Alaska . . . Foothills . . . Trails Policy . . . Islands . . . Camping

Pgs. 7  Pgs. 1  Pgs. 3  Pgs. 1, 6  Pgs. 4
New idea offers hope for foothills

Julie Kurnikel
SAN MARCOS FOOTHILLS COALITION

A revised project for the San Marcos Foothills has been presented that would not only protect the West Mesa, but also allow the public access to it.

The Small Wilderness Area Preserves, Environmental Defense Center, San Marcos Foothills Coalition and developer Bob Comstock—who worked closely with conservation organizations to protect Ellwood Bluffs—agreed on an alternate development plan.

The Sierra Club’s Santa Barbara Group is part of the coalition and has approved the new plan “in principle.”

To protect habitats and species of the West Mesa, Comstock proposes to cluster up to 44 units around the southern portion of the mesa near Via Gaitero. The alternate plan would add about 100 acres to the already protected 200-acre designated remainder, and eliminate the already approved eight mansions and “private conservation areas” from the West Mesa.

If the obstacles can be surmounted, this bold plan would contain the development adjacent to the foothill ecosystem to the smallest possible footprint, and eliminate prominent hilltop development.

The “Comstock Plan” would decrease fragmentation of the unique and fragile foothill ecosystem, and would allow public access to the west side of the property. It would also cluster development near the existing urban boundary.

Last summer SWAP, represented by the EDC, appealed the Planning Commission’s approval of the plan at San Marcos to the Board of Supervisors.

Despite voluminous comments, extensive arguments, and the involvement of dozens of community supporters, the appeal was denied and the project approved in November 2005. Litigation appeared the only remaining option.

Without an alternative to the development approved by the County in November 2005, the West Mesa of San Marcos Foothills would soon become a memory to the few who witnessed its unique ecology and cultural history firsthand.

Lacking a new vision, the songs of birds would be replaced by the sounds of explosives used to pulverize the ancient boulders and bulldozers grinding and grading the tops of the hills. Under the approved project, eight large mansions, each with acres of private backyards, would be built, placing nearly the entire West Mesa behind “No Trespassing” signs.

San Marcos Foothills is a place of many pleasures—a place where one can experience the last assemblage of foothill habitats that were once a common part of our local landscape. The songs of birds drum and echo across the intact grasslands, woodlands and canyons of San Marcos Foothills.

Located at the edge of our urban landscape next to Highway 154 and north of Foothill Road, these unique foothills can be seen from the coast and many neighborhoods of Santa Barbara and Goleta. The West Mesa is an essential part of this foothill ecosystem—it is a gateway to wilderness, a place still alive with the songs of grasshopper sparrows.

Meet legislators and change their minds

You can get directly involved in helping Sierra Club California discuss priority environmental issues with our state legislators at the state capitol during our annual Lobby Day, set for Monday, August 14.

Beginners are welcome, as there is training by SCC’s professional lobbyists on the day before, Sunday Aug. 13, in Sacramento.

This is a great opportunity to protect the environment by influencing the political process and to practice your advocacy skills, as well as meet new people with similar issue interests from around the state.

The training provides guidelines for achieving successful meetings with legislators and their staff, along with information on the legislative process and “talking points” on the priority bills that you will discuss in the capitol.

Participants will attend meetings with key legislators and will end with a debriefing and wrap-up back at the Sierra Club office.

SCC will provide free hotel accommodations and meals, and most transportation expenses will be reimbursed with prior approval.

Deadline to register is August 1, but due to demand, register ASAP.

Contact Sabrina Juarez, Sierra Club California legislative aide, for more information at (916) 557-1100 ext. 107 or email: juarez@sierracalber.org.

New solar web shines

The California Energy Commission has a new and practical website about alternative forms of energy you can use now at www.renewableenergy.ca.gov.

It is part of the Million Solar Roofs Initiative, which seeks to gain 1,000 megawatts of solar electricity in the next decade. The website features much information about solar, wind and other renewable energies, rebates and numerous links to companion sites.

Current priority is working with developers for new residential plans, plus school districts and local governments, followed by solar installations on existing buildings, both residential and commercial.
Tests show pollution in some creeks

After five years of monitoring the Ventura River Watershed, the Santa Barbara ChannelKeeper revealed pollution from agriculture and urban runoff that is causing excessive nutrient and bacterial pollution problems.

The most severe problem from the sampling identified treated sewage effluent, animal waste from horse and cattle facilities, faulty septic systems, pet waste, general urban runoff, fertilization and irrigation of golf courses, parks and landscaping as the probable sources of nutrient pollution.

Two areas were particularly high in nutrient pollution: along Canada Larga and San Antonio creeks.

The report makes a number of recommendations, including education of property owners, agricultural and horse facility operators about better ways to manage and keep their waste out of local creeks, and heightened enforcement of water quality and discharge standards by regulatory agencies. To read the full report, go to www.stck.org.

Launched in January 2001, the Ventura Stream Team goals are to collect baseline data on the health of the Ventura River watershed; identify sources of pollution; and to educate and train a force of volunteer watershed stewards.

Since the project’s inception, more than 350 volunteers have contributed more than 3,600 hours to this project. To get involved, contact ChannelKeeper at 563-3377 or brit@sbck.org.

Two government agencies provided funds and the California Coastal Conservancy just approved a $500,000 grant to expand an integration of the StreamTeam to identify and develop plans for habitat restoration projects in the Lower Ventura River watershed.

Transportation tax improves

The new Measure D still contains the subsidies for driving that go against Sierra Club policy, however. This policy can be seen at: http://www.sierrac.org/policy/conservation/transp.asp

It reads, in part: “These subsidies should be publicly scrutinized and eliminated by appropriate fuel and excise taxes, parking and road user charges, annual vehicle fees, and elimination of tax credits and deductions for motor vehicle use.”

The Coalition decided that it would strongly endorse this plan in order to get guaranteed funding for the sustainable transportation projects. Now, the hard work of passing this Measure D a two-thirds vote before 2010 just begins. Measure D was passed in 1989, imposing a half-cent sales tax increase over a period of twenty years solely to fund transportation projects and programs. It has garnered $270 million so far and revenue will continue to be collected until the program sunset date in April 2010, unless the voters extend it.

Delisting plovers targeted

Dr. James Caballero, the spirited "Hike With Doc" leader who also creates his own trail maps of Ventura area for sale, has graciously sent the following notice to his regular participants to join the Sierra Club and go on our outings.

"In an effort to promote more hikes for you, I am enclosing the Sierra Club’s Newsletter, Condor Call. It is easy to log on to and not only can you read interesting articles but you can view their complete schedule of hikes."

"Don’t be shy. You can meet new people and see new trails and be with leaders who know the areas. My schedule may be changing and I may not be available to lead hikes. As of today, I will be gone through August. I'll let you know about future hikes later."

1. Log on to www.lospadres.sieraclub.org

"Would you believe groups like the Surf Beach Commission and the Audubon Society both want to get rid of the Western Snowy Plover? The Surf Beach Commission and similar groups have been trying to achieve their goal of delisting through legal action, while Audubon and other like-minded groups have made efforts through proactive conservation programs. These programs have resulted in an overall increase in the WSP population statewide and in our local area. Continued success of the programs will result in fulfilling the requirements of maintaining a healthy WSP population, allowing it to be delisted."

"Habitat integrity is more than protecting one species. Habitat that is being protected often also home to various plants, animals and insects."

"The western plover habitat,” the others would no longer have a place to exist. Lompoc would be left with barren beaches and the wildlife including one of the last truly wild beaches accessible to the public.

The La Purisima Audubon Society believes that education is the vital first step in providing a foundation for the next generation. La Purisima is needed to protect the beach habitat not only for the wildlife including the WSP, but also for the enjoyment of beach visitors. Over the last three years LPAS has conducted the beach breeding season campaign to get people from the Surf Beach to help visitors understand and appreciate the entire beach ecology, including the part the WSP plays in a healthy beach.

Beach Ecology Program volunteers can usually be located on Surf Beach between noon and 2 p.m. each Sunday during the plover nesting season. You are encouraged to drop by to talk with our volunteers, take a look at the plover nests, and learn something new and most importantly enjoy one of the things Lompoc can be proud of—a truly beautiful, wild beach.

John Vickers, President La Purisima Audubon Society lpurismaudubon.org

For more information visit the San Marcos Creek Coalition website, www.sancarlosfowlhills.org

Thanks for the plug, Doc
Safe trails policy guides hike/bike conflicts

In response to conflicts on the front country trails of Santa Barbara County, the Santa Barbara Group has agreed on a policy that seeks to apply the national Sierra Club’s policy on mountain bicycles on trails to our local situation.

The policies emphasize safety for all trail users.

The national Sierra Club policy accepts bikes as legitimate trail users and supports shared use where it is safe, in order to avoid trail damage and to create safe trails for all users.

We support the idea that shared trails should be safe for hikers, equestrians and mountain bikers.

We believe that it is also important to examine how steep, narrow, urban trails, with or without roads, access to the top, are managed elsewhere.

We also note significant displacement of equestrian use in the front country has been underway for many years.

The Santa Barbara Group has made a preliminary analysis of local trails and believe that a number of them appear to be outside the limits laid down in the national policy.

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Los Padres Chapter — Sierra Club

Outings Schedule

Forest campgrounds ready for heavy summer use

Summer is a great time to visit Los Padres National Forest, but high fire danger of heavy vegetation from winter rains makes it necessary to be extra careful.

Many campgrounds are available on a first come basis, while others require reservations. Campers can be contacted calling 777-4444, 644-8777 or online at www.fs.usda.gov.

Wood and charcoal fires or barbeque grills in developed campgrounds and picnic sites. If you are visiting backcountry sites, make sure you have a campfire permit, available free at ranger stations, Los Padres National Forest.

Backcountry streams, creeks and pools can be de-watered. All de-watering of streams is considered unsafe to drink without treatment.

EAVESDROPS

“Hikes I made feel better… because random thoughts on the trail reminded me of the important things in life.”

—Stefania Pecorelli, Los Angeles County Mountain Bike Association (both listed on page 4 for fee compliance, now in effect. Any- one who receives a citation for the recreation fee may receive a cita-

www.fs.fed.us

RATTLESNAKE TRAIL: Hike up a wooded canyon and up Rattlesnake Ridge. Moderate 5.5 miles; Bring lunch and water. Meet behind Big Lagoon Campground parking fee or park along PCH where feasible. Camping is not permitted. Meet at 8 am at Big Lagoon Campground. Bring water. Meet at 9 am at old Rincon Trail head parking lot. Bring water and lunch. Meet behind the Bank of America on upper State St. at Hope Ave. at 9am. DIANE 559-2184 (SJ)

TOM MAXWELL 492-2184 (CJ)

AVILA RATTLESNAKE TRAIL: Start at the extension of this trail into the hills back of Avila. Middle 3.5 miles to the summit of Avila. Bring water, food and lug-soled shoes. Meet at 9 am at old Rincon Trail head parking lot (parking fee or park along PCH where feasible). Bring water, food and lug-soled shoes.

PIEDRA BLANCA POOLS: Moderate 8 mile hike across the Sespe and up Piedra Blanca Creek. If it is nice, a swim might be fun at a deep pool near where we stop for lunch. Bring water and lunch.

MOUNT BONEY TRAIL - POINT MUGU STATE BEACH: Hike from the bridge, bring water and snack. A 3 mile walk including the extension of this trail into the hills back of Avila. Bring water, food and lug-soled shoes. Meet at 7 am at old Rincon Trail head parking lot. Bring water, food and lug-soled shoes. A 4 mile hike with 700' elev. gain. Bring water, food and lug-soled shoes. Meet at 7am at old Rincon Trail head parking lot. Bring water, food and lug-soled shoes.

ROSEWOOD TRAIL LOOP: Moderate 6 mrt loop hike. Bring water, food and lug-soled shoes. Meet at 7am at old Rincon Trail head parking lot. Bring water, food and lug-soled shoes.

Easy, leisurely paced 8 mrt hike thru Big Sur region. Bring this is a high fire danger of heavy vegetation from winter rains makes it necessary to be extra careful.

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Iviento Preserve is bloomin' fun

By Lisa Snider

The Ojai Valley Land Conservancy's hike on the 80-acre Iviento Preserve in Ojai provided hikers with a once a year opportunity to experience a guided tour by experts on the 80-acre property. I heard about the hike from Rich Hadley, preserve manager for the O VLC—the nonprofit which owns and manages the property—and decided it was time to get some fresh dirt on my boots.

We made our way to the trailhead which abuts Thacher School just east of the Horn Canyon Trailhead at the east end of the Ojai Valley. The Iviento Preserve is open year-round to the public but about 20 hikers signed up for the guided 2-mile trek, with notebooks and pencils at the ready to record wildflower sightings.

The preserve's charitable edge, a known for its dramatic topographical relief, plant diversity and important wildlife corridors, was deeded over to the O VLC by the Iviento Family in 1997. It became the Conservancy's first successful land acquisition. Rich served as our guide and plant expert for the 2-hour botanical expedition. Though 80 percent of the preserve's wild flora is fire tolerant, its recovery has been steady and strong, yielding tremendous spring color and lush green plant life.

Rich pointed out many of the property's 150 plant species and discussed the modes of which were in full bloom. Among the wildflower sightings were: sticky monkey flower, fiesta flowers, Chinese houses, blue larkspur, hummingbird sage, wild penny and wild hyacinth.

We marched our way single file up the narrow trail and soon reached the high point of the Iviento at 2,034 feet. We took a moment to take in panoramic views down the valley to Lake Casitas and up to the Topa Topa Mountain and Chief Peak. Rich pointed out the important geological features of the preserve and its surroundings using an old, but still relevant, Thomas Dibblee map.

As we made our ascent we noticed many of us had to stop to tick and brush away dozens of blood-seeking ticks. It seems that recent rains provided a perfect breeding environment for the little bugbears. Having for-gotten one of the cardinal rules of hiking by not dousing ourselves in repellent, we had to fight to perform an on-the-spot de-lousing. No tick氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢氢hydrogen but, we all vowed to remember the bug spray next time.

With notebooks filled with flora findings, the wildflower seekers concluded the hike more than satisfied.

The OVL C conducts a series of free guided hikes on its properties, sometimes providing access to restricted areas. Hikes focusing on plant and bird life are offered on a regular basis, and guided hikes on horseback or bicycle will also find excellent trails.

For more information on the O VLC or to find out about their guided hikes please visit their website: at www.ovlc.org

Lisa Snider is a 7-year resident of Ojai and freelance writer. She can be reached at Lisa@Ojai.com.
Islands voyage also fun(d)raiser

Imagine taking a four or five day adventure to the Channel Islands and help fund important political programs in California too.

It’s all possible this summer, complete with experts revealing the best of all five islands.

The fundraising cruise are:
—July 21-24: 4-days, 4-islands: San Miguel, Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz, Anacapa Islands ($750).
—August 25-29 & September 14-15: 5-days, 5-islands: San Miguel, Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz, Anacapa, and Santa Barbara Island ($875).

New guide books

There are a number of new and revised books about the flora and fauna of our region that are worth a look.

Two books about the California condor were recently published: Introduction to the California Condor by Vincent P. I. F. K. R. and Helen Snyder and John Nielsen’s Condor: To the Brink and Back.

It’s cool to stop global warming

By Nancy Whelan

It’s pretty big news that 2005 tied 1998 as the hottest year on record and nineteen of the hottest twenty years in recorded history all occurred since 1980.

The majority of mainstream scientists worldwide seem to agree that the rapidly rising temperatures are primarily caused by excess emissions of carbon dioxide and deforestation, both created by humans.

Our activities as Californians make us one of the top 10 largest emitters of carbon dioxide worldwide, more than most small countries. The individual choices we make here have a big impact on global warming.

A major source of excess carbon dioxide emissions is the burning of non-renewable, polluting coal, oil, and gas to generate electricity and drive our cars. Carbon dioxide is released into the atmosphere as it is burned, and its concentration around the earth is like a blanket and traps heat—hence the term “greenhouse gases.”

We can help to stop global warming by reducing the amount of carbon we can sequester, releasing the previously stored CO2 back into the atmosphere.

Here are some individual choices we can make to reduce our contribution to global warming:

—Minimizing driving (walk, bike or use transit if possible) and driving smart. When you can, try car pools. It will make this possible for many trips.

—Conserve 30 percent of California’s CO2 emissions come from vehicles so this makes a huge difference.

—Save Electricity. Compact fluorescent bulbs are a bit more expensive, but they last 10 times as long and will lower your energy bills by about $15 per year.

Look for the “Energy Star” logo when buying new appliances.

Consider buying clean energy certificates which represent clean power. You can calculate the pollution associated with your everyday activities, then buy Tradable Renewable Certificates to offset your activities and become “climate neutral.” For information, see: www.green-e.org.

—Plant a Tree. Okay, plant a whole bunch of trees.

—Buy Good Wood. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) supports environmentally and socially responsible forest management in a sustainable way. Go to www.fsc.org.

—Spread the Word. Tell your elected officials and businesses you are concerned about climate control. Inform your friends and family. Financially support groups working at the local, regional or national levels so we can promote practical and timely solutions.

These are but a few choices and activities you can do to curb the pressing reality of global warming. Check out the following websites for more information:

www.csi.org - Sierra Club
www.sinewsociety.org - Science in Society
www.ucsusa.org - Union of Concerned Scientists
www.energystar.gov - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
www.globalwarming.org - The author, Nancy Whelan, is a freelance writer on topics of sustainable livelihoods.

We recycle your cell phones, etc.

Sierra Club’s Los Padres Chapter is doing its share to lessen the impact of using and disposing of old cell phones, inkjet cartridges, and laptops, and your help will turn them into cash for activists to work on local environmental issues.

Get the full schedule by calling 686-1941. (Photo by Nick DiCroce)

Many gracious thanks go to the hundreds of members listed below who responded to our once-per-year March Appeal.

Many gracious thanks go to the hundreds of members listed below who responded to our once-per-year March Appeal drive. It is these donations that help us protect and enhance the land and sea around us, as detailed in the scores of projects listed in the appeal letter and in last month’s issue of Condor Call.

The Chapter has teamed up with Phoneeraise to recycle old phones and electronic devices, which are refurbished or disposed of using only the most ecologically sound methods backed by EPA standards.

Inform, an independent research organization, issued a study examining that by year 2005 there will be more than 500 million used or obsolete cell phones in homes and offices across America. Concerns are you have one or two covered with junk in a drawer, and it is time to recycle them now.

These devices contain toxic substances such as arsenic, lead, cadmium and beryllium that can pollute landfills or incinerators and leach into soil and water when buried in landfills.

Donate your electronic waste today at the Sierra Club office at 300 E. Canon Perdido St., Suite B1 in downtown Santa Barbara. If there is one there, just slip it through the mail slot or mail the devices.

For more information or to help collect cell phones, contact Erin at 965-9719 or at 252-6547.

Thank you for your generosity.

Many gracious thanks go to the hundreds of members listed below who responded to our once-per-year March Appeal drive. It is these donations that help us protect and enhance the land and sea around us, as detailed in the scores of projects listed in the appeal letter and in last month’s issue of Condor Call. Contributions are particularly important this year due to various political changes that increase the threats to our quality of life.

We ask for donations only once per year, but you may contribute at any time. To donate, send a check to Sierra Club, Los Padres Chapter, 300 E. Canon Perdido B-1, Santa Barbara CA 93101.

Mary Arkeny
Donna Asworth
Monica Arman
Cassandra Auerbach
Betina Barros
Paul and Vera Barrett
Carl Breider
Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Bennett
Todd and Pamela Herman
Luis Bernbaum
Mary Blant
Barbara Byrom
Susan Bridges
Barbara Cline
Eleazar Cordero
Marc and Katherine Cantu
Mary Carroll
John Carson
Gerald and Beverly Ching
Austin Clute
Gerald and Marianne Clive
Mariah Cook
Jeannie Dvorak
David Dutten
Ina Eberly-Arnold
Gordon and Joyce Faber
Betsy Fah
Ellen Feldman
Nina Freeman
Stanley and Dorothy Foster
Elise Fidarder
Florence Franta
Sethuso Freuke
Cerre Giger
Walter Gehr
Herbert Goldman
Barry Gordon
Michael Mazur
Margery Ricards
Jean Reiche
Richard Hunt
Karin Jamison, MD
Donald Herman
Walter Gelb
Joseph Henderson
Florence Franta
Pamela Zwehl-Burke
Norma Frandle
Jennifer Haltom
Ann Hemsley
Jim and Dee Higman
Nancy Holm
Scott and Jennifer Holt
Rick Hubbard and Judi Staufner
Richard Hunt
Karen Jamison, MD
Charles Jake
Deftin Johnson
Susan Jorgenson
Jane Kelly
Kalyn Kelley
Charles Koepke
Ben Kusiner
Robert Kraas
Lesse Lagrange
Julia Lanaway
Andy and Susan Lentz
Jo Magradet
Betty Malcom
Herman Marc
Harold Marcuse
Carol Marsh
Jane Martindale
Michael Mazur
John McDougall
Phil and Melissa McIver
Mary Jo McLeod
Paul Moore
Dr. Roy Mront, DDS
Luis Miranda
Tina Nepus
Rene Nichols
Dennis Nelson
Ira Nepus
Ron Nichols
Carol Nond
Hendy O’Neal
Robert Pantill
Chris Paschy
Diane Parker
Robert Phillips
Elizabeth Perzen
Doreen Pollock
Brijon Reddington
Jean Reiche
Margarita Ricard
Judy Richards
Beth Rinehart
James Ring
Emmet and Julie Rieser
Curtis Roads
Joanne Rebalt
Lily Sanders
Barbara Scott
Geoffrey Shef
Marjorie Smeyne
Paul Sodenberg
Norma and Ben Stearns
Wendy Steiger
Remella Stephens
Frances Stephens
Andrea Stouffer
Nancy Stulberg
Tom and Beth Shunt
Myra Tuba
John Tilton
Kathy Underwood
Ulrica Urbina
Richard and Audrey Vincent
Mary Wash
Joshua D. and J. O’Connor	Ted Wiltz
Pamela Wilkerson
Dave Wilkins
Gerry Williams
Harold William
Debora Zalenski
Pamela Zwehl-Burke

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Each island is unique and offers its own special charms: San Miguel for its white, sandy beaches and huge congregation of elephant seals; Santa Rosa for its rare Torrey Pine forest; Santa Cruz for high moun-
tains, deep valleys and the famous Painted Cave, Acaapuca for the west coast brown pelican rookery, steep cliffs, a picturesque lighthouse and excellent snorkeling waters and Santa Barbara Island for pristine waters and a friendly colony of frol-licking sea lions.

All islands have rugged shore-
lines, dotted with sea caves, and inhabited by an abundance of wildlife. Activities include hiking, kayaking, snorkeling, beachcom-

boring, or just relaxing at sea. In sum-
mer, warmer, pristine waters of the Marine Sanctuary will entice snorkelers and swimmers. All cruises depart from Santa Barbara.

Participants are invited to board the boat the night before to ensure an early morning departure.

Prices include assigned bunks, meals and snacks, and a ranger/natu-
ralist who will lead hikes and help us identify species on land and sea.

An archaelogist will travel to help identify artifacts left by the native Chumash who inhabited these islands for thousands of years.

Proceeds benefit Sierra Club political programs in California. To make a reservation, send $100 check payable to Sierra Club to leader Joan Jones Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, 91732. Information: (626) 443-0706 or joholtz1holtz@gmail.com.

It's all possible this summer, complete with experts revealing the best of all five islands.

The fundraising cruise are:
—July 21-24: 4-days, 4-islands: San Miguel, Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz, Anacapa Islands ($750).
—August 25-29 & September 14-15: 5-days, 5-islands: San Miguel, Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz, Anacapa, and Santa Barbara Island ($875).

You, too, can visit Dyler Harbor on San Miguel Island and be followed by marine life if you go on Sierrra Club California’s Channel Islands trip. (Photo contributed)
Photographer’s eye illuminates Alaska oil debate

Editor’s note: Jeff Jones is a Santa Barbara County resident who was influenced by the Arctic Refuge Action Coalition, which includes the Sierra Club, to document oil development along the North Slope and the threat of expansion into the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. This is his story, adding insights about oil development to those authored by others.

By Jeff Jones

The Arctic coastline of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is our nation’s only piece of Arctic coastline and contains free oil from development.

Despite its singular status, the coastal plain (which was denied drilling in 2006 by the Congress to protect the vast and sweeping panaromas—and the sometimes stark but beautiful landscape) was first explored by white men in 1871. The nation’s only piece of Arctic coastline and contains free oil from development.

Despite its singular status, the coastal plain (which was denied drilling in 2006 by the Congress to protect the vast and sweeping panaromas—and the sometimes stark but beautiful landscape) was first explored by white men in 1871. The nation’s only piece of Arctic coastline and contains free oil from development.

The images showing a Prudhoe Bay gravel pit (left) and a braided river on the 1002 area where oil companies want to drill poses the question: What is your vision of wilderness? Gravel pits or gravel bars? (Photos by Jeff Jones)

raising awareness

Having fallen in love with the North Slope on my first trip there in 1982, I knew that I had to act in response to recent threats. With funds provided by the Alaska Wilderness League (representing the Arctic Refuge Action Coalition that includes the Sierra Club), I set off in the summer of 2005 to develop a photographic project that would accurately portray the breadth and scale of the Arctic oil industry while juxtaposing developed areas, such as Prudhoe Bay, with the vast and sweeping panaromas—and the sometimes stark but beautiful landscape.

I purchased a photorealistic art project with my fine art photography, I hounded the Congress for action, along with the leadership of those who have used their art to help save wilderness and wildlife worldwide.

What I saw graphically reflected the Natural Resources Defense Council’s description of Prudhoe Bay, where oil has turned “... 1,000 square miles of fragile tundra into a sprawling industrial zone, containing 1,500 miles of roads and

Oil vote shows House is ‘starved for ideas’

In light of the House vote on May 24 to approve oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Sierra Club Executive Director Carl Pope issued a statement (excerpts below) and urged all members of Congress to vote against the development. The campaign is designed to dramatically reduce the oil produced and consumed in California’s Central Coast region within less than 30 years.

A Wilderness Worth Saving received significant notice in the local media particularly given that its opening reception this year occurred on the 37th anniversary of the devastating 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill.

SHARING LESSONS LEARNED

The community response to A Wilderness Worth Saving was overwhelming. Individuals stepped up to produce the education piece in book format for wider distribution. Additional organizations have shown the exhibit to new audiences.

And many individuals have indicated that they now understand the Arctic Refuge to be a frozen wasteland, but rather a place that is wild and rare—a refuge in every sense of the word—that to do otherwise than save it would be simply unconscionable.

With regard to saving the Arctic Refuge, we have won many battles, but not the war. To ensure the long-term survival of the refuge, we must connect the issue of drilling there to our nation’s dependence on fossil fuels and the far-reaching and deleterious impacts on global warming.

We must use our ingenuity, intelligence, and courage for our global community to become fossil free before it’s too late.

Jeff Jones’ fine art photography can be seen at the following websites:
www.lumnos.com/prudhoe_anwr
www.lumnos.com
Integrity of endorsements upheld

Editor’s note: The following article has been submitted to the Ventura County Star to address the club’s policies on the use and misuse of political endorsements.

On Saturday, May 20, the Ventura County Star ran on its front page an article by Timm Herdt entitled “Sierra Club Tells Assembly Candidate to Stop Using its Logo on Campaign Mailer.”

In the article, Carmen Ramirez, a Sierra Club member, claims that the Club’s 41st Assembly District endorsement of Kelly Hayes-Raitt was not reviewed by any committee of the Los Padres chapter. This is blatantly not true.

The Executive Committees of both the Sespe Group and the Los Padres Chapter endorsed Hayes-Raitt unanimously. Although Sierra Club endorsement rules state that a Chapter with more than 80 percent of club members within an electoral district has sole endorsement power over that district, the Angeles Chapter was gracious enough to ask the Los Padres Chapter to participate in the endorsement process.

Last fall, Alan Sanders, Conservation Chair of the Los Padres Chapter, joined me in helping the Angeles Chapter write a detailed questionnaire sent to all the Democratic candidates in the 41st Assembly District in the race at the time. In addition we, along with several Angeles Chapter members, personally interviewed five different candidates. These preliminaries led to both the Los Padres and Angeles chapters recommending the endorsement of Hayes-Raitt and then the Club’s statewide political committee endorsing her.

When it came to the Angeles Chapter’s attention that another candidate was using the Sierra Club logo on a campaign mailer, the Angeles Chapter, with the full support of the Los Padres Chapter, issued a press release asking the candidate to cease its use, because it violated a written pledge the candidate signed when he completed our questionnaire.

This press release was authored by the Angeles Chapter and did not need to be approved by any committee. In direct contrast with Ramirez, I do think that the candidate’s use of the Sierra Club logo was meant to be misleading and do not think that the Club’s response was “over the top.” The Sierra Club has the right to protect the use of its logo and make sure that its members and the public clearly understand who we are endorsing in a particular race.

More importantly though, Ramirez herself is misusing her membership in the Sierra Club by implying that there is disagreement within the Club about which candidate should be endorsed in the 41st Assembly District race and about the use of the Club’s logo. The fact is that the Sierra Club is a membership organization. Anyone who is willing to pay the membership fee can join and say they are a Sierra Club member. As individuals they are free to endorse any candidate they choose. What they cannot do is to represent themselves as spokespeople about the Club and its endorsements. This is left to the Club’s leadership, Executive Committees for both the Group and the Chapter that are democratically elected every year by all of its members.

If Ramirez wants to be able to speak for the Club on political matters, she needs to take an active role in the two respective Executive Committees, which she has not yet done. At this point, I should be the sole source for information on Sierra Club political endorsements in Ventura County.

Joy Kobayashi, Los Padres Chapter Political Co-Chair

Petra Salmeron peers out from among the many rock formations in the Gaviota hills, a favorite area for Sierra Club outings. (Photo by Robert Bernstein)