APR, MAY, JUN OUTINGS

Build on these dunes? p. 3
Chapter fighting development on Monterey Bay dunes

Your Chapter is highly focused on coastal issues this year. Several projects that have been planned for the Monterey Bay shoreline for a decade or more may come before the California Coastal Commission or other regulatory boards this year.

The first one the chapter faced this year was the massive redo of Security National Guaranty’s (SNG) perpetual effort to build a mega complex in the coastal dunes at Sand City. (See story, p. 3). This project consisting of 341 units, pools, spas, restaurants and conference facilities was heard before the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District for approval of a water distribution permit last month. The Water District denied the application and directed SNG to do a Subsequent EIR as required by the California Environmental Quality Act.

SNG and their paid consultants, Rana Creek, are currently working hard to get around this decision and begin building their project. The Chapter has opposed development on this 39-acre site for many years because of federally-listed and sensitive species on site, coastal erosion concerns that could require seawalls to protect the structures, and the dwindling water supply in the Seaside Aquifer.

What was not discussed at the hearing before the Water Management District was another project in the pipeline near the SNG property proposed by King Ventures. This developer is now in the process of preparing an EIR due to be released this spring for another sprawling resort in the coastal dunes at Sand City. The proposed resort would also impact sensitive dune species, be subject to coastal erosion, and draw on the same dwindling water supply in the Seaside Aquifer.

In addition, the long-time presence of a sand mining plant just a little further north in Marina is removing hundreds of thousands of cubic yards of sand that is shipped out of the county for industrial uses.

The Chapter has retained legal counsel and scientists to address all of these projects, both as separate entities and for their cumulative impacts. To lose any of these scarce beachfronts to development would have disastrous effects on sensitive species such as the federally-endangered nesting western snowy plover, disrupt natural coastal rhythms, and siphon off water supplies that exist only on paper.

Protecting the Monterey Bay shoreline and its unique habitat and resources takes money and time. If you have interest in helping the Chapter with coastal issues or making a donation towards legal and/or scientific expert fees, please contact me at puffin@mbay.net.

—Rita Dalesio

Battery assault

Where do they come from? Do they drop from the sky? I am speaking about batteries.

Those of you who are personally acquainted with me know that walking is my main form of transportation. From my home on the Westside of Santa Cruz, I walk 1½ miles downtown to the bank or the post office or the Sierra Club office. I walk to nearby grocery stores, the drug store, and the book shop.

On many an evening, I find batteries: Double A, Triple A, small disk batteries for hearing aids or cameras, lithium batteries, once a cell phone battery. Usually they are in the street, often damaged by having been run over by vehicle tires. I pick them up as a dog owner might with a plastic bag and every couple of weeks deposit them in the specially-marked containers in the public library or at City offices.

If left on the street, these batteries would eventually wash into the storm drains and find their way into the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. I pick them up because they are bad for the Bay. Batteries are considered hazardous waste in California and are not supposed to be thrown in the trash. They contain a variety of harmful materials including lead, nickel, mercury, and lithium—all of which can contaminate soil and water, not to mention harm children, pets, and wildlife.

How do these batteries get in the street? I imagine kids dropping flashlights or toys which explode on impact leaving batteries behind. The batteries are not the kind for iPods. It’s because so many of us can’t leave home without carrying a battery-powered device or two. Can someone out there help me solve this mystery? Are they thrown out of car windows? When the user drops them, why don’t they pick them up themselves?

Readers might not be aware of what they are supposed to do with spent batteries. Each municipality has sites to drop them off for recycling and proper disposal. Contact your local waste disposal service for additional drop off places, hours of service, or if your jurisdiction is not mentioned below.

Marina: Monterey Regional Waste Management District.

Monterey: City Hall, Monterey Public Library, Whole Foods, Casanova Oak Knoll Park Center, Hilltop Park Center, Monterey Senior Center.


Scotts Valley: The Battery Store.

Seaside: City Hall, Seaside Public Works.

USCG: Battery bins on campus, check UCSC website.

Watsonville: Waste & Recycling drop off (Harvest Dr.).

Don’t throw your used batteries in the trash. Bring them to the various locations where they can be safely handled. Other options include using rechargeable batteries (these eventually wear out and must be taken to a hazardous waste site) and using devices that operate without batteries such as hand-crank flashlights and solar-powered calculators.

Mother Earth will do better without being assaulted with batteries.

—Debbie Bulger

From the Editor

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Sierra Club opposes Coastal Dunes Resort

For over 11 years, the Ventana Chapter has opposed projects planned for the sand dunes west of Highway 1 in Sand City. These parcels were used in the past for mining sand and other commercial activities. Since their closure, several plans have been proposed that would heavily impact coastal erosion, federally-listed, endangered and sensitive species such as the nesting western snowy plover, Monterey spineflower, black legless lizard and Myrtle’s Silverspot butterfly.

The most aggressive plan for development has been the Security National Guarantee (SNG) proposal for a mega-mixed-use complex called Monterey Bay Shores Resort. The site plan designed by Rana Creek would incorporate 341 units of hotel rooms and condominiums, restaurants, pools, spa, and conference facilities on 39 acres of beachfront property. The project would require removal and disposal of over 400,000 cubic feet of sand and impact our severely-diminishing water supply.

The project had a serious setback in late February when SNG came before the Monterey Peninsula Water Management Board to request approval of an application to exercise water rights. Following an intensive public relations campaign and lobbying efforts by the developer, Ed Ghandour, and Rana Creek, the consultants for the project, the Board denied SNG’s request to access its allotted water. The Water Board ordered Ghandour to prepare a Subsequent Environmental Impact Report to address all water-related concerns.

The last EIR was over 10 years old, having been circulated in 1998. Water Board members specifically cited the fact that significant new information about the over pumping of the Seaside basin in the last eleven years made denial the only possible decision. As a result of the denial of water rights, SNG withdrew the resort proposal from the Coastal Commission agenda for mid-March.

The Chapter has retained professional experts to represent us in opposing the resort. Attorney Larry Silver of CELP (California Environmental Law Project) has prepared detailed responses to the flaws in the project based on water law and CEQA. Botanist and coastal ecologist Peter Baye has reviewed impacts on sensitive species and the infeasibility of the project’s proposed mitigation and management plan.

In addition, the Monterey Dunes Coalition sent a letter to the Coastal Commission regarding technical review of coastal erosion predictions for the proposed resort. Citing the Regional Sediment Management Plan for Southern Monterey Bay that was released in November, 2008, the letter notes that the coastal dunes between the Salinas River and Wharf II in Monterey are predicted to erode between 1 to 6 feet per year over the next 50 years. Such erosion would put the eight existing oceanfront facilities at risk and certainly suggests that the proposed resort site is in a hazard zone.

All the documents cited above were submitted to the Coastal Commission in opposition to the Monterey Bay Shores Resort and are available for viewing on the Chapter website, www.ventana.sierraclub.org.

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Our transit district is in trouble

by Peter Scott

The Highway 17 Express bus service between Santa Cruz and San Jose—a service that began following the 1989 earthquake and has been consistently improved since then—provides the essential public transportation link to the outside world for Santa Cruz County. If you want to go to San Jose, or San Francisco, or their airports, or for that matter, anywhere else in the world, this is your bus. Providing 26 round trips on every weekday and 15 round trips on weekends and holidays, the Highway 17 Express is increasingly popular. It’s so popular, in fact, that on many trips there are more passengers than seats on the bus, so riders must either stand or sit on the floor for the 50-minute ride to San Jose.

But don’t expect this service to improve any time soon.

As a result of demands by Governor Schwarzenegger and minority members of the State Legislature, the State budget adopted on February 20 eliminates major support for public transit systems statewide. The result is a loss for the Santa Cruz County Transit District (METRO) of approximately $46 million over the years 2009 through 2013, an amount that is far from being offset by the expected $5 million in Federal Economic Stimulus funds. Particularly egregious is that the State Transit Assistance Program, which would have provided approximately $24 million to METRO, is being phased out statewide.

In addition, METRO will not receive $22 million from the Public Transportation Modernization, Improvement and Service Enhancement Account, which derives from Proposition 1B, a $3.6 billion bond measure passed in 2006 to benefit public transit, but which has yet to provide any money to public transit owing to diversion of funds by Governor Schwarzenegger and lack of the sale of the bonds.

The transit funds that are being cut would have gone primarily toward completing the MetroBase maintenance, storage and administrative facility ($22 million) and replacing 30 diesel buses ($15 million) with cleaner compressed natural gas vehicles. Additional maintenance and improvement projects make up the remainder.

METRO is currently under order from the California Air Resources Board to replace its diesel buses with less-polluting compressed natural gas buses by 2012. However, unless that deadline is extended, METRO will have to reduce its fleet from the current 83 buses to 52 buses, which would mean a 38% decrease in METRO bus service and the loss of jobs for 150 METRO employees.

Halting construction of the MetroBase facility will not only mean that our bus fleet will not be efficiently and effectively maintained; it will also mean the elimination of some 325 jobs in 2009.

Without funding, progress toward complying with statewide global warming laws—AB 32 and SB 375—will just not happen.

What you can do

• Write to State Senator Joe Simitian and Assemblymember Bill Monning. Urge them to work to ensure the sale of the Transit Bonds as soon as possible, so that work can continue on the MetroBase facility and that our aging and polluting diesel buses can be replaced. Also urge them to advocate for effective long-term State funding for public transit.

• Keep up to date regarding developments on this issue. For updates visit http://sensibletransportation.org.

Septic tanks affect coastal water quality

California Sea Grant* researchers have strong evidence that septic tanks in Northern California are leaking nitrogen and phosphate into coastal waters that can trigger algal blooms.

Reporting in the journal Limnology and Oceanography, they report finding elevated levels of these “nutrients” in the surf zone during periods of high groundwater flows to the beach.

Following one of these freshwater pulses, they observed a four-day elevation in chlorophyll-a levels—a proxy for phytoplankton concentrations. Though it is extremely difficult to attribute any single algal bloom to the presence of higher than normal nutrient levels, the general link between nutrient input and algal blooms is widely recognized for both marine and freshwater ecosystems.

“Our project is one of the first in California to show definitively that septic tanks can affect coastal water quality through submersion discharge,” says Alexandra Boehm, a professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Stanford University. Most research on septic systems has focused on effects on terrestrial ecosystems, Boehm explains. The value of this project is that it shows septic systems also can impact marine ecosystems via polluted groundwater discharging directly to the ocean.

In theory, the nutrient spikes detected in Northern California could have come from polluted creeks or runoff. This, however, is not what the scientists believe is happening because their fieldwork was conducted in summertime when, they say, groundwater is the only source of freshwater to the coast.

Fertilizers spread on lawns and crops could also potentially be sources of the nutrients they detected. Again, however, scientists rule out this possibility because of the concomitantly high levels of human fecal indicator bacteria detected in groundwater samples collected between the septic systems and shoreline.

Interestingly, bacteria counts in beach water samples did not rise and fall with changes in groundwater fluxes, suggesting the beach aquifer removes pathogens, says Stanford doctoral student Nicholas de Sieyes, the lead author of the journal article.

All of the fieldwork, which will continue into the summer of 2009, was conducted at Stinson Beach in Marin County because of the community’s interest in protecting its beach water quality. “We don’t think our findings are unique to Stinson Beach,” de Sieyes says.

In recognition of the potential environmental implications for beach, ocean and river ecosystems, the California legislature has directed the State Water Resources Control Board to establish regulations on septic systems. California and Michigan are the nation’s only two states without statewide regulations on septic systems.

*The National Sea Grant College Program is part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Department of Commerce.
What happened to Freedom Lake?

As you make your way down Freedom Boulevard west of Five Mile Corner, a once rich and beautiful lake looks now like a brown meadow. This 25-acre lake is completely covered by invasive water hyacinth, one of the fastest growing plants in the world.

Freedom Lake, known also as Corralitos Lagoon and Scott Lake, has been a popular fishing spot and home to over 130 species of birds. The lake is unsafe for boating or fishing, be you bird or mammal. This infestation also poses increased danger to area homes from flooding, and the stagnant water could cause a spike in the mosquito population.

Freedom Lake and the adjacent Scott Park land was given to the County of Santa Cruz in 1971 by Bert Scott, former CEO of Granite Construction. He wanted this valuable resource maintained as a public park and wildlife habitat. The bequest also included the Scott’s home on 35 acres across Freedom Boulevard from the lake.

The water hyacinth growth has gone unchecked for over 4 years. The cost to remediate the lake was bid at close to $1 million by a reputable Sacramento firm. That kind of money is not easy to find and the County staff has been in search of grants and other agency funding to cover the expense.

A group of Friends of Freedom Lake has come together to advocate for the lake and support County staff in restoring the lake. If you would like to help bring the recreational and wildlife value back to Freedom Lake, contact the group at 724-5526, 426-9777, or nitaherte@gmail.com.

To the contrary, the City Council is now leading the charge for a major expansion of the City’s Water Service Area, by applying to the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) for permission to provide water for UCSC’s proposed expansion into its “north campus” area, now largely a natural resource reserve. The City’s application, if approved, would commit at least half, and maybe all, of the City’s remaining water capacity.

Currently, UCSC uses about 132 million gallons of water each year. The City’s application would allow the University an additional 152 million gallons of water (more than half of the City’s remaining supplies). This water would allow the University to build over 3,000,000 square feet of new buildings.

In November 2006, 80% of Santa Cruz voters adopted a measure that said: “In order to preserve the limited remaining water capacity that is available to current utility users... the Council shall not initiate an expansion of the City’s water service area. . . unless authorized to do so by majority vote... The University sued and overturned this mandate, and the City Council was thus not legally bound to follow its requirements.

The LAFCO proceedings that will take place later this year will ultimately determine what happens. Reading between the lines, the City is counting on a highly controversial desalination proposal to deal with the water crisis that the University expansion will almost certainly cause.

You’ll see more on this story in future editions of The Ventana.

Volunteers needed for water testing

On May 2 volunteers from all over the Central Coast will descend on local creeks and streams to test the water. The event, called “Snapshot Day” because it provides a snapshot of water quality in over 100 streams spanning more than 300 miles of our coastline, is sponsored by the Coastal Watershed Council and the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Citizen Watershed Monitoring Network.

The water quality information collected is used by resource and local government agencies and community groups to assist in protecting and improving local streams. Last year nearly 200 volunteers participated in water quality monitoring at more than 180 sites along the California Coast.

Volunteers may be of any age and should sign up for one of the training classes listed below. To sign up visit www.coastalwatershed.org.

Santa Cruz County: Saturday, April 25, 9:00-12:00 p.m., Natural Bridges State Beach Interpretive Center.

Monterey County: Sunday, April 26, 12:00-3:00 p.m. MBNMS Main Office, 299 Foam Street, Monterey.

Please recycle this paper again
Volunteers needed for Sierra Club Earth Day booth

Saturday, April 18, 11-4.
Serve a 2-hour shift and meet new friends. Talk to people about the Club and hand out literature. To volunteer call Dennis Davie, 566-7447.

Friday, April 10

Potluck & Slides: India
Nancy will present this slide show from her travel to India. The potluck begins at 6:30 p.m. Bring food to share and your own washable plate, cup, utensils, and serving utensils. We love home cooked meals or dessert, but store-bought items (minimum value $5) make great contributions too. For directions call Nancy, 423-6373 or George, 335-7748.

Friday, May 8

Potluck & Slides: Argentina
“Argentina - Tango and High Mountains” is a slide show by world traveler Vilma Siebers. The potluck begins at 6:30 p.m. Bring food to share and your own washable plate, cup, utensils and serving utensils. We love home cooked meals or dessert, but store-bought items (minimum value $5) make great contributions too. For directions call George, 335-7748.

Friday, June 12

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Catching some rays

The City of Santa Cruz completed the installation of a 127.53 kW photovoltaic array on its Graham Hill Water Treatment Plant in November, 2008. The project, funded by the City Water Department, cost $1,373,900. The City is expecting an estimated $338,000 rebate from PG&E over the first five years of system operation.

The array consists of 420 flush-mounted and 234 tilt-mounted solar panels and will generate about 180,000 kWh of electricity/year. This project is expected to offset about 223,000 lbs. of CO₂ emissions each year. Also in 2008, the City installed a 73.6 kW solar array on the roof of the former Georgiana Kirby School building in downtown Santa Cruz. This building now houses City Water Department and Library staff. The remodel project earned a LEED Gold certification. The cost of the solar array was $593,180 with an expected rebate of $130,000. Annual CO₂ emissions offset is estimated at 155,000 lbs.

County changes policy on instream wood

In a victory for fish, the Santa Cruz County Supervisors unanimously agreed at their March 3 meeting to change the County policy on removing logs that fall into area streams. As reported in our last Ventana, fallen logs create fish habitat and stabilize stream banks.

Under the amended program, “County staff will not remove, cut-up or otherwise modify accumulations of large woody material (LWM) in county streams that support salmonids or other special status species unless it is determined that such accumulations pose a clear and immediate threat to public safety, public infrastructure or aquatic habitat.” Any modification or removal of LWM will be carried out only as directed by a state or federal agency or by Water Resources Division Director following a consultation with a geomorphologist, fishery biologist, Department of Fish & Game, and/or NOAA Fisheries.

Private property owners will need permits from the Department of Fish & Game to remove or modify large instream wood. The County will disseminate information to the public on the value of LWM for habitat and natural stream function and the terms of the county policy. The county will also document, including photos, the large wood that is modified or removed and that which is retained as is.

Thanks to everyone who contacted the Supervisors and worked to make this policy change happen.

To change address by email:
address.changes@sierraclub.org

Membership inquiries:
membership.services@sierraclub.org

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 handling address changes in a timely fashion.

Thanks!

“Every good thing, great and small, needs defense”
- John Muir

Join Sierra Club and help protect all creatures, great and small.

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Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not tax deductible. They support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Membership dues are paid for a subscription to Sierra magazine and $5 for your Chapter newsletters.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52966, Boulder, CO 80322-2968 or visit our website www.sierraclub.org

The Sierra Club  Ventana Chapter, Volume 48, Number 2, 2009
Unique farmland within city limits may be paved

by Celia Scott

Do you think that agricultural land should be protected and preserved within the City of Santa Cruz to encourage and support local food production close to home? Do you think that dense housing development should be encouraged on the borders of the Pogonip Greenbelt lands in the Golf Club Drive Area? Or should it be located instead on major transportation corridors?

If you care about these choices, it is time to pay attention. These questions and many other local planning issues are up for community decisions as the draft 2030 General Plan for the City of Santa Cruz finally moves forward again. An Environmental Impact Report on the proposed General Plan revision of our existing 1990-2005 General Plan is now underway. Public hearings before the City Planning Commission and the City Council are anticipated later in 2009, with no firm dates yet.

The Golf Club Drive area off Highway 9 is a semi-rural sanctuary on the edge of the City and serves as an important gateway to the Pogonip Greenbelt with its many hiking trails. The productive agricultural soils of the gateway lands are designated by the State Department of Conservation as unique farmland, and have, in fact, been commercially farmed until this year by local farmers who lease land from the property owners. Other natural resources in the gateway area include a high water table, riparian lands along adjacent Pogonip Creek, and wildlife habitat connected to the Pogonip Greenbelt.

The risk of these productive agricultural soils being paved and/or surrounded by dense residential development has been increased in the draft 2030 General Plan. The potential number of residential units ultimately allowed in the 17-20 acre Golf Club Drive area has been raised from 100 (maximum) permitted in the current General Plan to 200 plus in the proposed 2030 General Plan. At present, there are four residential units in the area.

In addition, the area to be protected for open space, community gardens, and buffer to the Pogonip Greenbelt has been reduced from seven acres (current General Plan) to five acres (proposed General Plan) in any future plans for increased residential development in the Golf Club Drive area.

The questions facing the Santa Cruz community are
1. whether this increased residential development in a highly sensitive environment is a good idea, and
2. how to reach a solution that accommodates both the needs of the current property owners and the need for a sustainable community.

Many communities in California and elsewhere are now recognizing that protecting suitable lands for local food production, whether in backyards, community gardens, or on agricultural land suitable for small-scale commercial farming, is an essential part of planning for a sustainable future. The City of San Francisco, for example, has had a Sustainability Plan for over 10 years, with detailed provisions on food and agriculture, including a goal of maximizing local food production within the city limits.

Unfortunately, the City of Santa Cruz, 2030 General Plan does not focus on local food production and has dropped (compared with the current General Plan) any detailed policies or programs for encouraging community gardens, and is silent on the question of local food production with no inventory of our local agricultural resources.

To follow these issues as the planning process evolves and become familiar with the draft 2030 City General Plan, visit the City of Santa Cruz website at www.ci.santa-cruz.ca.us and click on General Plan Update 2030. Two local groups focusing on food and agriculture issues include Transition Santa Cruz (www.transitionsc.org) and the Open Space Alliance (www.santacruzosa.org).

Labor and enviros join forces

Andrew Christie, Chapter Director for the Santa Lucia Chapter, was one of 250 Sierra Club members who attended the Blue-Green Alliance's Good Jobs/Green Jobs national conference in Washington, D.C. in February. More than 2000 business, labor, and environmental advocates gathered to bring national attention to the policies and investments needed to accelerate growth of the green economy, illustrate the job growth potential of global warming solutions, and highlight the potential of the coalition to lift Americans out of poverty.

The Blue-Green Alliance is a national partnership between labor unions and environmental organizations including the Sierra Club.

During conference sessions author Robert Pollin noted that “... the transition to a clean energy economy has the capacity to merge the aims of environmental protection and social justice to a degree that is unprecedented.”

Rich Trumka, Secretary-Treasurer of the AFL-CIO remarked, “We reject the notion that you have to choose between good jobs and a green environment.” Teamster President, James Hoffa, said, “We are no longer in favor of drilling in ANWR.”

Closing speaker, Van Jones, observed, “This is a profound movement, a noble movement; something that’s been torn apart too long coming back together.”
When I first saw this central garden . . . it seemed all one sheet of plant gold, hazy and vanishing in the distance . . . . I at length waded out into the midst of it. All the ground was covered . . . with radiant corollas, about ankle deep next to the foothills, knee-deep or more five or six miles out . . . . Sauntering in any direction, hundreds of these happy sun-plants brushed against my feet at every step, and closed over them as if I were wading in liquid gold.”

—John Muir, 1869

Fiddle Neck’s many small trumpet flowers are coiled in a shepherd’s crook.

Photographed in the Central Valley by Ventana staff.

Popcorn flowers under oaks.
Kirk Smith, 1916 - 2009

Throughout his life, Kirk had a deep connection to the Sierra. As a child he spent summers at Lake Tahoe. Family vacations included backpacking and hiking with Pat and his three daughters.

Kirk is remembered fondly as an enthusiastic and fun hike leader. Gabrielle Stocker recalls a backpack trip to Miter Basin with him and others just one month before Kirk’s 80th birthday! “Kirk was a master fire builder,” Gabrielle remembers. “Years before, Kirk encouraged me to become a local hike leader and also to serve on Ex-Com.”

Nick Wyckoff was lucky having Kirk as his leadership mentor:

“I knew Kirk through the outings he led for the Ventana Chapter. We first met in the 1990s on his annual Long Ridge hike near Saratoga Gap. After I returned for a couple of years, he asked me to co-lead it thereafter because he wanted to be sure it remained in the Ventana inventory after he retired from leading. Kirk always liked telling the story of two of his participants who met one year on the hike and the returned the following year to announce their marriage.

“He had a longstanding friendship with Bud McCravy of Big Creek Lumber. Because of that relationship, Bud allowed Ventana members to go on an annual hike led by Bud and Kirk on the Big Creek and adjacent Lockheed properties. We not only experienced the forest, multiple creek crossings and double waterfalls at the confluence of Boyer and Big Creeks, but also learned of the family history of the four generations of McCravys who have made that Swanton property their home. Those who were able to participate will always remember what a special event it was.

“Kirk also worked with Tony Look and Verle Claussen of Semperivens Fund and as President of the Waddell Creek Association in conservation efforts in that critical area of Big Basin Redwoods State Park.”

Restore Hetch Hetchy moves HQ to San Francisco

Restore Hetch Hetchy, the national advocacy group dedicated to restoring the Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park to its original natural splendor, has moved its headquarters from Sonora to San Francisco.

The mission of Restore Hetch Hetchy is to return the Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park to its original splendor without disrupting water delivery.

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Foam ban expands

The city of Monterey has joined the growing list of jurisdictions that have banned polystyrene take-out containers. The ordinance will go into effect in late August. As we go to press, the City of Watsonville was working to follow suit. This effort, however, is encountering opposition from the American Chemistry Council and the Plastics Food Packaging Group who have written letters to Watsonville against the ban. Other local jurisdictions which have already banned Styrofoam are Capitola, Santa Cruz, Pacific Grove, Scotts Valley, and the County of Santa Cruz.

On the edge

A Pinnacles condor is in intensive care in the Los Angeles Zoo after suffering from lead poisoning and also having been shot. Condor #286 was approaching maturity and starting to make courtship displays before the incident which is seen as a major setback to the plan of establishing breeding pairs in the wild.

Spy on eagles

Caltrans has set up an “eagle-cam” near Redding focused on a Bald Eagle nest, hopefully containing chicks by the time you read this. To take a peek visit turtlebay.org.

Wind, water, and sun best

A Stanford University researcher has determined that wind, water, and sun are the best ways to improve energy security, mitigate global warming, and reduce deaths caused by air pollution. Mark Z. Jacobson recommends against nuclear, coal, and both corn and cellulose ethanol. For details check out www.nccw.usgs.gov.

Reducing waste

The City of Toronto, Canada has banned the sale of bottled water on city premises such as golf courses by 2011. Other waste reduction measures enacted by their City Council include a 5¢ charge on plastic bags from grocery and retail stores starting in June and a ban on biodegradable and compostable plastic bags. Cities across Canada are planning restrictions on bottled water.

Top lop must stop

Film star Ashley Judd has teamed up with the Sierra Club to fight mountain top removal coal mining. Judd, who grew up in Kentucky, said, “Our mountains are our heritage and our legacy to future generations. But big coal companies are using explosives to literally blow the tops off the mountains, extract the coal and destroy Appalachia.”

Coordinating change

How will changes in stream temperatures affect fish populations? What will sea level rise do to endangered species? To address and coordinate the answers to these and other questions, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) has established a new National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center to better understand the effects of climate change on fish and wildlife and to help agencies adapt management strategies. To learn more visit http://nccw.usgs.gov.

Dumping coal

Governors are changing their minds about coal. New coal power plants planned for South Carolina, Michigan, and Wisconsin have been opposed by officials. States, businesses and local officials are increasingly focusing on newer, cleaner, more efficient technologies that can help both our economy and our climate.
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.

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:
Rio Road Park & 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 Fair: The shopping center at the junction of Graham Hill and Mt. Hermon 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. Plenty of parking with no fee on weekends.

Carpool News

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 Center.
Monterey: K-Mart Seaside.

April

Saturday, April 4
HIKE: FT. ORD OPEN SPACE
There may be some early wildflowers on this walk still remaining from the Reservation Rd. entrance to this park. It won’t be difficult with 7 miles and 900’ elevation gain. Meet at 9:30 a.m. a year ago. Meet at the park entrance and turn right into the parking lot. Bring snack and water. Leader: Martin Saylor, 372-9215.

Saturday, April 4
HIKE: SOBERANES CREEK/ROCKY RIDGE
We’ll follow the Soberanes Creek Trail into a beautiful redwood grove, then climb steeply to knolls for great views at lunch. Flowers should be out. We’ll descend Rocky Ridge with more fine views. 5-mile loop with 1700’ elevation gain. Boots recommended; hiking poles helpful. Bring water and lunch. Meet at the Little League ball fields on Sunset Dr. and Asilomar Blvd., Pacific Grove. Call to reserve a place. Bring snack and water. Leader: Martha Saylor, 372-9215.

Sunday, April 5
HIKE: EAST GARCIALAND TO KAHN RANCH
This strenuous 10-mile hike with 2000’ elevation gain will start from the Little League ball fields in Carmel Valley Village. Car shuttle. We’ll ascend Laus- teals, Vasques and Cougar Ridge Trails into the Kahn Ranch to do the Hitchcock loop. Wear light long pants and a shirt in case of poison oak; bring two hiking poles. Bring enough water and lunch, sun hat, and sun protection. Meet at Save-Mart at 8:00 a.m. (no leader) or in Mid Valley shopping center near WaMu at 8:15 a.m. to carpool. Call to make sure the hike is on. Leader: Anteliese Sutter, 624-1467.

Tuesday, April 7
HIKE: POINT LOBOS
Our 6-mile grand loop with minimal elevation gain takes us along tree-covered headland trails with magnificent views. We are certain to see a variety of wildflowers and possibly baby sea lions. Bring water & lunch. Arrive early; we leave at 9:30 a.m. sharp from Rio Road Park & Ride. Call for a reservation. Leader: Lynn Bomberger, 375-7777.

Wednesday, April 8
HIKE: RANCHO SAN ANTONIO CO. PARK
This county park adjoining the 3800-acre open space preserve and has diverse environments including riparian, oak woodlands, and grassy meadows. We especially love the huge bay laurel tree and the large bobcat that roams the trails and usually shows himself at some point in the hike. We’ll hike through the Deer Hollow Farm and along the Rogue Valley Trail to the Upper Meadow Trail. Views of both the bay area are great from Vista Point before we finish our 9-mile hike going down the PG&E Trail. Bring lunch and water. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave. to carpool ($5), or at the park parking lot near the restrooms at 10:00 a.m. Leader: Diane Cornell, 423-3922.

Saturday, April 11
HIKE: COASTAL HIKES
This is a series of shorter hikes to take in the beauty of our coast. First, we’ll drive up to Pescadero Marsh and walk the trails looking for birds, then drive down to Wilbur’s Watch for a hike up the hill for great views of the coast. We may see grey whales! Followed by a walk out to Franklin Point where the Sir John Franklin shipwrecked in the 1850s. Depending on time, we’ll head to the northern end of Año Nuevo. 8 miles. Meet at the Santa Cruz County Government Center at 9:30 a.m. to carpool. Bring lunch and binoculars. Heavy rain cancels. Leader: Pam Burnham, 915-2475.

Saturday, April 18
HIKE: WILDFLOWER WALK: POINT LOBOS RANCH
This easy 3-mile walk will give us a sneak peek of a future state park. There should be an amazing display of poppies and other wildflowers. Arrive early; we leave at 10:00 a.m. sharp from Rio Road Park & Ride. Bring water. Call for a reservation. Leader: Lynn Bomberger, 375-7777.

Sunday, April 19
HIKE: PINECLES
Join me for the fourth not-so-annual Easter hike and potluck (mostly veggie). Always a favorite hiking locale, should be perfect for wildflowers and lighter clothing. 12 miles, 1500’ elevation gain. Call me for food and carpool options. Leader: John Howerton, 476-4253.

Tuesday, April 14
HIKE: PARADISE PARK / BONCO
Enjoy many spring flowers. We’ll walk a fire road to Hwy 9, cross over to the Rincon Trail and then downhill to the river. About 4 miles. Steep uphill on fire road and river. Meet before 9:30 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave. To go direct, take Hwy 9 to Paradise Park entrance, follow signs 1 mile to picnic grounds. Lunch at picnic area. Restrooms. Bring water, lunch, $2 carpool. Leader: Pat Heroy, 458-9841.

Easter Sunday, April 12
HIKE: WILDFLOWER WALK: POINT LOBOS RANCH
See Saturday, April 11 for details.

Easter Sunday, April 12
HIKE: PINECLES
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For more information about our special programs or to receive a full schedule and description of Clair Tappaan programs please visit our website at www.ctl.sierraclub.org or call (800) 679-6775.

Built by Sierra Club members in 1934, this rustic, hostel-style lodge stands atop historic Donner Pass, just an hour and a half from Sacramento.

Springtime in the Sierra is a magical time. In early spring you can take advantage of longer and warmer days with extended ski and snowshoe tours or using the Lodge’s own groomed trails. Later in the spring you can experience the explosion of wildflowers as you hike miles of trails behind the Lodge or on the Pacific Crest trail just 1.5 miles from the Lodge.

Guests enjoy excellent family style meals, a friendly staff and a casual and communal atmosphere.

See you on Donner Summit...
We'll hike 4 miles south along the pristine Salinas
Hike:

Sunday, April 19

us through a forested valley then up to oak-dotted grasslands. We hope to see a beautiful display of lupine. Bring water ... 9:45 a.m. sharp from the dirt parking area outside Toro Park. Call for a reservation. Leader: Lynn Bomberger, 375-7777.

Thursday, April 16

Wilderness. Please join me on this strenuous 12-mile hike. Requires a very early start, so if you are not an early bird, please do not call, $5 for a very long carpool. Must call a week in advance to leave message, or your call will not be returned. Leader: Esperanza Hernandez, 678-1968.

Tuesday, April 14

Silver Peak Wilderness is as beautiful as the Ventana Wilderness. Please join me on this strenuous 12-mile hike. Requires a very early start, so if you are not an early bird, please do not call, $5 for a very long carpool. Must call a week in advance to leave message, or your call will not be returned. Leader: Esperanza Hernandez, 678-1968.

Friday, May 1

HIKE: GARLAND RAMBLE

We'll explore several of Garland Park's wildflower-studded (we hope) trails. The leisurely loop will include Waterfall, Oak View and Maple Canyon, with stops at Mesa Pond and Fern Pond, 5 miles with 500' elevation gain. Bring lunch and water. Meet at Rio Road Park and Ride at 10:00 a.m. to carpool, or at Garland Park Visitor Center on Carmel Valley Road at 10:20 a.m. Leaders: Cath Farrant and Mary Dain- ton, 372 7427.

Saturday, May 2

HIKE: MCNEE RANCH

A fairly steep hike to the top of Montara Mtn. will reward us with spectacular views of the ocean to the west, Mt. Diablo to the east, and possibly a bobcat or two. If the weather is clear, views of the Golden Gate, Mt. Tam and the Point Reyes Peninsula are possible, 1 mile; close to 2000' gain. Meet at the Santa Cruz County Government Center at 9:00 a.m. to carpool.

Tuesday, April 28

HIKE: SILVER PEAK'S LION'S DEN

Silver Peak Wilderness is as beautiful as the Ventana Wilderness. Please join me on this strenuous 12-mile hike. Requires a very early start, so if you are not an early bird, please do not call, $5 for a very long carpool. Must call a week in advance to leave message, or your call will not be returned. Leader: Esperanza Hernandez, 678-1968.

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Saturday, May 2
HIKE: MITTELDORF PRESERVE
Join me on this wonderful hike around the Mitteldorf Preserve, administered by the Big Sur Land Trust. This is the grand loop. 9 miles and 2000’ elevation gain. Expect great views, gorgeous old trees (the largest redwood in Monterey County), and masses of wildflowers. 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: Annellese Suter, 624-1467.

Sunday, May 3
WALK: POINT LOBOS
We’ll start this 4-mile hike around beautiful Point Lobos at the highway, to Whale’s Cove, out to the Pit and back, to the top of Whale’s Knoll, and return via southern trails. There are usually wildflowers out and some wildlife to see. Meet at the Rio Road Park & Ride to carpool. Call leader to reserve a space and for meeting time. Bring snack, water, and optional binoculars. Leader: Martha Saylor, 372-9215.

Sunday, May 3
HIKE AND BIKE: BIG BASIN
Starting at Waddell Beach, we’ll ride 5 miles to near Berry Creek Falls. Then hike the Sunset Trail to park headquarters and return to our bikes on the Skyline to Sea Trail. Expect varied weather, good views, awesome wildflowers and a great workout! 10 mile ride, 10 mile hike. Meet at the Santa Cruz County Government Center at 8:00 a.m. to carpool. Call for more info. Leader: John Howerton, 476-4253.

Tuesday, May 5
SENIOR HIKE: BIG BASIN/SLIPPERY ROCK
5-mile hike down Slippery Rock to Sempervirens Falls & Sequoia Tt. Lunch at top of Slippery Rock. Meet before 9:30 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave. or at FeltonFaire at 9:50 a.m. To go direct, use main entrance to Big Basin. Restrooms. Bring lunch, $5 carpool and share of entrance $. Leader: Joan Brohmer, 462-3603.

Tuesday, May 5
HIKE: MITTELDORF PRESERVE
This 4 ½ mile loop with 900’ elevation gain has 8 bridged creek crossings, a redwood forest and spectacular views. Moderate pace with stops to enjoy flora & fauna. Bring water & lunch. Arrive early; we depart at 9:30 a.m. sharp from Rio Road Park & Ride. Call for a reservation. Leader: Lynn Bomberry, 375-7777.

Sunday, May 10
HIKE: GARZAS CANYON
The Terrace Trail at Garland Ranch should have good flowers now. We’ll climb from the trailhead to a nicely-contoured walk above the creek, then drop steeply to the creek, walk downstream, and finally a steep climb back out. Short distance and slow pace. Bring lunch, water, good footgear, and a stick if you need steering on steep hills. Meet at the Garland Ranch parking lot on Carmel Valley Road at 9:30 a.m. Hike starts from Garzas Road trailhead at 10:00 a.m. More info: Leader: Mary Galy, 626-3956.

Sunday, May 10
HIKE: SOBERANES CREEK/Rocky Ridge
The wildflowers should be great for this 5-mile loop with 1700’ elevation gain. We’ll follow the Sobranes Creek Trail into the verdant redwood grove then climb steeply to grassy knolls for the spectacular view at lunch. We’ll descend Rock Ridge with more fine views. Boots recommended; hiking poles helpful. Bring water and lunch. Meet at Rio Road Park & Ride at 9:00 a.m. to carpool. Call for reservation. Leader: DJ Goehring, 277-9908.

Tuesday, May 12
SENIOR WALK: BEAN HOLLOW/Pigeon PT
A blooming paradise on this 2-mile hike south of Pescadero. Over 25 species of coastal wildflowers. The walk can be extended. Restrooms. Meet before 9:30 a.m. at Sears 41st Ave. or at Shen’s Gallery at Mission & King at 9:50 a.m. Bring water, lunch, $3 carpool. Leader: Janet Schwind, 425-3845.

Tuesday, May 12
HIKE: MOUNT MADONNA
This 6-mile loop with 900’ elevation gain includes a lovely redwood forest and lunch with a view. Moderate pace with stops to enjoy flora & fauna. Bring water & lunch. Arrive early; we depart at 8:45 a.m. sharp from Shell station by Home Depot in Seaside or from the east parking area of Mount Madonna at 9:45 a.m. Call for a reservation. Leader: Lynn Bomberry, 375-7777.

Tuesday, May 12
HIKE: GLORIA ROAD
Car shuttle will be needed for this beautiful, 12-mile, narrow, winding, mostly downhill, country road. Lots of wildflowers grow here along with spectacular views of the Salinas Valley, south county cities, Santa Lucia Mountains, including a peek into the Ventana Wilderness. Bring a bag to pick up trash along the way. Must call a week in advance to leave message for details. Leader: Esperanza Hernandez, 678-1968.

Saturday, May 16
HIKE: EAST GARLAND, GARZAS CREEK
This is another wildflower effort, 4½ miles, but quite steep with 1500’ gain. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Mar Monte exit in Aptos to carpool. Call Nick for additional info. Leader: Nick Wyckoff, 462-3012.

Sunday, May 17
HIKE: SALINAS RIVER STATE BEACH
See April 19 for details.

Sunday, May 17
HIKE: Big Basin
Time for the Sea to Tree Trail again. The wildflowers of this unique ecosystem and the varied terrain make for a diverse display. We’ll take the bus from downtown Santa Cruz to park headquarters and take a return bus from the coast. Always a great, mostly downhill hike to the sea, through the redwoods to the waterfalls. Meet at the Santa Cruz Metro Center at 8:20 a.m. You will need exact change for bus fare. Bring water and food. Call for details. Leader: John Howerton: 476-4253.

Tuesday, May 19
HIKE: Carmel to Pebble Beach
This nice lollypop loop begins in Carmel and leads to the quiet forest of Pebble Beach. Lunch gives us the option of a Poppy Hills sandwich. 6½ miles, 750’ elevation gain, moderate pace with flora & fauna stops. Arrive early; we depart at 10:00 a.m. sharp from the Rio Road Park & Ride. Call for a reservation. Leader: Lynn Bom berger, 375-7777.
Saturday, May 23
HIKE: UCSC TO POGONIP
Walk thru UCSC, with its great variety of habitat, checking out The Farm entroue, then head over to Pogonip. We’ll trek down to the San Lorenzo River for lunch. 9 miles. Meet at the Santa Cruz County Government Center at 9:00 a.m. to carpool. Bring lunch, water, comfortable shoes. Heavy rain cancels. Leader: Pamela Burnham, 915-2475.

Saturday, May 23
HIKE: EAST GARLAND LOOP
We’ll start from Garzas Rd., up the canyon, Veeder, East Ridge, and Saddle Trails to the highest point (Vasques Knob, 2000’) for great views all around. After lunch, down Vasques, Spring, Gablan, and River Trails. I hope there still will be many wildflowers. 8-mile loop with 1800’ elevation gain. Bring water, lunch, optional hiking poles for steep parts. Wear sun hat and sunscreen. Meet at SaveMart at 8:30 a.m. (no leaders) or in Mid Valley shopping center near WalMart at 8:20 a.m. to carpool. Call me to make sure the hike is on. Leader: Annaliese Suter, 624-1467.

Tuesday, May 26
SENIOR WALK & PICNIC: HENRY COWELL
Our 3-mile loop hike is along the river and through senior Walk & picnic: Henry CoWell

Tuesday, May 26
Hike: Nisene Marks
This 6-mile hike with 700’ elevation gain takes us along beautiful creeks and eventually to serene Maple

June

Tuesday, June 2
HIKE: MILL CREEK REDWOOD PRESERVE
This 3½ mile 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. Bring water & lunch. Arrive early; we depart at 10:00 a.m. sharp from Rio Road Park & Ride. Call for a reservation. Leader: Lynn Bomberger, 375-7777.

Friday, June 5
HIKE: WEST MOLERA
We’ll hike up Hidden Trail and Ridge Trail, enjoying views of Pico Blanco and Post Summit. After lunch we descend via the Panorama and Bluff Trail with views of the ocean and Point Sur. Bring lunch, water, and a windbreaker as the ocean breeze can be cold even at this time of year. Optional: bring sandals or aqua shoes for possible river crossing. Meet at the Rio Road Park and Ride at 9:30 a.m. 8 miles with 1200’ elevation gain. Leaders: Cath Farrant and Mary Dainton, 372 7427.

Saturday, June 6
HIKE: MT. MADONNA COUNTY PARK
Find more mariposas in our local foothills behind Watsonville. 6 miles with 1200’ elevation gain. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Mar Monte exit in Aptos to carpool. Call Nick for additional information. Leader: Nick Wyckoff, 462-3101.

Sunday, June 7
HIKE: PINNACLES BY MOONLIGHT
Hiking Pinnacles by the light of the moon is a very euphoric experience, like being on another planet. It is therapeutic for the mind and soul. It is mesmerizing. The weather will be perfect for an ancient volcano hike. Call a week in advance, so your call can be answered. 10-12 miles. Leader: Esperanza Hernandez, 678-1968.

Tuesday, June 9
HIKE: MIDDLE DORF PRESERVE
On this 7-mile loop with 2000’ elevation gain we hope to see the unusual “Golden Ear Drops.” We’ll take our strenuous hike at an easy pace into a redwood forest along a lovely creek up to vistas overlooking the rugged Garrapata and Big Sur coastlines. Bring water & lunch. Arrive early; we depart at 8:30 a.m. sharp from Rio Road Park & Ride. Call for a reservation. Leader: Lynn Bomberger, 375-7777.

Thursday, July 16 - 19
BACKPACK: YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK
Experience the amazing Cathedral Lakes region, among the most sublime high-country areas in the park. This three-night, base camp outing is suitable for first timers as well as experienced backpackers. Individual commissary. Space for 8 only. Contact leader for details. Leader: DJ Goehring, 277-9908, dgoehring@yahoo.com.
Chapter Executive Committee

Coastal Chair
Treasurer
Other Members

Conservation Committee:

Call for meeting place and time

Last Thursday of the month;

Executive Committee:

Information: 624-8032

Ventana Chapter, Volume 48, Number 2, 2009
“W”hat bees ask of us is simple: a world free from poisons and other stressors, with places where they can nest and a sweet, season-long supply of flowering plants. In return, they offer to teach us their deepest lesson yet. Much as a honeybee belongs to her colony, so we humans belong to the living community of the Earth.”

—Candace Savage, Bees: Nature’s Little Wonders