Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Helping the pronghorn
Club challenges Cemex
Borrow toys, don’t buy

FEB, MAR, APR
OUTINGS
Get involved politically

2008 could be the year of major changes in environmental and human rights policy for our country. This column is a request for many of you who have been turned off by the political process to become involved to insure that this change happens and has a good outcome.

The current administration under George W. Bush has done serious damage to the environment as well as to individual civil liberties. American actions and policies are, frankly, an embarrassment both in this country and abroad. The problems that have been created over the last eight years will not dissolve easily. They will require strong leadership and extraordinary diplomatic skills to change the corruption and greed that currently dominate politics in Washington. The end of the Iraq war and other planned hostilities in Iran or elsewhere should be the major priority.

The Sierra Club will be very active at both the National, State, and Chapter levels. Statewide, we have problems as the Governor plans to close State Park properties that provide recreation for people and protection for valuable natural resources. The view that our State Parks, the crown jewels of California, should be the earliest victims of budget cuts is a perfect example of misplaced priorities and the need for change at all levels of government.

Monterey County is equally bad or worse. We have an appallingly derelict Board of Supervisors who spend their time meeting with developers to plan how they can pave over prime farmland and open space in order to realize obscene profits. The good news is that Jane Parker will run for Jerry Smith’s seat on the Board.

She and other candidates that we support could use your help. Let 2008 be the year you step forward and make a difference. It will take all of us to turn the tide. Please set aside some time and money to help. Our own Political Chair, Gary Lasky is looking for members to help with our various campaigns. Please contact him at: data.nation@earthlink.net or 476-5702.

—Rita Dalessio

A symbol of hope

There is a truly amazing tree on the campus of Cabrillo College in Aptos. It is a native coast live oak. What is amazing, almost magical, is the fact that this tree springs from the stump of a much older oak that had been cut down.

The new tree is quite large. It sprouted possibly 80 to 100 years ago—before there was a Cabrillo College, before Highway 1 was constructed.

Unlike redwoods, coast live oaks do not regenerate. I have pondered on the scenario. Sometimes in my yard I observe scrub jays poking acorns into the ground, often in my vegetable patch! They push the acorn into the moist ground in the fall and winter. Then they tap it in further so it is completely covered with earth.

Perhaps on a day long ago, another scrub jay pushed an acorn into a crack in the stump that is now almost exploding around the base of the new tree. The old tree must have been quite venerable when it was cut down, probably before the nearby Porter Sesnon House was built in 1911. Judging from its size, it could have been several hundred years old.

Every time I see it, I am filled with hope and wonderment. It is a living example of how nature heals itself when we just let it do its thing.

Aah, that’s the trick, isn’t it. Keeping our busy minds and machines off Mother Nature. We seem to forget that she has had millions of years to figure out the best way to do things. So instead of protecting the flood plain so that rivers can overflow and deposit rich sediments for growing crops, we build in the flood plain, then construct channels and levees to protect our development.

Instead of letting the rain percolate through the soil to replenish the water table, we install impervious surfaces with z dispensal and then bemoan the fact that our water table is dropping and salt water is intruding landward.

Hopefully, we’re starting to get the picture. We’re not as smart as we think we are when it comes to living in harmony with the natural world. We need to look around more and learn from the expert.

A photo of this tree is on our cover this issue. It is even more impressive in person.

—Debbie Bulger
Coastal Commission allows development at Terrace Point

Standing on Terrace Point on the western edge of Santa Cruz, the view of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary and the Pacific Ocean appears infinite. Breathtaking coastline, wetlands, wildlife habitat, and unspoiled scenery. Isn’t this what the California coast is all about? Many of us think so. Take a look now. By a vote of 7 to 4 the Coastal Commission has approved the UCSC plan to expand development at Terrace Point by over 600,000 square feet.

At the December Coastal Commission meeting it was clear that the University had illegally drained wetlands. Despite compelling evidence, the Coastal Commission took no action to improve the project. Instead, they embraced UCSC’s claim that the environmental destruction was “worth it” since UCSC intends to educate future “ocean scientists” who will, hopefully, help to save degraded coasts and oceans somewhere else.

In sacrificing Terrace Point, the Coastal Commission not only allowed acres of new buildings on top of known wetlands, but allowed potent urban development such as dining facilities, sports courts, and housing to be constructed under the guise of ocean-dependent university and marine research. The vote appears to establish new precedent undermining California wetlands law by allowing special accommodations for state university developments that would not ordinarily be extended to private developers.

Thank you to all who took the time to write the Commission on this issue. We must intensify our efforts to preserve our spectacular California Coast. To receive emails about coastal issues, sign up at www.sierraclub.org/ca/coasts.

Contact Your Representatives

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Washington, D.C. 20500
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president@whitehouse.gov

Vice President Dick Cheney
(202) 456-1414
vicepresident@whitehouse.gov

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
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www.governor.ca.gov

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Sierra Club California has endorsed Proposition 93, the Term Limits and Legislative Reform Act, on the Tuesday, February 5, ballot.

Prop 93 would allow a legislator to serve up to 12 years in the Senate, the Assembly, or a combination of both. California’s current term limit allows 14 years, but these must be divided into a maximum of six years in the Assembly and eight in the Senate.

Experience: Legislators need time in Sacramento to learn about environmental issues and the Legislature’s sometimes arcane rules. Today, in the Assembly especially, even committee chairs and top leadership have limited experience. Often they are appointed after only two years in Sacramento; sometimes even brand-new legislators are appointed. Prop 93 will give lawmakers more time to gain the essential expertise and experience to deal with complicated environmental issues with long-term consequences.

Lobbyists: With less turnover of members, there will be fewer novice legislators most vulnerable to industry lobbyists’ false arguments. Consider the history of ballot propositions.

Open Space Alliance gets new director

Stephen Harrington joined the Open Space Alliance of Santa Cruz County (OSA) as Executive Director in November 2007. Harrington started his land conservation work in the early 90s as an intern with the Land Trust of Napa County while working on a double major in Environmental Studies and Economics at UC Santa Cruz. After completing his BA, he attended the Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies where he earned a Master of Environmental Studies degree in 1993.

Harrington’s graduate work focused on public space planning and land conservation. After graduate school he worked on the Chicago Rivers urban river restoration project with the National Park Service, Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program. In 1995, Stephen and his wife, Karen, returned to their native California where he worked as a consultant in Ventura with Rincon Consultants, focusing on CEQA and NEPA environmental review and city planning projects. During this time he served as an Executive Committee member of the Surfrider Foundation and worked on the Calleguas Creek Watershed Plan. This project was started by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board and has since grown to include all of the major watersheds in Ventura County.

In 1998, Harrington moved to Auburn where he consulted on the American River Watershed Plan. Before joining OSA, Stephen was a full-time dad. He and his family enjoy cycling and gardening in the foothills of Mt. Madonna in southern Santa Cruz County where they have lived since 2005.

The Open Space Alliance of Santa Cruz protects lands with significant natural and scenic qualities.

Vote YES on Prop 93 on February 5 (term-limit reform)

SB 375 would link land use planning and transportation

by Celia Scott

Potential landmark legislation to implement the California Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32) is now pending in the California Assembly Appropriations Committee, following passage by the Senate in 2007. (Senator Simitian voted yes, Senator Maldonado voted no.) SB 375, introduced by Senator Darrell Steinberg (D-Sacramento), is a significant effort to integrate land use planning and transportation in an effort to reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled and thereby reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This bill is a priority for the Sierra Club and is supported by the California League of Conservation Voters, the Natural Resources Defense Council, the American Lung Association, the Planning and Conservation League, and numerous other environmental and public interest groups. It is opposed by the League of California Cities, groups representing contractors, developers, and a variety of other business and local government interests. Recently, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission voted to instruct its staff to work toward exempting any possible transportation tax measure from the provisions of SB 375.

According to the bill’s author, Senator Steinberg, “Current planning models used for transportation decisions and air quality planning must be improved to assess policy choices...[by] encouraging more compact development patterns, expanding transit service, creating walkable communities, and providing incentives. It is also necessary to achieve significant greenhouse gas reductions from changed land use patterns and improved transportation to meet AB 32 standards.”

Currently, SB 375 requires the State Air Resources Board to provide by January 1, 2009, regional greenhouse gas reduction targets for automobiles and light trucks for the years 2020 and 2035, with regional updates until 2050. In addition, specified regional planning and transportation agencies would be required to prepare a “sustainable communities strategy” in order to achieve these targets through alternative development patterns or additional transportation measures. Other provisions would affect the environmental review process for specified projects.

SB 375 is lengthy and complex. It has already been significantly amended in the Senate, and is certain to spark strong debate in the Assembly. Some observers have called SB 375 the top environmental priority for the coming legislative session, as a critical component of the California effort to reduce global warming. At press time no hearing dates had been set for SB 375.

To keep informed, call the office of John Laird, our local representative in the Assembly and chair of the Assembly Budget Committee (see p. 3) or go online at www.leginfo.ca.gov for the legislative history and updates.
County trying to change zoning codes and dodge CEQA

The Santa Cruz County Planning Department has proposed a set of changes to the County Zoning Codes that will allow more buildings to be constructed on existing home sites with lower levels of public review. The proposal also relaxes the rules for second units which are fully independent living units associated with an existing home. The Sierra Club is not challenging the existing second unit rules. What we reject is expanding the meaning of “habitable” and “non-habitable” units so that they can become, in fact, additional housing units on a lot that already contains a main unit and a legal second unit.

We maintain that these proposed changes to the County Zoning Code require analysis of environmental impacts specified by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Over time many new occupied structures could be built on existing lots under these proposed rules. This would dramatically change the character of neighborhoods and place increased demand upon water supplies, waste water treatment capacity, and roads, and will further imperil wildlife. The County has so far refused to consider CEQA review, a position that we believe is illegal. The Santa Cruz Group of the Sierra Club has submitted extensive legal arguments explaining our position.

What could be built

- Under the proposed zoning code changes in rural areas, on any suitable lot larger than one acre, the owner could build both a second unit and two 640 sq. ft. “habitable accessory structures” with toilets and heating. The result could be a 4-unit rental complex on a 1.01 acre lot.
- Rural lots could have two 1500 sq. ft. insulated and sheet-rocked “non-habitable” house-size “accessory structures” 28 ft. 17-28 ft. high “habitable structures” plus a full second-unit apartment.
- The rule changes would remove the current affordability requirements created to provide low-income housing.
- The idea that the septic discharge from these new buildings in rural areas could be safely treated on one-acre lots is unfounded. Many rural home sites are near creeks where water pollution from septic systems is a particular hazard. Allowing toilets in accessory units will enable all kinds of plumbing fixtures and kitchen appliances which will in fact make the units housing.
- Anyone who lives in unincorporated areas of the County has some idea of how many illegal second units now exist, even without new rules facilitating their construction. Many septic systems in use today are sub-standard and no regular inspection of these systems is taking place despite an inspection program on the books.
- Everyone who drinks water from the City of Santa Cruz, the Soquel Creek Water District or other surface water systems should be concerned about the effect these zoning code changes would have upon water pollution and water availability.

The Planning Department suggests they will control the illegal conversion of “accessory structures” into full second units by regular inspections inside the building. They claim that the building permit would give consent to such inspections by the property owner. Current enforcement is weak and relies almost entirely on citizen complaint which places unreasonable pressure on neighbors in a rural setting. It is hard to imagine enforcement would be improved with additional responsibilities.

How to help

- The Board of Supervisors will take up this issue on February 26. Call your Supervisor to express your opinions on the proposed changes, 454-2200.
- Ask that the environmental impact of these changes be studied.
- To learn more contact Kevin Collins, 335-4196, bats3@cruzio.com or Aldo Giacchino, 460-1538, agsantacruz@sbcglobal.net.

CNPS and Friends of Arana Gulch file appeal challenging Arana Gulch bikeway

On January 11, the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) and Friends of Arana Gulch filed an appeal of the Superior Court November 2007 decision on the lawsuit against the City of Santa Cruz. The appeal focuses on the lack of alternatives in the EIR for the Arana Gulch bicycle connection. The EIR failed to consider alternative bike routes that do not cross habitat of the endangered Santa Cruz tarplant.

The tarplant (Holocarpha macradenia) is listed as “endangered” by the State of California and as “threatened” by the federal government. In October 2002, the U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife Services designated Arana Gulch as “critical habitat” for the tarplant.

The project would construct a 340-foot bridge over Hagemann Gulch, a “steel span” over Arana Creek, and two 8-11 foot-wide paved bicycle routes through critical habitat. In the EIR the City admits that the project would create “significant and unavoidable impact” to the tarplant and Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas that are protected by the Coastal Act. The City approved the project despite these impacts.

“There are plenty of options for an east-west bike link that would completely avoid the tarplant habitat,” said Vince Cheap, Conservation Chair, Santa Cruz Chapter of CNPS. “Instead the City chose to pit cyclists against an endangered species.”

Bicyclist Don Fong noted, “It’s a sad day for bicyclists when the City uses bicycling as an excuse to pave over the critical habitat of an endangered species.”

The Arana Gulch Greenbelt is a 67.7 acre open space in east Santa Cruz. It was purchased by the City in 1994.

For more information visit the Friends of Arana Gulch website at http://members.cruzio.com/~arana/.
Sierra Club Events

Friday, February 8

**Potluck & Slides: Tuscany and Umbria, Italy**
Slides and talk by Joanne Moy on 2007 Sierra Club Trip to Tuscany and Umbria. Why not bring some Italian foods for your potluck dish? Pasta, salads, cheeses, pizza, torta, gelato. The potluck begins at 6:30 p.m. at Sorrento Oaks Mobile Home Recreation Room, 800 Brommer St. near 7th Ave. Bring food to share and your own washable plate, cup, utensils, cloth napkin, and serving utensil. Call Diane Cornell for directions 423-5925.

Friday, March 14

**Potluck & Slides: Galapagos and Costa Rica**
The slide show is presented by Jim Bourne, a professional photographer and includes pictures of Quito and the Galapagos, including some underwater shots. The potluck begins at 6:30 p.m. Bring food to share and your own washable plate, cup, utensils, cloth napkin, and serving utensil. We love home-cooked food, but store-bought items (minimum value $5) make great contributions too. For directions call George at 706-4233.

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.

Friday, February 8

**Warming up to Water**
Free multimedia presentation by UCSC researchers on Climate Change Impacts on Local Water Supplies. Capitola City Hall, Council Chambers, 420 Capitola Ave, in the Village. 7-9 p.m. Sponsored by Capitola Commission on the Environment, UCSC, Soquel Creek Water District, Santa Cruz Water Department, Central Water District, County of Santa Cruz.

April 4 - 26

**Wildflower class - Monterey Peninsula College**
Join naturalist Nikki Nedeff for 2 Friday evening lectures and 4 Saturday field trips. Cost is $50. For more info contact nikki@ventanaview.net. To register visit www.mpc.edu for Biology 75.1.

Saturdays

**Habitat restoration sponsored by CNPS Santa Cruz**
Volunteer to restore native habitat in State Parks in Santa Cruz Co. Wear layered work clothes. Bring water & gloves. Tools provided. 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. We work rain or shine, but if things get particularly unpleasant, we call it a day. Contact Linda Brodman, redwdrn@pacbell.net, 462-4041. Website: www.cruzcnps.org.

February 16, Quail Hollow County Park
February 23, Sunset Beach State Park
March 1, Twin Lakes State Park

**Garland Ranch Hikes**
The Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District docents lead hikes at Garland Ranch every Saturday. An updated list of all hikes may be found on their website: www.mprpd.org.

February 17, Garrapata State Park, 11-2
March 1, Pt. Lobos, 1-4
March 16, Garrapata State Park, 11-2

Fourth Saturday

**Habitat restoration - Watsonville**
Sponsored by Watsonville Wetlands Watch. 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Meet at the Fitz Wetlands Educ. Res. Ctr. at Pajaro Valley HS. Gloves, tools, and snacks provided. Call Jonathan Pilch, 728-4106, for more info. No experience necessary.

Saturdays

**Habitat restoration sponsored by CNPS - Monterey**
Volunteer to restore native habitat in State Parks in Monterey Co. Wear layered work clothes. Bring water & snacks. Tools & gloves provided. 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Carpools meet at Black Bear Diner Park and Ride. Rain or shine. Contact Bruce Delgado, 277-7690, bdelgado@mbay.net Website: www.montereybaycnps.org.

February 17, Garrapata State Park, 11-2
March 1, Pt. Lobos, 1-4
March 16, Garrapata State Park, 11-2

**Habitat restoration sponsored by CNPS - Monterey**
Volunteer to restore native habitat in State Parks in Monterey Co. Wear layered work clothes. Bring water & gloves. Tools provided. 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. We work rain or shine, but if things get particularly unpleasant, we call it a day. Contact Linda Brodman, redwdrn@pacbell.net, 462-4041. Website: www.cruzcnps.org.

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Sierra Club challenges expansion of Cemex Quarry

The Sierra Club has submitted comments to the Draft EIR critical of expansion of the quarry supplying limestone to the cement plant in Davenport. The County of Santa Cruz has sent the report back for amending. It will be resubmitted as a second Draft EIR for public comment at a later date.

Global giant Cemex, based in Mexico, is the world’s third largest producer of cement. The cement plant is connected by a 3-mile conveyor belt to a quarry in Bonny Doon. Cemex applied to the Santa Cruz County Planning Department for a 16-acre expansion of the quarry, and the draft EIR was released in August 2007. In response to the DEIR, Sierra Club cited many inadequacies of the document:

- Much of the concern centers around the effect the expansion would have on Liddell Springs, the source of up to 10% of the water supply for the City of Santa Cruz. The Santa Cruz Water Department also expressed concern about the effect of the quarry expansion on the city water supply.
- Mitigations for the loss of habitat for the dusky-footed wood rat and the Federally “threatened” California red-legged frog are inadequate.
- The Club believes that the DEIR is deficient in that it does not address how the expansion would negatively affect adjacent open space known as Coast Dairies and Land, currently owned by the Trust for Public Land and slated to be handed over to the Bureau of Land Management this year.
- The DEIR does not address significant negative impacts of the noise, traffic, water, and air quality for nearby residents. Some potential significant quality of life impacts were simply ignored.
- Perhaps most importantly, the DEIR did not address the potential impacts the quarry expansion might have regarding AB32, the Global Warming Solutions Act. Cement plants emit 5% of all carbon dioxide emissions worldwide, and are thus a key component of climate change. The Sierra Club asserts that AB32 must be considered not only in terms of the quarry expansion, but also that the scope of the DEIR be expanded to include carbon dioxide emissions from the cement plant itself.
- Alternatives to the expansion are inadequate and biased in favor of the expansion. Although alternatives were identified, they were dismissed, because they did not meet Cemex’s objective of making as much money as possible as quickly as possible. Such reasoning is not permissible under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- Astonishingly, Santa Cruz County has allowed Cemex separate operating permits for the cement plant and the quarry, in spite of their mutual dependency and even physical connection via the long conveyor belt that transports the limestone ore from the quarry to the plant.
- The Ventana will keep readers informed as the proposed expansion wends its way through the CEQA process. The next step is for the Draft EIR to be worked and recirculated for public comment.

Cemex forestry practices receive FSC recertification

Management problems identified

by Jodi Frediani

The Cemex Cement plant in Davenport underwent a re-certification assessment of its forestry practices in November 2007 by SmartWood on behalf of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). The certification program is ostensibly to recognize conscientious land stewardship through an independent evaluation so that sustainably-harvested lumber can use the FSC label for marketing purposes.

Cemex owns and logs 8320 acres along San Vicente Creek above the intakes which provide drinking water to Davenport residents. As The Ventana has reported, Davenport residents have been under a “Boil Water” order from the County Health Department during the winter months because of excessive turbidity in the creek. In 2006 San Vicente Creek was listed as impaired for sediment under the Clean Water Act with the cause identified as silviculture (logging).

The independent auditors noted a number of concerns, despite recommending the recertification. Additionally, they requested a number of corrective actions before the next audit in one year.

Specific concerns included lack of planning at the landscape level which should include a larger ecosystem view, lack of a comprehensive plan for the transportation system (roads and skid trails), excessive skid trails and skidding (tractor hauling of logs) adjacent to streams, no analysis of the cumulative effects of timber harvests, and the fact that the stream buffers and streamside management used by Cemex do not meet the FSC standards.

In addition SmartWood noted that the distribution of old growth and snags inventoried is not yet known, and therefore, there is no comprehensive management strategy to increase the number of large old trees, snags, and large woody debris all of which provide key wildlife habitat. Older trees were under-represented. Records of post-harvest monitoring were also lacking.

The FSC audit process requires stakeholder participation, however for this audit, there was input only from one academic, one non-governmental organization, four government representatives, and two local residents. Comments may still be submitted to Kara Wires at kwires@ra.org. Comments may be made anonymously.

To view the complete report visit www.rainforest-alliance.org/forestry/documents/cemexpubsum07.pdf

Challenge to listing local coho moves to State Supreme Court

by Jodi Frediani

On November 20, 2007, the Third Appellate District court affirmed the decision of the California Fish and Game Commission to list two “populations” of coho salmon under the California Endangered Species Act.

In 2005, the California Forestry Association (CFA) filed a challenge in state court to two separate listing decisions by the California Fish and Game Commission. Specifically, they challenged the Commission’s decision to list a “population” of coho salmon that reside along California’s central coast (south of San Francisco) as “endangered” and the Commission’s decision to list another “population” of coho that reside on California’s north coast and in southern Oregon as “threatened.”

The California Forestry Association claimed that only species or sub-species could be granted listing protection, not populations. The 2007 court decision disagreed with CFA and ruled that the Commission could list populations separately. The CFA challenge was based on the scientific use versus the popular use of such terms as “species” and “sub-species.” They claimed that a “population” did not meet the definition of either a species or sub-species, and therefore could not be listed.

Not deterred by the appellate court, CFA filed a petition on December 28, 2007 for review of the decision with the California Supreme Court. CFA is represented by the ultra-conservative Pacific Legal Foundation.

Ever since the Central Coast coho salmon were listed by the State as endangered in 1995, after a petition to list them was prepared by County Planner Dave Hope, and submitted by the Santa Cruz County Fish and Game Advisory Commission, the local timber industry has fought to get the listing reversed. The loggers’ arguments have varied from claiming the Central Coast fish were not native to this area, the population was not self-sustaining, the habitat is too harsh, or as in the recent court case, a population does not qualify for listing status. Multiple challenges to federal and state listing have all failed.

Regardless of the argument, the timber industry’s expected, yet elusive, goal has always been the same: get rid of special watercourse protections designed to support coho recovery.

Removal of restrictions which currently limit the number of large trees that can be cut in the riparian corridor would allow landowners to log more trees adjacent to streams. Streamside shade is necessary to keep water temperatures sufficiently cool for coho, and large downed wood is essential to help create deep pools and slow sediment movement which helps provide adequate clean gravels needed for successful spawning. When large trees are continually harvested in the riparian corridor, they do not live long enough to fall over and provide future large wood in streams.

In addition to the state listing, the National Marine Fisheries Service federally listed the coho as “threatened.” After a Big Creek Lumber Company 2003 petition to delist, the National Marine Fisheries Service determined the coho were in worse shape than previously believed and chose to upgrade their listing status to “endangered.”
Check out toys instead of buying

by Debbie Bulger

Heddi Craft takes reduce, reuse, recycle to a new level with her business on Walnut Avenue in Santa Cruz. She has started a toy library. Called The Educational Resource Center of Santa Cruz, the toy library is a solution for consumerism and strained budgets. Craft is a former teacher with three children of her own under seven. The business was spawned when she started trading toys and games with friends as her children got tired of playing with the same puzzles for the umpteenth time.

Opened in 2005 and moving to progressively larger space in 2006 and 2008, the toy library boasts 1600 items and 65 members today. Members pay a modest monthly fee to have access to all kinds of fun. There are board games, building toys such as blocks, science kits, creative activities such as felt boards, foreign language learning materials, science kits, puppets, a good quality microscope, and more.

When we stopped by, Yuki Carrozinn selected toys for her two year old. Yuki Carrozinn

was checking out toys for her toddler. “I like how you can rotate toys,” she explained. “I’m not constantly spending money. It’s recycling!”

Craft missed teaching as she was staying home with her children. Running the Educational Resource Center which is open three days a week, enabled her to have the best of both worlds. She keeps her hand in education, and she can bring her children to work with her half the day.

With all the toys, they’re never bored. For more information call 818-8178.

More affordable products

Clorox and Sierra Club are partnering on a new line of plant-based cleaning products to be sold in 24,000 stores in April. They will bear the Sierra Club logo and endorsement. “The Green Works line will make it easier and more affordable for Americans to buy eco-friendly products,” said Carl Pope, Sierra Club’s Executive Director.

New water source

After getting State Health Department approvals, a huge new water treatment plant in Orange County will inject purified sewage water into the groundwater basin to fight salt water intrusion. Approval was pending at press time. From 70 to 130 million gallons of water a day could be reclaimed by the system which is touted to use less electricity than moving the same amount of water from remote sources via aqueducts.

Good for the air

John Balmes, M.D. has been appointed to the California Air Resources Board by the Governor. Dr. Balmes teaches pulmonary/critical care medicine at U.C. San Francisco. The Club applauds this appointment.

Smells funny

Despite repeated requests from environmental organizations, the EPA refuses to require manufacturers to disclose and label all ingredients in air fresheners. Phthalates, found in some air fresheners, cause birth defects or reproductive harm and can be particularly dangerous to young children. So-called air fresheners do not clean the air, they only mask smells and add toxic chemicals to the air. The EPA has asked for voluntary disclosure.

China bans plastic bags

Over 3 million plastic bags are used in China every day using 37 million barrels of oil/year for their manufacture. The Chinese government has decided to do something about this waste. Beginning in June thin plastic bags will be banned in supermarkets and stores there.

Emissions Protection Agency

Against the recommendations of his own staff, EPA administrator Stephen Johnson denied a waiver the State of California needs to move forward with stricter emissions standards for automobiles. Sierra Club has joined the fight to overturn the decision along with 16 states and other environmental organizations. EPA’s own lawyers agreed there was no legal basis for denying the waiver.

SECOND WIND COACHING

Create a balanced life, centered in principles and the expression of what you value

Create The Change You Long To See

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Marilyn Fahrner, MFT, CPCC

5905 Soquel Dr. Ste. 200, Soquel, CA 95073 831-465-9193

Make a difference

Join Sierra Club California’s Legislative Action Network

http://cal-legalalert.sierraclubaction.org

Printed on recycled paper
A gift for the Carrizo Plain pronghorn

by Louise “Letty” French

The bone-chilling wind drove right through sweats and polypro clothing as a dozen volunteers waited for a radio to direct our next move. We had stopped in a swale on the American Ranch overlooking the vastness of the Carrizo Plain. Cal and Doug had driven ahead on the tenuous dirt road to try to find the closest approach to that elusive fence. I held the radio, which finally spoke, “Come on here.” Around the big curve and over the hill, there was the BLM truck.

We grabbed wire cutters, universal fence tools and post pullers and trudged up the ridge to that last section of fence. We needed to pull it down; we could see the animal trails along side where the fence had interfered with their migratory pattern. With the strong incentive to work hard to keep warm and the desire to destroy this fence, this amazing group of 14 volunteers took care of that section in less than 2 hours.

Rolled up barbed wire and heavy T poles were left in neat piles about every 30 yards. Doug Wreden, our volunteer BLM resource person, stated that he would collect them with his ATV which saved us a lot of heavy carrying. As we finished lunch, a shower came down from the black cloud overhead; we piled into the cars and left.

What’s next? Doug had the job: a quarter mile of hog wire at the Washburn Center which he had wanted to tear out for a long time. Hog wire is nasty stuff. It’s a square mesh of heavy wire sunk about 6-12 inches into the ground and deeply anchored to T-poles. Our group set to work. Many had never seen hog wire, and exclamations warmed the air at the difficulty of freeing it from the T-poles. Half an hour later, we had that bottom half of the fence neatly rolled up and carried over to the maintenance shack. Old rotten wire and T-poles give up rather easily. By now, the sun had warmth, and we were ready to go. But Doug had run out of work! OK, time to play!

Craig Deutsche led us on an easy walk to some very interesting areas. One big rock was pockmarked with holes up the face overlooking the Plain. We could clearly see two raptor nests. All were empty this time of year. Underneath one

Next came happy hour. When darkness fell, the wind died and the heat from discarded oak logs spread out to warm us. Lots of good food and good conversation along with some chocolate and libation sent everyone to bed tired and happy.

Sunday dawned clear, sunny, and cold. We met Doug at the Visitors’ Center again and drove towards the American Ranch. Here was a long stretch of fence just begging to be modified. We yanked the bottom wires off rapidly. Old rotten wire and T-poles give up rather easily. By now, the sun had warmth, and we were ready to go. But Doug had run out of work! OK, time to play!

Craig Deutsche led us on an easy walk to some very interesting areas. One big rock was pockmarked with holes up the face overlooking the Plain. We could clearly see four raptor nests. All were empty this time of year. Underneath one

I picked up owl pellets with intact little mice and kangaroo rat skulls. Fascinating.

Finally, it was time to leave. As we came down the road from Selby Camp, there, close on our right beside Soda Lake Road, was a herd of about a dozen pronghorn. They were alertly watching us, and the faint breeze seemed to carry their message, “Thank you so very, very much.”

Their thanks go to Doug Wreden, BLM maintenance manager. Our volunteers came from all over: Eric Rorer from Mill Valley, Jane and George Collier from Oakland, Jim VerSteeg from Porterville, Glenn Gragg from Santa Cruz, Tony Loftin from Sacramento, Sid Silliman from Upland, Alice Bond from San Francisco, Greg Frugoli from Cambria, Joan O’Keefe from Atascadero, and Jason Hashmi and Craig Deutsche from Los Angeles. They braved rain and cold and did a fantastic job.

March 2005 was a banner year for wildflower displays on the Carrizo Plain. Debbie Bulger is surrounded by acres of goldfields and tidy tips.
Governor proposes closing 48 state parks & cutting lifeguards at 14 state beaches

In January Governor Schwarzenegger proposed cutting $13.3 million from the Department of Parks and Recreation general fund budget in 2008-09, in an attempt to close the huge $14 billion state deficit. This reduction would mean the closure of 48 state parks out of 278 existing parks and reduce the number of lifeguards at 14 state beaches, including Natural Bridges, New Brighton, Seacliff, Sunset, and Manresa. His proposal would also eliminate 136 permanent employees including park rangers, maintenance workers, scientists and tour guides.

Sierra Club California strongly opposes any effort to close our state parks. These cuts would be devastating to the millions of Californians who rely on their state parks for recreation, educational opportunities, and quiet enjoyment of nature.

Shutting down state parks is out of touch with the priorities of Californians. The 48 parks slated for closure represent some of the most significant cultural, historic, and natural resources in the state. State parks slated for closure include Henry Coe near Morgan Hill and Portola Redwoods in San Mateo County. See the map on this page for the complete listing.

Suggesting that California’s state beaches can go through the summer without adequate lifeguard staffing is a dangerous proposal that threatens the health and safety of Californians.

The Club believes that the Governor’s proposal is the wrong way to go about balancing the state’s budget. Contact information for both Governor Schwarzenegger and your State Assemblymember and State Senator are on page 3.

National Board of Directors ballot coming soon

Election ballots will be mailed soon to Club members to vote for the Board of Directors (or by internet for those choosing electronic ballots). The Board of Directors sets Club policy, budgets at the national level, and works with the Executive Director and staff to operate the Club. To learn more about the candidates visit www.sierraclub.org/bod/2008election.

The deadline for returning ballots in time to be counted is 9:00 a.m. April 21.

Moving?

Please fill out and mail the change of address form on p. 15 or email: address.changes@sierraclub.org

The post office charges us 70¢ each if they handle the address change. Please help the club by using the coupon on p. 15.

Thank you!

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,” by any name they are some of America’s most sought-after advertising targets. Their own purchasing activity is substantial. 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.

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: 41
Male/Female: 63%/37%
Median Household Income: $56,227
Attended/Graduated College: 81%
Professional/Technical/Managerial: 36%

Outdoor Sports Enthusiasts

Backpacking/Hiking 4 times more active than the average adult
Tennis 5 times more active
Mountain Biking 5 times more active
Cross-Country Skiing 5 times more active
Whitewater Rafting 5.5 times more active

Source: 1996 MRI Doublebase

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

Sierra Club/Ventana Chapter, Volume 47, Number 1, 2008 Printed on recycled paper
**Outings**

**Outings Ratings**

**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 the riders. Carpool drivers are not agents or employees of the Sierra Club.

**Explanation of Ratings:**

The outings described vary in difficulty from leisurely walks to strenuous hikes. The following explanation is a general guideline. (For more information about the difficulty of a particular outing, call the leader.)

- **Walk:** Between 2-5 miles, leisurely pace.
- **Easy:** No more than 5 miles; slight elevation gain; easy pace.
- **Moderate:** 5-10 miles; up to 2000' gain; boots; better than average fitness required.
- **Strenuous:** May involve off-trail hiking; demanding pace; for experienced hikers in good condition only.

**Meeting Places**

**Directions:**

**Black Bear Diner Parking & Ride:** This parking lot is on Rio Road in Carmel.

**Save-Mart / Bagel Bakery:** (formerly Albertson's) South of Monterey on Hwy. 1. One mile past Ocean Ave., turn L on Carmel Valley Rd. Almost immediately, turn R at the light. Save-Mart / Bagel Bakery on the R.

**Santa Cruz County Government Center:** The large grey building at the corner of Ocean & Water in Santa Cruz. We meet at the corner of the parking lot nearest to the intersection.

**Felton Faire:** The shopping center at the junction of Graham Hill and Mt Hermion Rds in Felton. 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 Ave. exit. Go toward the ocean on 41st Ave. Pass the main mall entrance and turn right into the next entrance near Sears. We meet behind the bank located at 41st and Capitola Road.

**MPC Parking lot:** Monterey Peninsula College Parking Lot. From Hwy. 1 take the Fisherman's Wharf exit, go straight one block, turn L and L again into the first parking lot—A. This is the site of the Thurs. Farmers Mkt.

**K-Mart Seaside**

**Notice**

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

**February**

**Tuesday, February 5**

**Hike: Point Lobos**

Our 6-mile grand loop with minimal elevation gain takes us along tree-clad headland trails with magnificent views. We're certain to see a variety of wildlife and, hopefully, some wildflowers which we'll stop to enjoy. Bring water, lunch, and optional binoculars. Meet at the Black Bear Diner Parking & Ride by 9:30 a.m. Call for a reservation. Leader: Lynn Bomberger, 375-7777.

**Wednesday, February 6**

**Hike: New Brighton Beach**

Our beaches are beautiful and uncrowded in the winter. Starting at the New Brighton Beach parking area inside the park will allow us to go both ways into Capitola along the bluffs past the butterfly trees and along the railroad track through Seafort to the Esplanade in Aptos. We will walk along the sand for about 1/2 miles, tide permitting, or along the bluff. Bring lunch and water. 7 miles. To carpool meet at Sears 41st Ave. at 9:30 a.m. ($1) or in the parking lot at the beach inside New Brighton SP at 9:20 a.m. Leader: Diane Cornell, 423-5925.

**Saturday, February 9**

**Hike: Toro Park**

Let's do the Black Mountain loop, a strenuous 9 miles with 2000' elevation gain. Sweeping views of the Salinas Valley and Monterey Bay. Take the Portola exit on Hwy. 68 and meet outside the park entrance at 9:30 a.m. Bring lunch and water. We recommend a short carpool. Bring snack, water, and optional binoculars for wildlife viewing. Leader: Martha Saylor, 372-9215.

**Tuesday, February 12**

**Hike: Veeder Pond**

8-mile hike with 1300' elevation gain out the Terrace Trail then on to Veeder Pond. We hope to see a fine selection of early wildflowers. Bring water and lunch. Meet at the Black Bear Diner Park & Ride by 10:30 a.m. or at the trailhead at 10:30 a.m. Call for a reservation. Leader: Lynn Bomberger, 375-7777.

**Wednesday, February 13**

**Hike: Pinnacles**

This trail traverses high grassy slopes that can be seen from most of the Bay Area. Currents of wind wash over the ridge, giving the trail its name. Ocean views. Don't let this scare you off, because the protected Hamms Gulch Trail descends through a Douglas fir forest with rays of winter sunlight. 8 miles. Bring lunch and water. From Hwy. 280 take Alpine turn-off to Portola Rd. for a 10:10 a.m. start on the trail. To carpool ($5) meet at 9:30 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave. Leader: Diane Cornell, 423-5925.

**Friday, February 15**

**Hike: Pinnacles**

Starting at the West side, we'll hike an 8-mile circle that takes in the highlights of this fascinating park: Juniper Canyon, High Peaks, Balconies, and Caves. Wonderful views and moderately strenuous terrain that includes some narrow, steep and maybe wet stretches. Leisurely pace. Bring lunch, water, sturdy shoes and a flashlight for the caves. Meet at MPC parking lot A at 8:30 a.m. (bring change
HIKE: SOBERANES CREEK/ROCKY RIDGE

Great views at lunch. We’ll descend Rocky Grove, then climb steeply to grassy knolls for Soberanes Creek Tr. into a delightful redwood loop with 1650’ elevation gain. We’ll follow the There should be some flowers for our 5-mile HIKE: SOBERANES CREEK/ROCKY RIDGE

HIKE: CARML VALLEY TO JACKS PEAK

A short but interesting hike up Roach Canyon in Carmel Valley, up a moderate incline to Jacks Peak. About 6 miles, 1000’ elevation gain. Possible return via Martin Canyon if brush isn’t too overgrown. Possible short car shuttle. Meet at Save Mart/Bagel Bakery at 10:00 a.m. to carpool. Leader: Larry Parrish, 622-7455.

Tuesday, February 19

HIKE: TORO PARK

We’ll climb the Baldwin Loop 3.5 miles with moderately steep uphill and great ocean views. Restrooms only at park entrance. Meet before 9:30 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave or at Mission & King by Shen’s Gallery at 9:50 a.m. To go directly, call leader for new parking area directions. Bring lunch, water, $3 carpool. Tick area. Bring Repellant. Leader: Brooke Ewoldsen, 475-6188.

Tuesday, February 19

HIKE: TORO PARK

This 5 1/2 mile hike with 800’ elevation gain takes us through a forested valley along the Olson Trail then up to oak-dotted grasslands hopefully covered with wildflowers. Moderate pace with stops to enjoy flora & fauna. Meet at the dirt parking area just outside Toro Park by 9:45 a.m. Bring water and lunch. Call for reservations. Leader: Lynn Bomberger, 375-7777.

Wednesday, February 20

HIKE: COSTANOA TO CHALK MOUNTAIN

25 miles north of Santa Cruz, the Costanoa Resort was built in San Mateo County just off Hwy. 1 in a grove of Eucalyptus trees. This was the sight of a historic Oblate encampment that provided shelter from seashore winds. We’ll start at the resort and follow the trail out and then uphill to Chalk Mountain with upper and lower vista points that overlook Año Nuevo Point and Pigeon Pt. Lighthouse. Bring water, lunch, and $3 carpool. 9 miles. Meet at Sears 41st Ave at 9:00 a.m. or at the Costanoa Resort Ranch House which is a general store at 9:40 a.m. Leader: Diane Cornell, 423-5925.

Saturday, February 23

HIKE: CASTLE ROCK / SAN LORENZO HEADWATERS

Years ago George Jamnal took us into this westerly portion of Castle Rock from its main parking lot. We’ll do a trail (new to me) from the Park’s westerly boundary just below Saratoga Gap into the headwaters of the San Lorenzo River where it is just a trickle. 8 miles with 1200’ elevation gain. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Santa Cruz County Government Center to carpool. Call for additional information. Leader: Nick Wyckoff, 462-3101.

Sunday, February 24

HIKE: TERRACE CREEK

We’ll hike up the Pine Ridge Tr., then go up beautiful Terrace Creek Tr. to the Old Coast Rd. and return via the Ventana Resort. 10.5 miles with 1600’ elevation gain. Great coastal views. Bring a big lunch and lots of water. Meet at Save-Mart/Bagel Bakery at 9:00 a.m. Car shuttle. Heavy rain cancels. Call before to confirm. Leader: Anneliese Suter, 624-1467.

Monday, February 25

HIKE: MOUNT MCBEE OVERLOOK

We’ll ascend from Waddell Beach to this stunning viewpoint via the Skyline-to-the-Sea Trail and McClary Ridge, passing through the redwood groves and along the pine-clad ridge crest. 13 miles, with 2,000’ elevation gain. Bring lunch and 2 quarts of water. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Santa Cruz County Government Center. Rain cancels. Leader: Eugene Sobka, 449-2873.

Tuesday, February 26

HIKE: MITTELDORF PRESERVE

This 4 1/2 mile loop with 900’ elevation gain has 8 bridged creek crossings, a redwood forest and spectacular views. Moderate pace with stops to enjoy flora (hopefully some Hound’s Tongue) & fauna. Meet at the Black Bear Diner Park & Ride by 9:30 a.m. Bring water and lunch. Call for a reservation. Leader: Lynn Bomberger, 375-7777.

Wednesday, February 27

HIKE: TORO COUNTY PARK

This is the best time of year to hike across the hillsides of this former ranch for views from Salinas Valley to Monterey Bay. We’ll start on the Cougar Ridge Trail hiking up 1620 ft. and return on the Ollason trail through the canyon. 8 miles. We’ll pass over wooded hillsides, grassy meadows, open ridges, and chaparral-covered ridges. Bring lunch and water. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave. or at Rio Del Mar behind the gas station at 9:15 a.m. (carpool $4). Or at Toro Park at 10:00 a.m. just inside the gate to the right in the open field. Leader: Diane Cornell, 423-5925.

Saturday, March 1

HIKE: BUTANO STATE PARK

A 10-mile loop beginning on the Mill Ox Trail and ascending the Jackson Flats Trail and Butano Fire Road to an abandoned airfield at 1600’. We’ll continue to the Trail Camp for lunch before descending the Canyon and Jackson Flats Trails. Meet at the Santa Cruz County Government Center parking lot at 8:30 a.m. Bring water, lunch and $4 carpool. Leader: Ed Gilbert, 685-8389.

Sunday, March 2

HIKE: KAHN RANCH

Steep canyons and trails climbing to ridges with great views make Kahn Ranch a fine addition to Garland Ranch Park in Carmel Valley. Our hike will involve steep climbs of about 600-800’, but the pace will be slow. 4 miles. We’ll look for early spring flowers: Hound’s Tongue and Mule Ears have been seen in past years! Because our permit allows only 15 hikers, you must call before March to reserve a spot. Hard rain cancels. Leader: Mary Gale, 626-3565.

Tuesday, March 4

HIKE: MILL CREEK REDWOOD PRESERVE

This 5 1/2 mile in-and-out hike with 250’ elevation gain takes us along a beautifully-terraced trail to a spectacular coastal overlook. Moderate pace with stops to enjoy flora & fauna. Meet at the Black Bear Diner Park & Ride by 10:00 a.m. Bring water and lunch. Call for a reservation. Leader: Lynn Bomberger, 375-7777.

Wednesday, March 5

HIKE: MILL CREEK REDWOOD PRESERVE

This 5 1/2 mile in-and-out hike with 250’ elevation gain takes us along a beautifully-terraced trail to a spectacular coastal overlook. Moderate pace with stops to enjoy flora & fauna. Meet at the Black Bear Diner Park & Ride by 10:00 a.m. Bring water and lunch. Call for a reservation. Leader: Lynn Bomberger, 375-7777.
HIKE: HIDDEN VILLA, LOS ALTOS HILLS

Hidden Villa Ranch is a 2,300-acre organic farm and wilderness preserve in the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mts. developed by Frank and Josephine Duveneck between 1923 and 1977. Upon their death, it was dedicated as a youth hostel / camp for environmental education. In 1993 the Loma Prieta Chapter of Sierra Club was founded there. Frank led many Sierra Club hikes on his property. There will be an opportunity to see the environmentally-sustainable buildings on the property. Chickens, pigs, goats and horses are kept in the farm area. We’ll hike over the Toyon Tr. to the Adobe Creek Tr. and come back down the Bunny Creek Loop. Lunch with an open vista of the South Bay. Bring water and lunch for this 9-mile hike. Meet at Sears 41st Ave. at 9:00 a.m. to carpool ($5) or at the Hidden Villa parking lot off Hwy. 280 on Alpine Rd. at 10:00 a.m. Leader: Diane Cornell, 425-5925.

HIKE: GARLAND PARK

Join us on this wonderful hike around the Mitteldorf Preserve, administered by the Big Sur Land Trust. 9 miles and 2000’ elevation gain. Great views, gorgeous old trees (the largest redwood in Monterey Co.) and masses of wildflowers in bloom. Bring lunch and water, wear a hat, and bring sun protection. Meet at the San Carlos Ranch Gate, 1 mile off Carmel Valley Road at 8:30 a.m. Call me for a reservation. Leader: Anneliese Suter, 624-1467.

HIKE: VEEDER POND

We’ll hike over the Toyon Tr. to the Adobe Creek Tr. and come back down the Bunny Creek Loop. Lunch with an open vista of the South Bay. Bring water and lunch for this 9-mile hike. Meet at Sears 41st Ave. at 9:00 a.m. to carpool ($5) or at the Hidden Villa parking lot off Hwy. 280 on Alpine Rd. at 10:00 a.m. Leader: Diane Cornell, 425-5925.

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HIKE: GAZOS CREEK

Let’s explore the south coastal region of San Mateo County that was heavily logged in the early 1900’s. 95% of the original forest was cut down. We can find remnants of old logging mill ponds, flattened areas made for stacking logs, and old logging roads. 8 miles along the narrow canyon of second-growth redwoods filled with ferns and watered by natural springs. We’ll park at the gate on Gazos Creek Rd. by the Pescadero Conservation Alliance Research Station. Meet at Sears 41st Ave. at 9:00 a.m. to carpool ($5) or at the corner of Hwy. 1 and Gazos Creek Rd. at 9:30 a.m. Bring water and lunch. Leader: Diane Cornell, 425-5925.

HIKE: OLD COAST ROAD, BIG SUR

This unpaved road in Big Sur makes a lovely, long hike. 11 miles up and down through fern-lined redwood canyons with views out to the coast and inland to Pico Blanco. Car shuttle with a walk from Big Sur Bridge to Andrew Molera. Leisurely pace. Bring lunch and water. Meet at the Black Bear Diner parking lot and down to Carmel about 1.5 mi. to free parking area. Car shuttle. Meet at the Carmel Beach parking lot, walk past Mission Ranch, up Mission Train reserve through Carmel and back along the beach. Meet before 9:30 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave. To go direct, take Hwy. 1 south to Ocean exit. Turn right, go downhill to Carmel, left on Carmello about 15 miles, 2500’ elevation gain. Great views, gorgeous old trees (the largest redwood in Monterey Co.) and masses of wildflowers in bloom. Bring lunch and water, wear a hat, and bring sun protection. Meet at the San Carlos Ranch Gate, 1 mile off Carmel Valley Road at 8:30 a.m. Call me for a reservation. Leader: Anneliese Suter, 624-1467.
Sunday, March 23
HIKE AND POTLUCK: PINNACLES
Join me for the 3rd not-so-anual Easter hike and potluck (mostly veggies). We’ll celebrate the beginning of spring and the return of daylight savings time! Should be perfect for wildflowers and lighter clothing. 12 miles, 1500’ elevation gain. Call for food and carpool options. Leader: John Howerton, 476-4253.

Tuesday, March 25
SENIOR HIKE: FORT ORD
It’s wildflower time again, and we usually see a great variety. 4.5 mile hike with some steep uphill on Ford Ord Pub. Lands. Meet before 9:30 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave. To go direct, take Hwvy. 1 south and exit at Reservation Rd. Go almost to Hwy. 68 and park near end of road near locked gate at 10:45 a.m. Bring lunch, water, $4 carpool. Leader: Joan Brohmer, 462-3803.

Tuesday, March 25
HIKE: GARRAS CREEK
Our 4 mile loop with 800’ elevation gain takes us through a redwood canyon and along Garzas Creek with six picturesque crossings. Moderate pace with stops to enjoy flora & fauna. Meet at the Black Bear Diner Park & Ride by 9:00 a.m. Bring water and lunch. Call for a reservation. Leader: Lynn Bomberger, 375-7777.

Wednesday, March 26
HIKE: PURISIMA CREEK REDWOODS
This reserve has breathtaking ocean views, towering redwoods and firs, a picturesque creek, and plentiful wildlife and wildflowers. “Purisma” means pristine, and it surely is the best 10-mile hike I’ve taken recently. We’ll start from the coast entrance along the flat creek trail where every section could be a stunning calendar picture. We’ll go up Soda Gulch Tr. and along a ridge for ocean views, then down the steep Whittenmore Gulch Tr. Bring lunch and water. Meet at Sears 41st Ave. at 9:30 a.m. to carpool ($3), or at the trailhead. Take Hwy. 1 north to Verde Rd. for 1/4 mile and continue onto Purisima Creek Rd. 3.7 miles to parking spaces. Leader: Diane Cornell, 423-5925.

Saturday, March 29
HIKE: CASTLE ROCK STATE PARK
A 10-mile, double-loop hike, with 800’ elevation change, through this park on the south side of Skyline Boulevard. We’ll begin from the main park entrance at 1200’ and hike past the Castle Rock, along the Ridge Trail, past Goat Rock, and the Service Road Trail to the Skyline Trail. Return along the Loghry Woods and Saratoga Gap Trails, past Russell Point and 75’ Castle Rock Falls. Many marvelous panoramic vistas. Meet at the Santa Cruz County Government Center parking lot at 8:30 a.m., or at Felton Faire at 8:50 a.m. Bring water, lunch and $5 carpool. Leader: Ed Gilbert, 685-8389.

Saturday, March 29
WALK: ASILOMAR, PEBBLE BEACH
A 4 mile loop, starting on neighborhood streets and then thru dunes, out to Point Joe and back along the beach boardwalk. Beach wildflowers, possible wildlife to be seen. Meet across from the Fishwiveau Restaurant on Sunset Dr. and Asilomar Blvd., Pacific Grove at 9:00 a.m. Back about noon, bring snack and water. Leader: Martha Saylor, 372-9215.

Sunday, March 30
HIKE: BUTANO STATE PARK
Celebrate the Spring equinox with a 10-mile hike, including magnificent old-growth redwoods, the headwaters of Butano Creek, and the north ridge with its fine views. We should see many wildflowers, including, if we’re lucky, a colony or two of the uncommon Calypso orchid (John Muir’s favorite wild-flower). Meet at 8:45 a.m. at the Santa Cruz County Government Center parking lot to carpool. Bring lunch and water. Call leader Peter Scott, 423-0796 (or drip@ucsc.edu) for details.

Monday, March 31
HIKE: PINNACLES
Join me on my birthday at my favorite hiking place. Pinnacles National Monument has approximately 30 miles of hiking trails and we will be doing a little over 11 miles with a 2000’ elevation gain/loss. We will be enjoying rock spires, ramparts, and crags that form the pinnacles of this park that have been created by erosion, faulting, and tectonic plate movement. Condor sightings always a possibility. Must contact me a week in advance or I’ll not be able to respond. For more information call me. Leader: Esperanza Hernandez, 678-1968.

April 1
HIKE: TAN BARK TRAIL TO TIN HOUSE
Our moderately strenuous 8-mile in-and-out hike with 2000’ elevation gain snakes along Partington Creek then through redwoods to the Tin House. Slow pace with stops to enjoy flora & fauna. Lunch with spectacular views of the Big Sur Coast; we’ll peek inside the crumbling old house. Meet at the Black Bear Diner Park & Ride by 9:00 a.m. Bring water and lunch. Call for a reservation. Leader: Lynn Bomberger, 375-7777.

April 1
HIKE: PLEASANT SURPRISE RIDGE
Join me for one of the best kept secrets in Santa Cruz County. We’ll leave our meeting place by limo for a short ride to the trailhead. Hike through open meadows, oak woodlands, pine and redwood forests and sandy beaches—all at a moderate downhill grade. Expect 45-55 wildflower species and almost guaranteed condor and rare bird sightings. Views of the mountains and bay. Lunch at the winery will be catered by famous local chef, with a mini foot massage after, before we resume our all downhill hike. Pack light. Water and snacks will be provided every 1-1/2 miles. Limit 12. Call for reservation. Leader: John Howerton, 476-4253.

April 2
HIKE: PINCHEETTI RANCH & STEVENS CREEK COUNTY PARK
This preserve is named for Italian immigrants Vincenzo and Secondo Pichetti who homesteaded here in 1882. It has been restored and is listed in the National Register of Historic places. Seasonal wetlands, pond, and trails through orchards, vineyards, and meadows. 10 miles and 600-1000’ elevation gain. Views over Stevens Cr. Reservoir where we might see soaring birds. Bring lunch and water. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave. to carpool ($4) or at the parking area off Hwy. 280 on Foothill Blvd. to Stevens Canyon Rd. to 0.5 miles on Montebello Rd. at 10:00 a.m. Leader: Diane Cornell, 423-5925.

April 5
HIKE: PICO BLANCO PUBLIC CAMP
We’ll hike to Pico Blanco Camp on rough trails. Strenuous, 11 miles with 2000’ elevation gain. See the best waterfall in the area; bring a bathing suit! First, we walk through redwoods and will cross the south fork of the Little Sur River. Wear boots, bring lunch and plenty of water. Meet at Save-Mart at 9:00 a.m. Heavy rain cancels. Leader: Steve Legnard, 402-1422.

April 7
CARRIZO PLAIN SERVICE
On Sat. we’ll remove fence to allow pronghorn antelope freer access to the range. Sun. is reserved for sightseeing. The views from the Caliente Mountains are spectacular; if rain has been sufficient, there will be spring flowers; the monument is known for the number and variety of raptors. Mon. we’ll continue our work. Contact leader Craig Deutsches, 310-477-6676, or deutsch@earthlink.net.

April 6
HIKE: SOBERANES CREEK/ROCKY RIDGE
Expect lots of flowers for this 5-mile loop with 1650’ elevation gain. See Feb. 17 for details.

Printed on recycled paper
Ventana Chapter
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Computer Database
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Forestry Chair
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Secretary Shandra D. Handley 147 S. River St., Ste. 221 Santa Cruz, CA 95060 477-1981
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Water Chair
Ken Holter 990 Hecker Pass Rd. Watsonville, CA 95076 722-5556

Meeting Schedule
Ventana Chapter (Monterey Co.)
Information: 624-8032
Executive Committee: Last Thursday of the month; Call for meeting place & time.
Conservation Committee: As needed. For dates and times call 655-8586

Santa Cruz Regional Group
Information: 426-4453
Meeting Place: Sierra Club Office, 1001 Center St., Santa Cruz, Suite 11.
Executive Committee: Wednesday, February 13 at 7:00 p.m.
Wednesday, March 12 at 7:00 p.m.
Conservation Committee: Call Conservation Chair for meeting times and dates: 768-8187

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Baby blue eyes cheer up spring hikes.