

# SANTA LUCIAN



**Santa Lucia  
Chapter**

**Nov./Dec. 2024  
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The official newsletter of the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club ~ San Luis Obispo County, California

## We're Getting the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary!

By Andrew Christie & Gianna Patchen



Robert Schwemmer/NOAA

After more than ten years of work on this campaign and over forty years of local advocacy, we are ecstatic to report that on October 11th, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced its designation of the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary off the Central

Coast of California and released the final designation documents.

In the words of Federal Register Notice 89FR-83554:

*NOAA is designating the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary (CHNMS) in the waters along and offshore of the coast of central California to recognize the national significance of the area's ecological, historical, archaeological, and cultural resources and to manage this special place as part of the National Marine Sanctuary System. The sanctuary boundary encompasses 4,543 square*

*miles of submerged lands and marine waters.*

The new sanctuary will protect ocean habitat along 116 miles of coast, extending up to 43 miles offshore. It joins the Channel Islands and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries to our south and north as a hub for research and monitoring, volunteer opportunities, education and outreach.

NOAA's designation decision for the sanctuary initiated a 45-day congressional and state review period. After 45 days of congressional session, the Chumash Sanctuary designation will be finalized and set in stone!

An Indigenous Cultural Heritage Action Plan will refine and adopt the sanctuary's framework for Indigenous engagement and collaboration. NOAA intends to take an inclusive approach to working with all types of local stakeholders and groups, residents, and federally recognized Tribes, Native American Tribes that are not federally recognized, and other Indigenous groups and organizations.

Though the sanctuary's boundaries exclude the area

north of Avila to Cambria, a Boundary Adjustment Action Plan is included in the final documents. This plan outlines NOAA's process to consider sanctuary expansion, initiating the process no later than January 2032. Potential expansion northward is outlined, as well as other potential areas. To meet the 2032 target, scientific analysis and characterizations of ocean resources could begin as soon as the designation is finalized. Any future expansion will entail a public review and comment process.

It has been a long journey to this monumental environmental victory, spanning three presidential administrations. The Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club has been there every step of the way as part of the local alliance that backed the Chumash in their quest.

Our chapter was part of the coalition that worked with the Northern Chumash Tribal Council to draft the nomination for the sanctuary and show NOAA our stretch of the ocean is special.

*SANCTUARY continued on page 2*

**Inside**



Your 2024  
chapter  
ballot, pg. 3

Before and after the submission of that nomination in 2015, the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club spent years petitioning, sending postcards and e-mail alerts, writing articles and letters to the editor, giving interviews to magazines, newspapers, grad students, radio and television outlets, tabling at local events, holding fundraisers and film screenings, going door to door to local businesses,

hiring interns to work on the campaign, placing op-eds and full-page ads in the *Tribune* and *New Times*. We accompanied the nominators, the late Chair Fred Collins and current Chair Violet Sage Walker of the Northern Chumash Tribal Council, as they spoke before city councils, advisory bodies, county supervisors, and

every community group that would have us. The Sierra Club commissioned an economic study that concluded a Central Coast sanctuary would likely result in, conservatively, 600 new

jobs and a \$23 million annual local economic boost.

We all persisted, against much opposition. Now the dream is real. Now the work begins.



**Generations** Left to right: The Sierra Club Santa Lucia Chapter's Political Chair Alex Mintzer, Conservation Chair Sue Harvey, former Chair Jennifer Bauer, former Chair Carole Mintzer, former Chair Tarren Collins, former Director Andrew Christie, Coordinator Gianna Patchen and Vice Chair Ranel Porter at the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary designation ceremony in Pismo Beach on Oct. 14, 2024.

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The *Santa Lucian* is published bimonthly, Jan-Nov. Articles, environmental information and letters to the editor are welcome. The deadline for each issue is the 12th day of the prior month.

Send to: **Editor, Santa Lucian**, Sierra Club, P.O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406, or sierraclub8@gmail.com



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The **Executive Committee** meets the second to last Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom. All members are welcome to attend.

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# Vote

## Select your Sierra Club Chapter's Executive Committee for 2025

It's time to vote for the next Santa Lucia Chapter Executive Committee members, the policy-making body of your Sierra Club chapter. Each position has a three-year term. You may vote for up to two candidates, including a write-in candidate. All current members of the Sierra Club's Santa Lucia Chapter are eligible to vote. You can vote online at [sc.org/santaluciaelection](https://sc.org/santaluciaelection), or by mail following instructions on your ballot below.

### Julie Lang

I have always considered the environment the most important issue of my lifetime. In Junior High, I joined the Environment Club and helped to clean up litter and raise awareness about environmental issues. I've tried to remain active and aware of all the environmental issues since then. I retired in 2020 from San Luis Coastal Unified School District where I was Director of Fiscal Services, and am currently on the Sierra Club Santa Lucia Executive Committee and serving as the treasurer for the chapter. The Santa Lucia Chapter includes amazing people with a wealth of knowledge to help navigate



these complex issues, so we can make decisions with confidence that this is the right choice for our local environment. I'm looking forward to continuing to advocate for all environmental issues and making the decisions that will keep the Central Coast and our planet clean and green!

### Linda Moran

My connection to nature began when I was just a year old, accompanying my family on tent camping trips. Since then, I have always felt at home and at peace in nature. My involvement with the Sierra Club began in Temecula in 2009 when the local chapter was opposing the construction of a large quarry in the hills. I became an active participant in the "Stop the Quarry" campaign, where I also met my partner, Bob Audibert, who led hikes for the chapter. In 2022, after retiring from a 22-year teaching career, we sought a cooler, less crowded area and discovered the beauty of California's Central Coast,



settling in Nipomo. We quickly joined the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club and I became involved with the Nipomo Action Committee. Bob has enjoyed leading hikes, while I have been actively involved in planning chapter activities. I am excited about the opportunity to contribute to the important work of the Santa Lucia Chapter and to help further the mission of the Sierra Club.

## 2025 Santa Lucia Chapter Executive Committee Ballot

To vote online or by mail, you will need your 6 to 8-digit member ID number. It should be on the address label of this newsletter, or on the label of any issue of *Sierra* magazine. If you need help finding your Member ID, contact the Sierra Club membership office at [member.care@sierraclub.org](mailto:member.care@sierraclub.org) or (415) 977-5653.

**To vote online:** Go to [sc.org/santaluciaelection](https://sc.org/santaluciaelection) any time before 5 p.m. on December 9, 2024, and follow the instructions there.

### To vote by mail:

● Make an X or checkmark in the box for up to two candidates of your choice. You may write in up to two names. Each write-in name is considered a vote. Ballots with more than two votes will not be counted. Write your 6- to 8-digit member ID in the space provided.

● Your mailing label should indicate whether you have a JOINT or SINGLE membership. Joint members please use both check boxes to vote.

● Sign and date the flap of the envelope. Do not write your name on the ballot. Mail to: **Elections Committee, Santa Lucia Chapter, P.O. Box 15755, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406** with sufficient time to arrive by the deadline.

● Ballots must be received by 5 p.m., December 9, 2024, at the chapter office. Mail only; no drop-offs. If both a mailed and online ballot are received with the same Member ID, only the final online ballot will be counted.

Julie Lang

Linda Moran

Write-In \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ member ID



# Sierra Club

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P. O. Box 15755

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# Hey, where'd the rest of the newsletter go? We're online!

We're kickin' it old school print media this month to deliver your 2025 Executive Committee ballot (which you filled out and mailed, right?) The rest of the Nov/Dec issue is where it is every month, on our website. Our lead story is here for your perusal – the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary designation – but the rest of our content awaits online.

## Stay in the loop!



[sc.org/SantaLuciaNews](http://sc.org/SantaLuciaNews)

This month's online newsletter articles include:

**30x30 Progress Report**

**Diablo's Bad Deal**

**Elon Musk Hits a Speed Bump at Vandenberg**

**Last Stop for Dana Reserve**

**Environmental Justice Training**

**A Mother for Peace**

**Offshore Wind Impact Studies**

**Dunes vs. Climate Change**

All this & more at: [Sierraclub.org/santa-lucia/santa-lucian](http://Sierraclub.org/santa-lucia/santa-lucian)

## Thank You Monthly Donors!!!

A special thank you to our Monthly Donors. Your ongoing support of the Santa Lucia Chapter provides a secure foundation for our advocacy to protect the Central Coast.

**Want to join this great group?** Sign up on our website. It's an easy and much appreciated way to support. Your donations stay in SLO County.

- |  |   |                                       |
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