

Vol. 21, No. 2 of 6

April - May 2021

Condor Call

Journal of Los Padres Chapter Sierra Club
Serving Ventura & Santa Barbara Counties



©Photo by Kaila Rayne

Future Power ... Past Oil ... Crucial Donors ... Earth Days ... New Trails

Pg 1

Pgs 2, 3

Pgs 1, 3

Pg 5

Pgs 6, 7

JOIN THE CLUB - ONLY \$15 - FREE BAG - SIERRACLUB.ORG

Our home is now a Virtual Power Plant

By Katie Davis

This week my family signed a "SoCal Edison Virtual Power Plant Enrollment Form," officially making our house with its solar and battery system part of a Virtual Power Plant.

Definition: A Virtual Power Plant (VPP) is a network of small to medium-sized energy resources, like solar and energy storage, that can be centrally controlled by the grid operator in support of, or in place of, a large central power plant.

Benefits: Adding a battery to my solar system saves me money by letting me shift energy use to less expensive times and provides energy backup if there is an outage. Enrolling in the VPP got me a \$1000 off the battery in exchange for letting SCE draw energy from my battery when the grid needs extra juice. Even better, I'm helping keep our energy grid reliable and our beaches and air clean.

The History: It all started with the proposed Puente gas plant, yet

another polluting fossil-fuel plant on the Oxnard beach. The Oxnard community and social justice organizations like CAUSE rose in opposition, sick of the industrial pollution and health impacts. Sierra Club formally intervened with state regulators, noting that sea level rise made the beach a poor choice for new infrastructure and that renewable energy alternatives should be considered instead.

I attended some of those hearings and the turnout was amazing. And it worked. The Oxnard power plant was scrapped, and 195 MW of battery storage were contracted instead.

See photo of hearing on page 2

The Future: Most of this will come from large banks of batteries being deployed everywhere from Oxnard to Goleta. A particularly innovative part of this regional solution is that some of it will come from residential customers like you and me. Swell Energy is actively recruiting approximately 6,000 homes and small businesses in the project area to create over 14 MW of capacity and demand response capabilities for a 10-year period.

"Solving today's energy needs in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties with Swell's virtual power plant showcases the value of strategically deploying these projects to reduce the region's reliance on power from fossil fuels," said Suleman Khan, CEO of Swell Energy.

Sierra Club has partnered with Swell Energy to spread the word. You can learn more here:

www.swellenergy.com/sierraclub

EAVESDROPS

"The fastest growing U.S. occupation in the next decade is solar panel installer, the second is wind turbine service technicians."

~ Craig Welch in a National Geographic article about driving cross-county in an electric car, "revealing how alternative energy sources could help power us into a sustainable future."

Read the article here:

<https://tinyurl.com/ElectricUSride>



Goleta City Council approved the purchase of the County's first EV ARC™. The ARC is a transportable, 100% off-grid solar-powered EV charger that can also serve as a mobile emergency preparedness and energy resiliency asset. It has a battery pack storing up the sun's energy. More info on Goleta's climate plans are here: <https://tinyurl.com/GoletaClimatePlans>

What's March Appeal all about?

The Sierra Club Los Padres Chapter's annual March Appeal is underway, and all members should be getting the request in the mail, if you haven't already.

Please don't toss it ... the March fundraiser is critical for our chapter because all the funds raised go toward defending wild lands, protecting clean air and water, and advancing climate solutions right here in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. Without your support, this

crucial work will not be done.

On the protection side, Exxon and other oil and gas companies continue the assault on our local environment. Our staff and volunteers are working tirelessly to prevent Exxon from restarting oil production on the Central Coast. We are defending oil drilling safety buffers and, notably in Ventura, calling for environmental review of old permits, which will also help advance statewide standards.

On the clean side, the Chapter is part of the bold Sierra Club 30x30 campaign to protect 30% of our valuable wildlands and waters by 2030. In addition, we are advocating for building electrification in Santa Barbara and other local cities.

Your donation supports community education and outreach, as well as civic advocacy to help advance all-electric buildings and transport, setting a precedent for the rest of the country to follow.

As for wild lands, the chapter staff and volunteers are helping steward the Central Coast Heritage

Españole

¡Vaya, sucedió! (Wow, it happened!) El sitio web de nuestro capítulo ahora tiene una versión en español. (Our chapter website now has a Spanish version.). Páselo ... aquí: (Pass it on ... here):

www.sierraclub.org/los-padres-es

Not only that, translator Nayra Adriana Pacheco Guzman was introduced to the Executive Committee. She will translate in Spanish for our Chapter events and she also works on club projects. Gracias y bienvenido.



HINES CHRONICLES

A gentle walk in Biden land

Editor's note: We continue with the Jim Hines Chronicles by popular demand, which takes the emails sent to our Executive Committee by our premier lobbyist who phones and zooms to the nation's Capital, state Capital, politicians, other chapters, eco-groups and more. This issue starts with his February 2021 emails and ends on our March 2021 deadline. Jim is our chapter's vice-chair and Ventura Conservation Director among other wildlife advocacy tasks.

By Jim Hines

Feb 3: **It's like a gentle walk** in the forest as I navigate Biden Land. They are so easy to speak with, they listen and are truly committed. Far cry from my meetings in DC over the past four years.

Feb 12: **Plenty of positive actions** being taken to protect our environment both on land and ocean waters here in the Central Coast region, notably Central Coast Heritage Protection Act, San Gabriel Mountains and Rivers Protection Act and a bill to ban longline commercial fishing nets in federal waters.

Feb 16: **Spoke to San Fernando Valley Group.** We work on several cross-county border issues together, like Santa Monica Mountains, Rim of the Valley Corridor Protection Act.

Feb 24: **I have become** the Rotary Clubs' speaker of choice about the work of the Sierra Club. I have spoken to the clubs of Camarillo, Santa Maria, San Luis Obispo and Los Olivos, and more requests are coming in.

COVER PHOTO

Bentley loves to take a dip on mellow weekdays along Cold Springs Trail before we made our trek to Montecito Peak. (Photo by Kaila Perry)

Feb 27: **Wildlife Team** update to Sierra Club California on protecting mountain lions and gray wolves.

March 2: **Bears Ears National Monument** status seems the number one question I get. Well, Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments will be back, on Jan. 26, President Biden issued an executive order to start the process of re-establishing the original boundaries of both.

March 5: **I need help** ... help for what? Shoveling all the sunshine out of my driveway ... it has been a rough Winter here in SoCal. I had a busy week of Zoom meetings and *continued on page 2*



New Interior Secretary Deb Haaland was strongly supported by the Sierra Club.



Electric Future on web

If you missed the webinar in March about the benefits of phasing out natural gas in buildings in favor of electric it, don't worry, you can enjoy it via a YouTube link in English or Spanish here:

<https://tinyurl.com/AllElectric>

<https://tinyurl.com/AllElectricES>

More than 65 people attended the webinar hosted by Sierra Club's Santa Barbara Group and Community Environmental Council (CEC) to educate Central Coast residents.

The one-hour video walks viewers through the health, cost and climate benefits of replacing gas with electricity and how you can make changes in your own home and enact new building all-electric codes in your city. It featured the Sierra Club's state representative, Matt Gough,

followed by a panel of guest experts: Dr. Christine James, CEC Energy Director Michael Chiacos and architect Alex Pujo.

The video comes as the City of Santa Barbara is finalizing an all-electric new building code for this spring. Ojai passed a new building electric code last fall, and activists in several Ventura and Santa Barbara municipalities hope to continue in their footsteps.

More than 40 California cities have passed codes for electric new buildings, while pro-gas legislators in other states have introduced bills to ban cities from doing the same.

If you would like to help in your city, we'll get you plugged in, contact:

jonathan.ullman@sierraclub.org

Meet Outings leader

Maureen Hernandez was chosen as the Los Padres Chapter's new Outings Chair, taking over from long-time Chair Stephen Bryne, who has stepped down but still stepping on the trails.

"I have lived in Camarillo, on and off, since 1962. Hiking became an interest, and I began hiking with the Monday Sierra Club about 2010," she said.

"When Phil and Lora Clarke moved to Santa Barbara, the long-standing Monday hiking group had

no leader. I became a hike leader in 2018, took over the hike, and have been organizing and leading hikes every Monday since."

Maureen intends to do more than the administrative work of compiling and organizing our free outings which, hopefully, will resume this year. "I hope to work with the rest of the Outings team to increase membership and get as many people as I can outside. A leadership role is something I do, and I hope I can live up to your expectations."



Four Ventura Sierra Club hike leaders, making the most of Covid restrictions by continuing to hike and explore to be ready when the club can again conduct free public outings. Here, they are exploring Santa Cruz Island. They are, from left: Maureen Hernandez (our new Outings Chair), Judith Laurentowski, Susanne Tanaka, and Anna Simkowiak Chung. (Photo by Lisa Sachs)

Hines Chronicles...

continued from page 1

calls with Biden staffers, western states legislators, Senate staffers and the chief of staff to Gov. Newsom.

Also gave talks to six groups and organizations via Zoom.

March 9: **Working closely** with our Borderlands and Wildlife teams by submitting a list of sections of the Trump border wall to be removed to provide safe passage for natural wildlife movement.

March 17: **Got about 6 minutes** on the phone with Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland, her second day on the job. She asked me to provide her staff with more info on issues we discussed.

EAVESDROPS

"Their sins of emission, like so many other firms and individuals, are bad. But their sins of omission are truly inexcusable."

~ Bill McKibben of 350.org, commenting on ExxonMobil's deliberate lies about global warming from 1988 to the present, covering up their own analysis that fossil fuel was responsible for much of climate change.



March 19: **A note about** wildlife crossings under the 101 freeway in the Gaviota area came from Doug Campbell, Coastal Ranches Conservancy, which said Coastal Commission staff is likely to recommend that Caltrans take the necessary steps to create a wildlife crossing under the four lanes of Highway 101, when they build the replacement culvert at Gaviota. A hearing is expected April 16.

March 23: **Bills are moving** through Congress to protect wildlife corridors, national forests, parks and monuments. Working closely with CA Assembly member Rob Bonta (D-Oakland) we have introduced AB 534, the Whale Entanglement Prevention Act to stop this deadly practice off California waters. Others are to ban nylon longline fishing and crab trap nets, which entangle marine mammals.

March 23: **So many people** are not aware of the Sierra Club 30x30 Conservation Plan, but when I send them the link and discuss it, they just love it. I'm working to implement the 30x30 plan in our region and will speak to Ventura Supervisors in April. Here's the link:

<https://tinyurl.com/30X30plan>

March 24: **It was all about** wildlife across the U.S. this morning as I spoke to Martha Williams, the new Deputy Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. She understands the importance of wildlife protection and I discussed measures to stop pesticide use on wildlife refuges and expanding funding for endangered species.

March 25: **Mountain Lions Forever** is a Sierra Club campaign to protect them, and our local populations are on the agenda April 14 for a six-month extension to the CA Fish and Game Commission. Staff told me it will likely pass until public hearings are held perhaps next year.



The ground was breaking for Virtual Power Plants (see page 1 success story) in grassroots activism, such as at this 2017 hearing opposing the Puente gas power plant in favor of electricity sources, like solar panels and battery storage. In foreground, Oxnard Sierra Club activists Mike Stubblefield and Liz Lamar, and CAUSE activists gather at the hearing. (Photo by CAUSE)

Our bold local legislators take on the oil industry

By Katie Davis

When it comes to meeting our climate goals, California's Achilles heel has long been the power of the oil industry.

They spend millions of dollars on lobbyists, campaign contributions and front groups to create the illusion of public support. Their goal is to pressure legislators, keep the oil flowing and stop all efforts at meaningful reform. But this year a bold group of California legislators stepped forward to take on the oil industry.

These legislators, including

EAVESDROPS

"Citizens United was 11 years old Jan. 21. The damage it has done in that time to American democracy is incalculable, and the chances of reversing it through a change in the court or a constitutional amendment are low."

~ LA Times writer Michael Hiltzik, responding to the news that corporations are suspending political donations due to the Jan. 6 insurrection, warning us not to think it's a "sea change in big-money influence on our elections." It isn't.

State Senator Monique Limón, introduced SB 467, a bill that takes aim at the unusually dirty and risky oil extraction practices that threaten our region. This bill would improve public health and environmental quality by banning all forms of enhanced oil recovery, such as hydraulic fracking and cyclic steam injection, and require the state to develop health-protective 2,500-foot setback between oil-gas extraction operations and homes and schools. This is particularly meaningful in our region. In Ventura County, a setback ordinance and other sensible oil regulations are being aggressively challenged in court by oil companies, and a temporary moratorium to protect water resources in Oxnard from cyclic steam production has expired.

In north Santa Barbara County dozens of organizations have been fighting multiple cyclic steam projects for years. These projects would triple oil greenhouse gas emissions, drill through the Santa Maria drinking water aquifer, create dangerous fire risks, clear-cut oak forests, and degrade a richly biodiverse area home to 99 sensitive and endangered species. While the immediate projects of concern have been withdrawn, only state action can protect us long term.

SB 467 also tasks California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) with identifying oil industry workers who have lost their jobs and providing incentives to companies involved with remediating abandoned oil and gas well sites to hire these workers.

A complimentary bill by Limón -- AB47 Remediating Deserted Wells -- allows CalGEM to spend up to \$10 million a year on plugging and abandoning deserted oil wells. That will help create these jobs and address a huge health and safety issue.

As will AB 896 -- Idle Gas and Oil Well Remediation -- by Assembly Member Bennett which authorizes CalGEM to impose a claim or lien on an idle well if the operator has failed to pay idle well fees, if the well is unsafe, or if the state has incurred costs for remediating the well. This will provide an important tool to help motivate oil companies to obey the law and properly seal wells no longer in use.

Kudos to State Senator Limón and Assembly Member Bennett for introducing these oil bills. It's a big lift to take on the oil industry and get needed reforms passed and signed, but it is necessary work to protect our health, meet our climate goals, and address the hazard of abandoned and idle wells.

Decommissioning an oil site



It may take up to three years to accomplish the decommissioning of the Carpinteria offshore oil and gas plant and will constitute the first oil platforms to be taken away off California's coast. The 55-acre onshore property is part of the effort. It was sold to Venoco by Chevron, but Chevron is obligated to decommission the on- and off- shore properties. The status of the land and the oil pier after decommissioning is yet unknown.

Condor Call
www.sierraclub.org/lospadres ~ All phone numbers 1-805 area code
EDITOR: 'Condor' John Hankins, 452-2885
 260 Pacos St. Ventura CA 93001 • John@gnusman.com
 ADVERTISING: Contact Editor (above)
 DEADLINES FOR ALL ISSUES:
 Copy Deadline: 20th — Advertising Deadline: 22nd of month preceding publication.

PUBLICATION SCHEDULE:
 February/March, April/May, June/July, Aug/Sept, Oct/Nov, Dec/Jan
 SUBSCRIPTIONS: Free to members
 Non-members, \$15 per year. Contact Editor John Hankins
Photos, news, tips always welcome!

Sierra Club
SierraClub.org/Los-Padres
 • LOS PADRES CHAPTER •
 Post Office Box 31241, Santa Barbara, Ca 93130-1241
<https://www.sierraclub.org/lospadres>
 Santa Barbara 617-3106 • Ventura 988-0339
 Change of Address: address.changes@sierraclub.org or (415) 977-5653

NATIONAL OFFICE & MEMBER SERVICES: (415) 977-5500
 2101 Webster St. Suite 1300, Oakland CA 94612
 WASHINGTON LEGISLATIVE OFFICE: (202) 547-1141
 50 F Street, NWW, 8th Floor Washington, D.C., 20001

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Jonathan.Ullman@SierraClub.org
 • EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE •
 Katie Davis (Chair): 451-4574, kdavis2468@gmail.com
 Jim Hines (Vice-Chair): 340-9266, jheasitas@gmail.com
 Gerry Ching (Secretary): 964-5411, gching@cox.net
 Richard Hunt (Treasurer): 966-4157, richardhunt@cox.net
 Alex Pujo (at large): 962-3578, alex@pujo.net
 David Gold (at-large): 642-7748 x6, davidgold4@aol.com
 Elisabeth Lamar (at large): 667-7617, elisabethlamar@hotmail.com
 Rebecca August (Arguello Group Rep): 350-0629, rebeccaugust@mac.com
 Hugh Warren (Conejo Group Rep): 341-6295, mail@hkwarren.net
 Martha Sadler (Santa Barbara Group Rep): 636-9194, marthasadler@yahoo.com

• GROUP CHAIRS •
 Arguello: Rebecca August 350-0629, rebeccaugust@mac.com
 Conejo: Hugh Warren, 341-6295, mail@hkwarren.net
 Santa Barbara: Katie Davis, 451-4574, kdavis2468@gmail.com
 Ventura Network: Elisabeth Lamar, 667-7617, elisabethlamar@hotmail.com

• CLUB SERVICES •
 Forest issues: Jim Hines, 340-9266, jheasitas@gmail.com
 Wilderness Basics Course: Teresa Norris, 524-7170, lospadreswbc@gmail.com
 Air Quality: Michael Stubblefield, 216-2630, motodata@roadrunner.com
 Conservation SB: Kate Mullin, mullin@shelter-vet.com
 Conservation Vta: Jim Hines, 340-9266, jheasitas@gmail.com
 Legal: David Gold, 642-7748 x6, davidgold4@aol.com
 Outings: Maureen Hernandez, moenandez@gmail.com
 Political SB: Alex Pujo, 962-3578, alex@pujo.net
 Political Vta: David Gold, 642-7748 x6, davidgold4@aol.com
 Transportation: Kent Bullard, 218-6945, KentBullard@yahoo.com

Typography and production by Dan Fuller

A 50-state fight on climate plans

By Jon Ullman

Our Central California coast municipalities are lucky. We have been given a full slate of tools to protect health and fight climate change, and we should use every one of them.

As someone who worked for 20 years for the Sierra Club in Florida, I know how hard it is to make progress on climate when the state doesn't have your back. Our biggest statewide climate champion was then-Republican Gov. Charlie Crist, who served from 2007 to 2011, and is now a Democrat. He modeled his strong climate policy after Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. Those days are long gone.

Today, I'm working with activists in the city of Santa Barbara to phase out harmful natural gas in buildings. Last fall, Ojai passed the first all-electric code for new buildings in our Chapter region (Santa Barbara and Ventura counties). Santa Barbara looks like it will follow with an all-electric code this spring. And there are more in our area that could take the plunge this year.

On March 17 we co-sponsored a webinar with Community Environmental Council entitled: *Santa Barbara Electric New Buildings 101*. It's available here: <https://tinyurl.com/GoElectricSB>

Already 45 cities have already passed similar ordinances to reduce carbon in buildings in California including San Francisco and San Jose. They are called "reach codes," which simply mean reach as high as far as you can. (Technically, it means locals can vote in stricter rules than the state.)

California wants cities to set climate goals, pass climate plans and take actions beyond the state's minimum standards. To use a football metaphor, California gave

us the ball, and we need to run with it.

But while we have the ball, Florida and more than a dozen other states with GOP-majority legislatures this year have introduced "pre-emption" laws, which strip the rights of cities and counties to pass laws to reduce carbon. The Florida Chapter is trying every trick up its sleeves to keep these bills from a final vote in the next six weeks before the legislative session ends. Florida, with the third most-populous state, would be the most populous state to ban local carbon restrictions.

Last year, the gas industry passed a "test" preemption law in Arizona just before the pandemic hit. It was a success. Laws were also passed in Oklahoma, Tennessee and Louisiana in 2020. This year, the industry has rolled out bills in Georgia, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas and Utah. Only Colorado, with a Democratic-controlled legislature, has stopped it in committee – on a party line vote.

Given that, I urge cities in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties (as well as the counties themselves) to run with the ball. Some are running. But some are slow walking. Some are frozen.

This is a 50-state fight. The oil and gas industry is running with the ball everywhere it can and so must we.

If you want to help with an all-electric new building campaign to protect health and climate in your city in the next couple months, email me at jonathan.ullman@sierraclub.org

We have rights, and we intend to use them.



Join our roof top revolution

The Sierra Club's "Rooftop Revolution" campaign to add more solar power is continuing with an offer of a free solar evaluation for your home with discounts. A Tesla Powerwall is also available.

"We continue to be amazed by the number of people interested in going solar with Sierra Club," according to the campaign.

Hundreds of people in or near the Los Padres Sierra Club have requested a solar quote and actual installations nationwide are growing by the thousands.

"You can lock in your electricity rate for the next 20 years, free yourself from dirty energy, and do it all with no upfront investment," said the club's executive Director Michael Brune, who had a system installed on his home, as did Condor John, editor of Condor Call.

Swell Energy is the company that will assess and install the system using local contractors, and it has a leasing program. The program, in most cases, will fund the installation of a Tesla Powerwall home battery system that can keep your medical equipment and other parts of your house operating during the outages for a limited time.

Be a part of a local solution to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels

by installing a Tesla Powerwall to provide backup power and participate in the distributed clean energy grid of the future! You'll get \$1,000 for participating and Swell Energy will donate \$500 to the Sierra Club. In addition, there are state cash-back rebates and federal tax incentives

available that may cover up to 100% of the system's cost.

Get a free quote from Swell Energy that will detail your solar options, show you what your home would look like, and how much you would save at: <http://www.swellenergy.com/SierraClub>

Vote for directors

Sierra Club's National Director, Ramon Cruz, is urging members to take the opportunity to exercise one of the most important responsibilities of your membership by voting for the Sierra Club Board of Directors.

Voting is particularly important as the Sierra Club is changing with more attention to diversity, social justice, climate solutions and more, including a look back at its history and where we go from here.

A robust portal of everything you need to know is here: <https://tinyurl.com/SClubElections>

It includes the candidate profiles, statements, a forum of candidates answering important questions, their vision, and goals.

Members should have received voting information by mail or email by now; if not, contact Election Services at (866) 720-4357 or email: sierraclub@electionservicescorp.com

Deadline to vote is noon April 28.

The Board of Directors is the governing body of the Sierra Club, which establishes conservation and internal priorities.

"Their strong leadership and dedication are critical to the ongoing effectiveness of the Sierra Club," Cruz said, and "while it will take only a few moments of your time, the impact to our organization, our mission and our planet will be far reaching."

Please vote.

Local donors drive climate plan

The eminent biologist E.O. Wilson has argued that to preserve biodiversity, we need to set aside half the planet for wild nature.

Now, conservation groups, including the Sierra Club, are laying out a road map to reach that "half Earth" goal, demanding that governments protect 30 percent of landscapes and seascapes by 2030.

Donate today to support our 30x30 conservation work in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties.

We can do our part locally to support the Sierra Club 30x30 Conservation Agenda.

Here's seven reasons your donation makes all the difference:

1 - Without your support, critical federal, state, and local legislation will not be passed, leaving our wildlands vulnerable to destruction, neglect, and development. Examples are plentiful via legislation put forward by our local leaders and lobbied by the Sierra Club, like the California Land Protection Act and Central Coast Heritage Protection Act, both sponsored by local Rep. Salud Carbajal.

2 - The urgency of climate change is glaring. Chapter advocates are in regular conversation with the Biden Administration, urging Secretary Deb Haaland, Tom Vilsack, and others to reverse Trump Administration environmental rollbacks and move forward

with increased environmental protection. After four million acres of California burned in 2020, we need climate action now!

3 - Stop Big Oil! Your contribution provides vital resources to Chapter staff and volunteers who are working diligently to ensure that oil companies are not allowed to increase local oil production, such as Exxon trying to restart oil drilling and sending 70 trucks of oil per day on the 101 freeway. Meanwhile, Plains Pipeline (which was convicted of felony negligence) seeks to build an oil pipeline across sensitive rivers, parks, and public lands. Ventura oil interests are working to drill new wells using old oil permits without modern environmental review.

4 - Your dollars go directly to securing endangered species

protections for mountain lions, condors, whales, and other precious wild life.

5 - Santa Barbara and other local cities are considering shifting to clean energy homes through all-electric buildings, vehicles powered by the sun, and other renewables like wind supported by the chapter in the Lompoc area.

6 - From bike lanes to preserving local lands, Chapter volunteers and staff are advocating at city and county meetings to create opportunities for all of us to get outside safely.

7 - Your donation directly protects our precious local wildlands and wildlife. We also favor social justice and working toward opportunities for all of us to enjoy the outdoors.

Please donate whatever you can here:

www.sierraclub.org/donate/1000



All physical meetings suspended - we're online

Group News

www.SBSierraClub.org

The public is welcome to our programs

CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

~ Meets 4th Thursday 7pm of every month, via internet for now. Email Secretary Gerry Ching for the agenda: gching@cox.net

~ Chapter website and blog at: www.SierraClub.org/LosPadres

SANTA BARBARA GROUP

~ We meet 1st Tuesdays, noon to 1:30pm of each month. For details and to follow the South Coast area, contact:

<http://www.sbsierraclub.org>
<https://www.FACEBOOK.com/SBSierraClub>
<https://TWITTER.com/SBSierraClub>
<https://www.INSTAGRAM.com/SierraClubSantaBarbara>
<https://www.MEETUP.com/SierraClub-SantaBarbara>
<https://tinyurl.com/SBGroupBlog>

ARGUELLO GROUP

Our North County Group will keep you informed on our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/SierraClubArguelloGroup ~Volunteers needed; your talents could make a difference. Call 350-0629 or: RebeccaAugust@mac.com

VENTURA NETWORK

~ For board meeting dates, times and location email: sierraclubventura@gmail.com
 ~ Get latest info about the western Ventura County group via Facebook and a blog:

<http://tinyurl.com/VenturaSierraClubFB>
<https://tinyurl.com/VenturaSierraClubBlog>
 ~New MEETUP site for hikes, outings etc:
www.meetup.com/SierraClubVentura

CONEJO GROUP

~ Events, outings and meetings will be sent to you if you sign up at ConejoGroup@gmail.com

Otherwise, get all information on this eastern Ventura County Group from Hugh Warren, 341-6295 mail@hkwarren.net
www.sierraclub.org/los-padres/conejo
www.sierraclub.org/los-padres/conejo/outings

SIGHTINGS

We persist despite pandemic

By John Hankins

While we're not back to our normal free outings and in-person meetings, our chapter is highly active to achieve the mission of the Sierra Club in modern times, which is:

EAVESDROPS

"The California coast won."

~ Coastal Commission Chair Steve Padilla on a 10-0 vote in mid-March to end off-road driving at Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area within three years to restore eight miles of coastline to a more natural state. Issue is a 40-year battle, and off-roaders vow to fight the decision.

"To explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; To practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; To educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives."

Please join us; see Group News box on page 3 for contacts and links where you can get involved. We encourage all to go outside on your own or by MeetUp.

If you'd like to donate (it helps a lot and the money stays here at home), do not pass go, but go directly to: www.sierraclub.org/donate/1000

Here's what we've been up to since our last issue:

March 28: **Renew Your Shoes** event to benefit Ventura Sierra Club, featuring artist Linda Zolten Wood showing you how to create a distinctive shoe-sneaker via painting designs of your own choosing. Nina Danza organized the event via MeetUp.

March 25: **Save the Foothills** cry was answered by our chapter donating \$1,000 to help save the San Marcos Foothills from development at a cost of \$18-\$20 million. A major campaign is underway with a deadline of June 2 (see story pg 6). To help: www.FoothillsForever.org



Rendering courtesy of the City of Santa Barbara

Despite an appeal from the Landmarks Committee, the SB City Council did approve green-painted bike lanes and a route that would allow better east to west access. The Sierra Club supported the move.

March 23: **SB Westside Bike** plan strongly supported by our SB Group. Landmarks Committee didn't like the green bike paths. The new lanes would close a glaring gap between the Westside and Eastside. But it will move forward via unanimous vote by the city council on appeal. Read about the issue here: <https://tinyurl.com/SBBikeVictory>

March 19: **Wildlife Overpass** proposed at Liberty Canyon was one of the key issues of interest to the Rotary Club of Westlake Village when our Chapter co-chair, Jim Hines, spoke to them. "Lots and lots of questions," Jim reports, such as the Rim of the Valley Corridor and Santa Monica Mountains issues. The club strongly supports the overpass and the Rim Corridor.

March 17: **Electrify buildings** campaign featured a webinar with the Sierra Club's statewide organizer, Matt Gough, affecting our chapter region, notably the heated battle with SoCalGas which is pushing back against a proposed ordinance in the city of SB in favor of electricity instead of gas to reduce pollution. "Congrats to Alex, Martha and Jon who all spoke in support of building electrification at the sustainability committee meeting today. Great job!" wrote Katie Davis.

March 10: **Glass vs Alternatives** issue was analyzed by David Goldstein's "Eye on the Environment" in the *VC Reporter*. Goldstein, an analyst with Ventura County Public Works, mentions a Sierra Club analysis of a 2019 study which considered "overall harm". Read it here: <https://tinyurl.com/RecycleStudy>.

March 2: **Conejo Climate Coalition** was the Ventura Sierra Club's guest during its regular (webinar) meeting to update us on their efforts lobbying the City of Thousand Oaks to adopt all electric building codes. www.conejoclimate.org

Feb 25: **CFROG** (Climate First Replacing Oil and Gas) asked the chapter to support safe clean-up of Ventura's old compressor station and questions about an Oxnard oil field study. ExCom motions passed unanimously.

Feb 22: **Wildlife Underpass** at Gaviota is fully supported by our Sierra Club Chapter, which sent a letter to that effect this day to the CA Coastal Commission.

Feb 21: **Call to Action** supporting permanent wilderness protection in our region via HR 803, Protecting America's Wilderness and Public Lands Act. Help Sierra Club gain critical support for protection of the Los Padres National Forest, Carrizo Plain National Monument and Rim of the Valley Corridor. It passed the House and is now in a Senate committee.

Feb 20: **Sierra Club California Conservation Committee** met virtually to review conservation issues. The was the 30 x30 Executive Order by Gov. Newsom: How it protects California's land and water, what changes we would like to see, and how Sierra Club California and the chapters can best advocate for change.

Feb 11: **Central Coast Heritage Protection Act (HR-973)** is introduced by our Rep. Salud Carbajal (D-Santa Barbara) to protect the Los Padres National Forest and Carrizo Plain National Monument. Status: referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources. The Sierra Club is lobbying for the bill's passage.

Feb 8: **Toxic Gas Plant** in Ventura (1555 N. Olive St.) is defunct, needs to be cleaned up by the state as it's a methane super-emitter. To ensure it is fully abated, the Sierra Club and others signed a letter listing potential problems to nearby schools, residences and traffic mitigation that must be followed.

Feb 2: **Loophole politics:** Ventura supervisors had to certify signatures gathered by the local oil industry to force a vote in the upcoming June primary election. Issue is over the county's approval of closing a loophole that allowed drilling or fracking under antiquated permits, many of which do not have an expiration date. Our Sierra Club and many others (notably CFROG, Climate First Replacing Oil and Gas) fought to close the loophole and insist on environmental review. A coalition will continue the fight against the ballot measure.



Katie Davis

Feb 1: **Two Climate Warriors** interviewed about Santa Barbara County's One Climate Initiative, by Tara Messing, appeared in the February issue of *Santa Barbara Lawyer*. Our chapter Chair Katie Davis and Garrett Wong of the County's Sustainability Division are the two "warriors". Worth the read here: <https://tiny.one/2EcoWarriors>



A climate gap still faces us

Editor's note: Emily Williams is a PhD candidate in Geography at UC Santa Barbara, a climate justice activist and scholar. For those interested in references, ask the author at:

emilylynnwilliams@gmail.com

By Emily Williams

One year into shelter-in-place due to Covid-19, we've experienced a fundamental shift in the way we live our lives. For many, this has included working from home—leading to less flying and commuting (my commute from the bedroom to the living room is more or less emissions free).

In 2020, global greenhouse emissions fell by 6.4%; in the US, they fell by a whopping 13%. Yet these reductions cannot be interpreted as a climate solution. A one-off year of lower emissions is a microscopic blip when it comes to necessary reductions.

To put 6.4% in context, year-on-year global emissions reductions of 7.5% are required to avoid 1.5C of warming and the most serious consequences of climate disruption. If we were to maintain 2020-level

emissions reductions over the next decade, globally, we would be nearly on track to avoiding 1.5C.

But as we all know and feel deeply, having lived through the past year, a pandemic is not a climate solution. We've just had a taste of what it would take to reduce emissions via individual actions alone—and it's not sustainable.

So how do we reduce emissions to avoid catastrophic climate change without going insane?

The answer is simple—climate change isn't an individual problem, it's a collective one. Anyone who tells you that individual actions are enough is parroting the fossil fuel industry's obstructionist talking points. Not that we shouldn't take actions where we can (I am a vegetarian and drive a plug-in hybrid vehicle) but rather, as 2020 showed us, the nature of individual actions that would be required comprise totally unrealistic expectations of what we as humans are able to sacrifice.

Meanwhile, nearly half of emissions in the US come from electricity production and industrial sources.

The Biden Administration has launched an ambitious climate agenda; yet, tallying up the related emissions reductions, we are still faced with a carbon 'gap' between where we need to be and where we are. Nevertheless, real climate solutions do exist, right here, right now. They're being articulated by young people, unions, and frontline communities, and even made their way into a House Resolution in 2019.

Collectively they are understood as a green recovery, a just transition or the Green New Deal. Together these prioritize systemic economic recovery, not by building back the same systems that created the mess in the first place, but instead by investing directly in communities and creating jobs to build the sustainable infrastructure that will phase out fossil fuels, increase resilience to climate impacts, and build out already low-carbon sectors of the economy.

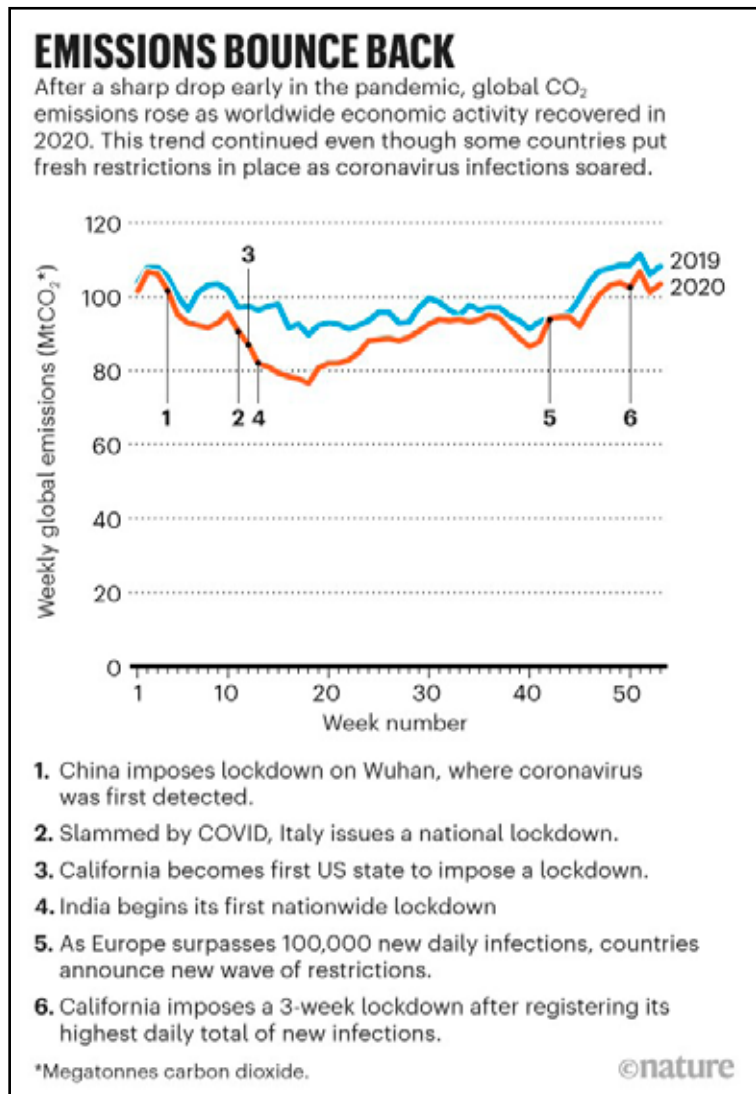
We cannot go "back to normal" after Covid-19. In May, the International Energy Agency warned that the economic rebound post-pandemic could result in even higher emissions than pre-pandemic.

Looking at current data it seems that emissions bounce-back is already happening.

As our frontline allies have made clear, "back to normal" perpetuates violence against and marginalization of people of color, "normal" entrenches skyrocketing wealth inequalities, and "normal" continues sacrificing communities of color for expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure. Coming out of the worst global pandemic of the past century, we have a choice to make: return to that "normal" or build back fossil free.

And when it comes to climate, this may be our last chance to make the right choice. To learn more about the push to build back fossil free, visit:

<https://buildbackfossilfree.org>





COASTAL PROPERTIES
EXCEEDING YOUR REAL ESTATE EXPECTATIONS

We appreciate the Sierra Club!

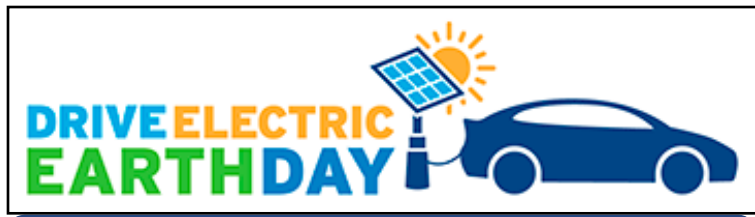
1085 Coast Village Road, Santa Barbara, CA, 93108 DRE #01208634

Kevin Young and Berni Bernstein

Your terrific real estate team with 65 years and 420 sales of combined experience

- We recognize our fiduciary duty to represent your best interests from meeting to closing.
- We are experts in selling homes and apartments, and in 1031 Tax Deferred Exchanges.
- Serving Carpinteria, Montecito, Santa Barbara, Goleta, Hope Ranch, and Summerland.
- Proud to be members of many neighborhood groups and non-profits, like OMNI and MBA.
- 34 years living here in Santa Barbara on the beautiful Mesa.
- Your success is our success. Thank you to our clients and their referrals since 1982.

Interview us for your next transaction. Free consultations. www.sbre.com
Berni Bernstein: bernibernstein@hotmail.com | DRE #00870443
Kevin Young: 805 637 2048 | DRE #00834214



Drive Electric Earth Day is a national campaign to share information about electric vehicles during April, so instead of a day, is all the days in April.

In addition to being better for the environment, electric vehicles are more fun to drive, more convenient to fuel and less expensive to operate than gasoline vehicles. Attend an online event to experience driving electric.

Drive Electric Earth Day, April 1-30, is a nationwide celebration to raise awareness of the many benefits of all-electric and plug-in hybrid cars, trucks, motorcycles, and more. They are fun to drive, are better for the environment, promotes local jobs, and reduces our dependence on foreign oil.

Are you considering going electric? Come talk to owners who have successfully done so.

Register to attend an in-person or online event for a chance to win a \$250 Visa gift card here:
<https://driveelectricearthday.org/events-search>

Earth Day, virtually

Editor's note: As of press time, there are few Earth Day events announced in our chapter region, but it's likely more will pop up as the day gets closer.

The official Earth Day is Thursday, April 22 with about a billion participants expected around the world over a three-day period from April 20-22, with the theme of *Restore the Earth*.

The biggest event always is the SB Community Environmental Council's Earth Day Thursday April 22 through Saturday April 24. Details are available here:

<https://sbearthday.org/>
www.Facebook.com/SBEarthDay

Our Santa Barbara group will have a virtual booth during CEC's 3-day virtual event.

This year's festival theme for CEC is #CelebrateClimateLeadership, and the free three-day virtual

event will focus on key areas where youth, business, and community climate leaders are stepping up to do the critical work needed to combat the climate crisis.

Annie Leonard, Executive Director of Greenpeace USA, is the recipient of CEC's 2021 Environmental Hero Award; she will appear on Saturday to discuss her vital work.

The 3-day schedule (go to the website to register) is April 22, Youth Leadership; April 23, Business Leadership and April 24, Community Leadership.

Also, on April 21 a co-sponsored talk with UCSB entitled "The Quest for Environmental and Racial Justice" features Dr. Robert Bullard at 5pm during a virtual event, as part of its April-May Race to Justice series that features six other events on the topic. Register at www.ArtsAndLectures.UCSB.edu

We're done with oil

By Gene Rubin

Only a handful of years ago, I used to dream of an electric car that I could charge from solar panels. The car of my dreams was something like a converted VW Bug that would take me to the beach and back, maybe around town a bit. Gee ... if that car could take me 20 miles or so, wow, that would really be great!

Only a few years later came the Model S. I bought one of the very first, and here I am two and a half years later with over 50,000 miles driven. I still chuckle to myself about my wishes for a 20-mile EV car. Were my dreams fulfilled? Oh yes, my dream came true, and to a level I could have never, ever imagined. I can go nearly anywhere I choose in the USA; at high speed, in full comfort, in full safety, and charge fast

and for free.

I can't tell you how many times I pinch myself to be sure I am actually awake and not back in that dream!

I'd really like to share with you why I made the decision, why I felt it was "my duty" to buy the Model S and to support Tesla's efforts to electrify transport. I have travelled the world as an amateur anthropologist. I am keenly aware, and I have witnessed firsthand, the destruction that oil industry exploration and drilling do to people's land, lives, and family. These are those peoples whose voices are seldom heard.

I then thought of all the wars fought over oil, the spills that have destroyed so much wildlife, global climate change, and the soon coming cancer death of a loved one who



grew up next to an oil refinery. You see, I have been an environmentalist for years. I realized that as long as I buy gas to put in my car, I am 'part of the problem'. I decided to stand for what I believe. I decided to be "part of the solution" and I chose the Model S as an EV that could take me the distances I need to travel. It is my only car. It is all the car I could ever need.

The buying and service experience that I have enjoyed with Tesla has been an absolute pleasure. The Model 3 would be great for my son Michael, and one for my sweet Jayne. Oh yes, and Amelia, our wonderful 9-year-old? When she is 16, I assure you, she'll be driving on electricity as well.

I have never heard of a war fought over electricity and I have never seen an "electric spill" in our oceans.

This family is done with oil.



Gene Rubin and his family are done with polluting cars in favor of the game-changing Tesla. (Photo contributed)



Gregory Young, program manager of Clean Coalition, with his new EV car Bolt and his new dog Quest. (Photo contributed)

EAVESDROPS

"Going on a business trip to a location that does not offer rental electric vehicles can cause me angst. Having to sit in front of dozens of buttons, switches and dials is bad enough, but when that one indicator makes me go to a putrioleum station it's a real retro journey. Dirty, stinky, and costly ... why? Life is so much better in an EV."

~ Kent Bullard, EV driver since 2011.

EV drivers tell stories

Top ten things I love about driving my Tesla Model 3:

10. Instant pick up and go when needed.
9. Smooth acceleration (no shifting).
8. Ability to get huge discounts on electricity from 10pm to 7am.
7. Brakes that last way longer.
6. No tail pipes because no emissions.
5. No more oil changes.
4. One-pedal driving.
3. Software updates that keep improving functions and features.
2. Leaving the garage every morning with full range,
1. Never having to visit a gas station!

~ From David Pollock of Moorpark, a director of Client Relations at the Green Law Group.

Doggone magic of fate:

The desire to own a dog came long before my desire to own an electric vehicle (EV), but I never would have guessed that they both would be satisfied on exactly the same day. I mostly have the magic of fate to thank for that — but I can proudly say that research and persistence also played a large role.

While the time and effort put into finding the right dog has paid off tremendously in companionship and unconditional love, the time and effort put into leasing an EV has paid off in a net gain of \$620.

I was shocked myself when I first started adding together the California grants and rebate funds that I could receive when purchasing or leasing an EV. I was also guided by the Community Environmental Council's website, which helps you understand whether you qualify for a free or low-cost leased or used electric vehicle in eight simple steps:

<https://tinyurl.com/FreeEVsite>

In a nutshell for a Chevy Bolt LT, 3-year lease cost: Lease \$8,880 - \$5,000 Clean Vehicle Assistant Grant, \$4,500 = \$620 net positive!

~ From Gregory Young, program manager of Clean Coalition.

DDT pollution persists off our shores

Editor's note: Channel Islands Marine and Wildlife Institute responds to animals found on beaches from Ventura all the way to Point Conception. If you see a stranded marine mammal please call the rescue hotline: 805-567-1505.

By Catherine Mullin

In the middle of the night in the 1950's a salvage barge leaves the Port of Los Angeles heading for the deep waters off Santa Catalina Island. Loaded on deck are barrels filled with toxic 'acid sludge'.

Many originated from the Montrose Chemical Corp. near Torrance. Starting in 1947 it was one of the biggest manufacturers of DDT used to combat malaria and typhus during WWII. Environmental protections were scant then, and the practice of dumping toxic waste in the deep ocean was an 'accepted' practice. The destination was the deep water about 10 nautical miles NW of Santa Catalina, but many barges took short cuts and dumped their load much closer inshore, often close to Palos Verdes. Photographs show crewmen wielding hatchets to puncture barrels so that they would sink more quickly.

The US finally banned DDT in 1972 when its danger became evident, although the Montrose plant continued to manufacture the substance up to 1982 for countries without a ban. DDT is extraordinarily persistent, does not break down

easily and tends to accumulate in fatty tissue of animals. This stability results in biomagnification as it moves up the food chain from krill, to fish, to marine mammals and humans.

By the late 60's and early 70's scientists began to measure remarkably high levels of DDT in mackerel caught off Southern California. Finally, in 1996 the area off Palos Verdes was declared a Superfund Toxic Cleanup Site.

While the story of toxic waste dumping made headlines it then largely disappeared as other more visible environmental issues took precedence. However, in 2011 and 2013, a UCSB science project using a marine robot to study deep sea vents happened to capture photographs of barrels littering the ocean floor. Samples collected during these missions found extremely high concentrations of DDT. Shipping logs uncovered in the 1970's indicated that every month thousands of barrels were taken out to sea for decades. It is estimated that over half million barrels were dumped. Extrapolating the potential amount of toxins still seeping from these largely forgotten barrels is huge.

Our California coast is an ecological marvel. California Sea Lions breed out on the Channel Islands where pups are born every June. The mothers leave to feed in the Channel Island waters returning

to nurse their pup for up to a year.

Marine Mammal Rescue and Rehabilitation organizations span the entire coast of California with the largest facility (The Marine Mammal Center (TMMC) in Sausalito near the Golden Gate Bridge.

For the last 25 years veterinarians and scientists have been observing a gynecological cancer in 17-22% of all stranded adult female and male sea lions. This is surprising, as wild animals tend not to develop cancer to that extent. Yet the prevalence of cancer in wild California Sea Lions is one of the highest amongst mammals.

Sea lions, like many mammals, can be infected with a species-specific herpes virus: Otarine herpesvirus-1 (OthV-1). Over the last 20 years samples collected at the TMMC have been analyzed and found that the odds of cancer are much higher in sea lions infected with OthV-1, and this is exacerbated with increasing concentrations of toxins in their blubber.

The conclusion is that toxins such as DDT increase the chance of herpesvirus infected sea lions getting cancer. The level of DDT concentrations found in our sea lions

continued on page 7



Sea Lions are in danger of ocean pollution that is causing cancer. (Photo by Catherine Mullin)



Take a Hike!

LOS PADRES CHAPTER

UPDATES: <https://www.sierraclub.org/lospadres>

Panorama above Goleta by Robert Bernstein

OUTINGS NOTES

Sierra Club Local Outings

All Sierra Club local outings have been cancelled until further notice. Check the Los Padres Chapter website for updates to this policy at: www.SierraClub.org/LosPadres

You may find some private Meet-Up hikes that have a club member as an organizer; check pg. 3 listings in the Group News box. These are not sanctioned by the club, however.

Forest Areas Reopen

The Los Padres Forest is open except for certain winter or rehabilitation closures.

Many of the campgrounds, day use areas and trailheads in the Lower Santa Ynez Recreation area of the

Los Padres National Forest are now open. These developed areas are subject to a user fee, but if you are not using a developed area, a fee cannot be collected. A new sign posted at the first kiosk makes this clear, but you must use an existing roadside turn-out and be completely off the pavement.

See the Conditions box below. Most information is at: www.fs.usda.gov/lpnf

Please Be Safe

Please observe social spacing. And if an area is too crowded, pick another. And be careful with fire.

Day Use Fees

Day use fees are not required for roadside parking outside of developed campgrounds or day use areas.

Progress for Santa Monica Mountains

Editor's note: Our chapter co-chair, Jim Hines represents the Los Padres Chapter on the task force.

By Jim Hines

Mountain lions and wild lands dominated the work of the Sierra Club Santa Monica Mountains Task Force so far this year.

We supported efforts to get the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (a state agency) to adopt the guiding principles of the 30 x 30 Conservation Plan in their work plans for the Santa Monica, Simi Hills, Santa Susana Mountains and Upper Santa Clara River Watershed.

Several others and I have spoken to the leadership in DC of the National Park Service (NPS) about getting more Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) monies for land acquisitions in the Santa Monica Mountains of Ventura and Los Angeles counties. Our top land protection priority is the 1400 acre coastal Mansdorf property adjacent to Pt Mugu State Park. Also, we need funds for the NPS to finish out land acquisitions in the Zuma/Trancas Canyons area.

So far, the Biden Administration has provided \$6.5 million for the Santa Monica Mountains region, but



Santa Monica Mountains Task Force at work over the conservancy's land that is immensely popular, drawing hikers from the LA and Ventura areas. (Photo courtesy of Angeles Chapter)

that is not near enough.

We are also lobbying the Office of Governor Gavin Newsom to release state bond monies to purchase the Sweetwater Mesa property in lower Malibu Canyon, land which was slated for development and then overturned by our lawsuit in court two years ago. This 150-acre parcel overlooking the Pacific Ocean is part of a wildlife migration corridor and also a critical coastal watershed. The property is owned by famed U2 rock guitarist David Evans AKA 'The Edge'.

We continue to take part in meetings of the Caltrans Working Group on plans for the construction

of the Liberty Canyon Wildlife Overpass over the 8-lane 101 freeway in the Agoura Hills area. Looks like construction will start in the Fall of 2021.

We are elated that the Rim of the Valley Corridor Protection Act (Schiff D-San Gabriel) passed the House of Representatives in February. We are now starting to lobby U.S. Senators for passage. This bill would create a 250,000-acre National Park Service managed system of open space lands for wildlife habitat, migration routes and outdoor recreation from the San Gabriel Mtns across to eastern Ventura county, and include the Simi Hills, Santa Susana Mountains.

Send trail problems to LP Forest Association

If you come across any bad sections of trail, downed trees or slides, take pictures and post to Hike Los Padres and email the Forest Service or your favorite trail group - things change so quickly across the trails and any information you can share is always appreciated! Website is: www.HikeLosPadres.com

The Los Padres Forest Association's mission is to care for the Los Padres Forest, ensuring it thrives and remains safe and open for the people to use and enjoy. LPFA

volunteers work to keep trails open, report and assess forest conditions and provide public education on how to safely use the forest. If interested in becoming a member or volunteering, visit:

www.lpforest.org

Surprising facts about the forest: there are 111 peaks throughout the LP forest, 174 springs, 206 dirt roads, 56 off-highway vehicle trails, 293 camps, 205 hiking trails and over a thousand cataloged locations. More info is at the Hike Los Padres website.

EVENTS

April 8: Virtual Town Hall at 5pm with Rep. Salud Carbajal and Senator Alex Padilla, talking about Covid-19 and benefits of the newly enacted American Rescue Plan and how it will help you. Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/CovidARPlan>

April 8: Beaver Believers: A special virtual screening about the importance of beavers in western North America. There aren't many left in the Los Padres National Forest where they were once more abundant before fur trapping and other activities decimated their populations. Join a growing chorus of voices advocating for restoring beaver populations in California, and this documentary highlights why it matters. Sign up at: <https://tinyurl.com/BeaverBelievers>

April 21: The Quest for Environmental and Racial Justice featuring Dr. Robert Bullard at 5pm during a virtual event, sponsored by UCSB Arts and Lectures as part of its April-May Race to Justice series that features six other events on the topic. Register at www.ArtsAndLectures.UCSB.edu

April 28: Noon deadline to vote for National Sierra Club Directors; see story pg 1. Questions? Contact Election Services at 1-866-720-4357 or email: sierraclub@electionservicescorp.com

May 13: Green & Blue, Living Room Edition is the SB Environmental Defense Center's annual celebration the many years of accomplishments we have won together. This year's Environmental Hero is Carmen Ramirez (newly elected Ventura County Supervisor) on her steadfast leadership in protecting our coast and communities. Details of this major event here: www.EnvironmentalDefenseCenter.org

GREETINGS FRIENDS

Go to the wild land

Greetings Friends:

By Jim Hines

I walk on ancient land ... the land is old ... I am young.

I seek the wildness of nature to calm my mind, soothe my soul and give me emotional and physical strength.

I walked in the wildland before I was born when my hiking mother carried me in her womb, then I walked in the wildland when she carried me in a baby pack on her back and now as an adult I walk in the wildland with my

own strength.

Exploring endless wildlands where I grew up -- a 20,000-acre ranch by Lake Casitas -- touching wildflowers in the fields, placing my hand in the warmth of a bird's nest, watching bobcat hunt rodents and, as I sit quietly, allowing all of the goodness which nature has to give enter my body. The nature of my youth has never left me.

We all seek nature for various reasons ... to view wildlife ... good exercise ... great scenery ... to feel close to Mother Earth.

I come to the wild land not because I want to but because I am called to ... I cannot pull away from the wild land ... the land tickles me as I lay on the grass in a meadow, it fills my senses with fragrance from the smell of sweet blooming native shrubs and wildflowers. I am wet from the wild river ... I am dry from a day hiking in the heat ... I place my hand in the tracks of a mountain lion and I feel her strength, she gives me power ... we are kin, in this wild land and her creatures.

The wild land is broken, and it is my job to fix the hurt, to right the wrongs given to this land for the crack in the earth needs mending ... the logged tree needs righting ... the dammed river needs to be set free ... the trapped wolf needs healing ... the whale entangled in fishing net needs freedom. I hear their calls and I weep with them ... and then I pull myself together and do what I can to bring calm to the wild land and her creatures.

Mother, thank you for carrying me into the wild, allowing me to experience wildness, freedom, love and gentleness of heart which comes from early experiences which left an indelible mark on my spirit.

When I need to renew, reconnect, and recharge I go to the wild land.

~ For the wild, *Jim*

CONDITIONS

Campgrounds trails and roads in Los Padres National Forest can be closed, have restrictions due to habitat protection, repair or weather. Before you go into the backcountry ensure you check conditions with rangers. Numbers to call (805 area unless noted) are:

Los Padres Forest Districts

Headquarters	865-0416
Ojai-Ventura	646-4348
Mt Pinos	(661) 245-3731
Santa Barbara	967-3481
Santa Lucia	925-9538

Other Areas

Santa Monica Mtns	370-2301
Conejo Park	381-2737
Simi Valley	584-4400
Montecito	969-3514

Forest Information

For updated info, maps, news releases, and other goodies: <http://FS.USDA.gov/LPNF>

Regional Hike Info

Lots of local info on websites that give you varied info on outings, trail profiles, wildflower alerts, work opportunities and much more.

- <https://www.sierraclub.org/lospadres>
- www.LPForest.org
- <https://LPFW.org>
- www.HikeLosPadres.com
- www.SBSierraClub.org
- www.SantaBarbaraTrailGuide.com
- www.SantaBarbaraHikes.com
- <https://SBTrails.org>
- www.VenturaCountyTrails.org
- <http://Hikes.VenturaCountyStar.com>

Huge drive to save San Marcos Foothills

Our Sierra Club Los Padres Chapter is supporting a push to purchase the San Marcos Foothills West Mesa which is a privately-owned 101-acre property next to the County-owned San Marcos Foothills Preserve.

Significant positives include the ability to access it by bus and bicycle and it would be managed in concert with the existing Foothills Preserve, adding to wildlife, watershed, and conservation goals.

To help the effort and to learn more, go to: www.FoothillsForever.org

The West Mesa property is in Santa Barbara, near "the bridge to nowhere" over San Marcos pass, at the north end of Via Gaitero Road. The owners are currently in the process of securing final County approval to build 8 new homes, guest houses, and associated development and landscaping.

Forest office relocated

The Los Padres National Forest Supervisor's Office has moved from Goleta to Solvang.

The long-time headquarters in Goleta at 6750 Navigator Way has permanently closed. Phone calls will be answered during the work week business hours at (805) 865-0416.

The new office will at 1980 Old Mission Drive, Solvang CA 93463/ phone is (805) 448-6487.

Forest Supervisor is Kevin Elliott and his deputy is Chris Stubbs. Andrew Madsen remains the public affairs officer while the visitor information assistant is Jennifer Gray, both veteran employees.

Also closed (temporarily) are Ranger stations in Los Padres National Forest due to COVID. No passes are currently sold at the stations.

Interagency passes (Senior, Access, Annual, Military, and Fourth Grade passes) are sold at Forest Service or National Park Service

However, the owners have agreed to sell the property for \$18 million to a conservancy to protect it forever. The campaign is to raise \$20 million, with the difference used to cover the costs of acquiring it plus an initial endowment to maintain and manage it.

Foothills Forever has a deadline of June 2 to raise the money so the time is short. Donations are tax deductible and are handled via the Santa Barbara Foundation. It would be managed as part of the San Marcos Foothills Preserve.

Our chapter gave \$1,000 and may give more later.

In addition to Sierra Club, supporters include Channel Islands Restoration, SB and Goleta Audubon, SB Botanic Garden, Land Trust for Santa Barbara County, Environmental Defense Center, among many others and numerous citizens.

ranger stations and offices that are open. Contact the national forest or national park that you plan to visit to find out if passes are available. Otherwise, those passes and maps are always available at: www.usgs.gov

The \$80 Annual Interagency Pass may be available at REI stores in San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, or Oxnard.

Adventure Passes are currently not being sold at the ranger stations due to COVID office closures. But the passes are sold at Big 5 Sporting Goods, among other sporting goods stores and sales outlets throughout Southern California. Note: Adventure Passes are required to park at snow play areas on the Mt. Pinos Ranger District during winter months. Check out the conditions on Mt. Pinos all year long via the Pine Mountain Club web cam here: www.frazmtn.com/pmcwebcam

Hear people roar for Bears Ears

Editor's note: Locals may remember how Ventura-based Patagonia founder Yvon Chouinard challenged then President Trump's slashing of Bears Ears National Monument by 85% in 2017, filing a lawsuit over the risk of development and mining resources. Our Sierra Club and so many others nationwide fought hard against the proclamation as a symbol of anti-environment policies of that administration. Looks like we will win.

By Jim Hines

A Redtail Hawk soars solo over a vast red rock landscape, her screech echoes off the canyon walls, coyotes drink from a spring, poplar trees are just leafing out from their winter sleep and a voice is heard but unseen ... the spirit of an ancestral Navajo calling for the land where her ancestors lived to be protected.

Yes, help is on the way for Bears Ears National Monument.

The most asked question of me when I speak to groups/organizations no matter where is "what is the status of Bears Ears National Monument?". So here is an update:

On January 21st, one day after taking office, President Biden signed an executive order for the U.S. Dept of the Interior to review the boundary shrinkage of both Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments in southern Utah.

At the Sierra Club Protect Wild Utah campaign I work on

we are actively working with new leadership at the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) which manages the two national monuments to make sure that all scientific and biological information is being used to expand the boundaries of the two national monuments.

And on my phone call recently with the new U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Deb Haaland, I added our voice in support of a restored Bears Ears.

Haaland said she will visit Bears Ears NM region in April. Boy, will our Protect Wild Utah Team have a greeting party for her, making sure that loud and clear we want Bears Ears and Grand Staircase restored. We are starting to organize now for her visit.

The journey to protect Bears Ears has been a long journey for us starting in 2016 when we got over 6 million Americans to call on President Obama to give the area National Monument status, which he did. Then one year later President Trump drastically shrunk the National Monument for drilling and mining companies.

In 2018 the large map on the wall in the Dept of Interior conference room where we met had a large bullseye on southern Utah (the second largest bullseye was on federal lands and waters of the central coast region of California where we live) highlighting the intent of the Administration to destroy vast areas of YOUR public

lands in the west.

And now we have a Secretary of the Interior who is friendly to public land protection coming to see the region. During the Secretary's visit will the voice of her unseen ancestors call out for the land once again?

Read the Sierra Club's editorial entitled "What Does It Mean to Restore Bears Ears, in Words and in Spirit?" here:

<https://tinyurl.com/BearsEarsRestore>

See Outings

The Sierra Club's national and international Outings has plenty of options for you to choose from, including over a hundred 2021 offerings and our newest international selections for 2022. It's also rebooked many of our canceled 2021 trips for 2022 so if you missed out the first time around, this is your chance!

All trips that begin between now and July 4 have been canceled to protect travelers and staff.

The Outings provide environmentally friendly outdoor adventures—from Tahoe to Tibet—for people of all ages, abilities, and interests.

To see all the amazing outings, go to:

<https://tinyurl.com/ClubOutings>

Trail projects

Good news from the Los Padres Forest Association that it is once again able to schedule and host volunteer trails projects.

There remain in place some COVID related size restrictions as well as constraints as to what the crews can do and how.

Some volunteers may have concerns, want more details or to sign up; if so contact us here:

Volunteer@LPForest.org

Upcoming events include:

April 7-12: Hurricane Deck, White Ledge Trail Project, LPFA.

April 10: Ojai 1st Saturday, TBD.

April 24 - May 2: Indian Creek Working Vacation, LPFA.

May 15: Ojai 1st Saturday, TBD.

May 15-23: Mission Pine Trail Work, Big Pine Side, LPFA.

May 27: Night Sky Photography Webinar #2 w/ Mike Shaw.

May 28 - June 6: Pine Mtn Haddock Working Vacation, LPFA.

June 12-20: Santa Cruz Trail Working Vacation, SC Station.

post updates.

* * *

Our Los Padres Chapter ExCom members cited the following of particular interest:

~ Oppose SB 10 which would overturn voter approved ballot measures such as Save Our Agricultural Resources (SOAR) in Ventura County and allow developers to develop open space and ag lands.

~ Support AB 896 to motivate oil companies to obey the law regarding idle oil wells.

~ SB 47 is sponsored by our own Monique Limon that should be supported. It would help ensure deserted oil wells to be plugged or abandoned in a timely manner; funds provided.

~ A bill to ban all forms of enhanced oil recovery, such as fracking and cyclic steam inject. SB 467 should be supported as it also develops setbacks to improve health from existing operations.

~ Fire Safe Bill (SB 55) is strongly supported as it would prohibit the creation or approval of a new development in a very high fire hazard severity zone, as defined by the state.



New trails now open



Harmon Canyon hiker, on one of the miles of brand new trails open to the public. (Photo courtesy Ventura Land Trust)

Over the last few months, Ventura Land Trust has been welcoming thousands of visitors each month to Ventura's first large-scale nature preserve at the Harmon Canyon Preserve, 2,123-acre canyon of sprawling hillsides, coastal sage scrub and abundant wildlife.

Purchased in 2020 it already has eight miles of trails, including a dirt road and since then at least another two miles of new trails. Trail crews are working daily to clear new routes. These trails wind through magnificent oak groves, offer spectacular views of the coast and mountains and are linked to the main access road.

This Spring, Ventura Land Trust will offer Spanish-language guided hikes and a self-guided wildflower walk as soon as the wildflowers are blooming.

On Saturday, April 24, the Trust celebrates Earth Day at the Preserve by planting a new oak grove near the trailhead. The public is invited to tag @venturalandtrust in social media posts of their outdoor Earth Day adventures.

The Trust has a robust nature education program through Ventura Wild, which served 400 children (ages 2-15) in 2020 with programs that rekindle a sense of belonging and wonder through local nature-based explorations. A Spanish-language session, offered for the first-time last year, had 20 participants. The demand is strong, as the Spring programs are already full.

The Trust's Once Upon a Watershed education program has produced a series of videos to take the place of its school-based curriculum, since Covid limited the number of students

in the classroom and available for field trips. It serves youth from kindergarten through sixth grade. One of the videos, *The Story of our River*, focuses on the critically endangered indicator species, Southern steelhead trout, and the effects of the Matilija dam on beach erosion and spawning access. Have a look here:

<https://tinyurl.com/VtaRiverStory>

Ventura Land Trust has two properties on the Ventura River, Willoughby Preserve, opposite the Main Street parking lot, and Big Rock Preserve, next to the Ventura-Ojai bike path near Foster Park.

On February 24, 2021, the Trust celebrated its 18th birthday and the incredible community that is a part of everything the land trust does: the donors, members, volunteers, docents, and partners/ They have been part of every clean-up and restoration event, every tree planted, and every trail blazed.

Since 2003, the non-profit Trust has conserved nearly 4,000 acres of land in and around Ventura, protecting habitats for endangered plants and animals, establishing a new greenway along the Ventura-Ojai Bike Path, and rekindling a connection to nature for thousands of children. Preserves are open daily from dawn to dusk and are free to the public.

Ventura Land Trust's mission is supported by its members, who enjoy exclusive guided preserve experiences, early bird access to events, and the *Outlook* newsletter. To become a member and learn more about the Trust, including volunteer and education opportunities, go to:

www.VenturaLandTrust.org

Monarch Act alights

The MONARCH Act was submitted with a clever moniker in March: Monarch Action, Recovery And Conservation of Habitat Act.

Local Rep. Salud Carbajal tapped into his inner child to co-author the bill with Reps. Jimmy Panetta of Carmel and Jeff Merkley of Oregon.

"We've all experienced the moment of childhood joy and excitement when we spot a butterfly

dancing in the air," said Senator Merkley. "If we let the western monarch butterfly go extinct, we'll lose a unique, beautiful species forever."

Welcome news but old news to the Sierra Club as we've been lobbying, calling for action, education and even conducting butterfly hikes BC (Before Covid).

According to the club, and bolstered by the proposed act, there is "devastating evidence that the population of the butterfly, *Danaus plexippus*, has diminished in the Southern California region by 99.4% since the 1980s," citing the Xerces Society, a non-profit devoted to the conservation of invertebrates.

What can you do? Plant milkweed in your backyard. And support the legislation.



Suz Montgomery draws monarchs to her back yard.

Eyes on priority bills

By Kathryn Phillips
SC California

At the beginning of each new legislative year, just as bills start their journey through policy committees, Sierra Club California releases a list of our priority bills.

The list reflects just a fraction of the bills that the Sierra Club California staff lobby on throughout the year. But it also reflects our best assessment of which bills will require strong effort to pass or block. Check out the list here:

<https://tinyurl.com/PriorityBills>

A lot of the bills have to do with recycling, reducing plastic, ensuring, clean water, reducing oil and gas dependence and advancing equity and social justice, among many others

SCC's positions on bills are determined by a committee of experienced volunteers who bring expertise about issue areas and the law to their work.

The legislature moves rapidly between now and early September when this year's session ends. Periodically, we will be updating the priority list. To stay on top of the list as it is updated, watch our website legislation page where we

EAVESDROPS

"Happiness is like a butterfly, the more you chase it, the more it will evade you, but if you notice the other things around you, it will gently come and sit on your shoulder."

~ Henry David Thoreau

DDT persists...

continued from page 5

is much higher than that found in pinniped populations in places such as New Zealand.

Marine mammals are sentinels of the sea. They are on the top of the food chain, like humans. Their lives are spent in the ocean so any pollution humans generate will affect them directly. We know this intuitively; we now know this as fact.

DDT does not just affect animals; it is easily assimilated into human tissue so these studies and discoveries should impel us to continue to protect our oceans to keep it pristine.

~ Catherine Mullin is Conservation Chair of the SB Group, a veterinarian and active in marine issues.



Become a Member

As a Ventura Land Trust member, you'll join a community of people who love nature and support VLT's efforts to conserve open space, restore habitat, and offer environmental education programs that inspire the next generation of land stewards. **Goodness is growing - join today!**

- **EXPLORE** Experience protected lands on members-only guided outings.
- **LEARN** Members receive the *Outlook* newsletter twice a year.
- **PROTECT** VLT preserves are protected forever and open daily at no charge because of support from members like you.

\$45 | \$100 | \$250

GIVE MONTHLY

JOIN TODAY AT
WWW.VENTURALANDTRUST.ORG



SIERRA CLUB
LOS PADRES CHAPTER
P.O. Box 31241
Santa Barbara, CA 93130-1241

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. Postage PAID
Santa Barbara, CA
Permit No. 9

CAREY FREE

Outdoor author writes his roots

By John Hankins

It's not hard to imagine Craig R. Carey, without his signature long beard, as a kid hanging out and getting soiled and smart in the Los Padres National Forest, a child of the woods who now leads children to the woods.

His legacy expanded this year with a second edition of my well-read and dog-eared *Hiking and Backpacking Santa Barbara & Ventura*, the "complete guide to the trails of the southern Los Padres National Forest" published by Wilderness Press.

"My main goal is to make people aware of what's out there and to have an investment in those public lands," he said, referring to "a kindred spirit in readership."

The first page is Acknowledgements: "This one's for the volunteers, those hearty souls who survey, clear trail and remove brush and downed trees; who toil under the sun and amid the bugs and burns; who protect the archaeological sites and the rare plants and the habitats and who advocate from home and

EAVESDROPS

"Summerland Beach is ever so much cleaner, healthier, and happier since Treadwell and NorthStar (old undersea oil wells) were capped in November 2020, but with this upcoming work (two more wells), soon this stretch of coastline will be next to pristine."

~ Hillary Hauser of Heal the Ocean on CA Lands Commission's funding to clean up abandoned oil wells that are still leaking or can leak.

from afield."

The first edition came out in 2012, and he notes in the preface, "it's been a rough decade" from the 2007 Zaca Fire, 2017 Thomas Fire, 2018 mudslide – claiming more than 20 souls – and scouring Santa Barbara area trails.

"As a result, the Los Padres again finds itself in an era of recovery," he writes.

Heeding to Wilderness Press's rule of thumb that if 10% of an area is changed, such books should be updated, he was "passively" updating as soon as the first book was printed, then geared up in 2017 by planning trips – many with Scout Troop 111 – along with crews fixing and building trails.

His parents were members of a Mountaineering Club and "weekends we bundled into the little Bronco" to go camping in the Los Padres.

"The forest was the world's best baby-sitting," he said, also referring to his own kids with his wife Karrie.

"It stills down your existence, you're just out there with all five senses firing," but also "very relaxing."

Why a book in the digital age? "It doesn't run out of batteries," he quipped, but it's also the love of a tactile printed book which is "a bit of a time capsule."

During the pandemic, Carey found ways to get his scout troop in the woods. They didn't have school and sports, but with small groups without carpooling, their treks "blew the Covid blues off the kids."

Our Sierra Club has a special place in our hearts for Craig R. Carey as he's a regular speaker at our Wilderness Basics Course (suspended until next year) and he's an Advisory Council member of the Ventura Land Trust.

Readers may notice this piece is not much about the book, but this slice of Carey may enlist you as a "kindred spirit." The

book is available in outdoor stores and online.

A beginning quote before the handy overview of nearly 100 hikes is from John Muir:

"No amount of word-making will ever make a single soul to know these mountains," and yet Carey's word-making is sure to open the wonder of our beloved Los Padres National Forest.

