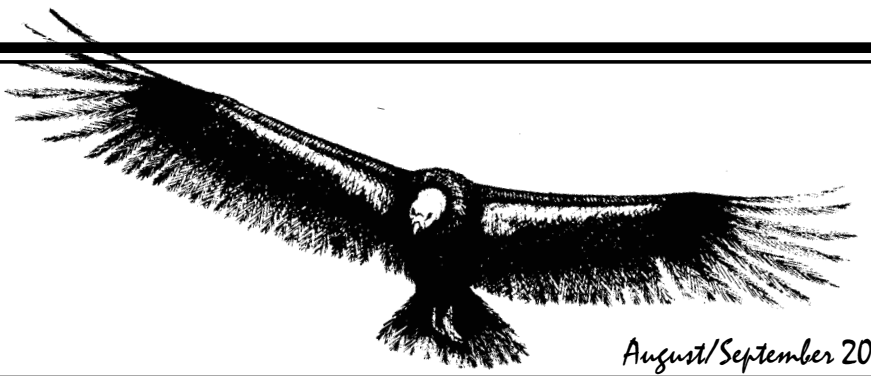


Condor Call

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



August/September 2004

EL CAPITAN CANYON

Chapter appeals camps

By John Hankins

The Los Padres Chapter has appealed the expansion of El Capitan Canyon campsites, asserting a full environmental impact analysis is needed.

"We are baffled that there has been so little discussion and so little opposition," wrote Ada Babine, secretary of the chapter, in the appeal.

There is a whole lot more to the story, as the Sierra Club's long-time coast watcher, Mark Massara, is a staunch supporter of the project and is working as a consultant to owner Roger Himovitz. He has the club's permission via a "conflict waiver agreement," meaning in no way does it limit the ability of the chapter to appeal.

Members of the Sierra Club may be gratified to know that "national defers to the locals in this situation," commented Ariana Katovich, the Sierra Club's Gaviota Coast Campaign organizer. She has taken no official position, but called for a closer look at environmental impacts while praising Massara and the landowner for working toward solutions.

Also, a permit would legalize music concerts that have been running for the last few years, attended by both overnight guests and visitors.

Although the situation could be a morass, all parties agree improvements are needed, especially as the previous permit had no limits on the

number of people that could be crammed into the canyon and along the creek.

A major problem is that up to 275 campsites in the canyon proper are "vested," meaning the owner can ignore more stringent environmental standards and by rights may not require a full environmental impact.

Massara said the ability to improve that situation, by reducing impacts ranging from thousands of daily visitors and guests to sewage and habitat protection, drew him to the project. "Roger's tried to create something for everyone," Massara said, adding "I embrace his vision," which includes expensive upgrades for better sewage disposal and habitat restoration.

The alternative could be much worse, he warned, especially if sold.

A hearing is set for Aug. 17 at the Board of Supervisors' hearing room in Santa Barbara.

Located across the freeway from El Capitan State Beach, the Canyon since 1970 had been a primitive and seasonal operation that had no limits on guests who could set up their RVs or tents just about anywhere. Sewage disposal, trash, fire danger and a whole host of other impacts were rather loose compared to modern standards.

When Himovitz and former partner Chuck Blitz bought the property from Texaco in 2000, major improvements were made to turn it

into a more upscale camping ground, complete with cabins, running water and maid service (see story on page 6).

But the loss of "traditional camping opportunities" bothered the Appeal... page 6

Open space sales tax gets support

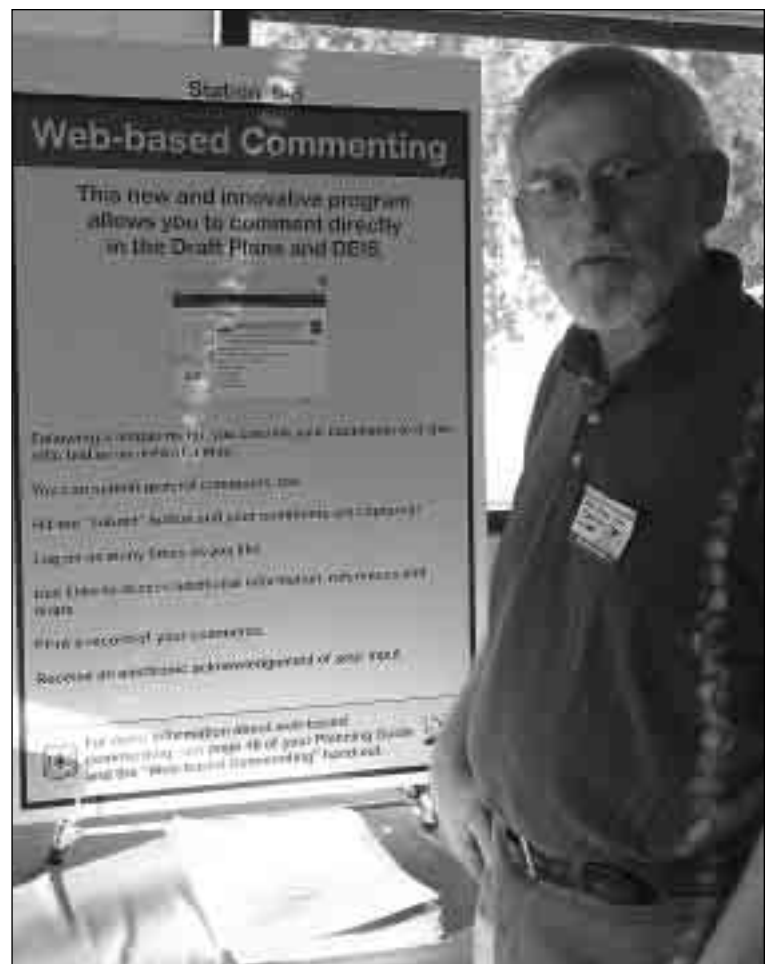
The Ventura County Open Space Alliance (COSA) is a broad-based county-wide effort to assure the passage of Measure A on November 2 ballot.

The Los Padres Chapter has endorsed the COSA effort.

The measure establishes an Open Space District that will purchase parkland, open space and agricultural conservation easements to permanently preserve farmland between our cities. It would add a small quarter-cent to the sales tax for a limit of 10 years, and would be able to leverage more money via state and federal grants.

The effort is also supported by Save Our Agricultural Resources supporters, notably Supervisor Steve Bennett.

To help out in the effort, call COSA at 653-0061 or log onto: www.venturacosa.org



Public comment on the Los Padres Forest Plan is now as easy as pointing and clicking on an area you want to talk about (see story on page 5). Ron Pugh, Forest Service team leader who helped devise the "place-based method," is rightly proud of those improvements. (Photo by John Hankins)

Birds of Hollywood may affect project

By Al Sanders

Protection efforts by volunteers have been rewarded by the news that the population of nesting least terns at Hollywood Beach in Ventura County has expanded to more than 50 nests.

Many volunteers, including Los Padres Chapter members, are helping to protect both the snowy plovers and least terns, and the increased nesting has gone a long way towards settling any debate about the potential habitat value of Hollywood Beach.

"We have had birds nesting all the way from near the jetty at the entrance to the harbor all the way up the beach to Channel Islands," said Dr. Jon Ziv, who discovered the nesting birds at Hollywood Beach.

The return of these federally protected birds is considered to be an extremely important step towards eventual recovery of each species because the trend in recent years has been towards loss of habitat areas.

"Terns and plovers have reclaimed this area as their habitat," said Ziv, "All we're doing is to try to put up signs and a perimeter to protect their nest sites."

Additional assistance came when area residents Casey Burns and Lorie Baker helped form the group Habitat for Hollywood Beach to provide immediate protection for the birds during the July 4 fireworks display, but more importantly to develop a long range plan to protect the habitat.

Hollywood Beach became an issue for the Chapter when the environmental review for the Boating Instruction and Safety Center, pro-

posed by the Channel Islands Harbor District, failed to identify the full extent and habitat values of the beach areas for the federally protected birds.

The Chapter has joined with the Beacon Foundation in appealing project approvals to the Coastal Commission to protect the area.

The Commission sided with the Club in its appeal by instructing Ventura County to amend its Public Works Plan for the Harbor, a process that would allow for important habitat issues to receive more attention.

The County's initial response was to threaten the Commission with litigation, but it has since agreed to pursue it.

The Los Padres Chapter will use the delay as an opportunity to educate the County about the habitat values and the need to incorporate protection into any further plans for the BISC.

Volunteers can contact: habitatforhollywoodbeach@yahoo.com

Web of Youth

The Sierra Club has a whole program devoted to getting youth involved in the environment.

The effort has now been bolstered by a website dedicated to youth. Check it out at: sierraclub.org/youthservice.

COVER PHOTO

The historic Faser Cold Spring Ranch (mile 18.5) at the junction of Highway 33 and Sespe Creek existed before the road. See the story on this magical and historic route from Ojai to Cuyama on page 7. (Photo by Jeanine Moret)



The "cheap seats" of El Capitan Canyon's expansion plan (at arrow) is along the Calle Real frontage road opposite the 101 freeway from El Capitan State Beach. Plans call for 100 RV and car camp sites. (Photo by John Hankins)

Dam report weighs risks, benefits

It's going to take three years and at least \$130 million to get rid of the 198-foot high Matilija Dam, according to a new report that also shows it's not a simple project.

The draft environmental analysis reveals potential flooding along the Ventura River unless temporary levees are built. Also, protecting water quality of Lake Casitas would require diverting silt and debris and might require a filtering system.

Despite the engineering prob-

lems, stakeholders believe the risk is worth it. Supporters range from federal and local agencies to recreation and environmental groups.

"Removal of Matilija Dam offers the opportunity to return millions of tons of sand to Ventura beaches" noted Paul Jenkin, coordinator for Matilija Coalition, a grass-roots group that has been striving for years to get the dam removed.

"Not only will this help to restore the shoreline, but it will save the tax-

payers millions of dollars now spent to simulate the work that would be done naturally if the dam weren't there," he said. Return of steelhead trout to the river could also occur.

The public can comment on the plan through August. Primary impacts would occur along the river parallel to Highway 33 from Ojai to the ocean.

Further information is available through the project web site www.matilijadam.org

ARROYO HONDO PRESERVE

See Gaviota fire aftermath

Now is a great time to visit the Arroyo Hondo Preserve to see the remarkable contrast between the natural beauty of the canyon and the relative austerity caused by the Gaviota Fire in June.

The fire burned only the west side of the canyon, thanks to the valiant efforts of firefighters. The historic adobe, barn, beautiful stream corridor and east side of the canyon were spared. You can observe first-hand the natural phenomenon of fire regeneration which has already begun on the burned areas.

You can also visit the beach or walk the creek-side trail where the

path follows the margin of the fire—ash on one side and lush plants on the other. Climb the western ridge to enjoy beautiful coastal and mountain views and an overview of the fire area.

The Arroyo Hondo Preserve is open to the public the first and third weekends of each month by advance reservation only. Self guided hiking is free. Excellent docent-led hikes are offered the first Saturday and third Sunday of each month for a \$5 donation.

The Preserve is located on the Gaviota Coast and run by the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County.

Preserve volunteers are always needed—no experience necessary. Habitat restoration meets the first Sunday of each month and trail maintenance the third Saturday of each month, both from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. All tools are provided. Bring your lunch to enjoy a picnic together afterwards and stay up until 3 p.m. closing time.

To make reservations to visit or volunteer, call the Preserve Hotline at 567-1115 or email arroyohondo@sblandtrust.org

Volunteer inquiries may also be emailed to the coordinator of volunteers, Jane Murray, at volunteer@sblandtrust.org



The Gaviota Fire stripped just one side of the Arroyo Hondo Preserve, making it an excellent time to visit to see the contrast between a lush canyon and bare hills. (Photo by Ray Ford)



Volunteers help clean up the Arroyo Hondo Preserve after the Gaviota Fire. (AHP photo submitted)

Flying humans scaring birds

By Al Sanders

Endangered wildlife at Ormond Beach in the City of Oxnard is experiencing an unprecedented assault from a new direction—above.

Motorized paragliders and ultralight aircraft have descended upon this area en masse to scare and harass nesting California least terns, western snowy plovers and other wildlife.

Allegations of repeated violations of both state and federal endangered species acts have been made to the city of Oxnard, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other agencies by the Los Padres Chapter, among others.

The paragliders, who account for most of the threatening activities, first appeared in substantial numbers in the summer of 2003. These numbers swelled in 2004 as the paraglider operators discovered the Ormond area after being refused use in other areas.

The gliders fly low, just a few feet above the surface at nesting sites and other areas throughout the Ormond wetlands and coastal dunes.

Biologist Reed Smith, who has the job of monitoring snowy plovers in Ventura County, reported that he observed nesting plovers taking defensive action and leaving their nests when the paragliders flew overhead.

Juliana Krolak, the monitor for least terns, said that almost every time she arrived at the nesting area, the birds flew up to try to chase away the aircraft.

The constant need to leave their nests creates the prospect of eggs becoming sterile from either cold or heat, thus violating the Endangered Species Act.

Ironically, the paragliders are using land owned by the California Coastal Conservancy that was purchased to protect biological resources as their staging area.

Some environmentalists, like Point Mugu Wildlife Center Director Dan Pearson, believe the simplest solution is for property owners to take action.

Now Oxnard is poised to pass an ordinance prohibiting take-offs and landings on beaches and wetlands within the city. Additional discussions on prohibitions are being discussed with the FAA.

The prohibitions, however, have created apprehension to residents of Hueneme Beach, Hollywood Beach and other residents who don't want the aircraft diverted to their neighborhoods.

The urgency of taking action has surfaced with reports that the numbers of snowy plovers has fallen to half of what it was last year while the population of nesting least terns has completely collapsed.

"Least terns seem to have abandoned their traditional nest site at Ormond in perhaps the largest violation of the Endangered Species Act to have been witnessed in Ventura County," said Pearson. "This has set back the collective efforts of everyone who has worked to protect Ormond wildlife by at least 15 years."

Meanwhile, the paraglider operators are not without their defenders. Several pilots spoke to the Oxnard City Council on July 20 claiming that the birds are given too much protection and should be delisted, and denial of any disturbance.

EAVESDROPS

"Maybe if they started hiring engineers instead of lawyers, the Goleta Sanitary District board might manage to institute full secondary treatment at the wastewater plant in a timely fashion."

—Goleta Valley Voice editorial, pointing out that GSD has for decades discharged effluent into the ocean "that does not meet current . . . standards."

Suits filed over LNG

The two proposed offshore LNG facilities were opposed by the Oxnard City Council in July, despite some business advocates asking them to wait until the environmental impact analysis is out.

In a related issue that could affect the local plans, the state of California has sued the federal government, asserting that the state must have review and permitting power. The Bush Administration through the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is attempting to push Liquid Natural Gas development in Long Beach without first allowing for state review, which could set a dramatic precedent.

A suit has also been filed by the Western States Petroleum Association asserting that the Coastal Commission has no authority to regulate waste discharges beyond the three-mile limit, which would also affect the 22 platforms currently off the state's coast.

The competing offshore Ventura proposals include Crystal Energy asking to use Platform Grace to offload LNG from tankers and transport it to Oxnard, while BHP Billiton is proposing a floating port about 21 miles from Oxnard. The city of Malibu has also opposed the plans as the floating port is only 14 miles from its shore.

The Coast Guard is preparing the environmental analysis, a draft of which is expected sometime in the fall.

Comment on oil leases

Five oil companies that pay for 36 undeveloped leases offshore Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo want to either develop them or force taxpayers to compensate them.

Meanwhile, the industry is asking to suspend the leases for almost three years to gain time to determine whether or not the resources

are worth pursuing. The public has the right to comment on the required environmental assessment.

The comment deadline is Aug. 26. Public input will determine the relevant issues, alternatives and mitigation measures.

The Environmental Defense Center is urging the public to support a more complete analysis.

"Piecemeal review cannot change the fact that continuing the life of these leases will impact our environment and economy. Since the leases were sold (between 1968 and 1984), two Marine Sanctuaries have been established and many marine species have been listed as endangered and threatened," said Linda Krop, EDC attorney.

For detailed information, go to: mms.gov/omm/pacific/lease/2004_sco ping.htm

Comments on the potential impacts of these extensions can be submitted by letter to: Minerals Management Service, Attn: Suspension-EA, 770 Paseo Camarillo, Camarillo CA, 93010 or emailed to: suspension-EA@mms.gov

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Photos, news, tips always welcome!

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 or address.changes@sierraclub.org or call (415) 977-5500
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 David Gold (vice-chair), 642-7748
 Roger Zimmerman, 928-4908, razimmer@earthlink.net
 Mike Stubblefield, 988-0339
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 You can help protect the environment by joining Sierra Club's fast-growing **Home Lobbying Network**. When you return this card, your name will be added to our lists and indexed according to your Congressional and State Legislative districts. When pro-environment votes from YOUR representatives are needed, we will call on you to contact them. Participation in this grassroots effort is simple and VERY, VERY effective.

Name _____
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(Please return this coupon to Home Lobbying Network, 3345 Wilshire Blvd., #508, Los Angeles, California 90010-1816.)
 (Source: Los Padres Chapter)



Outings Schedule

Los Padres Chapter — Sierra Club
www.sierraclub.org/chapters/lospadres



Conditions

A number of campgrounds and roads in Los Padres National Forest are closed or have restricted (no autos) access due to protection of habitats and species or are under repair. Before you go into the local backcountry, it's a good idea to check conditions with rangers. Numbers to call (unless noted, all 805 area code):

Los Padres National Forest Districts:
 Headquarters 968-6640
 Ojai Dist. 646-4348
 Mt. Pinos (661) 245-3731
 Santa Barbara 967-3481
 Santa Lucia 925-9538

Other Areas:

Santa Monica Mts. Area 370-2301
 Conejo Parks 381-2737
 Simi Valley 584-4400
 Montecito 969-3514

Forest Notes

For updated information, news releases, maps, and many other goodies, go to Los Padres National Forest website:

www.r5.fs.fed.us/lospadres

Public's Forest

Best website run by citizens of the Los Padres Forest Association, with info as varied as wildflower alerts, trailwork opportunities and factious issues, welcomes your input too:

www.lpforest.org

Outing Notes

The two letter abbreviation at the end of each outing is a key to the group who has organized the outing.

AR—Arguello Group

CJ—Conejo Group

SB—Santa Barbara Group

SP—Sespe Group

WLA—West LA (Angeles Chapter)

All phone numbers are in area code (805) unless otherwise noted.

The public is welcome at all outings listed, unless otherwise specified. Please bring drinking water to all outings and optionally a lunch. Study footwear is recommended. If you have questions contact the leader listed. Pets are generally not allowed. A parent or responsible adult must accompany children under the age of 14.

A frequently updated listing of all outings can be viewed at: <http://lospadres.sierraclub.org>. This website also contains links to the Group web pages.

August 7

LOPEZ LAKE HIKE/WATERSLIDES: Enjoy the Lopez Lake waterslides in the morning, have lunch, then hike the Turkey Ridge and Blackberry Springs trails (2 mi. loop, 420 ft. elev. gain). Meet at the Lompoc Pizza Hut parking lot at 8:30am. Bring lunch, water, and money for waterslides, carpool gas, and entrance fees. **CONNIE 735-2292 (AR)**

THREE POOLS BEYOND SEVEN FALLS: Primitive trail, some rock climbing. Bring swimsuit. Diffi-

Ongoing Outings

Every Monday morning

Join Elizabeth Budworth and Patricia Jump every Monday morning at 8:30 a.m. for moderate walks in the Ventura and Ojai areas. Now in its seventh year, the walks last about two hours and the group sometimes goes for coffee afterward. CALL 643-0270 or 642-6971.

Every Wednesday

URBAN EVENING HIKE: Weekly urban hike in Ventura meeting at 6:45 pm for a 4 mile hike up the hill to Father Serra's cross with view of sunset over the ocean and the Channel Islands, then down the hill to the ocean and walk to end of pier, then along beach promenade to mouth of Ventura River. Meet at the fountain across the street from the San Buenaventura Mission. **DAVE RIVAS 701-2466**

Tuesday Evenings

HIKES: Short, easy 90-min. hikes at Surf Beach, the Mission, Miguelito Canyon, or other spots near Lompoc (approx. 3 miles) Novice hikers will find these hikes to be a good introduction to group hiking. Meet in the parking lot behind the Lompoc Civic Center Pool by 6:25 pm for carpool to hike location. Wear walking shoes and bring a flashlight. Rain cancels. **VERN 733-2903 or DEAN 736-6685. (AR)**

Every Friday

SOCIAL HIKE: An easy-to-moderate 2-4-mrt night hike in Santa Barbara front country, beach, or back roads. Meet at 6:15 p.m. at the Old Mission. Bring a flashlight. Optional potluck or pizza afterward. **AL SLAYDEK (SB)**

Sunday Afternoons

CONEJO GROUP is leading a special series of Sunday Afternoon Hikes approximately twice a month. These hikes are geared to the interests of individuals or families who wish to take a 2-3-hr. walk in the outdoors with frequent stops to examine or study wildlife and the ecology. Exercise is of secondary concern. The hikes are not intended to be strenuous, but may entail some ascending of hills or walking on rocks. No pets or radios. **TOM MAXWELL, 492-2184 (CJ)**

Monthly Programs

ARGUELLO GROUP: Slide shows, speakers, and movies—third Friday of each month. Inquire for details: 928-3598. (AR)

COMMUNITY SERVICE: Help keep Highway 1 beautiful. Adopt-a-Highway trash pickup from the Lompoc 'Wye' to the Base boundary. Meet at Vandenberg Village Shopping Center parking lot at 9 a.m. on the fourth Saturday of odd-numbered months. Rain cancels. For information contact Connie (805) 735-2292.

San Luis Obispo Outings

THERE ARE MANY south San Luis Obispo County outings planned monthly that should interest Los Padres Chapter members and the public. They include hikes, bike trips, campouts, trail riding with horses, kayaking Avila and Morro bays, and treks through the Nipomo Dunes area. For a detailed schedule, call or write to Bill Deneen at (805) 929-3647, or write to 1040 Cielo Lane, Nipomo 93444.

Trail named for Michael Clark

A trail has been named after Michael F. Clark, the only Simi Valley policeman ever killed in the line of duty.

The Michael Clark Memorial Overlook Trail is located near Los Angeles Avenue and Stearns Street and is part of open space that Parker Ranch developers donated to the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District.

Clark was killed in 1995 by a suicidal man wielding a gun.

cut but short 5 mrt. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. **ALEX 898-1240 (SB)**

August 8

WEST FORK COLD SPRINGS TO LOOKOUT: Start on Cold Springs Trail, cross stream and hike west up to Lookout above Tangerine Falls. Moderate, but sometimes steep 4 mrt. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. **ROBERT 685-1283 (SB)**

August 9

Monday Morning Walk - Carpool Lot: Start the week off with an invigorating 5 mrt walk in our local areas (beach or hillside). Optional coffee/snack after hike. Meet 8:30am at Ventura carpool lot. **ELIZABETH 642-6971 & PAT 643-0270 (SP)**

August 14

POTLUCK HIKE AT POINT SAL ROAD: Moderate hike with uphill most the way to our lunch destination and mostly downhill on the way back (5 mrt, 1500 ft elev. gain). Bring a daypack with food to share, as well as a plate, utensils, and water for yourself. Meet at the Lompoc Pizza Hut parking lot at 9am or at the intersection of Brown and Point Sal Roads at 9:30am. Hikes change, always contact the leader. **PEGGY 733-2340 (AR)**

MISSION RIDGE: Hike from Rattlesnake Canyon, up the connector trail to Tunnel Trail and then up a primitive trail to the top of a ridge. Primitive trail, steep at times and some boulder hopping. Moderately strenuous 7 mrt. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. **DIANE 687-1929 (SB)**

August 15

SHORELINE PARK PICNIC AND BEACH WALK: Share a potluck breakfast followed by an easy beach walk. Bring food to share. Coffee provided. Meet in the middle of Shoreline Park at 9am. **ART 965-4850 (SB)**

August 16

Monday Morning Walk - Alexanders: Start the week off with an invigorating 5 mrt walk in our local areas (beach or hillside). Optional coffee/snack after hike. Meet 8:30am in parking area on left side



Arroyo Burro Trail Rocks, and you get good views besides. This is but one of the great outings offered by the Los Padres Chapter, Sierra Club. (Photo by Robert Bernstein)

EAVESDROPS

"Law enforcement has seen an increase in violence associated with the (marijuana) grows as the potential for profit has risen and organized crime groups have expanded their efforts."

—Sheriff's Sgt. Chris Pappas, after the first seizures this year of about 4,000 pot plants in the Los Padres National Forest. Backcountry hikers are advised to use caution as last year booby traps were found and shots fired.

of Alexander's. Bring hat and water. **ELIZABETH 642-6971 & PAT 643-0270 (SP)**

August 21

RATTLESNAKE TRAIL: Hike up a wooded canyon with scenic views to meadow. Moderate 3.5 mrt. with 1000 foot elevation gain. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. **BILL 569-5527 (SB)**

August 22

LAS CRUCES TO GAVIOTA BEACH: Start at Las Cruces Adobe; hike up over ridge and have lunch at Gaviota Beach. Moderate-strenuous 11-12mrt. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. **PAUL 964-9002 (SB)**

August 23

Monday Morning Walk - 5th Street: Start the week off with an invigorating 5 mrt walk at our local beach. Optional coffee/snack after hike. Meet 8:30am at the end of 5th Street, Oxnard Shores. **ELIZABETH 642-6971 & PAT 643-0270 (SP)**

Squaw Flat open

Following a nine month closure for erosion control work after the October 2003 Piru Fire, the Forest Service has reopened popular Squaw Flat Road in Los Padres National Forest.

The road extends from above Fillmore to Dough Flat on the edge of the Sespe Wilderness.

Report mountain lions

Conception Coast Project's online mountain lion database is now available to the public for education and input.

This online database allows our community to identify where mountain lions have been spotted (sightings, tracks, scat, etc.) in the Santa Barbara and Ventura area.

Mountain lions are a keystone species which are important for identifying critical habitat for conservation planning, and this "citizen science" information will aid in future planning. The database is at: conceptioncoast.org/projects_mountain_lion

August 28

ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY: Help keep Highway 1 beautiful. Trash pick up from the Lompoc "Wye" to the Base boundary. Meet in the Vandenberg Village Shopping Center parking lot at 9am. Rain cancels. **VERN 733-2903 (AR)**

RED ROCK TO SWIMMING HOLE: Hike to below Gibraltar Dam and relax by/in the water. Moderate 6.5 mrt. Bring swimsuit, wading shoes, lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. **TONY 687-1929 (SB)**

August 29

HENDRY'S BEACH TO MORE MESA: Beach walk past Hope Ranch to More Mesa or beyond depending upon tide. Easy 7 mrt. Optional swim. Bring swimsuit, old shoes, lunch, and water. Meet at Hendry's Beach (Arroyo Burro on maps) outside gate at 9am. **VICKI 563-4850 (SB)**

SUNSET/MOONRISE HIKE AND POTLUCK AT MONTANA DE ORO: We'll hike to the top of Valencia Peak, then down to the bluffs for a potluck dinner while the full moon comes up and the sun goes down a few minutes later (6 mrt, 1300 ft elev. gain). Bring a daypack, food to share, as well as a plate, utensils, and water for yourself. Meet at the Orcutt Long's Drugs parking lot at 3:30pm. Hikes are subject to change, always contact the leader. **JIM 937-6766 (AR)**

August 30

Monday Morning Walk - Mission: Start the week off with an invigorating 5 mrt walk in our local areas (beach or hillside). Optional coffee/snack after hike. Meet 8:30am at fountain across from the Mission, downtown Ventura. **ELIZABETH 642-6971 & PAT 643-0270 (SP)**

September 4

DEVEREUX POINT: Stroll slowly exploring around this creek area to the shoreline. Slow paced 3 miles or so round trip. Children welcome, bring water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. **KEITH 681-0916/965-9953 (SB)**

September 5

WEST CAMINO CIELO: Explore the rock formations off West Camino Cielo. Steep but short with rock hopping and exploring in a playground of boulders. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. **ROBERT 685-1283 (SB)**

September 11

GEOCACHE HIKE: Bring a small trinket for the cache and a GPS if you have one and we'll try to locate several geocaches in the Santa Barbara

area. Several short hikes with some driving in between. Children welcome! Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. **TONY 687-1929 (SB)**

September 12

LOST VALLEY - CASTLE ROCK: Hike from Nira Campground up the Lost Valley Trail. Primitive trail access to Castle Rock. Have lunch on top of this great massif. Strenuous 9 mrt. Bring plenty of water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. **DIANE 687-1929**

September 18

PARMA PARK: Pleasant stroll for an hour or so through one of Santa Barbara's largest and least known parks. Slow paced loop, about 3 miles, bring water. Children welcome. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. **KEITH 681-0916/965-9953 (SB)**

COASTAL CLEANUP DAY AT SURF BEACH: Come help us clean up Surf Beach and Ocean Park. Meet in the Surf Beach parking lot at 9am. **CONNIE 735-2292 (AR)**

September 19

STEVENS PARK LOOP: An easy hike (1.5 mrt) starting at Stevens Park, following a creekside trail to the Cater Water Treatment Plant. We will return to the start via San Roque Road. Meet at the Bank of America parking lot, Hope Ave. & State St. at 9am. **GERRY 964-5411 (SB)**

September 25

ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY: Help keep Highway 1 beautiful. Trash pick up from the Lompoc "Wye" to the Base boundary. Meet in the Vandenberg Village Shopping Center parking lot at 9am. Rain cancels. **CONNIE 735-2292 (AR)**

ROMERO CANYON LOOP: Hike up a trail with trees and a small stream to a lunch spot. Then down an abandoned road with a beautiful view. Moderate 6 mrt. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. **ALEX 898-1240 (SB)**

September 26

TEQUEPIS: Hike up to West Camino Cielo from Santa Ynez Valley. Views of Cachuma Lake and the Pacific Ocean. Moderate-strenuous 8 mrt. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. **CHRISTINE 963-2347 (SB)**

October 2

CATHEDRAL PEAK LOOP: Start up Tunnel trail and branch off onto Jesusita trail towards Three Pools. Continue up the east trail, steep and rocky in places, to Cathedral Peak. Return down the east side with views of Three Pools back to Mission Canyon and a maintained trail. Strenuous 6 mrt. Some agility required. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. **BILL 569-5527 (SB)**

October 3

INSPIRATION POINT: Hike up Tunnel Rd., then by trail to a point with beautiful views of the coast and mountains. Moderately Easy 3.5 mrt. 800 ft elevation gain. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. **VICKI 563-4850 (SB)**

October 9

ALEXANDER PEAK MEADOWS: Hike past 19 Oaks, then by deer trails to a beautiful remote ridge for lunch. Moderate 7 mrt. Bring lunch and water. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. **ALEX 898-1240 (SB)**

October 10

TRAIL WORK: Join the Sierra Club in maintaining one of our local trails. Help to support the trails that have given you so much hiking pleasure. Call leader for details. Meet behind B of A on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. **TONY 687-1929 (SB)**



CCP is also nearly ready to release a Regional Conservation Guide, which identifies and maps ecological characteristics of the landscape for priority protection.

Some of the components include rare species hotspots, wild areas and habitat representation.

It's easier than ever to comment on forest plan

By John Hankins

With plenty of people moving nearer the Los Padres National Forest and growing demands for recreation and other uses in the face of less money, the Forest Service needs us to help prioritize their work.

August 11 is the deadline to have your opinion heard to help direct the future of the Forest, especially on its rivers, recreation, wildlife and overall ecology.

It's easiest to do online; click on maps to comment on specific areas.

The draft management plan is a big document and it's easy to be intimidated by it. Our suggestion is to keep it simple and personal; no one expects you to comment on every detail.

For instance, you might not like the growing popularity of mountain bikes on single track trails, or as a mountain biker you want some of those trails available. Tell them about it.

Maybe you're worried about more roads cutting into an area of the forest you'd like to keep wild. Tell them about it.

Do you think additional oil and gas extraction in the Fillmore area is worth the degradation of the back country? Tell them about it.

Perhaps your ideas are more wide-ranging, such as preferring wildlife and quiet over increasing areas for motorized recreation. Tell them about it.

WHICH ALTERNATIVE?

There are a number of options possible, ranging from the status quo to dramatically reducing the impact on humans. The Forest Service prefers Alt. No. 4, but environmental groups (including the Sierra Club) want the "Conservation Alternative," No. 6.

Alternative No. 4's "primary theme is an increased emphasis on recreation with intensive levels of management controls and a focused emphasis on offsetting effects to the biological diversity and ecological integrity of the forests," according to the draft.

The Forest Service believes this alternative gives them "flexibility to respond to the variety and level of recreation expected from a growing urban and culturally diverse population."

Tim Allyn of the Sierra Club's Wilderness Heritage Campaign said that means more off-road vehicles, especially in the Ojai and Mt. Pinos ranger districts.

Where that occurs, Allyn said "the region and camps along it have been degraded by trash, unregulated gun fire and other activities that leave the visitor with something other than an 'unconfined recreation' experience."

The Sierra Club's favored alternative, No. 6, has "a strong emphasis on the protection and restoration of biological diversity and ecological function and mitigation of existing impacts from all uses," the draft says. It would reduce the amount of forest available to off-road vehicles, oil and gas drilling and mining in favor of more acres of wilderness and passive recreation.

It would also decrease the current road system by 67 percent.

During an open house in Ojai on the plan, a ranger questioned whether or not that alternative would unduly restrict access to the forest, especially to families and people who might have physical restrictions.

BEYOND RECREATION

One of the greatest values of the Los Padres is as a watershed and species habitat for Santa Barbara and Ventura counties.

Steve Evans of Friends of the River said the management plan is vital for the more than 470 sensitive and endangered fish, wildlife and plant species which depend on undeveloped areas "and the few remaining free flowing streams."

They also encompass the headwaters of most major Southern California rivers and represent an important source of clean water used by California residents.

The Forest Service is recommending some modest additions to existing wilderness areas and three Wild & Scenic Rivers, including the Arroyo Seco River, upper Sespe Creek, and upper Piru Creek.

That's good but not enough, the conservation coalition believes.

Evans says, "unfortunately, the Forest Service didn't even identify the Santa Ynez River as eligible for Wild & Scenic protection in the forest plan, and failed to recommend designation of the deserving segments of Mono and Indian Creeks."

Lower Piru Creek should also be given a higher status for protection, Evans says.

This is the type of debate the plan is all about and we hope you leap right into it (see box).

Comment online:
www.fs.fed.us/r5/scfpr

At a public hearing in Ojai over the Forest Plan, Gene Blankenbaker (right) answers all questions at one of the map stops. Forest friend Alasdair Coyne of Keep the Sespe Wild commiserates in the background. (Photo by John Hankins)



Desert mysteries featured

The Sierra Club's Desert Committee will take you into Nevada, the Mojave, White Mountains and many other exceptional and mysterious places in the coming months.

For details, contact Craig Deutsche at (310) 477-6670 or email: deutsche@earthlink.net

Outings are for fun, education and sometimes work trips.

The outings include:

—**Aug. 11-14**, backpacking the High Monitor Range in Nevada.

—**Aug. 27-29**, a car camp away from the heat and crowds at Grandview Campground in the White Mountains.

—**Sept. 18-19**, a car camp in the Lone Pine area to see Owens Lake wildlife sanctuary forming after flooding a dry lakebed. This is a fundraiser, but it only costs \$15.

Also on these dates a separate outing with an easy work day on Saturday and potluck at the delightful Cottonwood campground, with Sunday set aside to go to Sombrero Peak or Lost Valley.

—**Oct. 9-10** a car camp and search for bristlecone pines in the Silver Peak Range.

—**Oct. 16-17** a trip to the remote Black Canyon near Barstow which boasts incredible Indian rock art and other desert mysteries.

—**Oct. 23-24**, a field trip in the Mojave Desert at Owl Canyon and Rainbow Basin along with a geology expert from the BLM.

—**Oct. 29-31** brings a celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Mojave National Preserve, camping at Hole-in-the-Wall and surprise activities along with hikes and potluck. Reserve this one early.



JOIN THE FUN

Joining the Sierra Club is a great way to help our quality of life.



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

What You Can Do

By August 11, write a letter to Southern California Forest Plan Revisions, USDA Forest Service Content Analysis Center, PO Box 22777, Salt Lake City, UT 84122. Fax: (801) 517-1015. Or comment online (the preferred method) by logging on to: www.fs.fed.us/r5/scfpr

In your letter or online comments, please mention the following key points:

- Support Alternative 6 with changes proposed by the conservation coalition. It proposes significant additions to the Machesna Mountain, Garcia Mountain, San Rafael, Dick Smith, Matilija, and Sespe Wilderness areas.

- Urge the Forest Service to recommend Wild & Scenic River designation of Mono and Indian Creeks and reconsider eligibility of the Santa Ynez River and lower Piru Creek.

- Add your own personal experiences and ideas.

- Ask that Blue Point Campground, north of Lake Piru, be moved to an appropriate new location on public land, and reopened for public use.

To learn more about details, log onto the Forest Service website (above), acquire a CD of the plan from any Ranger Station, call the toll free information line at (866)-252-8846, or contact member groups of the Conservation Coalition:

www.sierraclub.org/ca/socalforests

www.friendsoftheriver.org

www.calwild.org

sespewild.org

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Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to Sierra magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

Enclose check and mail to: **Sierra Club**, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968

F94Q W1000 1



There are 100 cedar cabins, 26 canvas safari tents, some yurts, store, restaurant, a pool and parking nestled among El Capitan Canyon under the trees here. Photo is looking towards the mountains where the Bill Wallace Trail is clearly seen. Entrance off the El Capitan 101 exit is towards the lower left. (Photo by John Hankins)

Appeal . . .

Cont'd. from page 1
county, which suggested Himovitz provide RV, tent and bicycle camp sites adjacent to the canyon. That, and allowing the concerts, is what the expansion is all about.

A total of 100 campsites are planned for the expansion on 11 acres, which breaks down into 50 RV sites, 30 tent and 20 'bicycle-in' campsites.

Part of the deal is to limit overnight guests to 1,300 and additional day users to 300, which presumably decreases what the developers' attorney says is "a historic high of 3,000 users." The existing permit has no limit and records of the previous campsites are unavailable.

The expansion could also allow retreats, children's day camps, lectures and a rental horse facility, among others, as long as the daily guest limit is not exceeded.

"This is a commercial operation which has grown into a very significant entity on the Gaviota Coast," Babine said in the appeal, which also questions the baseline figures for overnight guests and visitors.

Massara said that Himovitz would rather restrict guests and charge more, which will help pay for environmental benefits.

However the issue is decided, Katovich said the debate "proves that the Sierra Club will do what most others won't to ensure that the quality of our environment is not compromised."

Canyon camp's livin' is easy

By John Hankins

Cushy, coddled camping in cabins kind of like those in big national parks has made its way to the Santa Barbara coast. So has the big price, but it sure can be nice.

While eco-groups are battling to keep forests free of roads, hoofing their way into the woods with backpacks, others are making it easy and comfortable to hang out near nature.

It's El Capitan Canyon, billed as "a refined rural retreat"—not to be confused with the state park on the ocean side of 101.

Nor should it be mistaken for the pre-2000 camp which was low cost but often a dusty, noisy, aging RV stopover, taking in the overflow from the state beach.

It was closed for awhile to transform it into what the owners call "a high-end campground nestled in the Los Padres National Forest, complete with 100-plus cedar cabins and 25 classic, canvas safari tents."

The wood cabins are spacious and some are cleverly situated for privacy or arranged for families and groups. Their standard models are

built offsite on a trailer frame for transport and do not need permanent foundations.

The cabins have maid service, Jacuzzis, great beds, porches, chairs, fire pits, picnic tables, refrigerator and microwaves. The ambiance is wonderful with quiet, wildlife, oaks, creek corridor and trails to the beach and mountains.

Your cell phones work there, too. "The camp is designed to be an antidote to all that is excessive, formal, artificial or contrived," claims one of their brochures, while others tout the staff's care of the environment.

El Capitan Canyon is unique along coastal California. Owners, primarily Roger Himovitz (and formerly Chuck Blitz), along with Blackbird Architects have figured out how to minimize the clamor from scores of people staying over in a canyon.

For one, you don't drive on the camp roads but twice, for unloading and packing up.

Cruiser bicycles are provided free for those who want wheels

around the camp or for a ride along the beach only a few minutes away. This reduces noise, dust and increases the feeling of peace that comes from not having to watch out for two-plus tons of steel on wheels.

No pets, no cars, no amplified music, no smoking, no nuisance, no light pollution.

Did you forget anything? No problem, the upscale camp store has just about anything. A barbecued meal with all the implements and condiments at your cabin are provided for a price, or you can buy prepared food, wine and beer, candles, bug repellent, wood, clothing and souvenirs.

On Saturday nights, there's live music on a lawn and a huge fire free for guests; townies buy a ticket.

The weekend we visited, there was a large birthday party down by the camp store with guests dressed like the B-52's and the Simpsons, a number of families and couples, and parents staying there to attend UCSB graduation.

It was a wonderful weekend that included a long hike into the mountains, a bike ride and picnic at the beach, topped off with a hot bath and deep sleep.

This place has already been written up in the Wall Street Journal ("coddled camping") and seen on Good Morning America and a Fox network show, according to a gushing review from Santa Barbara News-Press writer Gina Tolleson (The A List).

Tolleson writes: "My husband loves hiking and camping, while I crave sugar, body scrubs and martini bars." Of course, the inference is El Cap has it all.

The staff is great; friendly and helpful but not intrusive. Looks like a good place to work.

May to October rates range from \$135 (safari tent) to \$305 (canyon suite) per night.

There are some discounts for county residents. Check it out by calling (866) 352-2729 or log onto: www.elcapitancanyon.com



A safari tent at El Capitan Canyon is charming and comfortable. (Photo by John Hankins)



Workers at the Canyon are friendly, helpful and knowledgeable and we got excellent help from Nikki Eschler at the camp's gourmet store. (Photo by John Hankins)

Meanwhile, in the forest, protection getting harder

The Bush Administration recently sent the press an announcement that the Administration will "cooperatively conserve roadless areas on national forests" and end litigation that has dogged the rules for over three years. It's cheery message was gored by the Sierra Club, among others, declaring instead that Bush "has dealt a crippling blow" to the conservation rule.

Now is your turn to comment by Sept. 14. Proposed changes to the Roadless Area Conservation Rule may be viewed at www.fs.fed.u

Send input to:
USDA Forest Service ATTN: Roadless State Petitions, PO Box 221090, Salt Lake City, UT 84122.

You may also fax to (801) 517-1014 or email: statepetitionroadless@fs.fed.us

For more information log on to: www.sierraclub.org/forests

To put the issue in perspective, the Roadless Rule, designed to protect 58 million acres of wild forests in 39 states, was the result of the most extensive public comment process in history.

During the rulemaking, a record-breaking one million public comments in support of protecting wild forests were received and by January 2004, the Forest Service had received more than 2.5 million comments, 95 percent of which favor the strongest protections.

Motor the ‘magical’ ’33

By John Hankins

From Ojai’s horizon to the cusp of Cuyama, Jim Blakley’s new travel guide of Scenic Highway 33 is like a trip through time with an old friend.

The road begins at the beach in Ventura, wends its way through the ‘Y’ at Ojai, on through the twin tunnels at Wheeler Gorge, by Rose Valley, around Pine Mountain and rolls along the Lockwood Valley.

“To travel the 33 with Jim Blakley is to experience this magical highway on many levels, thanks to his running commentary that interweaves landscape, anecdote and natural history,” writes Jeanine Moret. She edited, designed and took most of the pictures in the book.

The magazine-sized paperback is quite a ride in itself. It starts your mileage meter at Ojai’s ‘Y’ and ends up 59.6 miles later at the junction of 33 and 166. Best thing to do is at least skim it ahead of time, and have someone read it in the shotgun seat.

The stories are all short, the typeface a good size, and Jim’s stories a hoot.

The Deer Lodge (mile 1.4) really was a deer lodge that dressed the kill, Soper’s Gymnasium (mile 3.9) was a prize fighter’s camp in 1925 where Jack Dempsey trained, Bellyache Spring (mile 11.6) had a

stone drinking fountain for kibitzing and the Wagy Ranch (mile 38.8) had a whopping 35,000 people at the Mother of all Barbecues to celebrate finishing Highway 33 in 1933.

Then there was Frank D. Felt, “Sage of the Sespe” and a poet (see box). Jim says Frank fell in love with Miss Ella Eggen while he was

Howdy Stranger

Welcome stranger, at our door
Pass—as though you’d passed before.
Come tarry—ere your way you wend
And sip our cup as friend to friend.
Break freely of our humble crust
Departing friendly when you must.
Your station or your worldly pelf
Is naught – just smile and be yourself.
And to thyself, be staunchly true,
Our friends are made from folks like you.

—FRANK D. FELT,
“Sage of the Sespe”

acting in the Ramona Pageant (he played in it from 1923 to 1946). Anyway, Jim says Frank didn’t think she’d want to live at the long end of a horse trail (mile 25.7). Well one day, the dog barked and four horses arrived with Ella, a witness, minister and her worldly belongings.

With all this lore, it’s intriguing that Highway 33 was built to get to the beach.

“Residents of Santa Barbara and Ventura hoped to lure tourists from the Central Valley to coastal vacation spots and (those) residents

wanted beach access,” Moret explains.

Also, it made it a shorter trek for homesteaders to pay their taxes and do business at the county seat.

Blakley’s 30 years of backcountry and historical experience is like no other, and it’s good to know he and Moret are again collaborating on another book, a geographical dictionary of the local Los Padres National Forest, in which every name on the map is explained.

Blakley’s natural history resume and field work since he moved here in 1956 as a botanist is impressive. He took notes all those years and is still doing it.

But on July 20 he broke his hip identifying plants along the Santa Cruz Trail in the Santa Ynez Valley. “I’m recovering quickly, because I’ve done so much camping (and hiking) in my life,” he said after he walked out of the hospital recently.

The book is available in all of Ojai’s bookstores, the Forest Association Visitor’s Center off Highway 33’s Wheeler Gorge (mile 8.2), LPNF ranger stations or direct through Pacific Books and Shoreline Press (687-8340).

In Santa Barbara, it’s at the Botanic Garden and Museum of Natural History.

It should cost \$33, but is only \$10.95.



THE TUNNEL. WHEELERS HOT SPRINGS. VENTURA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA.

An original Wheeler Gorge tunnel now replaced by two half-circles.



E.R. “Jim” Blakley signed his Highway 33 book for young and old at the Los Padres Forest visitor’s center at Wheeler Gorge. He has since broken his hip after falling on a trail July 20. Get well soon, Jim. (Photo by John Hankins)

Hiking the web

Do you know of a web site that would interest Los Padres Chapter members? Send it in to the Condor Call editor (gnusman@aol.com) or call him at 745-5432. All begin with www. unless otherwise specified.

- New Forest Plan fs.fed.us/r5/scfpr
- Pacific Crest Trail pcta.org
- New ocean report oceancommission.gov
- Practical tips earthday.net/howto
- Santa Maria outdoors naturalhistorysantamaria.com

Man-made wetland rallies

A new man-made wetlands using reclaimed water in Hill Canyon looks “pretty bare bones right now. But check it out in a year, it will be fabulous.”

That’s the assessment of Chuck Rogers, superintendent of the Hill Canyon Wastewater Treatment Plant in Thousand Oaks. Audubon members who live nearby believe it, according to an article in the Ventura County Star.

“For a lot of bird species migrating in our area, wetlands have become quite rare because of devel-

opment,” said Audubon member and Cal State Northridge professor Walter Wehtje.

The new five-acre site is now the largest man-made wetland in Ventura County, and is next to the Conejo Canyon and Arroyo Conejo open space areas and Wildwood Park.

Recycled water from the adjacent treatment plant goes through the area, which was built to help replace wetlands lost from a project that diverts Conejo Creek water to the Oxnard Plain for irrigation.

Old, new coast photos prove ‘enormous’ impacts

You can now see photos of how the coast has changed in over a generation from a new feature on the unique and useful California Coastal Records Project (CCRP) website.

The project uses slide images shot in 1972 of the coast and puts them together with the 12,700 aerial photos taken in the last few years by Kenneth and Gabrielle Adelman as part of their project at: www.californiacoastline.org

The Adelmans visited Santa Barbara Aug. 5 to show their coastal photos.

The modern and historical photos have important practical uses, not only for planning agencies, but also for the public. “Any person can appreciate the enormous magnitude of the extent to which development has permanently altered the nature of our coast in less than a single generation,” said Mark Massara, who runs the Sierra Club’s Coastal Program.

“Many people assume that the coast had been saved by the passage

of Proposition 20 in 1972,” commented Gabrielle Adelman. “We believe that if people witness the coastal resources we have lost in the intervening thirty years since the Coastal Act was passed, that they will work even harder to protect those that remain.”

The 1970’s aerial slides, taken by the California Department of Boating and Waterways, were stored for decades in cardboard boxes unavailable for public use. They ended up in the office of coastal geologist Dr. Gary Griggs at UC-Santa Cruz.

Dr. Griggs was familiar with the Adelmans’ project, which he called “an extremely useful tool for our coastal research on a wide range of issues from coastal erosion and cliff failure, to the distribution of seawalls and other coastal armoring. Nowhere did this sort of statewide, up-to-date, high quality information exist in an easily available and conveniently accessible format.”

He contacted the Adelmans, who immediately recognized the value of using the 1972 photos in concert with the new ones.

“We envisioned this historical record starting with our 2002 photographs and updating it over time. But we never imagined that we would be able to extend the dataset back in time a full 30 years to 1972,” said Kenneth Adelman.

The Adelmans worked with Dr. Griggs to scan and digitally restore the photographs and then integrated the aerial database into their website. The Adelmans donated their time, helicopter and the latest computer and imaging equipment to photograph all 1100 miles of the California coast (except the restricted Vandenberg Air Force Base) and then posted the results for public.

The resulting website, the subject of intense public interest, has logged almost 2.4 million visitors since its initial launch in late October 2002.

By the way, a lawsuit claiming invasion of privacy by singer Barbra Streisand, whose mansion was part of a coastal photograph, was recently thrown out of court.

Regular users include the Sierra Club, federal and state agencies such as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and California Coastal Commission, local planning agencies, environ-

mental groups and individuals.

The Adelmans and Dr. Griggs are already at work integrating a second set of aerial photographs taken in 1979 by the Department of Boating and Waterways into the website. They are hopeful that the launch of 1972 photos will inspire other researchers to check their files for archival photos that document the California coast that used to exist.

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Wheeler makeover is gorgeous

The Los Padres National Forest visitor's center at Wheeler Gorge has had a major makeover and is now open full time.

The improvements coincide with the establishment of an Ojai chapter of the Los Padres Forest Association, which is the official non-profit organization that works in concert with the Los Padres National Forest.

It offers outdoor books, maps, souvenirs and many educational pamphlets primarily of the Ojai District of the forest.

Outdoor author and former teacher Ray Ford of Santa Barbara remains the LPFA's director, while the Ojai chapter is chaired by Mike Havstad. Gordan Hemphill is the treasurer and an instructor while Carol Day is the interim secretary.

Previously, the center was occasionally staffed by a ranger and various volunteers and open only part-time. It did not sell the controversial "Adventure Pass," but it does now.

It was Ojai District Director John Bridgewater who decided it was worth the effort to upgrade the facility and staff it full time with forest rangers. Revenue from books and other goods go to the non-profit Association, which in turn provides educational materials, maps, trail work parties and many other services.

The center is only eight miles from the Ojai 'Y' on Highway 33 and is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. seven days per week. After Thanksgiving, it is likely to shorten the hours to five days per week.

Phone number is 640-9060.



Los Padres Forest Association's new Ojai chapter is headed up by Mike Havstad (left) and treasurer Gordon Hemphill, shown at the newly revamped visitor's center at Wheeler Gorge. At the center, you'll be greeted by Ojai rangers who can tell you what you want to know. They are (from left) Julie Bryan, Leanne Langeberg and Julie Hovanec. (Photos by John Hankins)

EAVESDROPS

"The unique thing about the Forest Service is that we make our own relationships, and they are colorless."

—Gloria Brown, the Los Padres National Forest's new supervisor who came on board July 7.

Next issue of

Condor Call

comes out 1st of October

DEADLINES:

Editorial: Sept. 15

Advertising: Sept. 20

Questions? Call 745-5432

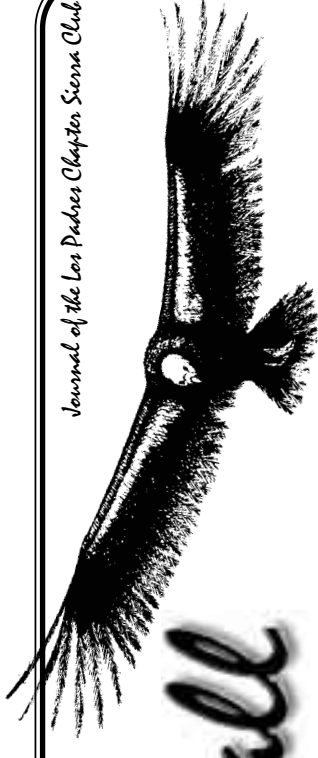
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Coastal camp...Cruise '33... Forest plan... LNG, oil... Trips

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