

## Chapter Chair Chat

*By Mila Vujovich-La Barre*

Dear All,

Even though the air is getting cooler and the daylight hours shorter, San Luis Obispo County remains one of the most beautiful places on Earth due to the local scenic beauty surrounding us.

San Luis Obispo County is also filled with thousands of good-hearted and well-intentioned people, which makes daily life here even more of a blessing!

The Executive Committee of the Santa Lucia Sierra Club has continued to solidify its goals. The committees currently are Budget, Communications, Conservation, Development/Fundraising, Environmental and Social Justice, Membership, Elections, Nominating, Outings, Political, Programs, Climate and Clean Energy, and Zero Waste Task Force. All of the committees are welcoming new volunteers.

The office, located at 1411 Marsh Street in San Luis Obispo, is open and has become a wonderful place for experienced and new volunteers to congregate and lend a hand.

Of course one of the highlights of the past month was the renewal of in-person General Meetings at French Hospital in the Pavillion. Bill Waycott entertained over 65 people with his talk about a new species of manzanitas in our County.

The company and refreshments were terrific. Kudos to Vice-Chair Ranel Porter, Zero Waste Chair Janine Kennel Rands, and audio-visual technician volunteer Steve Porter for making the event so enjoyable. It was also terrific to meet newcomers to San Luis Obispo who had never been active with our Chapter. Everyone made new friends and appreciated the warm reception.

Please mark your calendars for a series of robust and interesting guest speakers for the General Meetings in 2025. All meetings will start at 6:00 pm and conclude by 7:30 pm. Thanks to the generosity of French Hospital, we will continue to meet at 1911 Johnson Avenue in San Luis Obispo. There is sufficient parking and the auditorium is handicapped accessible.

The meeting dates in 2025 will all be on Wednesdays and are scheduled for January 15, March 19, May 21, July 16, September 17, and November 19. We are always looking for environmental topics of interest so please feel free to reach out if you have any ideas!

In the future, refreshments for the General Meetings will be “potluck.” Please bring savory or sweet food to share and your beverage of choice, if you choose. We also encourage everyone to bring a plate and cutlery to be as “zero waste” as possible in the beautiful venue.

Witnessing the evolution and success of the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary designation in October was also a crowning moment for many this past month. Dozens of community members joyfully celebrated the announcement and event at Dinosaur Caves in Pismo Beach. The landmark designation was several decades in the making. Kudos to all who made this environmental preservation possible!

As a full-time public school teacher, my wish list for 2025 is long. I see the future generation daily and listen to their hopes and dreams while teaching United States History and Spanish.

All of your pro-environmental actions today will have a positive impact on the world they will be living in. Continue to lead by example whether it be reusing, recycling, or making your events as “zero waste” as possible. The younger people in our lives are watching and learning from all of us. Please encourage them to prepare and enjoy fresh food and to exercise daily, ideally outdoors in the fresh air!

I am very proud of the evolution of the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club. Gianna Patchen continues to do a fabulous job as the Coordinator, networking with like-minded organizations in our County and expanding our membership. Of course, we are all grateful to retired Director Andrew Christie whose counsel continues to be appreciated. Also, I want to thank all of our Santa Lucia Chapter donors who make our efforts possible. It is heartwarming to receive donations, have existing members renew memberships, and have new members join!

I hope to see each of you soon at the upcoming and entertaining Santa Lucia Chapter events.

May 2025 be filled with dreams come true and good health!

With gratitude and love,  
Mila Vujovich-La Barre  
Santa Lucia Chapter Chair

