



**SIERRA
CLUB**

SAN GORGONIO

Palm and Pine

A publication of the San Gorgonio Chapter of the Sierra Club
Serving Riverside and San Bernardino Counties

Protect America's Environment For our Families . . . For our Future

Volume 54 Number 6 November-December 2024

We Will be a Force of Nature Defending our Communities and our Planet

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There's no way to soften the blow: a second Trump presidency brings profound challenges. This is a hard moment for many of us, but we are not powerless. As we grieve, we also reaffirm our commitment to protect our communities, defend our future, and fight with everything we have to block Trump's extreme agenda. We must stand together once again.

The movement for a safe, livable world where all communities have clean air, clean water, and sustainable green jobs remains strong. The Sierra Club is part of this resilient, nationwide movement. We are not stopping.

**Sierra Club San Gorgonio Chapter, is in for the long haul.
For More from our Director Joz Sida see page x**



2024 Chapter Awards December 10 at 7:00 pm



We have many dedicated volunteers and partners working with San Gorgonio Chapter to explore, enjoy and protect our region. Let's honor our 2024 Chapter Award winners with a fun evening together, with holiday themed food pot-luck style. Bring your favorite holiday dessert or appetizer for 6-8 people and we'll share our many different traditions this holiday season.

Chapter meetings are held at the San Bernardino County Museum,
Redlands

Featured Outing: San Timoteo Canyon Hike Rated: Easy!



San Timoteo Canyon, State Parks photo public domain

Saturday, November 16th, at 7:00 AM

This is an easy, family-friendly 5-mile out and back trail through the San Timoteo Nature Sanctuary. The trail is mostly flat, only gaining 300 ft. over the course of 5 miles. We will take advantage of the cooler weather and watch as seasons change in our local foothills. LEVEL: EASY

Leader - Rachel Wilkins

Check our website calendar for details on all our upcoming outings! <https://www.sierraclub.org/san-gorgonio>

November Trail Talk: Our Outings Program

Karla Kellems will present an overview of the San Gorgonio Chapter Outings program. She will explain the types of outings led by local outings leaders as well as the benefits (think: fun!) of being an outings leader. Karla will also explain how to become an outings leader, the Leadership Training Course offered, as well as conservation advocacy and education through outings.

Karla Kellems has been a San Gorgonio Chapter outings leader since 2014. She is a member of the Sierra Club National Outings Leadership Training Team, the San Gorgonio Chapter Trail Talk Committee and Outings Leader Training Committee. Karla has served as the Mountains Group Outings Chair since 2017.

Join us for this interactive and informative update via zoom. Register on our website calendar to receive the Zoom link . Our trail Talks are recorded and available to watch on our [YouTube channel](#) at your convenience!



Devil's Backbone, Mt. Baldy, photo by John St. Clair

Your Donations Fuel Our Success! Highlights from 2024

Thanks to donors like you, here are just a few of the things we accomplished in 2024!

With your help, let's see what we can do in 2025!

Explore and Enjoy

- We celebrated 92 years of the San Gorgonio Chapter with our event “Capturing Time” at the Cheech Museum, with over 100 members and supporters. There is still time to add your memory to our time capsule - contact Director Joz Sida at jocelyn.sida@sierraclub.org
- Everyone who attended enjoyed this amazing event and the experience of visiting the Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art and Culture
- Our Outings Leaders planned and led 115 outings ; 648 participants signed up!
- Outings included walks, easy hikes, hikes with dogs, moderate and strenuous hikes, car camping, backpacking, and educational outings.
- New outings leaders were trained and certified
- Outings to advocate for conservation introduced participants to areas we work to protect
- We provided our members and supporters with many opportunities to be in community with one another and enjoy being part of our movement with events at the San Bernardino County Museum

Protect

- We advocated for designation of the Chuckwalla National Monument at events throughout the year
- We helped protect the San Jacinto Wildlife Area from over-development (see article page 13)
- We helped stop Blue Triton from filling plastic water bottles with spring water needed by Strawberry Creek watershed and branding it Arrowhead Water. (under appeal again by Blue Triton)
- We provided expert legal comments on countless proposed warehouse projects and filed lawsuits and won settlement on the worst of them
- We engaged with local community groups to expand our reach and our impact in communities throughout Riverside and San Bernardino Counties



For Their Future!

“
Become a Monthly Donor!
Check **“make my gift monthly”** with your next donation. Consider \$5, \$10, \$20 or more a month - it all helps!
”

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We Couldn't do it Without YOU! Thank you to Our 2024 Donors

Sequoia \$1000+

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Thank you to Our 2024 Donors Cont'd

Every Donation is appreciated! We had hundreds of additional donors sending us \$5, \$25, \$50 or more, so many we can't list them all here. **We thank every one of you!**

Did you notice a * next to some of our donor's names? These folks are our sustainijg monthly donors. Just a few dollars a month, automatically sent from your choice of account, adds up quickly to support our work. Please consider becoming a monthly supporter !

Chapter Elections - What Does the Executive Committee Do?

Volunteer leaders are the heart and soul of Sierra Club. We depend on our volunteers for everything from getting this newsletter out to you, to managing our Chapter budget, setting our priorities and serving our two counties. Every year we hold an election for our Executive Committee, a board of nine people elected from throughout San Bernardino and Riverside Counties to lead this chapter. Read here to see what they do, and **consider joining this team next year!**

The Executive Committee (ExCom) is the representative leadership team for the chapter. ExComs are responsible for their chapter achieving four key outcomes:

1. Advance the Club's Mission

- Achieve conservation objectives that are part of Club-wide priorities
- Achieve conservation objectives specific to your geography / state
- Elect environmental public officials

2 . Provide Service to Members, Supporters and the Public

- Connect people to the outdoors through outdoor activities
- Make current Club / issue information available publicly/online
- Provide meaningful opportunities to take action (online and in-person)
- Connect environmentally-minded people with shared interests
- Educate members and the public about our issues

3. Build Local Resources

- Build & maintain a robust leadership structure (groups/committees/campaigns)
- Involve individual volunteers, activists and participants
- Foster working relationships with other community leaders and organizations
- Build a robust base of local donors

4. Exercise Effective Governance & Fiduciary Oversight

- Establish budgets based on priorities
- ExCom elections
- ExCom meetings
- Financial reporting
- Leader reporting/updates
- Staff management
- Financial management
- Outings safety
- Political & legal compliance
- Proper use of C(3) & C(4) funds
- Standards of conduct

Chapter Directors' Corner

...notes from Joz Sida

Hello Members of our San Gorgonio Sierra Club Chapter,

This year went by so fast. With many ups and downs, and our lives ever changing, we are excited to join a partnership with GRID Alternative and the Electric Truck Research and Utilization Center (eTRUC) Campaign. **We are one out of just 3 organizations that were chosen for this grant.** Goals and objectives of this project include efforts to::

- Advance Research, Development, and Demonstration activities that extend the delivery range of large weight class battery electric trucks beginning with drayage operations
- Engage broad stakeholders with a “Community-First” approach and use input to promote equity and workforce development opportunities in priority communities:

As part of GRID Alternatives’ vision of a transition to clean, renewable energy that includes everyone, they are making electric vehicles, electric vehicle charging and other clean mobility options more accessible to the communities we serve. This effort initially focused on California, in conjunction with investments from the California Air Resources Board (CARB) in low-carbon transportation equity programs, and has expanded to Colorado in partnership with Xcel Energy.

Low-income families in the US spend approximately \$75-\$78 billion every year on gasoline.



Communities of color are disproportionately impacted by pollution from both gasoline consumption and gasoline production, including disproportionate exposure to airborne lead poisoning from the era of leaded gasoline.

By pairing electric vehicles and other modes of transportation with solar power, GRID Alternatives is helping families replace gasoline with sunshine, saving them money and replacing local air pollution with clean energy.*

I just wanted to let you all know that we are working on many big moments for 2025, but the most important thing we are working on is fundraising from different grants, and partnerships. I cannot wait to work with you on a continuous vision so that we can build great partnerships and community.

Best,

Joz Sida

Director, Sierra Club San Gorgonio Chapter

**text beginning from “Goals” is from Grid Alternatives*

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Moreno Valley Group Expands to Become Box Springs Group Moreno Valley + Riverside

Compiled by George Hague and Ann McKibben

As the Moreno Valley Group has expanded to include Riverside to become the Box Springs Group, it seemed fitting to choose our new name because of the panoramic view from the top of Box Springs includes all of Moreno Valley and Riverside.

Election: Please take time to VOTE in our Box Springs Group Executive Committee

(ExCom) fall election found in this issue. Mike McCarthy, Molly Brooke Becker, Summer Davidson, George Hague are the candidates. All Moreno Valley and City of Riverside members are allowed to vote - check zip codes near ballot in this issue for a couple of areas outside the cities.

We hope to have a Box Springs Group membership meeting in the first quarter of 2025 - please join us. If you have any questions about our group, please contact us at movalleygroup@yahoo.com

Two Big Outcomes to share with our Box Springs Group members:

#1 In 2009 the Villages of Lakeview (VOL) was a 11,325 housing unit project on the southern border of the San Jacinto Wildlife Area (SJWA). The San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society (SBVAS) does their Christmas Bird Count in and around the SJWA which places it in the top 1% or 2% of all inland areas in North America for diversity of species. The SJWA serves 25 species of raptors which includes five species of owls. There are also endangered plants and animals that rely on the SJWA. That is why the Sierra Club has been concerned about this project — especially the portion adjacent to the SJWA, north of the Ramona Expressway.

Twenty years ago the Moreno Valley Group and the SBVAS were represented in litigation by the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) and we won. Another version of the VOL was approved in 2017 and our same groups challenged it again and while we lost in the Superior Court we won at the Court of Appeal in 2023.



April 2023 Mystic Lake, SJWA, by George Hague

After the last win we decided to sit down and see if the developer wanted to settle. They were interested and so we focused on protecting the SJWA from the portion of the project north of the Ramona Expressway. As a result of the settlement the final project has 2,600 fewer units with none of them north of the Ramona Expressway, but some commercial development will be allowed. The land adjacent to the SJWA will have permanent agriculture easements and significant money will be provided to the SJWA. This settlement was done by the SBVAS, CBD and our Box Springs Group. SJWA is such a great natural resource for Riverside and Moreno Valley area members.

#2 We have been challenging and litigating the almost 200,000 sq foot Moreno Valley Business Park warehouse for about three years. The project would have been at the southeast corner of Ironwood Avenue and Heacock Street. Their trucks would have passed near family homes on Ironwood Avenue and made the Heacock Street Interchange even more difficult. Thanks to our attorney Abigail (Abby) Smith, the developer stopped trying to defend his Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) in court which became a win for our Box Springs Group. We expect the developer to do what he should have from the beginning—a complete environmental impact report.

January 2024
SJWA, by
George Hague



Settlement Protects San Jacinto Wildlife Area

The Box Springs Group (cities of Moreno Valley and Riverside) just joined with the San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society (SBVAS) and the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) who represented us to settle future challenges to the Villages of Lakeview (VOL) housing project. The Sierra Club is not opposed to housing developments, but a large portion of the VOL was adjacent to the southern border of the very special San Jacinto Wildlife Area (SJWA). Thanks to CBD we won our 2009 case against the 11,350 unit VOL and again in 2017 with a new version of the VOL they represented us again. While they lost in Superior Court they won in 2023 at the Court of Appeal.



San Jacinto Wildlife Area, photo by George Hague

. Over time a couple of million dollars will be provided to help acquire habitat in and around the SJWA. Funding of \$65,000 annually in perpetuity will be provided for conservation at the SJWA. Funding of \$50,000 annually is included for stewardship programs related to mitigating the project and impacts to the SJWA. A significant number of native trees will be planted to shield any commercial development from the SJWA. The settlement will also reduce night lighting and pesticide use.

The SBVAS is having an all day birding Field Trip later this month on Sunday November 17th at the SJWA and nearby lands with one of their best leaders — you may leave during the day at anytime. You will be walking and carpooling to certain special spots to enjoy many species of birds. Find all the information about this trip on the [SBVAS website here](#) or contact leader [Tony Metcalf](#) at (951) 242-7038



Great Egret

The San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society (SBVAS) does their Christmas Bird Count in and around the SJWA which places it in the top 1% or 2% of all inland areas in North America for diversity of species because they usually spot more than 135 different species. The 10,000 acre Davis unit of the SJWA serves 25 species of raptors which includes five species of owls. There are also endangered plants and animals that rely on the SJWA.

After our 20 years of campaign and litigation with this massive project we have reached a settlement that eliminates all housing adjacent to the SJWA and has permanent agriculture in their place - more than 230 acres. This also resulted in at least 2,600 fewer units with their possible pets impacting the SJWA.



Cooper's Hawk, just one of the 25 species of raptors you might see at SJWA

2024 Chapter & Group Elections

Each year, our members elect leaders for the Chapter Executive Committee. This committee is made up of 9 at-large, elected members, who serve 2-year terms. Each group has one representative appointed by the group as a voting member, for a 16-member board.

The Executive Committee is the representative leadership team for the chapter, and is responsible for four key outcomes:

- Advance the Club's Mission
- Provide service to members, supporters and the public
- Build Local Resources
- Exercise Effective Governance and Fiduciary Oversight.

The ExComm makes decisions regarding chapter priorities - where do we direct our energy and resources. Running for ExComm is an excellent way to share your skills, knowledge and commitment to Sierra Club and our communities here in Riverside and San Bernardino County. Next year, consider running for a seat at this table!

Candidate statements are published here along with the ballots. Be sure to Vote!

Two Ways to Vote:

Mail in voting: Vote by cutting out the ballot for ExComm and for your group, and choosing no more than the number listed on each ballot. Joint members each have a ballot. Mail your ballot to Sierra Club San Gorgonio Chapter, PO Box 5425, Riverside, CA 92517

OnLine voting: visit myaccount.sierraclub.org and follow the instructions for voting.

Have your member number ready - you can find it on your Palm and Pine address label, your Sierra Magazine address label, or your membership card.

If you can't find your member number or have any difficulty with setting up your vote, email ruizmaryann@gmail.com or Jocelyn.sida@sierraclub.org and we'll help you get your vote in! .

Chapter and Group Election Ballot

All Chapter members are eligible to vote in the Chapter Executive Committee election. Group elections are limited to members in the group geography: if you are unsure about your group call the office at 951-684-6203 and leave a message

Do I have a Single or Joint membership? The mailing label on this newsletter will indicate whether your household has a single ("SNGL") or joint ("JNT") membership. This will be found above your name and before your 8-digit membership number. Examples: JNT 12345678 = Joint membership, Membership number (8-digits). SNGL 12345678 = Single membership, Membership number (8-digits).

Vote online or mail your ballot **no later than**

Online: Check our website for voting instructions after Nov 15.

BY MAIL: to assure confidential voting, write your membership number on the outside of your mailing envelope (below your return address is a good place). Your membership number is required to verify voting eligibility. Your membership number is the eight (8) digit number on your mailing label on this publication. (Adding your number on the envelope keeps your votes confidential.)

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Group Executive Committee Ballots

Mail your ballots along with Chapter ExCom Ballot to Sierra Club, PO Box 5425, Riverside, CA 92571. Be sure to write your membership number on the outside of the envelope. Find your number in the address field on this newsletter or call our office at 951-684-6203

Box Springs Group Executive Committee

Vote for 4 or fewer

<input type="checkbox"/> Mike McCarthy
<input type="checkbox"/> Molly Brooke Becker
<input type="checkbox"/> Summer Davidson
<input type="checkbox"/> George Hague

(first ballot)

<input type="checkbox"/> Mike McCarthy
<input type="checkbox"/> Molly Brooke Becker
<input type="checkbox"/> Summer Davidson
<input type="checkbox"/> George Hague

(second ballot - joint member)

Box Springs Group includes all zip codes in the cities of Moreno Valley and Riverside, and some unincorporated areas. If you are in either of these cities you can vote. For the new areas, If your zip code is in Zip Codes: 92501, 92502, 92503, 92504, 92505, 92506, 92507, 92508, 92513, 92514, 92516, 92517, 92518, 92519, 92521 and 92522, you can vote in this group.

Mail your ballot to Sierra Club San Gorgonio Chapter, PO Box 5425, Riverside, CA 92517

Tahquitz Group Executive Committee

Vote for 3 or fewer

<input type="checkbox"/> Gary Gray
<input type="checkbox"/> Noel Ragsdale
<input type="checkbox"/> Joan Taylor

(first ballot)

<input type="checkbox"/> Gary Gray
<input type="checkbox"/> Noel Ragsdale
<input type="checkbox"/> Joan Taylor

(second ballot - joint member)

Mail your ballot to Sierra Club San Gorgonio Chapter, PO Box 5425, Riverside, CA 92517

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San Bernardino Mountains Group Executive Committee

Vote for 4 or fewer

Steve Farrell
 Bob Sherman
 Marianne Gomes
 Karla Kellems

(first ballot)

Steve Farrell
 Bob Sherman
 Marianne Gomes
 Karla Kellems

(second ballot - joint member)

Mail your ballot to Sierra Club Mountains Group Elections PO Box 651, Blue Jay, CA 92317

Los Serranos Group Executive Committee

Vote for 3 or fewer

John St. Clair
 Mary Ann Ruiz

(first ballot)

John St. Clair
 Mary Ann Ruiz

(second ballot - joint member)

Mail your ballot to Sierra Club San Gorgonio Chapter, PO Box 5425, Riverside, CA 92517

Big Bear Group Executive Committee

Vote for 3 or fewer

Judy Atkinson
 Ed Wallace
 Ellen Kesler

(first ballot)

Judy Atkinson
 Ed Wallace
 Ellen Kesler

(second ballot - joint member)

Mail to: Sierra Club Big Bear Group, PO Box 3048
Big Bear Lake, CA 92315

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Santa Margarita Group Executive Committee

Vote for 3 or fewer

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Margaret Meyncke | <input type="checkbox"/> Cathy Peterson
<input type="checkbox"/> Thamar Draper |
|---|---|

(first ballot)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Margaret Meyncke | <input type="checkbox"/> Cathy Peterson
<input type="checkbox"/> Thamar Draper |
|---|---|

(second ballot - joint member)

Mail your ballot to Sierra Club San Gorgonio Chapter, PO Box 5425, Riverside, CA 92517

Mojave Group Executive Committee

Vote for 3 or fewer

- | |
|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Norm Bossom |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bryan Baker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jeff Cooper |

(first ballot)

Vote for 3 or fewer

- | |
|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Norm Bossom |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bryan Baker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jeff Cooper |

(second ballot - joint member)

Mail your ballot to Sierra Club San Gorgonio Chapter PO Box 5425, Riverside, CA 92517

Support Your Passion for a Just and Sustainable World

Create a legacy that protects and restores the natural world for future generations by naming Sierra Club's San Gorgonio Chapter in your will or trust. Or, name Sierra Club Foundation as the beneficiary of your retirement plan for the benefit of your local chapter and leave less highly taxed assets to your loved ones.



To learn more about the advantages of making a planned gift and to become a member of the Rachel Carson Society, please contact us.



Julia Curtis • (800) 932-4270 • giftplanning@sierraclub.org • myplan.sierraclub.org



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San Gorgonio Chapter Executive Committee

vote for 6 or fewer

Ladd Seekins

Enrique FLOres

Ladd Seekins

Enrique FLOres

Summer Davidson

Juliann Anderson

Summer Davidson

Juliann Anderson

Karla Cervantes

Rachel Wilkin

Karla Cervantes

Rachel Wilkin

(first ballot)

(second ballot - joint member)

Mail your ballot to Sierra Club San Gorgonio Chapter, PO Box 5425, Riverside, CA 92517

New ExCom Candidates

We are thrilled to welcome four new leaders to our Executive Committee election.

- Enrique (Henry) Flores has been in leadership with the San Bernardino Mountains Group for several years, and is now willing to move into a Chapter leadership role.
- Rachel Wilkin is an Outings Leader and active on the ExCom for Los Serranos Group, as well as assisting with our Outings Leader training programs and presenting at Trail Talks
- Summer Davidson from Riverside has been involved in Riverside, assisting with our fundraising efforts and taking on some of the planning for our recent Capturing Time event. Summer will also lead with the newly expanded Box Springs Group ExCom
- Karla Cervantes is the the founder of Mead Valley Coalition for Clean Air and a cofounder of Inland Valley Alliance for Environmental Justice. She has held leadership roles in other local community organizations Perris Neighbors in Action and Rural Association of Mead Valley. Karla has experience with fundraising, event planning and will bring her community organizing skills to our group

We have two incumbents running:

- Ladd Seekins has served as our Chapter Treasurer for years; he has been Chair in the past as well as serving on ExCom for years. He was termed out for a year due to our term limits rules and we are happy to welcome him back to ExCom.
- Juliann Anderson was appointed to fill out a term in 2023, and is willing to run for another 2 year term. She is our Outings Co-Chair with Dave Melton, and has taken on the challenge of continuing and expanding on the program led for over 30 years by our retired Chair Ralph Salisbury.

You could be here next year! We are always on the lookout for passionate and engaged leaders who are willing to take on the challenge of leading San Gorgonio Chapter into its 100th year in 2032!

Palm and Pine

Dear San Gorgonio Family,

2024 will leave a mark in our lives. For me, it will leave a mark of need and hope mixed together. The need to roll up my sleeves and work harder than ever before. I have done this before. The difference now will be that I will not be in Survival Mode anymore. I do not want us to be in survival mode anymore. I mean it. I came into this role not knowing who all was part of the impact the chapter was making in the region. I have been blown away, I have learned and connected with some amazing people who make up this organization. All of us from different backgrounds and different experiences, connected by an organization that cares about protecting the environment around us. That is why I am here. With you. No matter what, I always will be.

I have cared deeply about the environment since I was a little girl. I figured out how intersectional the issues were around the social injustice that connected all of it. From where people lived, to what we ate, to access to insightful education that challenged my brain growth through my pivotal years. Everything and everyone is connected. We are more connected now than ever before. As we move forward and onward, we have to walk with our heads held high. We must use our knowledge to create positive change. We must be proactive and take action to create a better future for everyone. We must work together to create a better world. I know we can. We had a great start and we must not lose sight of that. We must stay strong, stay focused and never give up.

Together, we can create a better tomorrow. I know I can and I will, especially with your support and willingness to keep working hard together and connecting our diverse communities with nature. Continuing to protect our open spaces, and standing in connection with our hearts and our values.

In my role as your Chapter Director, I have a vision of a life where everyone is empowered to create a more just world. I strive to create an inclusive environment that values everyone's uniqueness and encourages collaboration. I remain committed to taking meaningful action to create meaningful, lasting change. With your support, I know we can create a brighter future. A world where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. A world where everyone is respected and appreciated.

I grew up knowing I was different. Spanish was my first language. I learned English by reading, writing, making mistakes and learning from them. I listened to music and watched movies to build up my vocabulary. I became my High School Debate Captain and a recognized debater across the country. I learned to use the power of my voice and my lived experiences to connect with people from all backgrounds, from all walks of life, from different decades, and from different beliefs. I found strength in my own unique story and the courage to share it with the world. I realized that my story could be a source of strength and hope to others.

My connection with nature has led to my work and my journey to social justice. This journey has given me a greater sense of purpose and a desire to make a positive impact on the issues I believe need a platform to be heard. I want to continue to connect the issues because they are all faced together daily. I believe that by standing up for what is right, we can create a stronger and thoughtful future for all. As we move to a future of what most feel is unknown, we must strive to create a more equitable and sustainable world. We can work together to ensure that all voices are heard and to create a better tomorrow.

We must take action everyday to create a better community here and now. This starts with us at the San Gorgonio Chapter of the Sierra Club.

**In Solidarity,
Joz Sida**



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**Send your contribution
today to celebrate nearly a
century of work.**

Sierra Club San Gorgonio
Chapter
P. O. Box 5425, Riverside,
CA 92517-5425



San Bernardino Mountains, with Mt. San Gorgonio in the background

Contact us: San Gorgonio Chapter Website: <https://sangorgonio.sierraclub.org>



Editor

Shelby Reeder
shelbydreeder@gmail.com

Chapter Chair

Mary Ann Ruiz
chair@sangorgonio.sierraclub.org
909.215.9379

Chapter Director

Joz (Jocelyn) Sida
jocelyn.sida@sierraclub.org
773.627.0229

The outings and event calendar is at our website:
<http://sangorgonio.sierraclub.org>

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