

Sierra Sage

Sierra Sage of South Orange County, a Group of the Sierra Club ■ Bimonthly Events & Outings

Sierra Sage Group Bi-Monthly Meeting Tuesday, May 25, 2021 | 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.

OUR FEATURED SPEAKER FOR MAY IS...

**Mike Levin, U.S. Congressman,
49th Congressional District
Orange County/San Diego, California**

MIKE LEVIN WAS RE-ELECTED TO HIS SECOND CONGRESSIONAL TERM LAST NOVEMBER, representing the southern part of Orange County as well as the northern part of San Diego County.

Mike has been very active working on issues concerning the Toll Road proposals in San Clemente and Trestles as well as issues with the San Onofre State Park, and the closing of the San Onofre Nuclear Generation Plant.

We, in the Sierra Club, are concerned about the Natural Resources of this country and would like to protect these Natural Resources instead of selling them to the highest bidder.

Please plan join us via Zoom as we welcome **Mike Levin** on **Tuesday, May 25 at 7:00 p.m.**



Hon. Mike Levin

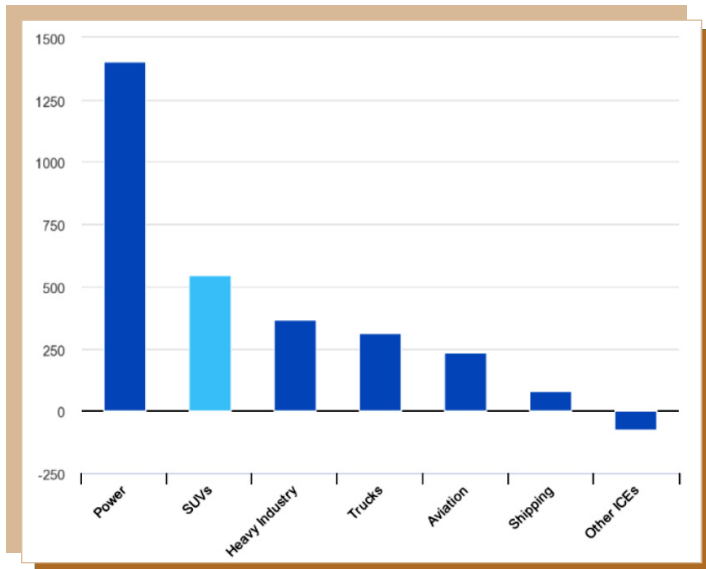
- **FOR ZOOM LINK & MEETING I.D.**, please email **Risa Koppel** (risa.koppel@me.com). **If you are new to ZOOM**, and would like some help to get on the Zoom app, contact us at the above email and we will gladly assist.



A Letter from the Climate Front, April 2021 | Ed Mauer

Even though the horrific pandemic put a damper on economic activity, folks in most wealthy countries continued to invest in stuff that will emit plenty of CO₂ for decades to come, especially SUVs, which keep flying off the shelves. Just look at this graphic to understand the effect of this folly:

The chart below shows the **change in global CO₂ emissions by energy sector, 2010-2018**, produced by the International Energy Agency. During this period, SUVs became the second largest emitter of CO₂ in the world!



Unfortunately, this buying spree continues unabated. The automotive industry gloats that “after a year of unpredictable sales due to COVID-19, SUV sales are set to get back on track in 2021.”¹ SUVs consume about 25% more energy than medium-size cars, and this caused the global fuel economy to worsen, even though small cars² and electric vehicles saved over 2 million barrels of oil per day.

There may be light at the end of this particularly dismal tunnel in the form of electric SUVs. The German auto industry, that country’s most important and beloved economic sector, has lately realized the importance of electric vehicles, and factories are beginning to churn out EVs in growing numbers. In the last quarter of 2020, more than 20% of all cars sold in Germany were electric, with Volkswagen grabbing the lion’s share of 22% of fully electric vehicles, Tesla was fourth with 11%. EV’s share of new car sales in California were at 8.1% for 2020. VW’s electric mid-size SUV, the ID4 with a range of 250 mi and a base price of a bit over \$40K before any federal or local incentives, is now available in California, where it will compete with the Chevy Bolt E-UV, Hyundai Kona EV, Tesla Model Y, and others. Clearly, there are now viable alternatives, both cost and range-wise, to fossil fuel powered SUVs.

I’d like to see Sierra Club members take a pledge to never again buy a new fossil fuel powered vehicle. If even we, an environmentally convinced bunch of people, cannot do this, nobody can, and the comfortable conditions that we presently enjoy will cease to exist for our children and grandchildren by the time they reach my age (same as Joe Biden’s).

During this decade we are likely to see these comfortable conditions take some serious hits. Store just these two items in your head for future reference:

- **The Thwaites Glacier in the western Antarctic, a gigantic glacier the size of Florida, is losing its moorings because of a steady increase in the ocean’s temperature. This may eventually lead to the glacier’s collapse, i.e., a break-up into icebergs that will melt and lead to a global 3’ rise of sea level. That’s why scientists call Thwaites the “doomsday glacier.” I see it as a doomsday for all those building sea walls to protect their expensive oceanfront properties.**
- **Be sure to book a window seat the next time you fly across the Atlantic during daytime so that you can see with your own eyes what is happening in Greenland. All those pretty blue lakes on top of the ice shield empty into the ocean, lubricating and accelerating the glaciers’ flow toward the sea. This increasing flow of water and ice into the ocean messes with the Gulf Stream that has kept the weather along the Atlantic coasts of North America and western Europe benign for thousands of years. Now, this massive run-off from Greenland’s ice-shield is causing the Gulf Stream to slow down to the point where it may stop altogether, with catastrophic effects —think extreme heat waves and cyclones on both sides of the “pond.”**

Are these the dire long-term consequences of the purchase of a fossil-fueled vehicle, such as an SUV? Yes, and yes and yes! Of course, buyers weren’t aware of these ramifications in the past, but by now you’d think everybody would know that the jig is up. Yet, as mentioned above, fossil fuel SUV sales are “set to get back on track”, clearly towards humanity’s perdition, rack and ruin.

I wrote this letter at the beginning of the month and before President Biden’s epochal announcement of the U.S. response to climate change. Sierra Club members will cheer him on in this effort and support it with their own actions.

I believe that we in the Sierra Club can do better. Love your SUV and drive it for as long as it serves you well, but when it does not serve you anymore, when it runs out of gas, replace it with something that supports the survival of mankind. Most of us refrain from smoking, we follow healthy diets, we exercise to keep in shape, and we observe the physical distancing, mask-wearing, and handwashing to protect others from Covid-19. Now is the time—not a moment too soon—to kick our burning fossil-fuels habit to protect the future of humanity.

¹ [automotivemap.com](https://www.automotivemap.com), Feb 4, 2021

² ICEs = internal combustion engine driven vehicles

Favorite Hikes | Linda Ledger

One of my favorite hikes is Bear Canyon to Four Corners from the Candy Store*. It is especially nice in the spring when the wildflowers are in bloom. The hike is a 7 miles lollipop with about 1300' of gain.

You begin on a trail just west of the Candy Store on Ortega Highway. You will have a gentle climb through chaparral. Keep your eyes open for wildflowers. You will come to a turn-off to the Morgan Trail. Don't take it. Eventually you come to another intersection with a trail leading to your right that you will return on. This is a good spot for a short snack break. Then proceed straight through the trees and continue up to a ridge that you follow to Four Corners. At four corners you will take the trail that is on the right from the trail you took down. There are signs at Four Corners. This will lead you to Pigeon Springs where we usually have lunch before continuing back to the Candy Store.

You will return to the clearing where you had the first break. Head up the trail and return the way you came. Some flowers that you will encounter include Ceanothus, Prickly Phlox, Monkey Flowers, Peonies, Nightshade, Paintbrush and Blue Diks.

* **Get to the Candy Store by 8:30 to insure a parking spot on weekdays, even earlier on a weekend.**



That is John Kaiser in the top picture. The purple flowers are Ceanothus.

Sierra Sage

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Sierra Sage Newsletter

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

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Note: Please mail your check to:
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PUBLICATION NOTES

- Sierra Sage is scheduled for delivery on Jan 1, March 1, May 1, July 1, Sept 1, & November 1 of each year.
- Please note that submission deadline is *one month prior to publication*.
- Electronic copies are sent via email and are free. Just send an email to mikesapp@cox.net and tell us you want the emailed Newsletter
- Newsletter Design & Layout: Risa Koppel | Graphic Design risa.koppel@me.com

Current Status of Angeles Chapter/Sierra Sage of South Orange County 2021 Travel Adventures

COVID PANDEMIC STATUS. We are expecting clearance to do these trips in early July. We are recommending that all participants receive their vaccines before the trip.

1. **State & National Redwood Parks.** Aug. 7–15 2021.
This trip is full.
2. **State & National Redwood Parks.** Sept. 11–19 2021.
This trip has *only one opening left*, that is for a man who is willing to share a room with another man.
3. **New Mexico Historical Adventure.** Oct. 9–15, 2021.
This trip has 4 vacancies and we have 4 people who have told us they were sending the paperwork and deposit.
When we receive paperwork and deposit, the trip will be full.

In November, we will START planning on trips for next year, so please don't ask until then. As a trip is developed and approved, notices will be placed in future Sierra Sage of South Orange County newsletters.

News from the Past!

[This is a news article from the Angeles Chapter Southern Sierran Newspaper issued March 2008.]

Coastal Commission Says “No” to the 241 Toll Road

Sierra Club’s Friends of the Foothills campaign won a major victory on Wednesday, February 6, 2008 when, after over 12 hours of testimony from all sides, the California Coastal Commission Voted 8-2 to reject the Federal Consistency application filed by the Transportation Corridor Agencies (TCA) for the Foothill-South Toll Road.

The proposed Foothill-South Toll Road, if built would cut through the heart of San Onofre State Beach located in South Orange County. The road would destroy nearly 60% of the park, affecting a popular campground, pristine watershed, and world-renowned surf beach. The road would also cut through the Donna O’Niell Nature Conservancy and adversely impact at least five endangered species.

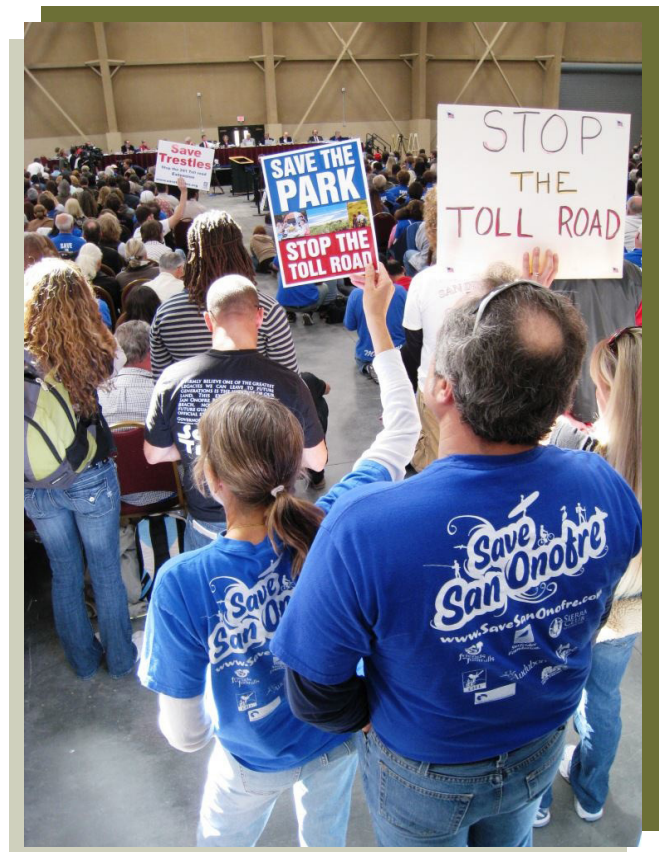
Originally scheduled for hearing at the Oceanside City Hall, a venue which seats less than 200 people, in a list minute decision, the Coastal Commission decided to move the hearing to Wyland Hall at the Del Mar Racetrack, the first great decision by the Coastal Commission on this issue. We got the word out, as the Transportation Corridor Agency (TCCA) and its supporters. As a result, over 3000 people attended the meeting and almost 2000 requested to speak before the commission. The extraordinary turnout was materially helped by activists from the Angeles Chapter’s Friends of the Foothills task force, its chair, **Bill Holmes** and Sierra Club’s staff members, **Robin Everett** and **Elizabeth Lambe**. Among other things, they conducted a very effective organizing meeting on January 28th for hundreds of activists to ensure we were focused and ready for the upcoming hearing. Three busses were provided to transport our members to the Del Mar location and many others carpoled direct there.

Angeles Chapter activists and supporters who were observed in the hall included **Al & Barbara Sattler**, **Rudy Vi-etmeier**, **Celia Kutcher**, **Todd Van Etten**, **Penny Elia**, **Alex Mintzer**, **Merri Levy**, **Paul Carlton**, **Marni Magda**, **Gail Prothero**, **Jon & Kelly Achee**, **Bob Fraser**, **Dave Perlman**, **Ed Schlegel**, **Jerry Collamer**, **Jack Eidt**, **Russ Brown**, **Al & Yvonne Cullen**, **Karen Phelps**, and many, many more, too numerous to name.

One of the highlights of the meeting was the testimony from **Rebecca Robles**, chair of our Sacred Sites Task Force and representative from the Acjachemen nation, who eloquently explained the importation of the Panhe site adjacent to the proposed toll road alignment. Her testimony was specifically mentioned by one of the commissioners as the critical item in her decision to reject the TCA’s application.

Our volunteers were especially delighted to greet **Brittany McKee**, former Sierra Club staff member who worked with the task force for the past eight years who flew back from her new home in Kansas to participate. “I worked so hard on this campaign and wouldn’t miss it for the world.” She shared with her many friends on the task force.

All in all, a long, but wonderful day, made wonderful by the thousands of supporters who took the time to attend the hearing and by a Coastal Commission who cared enough to vote to support the Coastal Act. They did so in spite of pressure to do the contrary by many politicians, including the Governor, who sent a personal letter to each of the Commissioners urging them to support the completion of the Todd Road. Last week proved that our Voice can truly make a difference!



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Note: * Denotes voting member of the Executive Committee

Remembering Bill Holmes | Linda Ledger

We are sad to report the passing of Bill Holmes, a long time Sierra Club member and leader. Bills died peacefully at home accompanied by close family members and his longtime companion, Sandra. I was fortunate to visit the day before his death. Even though heavily sedated, he was still the very upbeat English gentleman many of us knew. He thanked me for stopping by and mentioned some crossword puzzles he had finished but we hadn't compared yet. He left me smiling but with tears in my eyes.

Some of you will remember Bill from his years as Chair of the Sierra Club's Friends of the Foothills Task Force. Bill and many others on the task force were instrumental in thwarting the Transportation Corridor Agency's proposed Foothill South Toll Road. If approved, this Toll Road would have destroyed a large part of San Onofre State Beach and Campground, the world-renowned Trestles surfing beach, and some pristine watershed. The road would have cut through the Donna O'Neill Nature Conservancy and adversely impacted at least 5 endangered species.

Bill will be remembered for his leadership, energy, and enthusiasm. He loved pushing himself by running, hiking, and backpacking. There came a time when he could no longer run races, so he switched to race walking. When walking became too difficult, he cheerfully started using an exercise bike. Eventually he was using an electric scooter to get around his home and yard. Through it all he neither complained nor lost his love of life, friends, and family. Bill will be deeply missed but remembered fondly by those who knew him.



Sierra Sage
of South Orange County
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Check the "Last Issue" date on your label and renew early.

Remember to give us your new address if you are moving so you'll get your Sage at your new place on time!

<https://www.sierrasage.org>

Announcing... Sierra Sage Group's New Website

We are delighted to announce that we have created a new website for the Sierra Sage Group. Over the past months, **Ed Maurer** has created and led a committee to review and improve our communications with our members. A new and revamped website is now ready to be enjoyed. You can visit our new website at www.sierrasage.org. It has numerous new pages, interesting items, and many features, to keep you busy and learning about everything that the Sierra Sage group has to offer.

After you explore the new web site, feel free to send an email to **Ed** at balois@cox.net and let him know what you like and what changes you'd like to see.

Sierra Sage Meetings

- Executive Committee meetings are open to all members of Sierra Club who reside in South OC. Meetings are on the 2nd Thursday of each month. **Contact Mike Sappingfield at mikesapp@cox.net** for date, time and directions.
- Preserve the Coastal areas of Orange County? **Contact Penny Elia at greenp1@cox.net**
- Interested in electing environmentally-supportive politicians into local offices? **Contact Mike Sappingfield, mikesapp@cox.net**
- Want to keep the Santa Ana Mountains wild? Want to help maintain trails in the San Mateo Wilderness Area? **Contact John Kaiser at jkai39@gmail.com**

ANGELES CHAPTER WEBSITE:

<https://angeles.sierraclub.org>

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