave the report on the RTC meeting, and discussed the April 30th RTC meeting. She also reported on the May 2nd meeting. Lani said that at this meeting, Manu kept bringing up the possibility of rail banking.

b. Friday May 3rd Event: Mike mentioned Debbie Bulger's thank you letter to the club.

8. Conservation Committee

Mike gave the report on the ConsCom meeting on April 24th. He talked about Steve's concern about a specific weed that is sold in stores, but that is extremely invasive. Wetlands were discussed, with the State Club possibly creating a Wetlands sub-committee.

A long discussion ensued about how to handle the construction on the Laurel Street

bridge that is affecting swallows and nesting. The swallows appear to be very impacted, with lots of empty nests. Mike says the EIR allows for no interference with the swallows nesting, and suggests immediately writing a letter reminding the city that this is in violation of the clear language of the EIR.

Mike produced language from the EIR, and a letter he had already drafted. Jerry agreed with the letter, and offered some changes. He also mentioned that the bird/nest survey was conducted before the nesting season. Mike volunteered to have the letter ready by tomorrow (May 9), and to send it to all necessary parties. Mike stated that the continuing construction is in clear violation of the EIR which states that if nesting is observed the construction must be kept at least 150 feet away.

Jerry produced a page from Audubon Society which quoted federal law regarding interference with nesting birds. Mike asked for permission to send a letter to the city. Micah moved for Mike to have permission to send letter. Letter will be approved by email. Steve seconds. Mike said he would copy local Fish and Wildlife contact. Passed unanimously.

9. Sky Diving Noise Complaint

Mike states he received a contact from someone unhappy about sky diving company noise. The question was whether the Sierra Club would address this. Insufficient enthusiasm from the club.

10. Problems with County Putting Submitted Documents in the Record

Letters to Board of Supervisors. Mike brought up that his letters to the Board are not making it into the meeting package, even though he submits the documents well before deadlines. Mike performed a search for "Sierra" in the record during this ExCom meeting, and determined that there was no result for the search he performed, which indicated that the County of Santa Cruz did not put his submissions into the record