Sensational spring

p. 4
Save Del Monte Forest

The Pebble Beach Company is proposing the decimation one of the few remaining stands of native Monterey pine habitat in the world. The Plan, approved last month by the developer-driven Monterey County Board of Supervisors, calls for cutting down over 17,000 rare Monterey pines and protected oak trees to build yet another golf course, hotel, luxury homes and a driving range.

The Del Monte Forest is rich habitat for nineteen species of rare and endangered plants and the federally-listed California red-legged frog. The project area includes rare marine chaparral, coastal dunes, and wetlands. (In the last hundred years, California has lost over 95% of its wetlands). Legally, under the Coastal Act, this area is Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA). A project of this massive size and scope should never have been approved.

The Chapter has been following expansion plans of the Pebble Beach Company for over 30 years. Their last project at Spanish Bay included promises to permanently to set aside, restore and reforest large tracts of land (the Sawmill Gulch area and the haul road) and to restore the dune habitat as “mitigation.” Today, 20 years later, the lavish hotel, shops, club buildings, multi-million dollar residences and sport facilities are bustling, and the golf course is managed and maintained. The restoration projects, however, were never completed. The public was led to believe they were “too difficult” to do.

This new plan is also touted to provide “mitigation” for the damage to the resources. But the program to translocate the federally-listed Yadon’s pipers, for instance, has been described as experimental and unrealistic by biologists with California Fish and Game, California Native Plant Society and the Coastal Commission. The most likely scenario is that this “mitigation” will fail like the previous ones, and we will lose this rare orchid forever.

The Pebble Beach Company claims that this proposed destruction of the Monterey Pine Forest was approved by the voters through ballot Measure A. Recall, however, that the nearly million dollar campaign in support of Measure A featured the slogan from their celebrity owner that Measure A would, “Save the Forest.” The public was misled. Chopping down 17,000 Monterey pines and oak trees is not what the public thought it was approving when it voted to help “Save the Forest.”

Should we sit back and watch the death of our rare and beautiful forests and believe the empty promises of a company whose only concern is lining the pockets of their wealthy investors? No!

How to help

Please help the Chapter protect these trees and the fragile plants and animals that depend on them to sustain life. We have filed an Appeal to the California Coastal Commission and will take whichever measures are necessary to protect the forest. Please send a check for any amount made out to the Sierra Club, Ventana Chapter to help the Chapter prevent the loss of this forest.

Mail to: Treasurer, Joel Weinstein, 140 Carmel Riviera Drive, Carmel, CA 93923.

—Rita Dalessio

Moving?

Please fill out and mail the change of address form on page 15. The post office charges us 70 cents each if we do not call editor! Send address changes to Sierra Club, The Ventana, P. O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968.

Nature all around us

One of the amazing things about living on the Central Coast is the glory of nature all around us. At night I can hear the sea lions barking even though I live a mile and a half from the beach. When I walk down to the ocean, I am rewarded with the crashing sound of the waves and the cries of the gulls.

Outside my window birds flock to the feeders. Lately there have been goldfinches and pine siskins visiting. The mourning doves hang out year round and provide me with hours of amuse-ment watching them try to figure out how to land on the narrow shelf of the feeder obviously designed for smaller, more agile avian frames.

Once, an American kestrel surprised me by swooping down to snatch a snail next to the curb. Even more amazing, a peregrine falcon seized a hapless mourning dove in my tiny front yard just 15 feet away from my vantage point. Amazing because I live on a moderately busy street in Santa Cruz, not out in the country.

Unbidden, California poppies invade my yard and garner unearned praise for my gardening skill from the neighbors. If I move a rock in the garden, I might find a slender salamander.

These glories of nature are there for the looking, the listening, the smelling—the sensing. We need merely notice and enjoy what is often right in front of our noses. It costs nothing but time and attention.

But nature’s presence is not guaranteed.

From the apartment where I used to live in Live Oak I could hear the songs of the hundreds of Pacific tree frogs just on the other side of the fence. Today, those songs are stilled; the wetlands dried out. The land sports houses now.

If we want to preserve the beauty all around us, we will have to lend a hand and work for that preservation.

Each morning when I hear the birds greeting the dawn, I know it’s worth it.

—Debbie Bulger
Convert airport to organic ag center

Recently I addressed the Watsonville City Council, proposing closing down the airport, advocating less rather than more concrete, members of the audience AND the council snickered.

How about reversing the trend for more neighborhoods, more shopping opportunities, more pavement over our sacred, fertile land? Airports, such as Watsonville’s and golf courses have something in common; they use huge tracts of land and are used by a tiny fraction of the usually monied few. Who is going to speak out for earthworms, fungi, birds, and oxygen-giving plants?

I proposed an Organic Agriculture Research Center, complete with ponds to attract amphibians, insects, waterfowl, a community garden where seniors and children could work side by side, citrus, apple, pear, persimmon, walnut trees, flower and veggie plots. Bringing in tourist dollars, the center would be a model, an educational gem similar to the Monterey Bay Aquarium. As I proposed a modest, affordable housing neighborhood, close to the Freedom library and shopping, that would be California’s First Vehicle-Free Community, some listeners looked aghast.

Isn’t it time we breathe less aircraft and vehicle toxic emissions, hear less motor noise, surround ourselves with floral beauty and pesticide-free flowers, fruits and veggies? Isn’t it time to build bike and pedestrian pathways rather than more airport runways?

—Gary Harrold Apts

Rethink bike ban

As a Club member, I am disappointed that our Chapter has worked actively to prohibit mountain biking throughout the vast acreage of Nisene Marks. The park is certainly larger, I submit, than restricting its upper reaches to hikers warrants. Please rethink the policy to support more extensive biking legally. Perhaps in doing so, we can encourage lawful use as to the Park as a whole.

—Finch Farr
Santa Cruz

Allow bikes on fire road

I have been a member of the Sierra Club for many years. I am an avid supporter of keeping all wilderness and outdoor areas protected for us and for future generations. I am 57 years old, and am a competitive triathlete, runner and mountain biker.

I bought my house here in Nisene Marks for the purposes of running, hiking and mountain biking in a gorgeous, unspoiled place without ever having to get in my car. I am respectful of other runners and hikers when I am on my mountain bike, as are all my friends who ride with me. We confine our riding to the fire road, so as not to disturb the trails, which are reserved for hikers/runners. Our mountain biking does not impact the forest, as there is no exhaust, and our tires do not cause erosion on the road. We carry any trash home in our pockets.

This is an extremely healthy, environmentally-friendly activity, enjoyed by many people of all ages. Lots of families enjoy the forest, and it is certainly a better way to be together than sitting at home watching TV! It is inconceivable to me that this is to be outlawed! It is really important to us who live and train here year round to have the fire road available to us. PLEASE reconsider your decision.

—Katherine Frank Apts
Sam Farr gets Congress to recycle

Representative Sam Farr received a Leadership Award from three national environmental groups for his successful efforts to make Congressional recycling both efficient and profitable. The award was presented by Lance King of Community Solutions on March 31 at the California Grey Bears recycling facility in Santa Cruz. Friends of the Earth and Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund of Washington DC were co-presenters of the award.

Farr’s efforts began in 1999 when he proposed an amendment approved by the House Appropriations Committee to make recycling mandatory. That amendment was struck down during debate, but Farr persisted with a campaign called “if Congress won’t recycle, recycle Congress.”

Eventually a bipartisan group of Democrats and Republicans co-sponsored Farr’s resolution. The internal House recycling program went from costing taxpayers over a million dollars while wasting most of the paper collected for “recycling” to earning money for House operations. In FY 2004 the House recycled 1,744 tons of waste and saved valuable landfill space.

In addition, the House now has policies requiring products to contain recycled materials. Students from Mission Hill Middle School in Santa Cruz toured the Grey Bears recycling facility and met with Representative Farr at the event.

It was so spectacular, we ran out of film. This year has been exceptional for wildflowers. In mid-March your editor visited the Carrizo Plains and almost collapsed from sensory overload. These black and white photos are only a preview: To see the flowers in their full glorious color, go immediately to the Ventana Chapter website, www.ventana.sierraclub.org to have your socks knocked off by the wildflower display photos.

Mother Nature sure knows how to paint!

Debbie Bulger

Flower photos by Richard Stover

Petitions block Santa Cruz hotel project and parking complex

Developer withdraws proposal

The voters of Santa Cruz demonstrated the depth of their opposition to a massive hotel project proposed for West Cliff Drive first by signing referendum petitions against the project and second by responding negatively to the project in a telephone survey commissioned by the developer. As a result, the developer has withdrawn the project.

The Sierra Club joined with other community groups to oppose the project which would have replaced the former Dream Inn on West Cliff Drive with a structure nearly twice as large. In addition the project included a 690-space, six-floor parking garage and conference center across the street. The City planned to invest $30 million ($66 million with debt service) in the project via its Redevelopment Agency.

The Club opposed the project because it would have exceeded the height, mass, land use and setback limitations of the present General Plan, Local Coastal Plan, and zoning for the site. Ordinances passed by the City in a 4-3 vote in January included spot zoning to benefit this project exclusively. The staff of the California Coastal Commission also expressed concern about the project to Council.

Were the project built, views to and from the Wharf, Cowell and Main Beaches, and West Cliff Drive would be severely impacted. Coastal development policy requires that developments along the ocean and scenic coastal areas blend into, rather than dominate, their surroundings.

In addition, the proposed complex, with its 690-space parking garage would have been automobile-centric and would have created major traffic problems impacting access to the unique coastal resources surrounding the project site, including Lighthouse Field and West Cliff Drive. Only a week before the City Council approved the project, the City Transportation Commission recommended that approval be delayed until the traffic problems could be properly addressed.

Santa Cruz Group Executive Committee members and others who opposed the project noted that more extensive and more participatory planning is needed to identify appropriate locations for a major visitor-serving facility in Santa Cruz that would not create environmental damage.

In addition to many environmental problems, the proposed complex would have exposed the City to major financial risk if the project did not generate as much tax revenue as promised.

The developer’s decision to withdraw the project as we go to press eliminates the need for the City Council to schedule an election on the issue. Presumably, the Council will now rescind the ordinances it adopted in order to approve the project. The hotel owners have indicated their intent to remodel the existing hotel after the summer season.

Special thanks go to the many Sierra Club volunteers who gathered signatures, spoke out about the project at public meetings, and otherwise worked with other groups to oppose this massive project.
The Monterey County Board of Supervisors voted 5-0 to approve extensive development in Del Monte Forest by the Pebble Beach Company. This approval came despite written warnings from the Coastal Commission staff and Chair of the Coastal Commission, Meg Caldwell, a law professor at Stanford University.

In her letter to the Board of Supervisors in December, Caldwell had stated that it was inappropriate for the County to grant final approval for the Pebble Beach Combined Development Plan application until after the Coastal Commission reviewed Measure A for conformance with the Coastal Act. Measure A, which was opposed by the Sierra Club, passed in November 2000. The intent of Measure A was for the Pebble Beach Company to try to get around some of the environmental restrictions built into the 1984 Local Coastal Program.

To build this enormous project, Pebble Beach would cut down over 17,000 rare native trees. The proposed 18-hole golf course and driving range at Spanish Bay would adversely impact some of the last remaining coastal dunes and wetlands in California. These areas provide habitat for nine species of plants considered to be rare or endangered under CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act), seven of which are state or federally-listed including Yadon's piperia which is only found here. Also severely threatened by this project is the federally-listed California red-legged frog.

The plan also includes 33 luxury homes, 160 new hotel rooms, expansion of the Inn at Spanish Bay, 60 new employee housing units and the relocation of the current equestrian center to the Sawmill Gulch site. This last component of the plan would extinguish two scenic easements that were required as mitigation for the earlier Spanish Bay permit that squeaked by at the Coastal Commission in 1984. At that time, the new golf course was touted to be the “last golf course in Pebble Beach.”

At the March 15 public hearing, environmental groups including the Ventana Chapter, California Native Plant Society (CNPS), Ocean Conservancy and others spoke passionately against the project citing the decimation of the forest, plants and wildlife. Corky Matthews of CNPS stressed that the proposal to transplant trees as mitigation is not realistic. Proponents for the project included a few residents of Pebble Beach who liked this plan better than the previous one which proposed building hundreds of luxury homes.

This earlier project which was heatedly opposed by residents and environmentalists, may have been created to make the present proposal seem more reasonable. Coastal Commission staff stated in their March 14 letter to the Board of Supervisors that it was misleading for the public to have been told that up to 900 homes could have been built in the proposed project area, since only about 41 developable lots have been certified by the County.

Under the Coastal Act, the Coastal Commission staff contends, the Local Coastal Plan prohibits subdivision within Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESH). There is substantial evidence that the undeveloped project lands are predominately ESHA. Furthermore, recent fieldwork by a Coastal Commission biologist suggests there is even more significant dune and wetlands habitat than has been identified by the County to date.

The Chapter and other groups have appealed this project to the Coastal Commission. At press time no date had been set for the hearing.
Sierra Club Events

Thursday, April 21

Oil on Ice
Award-winning documentary film connecting the fate of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to decisions America makes about energy policy and transportation choices. Presented by Sierra Club Productions, KQED San Francisco. For more information about Oil on Ice, to purchase a DVD, or host a house party visit www.oilonice.org.

Friday, May 13

Potluck & Slides: Yellowstone Wolves
Our presentation “Yellowstone Wolves: 10th Anniversary of the Reintroduction Retrospective” is by Kathy Lynch, YNP Wolf Project volunteer. The potluck begins at 6:30 p.m. Bring food to share and your own plate, cup, utensils, and serving utensils. We love home-cooked food, but store-bought items (minimum value $4) make great contributions too. For directions call George, 335-7748.

Friday, June 10

Potluck & Slides: Mongolia
Sigrid will share her slides from her extended stay in Mongolia. The potluck begins at 6:30 p.m. Bring food to share and your own plate, cup, utensils, and serving utensils. We love home-cooked food, but store-bought items (minimum value $4) make great contributions too. For directions call George, 335-7748.

Non-Sierra Club events of interest

The following activities are not sponsored or administered by the Sierra Club. The Club makes no representations or warranties about the safety, supervision or management of such activities. They are published only as a reader service.

Tuesday - Wednesday, May 3-4

Threat: corporate personhood
Mary Zepnick, Coordinator of the Program on Corporations, Law and Democracy, and past president of Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom will speak on the plight of democracy under domineering corporate scale. May 3, 7:30 p.m. Unitarian Church at Aguajito, Carmel; May 4, 1:30 p.m. Monterey Peninsula College; Workshop on protest, May 4, 9:30 - noon, Peace and Justice Center, Pacific Grove FREE. Call George Riley, 645-9914 for more information. For background visit www.poclad.org and www.sierrachub.org/cac.

Wednesday, May 4

Safe drinking water/ ocean health
Over one billion people lack access to safe drinking water. Population growth will outstrip fresh water supply in the future. Vanessa Tobin, Chief of the Water, Environment and Sanitation Section, UNICEF and Julie Packard, Executive Director of the Monterey Bay Aquarium and member of the Pew Oceans Commission will speak on safe drinking water and ocean health. FREE. 7:00 p.m., Irvine Auditorium, Monterey Institute of International Studies, 499 Freedom Blvd., Monterey. Hosted by Monterey Institute’s International Environmental Policy Program. For more information call Denyse Frischmuth, 643-0707.

Saturday, May 21

Hetch Hetchy soiree
Food, film, and silent auction to raise money to restore Hetch Hetchy. Joint meeting between Sierra Club’s Hetch Hetchy Restoration Task Force and the Restore Hetch Hetchy Board of Directors at a hotel near Big Oak Flat entrance to Yosemite. Screening of documentary, “Hetch Hetchy: Yosemite’s Lost Valley.” Presentation on restoration feasibility study by technical/engineering team. For more information email, harold.wood@sierrachub.org.

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Free Wormshops (dates following)
Learn how worms can eat your food scraps and make beautiful compost for your garden. FREE workshop for Santa Cruz County residents. 1:00-3:00 p.m. Optional worm bin, $15. Call to reserve worm bin. Sponsored by Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors. Call Karin Grobe, 427-3452.

Sunday, April 24

Earth Day
Booths, food, fun. San Lorenzo Park, Santa Cruz. 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Monday, April 25

Film about David Brower
The life and times of David Brower and the monumental issues that made the Sierra Club a household phrase in the 1960s and 70s are the subject of the documentary, “Monumental,” to be shown at 7:30 p.m. at the Attic, 931 Pacific Ave., Santa Cruz. Benefit for EarthVision International Environmental Film and Video Festival. Copresented by Community Television of Santa Cruz and the Sierra Club. Tickets $5-10 sliding scale.

Friday, May 27

Singles Potluck and Games
See April 22 for description.

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GENERAL INFORMATION:
All outings begin and end at the trailhead. Carpooling to and from the trailhead is strictly a private arrangement between the driver and his/her guests. Carpool drivers are not agents or employees of the Sierra Club.

GLS = Gay & Lesbian Sierrans. All are welcome on GLS outings.

EXPLANATION OF RATINGS:
The outings described vary in difficulty from leisurely walks to strenuous hikes. The following explanation are general guidelines.

Walk: Between 2-5 miles, leisurely pace.
Easy: No more than 5 miles, slight elevation gain; easy pace.
Moderate: 5-10 miles, up to 2,000’ gain; climbs better than average, time required.
Strenuous: May involve off-trail hiking; demanding pace; for experienced hikers in good condition only.

MEETING PLACES

DIRECTIONS:
Big Sur Land Trust Parking Lot: 3785 Via Nona Marie, Carmel. From Hwy. 1, head south into Monterey County Bank, take left to the nearest Graham Hill Rd.

Albertson’s/Basil Bakery: Heading south on Hwy. 1, pass through Monterey. One mile past the Ocean Ave. intersection, take left on Carmel Valley Rd. Almost immediately, turn right at the light toward the stores.

Santa Cruz County Gov’t. Center: Meet before 9:30 a.m. at 6th & Mission Sts. for wildflowers. Bring water and a snack. Meet at Felton Faire, 336-2325.

Felton Faire: From Santa Cruz take Graham Hill Rd. toward Felton. Just after you pass Roaring Camp (on the left), make a right into Felton Faire shopping center. We meet at the edge of the Safeway parking lot nearest Graham Hill Rd.

41st Avenue Sears: From Hwy. 1 in Capitola, take the 41st Avenue exit and continue toward the ocean on 41st Avenue toward the Mall. Pass the main Mall entrance and turn right toward the next entrance heading toward Sears. We meet behind the bank located at 41st and Capitola Road. Senior Saunter meets in Sears parking lot close to 41st Ave.

MPC Parking Lot: Monterey Peninsula College Parking Lot. From Hwy. 1 take the Fisherman’s Wharf exit, go straight one block, turn left and left again into the first parking lot, parking lot A. This is the site of the Thursday Farmers Market. Plenty of parking without a fee on weekends.

April

Sunday, April 17
HIKE: FALC CREEK
Let’s explore this enchanted forest with redwoods, a lovely bubbling stream full of cascades, a lime kiln, barrel mill, fish pond, and dancing springs. Afternoon 7-mile walk. Bring water and a snack. Meet at Felton Faire at 10:00 a.m. to carpool. Leader: Sheila Dunnaway, 336-2325.

Sunday, April 17
HIKE: GARLAND PARK
4 1/2 miles with 800’ elevation gain up to the Mesa via Buckeye, Cliff and Waterfall trails. Return by Mesa and Lupine Loop trails. Look for wildflowers. Bring water and a snack. Meet at Albertson’s to carpool at 9:30 a.m. or at Garland Park at 9:20 a.m. at the car bridge. Leader: Martha Saylor, 372-9215.

Tuesday, April 19
SENIOR HIKE: TORO PARK
Fairly vigorous 5-mile hike with SOME UPHILL. If you wish a shorter hike, the first part is flat and makes a nice walk. Restrooms. Toro Park is just off Hwy. 68 between Monterey & Salinas. Meet before 9:00 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave. If you go direct, meet at the next to last parking lot about 10:40 a.m. to start on Ollason Trail. Bring lunch, water, a sit-upon, $4 carpool. Leader: Beverly Meschi, 475-4185.

Saturday, April 23
HIKE: PALO CORONA PEAK
We will begin by going up Soberanes Creek, then climb up to Palo Corona. Return via Rocky Ridge Trail. 10-12 miles and 3000’ elevation gain make this a strenuous hike. Bring lunch, water, and dress for possibly windy conditions. Call for reservations; space is limited. Leader: Larry Parrish, 622-7455.

Saturday, April 23
HIKE: WILDER RANCH STATE PARK
Moderate 5-hour hike featuring stunning panoramas of Monterey Bay, open meadows as well as wooded paths, and possibly a bobcat and Northern hawks. Wilder Ranch docent extraordinaire Liz Ryan will hike with us and share her knowledge of the wildlife and history of the park. Bring lunch and water. Serious rain cancels. Meet at Santa Cruz County Government Center at 9:00 a.m., or at Wilder Ranch State Park parking lot at 9:30 a.m. $5 fee per car. Leader: Gabrielle Stocker, 426-0865.

Tuesday, April 26
SENIOR SAUNTER: BIG CREEK HATCHERY
Meet 1 hour before formal meeting time in order to save gas and protect the environment when participating in out-of-county outings. Informal (no leader) carpool meeting spots:
Santa Cruz: County. Gov’t Bldg.
Monterey: K-Mart Seaside

Notice

Club events such as potlucks, slide shows and other get-togethers are on page 6 in the Calendar listings.

In the interests of facilitating the logistics of some outings, it is customary that participants make carpooling arrangements. The Sierra Club does not have insurance for carpooling arrangements and assumes no liability for them. Carpooling, ride sharing or anything similar is strictly a private arrangement among the participants. Participants assume the risks associated with this travel.

April

Hike: Wilder Ranch State Park

Moderate 5-hour hike featuring stunning panoramas of Monterey Bay, open meadows as well as wooded paths, and possibly a bobcat and Northern hawks. Wilder Ranch docent extraordinaire Liz Ryan will hike with us and share her knowledge of the wildlife and history of the park. Bring lunch and water. Serious rain cancels. Meet at Santa Cruz County Government Center at 9:00 a.m., or at Wilder Ranch State Park parking lot at 9:30 a.m. $5 fee per car. Leader: Gabrielle Stocker, 426-0865.

Saturday-Sunday, April 23-24
Backpack: Pico Blanco
Strenuous 12-mile with 1500’ elevation gain. From the Old Coast Road we’ll hike up the Little Sur River to Pico Blanco and spend the night at the Boy Scout Campground where we’ll be enchanted by the pool with its mesmerizing waterfall. Bring water, food, layered clothing, comfortable footwear, and $ for carpool. Space limited, call leader for meeting place, time. Leader: Esperanza Hernandez, 678-1968.

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Private Spas & Saunas overlooking

Well Within

A Japanese Garden

Massage Therapy

Skin & Body Care

All Natural Skin Care Products

417 Cedar St., Santa Cruz 831-458-WELL.
Visit our web site at www.wellwithinspa.com
Wednesday, April 27
HIKE: FALL CREEK
Enjoy a tour through Fall Creek hiking past the lime kilns up the Lost Empire trail to the Big Ben Tree, a virgin redwood. These trails follow old oxen roads used for logging the area for fuel. Today fir, oak, and madrone trees dominate the diverse riparian vegetation along bubbling Fall Creek. Bring lunch and water. Be sure to climb up through the canyon and over the west ridge for a 9-mile hike. Meet at Sears 41st Ave. at 9:00 a.m. or at the trailhead on Empire Grade Rd. just west of the town of Felton at 9:30 a.m. Leader: Diane Cornell, 423-3925.

Saturday, April 30
WALK: POINT LOBOS
4-mile walk, starting from Hwy. 1, out and back to the Ixchenta point grind holes, then past Whaler’s Cove, to the top of Whaler’s Knoll and back via southern trails. Some wildflowers, wildlife. Bring water, snack and optional binoculars. Done about noon. Meet at Albertson’s at 9:00 a.m. for a short carpool. Leader: Martha Saylor, 372-9213.

O U T I N G S

M A Y

Sunday, May 1
WALK: UCSC
Guided tour of UCSC campus areas proposed for development in the new Long Range Development Plan which calls for doubling the size of the campus. Significant native plant, insect, reptile, amphibian, bird and mammal habitats would be affected, in addition to aquifers and streams. Meet at the Arboreum parking lot before 9:30 a.m. to carpool to Northern Natural Reserve Area. Call 423-8567 for more information.

Tuesday, May 3
SENIOR HIKE: ROARING CAMP
We’ll walk around the railroad cars, go on trails and climb to top of Bear Mountain for lunch. Portable restroom available. Moderate 2.5 miles with SOME UPHILL. Meet before 9:30 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave. or Felton Faire at 9:30 a.m. To go direct, take Graham Hill Rd. to Roaring Camp entrance. Park in large lot by covered bridge. Bring lunch, water and $3 carpool. Leader: Pat Herzog, 458-9841.

Friday, May 6
HIKE: EWOLDSEN TRAIL
Starting at Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park, we’ll hike a 5-mile loop up fern-lined McWay Canyon, passing redwood groves to a view-point high above the ocean. The trail is steep but we’ll take it at a leisurely pace. Afterwards we’ll take a short stroll along the scenic waterfall trail. Bring lunch and water, and meet behind Breton’s at 9:30 a.m. for hour-long carpool. Leaders: Cath Farrant and Mary Dainton, 372-7427, marydainton@juno.com.

Saturday, May 7
HIKE: LOWER PEBBLE BEACH
Enjoy spectacular ocean views and Del Monte Forest on this 9-mile hike starting near Asilomar, then south along Spanish Bay Golf Course to Bird Rock. Then east by two more golf courses down through S.F.B. Morse Reserve and out along 17 Mile Drive. Bring water, lunch, and wear hiking shoes. Meet in front of the Fishwife Restaurant on Sunset Drive at Asilomar Ave. in Pacific Grove at 9:30 a.m. Leader: Stacy Smith, 625-5256.

Saturday, May 7
HIKE: MEDICINE BUDDHA-NISENE MARKS STATE PARK
We’ll explore an unusual entrance to the west side of Nisene. 10 miles with 1500’ elevation gain. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Santa Cruz County Government Center to carpool. Call Nick for more information. Leader: Nick Wyckoff, 462-3101.

Sunday, May 8
HIKE: PAT SPRINGS
Hike through meadows of knee-high lupine. This is a great year for wild flowers. We’ll start at Botcher’s Gap and hike past Devil’s Peak on our way to Pat Springs. 14 miles and 2000’ elevation gain. Bring boots, lunch and water. Meet at Albertson’s at 8:00 a.m. Leader: Steve Legnard, 402-1422.

Tuesday, May 10
SENIOR SAUNTER: MONASTERY BEACH/SOBRANES POINT
Also called Carmel River Beach. 2 to 3 miles. Beautiful walk to Carmel River then to Point Lobos for lunch. Meet before 9:30 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave. or at Monastery Beach on Hwy. 1 just beyond Carmel River at 10:30 a.m. Park on ocean side by day care center and eucalyptus grove. Bring lunch, water and $5 carpool. Leader: Grace Hansen, 476-7254.

Saturday, May 14
HIKE: MCCRARY BIG CREEK
This is a tentative announcement of a favorite local trek. Esperanza and Nick will co-lead. Monterey walkers should call Esperanza and Santa Cruz people should call Nick. The off-trail ramble is very difficult and should only be attempted by well-conditioned, experi-
HIKES OR BACKPACK: DANISH CREEK
If we get enough interest, we’ll do this as an overnight backpack leaving from Los Padres Dam. If so, we’ll probably day hike to Rattlesnake Camp and maybe beyond. If not, we will go to Danish Creek as an 8-mile, 1800’ elevation gain day hike. Perhaps we will do both. Call for more information. Leader: Larry Parrish, 622-7455.

Tuesday, May 17
SENIOR SAUNTER: UCSC ARBORETUM
Started in 1964 with a gift of 90 species of eucalyptus trees, the Arboretum has more than 6,000 specimens of marvelous plants. Easy walk. For those who want a longer walk, we’ll head over to UCSC campus and The Farm. Meet before 9:30 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave. To get direct, take Mission to Bay, go up Bay then on High St. which becomes Empire Grade to Arboretum parking lot on right. Bring lunch, water, $2 carpool. Leader: Marilyn Selby, 479-3809.

Saturday, May 21
HIKE: FALL CREEK STATE PARK
We’ll hike this beautiful redwood forest along the Fall Creek Trail, then up the South Fork, Cape Horn and Lost Empire Trails to the Big Ben Tree at the top. We’ll pass the DLX Lime Company’s still intact 1870 to 1919 Lime Kilns, 150’ high Blue Cliff Limestone Quarry and Blasting Powder Magazine. This 9-mile loop with 1500’ elevation gain, returns via the Big Ben and Fall Creek Trails past the old water-powered Barrel Mill on Fall Creek. Much of the barrel making machinery is still there. Bring water, lunch and $ for carpool. Meet at Santa Cruz County Government Center before 9:00 a.m. or at Felton Fair at 9:30 a.m. Heavy rain cancels. Leader: Ed Gilbert, 685-8389.

Sunday, May 22
WALK: ASILOMAR/PEBBLE BEACH
4-mile walk along city streets in Pacific Grove and Pebble Beach, then via a trail between fairways to the beach and out to Point Joe and back, finishing at Asilomar via boardwalks. Ocean views. Bring water and a snack, done about noon. Meet across from the Fishwife Restaurant on Sunset Drive in Pacific Grove at 9:00 a.m. Leader: Martha Saylor, 372-9215.

Tuesday, May 24
SENIOR HIKE: BIG BASIN/SLIPPERY RK
5-mile moderate hike on Sequoia Trail to Sempervirens Falls to Slippery Rock to Skyline to Sea Trail. Steep uphill at Slippery Rock. Those wishing a shorter walk can turn back at Sempervirens Falls. Meet before 9:30 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave. or at Felton Fair parking lot off Graham Hill Rd. at 9:30 a.m. Bring lunch, water, $4 carpool and share of Park entrance fee. Recommend hiking boots. Leader: Pat Herzog, 458-9841.

Sunday, May 22
HIKE: HETCH HETCHY
Ranger-led hike to Hetch Hetchy to learn about its natural history and to view spectacular Teeulala and Wapama waterfalls. Wildflowers should be abundant. See Calendar listings for related event the day before. Email Harold Wood for more information, harold.wood@sierraclub.org.

Tuesday, May 24
HIKE: HENRY COE STATE PARK
This walk is in Santa Clara County and involves a carpool over the hill. 11 miles on steep horse trails (1600' up and down) and multiple stream crossings. We’ll look for late spring wildflowers and a swimming hole. Bathing suits optional. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Santa Cruz County Government Center to carpool. Call Nick for additional information. Leader: Nick Wyckoff, 462-3101.
and Hare Creeks, far below Cone Peak. Bring water and lunch, and plan to share gas cost and state park entry fee. Meet BEHIND the Big Sur Land Trust Office (on Via Mona Marie across from the Rio Road Post Office) at 9:30 a.m. We’ll return mid to late afternoon. Leader: Mary Gale, 626-3565.

Tuesday, June 7
SENIOR HIKE: WATSONVILLE LEVEE
Level 4 miles in the sun along Corralitos Creek past orchards and fields with view of the Watsonville hills. No Facilities. Meet before 9:30 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave. Bring lunch, water, HAT, sunscreen, and $2 carpool. Leader: Beverly Mesch, 475-4185.

ATTENTION: Potential Advertisers!

Sierra Club Member Profile
Advertising in this newsletter packs more clout into your advertising dollars. Sierra Club members are one of the most valuable audiences in America. They are "opinion leaders" and "influentials." They are some of America's most sought-after advertising targets. But, more important, they influence others—in everything from opinion and outlook to choice of products. They are not only consumers, but also doers and leaders. A whopping 65% say they are willing to pay more for products that are lighter on the earth.

Club Members are among the most active, affluent audiences of adventure travelers and year-round outdoor sports enthusiasts your advertising dollars can buy. It’s an unduplicated audience with the power to buy your products and services.

Sierra Club Members are Great Prospects
Median Age: 46
Male/Female: 63% / 37%
Median Household Income: $82,000
Attended/Graduated College: 81%
Professional/Technical/Managerial: 36%

Outdoor Sports Enthusiasts
Backpacking/Hiking 4 times more active than the average adult
Mountain Biking 5 times more active
Cross-Country Sking 5 times more active
Whitewater Rafting 5.5 times more active
Source: 1996 survey and 2004 Sierra survey

For Rate Information, Contact: Debbie Bulger - 457-1036

Sierra Club
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Open space preserved on San Mateo County Coast

The Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) based in Menlo Park has purchased 183 acres of land on the San Mateo Coast for $2.25 million as part of POST’s “Saving the Endangered Coast” campaign. The property will be preserved as open space.

Rising between Lobitos and Tunitas Creeks four miles southeast of Half Moon Bay, the property climbs up wooded valleys and grassy slopes, culminating in a long, narrow ridge with ocean views. The sloping land features scrub-covered knolls, lush meadows, redwood groves, eucalyptus stands, and a winding, willow-lined creek. The property is adjacent to two other open space parcels.

“IF POST had not acquired it, two sprawling trophy homes could have been built on the flat areas along the ridge top,” POST President Audrey Rust said. “Any development would have been highly visible from neighboring ridgelines and would have impeded possible future hiking connections between the Bay Area Ridge Trail and the California Coastal Trail.”

Try an activist outing this year

What’s an activist outing? An intriguing Club trip that takes you to a special place that needs protection. As a Sierra Club member, you seek more than just travel: to blend your wildlands enjoyment with advocacy for the magnificent place you are visiting. Activist trips make it easy and also empower you to defend America’s wild heritage against the sinister attacks of the Bush Administration.

May 22-28
PROTECTING THE OWHEE CANYONLANDS OF NEVADA, OREGON, AND IDAHO
Three States and One Treasure. These little-known desert uplands and deep, sheer canyons boast spectacular scenery, dramatic geology, and immensely varied biology. Hike, camp, travel by van, and explore this breathtaking, incomparable wide-open country. Leader: Craig Deutsche. Price: $625. [50235A]

July 16-24
PROTECTING WILD NEVADA
Mountain streams, lush meadows, and 11,000-foot snowy peaks in Nevada? Yes, you’ll drive across this less-traveled state to its eastern edge to day hike in varied astounding wild areas. The Schell Creek Range and Mt. Moriah are just the start. Nevada has more potential wilderness than any other state. Leaders: Cal and Letty French. Price: $595. [50101A]

July 17-23
VISION FOR THE MAINE WOODS: RESTORING VALUABLE WILDERNESS
Maine activists are working to create wilderness areas in a once-primeval forest now largely privately-owned. Learn more about this major long-range campaign as you canoe four days on the idyllic west branch of the Penobscot River and camp one night at Lily Bay State Park to climb Mt. Kineo. Canoes provided. Leaders: Joan and Barry Sage. Price: $475. [50102A]

September 17-24
UTAH’S WILD WEST DESERT
Virtually unknown compared to redrock country, western Utah offers compelling mountain ranges and endless, sweeping landscapes. Car camping by van, explore on day hikes and one overnight backpack. Enjoy scenic peak climbs in the majestic Deep Creek and House Ranges, plus other wild ranges. Leader: Vicky Hoover. Price: $525. [50103A]

For more information, call Vicky Hoover, (415) 977-5527 or email, vicky.hoover@sierraclub.org. For a trip brochure and application form, call the Sierra Club Outing Department’s 24-hour voicemail, (415) 977-5522 or visit www.sierraclub.org/outings.
Nature Conservancy acquires gateway to Pinnacles National Monument

The long-awaited addition to Pinnacles National Monument is assured with the purchase in February of the 1,967-acre Pinnacles Ranch by The Nature Conservancy for $5.3 million. The Conservancy plans to transfer the property within three years to the Park Service for incorporation into the 24,000-acre park.

The new 1,967-acre addition to Pinnacles National Monument consists of rolling grasslands, oak woodlands and California condor habitat.

The Pinnacles Ranch consists of rolling grasslands, oak woodlands and California condor habitat and serves as the gateway to the monument. Approximately 75% of visitors to the park enter on the eastern side through the Pinnacles Ranch property.

The Conservancy received a loan for the acquisition from the David and Lucille Packard Foundation. By purchasing the land, the Conservancy in effect “bought time” for the National Park Service, preventing possible development of the property while the agency continues to seek full funding from the Land Water Conservation Fund. With help from Senator Dianne Feinstein, Senator Barbara Boxer and Representative Sam Farr, the Pinnacles National Monument recently received an appropriation of almost half the funds necessary to acquire the Ranch from the Conservancy.

The new acquisition is part of a crucial wildlife corridor in the Gabilan Mountains. It supports numerous animals, including golden eagles, peregrine falcons, deer, bobcats, foxes and most notably, newly-released California condors.

“It’s a great day for Pinnacles,” said Park Superintendent Cicely Muldoon. “The ranch is a treasure—it adds rare habitats to those already preserved in the park, and opens up new opportunities for the public. And it is key to the continued success of the California condor reintroduction effort.”

Since December 2003, 12 young condors have been released in the monument. Six more are scheduled for release in 2005. Condors can be seen wheeling high above Pinnacles Ranch, surfing thermal updrafts that rise from the open grasslands.

Along with extensive native grasslands and riparian habitat, the ranch contains approximately 700 acres of healthy valley oak woodlands. The Monument currently has only 40 acres of this increasingly rare habitat type.

Purchase gives newly released California condors more protected space

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On March 1 the Monterey County Board of Supervisors approved yet another subdivision project in the Elkhorn Slough watershed. The vote was 3-2 with supervisors Potter and Calcagno voting against the project citing water and traffic concerns.

The board had postponed making a decision on this project earlier in the year pending the outcome of a request for reconsideration of the Sunridge Views development which was effectively denied by the Coastal Commission in December by a 5-5 vote. In February the Coastal Commission denied the request for reconsideration, upholding their previous denial of the Sunridge project.

The new project, Rancho Roberto, proposes dividing 13.3 acres into 26 lots. The Planning and Building Department has recommended that six of the homes be "affordable." Friends, Artists, and Neighbors of Elkhorn Slough (FANS) submitted comments to the EIR regarding lack of long-term sustainable water supply, inadequate runoff detention basins, and other significant adverse biological impacts to the Slough. Many neighbors of Rancho Roberto in the Fruitland Avenue area circulated a petition against approval based on traffic issues.

The property is not irrigated at present, so no net increase in water supply would result from conversion of agricultural land to housing. The aquifer serving the proposed project has been documented as suffering from severe overdraft by the County. Despite this documentation and the two-year moratorium in 2000-02 on subdivisions in north Monterey County due to water quality and quantity, County Water Resource General Manager Curtis Weeks stated that there are over 900,000 acre feet of water stored in the aquifer and "not to worry." If there is no water supply problem, many wondered why residents are being assessed on their property taxes for the Salinas Valley Water Project to alleviate overdraft and why a desalinization plant is being considered for North County.

Two additional subdivisions near Elkhorn Slough are being studied including 180 new houses along the banks of Elkhorn Slough, conversion of an existing golf course to a 27-hole PGA course, and 103 new houses just uphill from the Carneros Creek which feeds more than 70% of Elkhorn Slough's fresh water.

To become involved in this issue contact Margie Kay, MARGIE17K@aol.com.
Scooting to work
by Brenda Barcelo

For environmental and safety reasons I don’t drive. I’m a lecturer at UCS and biking is my preferred mode of transportation. However, living on the Westside of Santa Cruz and commuting to UC very often meant riding my bike all the way down to the Metro Center in order to catch a bus with space on the racks for my bike. That took a good hour between bike riding, waiting, and bicycling from the bus stop to my office. Coming down the hill home was a breeze, literally!

A few years ago, I bought an electric bike, but the first time I tried to ride it to work, I discovered it didn’t have the power to go up that big hill. So I ended up returning it. Last year, for our 10th wedding anniversary, my husband surprised me with this electric scooter. It cost us about $950, but in exchange for taking a 2-hour safety workshop, we received a $300 rebate, so it ended up costing $650, a bargain considering its extremely low maintenance cost.

The scooter is very quiet, stable, and easy to ride. It can be ridden on most bike paths, only requires a bike helmet, and can be plugged in anywhere. I’ve never gone far, but I know that you can ride from downtown to Aptos and back on one charge. Now going to work means a very pleasant 15-minute ride. For more information visit www.ego vehicles.com.

Electric Bike Commuter Incentive Program

This program, run by Ecology Action, offers Santa Cruz County residents up to $375 off an electric bike. To receive the incentive, participants must complete a two-hour bike safety training class. Interested residents should call the program toll-free at (866) EZ-PEDAL (397-3325) to reserve a place in the class. Over 1,000 Santa Cruz County area residents are peddling and motoring, exhaust-free, along the roads on electric bikes. This pollution-reducing program is funded by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission. Visit www.ecoact.org and go to "transportation."

Celebrate the clean air way to commute or run errands.

Bike Week 2005
May 15-22

Santa Cruz

Sunday, May 15
BICYCLE & SKATEBOARD AIR & STUNT SHOWS
12-4pm @ Bicycle Trip (1127 Soquel Avenue in Santa Cruz). A jam-packed event: Professional air and stunt shows; Kids’ Bicycle Safety Obstacle Course; free BBQ and drinks; Prizes; Live Music by Stone Groove; Radio Remote by Santa Cruz X & free Valet Bike Parking! www.bicyclerip.com.

Tuesday, May 17
Commute Race
4:30pm @ Watsonville (race start). Cheer on local celebrities and politicians as the bicyclist takes on the motorist, electric bicyclist, tandem bicyclist, unicyclist, and others. Race finishes at Watsonville Plaza.

Wednesday, May 18
‘Cycling in Tibet’ Slideshow
6:10-7:30 p.m., hosted by local cyclist Julie Mitrovich @ Family Cycling Center (914 41st Ave., Capitola.)

Thursday, May 19
Bike to Work/School
Workout on the way to work. FREE breakfast at a variety of work and school sites in Monterey, Salinas, Greenfield, Moss Landing, Seaside, Carmel Valley, Aromas, Marina. 7:00-9:00 a.m. Call for locations.

Sunday, May 22
CASA Benefit Super Ride

Monterey

Tuesday, May 17
Bike vs. Car Challenge Ride
7:45 a.m. Alvin Shopping Center to Star Center, Salinas.

Bike to City Council Meeting
3:30 p.m. Steinbeck Library, Salinas. Contact James Serrano, 788-7195.

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Sunday, May 22
CASA Benefit Super Ride

Bike Festival Monterey Coastal Trail
Join us for a day of bike activities and rides, music, refreshments, drawings and games. (Park your car in Marina, Seaside, or Monterey and bike on the Coastal Trail to the festival.) Family rides from 10:00 to noon. See vintage and prototype bikes. Children’s bike rodeo (navigate a safety course).

For event information or to volunteer, please call (831) 775-0903 or email bikeweek@tacmonterey.org.
Deadline to vote in National Sierra Club election is April 25

If you haven’t already voted, please do so today! Votes must be cast by noon eastern daylight time on April 25. To vote online, follow the instructions in your printed ballot. If you haven’t already voted, please do so today!

Scientists agree

Listen, up. Scientists agree that human caused climate change really is happening. The so-called debate on this subject is largely the product of a public relations campaign sponsored primarily by the oil industry. Check out Greenpeace’s 2004 report that outlines this campaign. A recent Club function, your editor was shocked to hear some members thinking there was uncertainty among scientists. Ain’t so.

States sue over mercury rule

On March 15 the EPA issued a rule that allows power plants to continue to spew dangerous mercury into the air. This rule overturned a 2000 decision to cut mercury emissions and allows three times more mercury pollution than would happen with enforcement of our current laws! On March 29 nine states, including California, filed lawsuits against the EPA.

Natural ecosystems have monetary value

Natural ecosystems have great economic value. The value of natural forests has been estimated at $2.5 million per acre. The value of the services provided by natural ecosystems — pollination, water purification, climate regulation, etc — is even greater. Harvard economist Kenneth vector estimated that the value of the world’s tropical forests is $441 billion per year. Many environmental organizations have developed natural ecosystem indices to track the condition of our natural areas. The indices are calculated by assigning a value to each area based on its size, location, and other factors that determine its ecological value. The indices are then averaged to determine the overall condition of the natural ecosystem.

The study urges financial incentives to protect the environment. "Ecosystems and the services they provide are financially significant and . . . to degrade and damage them is tantamount to economic suicide," said Klaus Toepfer, head of the U.N. Environment Program.

Keep em clean

A shoe and bicycle tire scrubber to remove mud which harbors spores that spread sudden oak death is being field tested in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Researchers from the University of California in cooperation with the National Park Service. Sudden oak death has killed tens of thousands of oak trees in coastal California and southern Oregon since it was discovered about a decade ago.

Oil drilling threat on California coast

Ten environmental groups including the Sierra Club filed suit in March against the Bush Administration over its finding of “no significant impact” from extending 37 oil leases on the California Coast. The oil leases located off the Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo coasts were originally sold between 1968 and 1984. Sea otters in particular are at risk from oil spills.

Christmas present

Two days before Christmas, the Bush Administration announced a harmful new forest policy. The new rules effectively remove 20 years of national forest protections and, not surprisingly, conform closely to a timber industry wish list. The rules undermine wildlife and clean water protection and sharply limit the opportunity for meaningful citizen participation in forest planning. For more information: visit www.sierraclub.org/forests.
A new kind of bike

by Celia Scott

A new bike wasn’t really on the top of my agenda, although I did grumble about my old one from time to time. The old one had done good service ever since 1989 when the life-smothering oil spill in Alaska’s pristine Prince William Sound galvanized me into getting back on my bike and out of my car. But then the Sierra magazine arrived in February, with its article “Transported! Two-wheel travel made easy.” The “Breezer” commuter bike described there sounded like a dream that might make it even easier to ditch the car more often.

I put the article aside until one evening my old bike fell over on me, knocked me flat on the sidewalk, with only my helmet saving me from a serious head injury. I had to get a new helmet, so why not a new bike too? And so the “Breezer” came into my life.

My husband and I were surprised that we had to go over the hill to find a “Breezer,” but we did it—just as the Congress was voting to open up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling. That was my answer to that act of environmental vandalism.

And the “Breezer” really is a dream of a bike! From the twist gear shift on the handlebar, to the solid shock absorbers which cushion one from rough pavement, to its derailleur-free design, to the front and back lights generated by front hub power, it is well-designed and a pleasure to ride. The technical fine points would be better described by someone else. I just know that I can happily continue pursuing freedom from the automobile a while longer. For more information go to www.breezerbikes.com.