

Chapter Chair Chat

By Mila Vujovich-La Barre, Chapter Chair

Dear All -

The Central Coast is so beautiful throughout the year. For me, there is something particularly magical about the Fall. Brilliant sunsets and calm waters. It is the time of year that I first moved to the Central Coast to marry my ship Captain husband over 40 years ago. Our walks in Cayucos along the pier, counting our blessings, and planning our future, still warm my heart!

As Chair of the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club, my newfound joy is networking with so many like-minded, intelligent, compassionate people. If you are motivated to attend any of the in-person meetings, Zoom talks, or Meet Ups thanks to our Outings Committee you will find individuals from all walks of life intent on making our world a better place - for now and in the future.

Hopefully you have read about the Offshore Wind Power potential for the Central Coast. I have had the opportunity to become informed through meetings about the future of this industry. I have gone into these information sessions as a bit of a novice and a true ocean and nature lover. At our last ExCom meeting we had an extended, in depth explanation from Julia Dowell, Electric Sector/Beyond Coal Campaign, Senior Field Organizer, and Nancy Pyne, Senior Advisor of Offshore Wind, Beyond Coal Campaign. At the conclusion of the presentation, I remain enthusiastic that this new technology may be the path for additional renewable energy for consumers for the future. We are grateful for Jim Miers and his Climate and Clean Energy Committee, who with daily research, keep us abreast of local and national developments regarding sustainable energy.

In addition, I continue to applaud our Zero Waste Task Force Chair, Janine Kennel Rands, who has constantly spread information about the dangers of plastic pollution including polystyrene - AKA styrofoam. She is an absolute warrior, combating the unnecessary use of plastic in our community and throughout our state. If people would like to join in this cause, please feel free to contact Janine directly via email at: j9rands@gmail.com.

Kudos to Sue Harvey and her dedicated Conservation Committee members for their advocacy protecting the environment on multiple issues this past month. They all heroically attended

meetings both in person and online, where well-researched public comment was given. It all makes a difference!

Alex Mintzer and his Political Committee have worked tirelessly the last few weeks interviewing local candidates, in order to determine Sierra Club endorsement potential. Alex also took the lead at our August General Meeting to educate and entertain attendees on the “Tropical Rainforests of Latin America.” You can still watch the presentation [here](#). What a blessing he and his committee members have been!

It has also been a joy to serve on the ExCom with our Vice-Chair Ranel Porter. She is a powerhouse and as the Chair of the Membership Committee, she is the individual who makes all of the membership functions happen so seamlessly. Attendees had an entertaining time at the Lavender Farm in June and at our 2nd Annual Picnic By the Ocean in Cambria recently.



We are elated to be back in person for our Santa Lucia Chapter General Meeting at French Hospital Copeland Pavilion to learn about a new species of manzanita from Bill Waycott, former President of the California Native Plant Society. The meeting will begin at 6pm on Wednesday, September 18, 2024 with a pizza dinner and refreshments prior to the presentation. Please RSVP [here](#) and join in the fellowship and fun. Then, on Sunday, September 22nd, Bill has generously extended an invitation to take us on a walking tour of the Morro Dunes Ecological Reserve. RSVP [here](#) for his hike.

We are all looking forward to the opportunity to explore Oso Flaco Lake on October 12th. RSVP for that Hike & Dine [here](#). Then, the Fall Harvest Adventure in Nipomo on October 19th will feature a luffa farm, a pumpkin farm and a delightful lunch. RSVP for that exciting day [here](#).

We are grateful that so many individuals have continued with their annual membership. We are looking to expand our Chapter to even more citizens who desire to protect the environment. Please spread the word to your peers and family members to join the Sierra Club. Every dollar donated gets spent wisely, right here in San Luis Obispo County.

As Chair, I have also had the opportunity to attend meetings regarding planned giving. Our Santa Lucia Chapter has been the recipient of a handful of donors who have passed on. What a

lovely thought for Mother Nature and our local Santa Lucia Chapter to be remembered in one's will.

The Fundraising Committee has appreciated the donations that have come in from our summer appeal. Also, please mark your calendars now for our 2nd Annual Fundraiser on Saturday, February 22, 2025 at the SLO Rock venue in San Luis Obispo. There will be food, drink, and lively tunes from the local band Joy Polloi.

It has also been exciting to witness the stellar metamorphosis and leadership of our new Coordinator Gianna Patchen. She continues to be mentored by our former Director Andrew Christie. We so appreciate his ongoing involvement. Gianna has welcomed volunteers and new potential members through our updated website and by having the office at 1411 Marsh Street in San Luis Obispo open daily. Her skillset is impressive and she continues to make a positive difference weekly!

In closing, I wish you all peaceful pier walks and glorious sunsets in the weeks to come! Stay well.

With gratitude,
Mila Vujovich-La Barre
Chair - Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club



Photos by Mila Vujovich-La Barre