

Vol. 24, No. 3 of 6

June - July 2024

# Condor Call

Journal of the Sierra Club's  
Santa Barbara - Ventura Chapter



© Photo by Craig R. Carey

Oil danger ... delights ... Ocean waves ... Hot Springs ... and Al Sladek

Pgs 1&2

Pg 4

Pg 5

Pg 7

Back Page

**JOIN THE CLUB - ONLY \$15 - FREE BAG - [SIERRACLUB.ORG](https://www.sierraclub.org)**



Our chapter bought cartons of clean, tasty spring water in a reusable aluminum can and passed them out on Earth Day. "We gave out at least 1,000 cans and we had lots of conversations as it was the perfect symbol (of Earth Days' theme to stop plastics)," said Jim Taylor, SB Group Chair who thought of the idea and who also hatched the beanbag toss against the oil platforms. (Photo by Jon Ullman)

**PASS GAS**

# Stop cheating on emissions

By Katie Davis

### Dirty loophole

It's time for Santa Barbara County to close the special loophole for the oil and gas industry that excludes this one industry's emissions from the County's inventory of greenhouse gas emissions.

The County has been working on their 2030 Climate Action Plan for years, which is up for approval by the Board of Supervisors this summer. The goal is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 50% by 2030 (below 2018 levels), in line with what the global community agrees is necessary to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

The problem lies in how the County is counting emissions and measuring our success at reaching the goal. To put it simply, they are cheating by leaving out emissions from the oil industry.

That makes the exercise both untrue and unfair. It's untrue because a greenhouse gas inventory should be a neutral tally of all community emissions so that we can accurately see how we're doing over time. And it's unfair because all the rest of us are challenged to reduce our emissions, while the oil industry—the industry most responsible for getting us into this climate mess—is left off the hook.

Nor is this a minor omission. If these oil and gas facilities, referred to as "stationary source emissions," were included, they will make up about 13% of County emissions in 2018. After transportation, oil and gas facilities are one of the largest polluters in the County. They're responsible for more emissions than all our electricity use, in line with agriculture emissions, or all the natural gas we burn in buildings.

If Exxon's facilities, shut down since the 2015 Refugio oil spill but once one of our largest polluters, were turned back on, stationary source emissions could be 30% or more of total emissions. If we reduce other pollution sources, the oil industry could become the largest source of pollution in the County.

The oil industry doesn't want their emissions counted or to have to figure out how to reduce them because they know that the remaining oil in the County is tar-like and difficult to extract. It takes polluting, energy-intensive methods to produce oil here. Steam generators burn gas in order to melt the oil out of the ground at high heat.

Rather than confront this reality, the County is papering it over.

The rationale given by the County for excluding oil and gas facility emis-

sions is that "the County lacks primary regulatory control over many of these facilities." The problem with that argument is that the County doesn't have "primary regulatory control" over any of the other sectors either.

If anything, the County has more control over emissions from the oil industry through its permitting authority than other sources like agriculture or what kind of cars we all choose to drive and how much we drive. If the inventory was restricted to "primary regulatory Control," there would be virtually nothing to count at all.

In fact, County actions have made a difference. Oil industry emissions are half what they were in 2008, in part due to County actions. It is within our ability to continue that positive momentum. Doing so would lower not only carbon emissions, but other air pollutants that cause asthma, cancer and other health impacts as well.

### Stark contrast

In stark contrast to Santa Barbara County, other counties, such as Ventura and Los Angeles, do count oil industry emissions, and they are taking action to reduce those emissions. Los Angeles is working towards phasing out oil and gas, and Ventura County requires the use of "electrically powered equipment from 100 percent renewable sources and co-generation" for oil and gas exploration and production and prohibits venting and flaring of natural gas to lower emissions. Ventura's regulations were weakened by the oil industry but still represent progress.

California and Santa Barbara County in particular, has experienced record-breaking wildfires, flooding, and drought made worse by climate change. Our beaches are vulnerable to sea level rise and our agriculture and tourism economy by extreme weather. We're losing insurance companies willing to cover the escalating risks. The costs of climate inaction will soar.

Whether we take climate action seriously or not matters. If California was a nation, it would be the 5th largest

economy in the world. With the largest population and economy of any U.S. state, California's goals and policies directly influence the nation and the world.

One thing California can do is ask local jurisdictions to figure out how to reduce emissions in their regions, but that only works if we are transparent and honest about where carbon emissions are generated, and don't give the most polluting industries a free pass.

According to the global scientific consensus, the next few years are critical. Santa Barbara should be leading the world in a transition to clean energy and climate action—not cheating on our 2030 Climate Plan.

Ask our Board of Supervisors to count all emissions, including those from the fossil-fuel industry in the 2030 Climate Action Plan. You can email them at:

[sbcob@countyofsb.org](mailto:sbcob@countyofsb.org)

See GHG emission sources next page

## Join our volunteers

The Sierra Club covering Santa Barbara is welcoming people who want to make a difference for the future of our communities and our planet.

These volunteer positions don't require more than a few hours per month and can be done from home. They could include planning events, communicating with members, and keeping an eye on local government to encourage environmentally friendly transportation initiatives, among others.

As the nation's premier environmental group, we rely on volunteer leaders to be active and engaged in these critical areas.

If you love the outdoors, if you want to protect your community and if you want to see the planet remain healthy for future generations, roll up your sleeves and join us!

Contact Emily Engel for more information at 805-637-1052 or [emilyaengel@gmail.com](mailto:emilyaengel@gmail.com)

If you live in Ventura County, there are also similar volunteer positions available. Contact Julie Henszey at 805 677-2793 or [juliehenszey@gmail.com](mailto:juliehenszey@gmail.com)

Each of the positions below would entail about three hours per month. Specific needs for the SB Group include:

**PR/Social Media Chair**, which could entail reaching out to local media to promote club events, posting on social media, conducting interviews and public statements as needed.

**Events Chair** activities include planning events, organizing group participation in community events and working with other volunteers.

**Transportation Chair** would likely include keeping notes on transit modes and experiences and sharing them with the group. Also representing the Sierra Club at local government meetings that address transportation issues and working with other groups.

**Membership Engagement Chair** is important and would include growing and maintaining an engaged and active member/ volunteer base, welcoming new members and planning fun events for them and directing them into other volunteer roles.

## Outvote MAGA now

By Jim Hines

"Welcome, are you registered to vote?"

Yes, I say to the woman in the red, white and blue tee shirt holding a computer tablet ready to register me if I said no.

This is a very critical election year and every vote will count in all local, state and federal elections.

When I attend various MAGA events they always are registering voters, they have people tabling to help people register to vote and several people walk through the crowds gathered and ask people if they are registered to vote, if not they have a computer notebook in hand and register people to vote on the spot.

Moms for Liberty has a high school campus voter outreach program to register 18 year olds or those who will turn 18 by election day.

Several Christian Nationalist churches in our region are registering people to vote as well . . . for God commands it!

Their message to potential voters is to register to vote and then be sure to vote, their main argument is the economy and the high cost of everything which is a winner for the MAGA groups in our area.

The environmental community here in Ventura has been getting outvoted the past few elections with oil and gas measures defeated and a

MAGA takeover of the county board of supervisors and various city councils around Ventura County.

As far as I know, no environmental group is registering people to vote but our adversaries sure do.

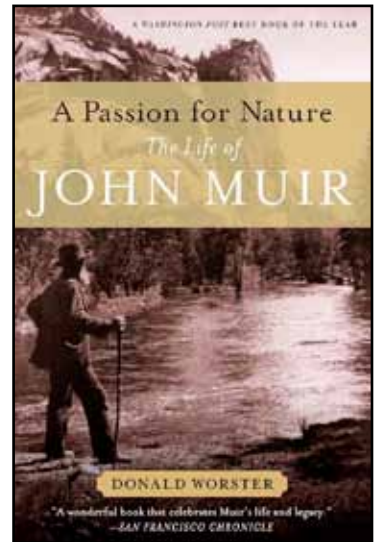
If we want to win for the environment, we have to register people to vote and then tell them to vote as if the environment mattered, because it does.



Nina Danza and Julie Henszey hold the information panels that will be installed along the new section of bike trail on the north side of the Santa Clara River, west of Wells Road. Our Sierra Club logo is on the signs! A third panel currently in production will feature an historical event that took place at Cabrillo Village, once a farmworker labor camp that is now a resident-owned cooperative. (Photo contributed)

### COVER PHOTO

Troop 111 ("There can only be One one-one-one") spent three days and nights at Pine Springs doing merit badge tasks and building a fort. This troop is known for its outdoor volunteer work on trails, such as at Harmon Canyon. Thanks to their leader, Craig R. Carey, who literally wrote the 'book' on our local outdoors: "Hiking and Backpacking in SB and Ventura Counties". (Photo by Craig R. Carey)

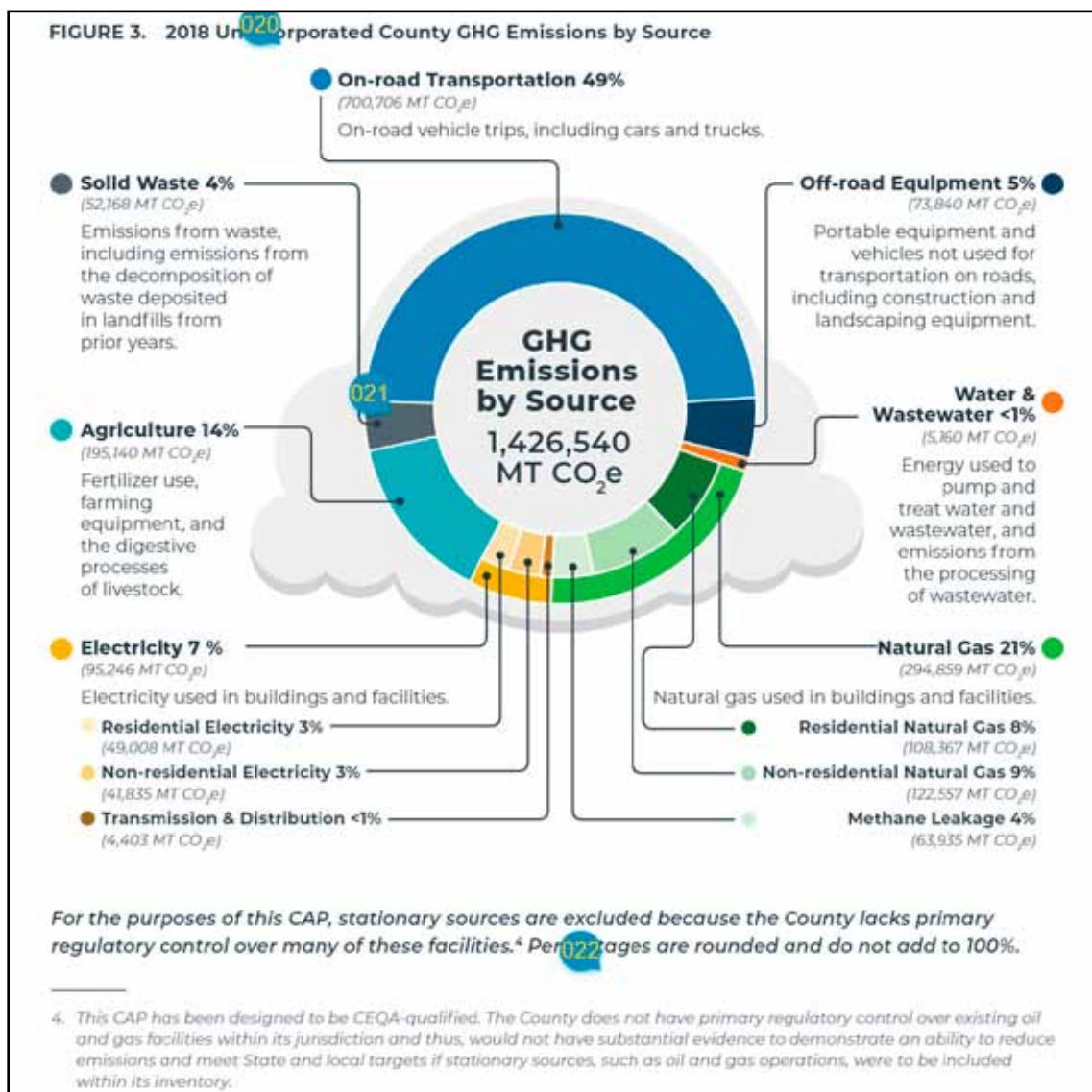


## Happy Birthday Sierra Club

May 28 (1892) **Sierra Club** was founded on this day by John Muir, Scottish born naturalist. He never envisioned that his small club -- which was initially formed to protect the Sierra Nevada mountain range in California-- would eventually become the nation's largest grassroots environmental organization. Muir's writings convinced the U.S. government to protect Yosemite, Sequoia, Grand Canyon and Mt. Rainier as national parks. "I'm so proud to be a part of this amazing organization," said Jim Hines, our vice-chair. (Read his Chronicles on pg. 3)

And now, you can visit John Muir's home in Martinez: <https://www.nps.gov/jomu/index.htm>





## EDC honors Heal the Ocean

Environmental Defense Center (EDC) announced that its 2024 Environmental Hero award will be presented to Hillary Hauser at the organization's annual Green and Blue event on Sunday, June 9 at the Stow House in Goleta from 2-5pm.

Hauser is the founder and Executive Director of the Santa Barbara nonprofit Heal the Ocean (HTO), which focuses on wastewater infrastructure (sewers and septic systems notably at the Rincon) and on protecting the marine environment from dumping and other forms of pollution, most lately on the seeping of old oil wells off Summerland.

Prior recipients of the Envi-

ronmental Hero award include Jane Fonda, Northern Chumash Tribal Council leader Violent Sage Walker, Patagonia founder Yvon Chouinard and our own Sierra Club Chapter.

"Hillary has been a force for protection and appreciation of the ocean throughout many different roles in her distinguished career, having a significant impact on our local communities and marine environment," said EDC Assistant Director Betsy Weber. "As a writer, photojournalist, diver, adventurer, environmental activist, and leader of Heal the Ocean, she has been on the front lines of this fight for more than five decades."

"In the 28 years Heal the

Ocean has been wrangling with environmental issues in Santa Barbara County, the Environmental Defense Center has remained a guiding star," Hauser said.

In 1988, Hillary wrote about local beaches closing due to pollution in her watershed piece "Another Day at the Beach?" The article ignited a storm of public protest as well as a demonstration at the Santa Barbara County Administration Building. At the protest, Hillary and Jeff Young, a Santa Barbara oyster grower-now-attorney, announced they were founding Heal the Ocean.

This is a significant event for the EDC, bringing together around 500 guests from across the tri-county region. The event raises critical funds for the organization to continue its work protecting the region.

For tickets and details, go to: [www.environmentaldefensecenter.org/gb/](http://www.environmentaldefensecenter.org/gb/)

### Help is here

*Editor's note: Hillary responded to EDC's Hero Award with characteristic modesty!*

"It takes a village... of many heroes to make a new leader.

I'll never forget the beginnings of Heal the Ocean, when I didn't have a clue what a 503c was, how so many reached out, so many who had, and have, gone before, to teach me, educate, help.

Mark Gold, then the Exec Director of Heal the Bay, Santa Monica, drove all the way up to Santa Barbara to see me, talk to me, offer his help.

The great folks at Environmental Defense Center gave their education and experience, taught me about storm water permits. When Marco Gonzalez of Coast Law Group, Encinitas, stepped forward to help on the wildly untamable Rincon Septic-to-Sewer project, I looked up at him like a god come to save me... and the project...which took 15 years to finish.

So, to everyone who helped me these past 26 years, this honor is truly yours, and I thank you all."

## Danger hasn't passed

By Brady Bradshaw

Nine years ago, a badly corroded pipeline near Refugio State Beach ruptured and spilled what experts now believe was more than 450,000 gallons of oil. Much of the oil poured into the ocean, creating the worst spill in the Santa Barbara area since the catastrophic 1969 event that helped spur the modern environmental movement.

I understand the immense power of oil spills. My own life has been profoundly shaped by disasters like the Pipeline 901 spill, and I'm tired of watching marine life suffer.

In 2010, just days after my first time seeing a pod of dolphins in the Gulf of Mexico, my joy was suffocated beneath more than 200 million gallons of oil gushing into the Gulf from the BP Deepwater Horizon disaster. In those dark days, I couldn't look away as the ocean became a toxic slurry of death. I felt compelled to shift my priorities and abandoned my childhood dream of becoming a marine mammal veterinarian so I could join the fight to stop offshore drilling.

The Pipeline 901 rupture brought those awful memories back. This spill killed and injured brown pelicans, California sea lions, dolphins, and fish, among many other animals. Beaches and fisheries shut down as oil blanketed the coast.

The spill also shut down seven offshore oil and gas platforms that the pipeline serviced — all but three of which are now slated for decommissioning.

But the danger hasn't passed.

Efforts are underway to restart the aging and corroded oil infrastructure, despite fierce opposition from landowners, Chumash people, and environmental groups. The Pipeline 901 spill happened almost a decade ago, but many of us remember it as though it was yesterday and want to make sure nothing like it ever happens again.

Unfortunately, oil spills keep happening. In October 2021 I took a hiatus from work to decompress and enjoy the sea and my passion for diving. But when I surfaced from one of my dives in San Diego surrounded by floating tar, a few weeks after the 2021 San Pedro pipeline spill in Huntington Beach, it was a harsh reminder that the ocean isn't safe until offshore drilling stops and all platforms are decommissioned.

We simply can't count on industry to prevent another oil disaster, so we need more help from government agencies, lawmakers,

and the public.

Recently a company called Sable borrowed money from Exxon and purchased the entire pipeline system, the three offshore oil-drilling platforms, and an onshore processing plant. Now it's trying every possible avenue to restart operations.

Transfers of ownership are an oil-industry shell game to avoid paying the true costs of cleanup. Often, at the end of an oilfield's life, the big companies sell their assets to an underfunded entity that then goes bankrupt, abdicating cleanup responsibility. At a time of record-breaking industry profits and a desperate need to decarbonize, there's no excuse for oil companies to avoid cleaning up their mess.

Every government agency should be skeptical of Sable's recent efforts.

The state pipeline regulator, Cal Fire, should not allow the onshore Pipeline 901 to restart, especially since the agency would need to grant a waiver allowing Sable to proceed without the best possible oil-spill prevention technologies. The State Lands Commission should not renew or extend any leases for pipelines in state waters due to the significant risk of another subsea pipeline spill.

Santa Barbara Air Pollution Control District must not renew air-pollution permits (currently open for public comment) for these shuttered operations with outdated, inadequate air-pollution controls. Before shutting down, these facilities were the largest source of greenhouse gases in Santa Barbara County and a major source of several serious air pollutants.

The federal government should stop extending the offshore oil leases in federal waters that would have expired years ago. And federal, state and local regulators should absolutely not allow Exxon to transfer assets to Sable without requiring financial assurances for all cleanup obligations and ensuring coverage for a worst-case scenario oil spill.

Offshore drilling must end, and governments must stop granting permission to pollute. The risk of devastating oil spills and the cost of cleanup are too high.

As we enjoy our beautiful beaches and ocean this summer, let's not forget the seasons when we had to stay away, the precious wildlife we lost, or the dirty industry that caused it.

~ Brady Bradshaw is a senior oceans campaigner at the Center for Biological Diversity.



The black tide after the Refugio oil spill. (Photo courtesy of NOAA)

**Condor Call**  
[SierraClub.org/SantaBarbara-Ventura](http://SierraClub.org/SantaBarbara-Ventura) ~ All phone numbers 1-805 area code

EDITOR: 'Condor' John Hankins, 452-2885  
260 Pacos St. Ventura CA 93001 • [John@gnusman.com](mailto: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/santabarbara-ventura](http://SierraClub.org/santabarbara-ventura)  
Post Office Box 31241, Santa Barbara, Ca 93130-1241  
Santa Barbara 617-3106 • Ventura 988-0339  
Change of Address: [address.changes@sierraclub.org](mailto: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, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor Washington, D.C., 20001

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
[Jonathan.Ullman@SierraClub.org](mailto:Jonathan.Ullman@SierraClub.org)  
• EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE •  
Katie Davis (Chair): 451-4574, [kdavis2468@gmail.com](mailto:kdavis2468@gmail.com)  
Jim Hines (Vice-Chair): 340-9266, [jhcasitas@gmail.com](mailto:jhcasitas@gmail.com)  
Gerry Ching (Secretary): 964-5411, [gching@cox.net](mailto:gching@cox.net)  
Member at-large: Emily Engel [emilyaengel@gmail.com](mailto:emilyaengel@gmail.com)  
Member at-large: Elisabeth Lamar 805-667-7617 [elisabethlamar@hotmail.com](mailto:elisabethlamar@hotmail.com)  
Rebecca August (Arguello Group Rep): 350-0629, [rebeccaugust@mac.com](mailto:rebeccaugust@mac.com)  
Niki Stokols (Conejo Group Rep): [ConejoGroupHiking@gmail.com](mailto:ConejoGroupHiking@gmail.com)  
Jim Taylor (Santa Barbara Group Rep): (408) 666-7356, [jim@carpedata.com](mailto:jim@carpedata.com)

• GROUP CHAIRS •  
Arguello: Rebecca August 350-0629, [rebeccaugust@mac.com](mailto:rebeccaugust@mac.com)  
Conejo: Niki Stokols, [ConejoGroupHiking@gmail.com](mailto:ConejoGroupHiking@gmail.com)  
Santa Barbara: Jim Taylor, [jim@carpedata.com](mailto:jim@carpedata.com)  
Ventura Network: Julie Henszey 805-657-2793; [juliehenszey@gmail.com](mailto:juliehenszey@gmail.com)

• CLUB SERVICES •  
Forest issues: Jim Hines, 340-9266, [jhcasitas@gmail.com](mailto:jhcasitas@gmail.com)  
Air Quality: Michael Stubblefield, 216-2630, [motodata@roadrunner.com](mailto:motodata@roadrunner.com)  
Conservation SB: Kate Mullin, [mullin@shelter-vet.com](mailto:mullin@shelter-vet.com)  
Conservation Vta: Jim Hines, 340-9266, [jhcasitas@gmail.com](mailto:jhcasitas@gmail.com)  
Legal: David Gold, 642-7748 x6, [davidgold4@aol.com](mailto:davidgold4@aol.com)  
Outings: Maureen Hernandez, [Moenandez@gmail.com](mailto:Moenandez@gmail.com)  
Political SB: Alex Pujo, 962-3578, [alex@pujo.net](mailto:alex@pujo.net)  
Political Vta: David Gold, 642-7748 x6, [davidgold4@aol.com](mailto:davidgold4@aol.com)  
Transportation: Kent Bullard, 218-6945, [KentBullard@yahoo.com](mailto:KentBullard@yahoo.com)

Typography and production by Dan Fuller

**HINES CHRONICLES**

**Lots to celebrate, but politics!**

*Editor's note: The joy and sorrows of environmental activism are recounted every issue with the popular Jim Hines Chronicles, reflecting the emails by our premier lobbyist and activist. This covers the last two months (April-May). Jim is vice-chair of our Chapter and Ventura Network. He is available as a speaker.*

**By Jim Hines**

**April 4: A 30 x 30 win!** Thank you to those of you who spoke to the CA Governor's office on behalf of the Sierra Club Mountain Lions FOREVER! campaign. Gov. Newsom has promised to release funds to purchase critical mountain lion habitat in the Santa Monica Mountains, despite a massive budget deficit. The campaign started in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties and spread statewide as the Sierra Club voice for mountain lions.

**April 17: Important wetlands** are on Sierra Club CA Wildlife Committee's radar as it is putting together a statewide inventory from each chapter of wetlands within our state.

Here is a list I have started for our chapter; if you know of wetlands which I have missed please add to this list. I am especially weak in northern Santa Barbara county: Conejo Marsh (Thousand Oaks), Piru Ponds, Mugu Lagoon, Ormond Beach Wetlands, Alessandro Lagoon (near the Mission), Mirror Lake (Ojai Valley), Carpinteria Marsh, Child's Estate ( Santa

Barbara), Goleta Slough, Ellwood Beach wetlands, Zaca Lake, Jalama Beach Wetlands, Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes area (protected as a wildlife refuge), Channel Islands Wetlands (protected as national park), Frazier Park Wetlands, Lake Casitas Watershed.

**April 18: Twin wins!** CA Fish and Game Commission took the first steps to list steelhead trout as endangered and includes their habitat in Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties. And it also took the first steps to list burrowing owls as a "species of concern".

**April 19: What a great week** it was. Building on our victories during the first quarter of this year we have much to celebrate this Earth Day weekend, which looks to be filled with the joys of Spring, so much in bloom, so much excitement and so much joy. Your conservation activist team helped to protect wildlife species and 30 x 30 land parcels, toured the Upper Piru Creek Wild and Scenic River, basked in the spirits of wolves to come into Lockwood Valley, Mountain Lions FOREVER! campaign joined the effort to protect Laurel Springs and much more. Plus, we learned President Biden may expand two national monuments on Earth Day April 22.

**April 20: National Park Week** (April 20 - 28). There are two national park units in our chapter: Channel Islands and Santa Monica Mountains. We will be advocating for wilderness land protection for Channel Islands National Park and for an increase in the land acquisition budget for Santa Monica Mtns. Also on our to-do list is the creation of a new park unit in our region, the Rim of the Valley Corridor (Ventura and LA counties).

**April 25: Sierra Club Wildlife and Endangered Species Team** officially joined the call to boycott the state of Wyoming due to the recent capture and torture of a beautiful gray wolf which we have named Tulan. The killer was fined only \$250, and we are advocating criminal prosecution. So please do not travel to Wyoming or spend money on products from Wyoming.

**April 29: April is Earth Day month**

and what will we be doing after our victories? Well, doing what the Sierra Club does best, fighting each day to protect the precious and endangered planet we live on . . . one acre at a time and one species at a time.

**April 30: Here we are, friends.** The beginning of the worst week of the year as Congress votes on several bad bills which would unprotect YOUR public lands, allow wolf hunting, open more lands to oil and gas drilling, prevent public comment and engagement on projects which impact YOUR national public lands. Grown men and women acting like YOUR national public lands are the playground of mega extraction industries, paid wildlife killers and others.

**May 1: It has now been two years** since I convinced the Sierra Club to change the then derogatory name of our chapter 'Los Padres' to the geographical name Santa Barbara-Ventura Chapter. I have been talking to others who use the name *Los Padres* and while they agree about the name being derogatory they say they will not change their use of *Los Padres* as long as the Los Padres National Forest (LPNF) has the name. That is our challenge.

**May 3: Our wolf pack** hit the road this week, travelling to our nation's Capital to attempt to stop congressional legislation which would prevent any future protections for wolves in the U.S. and allow an open hunting season on wolves. The bill, Congress member Boebert's "Trust the Science Act" would declare wolves Public Enemy Number One. Forget about criminals, drug dealers and such for wolves are America's real problem! The bill is now up to the Senate.

**May 22: Win for wildlife** this week because of YOU. I want to thank our great wildlife advocates in the Sierra Club Angeles, Santa Barbara-Ventura and Loma Prieto chapters for helping us successfully lobby state assembly members for passage of the Poison-Free Wildlife Act (AB 2552). This bill will add further restrictions on the use of wildlife-killing anticoagulant rodenticides as well as create buffer zones around wildlife habitat where rodenticides cannot be used.

**May 21: We need bold action NOW**, not evasive answers. So many questions about why and so many politically safe answers of why we can't. Here's some of those answers:

Q: You expanded the San Gabriel Mtns National Monument in the politically safe Los Angeles basin, why not create the National Park Service-managed Rim of the Valley Corridor in eastern Ventura county? A: Eastern Ventura county is MAGA country, and we don't want to anger people.

Q Why not create as requested the Ormond Beach National Wildlife Refuge? A: Because the land is not owned by the federal government.

Q: Why delay on the creation of the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary? A: Don't want to make the oil and gas industry angry. (Actually, there is not that much petroleum within the proposed sanctuary).

**May 28: Our national anger** towards the environment has reached the church pulpit. "Go forth and subdue the earth" (Genesis 1:28) God commands in the Bible and many Christian churches in our region take that command literally.

As I speak at various church events, I see more and more people attending Christian megachurches in Ventura County and the preaching of anti-environment values from the pulpit. No place for God's love of the earth in these sermons.

Of course, like in all things there is a wide diversion of views in the religious world from far left to far right



Three young volunteers (among others) greeted the public at our Chapter's Earth Day booth during Santa Barbara Earth Day. They are (from left) Tara Martin, Sahara Clark and Anastasia Nechay (Photo by Condor John)

and in between, but I have never seen as I have recently so much hate directed from so-called "religious people" towards God's creation.

**May 30: Mountain Lions FOREVER!** campaign is proud to announce that the National Park Service is prioritizing its land protection program to focus on critical habitat for mountain lions in the Santa Monica Mtns of eastern Ventura county and western Los Angeles county.

We will support work to improve habitat connectivity, lobby for funding to purchase critical habitat lands, and increase the awareness of the need for safe mountain lion crossing locations (both over and under) local roads, highways and freeways.

We will now begin advocating

for creation of a Big WILD!, a continuous open space region connecting eastern Los Padres National Forest lands across the Santa Clara River and into the Simi Hills and on into the coastal Santa Monica Mtns.

**Read our blog**



**EAVESDROPS**

*"I try to stay as elusive as the animals I'm catching."*

~ Jeff Sikitch, biologist in CA mountain lion study, noting a rare event of a sighting via headlights in a parking lot on the edge of Griffith Park last week (?) Excitement was palpable after what was considered that the lone lion -- the beloved P-22 -- was euthanized recently due to injuries and perhaps rat poison. At press time, Jeff hadn't yet caught up with the lion to add a tracking device to it.

# 30x30

**ORGANIZING TO CONSERVE 30% OF OUR LANDS BY 2030.**

**SUPPORTING STATE, FEDERAL AND LOCAL CONSERVATION INITIATIVES**

- H.R. 973 (Carbajal)
- Chumash Marine Sanctuary
- Carpinteria Bluffs

**STOPPING HARMFUL POLICIES AND PRACTICES**

- Oil Extraction and Trucking
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Methane Heating & Cooking Fuel

Sierra Club supports federal legislation- H.R. 973 (Carbajal) would:

- Designate 288,672 acres of wilderness in Carrizo Plain National Monument and Los Padres National Forest
- Create two scenic areas (34,882 acres)
- Establish the 400-mile Condor Trail
- Safeguard 159 miles of wild and scenic rivers

**Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary**

- 140 square miles
- Cambria to Channel Islands
- Connects existing marine sanctuaries

**JOIN US!**

Condor  
Call

**SIERRA CLUB**  
SANTA BARBARA - VENTURA

CURRENTS

**Most meetings continue online for now**

Group News

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](mailto:gching@cox.net)

~ Chapter website and blog at: [www.SierraClub.org/SantaBarbara-Ventura](http://www.SierraClub.org/SantaBarbara-Ventura)

**SANTA BARBARA GROUP**

~ We meet 2nd Tuesdays, 11-12pm 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](http://www.facebook.com/SierraClubArguelloGroup) ~Volunteers needed; your talents could make a difference. Call 350-0629 or: [RebeccaAugust@mac.com](mailto:RebeccaAugust@mac.com)

**VENTURA NETWORK**

~ For board meeting dates, times and location email: [sierraclubventura@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://www.meetup.com/SierraClubVentura)

**CONEJO GROUP**

~ Events, outings and meetings will be sent to you if you send an email request to: [ConejoGroupHiking@gmail.com](mailto:ConejoGroupHiking@gmail.com).

Or view the Conejo Group website: [www.sierraclub.org/SantaBarbara-Ventura](http://www.sierraclub.org/SantaBarbara-Ventura)

[www.sierraclub.org/SantaBarbara-Ventura/outings](http://www.sierraclub.org/SantaBarbara-Ventura/outings)

# Climate Watch

By Deborah Williams  
UCSB lecturer

*Editor's note: Our monthly column about specific climate action ideas takes on the benefits of going organic. Did you know our chapter has an agricultural committee focusing on just these issues. Get involved by emailing Jan and Ron at: [bugnet@rinconvitova.com](mailto:bugnet@rinconvitova.com)*

There are so many compelling reasons to eat organic food whenever possible. Organic food is much better for our environment, our health and for others, including farm workers and people who live near farms and children.

**The Environment.** Organic agriculture practices help reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Why?

Organic farming cannot use fossil fuel-based fertilizers. According to studies, if synthetic nitrogen fertilizers alone were eliminated world-wide, this would reduce direct agricultural greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 20%. Also, a study conducted over 40 years demonstrated that organic farms use 45% less energy than conventional farms.

Organic farming lowers GHG emissions because pesticides prohibited by organic farming have substantial greenhouse gas footprints. Not only is

their production energy intensive, but also some pesticides, like fumigants, emit nitrous oxide, a very harmful greenhouse gas.

In non-organic farms, fumigants, like chloropicrin, are commonly used on strawberry crops, and can increase N<sub>2</sub>O emission by 700-800%. As noted by EPA, "Nitrous Oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) has a GWP [Global Warming Potential] 273 times that of CO<sub>2</sub> for a 100-year timescale."

Organic farming results in healthier soil, including more biological activity and biomass, additional soil stability, and greater diversity. There is also enhanced carbon sequestration. A detailed analysis shows that "we could sequester more than 100% of current annual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions with a switch to widely available and inexpensive organic management practices."

There are numerous additional environmental benefits of organic farming, including the protection of wildlife, watersheds and drinking water. Of increasing importance, pollinator health is supported by organic farming.

**Our Health.** Pesticides are known to cause many long-term human health problems including "cancers, birth defects, reproductive harm, neurological and developmental toxicity, immunotoxicity, and disruption

of the endocrine system." "According to noted expert, Dr. Charles Benbrook, "when you compare organic versus conventional food, it is absolutely inarguable that organic food reduces dietary exposure to pesticides by 98 percent." A study involving over 68,000 adults found that "a significant reduction in the risk of cancer was observed among high consumers of organic food."

Want to avoid GMO foods? Because the use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) is strictly prohibited in organic products, eating organic is the easiest way to have confidence that you are not consuming GMOs. Want to circumvent sewage sludge and irradiation? They are explicitly prohibited in growing organic foods.

What's more, studies show that organic foods, including milk, onions and many others, have higher nutritional values.

**Others' Health.** Farmworkers and neighboring communities are particularly exposed to harmful pesticides from conventional farming. Farmers and farmworkers have higher rates of certain cancers, including prostate cancer. With respect to neighboring communities, as an article in Scientific American notes: "Children are especially vulnerable to these airborne pesticides, given that their young bodies are still growing and developing."

Pesticide Action Network also observes, "When pesticides are sprayed they can drift and settle on playgrounds, porches, laundry, toys, pools, furniture and more...Some of the most toxic pesticides in use in the U.S. today are also the most drift prone."

According to research, "upwards of 95 percent of applied pesticides miss their target, reaching nearby people and wildlife, waterways, soil and air instead."

**Taking Action.** Buy organic whenever possible. Let's vote with our mouths and dollars. More organic demand means more investments in and conversion to organic farming. Costco alone has \$6.6 billion in annual organic sales, spurring increased organic production.

Easy and local ways to eat organically include shopping at your local farmers market in Santa Barbara/Goleta/Solvang/Carpinteria/Montecito or Ventura County, and signing up for CSA services like Farm Cart Organics.

For our environment, ourselves and others, let's maximize our organic purchases.



A positive touch indeed. This garden grows vegetables, fruits, herbs and flowers at Condor John's abode where he built raised beds, paths etc. in between issues of Condor Call.

## GREETINGS FRIENDS

### Grow a positive touch

By Jim Hines

Gardening is good for the environment as well as your mind, body and soul.

Grow your own healthy organic fruits, berries, herbs and vegetables. There's nothing better than harvesting ripe homegrown vegetables or fruits to use in your kitchen. The health benefits of gardening without chemicals are enormous, no poisons for those who garden organically.

And gardening is good for wildlife. Plant flowers which are used by pollinator insects and hummingbirds. The joy of gardening brings true happiness to my small part of the world. Flowers in bloom make us smile, make us feel a part of creation.

When I start seeds in my home greenhouse I feel that I am taking part in something much bigger than I am. I nurture the seedlings; give them the care they need to grow and turn into beautiful flowers. In a tiny way I have helped our world.

My garden is a ray of blooms year round, for living in this great mild climate of southern California I can have annuals, perennials, roses, camellias and various flowering shrubs in bloom anytime of the year by planting various varieties some of which flower in the Winter, some in the Fall, some in the Spring and some in the Summer.

Bulbs are finishing now, Dahlias are starting to bloom, Peonies are almost done, Japanese Maple trees are all leaved out in various foliage colors, flower beds of Zinnias and Cosmos are budded up and ready, azaleas

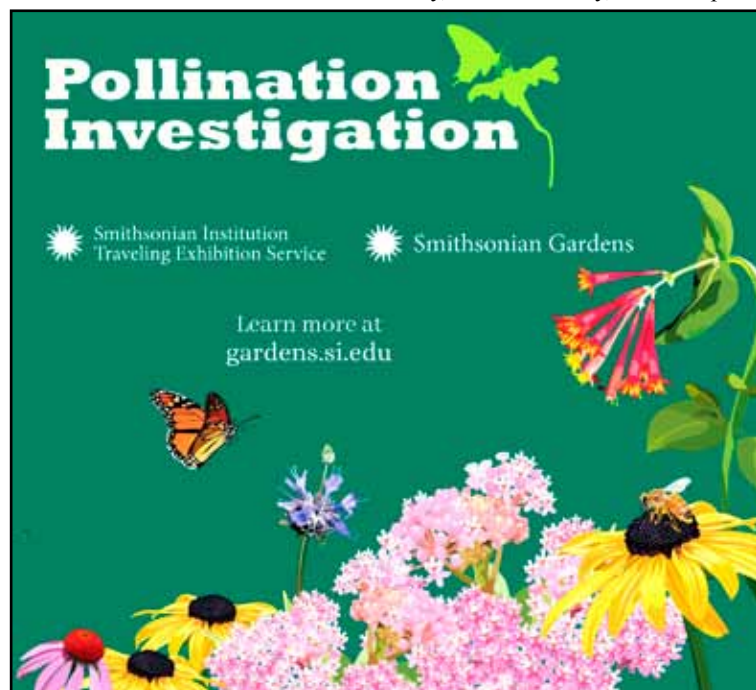
are showing their colors, greenhouse seedlings are ready to transplant . . . ah, so much to do but so much to enjoy and the rewards of gardening for me are enormous.

Water features in the garden add more depth to the beauty of life. I have a garden pond surrounded by a Birch tree grove, the pond is water for the birds and small nighttime animals. My garden fountain is water for smaller birds.

In my work for the Sierra Club to Protect Wildlife and Wild Places across the western U.S. I encounter a great deal of negativity, hateful elected officials who want to kill wildlife and destroy national public lands and call people like me who work to protect national parks unAmerican. Angry anti-government militias in Utah (interesting to sit in public meetings about national parks and most of the people around you are wearing pistols and waving confederate flags) who oppose our great national parks in southern Utah, elected and appointed government officials who want to kill wolves in the Rockies.

But I deal with all of this because I am passionate about the causes I work for, and I know that I have beautiful gardens at home to allow me to renew, recharge and reconnect, gardening and the beautiful results keep me sane in the insane world I work in.

So spend time out in your own garden creating beauty, planting the edibles you love to eat and the flowers which will give you hope for our world and add a positive touch to your everyday life.



The Agriculture Museum is hosting Smithsonian Institution's travelling show about pollinators. Nearly 90% of flowering plants rely on about 200,000 species of animal pollinators for fertilization. The museum is located at 926 Railroad Ave. in downtown Santa Paula. It is open Thursdays through Sundays and will have a special Play Date for kids and families on June 14 from 11am - 1pm. Visit: <https://venturamuseum.org/visit-agriculture-museum/>

## SIGHTINGS

### Pizza park, Ojai Grizzly, Trains, trails and Route 150

By John Hankins

We persist with a positive attitude to *Explore, Enjoy and Protect* the planet (Sierra Club's motto), despite turmoil in the political and environmental realms.

Please join us by getting involved and have fun too. We offer activities and activism and free hikes. See Group News box on page 3 for contacts and links where you can get involved or enjoy our free hikes via links on page 5, including via MeetUp and internet lists.

Donations help a lot, and the money stays here at home doing good stuff. Donate here: [www.sierraclub.org/donate/1000](http://www.sierraclub.org/donate/1000)

Check out the stories and links below on what happened in the last two months.

June 2: **Ojai Wild!** The annual event celebrating 20 years of Los Padres ForestWatch at the Thacher school. Live auction included a remote Sespe Eco-Retreat, and stays at Mexico, Costa Rica and even a fast ride in a WWII P51 Mustang! Speakers included Ju-

lie Tumamait-Stenslie, founder of the Barbareno/Ventureno Band of Mission Indians and Paul Jenkin, the tireless leader of the Surfrider Foundation.

June 1: **National Trails Day** via the American Hiking Society. Get Out, Take a Hike, Saunter On. Need advice on where to go? Check out all our hiking links on page 6.

May 30: **Electric school** buses are charging ahead, as Ventura County Air Pollution Control District has awarded \$1.56 million to school districts in Oxnard and Ventura to replace diesel engine buses with new zero-emission electric ones. It should reduce annual emissions by 1,600 tons of carbon dioxide.

May 29: **Public pizza oven** is at the newly revitalized Armitos Park. It will be Goleta's first community garden (50 raised plots) with a new playground and extended bike path. It also has an area for classes and workshops. Located in Old Town, on Armitos Drive near S. Kellogg Ave. More info at:

[www.CityofGoleta.org/ArmitosPark](http://www.CityofGoleta.org/ArmitosPark).

May 27: **2023 Impact Report** by the Community Environmental Council shares key highlights that have catalyzed significant environmental advancements on the Central Coast this past year. The report is accessible at: <https://cecsb.org/impact>

May 21: **Conservation groups** asked the U.S. Forest Service to revisit its approval of a 1,600-acre logging and vegetation removal project located near Mt. Pinos after the discovery of several rare salamanders in the project area. Los Padres ForestWatch, the Center for Biological Diversity, and the John Muir Project of Earth Island of Institute—submitted a letter informing forest officials about the presence of yellow-blotched salamanders and requests an environmental assessment.

May 20: **Route 150** could open to traffic by the end of June 2024, a target date subject to change. The landslide measuring about 1.8 acres occurred during powerful storms that saturated

the region. Since no nearby roads can serve as a short alternate route, a lengthy detour was created through the cities of Ventura and Ojai using State Route 126, U.S. Highway 101 and State Route 33. More info and updates at: <https://tinyurl.com/Route150updates>

May 19: **Wilderness Spirit Award** goes to the Community Environmental Council along with a new Sustainability Award to the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians. California Nature Art Museum (formerly Wildling Museum) presented the awards during an event where the funds raised support art exhibitions and programs that inspire a love of nature. Learn more at: <https://www.calnatureartmuseum.org>

May 18: **Space Force** officials outlined for the first time their plans to increase the number of launches from the base, from 37 in 2023 to more than 120 a year by 2026. Most of those rocket liftoffs would be conducted by SpaceX. Environmental groups argue that increasing launches could affect



marine life and the Gaviota Coast Conservancy believes "more frequent launches will result in permanent changes."

May 17: **Coastal Ranches Conservancy**, a Gaviota-based nonprofit, is co-sponsoring Assembly Bill 2320 to promote wildlife corridors across the state. Gaviota Wildlife Corridor Project has revealed three locations with high densities of roadkill along Highway 101 (200-300 each year). Using this data, Caltrans was awarded a \$8 million grant under President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to build a wildlife underpass in nearby Gaviota State Park. It would consist of 2.5 miles of wildlife fencing to funnel ani-

continued next page

# Managed retreat at Surfer's Point

By John Hankins

The city of Ventura was awarded a \$16.2 million dollar grant in June 2023 to implement Phase 2 of the Surfers Point Project because the ocean is chipping away at the shoreline that is adjacent to the Fairgrounds.

And it's open for input from residents, which occurred on May 2 at the Fairgrounds and the outreach was possible due to a grant. Details of the project were given to the 50 or so participants who later put paper dots onto a list of favored attributes, like slowing down e-bikes (a big one), more access to the beach (currently limited due to erosion and fenced off), educational signage, maybe surfboard racks, ADA compliant and public art.

That "public art" factor was quite popular, especially if it was made from natural materials. Enter the Dragon: This iconic Surfers' Point assemblage (see photo) was singled out as the way to go with its "Surfer's Crossing" and "Surfer Girls RIP" signs and steps leading to the sandy beach.

Phase 2 of the project is planned to be completed by 2025, complementing construction of Phase 1, completed in 2012. The first phase of the "managed retreat project" has been extremely successful, garnering nationwide attention for its approach to addressing long term coastal resilience, using natural materials rather than building a sea wall.

"The project serves as a model for other beaches along the California coast threatened by erosion and sea level rise, combining adaptation strategies of coastal habitat," said Assembly member Steve Bennett in a letter to the state Coastal Conservancy. Others who champion the project include State Senator Monique Limón and the Ventura County Board of Supervisors, among others.

This second phase involves re-

moving damaged coastal infrastructure and replacing it with dunes, native plants, and a buried cobble berm to safeguard City and Fairground infrastructures. The project will also include the construction of a new multi-use path and parking lot with an attendant station, a public art component, new lighting, drainage improvements, landscaping, and electrical vehicle parking.

It should improve coastal climate resilience by relocating a parking lot and section of coastal trail and reconstructing 2.5 acres of coastline with dunes, native plantings, and a buried cobble berm.

In the mid 1990's, after experiencing recurring coastal erosion at Surfer's Point, the City of Ventura, along with

BEACON, the California Coastal Conservancy, State Coastal Commission, Ventura County Fairgrounds, Surfrider Foundation, and other local stakeholders embarked on an innovative approach to support resilient natural and public infrastructure against the impacts of climate change, rising sea levels, beach erosion, and extreme weather events.

"There's the old-school mentality that when nature threatens you, you fight back," said Paul Jenkin, Ventura campaign manager for the Surfrider Foundation and a longtime advocate for the project in a 2011 feature in the *Los Angeles Times*. "So, this idea of retreating and moving back was really a radical proposition."

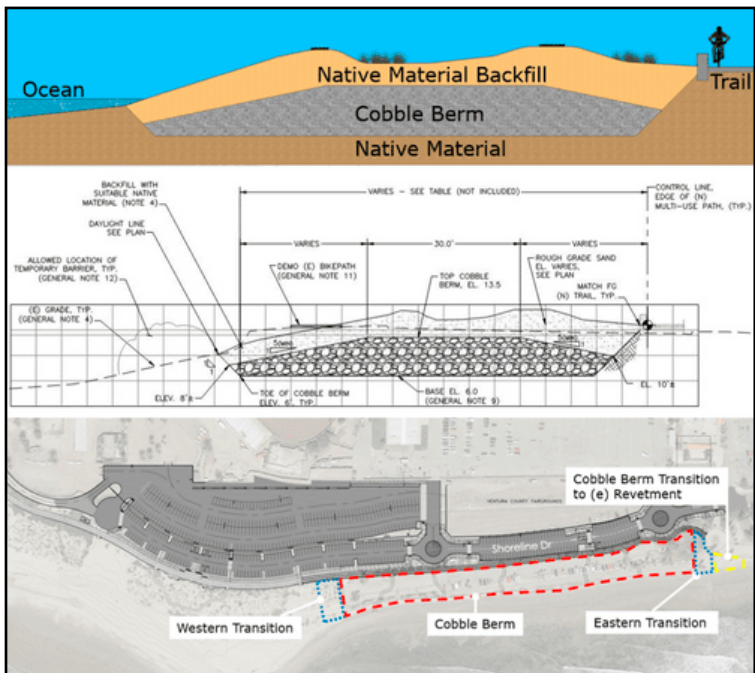
The project site served as an important "outdoor classroom" and was host to a BEACON organized field visit for four dozen managers and scientists to examine the completed Phase 1 project last November.

Get all the details and provide input here:

<https://tinyurl.com/SurfersPoint2>



This dragon at Ventura's Surfers Point was specifically mentioned as a great example of public art along the managed retreat plan as it uses natural materials and is simple fun. Who did it? Condor John found out it was "Dan in the Van" a modest fellow whose girlfriend identified him. However, a recent trip saw someone ripped off the dragon's head, or was it a stiff wind? (Photo by Condor John)



## We are there...always



Earth Day is special to the Sierra Club, which considers every day as Earth Day. Above is our family friendly booth in Santa Barbara and on the right the Merito Foundation sponsored the Ventura Earth Day (shown are Ron Whitehurst of our Ag Committee and in the booth Santiago Knowlton). Our ED Jon Ullman gave high marks to the volunteers in both counties. In SB and Ventura Kent Bullard and Brian Petcher for arranging EV displays, and in SB, Emily Engle moderating an oil panel, Jim Taylor and his Spring water bottles, Chair Katie Davis and Olivia Craig, leader of the Sierra Club's new UCSB Network working the booth, with other volunteers. In Ventura, Network Chair Julie Henszey and ExCom leader Steve Colome worked at the booth. (Photos by Condor John)

### Sightings...

continued from page 4

imals of all sizes to a safe passageway. Construction is scheduled between 2027 and 2029.

May 15: **Rails with Trails** project will include a modern multi-use trail. The historic railway tracing back to 1887 is known as the Santa Paula Branch Line. Which would connect communities in new ways. The first community workshop was held on this day and followed up by another on May 23. More information or to register for email notifications, visit: [www.cityofventura.ca.gov/SPBL](http://www.cityofventura.ca.gov/SPBL)

May 13: **Over 5,700 pounds** of trash and debris were removed from Santa Cruz Island by 29 volunteers, thanks to SB Channelkeeper, Island Packers, Marine Sanctuary Foundation, Tidy Seas and commercial fishers. "The large amount of debris that had accumulated in Chinese Harbor—including tires, irrigation pipes, fishing gear, plastic, and metal—was shocking to volunteers, especially considering that this group cleaned the same beach last fall," according to Channelkeeper in *Edhat*.

May 9: **Choo Choo**, a new commuter train that would run northbound from Moorpark (6:30am start) to Goleta (8am end route) is in the works as a pilot program. It would serve Moorpark, Camarillo, Oxnard, Ventura, Carpinteria, Santa Barbara and Goleta and reverse those stops in the after-work hours. The southbound route adds a stop at Los Angeles. However, there's much to do and it may not happen until October, according to the SB Association of Governments.

May 7: **Potter's Point** is the new name for a prominent bluff on the Ellwood Mesa Open Space in honor of the late artist Chris Potter who passed away on Feb. 3. One of his paintings was featured on *Condor Call's* April/May cover. Goleta City Council approved the name, prompted by hundreds of signatures on a petition. The bluff is located off Santa Barbara Shores Dr. and the idea came from SB County Second



Wheeler Gorge Visitor's Center is now open after a hiatus when severe storms made parts of Highway 33 impassable. The center is located at 17017 Maricopa Highway (33) open on weekends and proudly displays Teresa's Rock, honoring our Chapter's Wilderness Basics Course founder Teresa Norris.

District Supervisor Laura Capps.

May 3: **A 106,000-acre expansion** of the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument will cover forest areas east and south of Santa Clarita and areas north of foothill communities from Sylmar east to Azusa, thanks to the Biden Administration. Our neighboring Angeles Chapter was ecstatic: "It took ten years of organizing, but today we can celebrate another victory . . .," said Juana Torres, Chair of the Forest Committee. "We still need additional protections for the 200,000 acres of Angeles Forest north of Santa Clarita."

May 1: **Grizzly bears** back in Ojai? The question was posed by the *Ojai Valley News* and the answer was provided by UC-Santa Barbara Environmental Studies professor Peter Alagona. "Grizzlies today are held up as a wilderness species. That is wrong," said Alagona. "They were human's partners in intricate systems." Thanks to Ojai Valley Land Conservancy for sponsoring the talk. Visit [calgrizzly.org](http://calgrizzly.org) for more information. Also check out America's favorite grizzly named 399 here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gXa-bs\\_9i0&ab\\_channel=NatureonPBS](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gXa-bs_9i0&ab_channel=NatureonPBS)

April 24: **Carpinteria Living Shoreline** Project has secured a \$1.62 million grant from the State Coastal Conservancy. This critical initiative will help protect the city's vulnerable western coastline against the growing threats of sea level rise, flooding, and erosion. The Project envisions a sustainable,

nature-based solution using "living" elements like vegetation and sand for protection from Linden Avenue and down towards the saltwater march. But, it may have to be revised as a new study claims the sea could rise 10 feet instead of 5 feet, the level projected by the current plan.

April 23: **Ahoy!** The Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary Marine Sanctuary proposal was given a boost when the Northern Chumash Tribal Council and all three Morro Bay Offshore Wind Leaseholders announced a joint position in full support of a phased approach to the designation of the sanctuary. Proposal encompasses 5,617 square miles of submerged lands and marine waters from Montaña de Oro State Park in San Luis Obispo County to Naples along the Gaviota Coast. Our Sierra Club strongly supports its creation.

April 18: **Southern Steelhead** listed as Endangered under California's Endangered Species Act, thanks to pressure from environmental groups, including our Sierra Club. CA Fish and Game Commission voted unanimously to list Southern California steelhead as endangered providing critically important protections for this iconic species, which teeters on the brink of extinction.

April 16: **Goleta City Hall** officially won a Green Business Certification. Some of the accomplishments include launching the Plastic Free Goleta, installing solar panels at City Hall, utilizing best practices for energy efficiency, having an active employee transportation demand program, and implementing the Creek and Watershed Management Plan.

April 4: **Goleta Community Center** has reopened after a closure for seismic retrofitting. At 97 years old, it was about time to do upgrades. Goleta Mayor Paula Perotte said during the ribbon cutting event, "We know this is an important gathering spot and we are committed to making it a vital hub for residents to meet, learn and enjoy." It is now available for the community to rent for an event or class.

### Surfers Point Phase II - Live Polling

Go to  
[www.menti.com](http://www.menti.com)

Enter the code  
**69 27 87 7**



Or use QR code



# Take a Hike!

## SANTA BARBARA-VENTURA CHAPTER

Panorama above Goleta by Robert Bernstein

UPDATES: [www.sierraclub.org/santa-barbara-ventura](http://www.sierraclub.org/santa-barbara-ventura)



### HIKE WITH CLUB



### WELCOME HIKERS

The public is welcome at all outings listed, unless otherwise specified. Please bring drinking water to all outings and optionally a lunch. Sturdy footwear is recommended. If you have any questions about a hike, please contact the leader listed. All phone numbers listed are within area code 805, unless otherwise noted.

A parent or responsible adult must accompany children under the age of 14.

See updated listing of all outings via the QR code (above) or: <https://www.sierraclub.org/santa-barbara-ventura>

This website also contains links to Group web pages and other resources. Some regional Groups also list their outings on Meetup sites. See Group News on page 3 for links.



### HIKE LOS PADRES

#### 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.

- [www.sierraclub.org/santabarbara-ventura](http://www.sierraclub.org/santabarbara-ventura)
- [www.LPFforest.org](http://www.LPFforest.org)
- <https://LPFW.org>
- [www.HikeLosPadres.com](http://www.HikeLosPadres.com)
- [www.SBSierraClub.org](http://www.SBSierraClub.org)
- [www.SantaBarbaraTrailGuide.com](http://www.SantaBarbaraTrailGuide.com)
- [www.SantaBarbaraHikes.com](http://www.SantaBarbaraHikes.com)
- <https://SBTrails.org>
- [www.VenturaCountyTrails.org](http://www.VenturaCountyTrails.org)
- <http://Hikes.VenturaCountyStar.com>



Our Sierra Club led a hike to Mt. Pinos a while back where this rock pile is located. Check out our link and others (below) welcoming hikes to just about everywhere locally. (Photo by Jean Paul Tummler)

### From our Mountains to the Sea: Where to go?

"Maybe they shouldn't be called hikes. Maybe that defeats the joy and the purpose. I don't like either the word [hike] or the thing. People ought to saunter in the mountains - not 'hike!'"

It's a beautiful word and originated away back in the Middle Ages. People used to go on pilgrimages to the Holy Land, and when people in the villages asked where they were going, they would reply, 'A la sainte terre' (To the Holy Land). And so they became known as 'sainte-terre-ers' or saunters.

Given that Sierra Club's co-founder John Muir was one of history's greatest saunters, we should not only allow him his grumpiness, but give it profound consideration. And there is no better place than the Ventura - Santa Barbara region to amble in the great outdoors and give anything consideration.

As a wise soul once said, "It's only in the great open spaces that we find ourselves."

(Editor's note: Taken from Visit Ventura website with light editing to include Santa Barbara! Photo:

<https://www.facebook.com/SteveACattanach>

## Click to access all hikes

#### All links are now live!

We used to print our Sierra Club Outings here covering a two-month period. But we find that planning that far ahead may change due to weather, Covid restrictions, closures etc.

So, we ask that you now rely on the many Meetups and websites for the chapter and some others. For our chapter Meetups go to Group News box always on page 3, otherwise, here we go: The chapter's website:

<https://www.sierraclub.org/santa-barbara-ventura>

A very special personal website run by

Diane Soini which includes our chapter hikes, blogs, connections and a dragonfly on the screen:

Visit Ventura has a lot of information about hikes in the county and the Channel Islands. Go here:

<https://visitventuraca.com/biking-hiking/>

Los Padres National Forest is the turf for Los Padres Forest Association and it's the 'bible' for the forest as it shares amazing information gleaned from hikers and others outdoor sites. Here's its hiking site (see QR code too)

<https://www.hikelospadres.com>

Ojai Valley Land Conservancy has a handy Trailfinder for our phone. Go to:

<http://www.ovlc.org/trailfinder/>

Going a bit more afield, the LA Times has published a trail guide for the So-Cal region here:

<https://tinyurl.com/NearUsLA>

Even more! UCSB's Deborah Williams created a new and expanded website as part of her "Public Lands and Waters" class. Here's the link:

<https://50greatpubliclanddestinations.org/>

## Blockade leader coming to SB & Vta

By Julie Henszey

Blockade Experience Leads to Visit by Famous Land Guardian.

I wiped my eyes and blinked hard. I had to choose between sitting downwind from a smokey fire ring or sitting with my back exposed to the rain.

Huddled with a group of unshowered individuals one third to one half my age under a plastic tarp strung between large western hemlocks, I kept wondering whether it would be better to go back to my very small tent and dive into my down sleeping bag.

My comfort was not my priority, however. I had flown to Vancouver, British Columbia, to join a logging blockade to which my 24-year-old son had invited me. We took a ferry to Vancouver Island, drove two hours west across the island — winding through forests with 2000-year-old trees — and met our companions for the next five days. The following day we walked up a gravel road for two hours to a bridge, which the blockaders secured, preventing logging trucks from using the road to reach new areas to cut.

I was there a few days. Indigenous led, the blockade lasted 500 days between 2020 and 2022, making it the largest act of civil disobedience in the history of Canada with over 1100 arrests. It shifted the public's opinion about clearcutting. The logging company in the area wanted to "liquidate" 100% of unprotected old growth forest. No 2000-year-old wonder would be left upright.



If you want to see courage, look no further than the Indigenous women who were often seen standing atop earth moving equipment to lead a group in unity chants, or remaining passive as police dragged their bodies across gravel, or claiming their power as they spoke in front of hundreds at rallies outside the provincial government building.

One prominent voice belongs to Rainbow Eyes. As a member of the Awaetlala First Nation and graduate of Vancouver Island University's First Nations land guardian program, she has a spiritual and

cultural duty to protect these old growth forests. She is also the Deputy Leader of Canada's Green Party.

Her timetable for change is "right now."

After seven arrests, Rainbow Eyes has become a highly visible leader in the Indigenous movement to save the forests. She has been compared to Rosa Parks, refusing to obey laws that deny fundamental human rights.

Everyone from musician Neil Young to actor Mark Ruffalo and scientist Suzanne Simard are in her corner.

Hear this courageous leader's Inspiring Story in Person in Santa Barbara and Ventura June 22-25, sharing her inspiring story of courage and ongoing collaborative work to address climate change.

Her journey will facilitate your own ability to adopt the mindset needed to tackle climate issues in your own backyard with greater power and influence.

There are eight events over four days including outdoor learning circles, viewings of an award-winning documentary, and private fundraisers.

#### Indigenous Learning Circles

Santa Barbara, 11 am, June 22, San Marcos Foothills  
Ventura, 11 am, June 23, Thille Park

#### Documentary Viewings

Santa Barbara, 7 pm, June 24, Location TBA  
Ventura, 7 pm, June 25, E.P. Foster Public Library

## EVENTS

June 9: **Green & Blue!** A coastal celebration every year for the SB Environmental Defense Center. It's the largest and most successful fundraiser, that brings guests together to enjoy exciting live and silent auctions, environmental heroes, and special guests. Runs from 2-6:30pm at the Rancho La Patera & Stow House. Details at:

[www.environmentaldefensecenter.org/events/](http://www.environmentaldefensecenter.org/events/)

June 15: **Nature Hike** on Pine Mountain by ForestWatch, a free guided tour starting at 9:30am. Space is limited for this 3.4-mile hike along Reyes Peak Trail on Pine Mountain. Learn how to ID trees and other plants, lichens, mushrooms, birds, and more from Conifer Connoisseur, Bryant Baker:

<https://tinyurl.com/ForestWatchHike>

June 23: **SBCAN awards** Santa Barbara County Action Network presents "Looking Forward" Awards Dinner & Fundraiser, 3-6pm at Radisson Hotel, 3455 Skyway Dr., Santa Maria. Dinner to recognize outstanding individuals and organizations, including Cliff Lambert, Steve Molina, Noemi Velasquez, Land Trust of SBC, Daniel Segura and AAUW chapter. Tickets at:

[event@sbcana.org](http://event@sbcana.org)

June 27: **Plastic-Free Expo** at the CEC Environmental Hub, 1219 State St., Santa Barbara from 6:30 – 8pm. Features more than a dozen local organizations, businesses, and government agencies offering information and resources for eliminating plastic. Details at:

<https://cecsb.org/>

July 27: **Electric event** will emphasize the advantages and ways to improve your health by replacing gas appliances with electric ones and looking at ways to make personal transportation more efficient. (There will be EVs, bikes and electric bikes on display.) Presented by Citizens Climate Lobby chapter and Ventura Climate Coalition at 2pm at 5654 Ralston St. Ventura. Details

<https://www.cclventura.org/>

#### EAVESDROPS

"Public lands need our support now. Submit a public comment today and help put conservation back in the conversation ..."

~ Pitch by Patagonia Action Works (and supported by Sierra Club) asserting, "For nearly 40 years, the Bureau of Land Management has prioritized resource extraction over conservation, recreation and wildlife." GOP is fighting the change, so send comments here: <https://tinyurl.com/BLMbattle>

#### Reception

Ventura, 12 pm, June 23, Home of Julie Henszey

For further details:  
~ Use the QR code

~ <https://tinyurl.com/ClimateEyes>

~ Contact Julie Henszey: 805-657-2793

[juliehenszey@gmail.com](mailto:juliehenszey@gmail.com)



An environmental assessment of the Goerner Project concluded any impact would be insignificant, but the SB Trails Council and many others disagree and have created a petition to change that narrative. The comment period ends on June 19, so time is of the essence. The project envisions a new single-family dwelling, detached guesthouse, grading, and retaining walls on 40 acres. If you agree, sign the petition at: <https://sbtrails.org/SaveHotSpringsTrail>

# Save Hot Springs trail

By Otis Calef, President  
SB Trails Council

We often hear a clarion cry to save this or save that. It is so frequent that, in many situations, we have grown numb to the message and the messenger. The idea of “saving a trail” sounds as silly as a call to save a road—why? Because trails are decades, if not centuries, old and part of a well-established community infrastructure.

Simply put, trails are essential for public health, fitness, and recreation.

Hot Springs Trail in Montecito is not just any trail. It’s a unique journey that people from all over the country embark on to visit a local natural wonder and vital cultural resource. Nestled in the Santa Ynez Mountain foothills, this trail offers a serene walk under a riparian canopy of oaks and sycamores that have bravely withstood the test of fire and floods. It’s a place of solace and beauty, a part of our community’s heritage.

But now, it faces a new, formidable threat.

Envision a proposal to develop a forty-acre parcel west of the hot springs. If this proposal is not met with immediate action, some existing portions of the trail, as we know it, will be irreversibly transformed. A broad layer of asphalt will replace the familiar dirt track, and the majestic trees that have stood tall for so long will be reduced to firewood in the wake of chainsaws and bulldozers.

This is not just a long-term severe change to the trail; it’s an imminent loss of an environmentally sensitive natural habitat that we must urgently act to prevent.

We expect the planning professionals working for government agencies to protect taxpayers’ interests by balancing progress (e.g., a new residence) with the protection of the environment and access to nature. The long-standing California Environmental Quality Act backs this presumption. Should we take it for granted that the agencies will relentlessly keep a riparian habitat green, preserve the character of the public’s right to walk in nature, and protect daily access to a trail punctuated with the natural wonder of hot

springs?

If we believed that to be the current situation, we would take for granted that civil servants recognize the immense importance of trails as public recreational infrastructure for physical and mental health.

Unfortunately, this rarely happens, and it is far from the case with the Goerner Project and the required environmental documents made available to the public on May 7th. The report claims the disruption of recreational trail access for tens of thousands of trail users for over three years, permanently removing the riparian canopy and paving over the natural surface pathway on a scenic segment of the trail, as insignificant and easily mitigated.

The encouraging news is that numerous community organizations are uniting to demand the County and developer provide a focused Environmental Impact Report (EIR) that addresses community concerns, provides adequate notice to trail users, and a public hearing in the evening to allow open public input. However, we cannot succeed alone.

We need everyone who reads this message to sign the Save Hot Springs Trail petition (below). Do not hesitate. The comment period is closes on June 19.

Let’s be clear: the issues we face as supporters of rustic trails and sensitive resources, such as long-term trail closure, barriers to secure new trails, and protecting our environmentally sensitive habitats, are complex and far-reaching.

Yet, the most significant danger stems from the fragmented nature of multi-layered government entities that prioritize self-interest over recognizing the importance of trails and collaborating in an open well-noticed public process.

However, by signing the petition and joining our collective voice, we can change this narrative. Learn more and/or sign here:

<https://sbtrails.org/SaveHotSpringsTrail>  
<https://www.change.org/Save-HotSpringsTrail>

# Legal access coming to Mariano

The green hillsides that rise behind the City of Ventura, privately held and off-limits for so long, will finally allow legal public access in 2025. The work needed to open Mariano preserve to the public has kept Ventura Land Trust (VLT) very busy the past few months.

VLT has conducted property boundary surveys along the preserve’s southern border and is currently developing the parking and service area for the new preserve on Hall Canyon Road, east of Ventura High School. At the same time, it is monitoring natural resources across the property and developing plans to enhance its biological diversity and ecological function.

An evaluation of biological resources, including sensitive species and communities, will help guide the decisions VLT makes about the future use of the preserve, including where trails will be located.

Some “social” trails -- unofficial trails cut by hikers and cyclists -- may be eliminated if they are deemed a problem. Decisions about the construction of new trails will be influenced by the steepness and soil composition of the preserve. As we have seen over the course of a few very wet winters at Harmon Canyon Preserve, trails and roads over our sandy, erosive soils are prone to landslides, sinkholes, ruts, and other public safety concerns.

As a nonprofit organization, VLT must employ best practices in determining the placement of new trails to ensure their long-term sustainability. A well-situated, well-built trail is likely to require less maintenance over time.

VLT has conducted five community meetings as part of the planning process. Recordings of community meetings and a list of Frequently Asked Questions about the project are available at:

[www.venturalandtrust.org/marianoranchopreserve](http://www.venturalandtrust.org/marianoranchopreserve)

It’s not often we get to think about or meaningfully participate in the work of “forever,” and we’d like to invite readers to join us in this endeavor. Thanks to the enthusiastic support of some of VLT’s most dedicated donors, every dollar you contribute to Ventura Land Trust this season, up to \$55,000, will be matched. That is a total of \$110,000 that could be raised toward conservation, but only with your help!



The new bridge connecting Conejo Canyons and Wildwood next to the reclamation plant is now open. Shown are members of the Conejo Hiking Group celebrating the new bridge on Hill Canyon Road in Conejo Open Spaces. They are (from left): Janet Guthrie, Diana White, Vicki Klahn, Niki Stokols, Yvette Berthier-Schaad, Mark Stokols, Jan Delaney and Ellen Sanders. (Photo contributed)

## EAVESDROPS

*“We are the only organization 100 percent devoted to the cultural history of the California islands . . . Saving their history, telling their stories.” said Marla Daily, a firebrand of a historian who’s led the Santa Cruz Island Foundation (SCIF) since Stanton founded it in 1985. “The California Islands: That’s what our mission is.”*

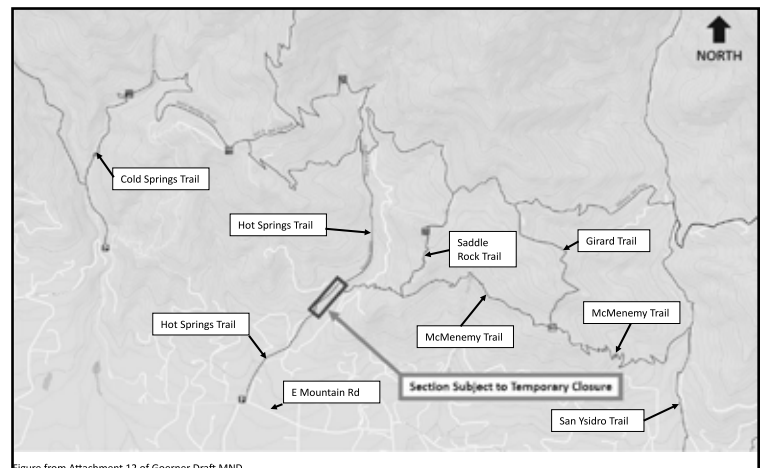


Figure from Attachment 12 of Goerner Draft MND  
This graphic by Sierra Club hike leader Gerry Ching shows the location of the contested Goerner Project.

# Ojai Valley Land Conservancy secures trailhead

After more than two decades of effort the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy (OVLC) is on the verge of permanently protecting the 44 acres of Riverview Trailhead and the riparian scrub habitats below it.

The Redemption Church is to be thanked for enabling OVLC to develop the Riverview Trailhead 10 years ago as one of only three access points to the Ventura River Preserve. With this acquisition, OVLC secures this community amenity forever.

If you’ve spent any time on OVLC’s preserves, you know just how spectacular the Ventura River Preserve is for recreation. It offers 1,600 acres of open space, 18 miles of trail, three miles along the Ventura River, and provides access to its beautiful surrounding canyons and the Los Padres National Forest.

This is a critical moment.

OVLC can now protect this key parcel of land in perpetuity and others, but we need your help. Please consider donating today. Every contribution, no matter the size, brings us one step closer to securing this vital feature of our community. Together, we can make a lasting impact. Donate today at [ovlc.org](http://ovlc.org)

Any donation would also help conserve a total of 246 acres, consisting of the 44 acres at Riverview Trailhead, 20 acres adjacent to the Ventura River Steelhead Preserve and a 170-acre conservation easement on Santa Ana Road



A good look at the Ojai Meadows and the announcement of securing a new trailhead for the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy. (Photo by Nathan Wickstrum)



# SIERRA CLUB

SANTA BARBARA-VENTURA CHAPTER  
P.O. Box 31241  
Santa Barbara, CA 93130-1241

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

## Are trails important?

By Mark Wilkinson  
E.D. SBC Trails Council

For the readers of the *Condor Call*, the answer is a resounding yes. However, it is more challenging to answer why they are essential and how they add value to the community.

I am sure you can agree that trails are vital to recreation in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. They provide opportunities for physical exercise and social interaction. They foster a sense of community as we often share these experiences with others. They pass through scenic areas, historic sites, and diverse ecosystems, allowing us to experience memorable moments in the natural environment.

These trails are not just for us; they are for the health of our ecosystems. They inspire us to take responsibility as stewards for conserving these precious environments.

Despite our region's abundant natural resources, diverse ecosystems, and Mediterranean climate, the trails in Santa Barbara and Ventura County are not receiving the respect and attention they deserve from business organizations and government entities. This neglect is starkly contrasted by the support and funding seen in other parts of the state, as I discovered at the recent California Trails and Greenways Conference. There, I learned about several transformative multi-jurisdictional trail projects that, despite their challenges, had broad support and funding symbolic of what the community valued.

Locally, winter storms are causing more trail damage than we have witnessed in over a decade. Numerous rain events in areas

ravaged by fire have compounded the problem, leaving many trails in a repair queue due to a lack of agency resources. Government entities would address the situation if trails were considered infrastructure with line-item funding.

Recent proposals for long-term trail closures will significantly impact our community's recreational trail use. Closures of three, six, or twelve months affect tens of thousands of trail users, disrupting their physical exercise routines and social interactions. Yet, in many cases, required environmental impact reports claim that these closures have an insignificant impact on recreation and are easily mitigated. This disregard for the community's needs indicates that trails must be recognized as critical public health and recreation infrastructure.

It's time for us to come together and show our decision-makers that trails are not just recreational amenities but critical infrastructure that deserves their attention and protection. More support and funding are needed to ensure the longevity and accessibility of our trails, and we have the power to make that happen.

Let's form an ad hoc coalition to raise awareness of the value and importance of trails to community members, organizations, and agencies. Together, we can foster a sense of widespread appreciation that ensures their continued importance now and for future generations.

Let's talk:  
[mwilkinson@sbtrails.org](mailto:mwilkinson@sbtrails.org)  
Santa Barbara County Trails Council  
[805.708.6173](tel:805.708.6173) | [website](#) | [facebook](#) | [twitter](#) | [instagram](#)



Just ask Al Sladek, who has been leading our Sierra Club hikes for 50 years. Think of that! Some inscriptions included: "Congratulations to our Leading Man," "Al you're an Inspiration," "You have given a great gift to all of us," "Love the hikes," "Thanks for all the happy times," "Wow 50 years," and "You should go for 60"! (Photo by and thanks to Robert Bernstein)

## Hike leader of 50 years!

*Editor's note: Our beloved Al Sladek was honored by so many friends and hike participants at a March event, showing appreciation for his amazing feat (feet?) of leading Sierra Club hikes for 50 years. But before that, in 2018, he was honored by the Santa Barbara Independent as a Local Hero. Here is the Indy's write up:*

**Al Sladek**  
Trail Leader

Al Sladek shows up. Every Friday at 6 pm he steps to the edge of the fountain in front of Santa Barbara Mission to make an announcement. The gathering crowd may be small or large, the weather hot or cold, or somewhere in between. Doesn't matter if it's raining or if darkness has already arrived, as it does this time of year.

It's time to hike, and Sladek is calling out this week's trail, as he has done steadily for the past 44 years, ever since starting this Friday-night offshoot of the Sierra Club's popular Wednesday-night hikes.

By 6:15 p.m., Sladek—an avid jogger who routinely puts in 25 miles weekly—has encouraged hikers to

carpool to the trailhead and hike at their own pace, paired up or in small groups of friends or strangers. "The important thing," he said, "is that everybody has somebody to hike with." And if somebody needs a flashlight, he may have an extra. Sorry, no dogs and no smoking.

Westward on the front county, Arroyo Burro Trail may host the night's hike. Sometimes it's Romero Canyon. Often, it's a popular route in between; he has a handful of favorites. "We head up about an hour and a half and turn around," said the 76-year-old, who ventured from home at 15, served in Vietnam, got an engineering degree from UC Berkeley, and eventually landed at Delco in Goleta.

Coming down the mountain, everybody's encouraged to regroup for pizza downtown and, once a month, back to the Valle Verde senior-living community—where Sladek has lived for the past five years—for a potluck and slideshow.

"I just enjoy hiking and meeting hiking people," he said. "It's just a fun thing to do."